



BJP sent unaccounted money to Kerala ahead of polls, says Pinarayi
page 5



BJP, largest ally in Bihar's ruling coalition, questions Nitish govt.
page 9



Google to change global advertising practices in landmark antitrust deal
page 12



Djokovic rallies from the brink to beat Musetti
page 13

PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

NEARBY



Kejriwal announces drive to vaccinate all above 45

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a pan-city vaccination drive aimed at ensuring that everyone above the age of 45 receives their first dose of vaccine over the coming four weeks. Beginning Tuesday, teams led by block-level officers would visit every household allotting vaccination slots.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Farmer leaders released, SKM claims major victory

GURUGRAM

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha on Monday claimed major victory in its protest at Haryana's Tohana after all three farmer leaders arrested last week were released. Led by SKM leaders, the farmers had been holding a sit-in at the Sadar police station in support of their demands.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8

Vaccine sale in Punjab: Oppn. corners Cong. govt.

CHANDIGARH

Amid controversy over the sale of COVID-19 vaccine by the Punjab government to private hospitals, the Opposition parties are cornering the Congress dispensation and demanding the dismissal of State Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu over the alleged scam.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

Govt. will revert to centralised procurement of vaccines: Modi

PM also says the Centre will provide vaccines for free to all adults from June 21

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday announced that India would revert to a system of centralised procurement of vaccines against COVID-19, with free vaccines to be provided for the 18-44 age group as well and with 25% of procurement kept open for the private sector. This system will be operationalised by June 21.

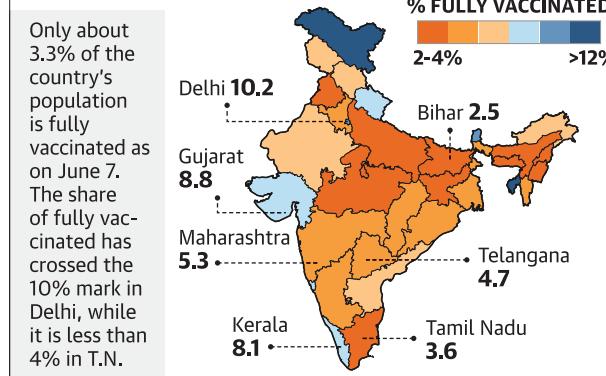
Announcing the decision during a televised broadcast to the nation, Mr. Modi said many Chief Ministers had "come forward with a demand for reconsideration of the vaccination strategy and for bringing back the system in place before May 1".

He announced a cap of ₹150 on the amount private hospitals can charge over the cost of purchase of the vaccine from the manufacturer.

He also announced the extension of the free ration distribution scheme for 80 crore beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana till Diwali, in November.

SC hearing on June 30
The Prime Minister's announcement comes a week after the Supreme Court asked for an affidavit from the Centre on how the sum

Long road ahead



Centre can procure up to 75% of the doses and it will provide them free to States, even for the age group 18-44... In private facilities there will be a cap of ₹150 per dose as service charge over the cost of the vaccine
NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

Only about 3.3% of the country's population is fully vaccinated as on June 7. The share of fully vaccinated has crossed the 10% mark in Delhi, while it is less than 4% in T.N.

of ₹35,000 crore allocated in the Union Budget for vaccines has been spent so far. The Court sought to know why these funds cannot be used for giving free vaccination for those in the age group of 18 to 44 years, observing that the Centre's policy of not providing free vaccines to this particular age group was prima facie "arbitrary and irrational". The affidavit is due on June 15 and the next hearing is on June 30.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had written to Chief Ministers across the country urging a consensus on central procurement of vaccines, while Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had written to Chief Ministers of 11 non-NDA States to

unite to ask for free vaccines from the Centre.

Expressing grief at the loss of life especially during the massive second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit India, Mr. Modi said his government had dealt with the challenges of resources on a war footing to deal with a "once in a century" pandemic.

Unprecedented crisis

"Never in a 100 years has there been such a pandemic, and this saw an unprecedented demand for medical oxygen across the country. We pressed the government, railways, army, air force, navy and other wings into service to procure medical oxygen and other medicines required in our fight against

the pandemic," he said.

At the receiving end of much criticism over vaccine shortages, Prime Minister Modi defended his government's record and capacity.

"When we were first elected in 2014, we found that vaccine coverage under the universal immunisation programme was around 60% and we quickly launched 'Mission Indradhanush' to not only increase coverage but we added other vaccines to improve the health of our children. When COVID-19 hit, our scientists got to work to develop a vaccine to deal with the disease. Government of India set up a vaccine task force in April 2020 itself," he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

18 feared killed in Pune factory fire

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

At least 18 people, of whom 15 are believed to be women, are feared killed in a blaze following explosions in a private chemical plant in Pune's Mulshi taluk on Monday.

There were conflicting reports of the exact number of workers trapped at the time of the blaze, with some officials giving the figure as 38 and others stating that the roll call showed 37.

Fire department personnel, who reached the scene at 4 p.m., said they recovered 11 bodies and that at least two persons were feared missing.

The death toll could rise further, officials said.

According to Pune rural authorities, a massive fire was reported around 2.30 p.m. at the SVS Aqua Technologies, a company in Urapade village near the Pirangut MIDC area in Mulshi. It is believed that two powerful explosions led to the ensuing inferno.

"We have information that over 35 workers were inside the factory of which 20 were rescued. So far, 11 bodies have been recovered. Most of them are charred beyond recognition. The process of identification is on," said a Fire department official.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Complete internal assessments by June 28, says CBSE

It should be done online, schools told

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI



A file photo of Class 12 students outside a Delhi school • R.V. MOORTHY

Schools which have pending internal and practical assessments for Class 12 must complete them through online mode only and submit the marks by June 28, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) said in a notification on Monday.

This comes as a CBSE panel is deliberating on how to determine Class 12 results in lieu of the cancelled board examinations.

"Some schools have not been able to complete the school-based assessments in various subjects due to the pandemic. Schools with pending practical/internal assessments are permitted to conduct the same in only online mode and upload marks on the provided link latest by 28.06.2021," said the notification issued by CBSE Controller of Examinations Sanyam Bhardwaj.

Examiners were warned to "keep in mind that the marks allotted should not bunch towards the maximum marks which is highly unlikely in view of diverse levels of students".

Dr. Bhardwaj is a part of the 12-member panel set up by the CBSE last week to decide on objective criteria to determine Class 12 results after the exams were cancelled. One of the options being considered is using the marks from students' internal assessments, unit tests, project and practical work done through the year.

Markets, malls reopen to lukewarm response

Social distancing markers in place; shopkeepers hope for footfall to pick up soon

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

Shopping malls and markets reopened in the Capital on Monday on an odd-even basis after nearly two months of lockdown.

Sanitiser dispensers and markers for social distancing were in place as shopkeepers raised shutters with a hope to make their first sale after a long spell of no income. While most markets and malls bore a deserted look, few shoppers started trickling in from noon.

At the Select City Walk mall in Saket, most shops reopened but some, including a few food joints, continued to have their shutters down.

Sumit Agarwal, a shopper at the mall, said, "The last two months had been very



Familiar sight: A chock-a-block ITO Yamuna bridge as offices reopened in New Delhi on Monday. • R.V. MOORTHY

long and stressful. Staying at home and constantly receiving terrible news had become too much to bear. Now that the malls have reopened, we can still think of stepping out in a restricted manner. I thought of visiting the mall today for some respite before it starts getting crowded."

At the Sarojini Nagar market, while the hawkers stayed away, the shops opened on odd-even basis. Manoj Bajaj, a shopkeeper, said, "We will

have a sanitiser dispenser in place which the customers have to use before entering the store. It is all the more imperative now as multiple customers touch the same products before buying."

(With inputs from PTI)

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 2

have a sanitiser dispenser in place which the customers have to use before entering the store. It is all the more imperative now as multiple customers touch the same products before buying."

At the Sarojini Nagar market, while the hawkers stayed away, the shops opened on odd-even basis. Manoj Bajaj, a shopkeeper, said, "We will

(With inputs from PTI)

12-hour hunger strike across Lakshadweep for Patel's recall

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

People across the islands under the Lakshadweep administration observed a 12-hour hunger strike on Monday. The protests which began at 6 a.m., were held at islanders' homes in observance of COVID-19 protocols as the number of cases continue to rise in the archipelago. Residents held up placards calling for the Centre to immediately recall the islands' Administrator Praful K. Patel.

The idea is inspired from "vaccine passports", which is a documentation proving that a person has been vaccinated against COVID-19 and will allow people to enter a country more easily.

While it is exploring the concept for travel within the country, the Indian government, however, firmly opposed the adoption of COVID-19 vaccine passports at the G7 meeting of Health Ministers last week on the grounds that it was "hugely discriminatory" against developing countries that have lower rates of vaccination.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

ment for all domestic travellers," said Aloke Bajpai, CEO of travel booking portal ixigo.

So far, only 4.49 crore Indian citizens have received both doses of COVID-19 vaccines, and 18.55 crore have received a single dose.

The idea is inspired from "vaccine passports", which is a documentation proving that a person has been vaccinated against COVID-19 and will allow people to enter a country more easily.

While it is exploring the concept for travel within the country, the Indian government, however, firmly opposed the adoption of COVID-19 vaccine passports at the G7 meeting of Health Ministers last week on the grounds that it was "hugely discriminatory" against developing countries that have lower rates of vaccination.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

ment for all domestic travellers," said Aloke Bajpai, CEO of travel booking portal ixigo.

So far, only 4.49 crore Indian citizens have received both doses of COVID-19 vaccines, and 18.55 crore have received a single dose.

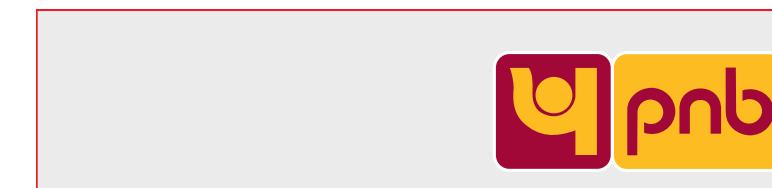
The idea is inspired from "vaccine passports", which is a documentation proving that a person has been vaccinated against COVID-19 and will allow people to enter a country more easily.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Passengers arriving at the Chennai airport.

sengers from selected States. Some States want a report not earlier than 48 hours, while others accept reports up to 72 hours before travel.

It is a welcome move which will boost travel confidence and help ease any anxiety surrounding travel in the current environment. The decision will also inspire more people to get vaccinated against COVID-19, encouraging safe and free move-



Avail PNB JEEVAN SURAKSHA SCHEMES today for healthier future

PNB JEEVAN RAKSHAK SCHEME

- ❖ For setting up of onsite Oxygen Plant in Hospitals/ Nursing Homes/ Clinics/Medical Colleges / Units engaged in manufacturing of Liquid Oxygen, Oxygen Cylinders etc.
- ❖ Loan upto ₹ 2.00 Crore
- ❖ No Upfront/Processing Charges, No Collateral security
- ❖ Low Rate of Interest @ 7.50%
- ❖ Nil Margin & upto 100% Finance



- ❖ For setting up of Clinic/ Nursing Home/ Hospital /Pathological Laboratory, Diagnostic Centres/ purchase of Medical equipment and other Healthcare Requirements etc.
- ❖ Need based Term Loan & non-Fund based Facility
- ❖ Working Capital facility upto ₹ 2.00 Crore.
- ❖ Lower margin requirement upto 15%
- ❖ Longer repayment period upto 120 months
- ❖ Low Rate of Interest

PNB SANJEEVANI

PERSONAL LOAN SCHEME

Personal loan schemes for meeting emergent funds requirement for COVID related medical needs

- ❖ Eligibility: All existing Salaried/ Pensioners/ Self Employed banking with us.
- ❖ Purpose: For COVID treatment of self or family members on or after 01.04.2021.
- ❖ Amount: Maximum ₹ 3 Lakhs.
- ❖ Reimbursement also permitted.
- ❖ Low Rate of Interest
- ❖ Margin: NIL
- ❖ Processing & Documentation Charges : NIL



First step towards normalcy



(From left to right) Passengers at Kaushambi bus station in Ghaziabad; commuters board a train at Rajiv Chowk metro station; people buy groceries at INA Market as the Capital began the 'unlock' process on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR, R.V. MOORTHY

Covaxin only for people who got it as first dose: Delhi govt.

HC commends steps taken by authorities to address vaccine shortage

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Monday informed the High Court that it has directed all government centres, private hospitals and nursing homes that Covaxin will only be administered to those in the 18-44 age group who had received it as first dose.

It further informed that an additional 40,000 vials of Covaxin had been received on June 6. The court was hearing three pleas filed by persons who were finding it difficult to get the second dose of Covaxin after getting the first jab.

18-44 age group

Justice Rekha Palli commended the proactive steps taken by the Centre and Delhi government to address Covaxin shortage, especially for people who had taken the first dose and were struggling to get a second dose before the six-week window expires.

The HC was informed that



A medical worker shows a vial of Covaxin at a centre in New Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO

the Delhi Chief Secretary issued an order on June 6 stating that the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) has directed all private hospitals and nursing homes functioning as COVID vaccination centres for Covaxin to inoculate only those in the 18-44 age group and eligible for a second dose during June.

On June 3, the Health Department of the Delhi government had issued similar directions for government vaccination centres.

The HC was informed that

One of the petitions, filed by advocate Kushal Kumar, sought direction to authorities to urgently provide a second dose of Covaxin to them as their allotted time period for the second dose is about to end. The plea said the allotted time period for the second dose of vaccine is between May 31 to June 14.

Unable to book slot

Another petition was moved by lawyer Ashish Virmani, who received the first dose of Covaxin on May 3 and since May 29 has been unable to book a slot for receiving the second jab, which has to be taken within six weeks of the first dose. Subsequently, he had to travel to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh to receive the second dose, advocate Pallav Mongia, representing Mr. Virmani, had told the court.

A third petition, filed by Rajeev Parashar, stated he was administered the first dose of Covaxin on March 4 and the second dose has to

be administered between June 1-15.

Mr. Parashar, 35, said the Delhi government's decision to put the vaccination drive for 18-44 age group on hold till June 10 puts him at significant risk of not getting the second dose in time.

During the hearing, the petitioners stated there are many citizens whose six-week period will end on June 14. If they do not get the second jab in time then the whole exercise will be rendered futile, they added.

The government counsel sought time to take instructions on this aspect and the HC posted the matter for further hearing on June 11. The HC also asked the counsel to examine whether slots for second dose could be increased.

The Centre said the Co-Win system sends automatic SMS to beneficiaries every third day – starting three days before the second dose due date – till the beneficiary books an appointment.

Nine special flying squads

Metro services resume with 50% seating capacity

Over 4.5 lakh passengers travelled across network till 8 p.m.

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro resumed services on Monday after nearly a month-long hiatus due to the lockdown in the Capital. Till 8 p.m., over 4.5 lakh passengers travelled across the network, according to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC).

Operations resumed with 50% seating capacity and commuters were not permitted to stand inside the coaches. Only 25 people were allowed inside each coach at any given time.

"The passenger journeys performed on Monday was in view of drastically reduced capacity owing to adherence to guidelines issued by the government," DMRC spokesperson Anuj Dayal.

Stations closed briefly

On the first day of operations, around 15 stations were closed briefly during morning and evening peak hours, in a bid to ensure COVID-appropriate behaviour.

were also deployed for random checks inside the trains for violations, officials said.

"At least 84 passengers were asked to deboard for standing while travelling and 73 were penalised for not wearing masks. Around 106 passengers were counselled to follow social distancing and wear masks properly," Mr. Dayal said.

All norms and protocols



Commuters wait to board at Rajiv Chowk metro station on Monday after services resumed as part of the unlocking process in the city. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

be shut temporarily if stations get crowded.

Services on the Delhi Metro network were completely suspended from May 10 while prior to that, from April 19 to May 9 only people engaged in essential services were permitted to travel on the network, on production of valid identity cards.

The Delhi Metro had announced that services would resume in a staggered manner. The network is expected to operate at full strength by Wednesday, DMRC officials said.

Noida Metro to restart tomorrow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NOIDA

The Noida-Greater Noida Metro will resume services for passengers from Wednesday after a hiatus of over a month due to COVID-19 lockdown, officials said on Monday.

The announcement comes close on the heels of Delhi Metro resuming services on Monday and Gautam Buddha Nagar also relaxing restrictions that were put in place due to the COVID-induced lockdown.

"Due to partial COVID curfew, metro services on the Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC) network were suspended with effect from May 1," NMRC managing director Ritu Maheshwari said.

Keeping in view the night curfew and also to discourage people to move out due to the pandemic, trains will be operated from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays, she said. As weekend curfew is still in practice, train services will not be operated on weekends, she added.

Capital records fewest challans for COVID-19 violations in two months

Over 1.2 lakh fines have been issued from April 19 to June 6

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police fined 901 people on Sunday for violating various COVID-19 rules that include not wearing masks and not maintaining social distancing.

This is the lowest since March 28, officers said on Monday.

At least 159 people were fined for not maintaining social distancing, they said.

On June 5, 1,883 challans were issued and on June 4, 2,452 challans were issued.

The police said that out of the total 901 challans, 742 challans were issued for not wearing face masks.

According to police data, on March 28, 730 people



City police checking vehicles for COVID norm violations. ■ FILE PHOTO

were fined for not wearing masks and nine for not maintaining social distancing.

"The cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

A total of 1,22,911 challans have been issued by the police from April 19 to June 6, the data showed.

"The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The process of unlocking has started and we urge people to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask while coming out of the house, maintain social distance and regularly sanitise their hands. People should not come out of their homes unnecessarily despite the fact that cases are declining," Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal said.

The police is continuously prosecuting people who are breaking rules and also sensitising them about COVID-19. The

Timings**DELHI**

| |
|----------------------|
| TUESDAY, JUN. 08 |
| RISE 05:24 SET 19:18 |
| RISE 03:53 SET 17:33 |
| WEDNESDAY, JUN. 09 |
| RISE 05:23 SET 19:19 |
| RISE 04:27 SET 18:27 |
| THURSDAY, JUN. 10 |
| RISE 05:23 SET 19:19 |
| RISE 05:06 SET 19:23 |

| | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| Delhi Weather | max | min |
| Delhi City | 40 | 26 |
| Safdarjung | 40 | 26 |
| Palam | 40 | 26 |

Delhi Palam Today
42°C Another hot day and warm evening likely. Dry weather with moderate gusty winds during day.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
41°C Loo type situation likely at day. Dry weather with moderate gusty winds. Evening also would remain warm.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

IN BRIEF**Data on children who lost parent to COVID-19**

NEW DELHI

Delhi's Women and Child Development department will collect data on children who have lost one or both parents to COVID so that they can avail the benefits by the government, officials said on Monday. The data will be collected with the assistance of the health department, said WCD Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam.

Prime accused in Asif murder case arrested**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

GURUGRAM

The prime accused in the Asif murder case was arrested on Monday, the Nuh police said. Thirteen accused have been accounted for in the murder case so far.

Acting on a tip-off, an SIT led by DSP (Headquarters) Sudhir Taneja arrested Rohit alias Kala. He was on the run after the murder.

The police said the accused was being interrogated and would be produced before the court to seek his police remand for further interrogation and recovery of weapons used in the commission of crime.

Asif, a resident of Nuh's Khera Khalilpur, was returning home from a medical store on May 16 evening with Rashid and his friend Wasif in a car when the accused allegedly waylaid them at Atta village and kidnapped him. He was later found dead at Nangli village in Sohna. Keeping in view the gravity of the matter, the SIT was constituted for a thorough probe into the matter and the arrest of the accused.

Mr. Taneja said the remaining accused would be arrested soon.

Two held for killing man during robbery**STAFF REPORTER**

NEW DELHI

Two persons have been arrested for allegedly killing a man during a robbery attempt in Dwarka, the police said on Monday.

DCP (Dwarka) S.K. Meena said the accused have been identified as Yogesh Sharma alias Lala (28), who is involved in 12 cases of robbery and Arms Act among others, and Rohit alias Bawla (22). They also tried to kill the victim – Udayan Singh's – wife Vidhya Devi.

On May 2, two persons entered Singh's house with the intention to rob them and choked him to death. "Sharma knew that Singh was rich and planned to rob him along with his friends – Rohit and Bablu. They entered his house on the pretext of asking for a room on rent. The accused then killed Singh. They could not find cash in the house and soon fled the spot," Mr. Meena said.

Kejriwal announces campaign to vaccinate 45+ at local booths

Block-level officers to visit homes across civic wards to allot vaccination slots

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday announced the Delhi government's "Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination" campaign, which will see block-level officers visit citizens' homes across the 280 civic wards in the city to allot vaccination slots.

In 70 civic wards

Addressing a digital briefing here, Mr. Kejriwal said government teams will encourage citizens above 45 years to get vaccinated at local polling booths in 70 civic wards on a rotational basis till the entire city is covered.

E-rickshaws will be arranged to carry citizens to polling booths. After those above 45 years of age are vaccinated in four weeks, the government will carry out a similar drive for the 18-44 years category.

"Our aim is that within four weeks, every person above the age of 45 years will get vaccinated.

He said very few people were turning up for the jabs, due to which, the govern-



A healthcare worker administers a vaccine to a man inside a car at the Commonwealth Games Village on Monday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

C Our aim is that within four weeks, every person above the age of 45 years will get vaccinated

ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Chief Minister

needed to be considered.

"Every week this initiative will be carried out in 70 wards. These booth-level officers, for the next two days, will visit every house. Then they will give vaccination slot to people above the age of 45 years who are yet to be vaccinated so that they can come to the polling station at a specific time," he said.

"We will see whether those who were given the slots have turned up. For those who do not turn up, the booth-level officers will go to their houses again. They will make two rounds and try to convince them to come and get vaccinated," he said.

In this manner, Mr. Kejriwal said, the government planned to cover the city within four weeks; after 2 to 3 months, he said, another round would begin at polling centers for the second dose.

"When we receive sufficient amounts of vaccines for those between 18-44 years, then in the next two rounds we will vaccinate the youth of Delhi within two months," he said.

There were 272 civic wards in Delhi but there were two Assembly segments, which did not have any ward; assuming four wards each in these segments, Mr. Kejriwal said, there were 280 wards, which

men has decided to go to the people instead.

"The polling centers are within walking distance so people can easily walk to these centers. The scheme is going to start today [Monday] in the 70 civic wards of Delhi," he said.

There were 272 civic wards in Delhi but there were two Assembly segments, which did not have any ward; assuming four wards each in these segments, Mr. Kejriwal said, there were 280 wards, which

Sisodia thanks Supreme Court for its 'intervention' on vaccination drives

Remark comes after PM says States will get free jabs from June 21

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday thanked the Supreme Court for its "intervention" on vaccination drives in the country.

This comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that States will be provided free COVID vaccines from June 21.

Mr. Sisodia said it was

done after the Supreme Court's intervention and blamed the Centre's policies for which States could not buy doses directly.

"We express our gratitude to the Hon'ble Supreme Court that after the court's intervention, free vaccine will be available to people of all age groups across the country. If the Central government wanted, it could have done this long ago, but

due to the policies of the center, neither the States were able to buy the vaccine nor the Central government was giving it," Mr. Sisodia said in a tweet in Hindi.

SC on Centre's policy

On June 2, the Supreme Court questioned the Centre's policy of paid vaccination for 18-44 age group, saying it is "prima facie, arbitrary and irrational".

"If Delhi had also implemented it, some 72.78 lakh

Lowest daily cases in over three months

Govt. receives 40K doses of Covaxin

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi reported 231 fresh COVID-19 cases in 24 hours – the lowest in more than three months – taking the total cases to 14,29,475, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

The lowest number of cases before this was reported on March 2 – 217 cases. Also, the test positivity rate (TPR) fell to 0.36%. The last time the TPR was less than this was 0.31% on March 7.

A TPR of 0.36% means that less than one person out of 100 people taking COVID-19 tests is now positive for the virus. Also, 36 deaths were reported, and the total number of deaths stood at 24,627.

A total of 63,610 tests were done in a day, the bulletin said.

Of the total cases, 13,99,640 people have recovered and there are 5,208 active cases.

"AAP MLA Atishi on Monday said that the Delhi government received 40,000 doses of Covaxin on Sunday.

"For the last two weeks, there no vaccination drive

happening for the youth in the government schools about which people were worried. Especially those who got Covaxin in May and was supposed to get the second dose within a span of 4 to 6 weeks," Ms. Atishi said.

Only for second dose

"We are happy to tell you that 40,000 doses of Covaxin have been sent to us for the age bracket of 18-44 years. With this, we are only going to vaccinate those who had received the first dose of Covaxin in May," she said.

The total number of vaccines administered in Delhi has reached 56,67,221, of which 12.85 lakh people have been vaccinated with both doses.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Monday said the government is working on revamping several existing hospitals to increase the number of beds and also building new hospitals.

The workers along with party chief Ch. Anil Kumar gheraoed Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who had come to inaugurate a drive-through vaccination centre at Akshardham.

The party alleged that the government was busy inaugurating premium drive-through vaccination centres, which would help the private players make huge profits. Mr. Kumar said that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has been fooling the people of Delhi and telling them lies by promising them free vaccination.

"A large number of people are still waiting for their second dose even two months after getting their first jab. The Delhi government has run short of vaccines, while vaccines were available in abundance in private hospitals and drive-through vaccination centres, though these centres charge over ₹1,600 per dose," Mr. Kumar said.

He alleged that the government has been a total failure in managing the pandemic as well as the vaccination drive.

Several Congress workers were detained during the protest.

HC refuses to stay order letting private schools charge fees

Don't be just a populist govt., it says

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday declined to put on hold its May 31 order allowing private unaided schools in the Capital to collect annual and development charges from students for the period after the lockdown ended.

A Vacation Bench of Justice Rekha Palli and Justice Amit Bansal said, "We are rejecting the stay application".

'Give money to schools'

"Don't be just a populist government. Give money to schools also. They also need money to run the schools. They have to pay taxes also," the Bench added.

The High Court also issued notice to the Action Committee of Unaided Recognised Private Schools, which represents over 450 schools here, on the appeals of city government, students and NGO Justice for All challenging the High Court's May 31 order. The court will hear the case again on July 12.

On May 31, the HC had quashed orders issued by the Department of Education, Delhi government on April 18, 2020, and August 28, 2020, restraining the private school unaided schools from collecting annual charges and development fees beyond the lockdown period and deferring it till physical opening of the schools.

The Delhi government contended the May 31 order failed to appreciate the powers of the Department of



The emblem of the Supreme Court of India.

Govt. committee mulling to train healthcare workers to man ICUs

NIKHIL M BABU

NEW DELHI

An expert committee formed by the Delhi government to formulate action plans ahead of a possible third wave is considering whether parents should be allowed inside hospitals if their children get admitted with COVID-19.

The committee is also considering a plan to train more healthcare workers to handle intensive care units (ICUs) for children, said sources privy to the development.

The committee is yet to make a final decision. It will

come up with a report in the next two weeks regarding treatment procedure for children affected with COVID-19 and other preparations.

On Saturday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said children will need different types of equipment for treatment. He also said a paediatric task force was formed on Friday to give its recommendations separately.

On May 27, the Delhi government formed an expert committee headed by Additional Chief Secretary Satya Gopal. The first objective of the committee was to devise a plan for handling a possible third wave with a focus on the "needs of children of the city", as per an official order.

The committee met at



Kin and healthcare workers outside LNJP Hospital with a COVID patient in the city. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

least twice and also had a meeting with the Chief Minister on Friday.

"Members of the committee suggested that parents of children affected with COVID-19 should be allowed inside

side the hospitals. This is because a four or five-year-old child will keep crying if they do not see their parents. If allowed, the parents will have to wear PPE kits," a source privy to the development said. The source said the committee is yet to fix an age cap but currently, the committee is considering to allow it for children below 14 years.

Members of the committee have also suggested that there should be a pool of trained personnel to work in NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) and PICU (pediatric intensive care unit) in case of a third wave.

"Beds can be increased if there is a fresh wave, but doctors, nurses, and even nursing orderlies have to be trained to handle children. So, the committee is also mooting to train a group of healthcare workers before the third wave to deal with children," another source said.

Panel on helpline

The committee has also discussed the possibility of a different helpline number or a separate section of the main helpline number, where family members can call in case of an emergency for children.

On Monday, the Delhi government said the department of women and child development along with the Health Department are together preparing a roadmap to tackle the third wave.

Parents of infected children may be allowed inside hospital

The collective has fed over 1,630 out

Bomb scare
in SrinagarSPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

A Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) of the security forces was rushed to the busy Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) office on Monday evening after a suspicious object was found in its vicinity.

"The BDS is on the job and is ascertaining the nature of the object," an official said.

Traffic stopped

Traffic was stopped in the area, a high security zone with the buildings of the SMC and District Police Lines housing the offices of senior police officers adjacent to each other.

The operation of the BDS was on when this report was being filed. Earlier in the day, security agencies were tipped off about the presence of explosives in Sainoh area of Tral in South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

On Sunday, explosives were also defused in Srinagar's Chanapora area.

No State asked for paid vaccination, says Gehlot

'Modi made an unsuccessful attempt to blame State govt.'

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made an "unsuccessful attempt" to blame the State governments while announcing centralised procurement of vaccines against COVID-19 and their free supply to States. "No State had suggested making payment from its budget for vaccinating the people of 18 to 44 years of age," he said.

Wrong decision'

While affirming that Mr. Modi was forced to withdraw his "wrong decision" because of the strong public sentiments as well as the Congress' campaign for free universal vaccination, Mr. Gehlot said the Prime Minister should tell the nation as to which States had asked for paid vaccination.

"I don't know of any State government which raised such a demand. It seems the Prime Minister's advisers have fed him wrong information," Mr. Gehlot tweeted.

He said he had himself raised the issue at a video-conference meeting with Mr. Modi on April 23 and requested him to ensure free vaccination for all, including those of 18 to 44 years, by the Centre.

"Der Aaye Durust Aaaye

(better late than never)," Mr. Gehlot said, and added that several State governments, including Rajasthan, had to approach the Supreme Court for seeking directions to the Centre to float global tenders for procuring vaccines and supply them to the States.

The Congress leadership and the entire Opposition had raised the voice against the Centre's wrong vaccination policies, he said.

Higher rates

The vaccination exercise in Rajasthan was halted several times in the absence of sufficient number of doses. The global expression of interest issued by the State government for urgent procurement of vaccines last month did not yield the desired results, as the interested companies quoted much higher rates than the market prices.

Oppn. in Punjab corners Cong. govt.

SAD, AAP should stage their protests outside PM's residence, says Health Minister

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

Policemen lathi-charge Youth Akali Dal activists in Chandigarh on Monday. ■ PTI

Amid controversy over the sale of COVID-19 vaccine by the Punjab government to private hospitals, the Opposition parties are making the most to corner the Congress government ahead of the Assembly polls due early next year.

While the principal Opposition, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), held a sit-in protest outside the residence of State Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu in Mohali on Sunday, the members of the Shiromani Akali Dal on Monday staged a protest outside Mr. Sidhu's house, demanding his dismissal over 'vaccine scam'.

The Health Minister, however, hit back accusing both the SAD and AAP of involving in theatrics and asking the parties to stage their protests (dharnas) outside the residence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "But I know you cannot do that as

Sukhbir and other Akalis are too scared of Modi, and AAP and Kejriwal are the 'B' team of the BJP," he said.

Dismiss Minister'

Former Deputy Chief Minister and SAD president, Sukhbir Singh Badal, who led the protest, demanded dismissal of Mr. Sidhu over the alleged 'vaccine scam'. "If by June 15, the Health Minister is not dismissed, the SAD would gherao the residence of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh," he said.

"We will continue to strive

to ensure justice to the people of Punjab in the vaccine scam....This amounts to playing with lives and is reprehensible. If the Health Minister is not dismissed, we will approach the Governor as well as the courts for justice," said Mr. Badal.

File a case'

AAP members had also demanded that Mr. Sidhu be sacked from the Cabinet and a criminal case registered against him.

Facing criticism from several quarters, the State go-

Board exams:
Tripura govt.
seeks opinionSPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AGARTALA

The Tripura government has sought opinion from parents and experts to take a decision over holding of secondary and higher secondary examinations in the State amid the pandemic.

State's Education Minister Ratan Lal Nath has said that he will chair a meeting here on June 14 where opinions and suggestions will be thoroughly discussed.

"Senior officials of the tribal autonomous district council, prominent psychiatrists and former Education Ministers will be invited at the meeting. After the meeting we will declare a final decision," Mr. Nath told newsmen on Monday.

No ex parte decision'

The Minister clarified that the decision on holding or not holding the exams will depend on opinions of parents of the students and notable persons who will be attending the meeting.

The daily fatalities, however, do not correspond to the downward trend in positive cases.

For the past one week, the State has been averaging daily deaths over 35. The State reported 41 deaths on Monday, with the overall death toll crossing 3,000.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown Age: about 30 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Hair: Black with black Beard, moustache, ID: Has got injured in a road traffic accident. Wearing: Dark blue coloured shirt, black coloured jeans and black coloured shoes in feet, has been found dead on 05.06.2021 at 10:53 PM at Western Carriageway. Before IP Flyover on Mahatma Gandhi Road, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours at the Mortuary of Maulana Azad Medical College Hospital, Delhi. In this regard a FIR No. 134/21 U/S 279/304A IPC dated 06.06.2021 has been lodged at P.S. I.P. Estate, Delhi. If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers. SHO P.S. I.P. Estate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23378387, 23370928 DP/822/CD/2021 8750870428

KAYAALAY ADHIKARASI AMBHANTAK (दक्षिण) उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान
32-राजपुर रोड, देहरादून
दर्शक (कायालय) : 0135-274028, फैक्स : 0135-2746137
"जल संचय" पत्राक : 387/ई-निवादा/जलकल-देहरादून/2021-22 दिनांक : 07 जून, 2021
E-Tendering Notice

Only Registered contractors/Firms of Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan registered in minimum "B-Class" for above work (Sewer Work) category will be allowed to take part in the tender. Tenderer must have adequate experience of work of similar nature, in a Govt. department or Govt. Organization/Undertaking.

Rest Terms and conditions may be seen in Tender Document.

अधिकारसी अधिकारत (रक्षण)
उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान, देहरादून।

To ADVERTISE: www.thehinduads.com

CLASSIFIEDS MART

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public at large are hereby informed that M/s Parshwa Accessories Pvt. Ltd. claims to be the absolute owner and in possession of Property No. D-50, Situated at Industrial Estate, Sector-18, Udyog Vihar, Tehsil & Distt. Gurgaon, Haryana (for short 'said property'), on the basis of Sale Deed dated 21.12.2009 executed by M/s Bombay Commercial Syndicate through its partner Prabhat Singh Chahdor.

Said M/s Parshwa Accessories Pvt. Ltd. claims to have lost the Originals of Regular Sale Deed, Possession Certificate & Orignal Deed registered dated 21.12.2009 in the name of M/s Bombay Commercial Syndicate & Re-Alotment Letter dated 23.05.2013 (in the name of M/s Parshwa Accessories Pvt. Ltd.), being part of the property documents related to said property.

Now, M/s Parshwa Accessories Pvt. Ltd. is proposing to mortgage said property with our client M/s HDFC Bank Ltd. against the loan facility being availed by it.

If any person(s) is/have any kind of claims of whatsoever nature on the said property or any kind of objections about the proposed mortgage transaction, s/he may lodge such claims or objections with the supporting documents, to the undersigned, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice as otherwise it would be presumed in good faith that there are no subsisting claims on the said property or objections to the proposed mortgage transaction at all.

Mohd. Raees (Advocate) R&P Legal Advocate & Legal Consultant, I-1693, Cittaranjan Park, New Delhi -110009 Ph. 011-46038388, 41018803 Ext-106

Narendra Sharma (Advocate) Chamber No. 742, Block D, District Court Saket, New Delhi -110017

TENDERS

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

INDIAN NURSERYMEN ASSOCIATION 09.06.2021

Indian Nurserymen Association is planning to execute the following projects:

1. INA Exhibitions - Delhi and Pune

2. INA Yuba-Jub Project

3. INA Directors

4. INA Coffee Table Book

5. INA Lab Portal

6. INA Membership Kit

7. INA Seminars, Workshops & Conferences

8. INA Training Programs (Online)

9. Other INA Projects

This is an item of interest from reputed organizations/ consultancies/ agencies having relevant experience in consulting activities for the aforementioned projects. Kindly submit separate proposal for each project. The rates quoted will be valid for next 60 days of English calendar.

Interested companies, may collect detailed Tender T&C from our Head Office and send their proposal latest by 15th of June 2021 to our office.

Office Address: 15, Aurobindo Apartment, Achini, New Delhi 110017

Mr. Mukul Tyagi General Secretary Indian Nurserymen Association

STOP FAILING IN PRELIMS

Read Exact Content for Prelims.

CORRECTLY SOLVE 80+ QUES IN GS

Bear the Competition on 10th Oct.

Our Booklets Delivered:

84 Ques in Prelims 2019

82 Ques in Prelims 2020

Complete Pack for Prelims

Download 200 Pages PDF Free

BestCurrentAffairs.com

PHONE 9463838383

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to all general public that my clients Sh. Bh. Singh, Sh. Gyan Singh, Sh. Kishan Singh and Sh. Soh Gulzar Singh Ro 1771, New Market, New Delhi have severall relations with Sh. Sumit Shokhen. They have disowned Sh. Sumit Shokhen from their movable and immovable properties without due to his disloyal and anti-national activities. We request any client to not give any benefit from the properties of my above said clients. My clients would not be responsible in any manner if any person enters into any contract/agreement with Sh. Sumit Shokhen.

Narendra Sharma (Advocate)

Chamber No. 742, Block D, District Court Saket, New Delhi -110017

TENDERS

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

INDIAN NURSERYMEN ASSOCIATION 09.06.2021

Indian Nurserymen Association is planning to execute the following projects:

1. INA Exhibitions - Delhi and Pune

2. INA Yuba-Jub Project

3. INA Directors

4. INA Coffee Table Book

5. INA Lab Portal

6. INA Membership Kit

7. INA Seminars, Workshops & Conferences

8. INA Training Programs (Online)

9. Other INA Projects

This is an item of interest from reputed organizations/ consultancies/ agencies having relevant experience in consulting activities for the aforementioned projects. Kindly submit separate proposal for each project. The rates quoted will be valid for next 60 days of English calendar.

Interested companies, may collect detailed Tender T&C from our Head Office and send their proposal latest by 15th of June 2021 to our office.

Office Address: 15, Aurobindo Apartment, Achini, New Delhi 110017

Mr. Mukul Tyagi General Secretary Indian Nurserymen Association

STOP FAILING IN PRELIMS

Read Exact Content for Prelims.

CORRECTLY SOLVE 80+ QUES IN GS

Bear the Competition on 10th Oct.

Our Booklets Delivered:

84 Ques in Prelims 2019

82 Ques in Prelims 2020

Complete Pack for Prelims

Download 200 Pages PDF Free

BestCurrentAffairs.com

PHONE 9463838383

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to all general public that my clients Sh. Bh. Singh, Sh. Gyan Singh, Sh. Kishan Singh and Sh. Soh Gulzar Singh Ro 1771, New Market, New Delhi have severall relations with Sh. Sumit Shokhen. They have disowned Sh. Sumit Shokhen from their movable and immovable properties without due to his disloyal and anti-national activities. We request any client to not give any benefit from the properties of my above said clients. My clients would not be responsible in any manner if any person enters into any contract/agreement with Sh. Sumit Shokhen.

Narendra Sharma (Advocate)

Chamber No. 742, Block D, District Court Saket, New Delhi -110017

IN BRIEF



Clarify decision on sale of land to JSW: HC

The Karnataka High Court on Monday asked the State government to clarify its decision related to the sale of 3,677 acres of land to JSW Ltd., Ballari, at a meagre ₹1.22 lakh per acre, and submit the documents related to decisions taken in this regard. A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka and Justice Suraj Govindaraj issued the direction on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition filed by K.A. Paul, a Bengaluru resident.

Former Minister Mumtaz Ali Khan passes away

BENGALURU
Former Minister Mumtaz Ali Khan, 94, passed away here at his residence on Monday. He held the portfolio of Haj, Wakf and Minority Welfare in the B.S. Yediyurappa Ministry in 2008. As there was no legislator in the BJP from the minority communities, Mr. Khan was brought into the Cabinet. As he was not a member of the legislature, he was made an MLC. He had gone with Mr. Yediyurappa when the latter launched the Karnataka Janata Party.

Eatala entry into BJP either on June 13 or 14

HYDERABAD
Former Telangana Health Minister Eatala Rajendra is scheduled to pay another visit to New Delhi either on June 13 or 14 to formally join the BJP in the presence of party national president J.P. Nadda, it is learnt here on Monday. Party sources said Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who has been in constant touch with the ex-Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) leader, would be talking to the latter again on Monday night before finalising the time and date of the joining.

BJP brought in unaccounted funds: CM

Cong. for truthful probe into the Kodakara case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday told the Assembly that the BJP had moved unaccounted-for money into the State during the 2021 Assembly election campaign.

The Chief Minister was replying to a notice for leave of the Assembly to discuss an adjournment motion by Congress legislator Shafi Parambil, who demanded that the House discuss the case to ensure a "truthful" police investigation into the alleged movement and subsequent highway robbery of the "BJP's unaccounted election funds" at Kodakara in Thrissur on April 3, merely three



Charges put forth: BJP supporters during an election campaign in Kochi, Kerala, in March. ■ PTI

days prior to the Assembly election on April 6.

Mr. Vijayan said the BJP had laid down a smoke-screen of lies against the previous Left Democratic Front (LDF) government to cloak its illegal influence-creation operation fuelled by unaccounted money. The Congress had amplified the BJP's false messaging, parroting

the lies spread by "unprofessional" Central investigators, he said, without specifying the UAE gold smuggling controversy that dogged the previous LDF government at the fag end of its term.

'Crime against polity'
The Chief Minister said black money endangered the sanctity of the electoral process

Court gives nod for case against Surendran

KASARAGOD

The Kasaragod First Class Judicial Magistrate Court on Monday granted permission to file a case against BJP State president K. Surendran. The order came in connection with a petition filed by CPI(M) leader V.V. Rameshan demanding the arrest of BJP leaders who allegedly paid money to a candidate to withdraw his nomination from Manjeshwar.

and derailed statutory and truthful accounting of election expenditure. "The Kodakara case was a grave crime against the polity in that sense."

The State police have arrested 20 persons and recovered ₹1.12 crore out of the estimated ₹3.5 crore stolen during the highway robbery. They have also seized 347

grams of gold bought using the loot and recorded the statement of 96 witnesses.

The Enforcement Directorate had sought the details of the case. The State police complied on June 1.

Satheesan's caution

Leader of the Opposition, V.D. Satheesan, cautioned the ruling front against using the Kodakara case to strike a detente with the BJP. He said the Central investigation into the gold case centred on the previous LDF government had sputtered and stopped after the hawala heist "involving" BJP leaders had surfaced. The Kodakara probe faced the risk of becoming a circus clown's slapstick, Mr. Satheesan said.

The Speaker denied the Opposition's motion after he found the Chief Minister's reply satisfactory.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18:00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, Odisha and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Jharkhand, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|-------------|------------|---------|------|--------------------|------------|---------|------|
| Agartala | ...33.0... | 24.4 | ... | Kozhikode | ...33.0... | 24.9 | ... |
| Ahmedabad | ...38.3... | 27.6 | ... | Kurnool | ...36.0... | 26.6 | ... |
| Aizawl | 9.0... | 21.6 | ... | Lucknow | ...40.6... | 28.2 | ... |
| Althababad | ...40.7... | 29.8 | ... | Madurai | ...37.6... | 24.7 | ... |
| Bengaluru | 0.4... | 22.1 | ... | Mangaluru | ...31.7... | 23.9 | ... |
| Bhopal | ...38.5... | 25.4 | ... | Mumbai | 17... | 33.5... | 24.2 |
| Bhubaneswar | 8... | 26.3 | ... | Mysuru | ...26.0... | 21.0 | ... |
| Chandigarh | ... | 26.1 | ... | New Delhi | ...40.7... | 26.1 | ... |
| Chennai | ...39.0... | 28.0 | ... | Patna | ...40.2... | 27.4 | ... |
| Coimbatore | ...34.7... | 23.8 | ... | Port Blair | 27... | 30.0... | 24.2 |
| Dehradun | ...36.4... | 20.8 | ... | Puducherry | ...37.2... | 26.0 | ... |
| Gangtok | 103... | 20.1... | 17.0 | Pune | ...31.1... | 22.0 | ... |
| Goa | 7... | 29.2... | 25.1 | Raipur | ...40.5... | 28.5 | ... |
| Guwahati | 11... | 29.8... | 23.6 | Ranchi | ...36.2... | 26.1 | ... |
| Hubballi | ...30.0... | 22.0 | ... | Shillong | 2... | 26.5... | 18.0 |
| Hyderabad | 0.1... | 25.6 | ... | Shimla | 7... | 24.0... | 13.7 |
| Imphal | 0.3... | 28.2... | 25.6 | Srinagar | ...32.4... | 18.0 | ... |
| Jaipur | ...40.0... | 29.3 | ... | Thiruvananthapuram | ...32.9... | 24.7 | ... |
| Kochi | ...31.8... | 25.8 | ... | Tiruchi | ...38.6... | 26.4 | ... |
| Kohima | ...27.6... | 17.8 | ... | Vijayawada | 28... | 38.8... | 27.0 |
| Kolkata | 5... | 37.8... | 23.8 | Visakhapatnam | ...36.4... | 27.6 | ... |

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

| CITIES | SO ₂ | NO ₂ | CO | PM _{2.5} | PM ₁₀ | CODE |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----|-------------------|------------------|------|
| Ahmedabad | 33 | 55 | 18 | 62 | 125 | ... |
| Bengaluru | ... | 37 | 106 | 24 | 30 | ... |
| Chennai | 45 | 21 | 175 | 29 | 33 | ... |
| Delhi | 11 | 28 | 94 | 350 | 242 | ... |
| Hyderabad | ... | 69 | 30 | 25 | 44 | ... |
| Kolkata | 4 | 17 | 23 | 48 | 59 | ... |
| Lucknow | 25 | 42 | 76 | 155 | 139 | ... |
| Mumbai | 43 | 9 | 34 | 29 | 50 | ... |
| Pune | 6 | 9 | 82 | 17.8 | 57 | ... |
| Visakhapatnam | 17 | 36 | 22 | 38 | 57 | ... |

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Baghat, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 372, indicating an unhealthy level of pollution.

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

WEST

RSS may sideline Modi if his popularity plunges further, says Congress leader

Anant Gadgil holds Centre accountable for the tardiness of vaccination drive



Anant Gadgil

ruined owing to the Prime Minister and the Centre's gross mismanagement of the pandemic situation, there is every possibility of Mr. Modi's popularity continuing to plunge thus. And in this event, the RSS is most likely to sideline him," said Mr. Gadgil, the son of former Union Minister and veteran Congressman Vitthal Gadgil.

Censuring Mr. Modi's authoritarian style of functioning, Mr. Gadgil said it was unfortunate that the central leadership wilfully disregarded expert warnings and decided to permit unrestrained public gatherings earlier this year. "The sheer 'immaturity' in permitting the Kumbh Mela to take place and the Prime Minister's campaigning for five State elections without regard for human life borders on the criminal.

Meanwhile, the Maharashtra Congress under party president Nana Patole staged a State-wide protest against skyrocketing fuel prices.

How can you not have a contingency plan or assume that the Indian public had some natural immunity to the virus?" said Mr. Gadgil.

He said the massive confusion over the vaccination drives was a result of a fundamentally flawed planning of the vaccination process. "The rejection of foreign pharmaceutical companies into the Indian market early on has slowed down the pace of vaccination. This reliance on only two Indian vaccine companies has resulted today in not even 20% of our countrymen getting vaccinated," the Congress leader said.

Meanwhile, the Maharashtra Congress under party president Nana Patole staged a State-wide protest against skyrocketing fuel prices.

Man accused of dacoity in U.P. arrested in Thane

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THANE

A man wanted by the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force for a dacoity in that State was held in Thane on Monday, the police said.

Abdul Rehman Sheikh (32) of Azamgarh in U.P. was an accused in a dacoity case

registered at Phulpur police station, Thane Crime Branch Unit I senior inspector Krishna Kokni said.

"The U.P. police alerted us about Mr. Sheikh hiding here. A joint team nabbed him near Thane railway station on Monday," the official said.

Three instances in last one month have seen the Congress take a stand contrary to the government or its allies. Party leaders, however, downplayed the differences saying the context for each is different and the Congress is committed to the government.

In the first instance, the party's Dalit leader and State Power Minister Nitin Raut strongly objected to the State government's decision to deny reservation in promotion, saying the government resolution was contrary to what was dis-

cussed in the Cabinet meeting. Following this, three other Congress ministers – Tribal Development Minister K.C. Padvi, School Education Minister Varsha Gaikwad and Mr. Raut held a meeting with Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. The issue was discussed in the Cabinet yet again. Though no final decision has been reached, Mr. Raut is adamant on seeking withdrawals of the said GR.

Mumbai Congress chief Bhai Jagtap, who has already announced that the party will contest all 227 wards in Mumbai in the upcoming civic polls, slammed the ruling Shiv Sena alleging corruption worth hundreds of crore in pre-monsoon nullah cleaning in the city. State Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vijay Vadettwar's attempt to overpower Chief Minister office by an-

IMD forecasts heavy rain in Konkan from June 9; CM takes stock

RAINA ASSAINAR
NAVI MUMBAI

The India Meteorological Department on Monday warned of heavy rain in all the districts of Konkan region including Mumbai from June 9 to 12. Strong winds with a speed of 40-50 km per hour gusting to 60 km per hour have also been predicted.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray reviewed the disaster management preparations and directed the district administrations to evacuate people from dangerous areas to safer places while ensuring that patient care should not be disrupted.

He further said that NDRF and SDRF units should be deployed wherever necessary.

"Some natural things are expected to happen in the rainy season and some things happen unexpectedly. We are preparing for the expected things, but the administrations should also prepare for unforeseen things," the CM said.

Heavy to very heavy rain has been predicted in Raigad district while isolated areas of Palghar, Thane and Mumbai may receive heavy rain. Fisherfolk have been warned against venturing into the sea.

nouncing unlock rules directly hit the government's top boss.

Political observers see a well-defined pattern and strategy in the Congress functioning. "This is definitely not random. It's well-thought of strategy to address core voter and keep party's different identity intact," said Abhay Deshpande, political commentator and senior journalist. He said the party needed to address the perception of Uddhav Thackeray and Sharad Pawar running the government. "Nobody can predict what will happen in next polls. It's important for the Congress to not play second fiddle and keep its base as well as identity intact," he said.

According to Ashish Dua, secretary, All India Congress Committee and in-charge of the Maharashtra unit, three incidents are not identical.

One killed in Mumbai building collapse

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

One person was killed after the wall of a house collapsed on an adjacent building at Bandra (East) in Mumbai on Monday.



School ranks

High-performing States with good schools can nudge others if they have the political will

The Union Education Ministry has been attempting to get States into a competitive mode in upgrading their school education system by recognising progress with a Performance Grading Index (PGI) that assigns them a score. It can be argued that countries and State governments use school education as a transformative tool most effectively where the political imperative is strong. The Centre's effort with the PGI scoring system has been to try and nudge all States using a hall of fame approach. In the latest set of scores and grades for the pre-COVID-19 year, 2019-20, the Andaman and Nicobar islands, Chandigarh, Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu have performed the best, although they still fall short of the 951,000 points slab, the highest possible. It should be heartening to 33 States and Union Territories that their PGI scores have improved over the previous year, and in the case of Andaman and Nicobar, Punjab and Arunachal Pradesh, by a noteworthy 20%. Several middling States continue to make marginal progress, some have improved merely by tweaking their data, while Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh actually regressed, although the PGI scheme is now three years old. The score is derived using databases on 70 parameters such as access, equity, governance processes, infrastructure and facilities, and learning outcomes that are mostly self-reported by the States but vetted by the Centre, with National Achievement Survey data also being incorporated. On some parameters, such as uneven learning outcomes between students from deprived communities and others, bridging the gap earns a better score.

The Centre, with its transparent scores and data for each parameter and sub-topic made available in the public domain, seeks to create a resource-sharing system that low-performing States can tap into. This initiative is laudable, but it can work only if governments and Opposition parties see value in strong and open school education, and work to strengthen access, equity and infrastructure by budgeting fees and funds for universalisation. It is such commitment that led Southeast Asia to carry out a renaissance in school education in the later decades of the last century, on the lines of Meiji-era Japan. India's school system has to contend with not just patchy access and infrastructure, but major equity issues that have come to the fore during the pandemic. Clearly, the shadow of COVID-19 will persist over the education system for the foreseeable future, and further progress on all parameters will depend on bridging the gaps, particularly on digital tools, infrastructure and subsidies for access. The PGI scores show that the southern and western States are on firm ground to achieve this, while those in central India and parts of the east and Northeast are less resourced. What is evident from the Education Ministry analysis is that governance processes are the weakest link in some States. A new deal for schools can transform them as the Right to Education law envisages.

Fair wind

A good monsoon will aid agriculture, now one of the few bright spots in the economy

If everything aligns, India could see a third consecutive year of surplus rainfall. The IMD has said that monsoon rains will likely be 101% of the Long Period Average (LPA) of 88 cm. In 2020, it was 109% of the LPA and in 2019, 110%. While the forecast 101% LPA is short of the rainfall received in these years and still within the range of what the IMD considers 'normal' rainfall, it is positive news because the current forecast is 'above normal' rainfall in the core agricultural zone. This zone includes States where agriculture is significantly rain-fed including Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and West Bengal. The IMD's estimate of the distribution of this rainfall also suggests that except for the Northeast, where rainfall is expected to be 'below normal', other regions are expected to get above normal rainfall. A general pattern of the monsoon is that weakened rains over Northeastern India – which has a higher base rainfall than other parts of India – translate into stronger rainfall in Central India. Propitious rain this year is premised on forecasts from Indian and global climate models, veering towards no excess sea-surface temperatures at the Equatorial Pacific conditions. There are also 'negative' IOD (Indian Ocean Dipole) conditions over the Indian Ocean during the monsoon season, meaning warmer water and greater precipitation in the eastern Indian Ocean. Put together, they mean that these larger climate factors are, as of now, unlikely to have a significant influence over the prevailing monsoon.

A good monsoon could aid agriculture which has been among the few bright spots in the Indian economy. Two good years of rains have boosted storage in the key reservoirs. However, the flip side of a forecast for a bounteous monsoon is the possibility of flash floods, landslides and disease outbreaks. In the last year and before it, the IMD had not, in June, warned about the exceptionally high rains. While three consecutive years of above normal rain are exceedingly rare, the IMD itself assigns a 22% probability of it occurring, which is just below the 40% probability of 'normal' rainfall. India is now moving to a system where medium range forecasts, or expected changes in monsoon or larger weather patterns over two weeks, are better captured by the monsoon models deployed. These inputs must be used by the Government to better prepare infrastructure in the eventuality that excessive rains can wipe out the potential gains for agriculture. It may also be worthwhile to encourage farmers to sow higher-value crops than only rice via the MSP route. The favourable tidings should not be an excuse to abandon caution.

Connecting the dots to mitigate a third wave

The acronym 'DOTS' is a framework to understand the dynamics of the second wave, thereby helping mitigate the next



BRIAN WAHL

After a long and painful month-and-a-half, confirmed cases of COVID-19 in India have been declining steadily for more than a month. Deaths have started to decrease as well. However, it is a long way down from an unprecedented peak of more than 400,000 daily cases, and the suffering will continue for weeks and months to come. It does, however, appear that the second wave of the novel coronavirus is abating.

R⁰ and determinants

A simple epidemiologic concept can be used to better understand the second wave and help plan for a potential third wave. The reproduction number – often referred as R – is the average number of new infections arising from one infected individual. R fluctuates over time during an epidemic. When R is greater than 1, infected individuals infect more than one person on average and we observe increasing cases. When it is less than 1, cases are declining. It is not a perfect statistic, especially when cases are low, but it does provide helpful insights into how an epidemic is changing.

What led R to increase earlier this year resulting in a second wave? R depends on four factors, summarised by the acronym DOTS: the Duration a person is infectious; Opportunities infected individuals have to spread infection to others; the probability Transmission occurs given an op-

portunity, and the average Susceptibility of a population or subpopulation. Because each factor is required for increasing cases, reducing any of them to 0 would extinguish an epidemic. This is not practical right now anywhere in the world. However, we should work toward decreasing these factors such that R remains as low as possible. It is also critical to consider the effect new variants have had on each of these four factors.

Susceptibility, opportunities

Let us start with S – the proportion of the population susceptible to infection. Susceptible individuals lack immunity derived through prior infection or immunisation. Results from a national seroprevalence survey done in December 2020 and January 2021 indicate that roughly 25% of the population had antibodies (<https://bit.ly/3vOWSWY>) to the virus that causes COVID-19. Estimates were slightly different depending on geography. And some surveys showed substantially higher exposure to the virus. Nevertheless, there was still a substantial susceptible population in most parts of the country at the beginning of 2021. Susceptibility can be reduced through immunisation. By the end-March, however, less than 1% of the total population had received two doses of the vaccine. Taken together, the right conditions were set for a potential second wave at the beginning of 2021.

The next factor is the number of opportunities for transmission – or O in the DOTS. By January, there was a sense that India had made it through the worst of COVID-19. Many people were eager to get back to life and work, especially after a very challenging 2020. Social distancing had reduced and



markets filled again with people. One salient characteristic of COVID-19 is that the disease is driven largely by superspreading, where many individuals are infected by a small number of individuals. Colleagues and I showed in research from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (<https://bit.ly/2T7Dpa9>) that only 5% of infected individuals accounted for roughly 80% of all secondary infections. With this in mind, increased social mixing and large gatherings that took place in early 2021 also might have helped facilitate a second wave.

Transmission, duration

This brings us to T, or the probability of transmission. Not taking proper precautions can lead to increased transmission. There are no good national statistics on the proportion of people adhering to preventative measures. However, during my travels throughout India for work in early 2021, it was clear that few people were wearing masks while in public. In addition, new variants that are more transmissible have emerged. One new variant called B.1.617.2, or more recently known as the delta variant, is known to be much more transmissible – potentially twice as much (<https://bit.ly/3pxqDOO>) – than those circulating in 2020. This is demonstrated by the fact that it is the dominant variant in India and has emerged as the do-

minant variant in the United Kingdom according to data from there.

Finally, the last factor in the DOTS equation is the duration of infectiousness or D. Emerging evidence (<https://bit.ly/3fZufpa>) suggests that the duration of infectiousness could be slightly longer with some new variants. More research is needed to confirm this. However, this could help explain why some variants are outcompeting others and could have contributed to the increase in R in India earlier this year.

A third wave?

What does this mean for a potential third wave? First, we need well-designed seroprevalence surveys to understand how much of the population remains susceptible and where they reside. The Government has planned a seroprevalence study in June in the same 70 districts where the first three rounds were conducted. There also remain questions about waning immunity and the potential for reinfections, which would affect how we calculate the proportion of the population that is susceptible. The new variants also complicate this equation, as they are able to partially evade immunity developed through infection or immunisation.

Despite the need for more data, based on the existing evidence and out of an abundance of caution, we should anticipate that there could be a potential third wave.

Luckily, DOTS provides us with a framework for preventing or mitigating a third wave. We need to drive down the factors that contribute to R wherever possible. And we need to work even harder to do this, because the new variants have skewed the equation such that R can more easily be pushed

to be greater than 1. Some regions have implemented lockdowns, which substantially reduce opportunities for transmission. These are temporary solutions and should be used to focus on slowing transmission and scaling up other interventions.

Mass gatherings have also largely stopped, which should help reduce opportunities for transmission. This is welcome news and should continue after the second wave. We can reduce the susceptible population by substantially increasing immunisation coverage. Currently only 3% of the population has received both doses. The Government is working hard to procure additional doses that are desperately needed.

Mask use, ventilation

Transmission can be reduced through increased use of face masks and improved ventilation. Research from neighbouring Bangladesh (<https://bit.ly/3vVDBr>) indicates that providing free masks together with community monitors can help improve adoption. Last, if the duration of infectiousness is indeed longer, isolation and quarantining guidelines should be revisited to minimise potential exposure to others.

The emergence of new variants means we need to take these interventions even more seriously. Connecting the DOTS, though, can help mitigate a third wave and the tremendous pain and suffering that have become all too common in recent weeks.

Brian Wahl, PhD, MPH, is an epidemiologist and faculty member at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and a member of the Johns Hopkins India Institute COVID-19 Response Task Force. He has worked on public health issues in India for more than a decade

Cease the conflict and build the peace

With a section of the young generation rejecting violence, Israel and Palestine must explore peaceful negotiations



RAMIN JAHANBEGLOO

The recent clashes between young Palestinians and Israelis in Jerusalem and in the occupied West Bank are a reminder of why it is so important to understand that the challenge of peace in that region of the world is actually the challenge for all of us who have been witnessing for the past 70 years a murderous and horrific conflict between Arabs and Jews.

A common humanity

The refusal to kill or to legitimate murder is the starting point where Palestinian-Israeli reconciliation can begin. The question is can Israelis or Palestinians imagine each other's death and their shared responsibility for it? Can they perceive themselves as perpetrators of violence as well as its victims? Can an Israeli father or mother imagine that a Palestinian child is as precious as his/her own? Can a Palestinian feel the same sense of horror, disgust and sorrow when he or she sees the image of Israeli children blown up by rockets or suicide bombers?

Forming an answer to these questions begins with Palestinians and Israelis recognising their common humanity and shared values beyond a continuous reinvention of their victimhood, and beyond a persistent tendency to blame the other. The moral courage to accept one's wrongdoings can help stop the perpetuation and a de-

pening of a war between the two nations. Fearful men and women who cannot visualise a goal or goods beyond a mere instinct to survive cannot help the process of peace. A fearful person cannot love, have desire, or have hope. It is perhaps too much to hope that a community, a state or for that matter, even an isolated individual, can admit being wrong. But to hope is already a step forward and to do one's best for such hope is a giant leap forward.

There is no doubt in anybody's mind that the clash between Israelis and Palestinians is a clash between two versions of the same lived experience. There are no good guys and bad guys in this conflict, as most people living outside this region tend to perceive it. We are talking about two nations that have been living with their shattered dreams and broken hopes. In a way, dying together, more than living together, has brought Israelis and Palestinians to share the same fate. They are burning in the same fire. So either each nation can run for its own life and let the other fade or both nations can try to fight the flames together. This is because neither Israeli Jews, nor Palestinian Arabs can find a national homeland anywhere else. This is why the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is neither a clash of cultures nor a clash of religious traditions, but a clash of intolerances and prejudices among two nations who share the same boat.

For too many years an iron wall of hatred, violence and fanaticism has separated the world of Israelis from that of Palestinians. As a result, we have a traumatised and untrusting peoples on both sides. For much too long, the Palesti-



nians and the rest of the Arab world have treated Israel as an infection that will simply go away. For their part, many Israelis have treated the entire Palestinian issue as no more than a vicious invention of a pan-Arab propaganda machine, aimed at undermining Israel's legitimacy in order to destroy it. In terms of violence committed in the region, the major human rights violations are generally perpetrated by the Israeli military and various Palestinian militant groups that claim responsibility for killing civilians. However, the peoples of both countries are in broad agreement that it is never justified for an individual person or militaries to target and kill civilians.

Grounded in reality

Many young Israelis and Palestinians reject violence in the long run and favour non-violent forms of negotiation as the best approach to achieving self-determination and security. Is this an idealistic dream? Maybe. But perhaps idealism is the most realistic approach at this time, because non-violence is the solution most grounded in reality. As we have seen in the past 70 years, violence has not worked and submission to domination has been intolerable. Non-violence, it would seem, is

the only alternative. This is the only strategy that can assure Israelis their security and Palestinians their state. The key requirement for any peace settlement is that violence must end. This does not mean that we have to be silent in an undignified way in face of the deaths of innocent civilians on both sides. It means that we need to launch a global movement of non-violent resistance to the violent policies of those who are against a coherent and proactive negotiating position.

Wheel of victimisation

The path to a workable peace – one with a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and both with internationally recognised borders – has been well known for long. But a succession of Israeli and Palestinian leaders have been reluctant to pick up the challenge. If each side has refused to understand the other, it is because each side has seen itself only as a victim. A sense of victimisation has accompanied both sides, with a justification and legitimisation of violence. There is doubt on whether there can be a partner to deliver peace. But how can we get out of this cycle of violence and how can the two sides reverse direction and start looking towards the future? No realist would believe that today there is a brilliant formula or shining piece of paper that will end the Palestinian-Israeli tragedy in our time. This is true, but the years and decades to come will be very challenging for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Roughly speaking, Israel is caught in a dilemma. If it does not end the occupation and retreat, it will lose both its integrity as a Jewish democratic state and its inter-

national legitimacy. But if Israel ends the occupation and withdraws without a peace accord, it will be perceived by its neighbours as an act of weakness. To solve this dilemma, Israel must get its act together. It must reform its political system; it must come up with a government of wisdom and common sense. But it must do more than that. It must create a new, relevant narrative, which is a narrative of tolerance and dialogue.

As for the Palestinians, they have no way of regaining their rights without the active participation of Israelis in their democratic effort. If there is a permanent agreement with the Palestinians on this issue, Israel will no longer be able to view its Arab citizens as permanently suspect and unofficial enemy agents. In the coming decades, Israelis will be confronted with a fundamental question – whether to ensure the peaceful transition towards an egalitarian society in which Palestinians are given the same rights as Jews. However, this does not mean that they have to artificially engineer solutions. On the contrary, it means that for one people to realise their dreams, another should not lose everything. It is time for Israel and Palestine to underline the renunciation of violence and murder as a moral imperative and an alternative course of action. But for that, they both need to understand that they are victims of the same fear, prejudice and intolerance. Undoubtedly, light and hope can only come from a non-violent dialogue between young Palestinians and Israeli youth.

Ramin Jahanbegloo is Director, Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Peace, Jindal Global University, Sonipat

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Minister on IT rules

The argument that the new IT rules are meant to serve the interests of the people using social media is clearly specious (Inside pages, Interview with IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, June 7) The government does not inspire confidence owing to its recent actions of selective targeting of activists and dissenters for their social media comments. Its aggressive weakening of legal powers of the citizens like the right to information contradicts its "transparency" for transparency. It would be better to leave it to the courts to ask for any such

tracing of the 'original' post in the context of a legal complaint, rather than adding to the increasingly unaccountable powers of a partisan executive. The Union Minister's reading of privacy as covering one's 'relationships, medical records' etc. is just an attempt to sanitise social media communication and turn socially engaged citizens into apolitical zombies. Of course, there should be legal mechanisms to protect people's privacy and trace and prosecute offenders, but the claim of drawing a connection between a message and subsequent

violence or 'law and order' situation is itself prejudicial and likely to be abused to further criminalise protest and harass those not in the good books of the government.

**FIROZ AHMAD,
New Delhi**

Work from home issues
It is not just women techies who are under tremendous pressure (Kerala, "WFH leaves women techies guilt-ridden", June 7) but also women teachers all over Kerala, and possibly India. Most are reeling under the triple burden of having to prepare teaching materials differently for

online classes, cook and clean for more hours, and compelled to attend online meetings outside working hours including Sundays. The assumption is that online teaching is easy. It is not so. The older generation of teachers has had to re-learn their teaching methodology and make classrooms more online friendly. Online meetings tend to run on for hours, eating into precious time meant for recharging, preparation for classes and quality time with family members. Additionally, teacher-parents with young children have to sit with them for the children's

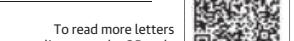
classes. The only silver lining for the teaching community has been a saving of commute time – now been taken over by meetings and training sessions. This is also a gender issue that is not being addressed at all because in a majority of the cases, the scheduling is being done by men or corporate entities.

**TEENA ANTONY,
Kochi, Kerala**

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:
The graphic accompanying the Sports page main story, "Rybakin forces Serena to wait for her record-equalling title" (June 7, 2021) had erroneously captioned Monday's picks as Sunday's picks.

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



No Roger

Roger Federer calling a halt to his campaign at Roland-Garros is a disappointment ('Sport' page, June 7). His marathon match against Dominik Koepfer appears to have taken its toll. We do understand his desire though to focus on Wimbledon.

**N.J. RAVI CHANDER,
Bangalore**

A ND-NDE

Towards a stronger mental health strategy

More needs to be done in India in the context of COVID-19, which has exacerbated mental illnesses



SURJITH KARTHIKEYAN

Mental health issues are a major health challenge in the world today. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there is a 10-25-year life expectancy reduction in patients with severe mental disorders. About 72% of member states had a standalone policy or plan for mental health in 2017. India introduced the National Mental Health Policy (NMHP) in 2014, and a rights-based Mental Healthcare Act in 2017, which replaced the Mental Healthcare Act of 1987. The NMHP, National Health Mission, National Adolescent Health Programme, and Ayushman Bharat have the necessary components to address the mental health issues of all sections of the population. But more needs to be done in the context of COVID-19, which has exacerbated mental illnesses everywhere.

Mental health indicators

Studies in *The Lancet Public Health* (2019) revealed that median mental health spending across the world was around 2% of the total government health expenditure in 2015. In the case of low-income countries, it was around 0.5% of their health budget; for lower-middle-income countries, it was 1.9%; for upper-middle-income countries, 2.4%; and for high-income countries, 5.1%. There was higher allocation in developed countries than in developing countries. Government expenditure on hospitals dealing with mental health issues as a percentage of total government expenditure on mental health is 1.3% in India; in developed countries, it ranges from 3% to 15%.

In India, the share of mental hospital beds per 1,00,000 population is as low as 0.01 in line with developing countries, according to the WHO. This may possibly be due to the lack of focussed attention given to mental health compared to other major diseases in India.

In the distribution of mental health units in general hospitals (per 1,00,000 population) globally, in 2016, India was ranked 114 with just



0.03 units per 1,00,000 population. India was at the 99th position in the distribution of mental health outpatient facilities (per 1,00,000 population), with 0.18 units per 1,00,000 population. India was also at the 64th position in the distribution of mental health day treatment facilities (per 1,00,000 population).

Residential mental health services, particularly community ones, are an important component for good quality mental health care. In most industrialised economies, there has been a growth of community healthcare facilities in line with the increase in patients with mental health issues. Research also shows that long-term patients with mental health issues are usually admitted to residential facilities. The distribution of community residential facilities globally for the median year 2016 showed India at the 58th position, with 0.017 units per 1,00,000 population among the WHO member countries.

Mental health may not be the primary concern in developing economies like India as there may be other communicable and non-communicable diseases which may be more prevalent. There are also challenges regarding funding, delivery of mental health packages, lack of trained staff, etc.

However, these challenges need to be considered more seriously in the wake of COVID-19 as mental health issues are widely prevalent among the Indian population due to lockdowns and related issues.

Recent reports published in *Lancet* revealed that one in seven people in India had a mental disorder ranging

from mild to severe in 2017. Also, the proportional contribution of mental disorders to the total disease burden had doubled between 1990 and 2017. Mental disorders include depressive and anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. This situation was generally worse in the southern States compared to the northern States due to the nature of development, modernisation, urbanisation and other factors not understood yet. Depressive disorders were more prevalent among females than males which could be due to sexual abuse, gender discrimination, stress due to antenatal and postnatal issues and other reasons.

Mental illnesses
Mental illnesses include anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders, mood disorders, substance use disorders, personality disorders and eating disorders. The majority of suicides in the world are related to psychiatric problems or to the illnesses listed above. Death by suicide is a complex phenomenon and not fully reported. Globally, the suicide rate was 10.6 per 1,00,000 population whereas in India, it was 16.3 per 1,00,000 in 2016. The suicide rate was higher among males compared to females.

Mental health may not be the primary concern in developing economies like India as there may be other communicable and non-communicable diseases which may be more prevalent. There are also challenges regarding funding, delivery of mental health packages, lack of trained staff, etc. However, these challenges need to be considered more seriously in the wake of COVID-19 as mental health issues are widely prevalent among the Indian population due to lockdowns and related issues.

There needs to be a road map for mental health awareness. This should include the traditional media, government programmes, the education system, industry, and social media. Media awareness and government involvement is already happening in India but both can improve. It is high time that industry and private sector companies set up counselling facilities. The application of big data and crowd sourcing ideas may help us in informed decision-making.

Surjith Karthikeyan is an Indian Economic Service (2010) Officer. Views are personal

Students' safety, first

While debating the CBSE Class 12 exam, the criteria considered were career, safety, and empathy

RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'

A real leader examines every issue in a holistic manner to ensure that at the end of the debate, we emerge stronger and more united than ever before. The decision to cancel the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 12 exam is among the many decisions taken by the Prime Minister in the sphere of education in these times of unprecedented crises and challenges.

Three criteria

Every decision in public policy should pass certain objective criteria because there are always competing alternatives. If a decision is based on the criterion of empathy, it is an excellent decision. If empathy is clubbed with rationality, the decision will pay rich dividends for all the citizens. The three criteria that were considered in the debate on cancelling the CBSE Class 12 exam were students' career, their safety, and empathy.

Regarding the first criterion, there is no denying that the CBSE Class 12 exam has a significant role in every student's career graph and road map for life.

Regarding the second criterion, the health and safety of our students is of the greatest importance and there should not be any compromise on this aspect. Though the numbers of COVID-19 cases are decreasing, some States are still under some form of lockdown. The Prime Minister has said that every single life is precious and the safety of our children is our biggest priority.

Regarding the third criterion, I feel that all stakeholders must show sensitivity and empathy for our students. The Prime Minister has proved that leadership is all about empathy and the ability to connect with the people. He has always been there in *Pariksha Pe Charcha* with our students to inspire them with empathy.

Democracy since the days of the 'Janapada system' of ancient India is all about consultative decision-making. When we met for the first time on the CBSE issue, the Prime Minister made it clear that a decision should be taken only after wide discussion. He used to repeatedly ask, was this issue widely discussed and

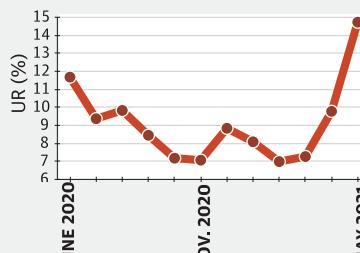


DATA POINT

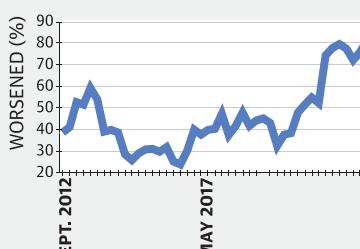
Heights of pessimism | Job losses in urban areas as a consequence of COVID-19-related lockdowns have crushed the confidence levels of city dwellers. Their negative perception of the economy and employment situation has reached the highest level recorded in at least eight years. The negative perception remained high with regard to the overall price situation and incomes too. The survey was conducted between April 29 and May 10 in 13 major cities

A YEAR'S HIGHEST

The urban unemployment rate (UR) stood at 14.73% in May 2021, the highest in 12 months. It was 23.14% in May 2020 during the COVID-19-induced national lockdown

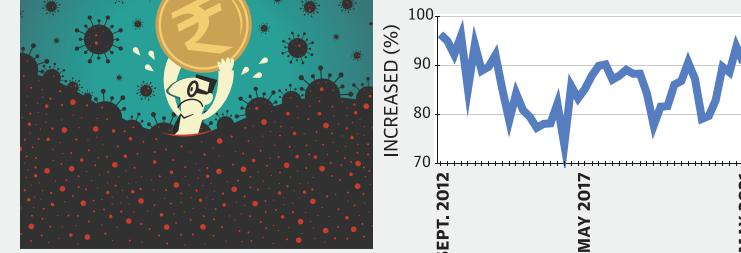


EMPLOYMENT
As many as 81.4% of respondents said that the country's economic situation worsened in May 2021 compared to May 2020. This perception is the highest since September 2012

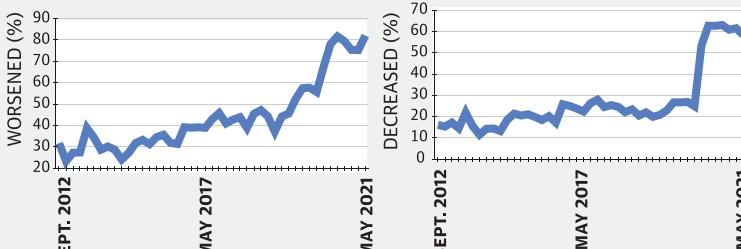


PRICE LEVELS INCREASE

Around 90% said that the price levels of commodities increased in May 2021 compared to May 2020. The negative perception on price rise fell marginally in May 2021 compared to March 2021



INCOME LEVELS DECREASE
Over 58% of respondents said that their income levels decreased in May 2021 compared to May 2020. In May 2020, this figure increased sharply after the lockdown was imposed



Belligerence and pushback

As the Quad gains momentum, states in the Indo-Pacific and South Asia are more likely to resist Chinese largesse



HARSH V. PANT

In May, in another brazen display of its 'wolf warrior' diplomacy, China issued a strange warning to Bangladesh, a nation that it has tried to cultivate assiduously over several years. While suggesting that China considers the Quad to be a minor anti-China initiative, the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh, Li Jiming, warned Dhaka that there will be "substantial damage" in bilateral ties between China and Bangladesh if the latter joins the Quad. It was an extraordinary statement by a diplomat in a host nation but it had all the chutzpah that Chinese diplomats think they deserve to embed in their seemingly non-diplomatic outpourings.

Revealing fault lines

As was expected, Bangladesh Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen promptly and publicly challenged the Chinese envoy's statement, underlining categorically that Dhaka pursues an independent foreign policy. "It's very regrettable... We are an independent and sovereign state. We decide our foreign policy," he said. "They [the Chinese] can say what they want... We will listen to what they say. But we will decide what is good for us." There was some attempt at damage control with Mr. Li reportedly trying to explain his remarks to Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen later in a meeting where he apparently said that he "did not mean to harm the ties between the two countries" and that his remarks were taken "out of context." But the Chinese Foreign Ministry continued to target Quad "as a small clique against China" and said that "remarks expressing opposition to this mechanism are not about interference but about expressing opposition to small cliques and bloc politics. They also reflect the aspiration for maintaining regional peace and stability." That China's remarks would reverberate far beyond South Asia was expected and perhaps intended by Beijing itself. The spokesperson of U.S. State Department remarked, "What we would say is that we respect Bangladesh's sovereignty and we respect Bangladesh's right to make foreign policy decisions for itself."

This episode captures the emerging fault lines in South Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific in ways that are both revealing and challenging. As the tectonic plates in the Indo-Pacific shift, major players are making their moves and testing the waters. For all its at-

tempts to play down the relevance of the Quad, Beijing realises that the grouping, with all its weaknesses, is emerging as a reality and there is little it can do to prevent that. It tried but failed. And so, it is agitated about Quad's future role and its potential success in offering the regional states an alternative to its own strong-arm tactics.

The Quad member states are busy in figuring out a cohesive agenda amongst themselves and there are no plans for an expansion. There is a desire to work with like-minded nations but that can only happen if the four members of the Quad can build a credible platform first. No one is sending out invitations to join Quad and no one has shown an interest. But Beijing wants to ensure that after failing in its initial attempt to prevent the Quad from gaining any traction, its message is well understood by other states who may harbour any desire of working closely with the Quad members to uphold a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. With its message to Dhaka, Beijing was laying down a marker that nations should desist from engaging with the Quad.

Growing momentum of Quad

Of course, this aggressive diplomacy is likely to have the opposite effect, but that is for the future. For the moment, it is enough for Beijing to showcase its public disapproval of a platform that has gained rapid traction. Beijing has failed to prevent nations from the West to the East from coming out with their Indo-Pacific strategies, it has failed to prevent the operationalisation of the Quad, and now it might be worried about other nations in the region thinking of engaging with the Quad more proactively. Even Bangladesh is planning to come out with its own Indo-Pacific strategy and Beijing has now warned Dhaka that a close cooperation with the Quad should not be part of the policy mix.

This is just the beginning. As the Quad gains more momentum and the churn in the waters of the Indo-Pacific leads to new countervailing coalitions against China, Beijing's belligerence can only be expected to grow. For many regional states in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific, it has been a smooth ride so far with China being the only game in town. For all the criticism China has heaped on the Quad's members for trying to create an exclusive clique, it will be Beijing that is likely to demand clear-cut foreign policy choices from its regional interlocutors. And states are more likely to push back than become subservient to Chinese largesse.

Harsh V. Pant is Director, Studies at Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi and Professor of International Relations, King's College London

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 8, 1971

Administration of evacuee camps

The West Bengal Chief Minister, Mr. Ajoy Mukherji, said here to-day [Calcutta, June 7] that the Army was not agreeable to take the entire charge of the administration of Bangla Desh evacuee camps. Mr. Mukherji, who discussed the issue yesterday at his residence with the Army Chief Gen. S.H.F.J. Manekshaw, said he was told that since the Army had many other jobs to perform it could not take the responsibility for administering the camps. He said the Centre had taken the entire financial burden. It would also lend the services of some senior Central officers. The State Government, however, would have to provide the major portion of the staff for running the camps as Bengali-speaking people would be helpful in the matter. He said that on the completion of construction of the camps outside the State, trains, trucks and aircraft would be transporting the evacuees there. Work on some camps in Bankura and Birbhum districts in the State was also in progress. He said accommodation of refugees had become the main problem with the onset of monsoon. The Government was experiencing extreme difficulty in procuring construction materials. Prices of articles were shooting up every day.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 8, 1921

'The Bible has lost its hold'

The fact that the Bible has long lost its hold over the peoples of the West is frankly acknowledged by Mr. H.G. Wells. Writing in the *Sunday Times* on the salvaging of civilisation he says: "It has been the book that has held together the fabric of Western civilisation. It has been the handbook of life to countless millions of men and women. The civilisation we possess could not have come into existence and could not have been sustained without it. It has explained the world to the mass of our people and it has given them moral standards and a form into which their consciences could work. But does it do that to-day? Frankly, I do not think it does. I think that during the last century the Bible has lost much of its former hold. It no longer grips the community." And according to him it has its lost hold because of those sundering eighteen centuries, because of profound changes in the methods and mechanisms of life, and because of the vast extension of our ideas by the development of science in the last century. In the opinion of Mr. Wells the Bible is not all that the West needs at the present day.

Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' is Union Education Minister, Government of India

FROM PAGE ONE

Vaccine procurement to be centralised: PM

"We provided logistical support, funds and other encouragement to our scientists and manufacturers, with the result that by the end of the year we had two "made in India" vaccines. A situation different from before, when it would be decades before vaccines developed abroad could become available in India," he added.

"We launched the vaccination drive against COVID-19 on January 16 and kept to guidelines provided by WHO and best practices of other countries. We prioritised our healthcare and frontline workers, elderly and those with comorbidities. It doesn't bear thinking what would have happened in the second wave if our frontline workers had not been vaccinated," Mr. Modi said.

"As COVID-19 cases started declining, questions arose about the lack of choice for States and some people questioned why the Central government was deciding everything. Flexibility in lockdown and one-size-does-not-fit-all type arguments were forwarded," he said.

He expressed optimism that more vaccine candidates will be available in the future, including an under-development nasal vaccine. He added that trials for vaccines for children were also going and urged people to spike rumours over vaccines and encourage as many as possible to get inoculated.

18 feared killed in Pune chemical factory fire

The bodies were taken to the Sassoon General Hospital for post-mortem and identification through DNA testing.

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, who is also Pune's Guardian Minister, announced an ex gratia payment of ₹5 lakh each for the kin of the deceased on behalf of the Maharashtra government.

The Centre also announced a compensation of ₹2 lakh each for the kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured.

"Pained by the loss of lives due to a fire at a factory in Pune, Maharashtra. Condolences to the bereaved families," tweeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"It is tragic that the workers of a chemical company died in a fire near Urawade village. It is even more tragic that the fire brigade was unable to rescue some of the victims despite their best efforts. We sympathise with the families of those killed

tion were raised, decision about priority to certain age groups was raised. Many types of pressures were exerted and certain sections of the media houses ran a campaign to this effect as well," he said. "So, we announced that from May 1, 25% of all procurement for the vaccination programme would be done by State governments. Many tried and came up against many challenges that the Centre had managed to overcome, dealing with manufacturers, pricing etc. Then a few days back many States said that a reverting to the old system was better," he said.

"We will be reverting to the old system where the Centre can procure upto 75% of the doses of vaccines and it will provide them free to State governments, even for the age group 18-44," he said. "Those who want to go to private facilities, that too will be allowed, as private institutions can procure 25% of vaccines from manufacturers, but there will be a cap of ₹150 per dose as service charge over the cost of the vaccine," he said.

After repeatedly rejecting fugitive businessman Mehul Choksi's claim that he had been abducted from the Caribbean islands of Antigua and Barbuda, Antiguan Prime Minister Gaston Browne said on Monday that the police would investigate the "very serious" offence that Mr. Choksi might have been kidnapped to Dominica, ahead of a Tuesday hearing for his bail application.

"An abduction is a serious offence and assuming the veracity of that claim, law enforcement and the executive would be very concerned,"

Panel to probe
A committee headed by the Pune District Collector has been formed to determine the cause of the fire.

On information about the fire, teams of the Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA) and the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) fire brigade rushed to the spot with at least five fire tenders, water tankers and fire-fighting equipment.

The blaze was brought under control after battling for five hours.

Fear and pandemonium reigned supreme outside the chemical plant as shocked relatives of the deceased and the missing labourers gathered there, compelling the Pune police to restrain them.

Strike in Lakshadweep for Patel's recall

They also demanded the recall of Lakshadweep collector Asker Ali.

While the people staged protests at their homes, panchayat council members from Kavaratti gathered at the panchayat office to register their protest "in a peaceful manner". However, the police intervened and the protesters were turned away, said a spokesman for the Save Lakshadweep Forum (SLF), which organised the protests.

"This is the first pan-island protest by the people under the Lakshadweep administration, demanding that the government roll back the anti-people policies unveiled by the Administrator," said a spokesman for the SLF, which included members across political parties and professions.

All political parties and organisations are united in their demand that the policies of the Administrator are anti-people and against the actual requirements of the

Remove illegal constructions in Aravali land'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday ordered the Haryana government and the Faridabad Municipal Corporation to take "all essential measures" to remove encroachments, including about 10,000 residential constructions, in the ecologically fragile Aravali forest land near Lakarpur Khor village.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar dismissed the argument by the residents that they should be rehabilitated first, saying "land-grabbers cannot take the refuge of the rule of law" and demand fairness. "We expect the Corporation will take all essential measures to remove encroachments on the subject forest land without any exception, not later than six weeks from today and submit a compliance report in that behalf," the court directed.

SC urged to stop illegal adoption

Details of children orphaned by the COVID-19 pandemic leaked on social media, says NCPCR

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to intervene after the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) sounded the alarm on a spate of complaints about illegal adoption of COVID orphans through private individuals and organisations.

The NCPCR informed a Bench led by Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose that it had received many complaints in May that private individuals and organisations have been actively collecting data on these children while claiming that they want to assist families and children in adoption.

'Violates JJ Act'

"Social media posts are circulating that children are up for adoption. This is plainly illegal and violates the Juvenile Justice Act," advocate Shobha Gupta, for an intervenor, made an impassioned



Uncertain future: Twin sisters from Bhopal, who lost both their parents to COVID-19, play with toys as a relative looks on. Thousands have been orphaned by the pandemic. ■ FILE PHOTO

plea.

"The adoption of orphaned/abandoned/surrendered children is lawful only after the adoption procedure as given under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 is followed and the final adoption order is passed by the prescribed

authority," Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj, for NCPCR, submitted.

NCPCR statistics shows that 3,621 children were orphaned, 26,176 children lost either parent and 274 children were abandoned between April 1, 2021 to June 5,

2021. The second wave of the pandemic was at its worst form during this period, leaving a trail of death across the country.

Justice Rao said the court would pass the necessary orders on the issue of illegal adoptions.

The national child rights body said information about these children, including their personal details, are being leaked from within government sources to private bodies, which circulate them.

"The Commission is receiving intimation regarding disclosure of children's identity/information by government authorities to private NGOs and organizations. Care must be taken by the authorities to ensure that their action is not in violation of Section 74 of the Juvenile Justice Act," the NCPCR affidavit said.

The provision prohibits the disclosure of identity of children with regard to the

name, school, age, address or any information which would reveal the essential details of the child.

Susceptible to trafficking
NCPCR urged the court to direct the States and Union Territories to not place any confidential information about children in the public domain which would make them susceptible to trafficking.

"The Commission is also concerned to note that several NGOs are seeking monetary support in the name of children impacted by COVID. However, there is no disclosure to authorities regarding actual beneficiaries, as mandated under the JJ Act, 2015," the NCPCR said.

The Commission asked the court to direct the States and UTs to create State Juvenile Justice Funds to enable the credit of donations/contributions/subscriptions directly in the notified account.

Congress slams rising fuel prices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

As the retail price of petrol crossed ₹100 in several cities, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday called it a 'tax collection epidemic' by the Central government.

"The process of unlocking has started in many States. While paying the bill at the petrol pump, you will see the growth in inflation by the Modi government. The waves of tax collection epidemic are coming continuously," Mr. Gandhi tweeted in Hindi.

His colleague and party general secretary Randeep Surjewala also termed the rise in petrol prices as an 'excessive public loot' and blamed the Modi government for it.

"Excessive public loot – in the last 13 months, petrol and diesel have risen by ₹25.72 and ₹23.93 per litre. In some States, petrol has crossed ₹100 per litre. The increase in taxes by the Modi government and not high crude oil price is responsible for this rise in petrol and diesel prices," Mr. Surjewala tweeted.

The Congress has been regularly criticising the imposition of special excise duty on petroleum products by the Modi government and has argued for bringing petrol and diesel under the ambit of good and services tax regime.

J&K leaders voice concern on troops

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Deployment of paramilitary personnel in Jammu and Kashmir in the past week has fuelled speculations of the Central government pushing new changes in the Union Territory, and several leaders voiced their concern on Monday, demanding a clarification from the government.

Officials said 70 companies were "reinducted and redeployed" in parts of the UT in the past one week.

It is the first time since the Centre revoked J&K's special constitutional position on August 5, 2019, that the UT was witnessing such large-scale movement of paramilitary troops.

Police officials, who requested anonymity, described the movement as "just reinduction of personnel who were dispatched for poll duties in several States in the past one year". They claimed that around 300 companies of paramilitary personnel were moved out of the UT and were "likely to be brought back".

Diamantaire alleges Indian 'chief agent', 'high-ranking Indian politician' behind abduction

SUHASINI HAIDAR
DEVESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

Seeking relief: Mehul Choksi is helped into a wheelchair by police as he arrives at a magistrate's court in Dominica. ■ AP

Mr. Browne said in a radio interview, adding that he had earlier dismissed Mr. Choksi's claims because Antigua and Barbuda do not have a "culture of abduction".

In his complaint dated

June 2, Mr. Choksi has named the woman he claims entrapped him, Barbara Jabaica, and named "Indian men" – Narendar Singh, Armander Singh and Gurmit Singh – that he claims beat him up, forcibly took him on a boat to Dominica and interrogated him.

Mr. Choksi has not directly named Indian authorities for the alleged abduction, but makes several references to the possibility that the men whom the complaint says "seemed to be highly experienced mercenaries or contractors, hired specifically for the purpose of detaining and abducting me in such a brutal and unlawful manner," intended to take him back to India.

Mr. Choksi also says Narendar Singh asked him over the telephone not to disclose the names of any offshore accounts that he held.

Farmer leaders' release: SKM claims major victory

All demands of farmers met, it says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), a coalition of farmer unions, on Monday claimed major victory in its protest at Haryana's Tohana after all the three farmer leaders arrested this past week were released. Led by several SKM leaders, the farmers had been holding a sit-in at the Sadar police station for the past three days in support of their demands.

Swaraj India national president, in a tweet, said all the demands of the agitating farmers were met with the release of the three farmers leaders, associates of local MLA Devender Babli withdrawing their complaint and the administration agreeing to withdraw cases against them.

Seeing no headway in talks with the local administration after two days, the SKM leaders had on Sunday given a call for State-wide sit-in outside the police stations and made an appeal to the farmers from four neighbouring districts to reach

Tohana in large numbers for the protest outside the Sadar police station. The call for the State-wide agitation was withdrawn after two of the leaders, Ravi Azad and Vikas Sisar, arrested in connection with the protests against Mr. Babli, were granted bail on Sunday night and released from jail early on Monday.

But the farmer unions went ahead with their proposed protest outside the Sadar police station during the day demanding the release of the third farmer leader, Makkhan Singh, and withdrawal of cases.

"Thousands of protesters showed up in response to this call. The bringing of livestock into the protest by a farmer in the absence of caretakers at home, along with the pitching up of a tent and setting up of a stage along with langar facilities that provided warm hospitality to the police personnel too, marked this particular battle in the ongoing farmers' movement," said the SKM.

However, large numbers of farmers are also fighting against market failures and

Farmer protests increased fivefold since 2017: CSE report

12 pan-India protests; most others in Odisha, A.P., Telangana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Farmers from Punjab arriving at the Singhu border on Monday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

protesting farm leaders have also led to further stirrs.

Although Punjab and Haryana farmers have caught the limelight for the recent protests outside Delhi, data shows that the largest number of recent protests have taken place in Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The report notes that India now has more farm labourers than landowning farmers and cultivators. This is true in 52% of the country's districts, as well as in all districts of Bihar and Kerala. More than 28 agricultural workers and cultivators end their lives every day. The latest data available shows that 5,957 farmers and an additional 4,324 farm labourers died by suicide in 2019.

The CSE has called for better maintenance of agricultural data, noting that 14 States had actually witnessed a deterioration in the quality of their land records. "India is sitting atop a massive time-bomb of agrarian crisis and disquiet, and the clock is ticking away," it said.

At least seven agitations have been to demand loan waivers or to protest poor insurance coverage and delayed compensation. Farmers have gathered at least four times to protest the unavailability or increased prices of farm inputs and infrastructure. The arrests of

farmers from Punjab arriving at the Singhu border on Monday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

SC invites suggestions from Stakeholders

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Draft Rules released by the Supreme Court e-Committee on Monday for live-streaming and recording court proceedings propose a 10-minute delay in transmission and exclusion of communally sensitive cases and matters that involve sexual offences and gender violence against women.

The Rules are part of the National Policy and Action

Plan for implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the judiciary. Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana recently said the process to make live stream a reality was actively under consideration.

Now, the apex court has invited inputs and feedback on the 'Draft Model Rules for Live-Streaming and Recording of Court Proceedings'. The Rules would cover live-streaming and recording of proceedings in High Courts, lower courts and tribunals.

Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, who heads the SC e-Committee, had written to the Chief

draft Rules.

In his letter, Justice Chandrachud said the right of access to justice, guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution, "encompasses the right to access live court proceedings". The Rules intend to balance between access to information and concerns of privacy and confidentiality.

Matrimonial matters, cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) and under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act would also be exempted from live-stream. The Bench can exempt, for reasons re-



corded in writing, any case it considers antithetical to the administration of justice.

"The final decision as to whether or not to allow the live-streaming of the proceedings or any portion thereof will be of the Bench, however, it will be guided by the principle of an open judicial process," the Rules said.

Personal information such as date of birth, home address, identity card number, bank account information, and the personal information of related parties, such as close relatives, witnesses and other participants, will be deleted or muted.

SC flayed decentralised procurement, paid jabs

Centre's change in stance comes after 32-page order

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement on Monday to centralise vaccine procurement and provide free inoculation to the 18-44 age group marks a U-turn, which comes just a week after a scathing 32-page Supreme Court order.

Grilling the Centre for its flawed vaccination policy, the court had nudged the government to correct its course, advising that admitting one's mistakes was a sign of strength rather than weakness.

The Supreme Court order of May 31, which was published on June 2, slammed the Centre on three cardinal issues – decentralised procurement of vaccines, differential pricing and paid vaccination for citizens in the 18-44 age group under its 'Liberalised Vaccine Policy'. The order was by a Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud.

Under the liberalised policy introduced in May, the Centre had reduced its vaccine procurement role to 50%, leaving the States to fend for themselves. The



Right on time: The Supreme Court had urged the Centre to take full charge of procurement of vaccines. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

court questioned the rationale of the sudden change in policy and said it needed to test it on the touchstone of Article 14 (right to equal treatment) of the Constitution.

Differential pricing

The court trashed the Centre's argument that citizens would not suffer because States were paying for their vaccines. But the court reasoned that the money for States to buy the vaccines came out of the public exchequer. Hence, the citizen was indeed the loser.

On the second aspect of differential pricing, the court questioned the Centre's logic that it could

buy the vaccines for ₹150 per dose because its orders were bulky. The States had to pay double.

The court asked the Centre then why it could not buy 100% of the vaccines instead.

On the third aspect of making the age 18-44 group pay for their vaccine, the court order said, "The policy of the Central Government for conducting free vaccination for groups under the first two phases and replacing it with paid vaccination by the State/Union Territory Governments and private hospitals for the persons between 18-44 years is, *prima facie*, arbitrary and irrational".

Oppn. leaders say their constant pressure led to U-turn in policy

Chief Ministers thank PM for decision on free vaccine for 18-45 age group

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders across the spectrum on Monday claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new vaccination policy of providing free vaccines to all adults in government hospitals from June 21 has been driven by the Supreme Court's criticism of its policy and constant pressure from political rivals.

While the Chief Ministers of non-BJP ruled States thanked the Prime Minister for 'reversing' the Centre's earlier policy of asking them to buy directly from vaccine producers and offering the vaccines free of cost, several Opposition leaders argued that such a decision should have been taken right at the start of the vaccination programme, pointing out that the delay cost many lives. Among the Chief Ministers who welcomed the move on Twitter included Odisha's Naveen Patnaik, Tamil Nadu's M.K. Stalin, Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan, Punjab's Captain Amarinder Singh and Rajasthan's Ashok Gehlot.

West Bengal Chief Minis-

Took him 4 months but after much pressure, he has FINALLY listened to us & implemented what we've been asking all this while. The well-being of the people of India should've been prioritised since the very start of this pandemic

MAMATA BANERJEE, West Bengal CM



ter Mamata Banerjee tweeted, "Back in Feb '21 & multiple times thereafter, I'd written to the PM stating our long standing demand to provide vaccines to ALL for FREE. Took him 4 months but after much pressure, he has FINALLY listened to us & implemented what we've been asking all this while. The well-being of the people of India should've been prioritised since the very start of this pandemic. Unfortunately, this delayed decision by PM has already cost many lives".

Mr. Gehlot also contested Mr. Modi's claim that States had asked for a 'free-hand' from the Centre with regard to vaccine procurement.

Addressing a virtual press

conference, Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the Prime Minister's announcement partially met the Congress' demand for a free universal vaccination and even now, a person may have to spend anywhere between ₹1,900 to ₹2,700 for two doses if he is 'forced' to get vaccinated at a private hospital because of non-availability of vaccines in a government hospital or opts for a private hospital.

"One simple question – If vaccines are free for all, why should private hospitals charge for them?" asked former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi on Twitter with hashtag #FreeVaccineForAll.

"The cost of the delay has been unbearable for India as

it resulted in tens of thousands of deaths," added senior Congress leader Anand Sharma.

Questioning the 25% quota of vaccines for private hospitals, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said, "The vaccination programme is funded by people's money. So why is the discrimination continuing? This is not a largesse by the Modi government, it is not a favour that they are granting us."

"The opposition parties, including ours have been demanding universal, free vaccines and free foodgrains for the vulnerable. The government did not listen to the Opposition and then the Supreme Court had to step in," said CPI general secretary D. Raja, adding, "Vaccination is the government's responsibility; it is not an act of charity."

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge also took to Twitter to ask if Govt has enough doses to vaccinate the most vulnerable people by July as it plans. Where is the blueprint for it?"

The missives that pushed for free doses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties, jointly and individually, have repeatedly in the past few weeks demanded free and universal vaccines from the Central government. In May, two joint statements were issued by opposition parties reiterating this demand. Other than these, two opposition Chief Ministers – Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan and Jharkhand's Hemant Soren – sent off missives.

These are not counting the innumerable letters shot off by the parties individually.

On May 2, when the country was facing a huge oxygen shortage the Opposition parties issued a joint statement, urging the Prime Minister to focus all attention to ensure uninterrupted flow of oxygen supplies. They also spoke about changing the vaccination policy.

"We call upon the Central government to immediately launch a free mass vaccination programme across the country. The budgetary allocation of ₹35,000 crore for the vaccine programme must be utilised for this," they said.

Minister takes back remark on Data Bill

It's 'Assam model' for BJP in Uttarakhand

Party plans to fight Assembly polls on the basis of a collective leadership rather than with a CM face

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad's comment to *The Hindu* in an interview on Monday claiming that the Select Committee on Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 "has given their report" led to a protest by many members of the committee, ultimately forcing him to recall his comments by evening.

The committee led by BJP MP Meenkashi Lekhi is yet to circulate the draft report among its members.

"I am amazed. On March 8, I had been assured by Mrs. Meenkashi Lekhi, Chairperson, that the draft report will be circulated for comments by members. That is still awaited," said Jairam Ramesh, senior Congress leader and committee member. The committee has so far held 66 meetings and its last sitting was on December 29.

Later in the evening, Mr. Prasad issued a correction. He tweeted, "I understand that the Select Committee of Parliament is still to finalise its report on Data Protection Law. I appreciate their hard work. I look forward to their final report so that Parliament approves a Data Protection Law soon."



No fronts: The BJP wants to put up a united front in Uttarakhand to rally against rival forces. ■ FILE PHOTO

placed Trivendra Singh Rawat in Uttarakhand as Chief Minister after the latter alienated party MLAs, leaders, workers and also the Vishwa Hindu Parishad that threatened him with an agitation if he did not announce the withdrawal of the Devastha-

nam Act of 2019 that sought to regulate the working of a large number of Hindu shrines, including the Badrinath and Kedarnath temples.

Mr. Tirath Singh Rawat has reversed many of his predecessor's unpopular decisions, but he is not consi-

dered an inspiring administrator.

Stocktaking exercise

At a recent stocktaking exercise held in Uttarakhand, BJP national general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh got much feedback from various leaders of the party and one thing was clear: the exit of Mr. Trivendra Singh Rawat did not mean the end to factionalism. Several leaders belonging to various factions made their concerns clear to Mr. Santhosh.

"At this time, the faction of leaders who had moved from the Congress to the BJP, led by former Chief Minister Vijay Bahuguna, is active, as are those belonging to factions led by previous BJP

Chief Ministers. While Mr. Tirath Singh Rawat has tried to reverse many unpopular decisions of the Trivendra Singh Rawat government, he has not been able to accommodate many of these faction leaders in his team," said a source.

The divisions within the party have prompted the central leadership to emphasise the collective leadership trope to begin preparations for the next Assembly polls. "Please remember that this is the same State unit that raised slogans of 'Khanduri hai zaroori' [Khanduri is necessary] in 2012 before losing the polls due to heavy infighting between the Brahmin and Rajput lobby," said a senior State unit leader.

BJP flags attack on Dalits in Bihar

Party questions police functioning

AMARNATH TEWARY

PATNA

After the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and the Vikashesh Insaan Party, the BJP, the largest ally in the Bihar ruling coalition, has raised questions over claims of good governance by the NDA government in the State.

BJP State chief Sanjay Jaiswal, in a Facebook post on Sunday, questioned the functioning of the police and raised concern over the recent spurt in attacks on Dalits by minority community members in different parts of the State.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar holds the Home portfolio.

"Instead of taking action against the guilty in incidents of communal clashes between members of minority communities and the Scheduled Castes, the police always send members of both warring communities to jail," Dr. Jaiswal said.

"On June 5, I got information from Dhangarhwa village that some members of the minority community have blocked the pathway of Dalit community by raising a brick wall. I spoke to local officials and they resolved the issue," Dr. Jaiswal said.

There had been spurt in



such incidents in last few days in the State, he said.

In East Champaran district, members of Dalit communities not only got police thrashing but were also sent to jail when they sought police help. Over six such incidents were reported from Dhaka area of the district in recent days. Instead of taking action against those guilty, police sent members of both the warring communities to jail," he said.

RJD's poser

Mr. Jaiswal's statement evoked a sharp reaction from the Rashtriya Janata Dal.

"The BJP State president has questioned the so-called good governance of CM Nitish Kumar. Will the ruling alliance partner JD(U) leaders chop off Dr. Jaiswal's arms for this," asked RJD leader Mrityunjay Tiwari.

No Raj Bhavan appointee from my family: Dhankhar

'We will take the BJP head-on in every State'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

Two days after he was appointed general secretary of the Trinamool Congress, Abhishek Banerjee said on Monday that his aim was to spread the footprint of the party across the country.

Speaking to presspersons at the Trinamool Congress



ratiya Janata Party in the West Bengal Assembly polls.

"We received around one lakh emails from people across India thanking the TMC for defeating the BJP. We will take the BJP head-on in every State where the TMC builds its foundation," he said.

Mr. Banerjee did not name the States, but said if the Trinamool Congress intended

to set up a unit in any State, it

would not be about winning one or two MLAs. The party

would like to come to power in the State.

Dynasty politics

The Diamond Harbour MP responded to questions whether his elevation as general secretary indicated the rise of dynasty politics in the State. "Dynasty can be better than being nasty. If the Union government passes a law that no second person from a family will occupy a public post, I will accept it. Can the BJP pass such a resolution?"

said Mr. Banerjee.

He referred to Jay Shah, son of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, holding the post of secretary of Board of Control for Cricket in India and said he himself would not occupy any post in government for the next 20 years. He was not the Number 2 in the party, only an ordinary worker who had been the youth president for the past six years and had now assumed the role of the party's general secretary.

No Raj Bhavan appointee from my family: Dhankhar

the Governor's "extended family". On Monday, she asked the Governor to explain how the appointees got into the Raj Bhavan.

She also shared a screen grab from the Raj Bhavan website highlighting four names and asking how they were appointed OSDs.

The Governor said, "This is unfolding of 'distraction strategy' to divert attention from alarming law and order scenario @MamataOfficial. Would continue undeterred and with zeal to serve the people of state and vindicate my oath of office under Article 159 of the Constitution".

"Assertion @MahuaMoitra in tweet & Media that six coterminous appointees [officers on special duty] in personal staff are relatives is FACTUALLY WRONG. OSDs are from three states and belong to four different castes. None of them is part of close family. Four of them are not from my caste or State," Mr. Dhankhar tweeted.

On Sunday, Ms. Moitra alleged that six appointees at the Raj Bhavan were from

| भारत सरकार / Government of India, परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग / Department of Atomic Energy, नामिकीय ईंधन समिति / Nuclear Fuel Complex, सिविल अभियांत्रिकी प्रभाग Civil Engineering Division द्वितीय तल, 2nd Floor, सारथी भवन Sarathi Bhawan ईसीआरएस एक्सीपी, हैदराबाद ECIL Post, Hyderabad-500062 (An ISO 9001, IEC 14001 & OHSAS 18001 Organisation) | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| निवेद्या आगंत्रण हेतु सूचना संख्या TENDER NOTICE NO.C/1244/2021 to 1246/2021 मात्राके निवेद्यों की ओर से आगंत्रण द्वारा प्रयोग अनुमत रखने वाले पात्र ठेकदारों से निम्नलिखित कायदे हेतु सूचना संख्या में भागीदारी की जाती है। | | | | | | |
| On behalf of President of India, on line (e-tender) Two part item rate tenders are invited from competent and well experienced eligible contractors for the following works. | | | | | | |
| S. No. | एन्ट्राइटी संख्या Tender Notice No. | कार्य का नाम Name of Work | अनुमानित लागत Estimated Cost (Rs) | निःशुल्क देखेन और ही-निवेदा को डाक्युमेंट की अपीली डेट लिखे Date for tender request upto 2100 hrs | लास्ट डेट online submission of bids upto 2100 hrs | हार्ड प्रिंटिंग को प्रत्युत करने की देखें Date of submission of hard copies upto 10.00 hrs |
| 1. | C/1244/2021 | NFC Kota-ETP-1-Site grading, and Civil works for construction of guard pond for ETP-1 at NFC, Kota, Rawatbhata. | 700.00 Lakhs | 08.06.2021 to 29.06.2021 | 14.07.2021 | 19.07.2021 Envelope-I |
| 2. | C/1245/2021 | RWTP, NFC-K - Civil, Structural Steel, PEB, PH & Other Allied Works For Construction Of Raw Water Treatment Plant (RWTP) At NFC Kota | 477.00 Lakhs | 10.06.2021 to 01.07.2021 | 16.07.2021 | 22.07.2021 Envelope-I |
| 3. | C/1246/2021 | Civil, Structural Steel, PH & Other Allied Works For Construction Of Active Waste Water Treatment Facility (AWWTF) At NFC Kota | 1367.00 Lakhs | 12.06.2021 to 03.07.2021 | | |

IN BRIEF

**Govt. is manipulating COVID-19 data: Priyanka**

NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday accused the Narendra Modi government of "suppressing and manipulating" data related to the pandemic and using it as a "tool for propaganda" to save the government's image. "The Modi government's emphasis on propaganda over saving lives has caused immense damage. It is answerable to the people of India," she said on social media.

Bombay HC gives nod for use of repaired ventilators

MUMBAI

The Aurangabad Bench of the Bombay High Court on Monday allowed the use of repaired ventilators provided they are supported by standby machines. A Division Bench of Justices R.V. Ghuge and B.U. Debadwari perused the affidavit by the Centre and said, "We have been told through this affidavit that the ventilators are safe to be used on patients." On May 25, the Bench was informed that 19 ventilators provided by the Centre had serious flaws.

Doctors move SC against AIIMS PG exam notice

NEW DELHI

A group of doctors has moved the Supreme Court challenging an AIIMS notification announcing June 16 as the date for the Postgraduate Entrance Test-INICET exams in "utter disregard" of an assurance from the Prime Minister's Office to postpone PG exams by four months. The petition said an assurance was also given that students would be given a month's time to prepare for the exams.

Rajasthan eases lockdown restrictions

JAIPUR

The Rajasthan government on Monday modified the COVID-19 lockdown to ease restrictions following a recommendation of the Council of Ministers to strike a balance between containing the virus infection and securing the livelihood of people. The Home Department issued new guidelines to allow commercial activities and widen the scope of permitted activities. The shops and commercial establishments will be allowed to open from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Actor to the rescue of zoos in Karnataka

MYSURU

A video featuring actor Darshan Thoogudeepa with an appeal for supporting the zoos of Karnataka, badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, has received good response from his fans and others as donations to the tune of ₹43 lakh have been received in two days. The closure of zoos due to the lockdown resulted in zero revenue.

Death toll in India tops 3.5 lakh

Daily COVID-19 cases in the country drop below 1 lakh; test positivity rate at 4%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

India recorded 83,887 new COVID-19 cases and 2,075 new deaths till 9.30 p.m. on Monday. The country has so far reported a total of 2,89,93,541 cases and 3,51,304 deaths.

Tamil Nadu reported 19,448 new infections, followed by Karnataka (11,958) and Maharashtra (10,219). Tamil Nadu also recorded 351 new casualties on the day, followed by Maharashtra (340) and Karnataka (340). Maharashtra's fatalities include backlog deaths which were missed in the previous reports.

The figures do not include cases and deaths from Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Ladakh. The data are sourced from the health bulletins of the respective States and Union Territories.

Nearly 15.88 lakh samples were tested in the country

Inoculation coverage

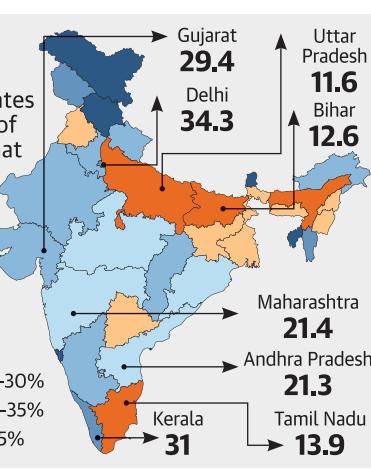
In 10 out of 31 States / U.T.s, the share of 18+ population that has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine is less than 20%.

% of 18+ population vaccinated with at least one dose

10-15% 25-30%

15-20% 30-35%

20-25% >35%



on Sunday (the results for which were made available on Monday). India's average daily test positivity rate (positive cases identified for every 100 tests) continues to decline. It was 4% on June 6 compared with 9% recorded a week before.

Nearly 13.91 lakh vaccine doses were administered in the country in the 24 hours ending 7 a.m. on Monday, which is nearly 19.62 lakh doses fewer than what was recorded in the previous 24 hours. However, it is 3.73 lakh more doses than what was recorded during the same period a week ago. The seven-day rolling average of daily vaccinations in the country continues to increase. It stood at 26.96 lakh on June 6, which is more than the 23.5 lakh recorded a week before (May 30). About 20% of adults in India, 40.5%

Govt. revises vaccine rules for those going abroad

Covishield second dose after 28 days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

dose is administered 12 to 16 weeks after the first dose.

The Ministry said the Co-WIN system would soon provide the facility for the administration of second dose in such exceptional cases.

The Ministry said it was advised that vaccination might be availed of in such cases through passport, which was one of the permissible ID documents as per the current guidelines, so that the passport number was printed in the certificate. If passport was not used at the time of administration of the first dose, the details of the photo ID card used for vaccination would be printed in the vaccination certificate and mention of the passport in the vaccination certificate was not to be insisted upon.

The Ministry has issued standard operating procedures and asked the States to take all measures to immediately implement them.

As per the revised rules, the facility will be available to those who need to undertake international travel for the specified purposes till August 31 this year, and the mention of the vaccine type as "Covishield" is sufficient and "no other qualifying entries are required", the Union Health Ministry said in a statement.

While the States and the Union Territories will designate a competent authority in each district for permission for such administration of the second dose of Covishield, the order stated that Co-WIN certificates will be linked to the passports of such travellers.

At present, the second

Following this, more than 200 Indians jointly sent written representation to China made

Ensure doctors can work without fear, IMA urges PM

'Stop spread of misinformation against modern medicine'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Monday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure that medical professionals are allowed to work without fear.

The IMA, in a letter, said Mr. Modi's urgent intervention was required to stop the continuous and ongoing physical and mental assault on doctors as well as deliberate spread of misinformation against modern medicine and vaccination by certain people with vested interests.

"Any person(s) who spreads misinformation against the vaccination drive, which is meant to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, must be booked and punished in accordance with law including under the relevant provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, the Indian Penal Code and the Dis-

aster Management Act, 2005," it stressed.

Any attempt of any person to fool the gullible public and promote so-called "magic remedies" or "wonder drugs" without the approval of the Union Health Ministry ought to be curtailed. The government should promote universal free vaccination to all above 18.

The IMA noted that post

COVID-19 complications of lung fibrosis, increased thrombotic events and fungal infections were on the rise and that there was need to get prepared for the same.

"We appeal to you to set up a separate research cell to study these complications in detail and to come out with multi-faceted treatment guidelines in all disciplines of medicine," the letter urged.

The letter was attached with the names of 202 Indians who had taken Chinese vaccines.

Subsequently, the association members told PTI that the number had gone up to more than 300.

300 stranded Indians take Chinese vaccines abroad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING

More than 300 Indians, who have managed to take Chinese COVID-19 vaccines to comply with China's stipulation for travellers from India to be inoculated with its jabs, have urged Beijing to lift travel restrictions and permit them to return to join their jobs and businesses.

On March 15, China made

it mandatory for travellers coming from India and 19 other countries to get Chinese vaccines. The announcement put hundreds of Indians, who are working and doing business in China but stuck in India due to travel restrictions, in a dilemma as Chinese vaccines are not available in the country.

But desperate to return to join their jobs and families in

China, more than 300 Indians travelled to neighbouring countries such as Nepal and the Maldives besides Dubai to get the Chinese jabs, incurring huge expenditure. However, their efforts were in vain as the Chinese Embassy has not started issuing visas for their return.

Following this, more than 200 Indians jointly sent written representation to Chi-

neese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong early this month. They have also written to the Indian Embassy in Beijing, seeking its help to facilitate their early return.

"Respected H.E Sun Sir, now that we have been successfully vaccinated by the Chinese vaccine, kindly guide us with a way forward. We request you to start visa issuance to Indian nationals, which has been stopped since early November last year," the Indian community in China wrote to the Chinese Ambassador.

The letter was attached with the names of 202 Indians who had taken Chinese vaccines.

Subsequently, the association members told PTI that the number had gone up to more than 300.

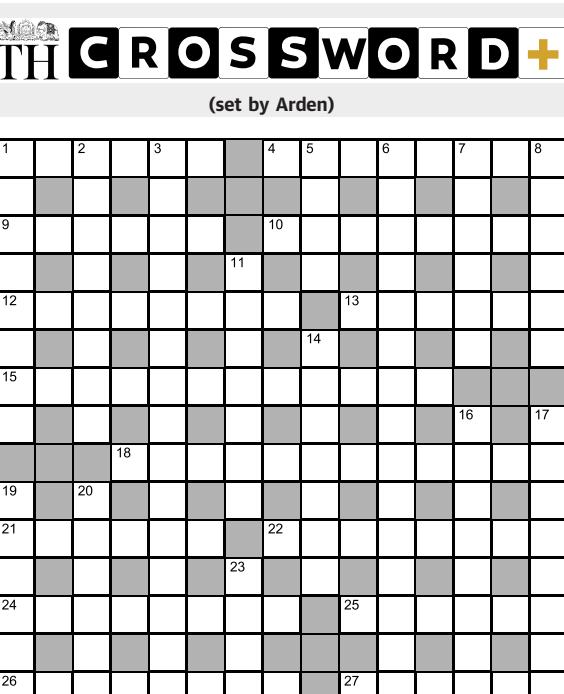
SUDOKU

SCAN TO PLAY

Type your answers into our online grids!

@ <https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn>

No. SSS101 Date: 08/06/2021 www.mgfeatures.com



- 15 Cars in the air, going around in this day and age (9,3)
 18 Source of Ayn Rand's work (12)
 21 Animals retreating are getting little coverage (6)
 22 West loses nothing but gets a chance (8)
 24 Jacket takes sheen off case hardening, perhaps (8)
 25 After emptying a barrel, German's all sozzled (6)
 26 Died unfortunately, any time it could blow up (8)
 27 Remarks about fool catching fish (6)

DOWN

- 1 Special cocktail with a drop of lemon and myrtle pepper (8)
 2 Central part in country isn't upper class – it's the opposite (8)
 3 Expertise to claim island is in Lake Michigan initially (15)
 5 Automatic machine – covers are on top (4)
 6 Basic facts: In the beginning, cricket tournament excluded royalty (5,10)
 7 A settler having a drink, raises a question (6)
 8 Outstanding! Girl picked up an escort (6)
 11 Knowing with gear change, you get greasepaint (7)
 14 Popular supporter extremely cheeky at the beginning (7)
 16 Agreed it's fast in grass (8)
 17 Volumes on crime, from top to bottom (8)
 19 I went for a point, kept calm (6)
 20 Two boys find a well wisher (6)
 23 Flock right back (4)

ACROSS

- 1 Do eat mushroom, take it (6)
 4 Preserve ground for game (8)
 9 Capital Lima – placed on both sides of delta (8)
 10 Pay off in stages, it romanticises some of those returning (8)
 12 Soldiers involved in attack, lost one – it's hard cheese (8)
 13 No set back for world leaders surrounded by petals (6)

SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | 4 | | 6 | 7 | 2 |
| 7 | | | | 1 | 8 | | 5 | |
| | | | 2 | | | | | |
| | 7 | | | 2 | 9 | 5 | | |
| 5 | 2 | | 8 | 1 | | 6 | | |
| 9 | 8 | 6 | | | 3 | | | |
| | | | 6 | | | | | |
| 8 | 7 | 1 | | | 9 | | | |
| 2 | 6 | 5 | 9 | | | 1 | | |

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13267

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | O | G | I | N | T | H | E | M | A | N | G | E | R |
| A | U | N | E | R | U | H | E | | | | | | |
| L | A | T | H | E | L | I | S | T | A | | | | |
| M | N | R | L | O | T | N | L | | | | | | |
| O | P | U | N | T | A | R | E | | | | | | |
| D | E | B | U | T | A | N | G | L | D | U | S | | |
| E | H | R | A | I | S | C | A | R | E | A | | | |
| C | A | R | P | E | T | R | A | C | H | E | | | |
| O | N | N | I | E | A | T | E | A | C | H | | | |
| R | U | T | L | A | D | B | U | C | K | R | | | |
| S | O | G | I | A | U | E | S | | | | | | |
| A | P | R | I | S | A | L | R | T | | | | | |
| I | I | C | D | I | R | T | N | | | | | | |

China hosts ASEAN Foreign Ministers

It seeks closer economic cooperation with Southeast Asian nations while pushing back against Quad

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China is hosting Foreign Ministers from the 10 ASEAN countries on Monday and Tuesday, with Beijing pushing for closer economic cooperation and aligning COVID-19 recovery efforts even as it looks to push back against the recent regional outreach of the Quad grouping.

Chinese officials have in recent weeks stepped up criticism of the Quad – the informal India, Australia, Japan and the United States grouping – and of Washington in particular. During recent visits to Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, China's Defence Minister called on both countries to reject "military alliances" – a term that some Beijing are using to describe the Quad, but a label that the group rejects.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin



Upgrading ties: China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi will be holding bilateral meetings with the visiting Ministers. ■ AFP/FILE

said in a statement the China-ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting, in the city of Chongqing, would mark the 30-year anniversary of relations and also "focus on combating COVID-19, promoting economic recovery, [and] better dovetail[ing] strategic plans." A vaccine passport connecting China and ASEAN countries is also being discussed.

China's Foreign Minister

Wang Yi will hold bilateral meetings with all the visiting Ministers, and also chair a meeting of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) with Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

Economic cooperation

Deepening economic cooperation, particularly following the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade

deal, would be China's focus, analysts in Beijing said, even as it grapples with disputes over the South China Sea. Recently, China and the Philippines have clashed over the presence of Chinese vessels near a disputed reef, while Malaysia alleged the intrusion of 16 Chinese aircraft into its airspace.

The Communist Party-run *Global Times* on Monday blamed the U.S. for those tensions rather than China's moves that prompted the protests from the Philippines and Malaysia. Countries "see clearly that quarrels on South China Sea are not the biggest threat to regional stability; it is the U.S., whose warships frequently sail through the sensitive waters and try to force ASEAN countries take sides to confront China," the newspaper wrote.

After the first Quad leaders' summit held in March

and the announcement of a regional vaccine initiative, many Chinese analysts framed ASEAN as a key space where Chinese and Quad initiatives may rub up against each other.

China "cannot rule out the possibilities that Quad members will further rope in ASEAN members to counter China as Southeast Asia is of great significance to the U.S.' Indo-Pacific Strategy," wrote Yuan Zheng, senior fellow of the Institute of American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. "Yet ASEAN will not easily take sides."

The framing of the Quad as "an Asian NATO" by Beijing has been criticised by the group's members. India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in April described the using of words such as "Asian NATO" as "a mind game which people are playing".

Fujimori leads in tight Peru presidential poll over Castillo

The country has seen four Presidents in the last three years

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LIMA

Right-wing populist Keiko Fujimori held a narrow lead on Monday in Peru's presidential election, but the crisis-hit nation's race was too close to call as votes were still being tabulated from countryside bastions of support for radical leftist Pedro Castillo.

Ms. Fujimori had 50.2% of ballots to Mr. Castillo's 49.8%, according to partial results from Peru's electoral body, with about 90% of polling stations counted after voting on Sunday in a country battered by years of political turbulence.

Whoever wins will take leadership of a nation in crisis, suffering from recession and with the worst coronavirus fatality rate in the world after recording more than



Keiko Fujimori

Corvetto, warned that many polling stations from rural areas – Mr. Castillo's stronghold – had yet to be tallied.

"They haven't counted our votes yet," Mr. Castillo told supporters on Sunday in Tacobamba, in the northern Cajamarca region where he lives.

Mr. Castillo, 51, had earlier urged his supporters to "stay calm."

Ms. Fujimori, 46, also called for caution, saying: "Seeing how small the gap is, it is essential to maintain prudence and I say that for all Peruvians."

Both candidates promised to respect the results as they cast their own ballots on Sunday.

"We're not going to know (the winner) until the last vote" is counted, political scientist Jessica Smith said.

Devastating pile-up



Rescue mission: Soldiers and volunteers at the site of a train collision in Ghotki district in southern Pakistan on Monday. At least 43 people were killed and dozens injured when a packed inter-city train ploughed into an express train that had derailed just minutes ago. ■ AP

Maldives wins UNGA election, India seeks close cooperation

Talks are on to bring in Indian diplomat as Chef de Cabinet'

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

In a first for the Maldives, Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid was elected the President of the UN General Assembly for 2021-22, winning 143 votes or nearly three-fourths of the 191 countries that voted in the annual election, while his rival, former Afghanistan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul, won 48.

Mr. Shahid's win was welcomed in particular in New Delhi, where Indian diplomats had been active behind the scenes in helping the Maldives canvass for him, after Maldives announced its candidate for the 76th General Assembly Presidency a year ago. Sources confirmed that given the close cooperation between both countries, Maldives is in discussions with the Indian mission for India's deputy Permanent Representative at the UN Nagaraj Naidu to officiate as Mr. Shahid's Chef de Cabinet.

As *The Hindu* had reported last week, India had made it clear to Afghanistan's government that it



Abdulla Shahid

won "resounding" and a "great honour for the Maldives", while former President and Maldives speaker Mohammad Nasheed said it was a "great day" for small island states and for "climate vulnerable countries everywhere".

"This is a testimony as much to [Mr. Shahid's] own stature as to the standing of Maldives. We look forward to working with him to strengthen multilateralism and its much-needed reforms," said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

"Both Maldives and Afghanistan have excellent ties with India and both candidates are friends of India. However, since India had already committed its support to Maldives at a time when no other candidate was in the fray, India voted in favour of Maldives," the sources said.

Mexico President poised to hold majority in elections

His party falls short of supermajority

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MEXICO CITY

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's party and its allies appeared poised to maintain their majority in Mexico's lower chamber of the Congress, but fell short of a supermajority, as some voters boosted the struggling Opposition, according to initial election results.

Electoral authorities released "quick count" results based on voting samples that allow estimates of the voting trends to determine the rough potential makeup of the Chamber of Deputies late Sunday.

Mr. López Obrador's Morena party will have to rely on votes from its allies in the Workers Party and Green Party, but together they were expected to capture between 265 and 292 seats. Morena alone was expected to win 190 to 203 seats.



seats on its own. It would also deprive the President of a qualified majority of two-thirds required to approve constitutional reforms.

He appeared to acknowledge that new reality on Monday. He praised the election as "free, clean" and said Mexicans had shown a degree of political maturity + "never seen."

The opposition alliance made up of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, National Action Party and Party of the Democratic Revolution were estimated to win between 181 and 213 seats. Those would be gains for those parties, which have often appeared rudderless in the face of Mr. López Obrador's popularity.

FDA conditionally approves controversial Alzheimer's drug

The drug, Aduhelm, has been granted 'accelerated approval'

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

The U.S.'s pharma regulator, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), made a much anticipated ruling on Monday, in conditionally approving the use of an Alzheimer's drug, called aducanumab, the first such approval since 2003. The drug, which goes by the brand name Aduhelm, has been granted 'accelerated approval', meaning it will need to verify expected clinical benefits in a new trial.

The drug's approval had become controversial, with growing pressure from those impacted by the debilitating degenerative brain disease on one hand and opposition from many in the scientific community who were not convinced that the drug had demonstrated efficacy in trials, on the other. The FDA's conditional approval on Monday took account of this.

On Monday, Patrizia Cavazzoni, director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation

ation and Research, wrote on the organisation's website that "the data included in the applicant's submission were highly complex and left residual uncertainties regarding clinical benefit."

Aducanumab is based on the amyloid hypothesis of the disease – that plaques made of beta amyloid peptide (a type of protein) form in the patients brain leading to cognitive decline and problems with thinking. The drug supposedly binds to beta amyloid molecules and removes them. The drug, a monoclonal antibody, is given monthly via injection to patients who suffer from early stages of Alzheimer's.

No strong evidence'

The drug, developed by Biogen, a Cambridge (Massachusetts)-based company and Eisai Co., a Japanese company, was pulled out of two trials in 2019 after it was thought not to be working. In October of last year, Biogen said a high dose of the

drug slightly slowed cognitive decline.

A panel of experts – not part of the FDA – had ruled last November that the drug did not show "strong evidence" of working. Their decision was non-binding on the FDA. Other scientists and a think tank had said safety concerns around the drug did not outweigh any possible benefits, the *New York Times* reported.

The late-stage development program for Aduhelm consisted of two phase 3 clinical trials. One study met the primary endpoint, showing reduction in clinical decline. The second trial did not meet the primary endpoint. In all studies in which it was evaluated, however, Aduhelm consistently and very convincingly reduced the level of amyloid plaques in the brain in a dose- and time-dependent fashion. It is expected that the reduction in amyloid plaque will result in a reduction in clinical decline," Ms. Cavazzoni wrote on Monday.

Mr. Bezos, who is due to step down as Amazon's chief on July 5, will join the winner of an auction for a seat on the spaceflight from Blue Origin.

Jeff Bezos to fly to space next month

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

Amazon's billionaire founder Jeff Bezos said on Monday he and his brother Mark will fly on the first crewed space flight from his rocket company Blue Origin next month.

"Even since I was five years old, I've dreamed of traveling to space. On July 20th, I will take that journey with my brother," Mr. Bezos said in an Instagram post.

Mr. Bezos, who is due to step down as Amazon's chief on July 5, will join the winner of an auction for a seat on the spaceflight from Blue Origin.

| NMDC Limited | | |
|--|---|--|
| (A Government of India Enterprise) | | |
| 'Khanji Bhavan', 10-3-311A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028 | | |
| Telephone: 040-23536740, 23538713 to 23538721 Ext: 545 | | |
| E-mail: ipsingh@nmdc.co.in; bmukumar@nmdc.co.in; gnankumar@nmdc.co.in | Corporate Identity Number (CIN) - L13100TG1958G001674 | |
| Tender No. HQMM/ 1015-20/10F940/ 371 | Dt. 07.06.2021 | |
| Open Tender Notice (E-Procurement Mode Only) | | |
| E-tenders are invited for following items from reputed manufacturers directly or through their dealers / accredited agents through MSTC portal website http://www.mstecommerce.com/eprocurement/nmdc_bearer_login.jsp | | |
| Description of Equipment | Qty (NO) | Display of Tender Documents Period |
| Design, Manufacture, Supply, Replacement of Server/Client Operating Software and Hardware for the Existing PLC System (Honeywell Automation) of Dep-11C Crushing Plant and 11C- Down Hill at BIOM Kirandul Complex, Chhattisgarh State. | 01 | Draft Tender: 07.06.2021 to 21-06-2021 FINAL Tender (Tentative) 01/07/2021 To 15/07/2021 upto 2.30PM (IST) |
| (Prebid Meeting on 21/6/2021 at 11.00 AM through Microsoft Teams.) | | |
| Detailed terms and conditions, Tender fee, EMD, quantity, etc., are available in the tender Documents which can be downloaded from websites : www.tnpl.com/ / www.tenders.tn.gov.in/ | | |
| DIPR/1694/Tender/2021 | | |
| TNPL TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED | | |
| Kagithapuram - 639 136, KARUR Dist. Tamil Nadu | | |
| Ph. : 04324 - 277001 (10 Lines) Email: purchase.pulp@tnpl.co.in | | |
| NOTICE INVITING TENDER | | |
| TNPL Invites Tender for the following | | |
| Tender No. | Material Description | Tender due date |
| 212213 | Bleached Hardwood Sulphate Pulp for Unit I | 21.06.2021 |
| 001118 | | |
| 212223 | Stoneground softwood Pulp for Unit II | 22.06.2021 |
| 000468 | | |
| Detailed terms and conditions, Tender fee, EMD, quantity, etc., are available in the tender Documents which can be downloaded from websites : www.tnpl.com/ / www.tenders.tn.gov.in/ | | |
| DIPR/1694/Tender/2021 | | |
| Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited | | |
| (A Government of Karnataka Enterprise) | | |
| "Samparka Soudha", No.8, Dr. Rajkumar Road, Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560 010. Tel: 080-22024000 | | |
| E-mail: cekrdcl@gmail.com Website: www.krdcl.in | | |
| No. KRDCL/IFB/EI/2021-22 | | |
| INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST | | |
| (on e-procurement basis) | | |

1. The Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) intends to short-list the eligible consulting firms who have experience as Independent Engineer / Construction Supervision on BOT / Public funded projects to act as "Independent Engineer (IE)". The services required as **Independent Engineer for the project of "Development of State Highway No. 132 commencing from Ch.1,500 to 10,000 to Four lane divided carriage way and from Ch.10,000 to 27,170 to Two lane carriageway from Bellary city to Andhra Pradesh (AP) border on Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Transfer (DBFOT) Annuity Basis" during Operation & Maintenance period.**

2. The services will be required over a period of 36 months.

3. Interested applicants may access the document indicating instructions for selection of Independent Engineer from e-procurement portal www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in from 08-06-2021 onwards and proposals to be submitted not later than 17.30 Hours on 30-06-2021. Opening of EOI proposal is on 02-07-2021 at 11.30 Hours.

4. Further, any addendums / clarifications / calendar of events regarding the bid documents will be published / uploaded only on e-procurement portal

5. Please note that

MARKET WATCH

| | 07-06-2021 | % CHANGE |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Sensex | 52,329 | -0.44 |
| US Dollar | 72.80 | +0.26 |
| Gold | 48,107 | -1.13 |
| Brent oil | 71.47 | -0.04 |

NIFTY 50

| | PRICE | CHANGE |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Adani Ports | 878.60 | +44.75 |
| Asian Paints | 2933.10 | +8.20 |
| Axle Bank | 751.10 | +9.05 |
| Bajaj Auto | 4249.75 | -0.30 |
| Bajaj Finserv | 11828.55 | -327.10 |
| Bajaj Finance | 5729.75 | -263.70 |
| Bharti Airtel | 536.45 | +3.75 |
| BPCL | 481.40 | +3.15 |
| Britannia Ind | 3542.60 | +53.30 |
| Cipla | 939.80 | -6.60 |
| Coal India | 156.25 | +3.15 |
| Divis Lab | 4229.95 | +31.65 |
| Dr Reddys Lab | 5219.20 | +35.80 |
| Eicher Motors | 2754.45 | +9.85 |
| Grasim Ind | 1501.00 | +2.25 |
| HCL Tech. | 949.60 | +13.05 |
| HDPC | 2585.75 | -33.30 |
| HDPC Bank | 1499.85 | +1.10 |
| HDPC Life | 680.10 | +0.80 |
| Hero MotoCorp | 3052.25 | +3.85 |
| Hindalco | 395.00 | +0.05 |
| Hind Unilever | 2339.30 | +2.75 |
| ICICI Bank | 648.20 | +5.50 |
| IndusInd Bank | 1025.20 | +15.90 |
| Infosys | 1389.65 | +4.00 |
| Indian Oil Corp | 114.70 | +0.10 |
| ITC | 211.45 | +2.70 |
| JSW Steel | 715.75 | +5.45 |
| Kotak Bank | 1814.90 | +3.70 |
| L&T | 1557.80 | +20.25 |
| M&M | 803.85 | +0.75 |
| Maruti Suzuki | 7275.65 | +60.95 |
| Nestle India Ltd. | 17532.55 | +105.75 |
| NTPC | 116.40 | +4.65 |
| ONGC | 125.15 | +0.30 |
| PowerGrid Corp | 236.25 | +10.10 |
| Reliance Ind | 2227.40 | +36.90 |
| SBI Life | 988.50 | +0.65 |
| State Bank | 432.25 | +1.35 |
| Shree Cement | 29155.80 | +1002.15 |
| Sun Pharma | 675.35 | +1.40 |
| Tata Consumer Products Ltd. | 699.95 | +13.00 |
| Tata Motors | 345.50 | +10.55 |
| Tata Steel | 1128.70 | +8.00 |
| TCS | 3183.20 | +39.45 |
| Tech Mahindra | 1034.40 | +15.20 |
| Titan | 1685.10 | +5.60 |
| UltraTech Cement | 6849.65 | +185.35 |
| UPL | 850.50 | +14.25 |
| Wipro | 548.25 | +7.05 |

EXCHANGE RATES

| CURRENCY | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar | 72.60 | 72.92 |
| Euro | 88.23 | 88.65 |
| British Pound | 102.69 | 103.17 |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 66.34 | 66.64 |
| Chinese Yuan | 11.35 | 11.40 |
| Swiss Franc | 80.69 | 81.05 |
| Singapore Dollar | 54.82 | 55.09 |
| Canadian Dollar | 60.10 | 60.37 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 17.59 | 17.66 |

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Union Bank posts Q4 net profit at ₹1,330 crore

NEW DELHI State-owned Union Bank of India on Monday reported a standalone net profit of ₹1,329.77 crore for the March quarter 2020-21. The lender incurred a net loss of ₹2,503.18 crore in the year-earlier quarter. Union Bank said that the results were not comparable as they included operations of the erstwhile Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank. PTI

Tata Digital to invest up to \$75 million in CureFit
MUMBAI Tata Digital Ltd., a 100% subsidiary of Tata Sons, has entered into an MoU for investing up to \$75 million (₹547 crore) in CureFit Healthcare, a health and fitness company, subject to approvals. CureFit founder and CEO Mukesh Bansal will join Tata Digital in an executive role as president. He will also continue in his leadership role at CureFit.

Google to change global advertising practices in landmark antitrust deal

French authority fines U.S. tech firm \$268 mn; probe followed publishers' plaint

REUTERS

PARIS

Google said it would make changes to its global advertising business to ensure it did not abuse its dominance, bowing to antitrust pressure for the first time in a landmark settlement with French authorities.

The deal with the French competition watchdog could help rebalance the power over advertising in favour of publishers, which held sway over the business in the pre-Internet era but lost control with the rapid rise of Google and Facebook.

The settlement, which was announced on Monday and also saw Google fined €220 million (\$268 million), is the first time the U.S. tech

NCLT approves Piramal's DHFL offer

Tribunal says approval subject to final NCLAT ruling, SC's judgment on Kapil Wadhawan's plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The National Company Law Tribunal on Monday approved the Piramal Group's bid for bankrupt-DHFL, subject to certain conditions.

The NCLT's Mumbai-bench, chaired by H P Chaturvedi and Ravikumar Dara, said the approval is subject to the final ruling from the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal and the Supreme Court's judgment on Kapil Wadhawan in the matter.

'More to FD holders'
In its order, NCLT asked DHFL's Committee of Creditors (CoC) to consider giving more money to small fixed deposit holders under the approved resolution plan.

"We are not remanding the plan back to CoC, we re-



Taking wing again: The approval is a significant milestone in DHFL's resolution, says Piramal Group. ■ REUTERS

pect their commercial wisdom," the bench said.

NCLT also rejected former DHFL promoter Mr. Wadhawan's plea to get access to a copy of the resolution plan.

On May 25, the NCLAT had stayed the direction of NCLT asking the lenders of DHFL

to consider the offer by Mr. Wadhawan. The appellate tribunal had also clarified that its order should not deter NCLT from deciding on approval for the resolution plan selected by the CoC.

NCLAT's direction had come on an urgent petition

moved by the Union Bank of India on behalf of the CoC. On May 19, NCLT had asked the RBI-appointed administrator of DHFL to present the settlement plan offered by Mr. Wadhawan to the CoC.

In January, the CoC voted to accept the Piramal Group's ₹37,250 crore offer under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

'Positive trendsetter'
Welcoming the NCLT ruling, the Piramal Group said, "This is one of India's largest IBC proceedings, and the very first in the financial sector. In that regard, it is an important and positive trendsetter for the future. The approval from NCLT is a significant milestone in DHFL's resolution and an affirmation of the sanctity of the IBC process".

Last year, Mr. Wadhawan

had made his settlement offer. The offer was rejected by the CoC, citing lack of credibility and the valuations attached to the proposed asset sales. Mr. Wadhawan had proposed repaying lenders by selling assets.

In November 2019, RBI had referred DHFL – then the third-largest pure-play mortgage lender – for resolution under the IBC.

DHFL had gone bankrupt with more than ₹90,000 crore in debt to various lenders, including banks, mutual funds and individual investors who kept fixed deposits with the company.

DHFL's shares would be delisted from stock exchanges post acquisition by Piramal Capital and Housing Finance, sources told PTI.

(With inputs from Lalitendu Mishra in Mumbai)

Heightened stress could delay bank privatisation: Fitch

'Investor interest needed for success'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre's plan to privatise two public sector banks this year could face delays on account of higher stress levels in banks' balance sheets due to COVID-19, as well as political hurdles in effecting necessary legislative changes, Fitch Ratings said on Monday.

The government has announced an ambitious disinvestment target of ₹1.75 lakh crore for 2021-22, which includes the sale of two banks, yet to be officially identified from the dozen public sector entities in the sector.

The bold move to privatise state-run banks faces risk from political opposition and structural challenges including heightened balance-sheet stress due to the pandemic, which is likely to keep bank performance subdued for the next 2-3 years," Fitch said in a note.

Arguing that investors' appetite for government-owned banks is muted due to 'structurally weak governance frameworks' and 'persistently weak performance, reflected in significant asset-quality problems', the ratings agency said that larger banks have generally 'compromised' financials.

"The increase in the resolution amount in FY22 would depend on the expected resolution of a large housing finance company which is awaiting the NCLT's approval but is also under litigation in the higher courts," said Abhishek Dabria, VP and group head, Structured Finance, ICRA.

In FY22, realisations would depend on successful resolution of 8-9 big-ticket accounts, ICRA said.

For the year ended March 31, net loss narrowed to ₹888 crore from ₹1,121 crore in the previous year. Net NPA improved to 5.77% in FY21 from 7.63% in FY20. Gross NPA improved to 16.6% (18.9%). The bank made a provision of ₹3,262 crore in Q4 towards NPA, compared with ₹1,583 crore a year earlier. Slippage ratio improved to 4.40% in FY21 (6.02%). However the Q4 figures worsened to 3.91% (0.28%).

around, who will be against the safety-net withdrawal of state ownership. Success of the plan would also require sufficient interest from investor(s) willing to acquire large stake(s) in state-owned banks and run them," it added.

State-owned banks have been more active in extending relief and forbearance measures announced by the authorities, which is likely to keep bank performance subdued for the next 2-3 years," Fitch said in a note.

"Similar challenges and the absence of meaningful investor interest resulted in the state ultimately having to sell its majority stake in IDBI Bank to LIC in 2019, which has somewhat been privatised in letter but not in spirit.

"However, this could change in 2021 if both government and LIC are able to divest a majority stake in the bank to an external investor, as it may be indicative of broader investor appetite in state banks with adequate loan-loss reserves," it concluded.

Banks to shift ₹89,000-crore NPAs to NARCL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Banks have identified about 22 bad loans worth ₹89,000 crore to be transferred to the National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd. (NARCL) in the initial phase, according to Union Bank of India MD and CEO Rajkiran Rai G.

"The Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has asked lead banks to call for meetings and keep an approval ready so that as soon as the ARC is formed, they can start the process," Mr. Rai, who is also the chairman of IBA, told reporters.

"I think the assessment in the first phase was of 22 accounts of about ₹89,000 crore for the system."

'Second wave may delay resolutions, increase haircuts'

FY22 realisation under IBC rests on 8-9 large accounts: ICRA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic may again delay resolutions under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and increase haircuts for lenders, though realisations for financial creditors is likely to improve under the Code in FY22, ICRA said in a report.

Stating that realisation for financial creditors from the resolution under the IBC fell to ₹26,000 crore in FY21 – almost a quarter of the realisations in FY20 – it said financial creditors may realise about ₹55,000-60,000 crore in FY22, largely driven by

the expected resolution of a large housing finance firm. This is likely to be DHFL.

"The pandemic has increased operational challenges for the various parties involved in a corporate insolvency resolution process, which resulted in limited cases yielding a resolution

plan," ICRA said. "Further, the suspension of new proceedings under the IBC for the entire fiscal resulted in a sharp slowdown in the resolution process," it added.

The increase in the resolution amount in FY22 would depend on the expected resolution of a large housing finance company which is awaiting the NCLT's approval but is also under litigation in the higher courts," said Abhishek Dabria, VP and group head, Structured Finance, ICRA.

In FY22, realisations would depend on successful resolution of 8-9 big-ticket accounts, ICRA said.

'MSMEs, retailers need to adapt to home delivery'

Demand for consumer goods to go up'



MRF Q4 profit halves, to pay ₹150 dividend

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Djokovic survives a scare to make quarterfinals

Rallies from two sets down to advance as Musetti retires; Sakkari demolishes Kenin; young Gauff continues to soar

ROLAND-GARROS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PARIS

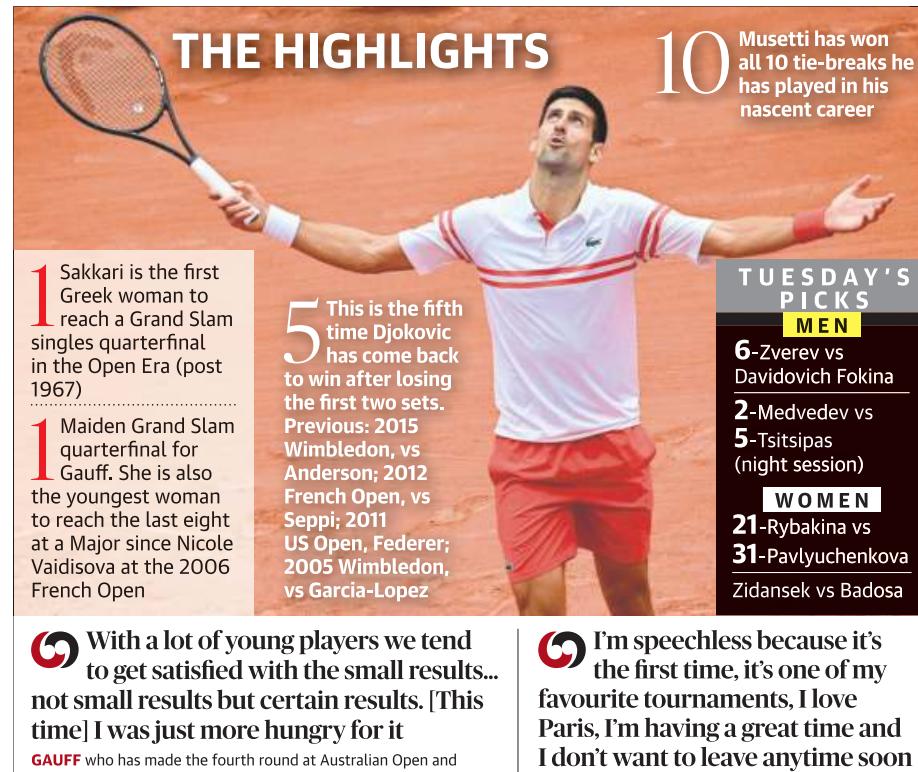
Novak Djokovic went from a big deficit to his best tennis on Monday at Roland Garros, erasing a two-set deficit and grabbing 13 games in a row in a dominant display before his opponent stopped playing because of an injury.

The result officially goes into the books as a retirement by Lorenzo Musetti, a talented 19-year-old from Italy making his Grand Slam debut.

The score when he quit showed Djokovic ahead 6-7 (7), 6-7(2), 6-1, 6-0, 4-0.

It took Djokovic more than two sets and two hours to get going in the right direction at Court Philippe Chatrier, but once he did, it became a one-way journey. That included a 19-point run for him bridging the end of the third set and start of the fourth.

Musetti, so good at the outset with his one-handed backhand and tremendous touch, is hardly used to this best-of-five-set format at the majors and he sought treatment from a trainer after the fourth. This was the second five-setter of Musetti's career – he won his third-round that way – while Djokovic im-



India's white ball tour of Lanka from July 13 to 25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

India will play three ODIs and as many T20Is in Sri Lanka between July 13 to 25, broadcaster Sony Sports announced on Monday.

Sony announced the schedule via social media.

The ODIs will take place on July 13, 16 and 18 while the T20Is will be played on July 21, 23 and 25. The venues for the the games are yet to be announced.

It will be a rare occasion when two India squads will be playing in different countries at the same time. The Virat Kohli-led side will be preparing for the five-match Test series against England at the same time.

The schedule:

ODIs: July 13, 16 & 18; **T20Is:**

July 21, 23 & 25.

Milkha and wife improving, says family

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDIGARH

There is continuous improvement in the condition of sprint icon Milkha Singh and his wife Nirmal Kaur as they battle COVID-19 in the Intensive Care Units of separate hospitals here, read a statement from their family on Monday.

"Milkha Ji continues to improve and his condition is stable. However he is still in the ICU. Mrs. Nirmal Milkha Ji is stable and improving. She is battling hard," read the statement issued by the family.

Osaka pulls out of Berlin tournament

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PARIS

Naomi Osaka has pulled out of next week's Berlin WTA grasscourt tournament in the wake of her controversial exit from the French Open, organisers confirmed on Monday.

"We have received notification that Naomi Osaka cannot start in Berlin. After consulting her management, she will take a break," said a spokesman for the Berlin tournament, which starts June 14.

'Will be quite cool to go out for the toss with Kohli'

Williamson says they know each other well



Mutual respect: Williamson says he is looking forward to a 'bit of contact' with Kohli during the WTC final. ■ FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LONDON

Fierce rivals on the pitch and close friends off it, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson thinks it would be "quite cool" to walk out for toss alongside his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli in the inaugural World Test Championship final starting June 18 in Southampton.

"...we have played against each other at so many different levels and competitions and have known each other fairly well. So, it will be quite cool walking out there, doing the toss and having a bit of contact in the first WTC fi-

nal." Williamson told the ICC's official website when asked about his rivalry with India captain since their under-19 days in 2008.

"Yeah, they have got a

fantastic attack. Brilliant, obviously a brilliant side. Throughout we have seen the depth they have as well, certainly saw that in Australia as well.

"A lot of strengths in their fast bowling and spin department. So yeah, a brilliant side, ranked right up the top, which is fair enough and an exciting opportunity for us to be involved in the final taking on the best."

It will facilitate the BCCI to let the participants in the Caribbean Premier League take part in a majority of the IPL matches after playing the final on September 19.

IPL: BCCI in a dilemma over finalising fixtures

Board hoping to push final to Oct. 14 or 15

AMOL KARHADKAR MUMBAI

More than a week after formally passing a resolution to schedule the remaining half of the suspended Indian Premier League (IPL) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is in a quandary over finalising the fixtures of the tournament.

Given the short window available between the conclusion of India's Test series in September and the scheduled beginning of the T20 World Cup in mid-October, the BCCI had targeted September 20 to October 10 as the window for hosting the remaining 31 games.

However, with an overlap of the IPL with other domestic leagues and international games looking inevitable, the BCCI is hoping to be allowed to push the final to October 14 or 15.

It will facilitate the BCCI to let the participants in the Caribbean Premier League take part in a majority of the IPL matches after playing the final on September 19.

Nadal in last eight

■ Rafael Nadal defeated Jannik Sinner 7-5, 6-3, 6-0 to reach the quarterfinals

THE RESULTS

Fourth round: Men: 1-Novak Djokovic (SRB) bt Lorenzo Musetti (Ita) 6-7(7), 6-7(2), 6-1, 6-0, 4-0, retd; 10-Diego Schwartzman (Arg) bt Jan-Lennard Struff (Ger) 7-6(9), 6-4, 7-5.

Women: 24-Coco Gauff (USA) bt 25-Ons Jabeur (Tun) 6-3, 6-1; 25-Barbara Krejcikova (Cze) bt Sloane Stephens (USA) 6-2, 6-0; 17-Maria Sakkari (Gre) bt 4-Sofia Kenin (USA) 6-1, 6-3.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 6-4, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4.

Sunday's results:

Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Kei Nishikori (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; Alejandro Davydenko Fokina (Esp) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg

TV PICKS

Roland-Garros: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 2.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Spain captain Busquets tests COVID positive

MADRID Sergio Busquets has left Spain's pre-Euro 2020 training camp after testing positive for COVID-19, the country's football federation announced on Sunday. The rest of the squad has tested negative. Those who were in close contact with Busquets will remain isolated. • AFP



Ben White in for the injured Alexander-Arnold

LONDON Ben White was called into England's squad for the European Championship on Monday to replace the injured Trent Alexander-Arnold, reflecting ongoing uncertainty over the fitness of Harry Maguire. The Brighton centre back provides cover for Maguire, who might not be able to play in England's opening game of the tournament on Sunday against Croatia. • AP

Ankita Raina makes main draw

NOTTINGHAM Ankita Raina beat Ellen Perez of Australia 7-6(5), 6-4 in the first and final qualifying round of the \$235,238 WTA tennis on grass on Monday. **Other results:** €132,280 Challenger, Nottingham: Qualifying: Second round: Marius Copil (Rou) bt Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-2, 6-4; First round: Ramkumar bt Anton Matusevich (GBR) 2-6, 7-6(1), 7-6(5).

Shuttle rump up preparations ahead of the Games

Sai Praneeth, Satwiksairaj & Chirag Shetty shift training base

BADMINTON

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

B. Sai Praneeth, who will lead the men's singles challenge in badminton at the Tokyo Olympics next month, and the men's doubles pair of R. Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty, shifted base from the Gopi Chand Academy to the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium here to train under their coaches Agus Dwi Santoso and Mathias Boe.

Sindhu has been training alone over the last four months with Korean coach Park Tae Sang and sparring partners from the Suchitra Academy, where she was doing fitness training under M. Srikanth Verma.

It was later indicated that this move was facilitated by the support staff, though it took more than three months for the other Tokyo-bound shuttlers to follow

moved over from his academy in February.

Sindhu claimed she had shifted here because she wanted to acclimatise by training in a bigger stadium where the conditions will be similar to the Games' competition venue.

A new flooring mat was laid adjacent to the court where Sindhu has been training, and as things stand it is not yet clear whether there will be mixed training sessions or not.

A stadium official also informed *The Hindu* that there was a suggestion by the players to switch on the AC so that they can train with the drift factor, which will again be a key issue when they compete at the Games.

Biles' reign continues



Brilliant: Simone Biles delivered some stunning routines to embellish her credentials as the best US gymnast. • AFP

GYMNASICS

REUTERS
FORT WORTH (USA)

Simone Biles again showed her quality, outclassing the field at the U.S. Gymnastics Championships on Sunday to claim a record seventh all-around national title and make her selection to the Olympic team a formality.

In what was just her second competition in 18 months, Biles shook off any

remaining rust delivering a dazzling display that left the crowd in awe, even without pulling out her show-stoppers like the Yurchenko double-pike vault which she is the only woman to land in competition.

The reigning World and Olympic all-around champion showed little emotion as she ran through her routines, posting top marks on vault, floor exercise and balance beam.

Half of Japan thinks Olympics will go ahead, according to poll

Opposition grills PM over move to press ahead with event

REUTERS
TOKYO

Half of the Japanese public think the 2020 Olympics will take place this summer, a survey by the *Yomiuri* daily newspaper showed on Monday, despite most people opposing holding the Games during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Opposition lawmakers grilled Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and cabinet ministers in parliament on Monday over the decision to press ahead with the event after several polls showed the public was not in favour.

"Taking infection control measures for athletes and Games officials so athletes from the world can safely participate and to protect our people's lives and health, I think that is the

premise of holding the Olympics," Suga told lawmakers.

In a *Yomiuri* survey conducted from June 4-6, 50% of respondents said the Games would happen this summer; 26% said they would take place without spectators.

Some 48% said the event would be cancelled.

But most of the respondents in the same poll said virus measures for athletes and participants were inadequate, while public support for the Suga administration hit its lowest level, at 37%.

TTFI plans camp for Olympic contingent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) is planning a training camp for its Olympic contingent in Sonepat from June 20, trying to make up for a far from ideal Games build-up amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the second wave of COVID-19 ravaging the country, the four Tokyo-bound players – Sharath Kamal, G. Sathiyan, Manika Batra and Sutirtha Mukherjee – have been restricted to individual training since qualifying in March.

"The preparations have not been ideal but you could not help it amid the pandemic. We are now awaiting SAI's approval for the 15-day camp. It should come in a day or two."

"A total of 12 players and four support staff will be part of the camp. The



Manika Batra. • FILE PHOTO

players have trained in DPS Sonepat earlier also, so they are comfortable with the facility," TTFI advisor M.P. Singh said.

Sathiyan not to travel

Barring Sathiyan, who wants to continue training with coach S. Raman in Chennai and avoid travel, the other Olympic-bound paddlers will be part of the camp.

McLaughlin scorches 400m hurdles



Sydney McLaughlin. • AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

American Sydney McLaughlin set this year's world-best time in the 400m hurdles winning in 52.83 seconds at the Music City Track Carnival in Nashville, USA.

Indian women eye Tokyo ticket

ARCHERY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PARIS

The Indian women's archery team, led by former World No. 1 Deepika Kumari, reached here on Monday to compete in their final Olympic qualification event on June 20.

The women's trio of Deepika, Ankita Bhakat and Komalika Bari will have to finish in the top-3 to clinch the last available berth for the Tokyo Olympics which begins on July 23.

Mandatory quarantine
"The Indian women archers are going through a mandatory 10-day quarantine.

"They went ahead of the men's team because of the Olympic qualifiers," Archery



The target: Deepika Kumari, who has an individual quota among women, will hope for a team one as well. • GETTY IMAGES

Association of India assistant secretary Gunjan Abrol said.

While the men's team had secured the Olympic berth during the 2019 World Championships, India so far has an individual quota among women, achieved by Deepika at the Continental

Qualifiers in Bangkok two years ago.

"The men's recurve and compound teams will leave India on Tuesday," Abrol said.

A week after the qualification event, both the teams will compete in the third stage of the World Cup.

Monica Puig to miss out



Monica Puig. • INSTAGRAM/MONICAACE93

REUTERS
LONDON

Monica Puig, the reigning Olympic champion in women's singles tennis, said she will miss the Tokyo Games and the rest of the 2021 season after undergoing shoulder surgery. Puig, 27, became the first Puerto Rican to win Olympic gold in 2016.

Wrestling federation to request UWW to expedite Malik's case

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) is willing to request the United World Wrestling (UWW) to expedite the hearing of 125kg freestyle wrestler Sumit Malik's doping case.

Even though Malik's chances of competing in the Tokyo Olympics looks slim after he tested positive for banned substance methylhexaneamine (MHA) and was provisionally suspended for six months by the UWW, the WFI is waiting for the wrestler to complete the formalities related to his 'B' sample test by June 10.

Considering the current travel and visa restrictions

due to the pandemic, Malik – who tested positive in competition at the World Olympics qualifier in Sofia where he bagged a quota place last month – is likely to give his consent for 'B' sample test without travelling abroad.

The WFI is well aware that Malik's participation in the Tokyo Olympics is remote. Still, the National federation would like to see all the eight Olympics-qualified Indian wrestlers compete in Tokyo.

"The wrestler concerned wants the hearing process to be completed quickly. After we get the result of his 'B' sample test, the WFI is waiting for the UWW to expedite the hearing process and complete it as soon as possible,"

WFI assistant secretary Vinod Tomar told *The Hindu* on Monday.

The matter of a fine

On the UWW norm to impose a fine of ₹16 lakh on the National federation for a failed dope test, Tomar said the fine would be applicable only if Malik was found guilty.

"The UWW imposes a fine on the National federation for a doping violation. We pass it on to the wrestler who fails the dope test."

"In case he/she is not able to pay the fine, then we impose a life ban. The same procedure will be followed here if Malik is held guilty," said Tomar.

Railways to monetise 15 sports complexes

AIRF raises objection over the proposed move

GENERAL

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Facing a cash-crunch owing to rising maintenance costs, the Railway Board has identified 15 sports facilities across the country for "techno-economic studies for commercial development."

In a letter addressed to the vice-chairman of the Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) last month, the Railway Board confirmed entrusting 15 stadiums. All concerned Zonal Railway general managers are directed to furnish the relevant documents to the RLDA.

These facilities are, Rail-way Sports Complex in DLW (Varanasi), Chennai, Kolkata, Raebareli, Maligaon in Guwahati, Kapurthala and Secunderabad; Indoor Stadium at Patel in Mumbai and Patna, Railway Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Bahala in Kolkata and Mahalaxmi in

Riya Bhatia looks ahead with confidence

She is working hard on all aspects of her game

TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

It comes naturally for most of us to find fault with the world. It takes some effort to sport the right attitude, introspect and find a way forward.

Being reduced to the role of a reserve, despite being ranked second best in the country behind Ankita Raina, for the Billie Jean King Cup World Group play-off match against Latvia, the 23-year-old Riya Bhatia responded well by working on improving her game in tournaments around the world.

"Probably, I wasn't good enough to be part of the team this time. I am working on improving myself so that I can make my country proud in future," said Riya, who had made the doubles final of a \$25,000 event in Portugal with Gabriela Ce of Brazil.

She was part of the national team when it had qualified for the World Group play-off, for the first time ev-

Focused: Riya Bhatia is looking to improve her game and make the country proud in future. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

er. Thus, it hurt more, to be left out.

As if to make a point, Riya beat the former top-50 player, one of the towering personalities of Asian women's tennis, Akgul Amanmuradova of Uzbekistan, in a tournament in Latvia, recently.

"It was raining in Liepaja. We had to start our match on really wet courts, with just an extended warm up. It was cold, tough to move, and favourable for the more experienced Akgul. I just focused on being consistent and tried the things that I had been working on, in train-

ing," recalled Riya.

Practising yoga and kriya regularly, Riya is categorical about fitness being, "the most important part in tennis".

"Yoga plays an important part in our lives, both physically and mentally. I was lucky to be part of the Art of Living course. It has been a boon for me, especially during all the uncertainties caused by the pandemic," said Riya.

A proud member of the 'Indian Oil family', Riya has been competing in Abu Dhabi, Egypt, South Africa, Dubai, Portugal, Spain apart from Latvia this season, thanks to the support of her parents.

"I have been travelling alone for a long time now, as it is very expensive. My family is definitely cheering me from home, no matter where I am in the world," Riya said.

"I am working on all aspects of my game, as there is tremendous scope to improve, to reach the next level," the 357th ranked Riya stressed.

Clippers end Mavericks' campaign

Slam dunk! Clippers' Kawhi Leonard finds the basket beating Mavericks' Kristaps Porzingis. • AP

NBA PLAYOFFS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LOS ANGELES

Kawhi Leonard finished with 28 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists as Los Angeles Clippers beat Dallas Mavericks in game seven 126-111 on Sunday to punch the ticket to the second round of the NBA playoffs.

Clippers withstood a 46-point performance from Mavericks star Luka Doncic to take the Western Conference series 4-3.

Marcus Morris scored 23 points and Paul George tallied 22 for the fourth-seeded Clippers.

The Clippers advanced to the second round to face top-seeded Utah Jazz with game one on Tuesday in Salt Lake City.

The results: EC semifinals: Atlanta Hawks 128 bt Philadelphia 76ers 124 (Hawks lead series 1-0).

WC first round: Los Angeles Clippers 126 bt Dallas Mavericks 111 (Clippers win series 4-3).

A ND-NDE

