DECCAN • nicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

NELLORE | WEDNESDAY | 16 JUNE 2021





Forecast: clear. Max/Min temp. 36/30 ºC

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana Tithi: Jyeshta Shuddha Shashti till 10.41 pm Star: Magha till 10.10 pm Varjyam: 9.54 am to 11.32 am Durmuhurtam: 11.50 am to

Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** Zeeqad 4,1442 AH **PRAYERS** (SHAHI MASJID)

Fajar: 4.20 am **Zohar:** 12.10 pm Asar: 4.45 pm Maghrib: 6.40 pm **Isha:** 7.59 pm SUNSET TODAY 6.40 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.41 AM MOONRISE TODAY 10.35 AM MOONSET TOMORROW 00.00



He has agreed to join our party... along with party ticket he wants petrol for his campaign vehicle!

Panel cancels Haj pilgrimage

New Delhi: The Haj Committee of India on Tuesday announced that all the applications for the pilgrimage this year stand cancelled as Saudi Arabia has stated that only a limited number of people residing in the Kingdom will be allowed to perform Haj due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Last year also, Saudi Arabia asked India that pilgrims should not be sent in the wake of the pandemic.

Jobless rate drops to 8.7%

Chennai: There is a ray of hope on the job front. The unemployment data in the week ending June 13 shows an improvement from the lows a few weeks back. As per the data from Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, in the second week of June unemployment rate has eased to 8.7 per cent from 13.6 per cent in the first week of June.

■ Full report on Page 7

SC shuts case

against 2 Italians **New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed

the closure of criminal proceedings in India against two Italian marines, accused of killing two fishermen off the Kerala coast in February 2012, and asked the Kerala High Court to oversee the apportionment of ₹10 crore compensation

NATION 4

Sonia asks govt to come clean on Galwan incident



WORLD 5

Suu Kyi faces sedition charge

SPORTS 8

Messi scores but Argentina held



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Trial run



A military train rolls with vehicles and equipment during a trial run conducted at a Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) from New Rewari in Haryana to New Phulera in Rajasthan on Tuesday.

Vizag to get tallest sky tower

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 15

Come next year tourist season, the city of destiny will have India's tallest tower perched on picturesque Kailasagiri Hill in the city. It will become a landmark structure for the city, drawing a lot of tourists round the year.

The sky tower, as it is called today, will be one of among the few such structures in the world. The tower, a huge observation centre with a lifting and rotating circular passenger cabin carrying 80 passengers, gives a 360 degree view of the entire city and the ocean.

The passengers will be seated at the circumference and with an out-

ward-facing seat row to enable a spectacular panoramic outside view. Ît is a true world-class tourism attraction suitable to all age groups, said the project propo-nent, Vinay Reddy, from Hyderabad.

Vinay Reddy of Swarnamukhi Agency signed a memorandum of understanding with the state government during the partnership held in 2017 for this project. Visakhapatnam Met-Regional ropolitan Development Authority (VMRDA) floated a notice inviting some more agencies to take up the project. None responded and VMRDA shelved the pro-

Vinay Reddy then sent a

proposal to the state government to revive the project last December and the Cabinet approved it on May 4 this year along with other tourism pro-

The proposed sky tower is 120 meters tall sitting on 300-foot high Kailasagiri Hills. At night, it will be illuminated and can be seen from all the corners of the city. The ride will give an unsurpassed experience to passengers with the sensation of being on a flying balcony in the sky. The cabin is fully air-conditioned and comes with high-end finished seats automatic doors, illumination, automatic sounddistortion-free laminated safety glass

with UV-filter all around for a panoramic view.

With a travelling speed of 1.5 metres/sec and a revolution speed of 0.5 metres/sec, the sky tower will have an hourly capacity of 1600 passengers. "We will initially carry only 400 passengers and add more at a later stage," Vinay Reddy said. He said the typhoon tower is being designed for the harsh environ-ment in Visakhapatnam with strong winds, which calls for special design of the equipment and will be certified by appropriate agencies. Worldwide Intamin Switzerland will supply,

install and maintain this safe and unique tower, he

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

In a free for all within the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), Chirag Paswan was on Tuesday removed from the post of national president. This comes a day after five party MPs in the Lok Sabha rebelled against him in a coup led by his uncle and LJP leader. Pachuration

Mr Paswan was remov-

CM doles out ₹248cr for auto, taxi drivers

Credits ₹10K each in banks for third year in row **DC CORRESPONDENT MOM OF 2 IS VAHANA MITHRA BENEFICIARY**

DC CORRESPONDENT

TIRUPATI, JUNE 15

VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

As many as 2,48,468 au-

torickshaw and taxi drivers

across the state received

₹248.47 crore financial aid under YSR Vahana Mithra

scheme on Tuesday. For the

third year in a row and a month in advance, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan

Reddy on Tuesday credited

the money directly to their accounts. Speaking on the

₹10,000 towards insurance

and other expenses req-

Almost 84 per cent of the

A woman who worked hard to find a way out of poverty was among those who benefited from the ₹10,000 incentive given to autorickshaw and taxi drivers under Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy Vahana Mitra scheme. Parvathi, hailing from Chittoor district's Chan-

occasion, the Chief Minister asked them to utilise the aid was being dragiri, took up driving an provided to meet recurring autorickshaw three years expenses, insurance, maintenance and procurement ago and helped the family earn during the pandemic. of fitness certificate. Her husband was among The CM said that during those struck by the Covidhis 3,648 km padayatra he 19 induced lockdown. witnessed the difficulties of Parvathi, a mother of two, autorickshaw drivers, who hardly earn ₹500 a day and beneficiaries are from SC. ST, BC and minorities, he have to pay a huge sum of

uired for getting a fitness the drivers but also passencertificate and, hence, the gers who can experience a government came up with safe journey.

noted, adding that the

scheme not only benefits

Minister

received her third installment of cash incentive on Tuesday.

"My husband is a daily wage worker and used to do petty jobs, but he never made enough money to make a decent living. As a housewife, I did not go out and had no chance to earn. It beame difficult for us to look after our two children. So, with the help of Rashtriya Seva Samithi (RASS), I got trained in driving an auto rickshaw and took it up as a profession three years ago," Parvathi

Page 2: Parvathi thanks CM for financial help

YSR Vahana Mithra, ₹759 crore was credited directly into the accounts of beneficiaries and such a scheme is available only in Andhra Pradesh in the country.

■ Page 2: Taxi drivers looted by previous govt: Jagan

Delhi HC says state blurred line between protest, terror

Chief

informed that so far under

SANJAY KAW | DC

the initiative.

In its anxiety to suppress dissent, the state has blurred the line between right to protest and terrorist activity and if such a mindset gains traction, it would be a "sad day for democracy", the Delhi High Court observed on Tuesday while granting bail to three

students from Jawaharlal University and Millia Islamia arrested over a year ago for the riots that followed protests against the controversial citizenship law.

"somewhat Terming as vague" the definition of a "terrorist act" under the stringent UAPA law and warning against its use in a 'cavalier manner

trial court orders rejecting bail to JNU students Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita and Jamia's Asif Iqbal Tanha, allowing their appeals and admitting them to regular bail. "We are of the view that the foundations of our nation stand on surer footing than to be likely to be shaken by a the court sai protes

high court set aside the

WB Gov. in Delhi after 24 BJP MLAs skip meet

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC **KOLKATA, JUNE 15**

As the BJP stares at the threat of large-scale defection by its MLAs to the ruling Trinamul Congress and continuous post-poll attacks on its cadres in West Bengal, Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar flew to New Delhi on Tuesday evening on a three-day visit to look for

a way out urgently.
Mr Dhankhar, according to sources, is expected to meet Union home minister Amit Shah and then Prime Minister Narendra Modi appar-ently to discuss a strategy under the anti-defection law to stop the BJP MLAs' switch and the post-poll violence in the state. The governor tweeted that he would "return to Kolkata on June 18 in the late after-

Mr Dhankhar's itiner-

The WB Governor, according to sources, is expected to meet home minister Amit Shah and then Prime Minister Narendra Modi apparently to discuss a strategy under the anti-defection law to stop the BJP MLAs' switch and the post-poll violence in the state

present tally of 74 were conspicuous by their absence in their party's delegation of legislators, headed by Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, who met him at the Raj Bhavan.

The 50 BJP MLAs on Monday pressed for the use of the anti-defection law on Krishnanagar North MLA Mukul Roy for his return to the TMC from their party last week and his calls to 10

topped the agenda over the post-poll violence in their deputation to the governor, who then assured them of the antidefection law's validity in the state.

Before leaving Kolkata, Mr Dhankhar, however, urged Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in a letter to deliberate on the post-poll violence in her Cabinet and sought to have a discussion with

The West Bengal Governor wrote: "With a heavy heart I am constrained to observe your continued silence and inaction over the postpoll retributive bloodshed, violation of human rights, outrageous assault on the dignity of women, wanton destruction of property, perpetuation of untold miseries on political opponents — the worst since Independence — and it ill augurs

LJP'S CHIRAG FACTION EXPELS FIVE REBEL MPS

Kumar Paras.

ed after an emergency meeting of the LJP national working committee on Tuesday. On the other hand Mr Paswan expelled his uncle, Mr Paras, and four other MPs from

the party. While Paswan has been isolated in the parliamentary party as all other MPs have backed Mr Paras, insiders claim that he continues to draw support from other leaders in the organisation. The matter is now likely to reach the Election Commission.

ary came a day after two dozen MLAs in the BJP's others to follow him. Their demand carried so to the heirs of the victim. for democracy. Justice Ramana says intl arbitration centre is dream project **LEGAL** INFRA CJI to set up arbitration centre in Hyd DC CORRESPONDENT an international arbitra-The CJI stated that the Justice of India said. tration institutes tion centre in Hyderabad, The CJI announced that Justice Ramana said it proposals for infrastrucwas his dream project to set provided that the infra-

HYDERABAD, JUNE 15 Chief Justice of India (CJI)

Nuthalapati Ramana Venkata Tuesday said he was putting in efforts to set up an international arbitration centre in Hyderabad in collaboration with the Singapore International

Arbitration Centre (SIAC) "Recently I talked to the Chief Justice of Singapore and he was pleased to cooperate with us in setting up arbitration centre, then the

structure is arranged by the Telangana state government," Justice Ramana

Further, the CJI stated that the proposals for infrastructure had been sent to the Telangana state government and its response was awaited. "If a fully-equipped building will be given by the government to set up the international

ture had been sent to the Telangana State government and its response was awaited.

Supreme Court is ready to constitute a committee comprising a Supreme Court judge, the Telangana High Court Chief Justice

and other eminent jurists

to look after the setting up

of the centre," the Chief

up such a centre in Hyderabad, where he start-

ed his career. Hyderabad had become an arbitration hub, where several international commercial organisations, IT industries, pharma and other companies were situated in larger numbers, he said adding that when legal issues were being raised, the companies were look-

ing for international arbi-

the work was under process to telecast live the Supreme Court arguments within three months without interruption.

Responding to apprehensions over the possibility of misuse and misinterpretation of the live telecast of the hearing, the CJI said that the Supreme Court had initiated a new software with artificial intelligence to make sure no such issue of misuses of live telecast.



SHORT TAKES

HC RESERVES VERDICT ON GROUP-1 EXAMS

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

The AP High Court on Tue-sday heard the petitions filed over alleged irregularities in the conduct of Group-1 Mains examinations. A total of nine petitions were taken for trial on Tuesday, and after hearing arguments from both the sides, the court reserved the judgment. The petitions were filed by advocates Yogesh Tandava, Adinarayana, G. Vidyasagar and others.

The counsels for the petition-Adianarayana Vidyasagar contended that the Group-1 Mains examinations were not conducted as per the rules. The petitioner's counsels brought to the notice of the court that the digital valuation of the examination paper was mentioned by the authorities in the final stage. The counsels for the petitioner informed that the valuation of Telugu medium papers was done in state while the English medium papers were done in other states, which was unfair to the students who wrote in English medium.

The counsels argued as to how the government could carry out the valuation process with the private individuals. The petitioners contended that the secretary had acted unilaterally by bypassing the chairman of the APPSC and asked to issue interim orders suspending the interviews.

The government lawyers argued that the Group-1 examinations were conducted in accordance with the regulations of APPSC. The public prosecutor brought to the notice of the court that there was no need to mention in advance about the valuation process.

After hearing arguments from both sides, Judge D.V.S.S. Somayajulu reserved the judg-

FORMATION OF **KAPU BOARD** COMMENCES

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

The AP government issued orders on Tuesday for the constitution of the board of directors for AP State Kapu Welfare and Development Corporation. Special chief secretary G. Anantha Ramu issued a GORT: 56 which said the board would have official and non-

Official directors will comprise director of BC welfare, MD of APBCCFC, CEO/MD of APSSDC, MD of APSKWDC, additional secretary/joint secretary of the finance department, additional secretary/ joint secretary or deputy secretary of the BC welfare department, and joint director of

MUSLIM CLERICS FOR SUNNIS, SHIAS IN WAKF BOARD

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

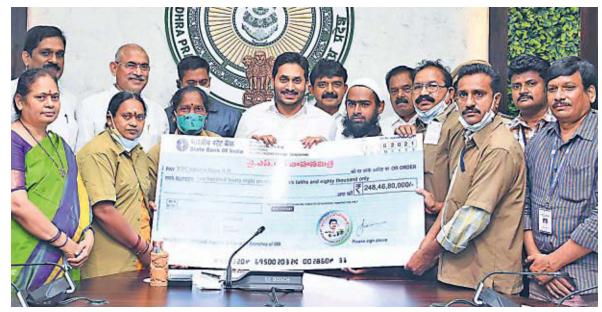
Leaders of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamat (Sunni) in Andhra Pradesh have sought appointment for people of Sunni and Shia communities to the nominated posts of the state Wakf Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat leader and Sufi mentor Altaf Ali Raza Baba and leaders Syed Hafiz and Hafiz Abdul Samad, at a press conference here on Tuesday, objected to the appointment of people from faiths other than Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamat to the nominated posts of Wakf Board. They urged Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to appoint Jamat's nominees to the Waqf Board.

AMBATI: GOVT **WILL RECLAIM ALL** GRABBED LANDS

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

Asserting that the government will protect its lands and reclaim those under encroachments, YSRC MLA Ambati Rambabu said that lands worth ₹5,082 crore in about 430 acres have been reclaimed in Visakhapatnam alone.

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, the ence here on MLA revealed that the former collector of Visakhapatnam Praveen Kumar, had openly stated that the land records of 379 villages, 16,735 FMB copies of one lakh acres in Visakhapatnam district were missing. The former minister in TD government, Ayyanna Patrudu, also said that many people were involved in the land scam with the support of those in TD government.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy hands over a symbolic cheque to the beneficiaries of the Vahana Mithra scheme at his camp office in Tadepalli on Tuesday. Ministers K. Narayana Swami, Perni Venkatramaiah, Ch. S. Venugopala Krishna, Principal secretary (transport) M.T. Krishnababu and others are also seen. — BY ARRANGEMENT

Auto drivers hail Jagan for financial assistance

₹10,000 is a blessing in disguise to auto drivers' families, says Mani

DC CORRESPONDENTS KURNOOL/NELLORE, JUNE 15

Auto drivers and cab owners expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for coming to their rescue by extending YSR Vahana Mithra when they are going through the worst phase of their lives due to the Covid pandemic, said Afzal Basha, an autorickshaw driver.

Each owner of a vehicle was granted ₹10,000 per year. This is the third year

of the dole.

About 18,100 autorickshaws and taxi drivers benefited from the scheme in the district.

Thanking the CM, they said it is a great relief when petrol and diesel prices hit the roof. The scheme benefited 15,403 people in 2019 and 18,339

J. Philip from Lakshmi Nagar, an auto driver, said the grant was a booster dose to him as Covid crisis badly affected his livelihood. A graduate, he used to earn ₹400 daily earlier. After Covid outbreak, he was hardly getting not than two trips a day, he

B Venkata Ramana, a resident of Joharapuram, said he was educated up to running the auto for the past 20 years. He said his mother and wife depend on his income. The financial assistance is a great boon for auto drivers who are facing high fuel prices and low transport fares,

M.B. Suresh Babu, a native of Kondapet in Dhone town, said if an auto developed repairs, it would be the end of livelihoods for them, The meagre earnings on plying autos is worst hit by Covid and the benefit came amid a financial crunch, he

Beneficiaries of the YSR Vahana Mithra Scheme in Nellore said that they are all indebted to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for the Jagan financial assistance under the scheme at a time when they are struggling for survival because of the pandemic.

A beneficiary, K. Mani, from Ayyappa temple centre, Nellore, said the financial aid of ₹10,000 is a blessing in disguise to the Among them, 3,119 are new beneficiaries and the families of auto drivers as



Parvathi from Chandragiri comes in her autorickshaw to

Parvathi thanks CM for financial help

From page 1

Initially, Parvathi struggled to find passengers as no one in this tiny town believed her driving skills. Subsequently, she gained trust among the locals. However, the Covidinduced lockdown had a noticeable impact on her livelihood and daily earnings disappeared. 'I used to make around

₹600 a day by driving the autorickshaw. But it is hard to earn even ₹100 per day during this crisis. At Vahana Mithra scheme came as a boon for all drivers like us and it is a big help for us to repay our loans or to help our family eat three meals. Parvathi said.

She thanked the Chief Minister, saying that he

the lockdown seriously affected their daily earnings. He explained his heartfelt feelings during a virtual interaction with the Chief Minister at the rollout of the third round of Vahana Mithra Scheme on Tuesday.

Another beneficiary S. Balasubhramanyam from Nellore hailed the CM for understanding their ordeals and coming to their rescue amid the havoc created by Covid.

Nellore district collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu said, "As many as 18,955 persons were benefited to the extent of ₹18,95,50,000 under the third round of the scheme in Nellore district.'

remaining

had been providing the financial assistance one month in advance and supporting lakhs of families of drivers like her. She expressed happiness that the CM had given a lot of courage to women like her by implementing every scheme in the name of women. She said both her children were studying in a government school and they benefited under the Amma Vodi

Meanwhile, Chittoor MP N. Reddeppa, MLAs M.S.)warakanatl Reddy, collector M. Hari Narayanan and others handed over cheques and certificates to beneficiaries at Chittoor district collectorate. A total of ₹16.73 crore was disbursed to the 16,732 Vahana Mitra beneficiaries in the district.

renewals. He said the financial aid will be useful to insure the vehicles carrying out besides repairs and obtaining fitness certificates. MLC Balli Kalyan Chak-

ravarthi was also present. apart from joint-collector (Development) Ganesh Kumar, district forest officer Shanmukha Kumar and deputy transport commissioner Subba Rao.

Meanwhile, transport commissioner of Prakasam district, B. Krishnaveni, said 40,091 persons were benefited under the scheme during the last 3 years.

Speaking on the occasion, Prakasam district collector Pravin Kumar told the beneficiaries to maintain the vehicles in good condition.

CM: TAXI DRIVERS LOOTED BY PREVIOUS GOVT

From page 1

He said as many as 42,932 beneficiaries newly applied for the scheme this year, taking the total number to 2,48,468. Those left out by the scheme can still apply at village/ward secretariats and their applications would be considered if they are eligible. He said people can contact on 9154294326 or 1902 to know details about the scheme or lodge a complaint. He said the government also set up a task force in the transport section for the smooth run of the scheme.

Hitting back at the opposition leaders over the false propaganda, the CM said that auto and taxi drivers were looted by the previous government with taxes and penalties. Going into the details, he said that ₹7.39 crore had been collected towards com pounded fees, tax and penalties from the auto drivers during 2015-16.

Various fees and penalties amounted to ₹9.68 in 2017-18 and ₹7.09 crore in 2018-19. In contrast, under the YSRC government, only ₹68.44 lakh was collected through penal-ties and taxes in 2019-20 and in 2020-21 it was just ₹35 lakh. He said the TD leaders published a book of 94 mistakes even as the government fulfilled over 94 per cent of the promises made in the last two

opposition cited YSR Vahana Mithra as one of the 94 mistakes, but in reality taxes and penalty fees came down significantly after YSRC came to

Further, the Chief Minister requested the auto drivers to follow traffic rules and never to drive under the influence of alcohol.

Deputy CM K. Narayana Swamy, ministers Perni Venkataramaiah. Venu Gopala Krishna, principal secretary (transport) M.T. Krishna Babu, Commissioner of Transport P.S.R. Anjanevulu and other officials were present at the event.

English medium must at UG level

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to make English medium compulsory across in government, aided and unaided degree colleges in the state from the academic year 2021-22. The department of higher education strongly feels the introduction of English medium at the UG level would enhance the career prospects of graduates.

According to the findings in India Skills Report of 2019, English figured among the top three skills, along with learning agility and adaptability, that employers look for in India.

Out of over 2.62 lakh students who have taken admissions into degree colleges across the state, only 65,981 students are admitted into the Telugu medium during 2020-21. Out of 65,981 Telugu medium students, 24,007, 16,925 and 24,960 enrolled for BA, B.Com and B.Sc courses respectively. The government decision is bound to benefit these students as well. A 2016 report of Cam-

bridge University titled 'Findings of English at Work: Global analysis of language skills in workplace' highlights that about 90% of employers in India say that the English language skills are important for their organisa-

tion.
The English language skills would help B.Sc, BA and B.Com students a lot. A majority of B.Sc students have been seen to have taken up opportunities across the country. and in some cases abroad. Considering this, proficiency in the English lan-

guage becomes essential for opening up new avenues for the students and ensuring their career growth.

In the case of BA students, data shows that a large number of BA graduates prefer getting into sales and marketing, apart from journalism and research. Keeping in mind the fact that most companies have started preferring multilingual candidates and laying emphasis on English, it is essential that the students pursue their UG in the English medium.

For BCom Students, with the advent of topnotch technology, commerce industry has become highly dynamic, fast-paced and algo-rithm/software-oriented in the last two decades. Therefore, English language serves as an essential tool for professionals in the industry for becom-

ing highly successful.
Further, the public sector recruitment process held through UPSC, APPSC, SSC, BSRB also tests language proficiency. As the 4th year of the UG curriculum is in research orientation, it would be difficult to pursue quality work in PhD, if the under graduation is studied in Telugu medium.

The 'Future of work' demands knowing English which will be met with studying UG in English medium so that the inherent inhibition wanes away. By studying core subjects in the English medium, the fluency in English increases.

Studying market-oriented programmes in degree in Telugu medium is diffithe reference

GVMC postings spur capital buzz

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Tuesday's reshuffle of five officials in Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) limits has given momentum to the executive capital buzz in the city.

A GO, issued by special shmi, mentioned that the current Srikakulam mucommissioner, who is on leave, has been transferred and posted as deputy commissioner (revenue) of GVMC. Similarly, K. Ramesh Kumar, the deputy commissioner (revenue), has been transferred and posted as GVMC's deputy project officer.

Another officer B. Venkata Ramana has been posted as the zonal commissioner in place of M.V.D Phani Ram. The government has appointed Phani Ram as the deputy project officer for the corporation. S. Venkata Ramana, the secretary to Nellore Urban Development Authority, has been transferred and posted as a zonal commissioner in GVMC.

All these transfers seem to indicate that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is speeding up the process of transferring this cosmopolitan city as the executive capital of the state, said a political observer in the port city.

FOLLOWING I TRADITION TD politburo member visits Paidithalli temple along with followers

Ashok Gajapathi Raju violates Covid norms

'NAIDU PUTTING OBSTACLES FOR JUDICIAL CAPITAL

DC CORRESPONDENT KURNOOL, JUNE 15

Chandrababu Naidu of causing a delay in turning Kurnool into the judicial capital, government chief whip Gadikota Srikanth Reddy said the government was committed to the formation of the three capitals in the

Reddy, who was in Srisailam on Tuesday, told the media that the High Court would definitely come up in Kurnool but rued that Naidu became a stumbling block for the realisation of the dream of Rayalaseema. The advocommunity Kurnool was feeling neglected as the shifting of High Court could not be materialised despite a legislation to the effect. The chief whip alleged

Naidu was in a secret pact with the NDA government and questioned him why he was not criticising the NDA govern-ment or Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He arrived on a two-day personal visit to Srisailam temple along with his family.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE BRINGS KUDOS TO JAGAN

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy seems to be getting all praises for his commitment to social justice, which is reflected in the recent allocation of MLC seats with two out of four candidates entering the Upper House belonging

to weaker sections.

Empowering weaker sections is no longer a slogan as the Chief Minister has made it a reality in his two years of

governance.
In allocation of MLC seats, factors influencing the selection like social status, financial ability and political influence were side-lined paving the way for true political empowerment for the weaker sections.

Prominence was given to members of BC Yadava caste in the Govern-or-nominated MLC posts. With this decision, after six-and-a-half decades, a person belonging to Yadava caste has been nominated to the Governor's quota as an MLC. Since the formation of AP Legislative Council in 1958, almost 30 MLCs elected from Kadapa district and for the first time the Yadav community got

opportunity.
Of the four MLC posts that went vacant under Governor's quota, the government selected one SC and one BC for two seats. Moshen Raju of West Godavari district, Ramesh Yadav of Kadapa, Thota Trimurthulu of East Godavari district and Lella Appireddy of Guntur have been nominated for the MLC posts

under Governor quota. Since the day of forming the government in 2019, a total of 15 MLCs were elected under nominated and MLA quota, where 11 of them have been given to BC, SC and minorities. In vacancies that were filled after 2018, 12 posts were given to BC, SC and Minorities, while three of them were given to upper castes. This shows the priority given by Jagan Mohan Reddy to social especially empowering SC, ST, BC and minorities.

Members of ma sed communities elected and nominated as MLCs on behalf of YSRC since 2019 are P. Ravindra Babu (SC), Balli Kalyana Chakravarti (SC), Dokka Varaprasad Manikya (SC), Koyya Moshen Raju (SC), Mopidevi Venkata Ramana (BC), Duvvada Srinivas (BĆ), Potu-la Sunita (BC), Ramesh Yadav (BC), C. Ramachandraiah (BC), Zakia Khanum (minority), Muhammad Iqbal (minority), Mohammed Karimunnisa (minority), Challa Bhagirathareddy (OC), Lella Appireddy (OC) and Thota Trimurthulu

Vijayawada: AP Government Nurses Association has written a letter to the CM objecting to harassment of nurses by superintendents of various government hospitals. Association president D. Manjula Devi complained that nurses are facing considerable problems while discharging their duties

Jagananna Colonies first of their kind

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 15

Housing minister Cherukuvada Sriranganatha Raju said a total of 17,000 Jagananna Model Colonies will be built across the state. Reviewing the progress of the housing project at the Vizianagaram collectorate on Tuesday, he said the colonies were the first of its kind

in the country. The minister said the government aimed to make them model colonies in the country, by providing all kinds of infrastructure and amenities. All the allied departments were asked to work in coordination and complete the construction in a time-bound manner. Deputy chief minister Pamula Pushpa Srivani Vizianagaram district in-charge minister Vellampalli Srinivas were also present at the review meeting.

Raju Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had envisioned the construction of 30 lakh houses for the poor. He made it clear that the aim of the government was to fulfil the housing dreams of all the poor irrespective of caste, creed and politics. It was decided to com-

plete around 15 lakh

houses by March 31, 2022,

the minister said, adding

that the project would cost about ₹30,000 crore.

P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju allegedly violated the Covid-19 protocol by visiting Paidithalli temple in Vizianagaram town along with hundreds of party workers and his followers on Tuesday morning. Normally, people visit this temple on Tuesdays, a tradition that has been followed since decades.

DC CORRESPONDENT

VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 15

His followers said after winning the High Court case against the state gov-ernment regarding his removal from the chairman post of Mansas and Simhachalam Trust, Gajapathi Raju



Pyditalliamma Temple in Vizianagaram town on Tuesday.

wanted to offer special 19 protocol, taking hunprayers to the Goddess. But his critics said it was a clear violation of Covid-

temple during Sirimanodreds of people inside the tsav, the annual festival of premises of the temple. the Goddess citing Covid-"Ashok did not visit the 19. He also most of the ti-

a retired school teacher and a devotee of the Goddess. District Medical and Health Officer Dr S.V. Ram-

me shut his bungalow to outsiders citing infection.

Why did he go today?" said

ana Kumari said the administration was allowing one or two persons into the temple and not hundreds as per the Covid-19 protocol. Superintendent

Police, Vizianagaram, B. Raja Kumari said as per information, only 60 to 70 persons accompanied Ashok Gajapathi Raju to the temple in the morn-

"But it is still a violation of Covid-19 protocol," the SP said.

40% OF VIZAG

TOILETS 'BAD,'

SAY DENIZENŚ

V. KAMALAKARA RAO |

VISAKHAPATNAM JUNE 15

Nearly 40 per cent of the

public toilets in Vizag city have been rated as "bad" or "average" by the general public. The

ratings were shown under the 'public health' category on the 'City Dashboard' page of the official website of

Greater Visakhapatnam

Municipal Corporation

expressed their opinion

persons

www.gvmc.gov.in When Deccan Chronicle checked the website on June 15, a total of

IN BRIEF

Sicma donates

02 concentrators

Vijayawada: South Indian Cement Manufacturers' Association (Sicma) has donated 200 oxygen concentrators worth ₹2 crore to the Chief Minister Relief Fund (CMRF)

SON ENDS LIFE AFTER MOTHER SAYS NO TO PET

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 15

A 16-year-old Intermediate student died by suicide after his mother refused to pay him money to buy a pet dog online. Though the incident took place on Monday, it came to light on Tuesday.

The deceased was a first-year intermediate student of a corporate college in Visakhapatnam. The police said he came across an adver-tisement online. Attracted by it, he wanted to buy the pet dog and asked his mother to give him ₹15,000 for the purchase.

His mother and his cousin told him that there was no urgent need for a pet dog. They told him there was none to look after the dog after he went to the college.

The youngster, however, was determined to buy the dog but his mother stood firm.

The police said his father had died due to ill-health and his mother was working in a store. He reportedly became dull and depressed during the past few days as his mother refused to allow him buy the pet. Inspector Venkata Rao said the youngster had taken the extreme step when his mother went to the revenue office to obtain a legal heir certificate.

The police have registered a case under Section 174 of CrPC (suspicious death) and the body was shifted to KGH mortuary for post mortem.

TWO PEOPLE **KILLED IN GUNFIGHT**

DC CORRESPONDENT ADAPA, JUNE 15

Two persons belonging to two families owing allegiance to YSR Congress were killed in a gunfight at around 8 am on Tuesday in Nallapureddy Palli village in Pulivendula mandal

of Kadapa district.
According to Pulivendula sub-divisional police officer E. Srinivasulu, families of Parthasarathy Reddy, 48, and Prasad Reddy, 62, live opposite

to each other in the village. Parthasarathy, a former soft-ware engineer, quit his job two years ago. His wife and children stay separately from him due to disagreements with them. Because of this, Parthasarathy was mentally disturbed. He was also angry that his relative Prasad Reddy who had come out in open support of his wife.On Tuesday morning, Prasad threatened to kill Parthasarathy with a knife and even tried to attack him. On this, Parthasarathy shot Prasad with his licensed

THREE MAOIST COURIERS ARRESTED

DC CORRESPONDENT **KAKINADA, JUNE 15**

Chinturu Division Police arrested three couriers of Maoists-Shaik Shamshuddin, 45, and Sode Raju, 21, of Abhicherla village of Kunavaram mandal and Sonde Mudraju, 40, of Murumuru village of Yetapaka mandal in East Godavari district and seized ₹9.93 lakh from them.

The Superintendent of Police Adnan Nayeem Asmi said that when the police officials of Yetapaka and Chinturu were checking vehicles at Gorlagudem Junction of Chinturu mandal, three persons were suspiciously coming from Kunavaram by bikes. On the interrogations, they revealed that on the orders of the banned Maoist Leaders of

Kunta Area, Kristaram Area and Gollapalli Area Committees, borrowed the amount of ₹9.93 lakh from the

Contractor M.Satyanarayana Reddy and are taking the said amount to handover to the LOS commander Kovvasi Unga at Pillavai Forest area of Kunta Tahsil, Chhattisgarh state for purchasing of explosives. It came to knowledge that with the money borrowed from the contractors they are accumulating explosives to attack on the security forces, aiming at oppressing government property and the general public, it



Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana along with his wife participates in special puja to Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy

CJI visits Yadadri shrine

Ramana admires the renovation works taken at ₹1,000cr

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JUNE 15

Chief Justice of India Justice N.V. Ramana, who is currently on a visit to Hyderabad, offered to prayers Narasimhaswamy at the

famous Yadadri temple on Tuesday.

As per tradition, the temple priests welcomed the CJI with purna kumbamon his arrival at

Balalayam.

Justice Ramana and his wife participated in special puja at the Balalayam. He arrived at the temple by road from Hyderabad.

Endowments minister A. Indrakaran Reddy and energy minister G. Jagdaish Reddy welcomed the CJI on his arrival at the VVIP suite

on Yadadri hill. Yadadri Bhongir zilla parishad chairman Alimineti Sandeep Reddy, government Gongidi Sunitha, district collector Pamela Satpathy, Yadadri Temple Development Authority (YTDA) vice chairman Kishan Raoand temple executive officer

Geetha were also present. The CJI also received a ceremonial salute from the police. After offering prayers, Justice Ramana went through the renovation

works of the main temple of Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamy on the hill shrine being undertaken by the state government at a

DC CORRESPONDENT

VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

The Covid-19 new infec-

tions slightly increased

on Tuesday in the state.

As many as 5,741 new

cases were registered as

against 4,549 on Monday.

However, the recovery

rate has improved with

the discharge of 10,567



Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana plants a sapling at the Raj Bhavan, in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

cost of over ₹1,000 crore to develop it as a worldclass temple town. Ministers and officials explained to him the progress and status of works at the main tem-

patients from

hospitals. As

many as 96,153 samples

were tested in the past 24

hours in which 5,741

found infected. A total of

2,06,34,891 Corona tests

were conducted in the 13

The total number of

districts of the state.

various

Ministers said Justice Ramana was impressed the by the complete makeover of Yadadri temple and the sculptures and structures on the temple premises being erected as part of

New Covid-19 infections rise a bit in AP

total recoveries account

for 17,32,948. A total of 53

new deaths were regis-

tered, taking the total toll

East Godavari district

is at the top with the highest daily new infec-tions at 831, followed by

830 in Chittoor, 703 in

Covid-19 infections in AP West Godavari, 463 each district reported 12 new and was 18,20,134 of which in Krishna and Prakasam deaths, followed by six in tricts.

to 12,052.

CJI PLANTS SAPLING AT RAJ BHAVAN

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JUNE 15

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Tuesday planted a sapling at the Raj Bhavan complex as part of the The Green India programme. Justice Ramana called upon the legal fraternity to take part and encourage the plantation programme to increase green cover which is essential to maintain balance in the ecosystem.

"It is important to protect Mother Nature by promoting greenery in a big way. We must ensure required green cover so as to protect nature and ensure sustainable development for the benefit of future generations," he

Calling the Green India programme launched by Rajya Sabha member J. Santosh Kumar, who was present at the ceremony. a good and timely initiative to promote awareness and greenery in our coun-

renovation works. He also inspected the works at the temple town and Presidential suite later. He spent over four hours on the temple premises and left for Hyderabad.

385

Guntur, 353 in Anan-

tapur, 339 in Visakha-pat-

nam, 325 in Kadapa, 266

Nellore, 225

Vizianagaram and the

least number of 130 infec-

tions was registered in

Kurnool district.Chittoor

2,000 beds planned for kids

East Godavari and 70 in

West Godavari. The West

Godavari district med-

ical and health officials

have invited applications

for enrollment of paedia-

In East Godavari dis-

trict, the officials plan to allot 250 beds in govern-

ment General Hospital at

provide necessary treatment to the children.

Medicines shall be made

in

were

Srikakulam,

Borewell owners responsible for accidents: Govt

PATHRI RAJASEKHAR |

NELLORE JUNE 15

In the wake of several incidents where innocent children were killed after falling into abandoned borewells, the groundwater department has issued guidelines as per the directions of the directions of the Supreme Court to protect the children. These rules have made the borewell owners and rig managements responsible for any

untoward incident.
According to the groundwater wing officials, negligence of the owners to remove the casing of the borewell and close the same when it becomes dry gave scope for children to fall in

Taking a serious view, the apex court made it mandatory for the rigs to register with the governmental agency irrespective of whether they belonged to the private or government sphere.

The rig owner and the borewell owner should put up a signboard and arrange a fence around the installation. A concrete platform is a must at the borewell as per the

new specifications. All the pits and muddy canals around the borewell should be closed and the ground should be leveled.

In the case of closed bore wells, the owners should obtain a certificate from officials about the closure to save them-selves from the possible legal problems.

Records should be maintained on both functioning and defunct bore wells by the agriculture department in villages and by the municipal engineering and public health department in urban areas.

Officials should inspect the bore wells in their jurisdiction and ensure all safety norms, said the assistant director of the groundwater department.

ually being increased.

Rajamahendravaram MP

Bharat Ram inaugurated

the release of waters at

the Eastern Arm at

He said there would be

no shortage of water even for small fields. A 20-TMCs capacity storage

tank has been constructed

at Polavaram Project and

the project would supply

water to the fields. Union Ministry for Water Resources has responded

favourably to the state's

Dowleswaram Barrage.

on 'public toilets'. Nearly 40 per cent of the respondents felt the toilets were average or

bad. Nearly 19 per cent of those in the survey said the toilets were ₹bad' while 21 per cent said these were of average quality.
Vizag-based

Youth for Society member M Jagadeesh Kumar, who takes up environ-mental friendly activi-ties in the city, said, "the below-middle class people are comfortable with the toilets as per their observations, but the authorities would need to put in some extra efforts to make the toilets usable by the abovemiddle-class tourists.

A tourist said the corporation would do well to set up new toilets or at least mobile toilets at RK Beach and Tenneti Park. The existing toilets were not sufficient to cater to the needs of the visitors, he said.

GVMC chief medical officer KSLG Sastry told DC he also checked the feedback on the GVMC website. "We took the feedback and will improve the condition of the toilets." The corporation requested the public to give genuine feedback on the toilets and their maintenance with details like photographs, contact details and address for immediate response from their

The city has 328 toilets including 248 community toilets across the 98 wards under eight zones in GVMC limits. There were plans of developthe toilets and adding a few more toilets in the city, Sastry

DC CORRESPONDENT Srinivasa Rao said the release of waters is grad-

GODAVARI WATER RELEASED TO DELTA

KAKINADA, JUNE 15

Godavari water was let out into three delta Delta, canals—Eastern Central Delta Western Delta— to East Godavari and West Godavari districts on Tuesday.

Irrigation released the water after performing the poojas. As high as 19,000 cusecs of released Polavaram water was through Project Spillway. Of these, the officials released 3,000 cusecs of water.

cusecs of water. plea to release funds for Irrigation headworks the polavaram project, he **VAMSADHARA WATER FOR KHARIF IN JULY**

DC CORRESPONDENT VIKSAKHAPATNAM, JUNE 15

Deputy chief minister Dharmana Krishnadas has directed officials to speed up the process of linking the rivers Vamsadhara and Nagavali.

Reviewing the irrigation project works with officials Srikakulam collectorate

in Kadapa, Krishna, Prakasam, Srikakulam

and Visakhapatnam dis-

tricts. Three deaths each

Anantapur, Guntur and West Godavari districts.

Two deaths each took

place in Kurnool, Nellore

and Vizianagaram dis-

registered in

on Tuesday, the minister said the government took up the river linkage programme as a prestigious irrigation project. The minister called for another meeting on the irrigation projects on June 19 at the Srikakulam collectorate.

The minister said the officials should also gear up for release of water.

NIT-AP DEVELOPS SENSORS FOR RAINWATER

VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15: integrate sensors for smart Students from the National Institute of Technology Andhra Pradesh (NIT-AP), Tadepalligudem. have developed a 'Wi-Fi mounted microcontroller' that can

harvesting of rainwater This system can automate the process of water storage, to make it more efficient, and reduce waterborne disease



राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, करूक्षेत्र NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)

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NREGA FUNDS BOOST FOR RURAL INFRA

DC CORRESPONDENT **ANANTAPUR, JUNE 15**

A target has been set to build and provide perma-nent buildings for entities in rural areas in the district through use of NREGA funds. About 890 buildings – including bulk milk cooling units, health clinics will be constructed under the programme. Some 329 buildings are in the final stage of completion.

While the state government is taking serious steps to provide pucca buildings for various entities in villages, the funds from the National Employment Rural Guarantee Act (NREGA)

have been of help.
Anantapur district alone will have 890 such buildings. The state government has announced 'Bhavana Nirmana Pakshoshavalu' in the state from June 17 to July 2 for construction of these buildings.

According to sources, permanent buildings would be provided for village health clinics, Rythu Bharosa Centres, Anganwadi Centres and Grama Sachivalavams.

PR & rural development principal secretary Gopalakrishna Dwivedi

Additional doctors, staff to treat Covid children: Nani

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 15

Health minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas alias Nani said on Tuesday that the government is taking steps including offering paediatric training to the medical staff to face the likely third wave of Covid-19 in an effective manner in Andhra Pradesh.

A meeting of the group of ministers to discuss the measures to limit a third wave's impact was held at Mangalagiri. The minister said the meeting decided to provide treatment facilities to children in all government hospitals across 13 districts in view of the anticipated third wave.

The meeting was attended by ministers Botsa Satyanarayana, Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, Dr Seediri Appalaraju and Kurasala Kannababu, government advisers Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy and several senior officials of the health department.

Minister Nani said Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has advised officials to appoint additional doc-

if third wave strikes state DC CORRESPONDENT Kakinada and 50 beds in required. The officials identified 240 paediatri-cians in both Godavari districts including 170 in

tricians.

KAKINADA, JUNE 15

As the second wave of Covid-19 is abating, the administrations of East and West Godavari districts are making preparations to face a possible third wave that could also affect children in a

serious way.

It is estimated that roughly 2,000 more hospital beds would be

tors and staff for treatment of children and set up health hubs close to residents. Steps would be taken for providing treatment to Covid-hit children in government hospitals. Primary health centres and area hospitals would be thoroughly examined and the treatment would be covered under the Aarogyasri scheme free of cost, as advised by the

Nani said all arrange-

available to meet the requirements third wave.

The minister said vaccinations to the mothers of children below age five should be speeded up and tokens should be distributed a day in advance to all the eligible mothers for the vaccination. The health machinery should be well-prepared to tackle the third wave effecments would be made to tively and reserves

Rajamahendravaram exclusively for treatment of children in the third District collector D. Muralidhar Reddy said a

plan of action report has been submitted to the state government, saying 1,000 more beds are required. He said there are some 50 paediatricians in government hospitals

blood banks. Nani said nearly 2,000 people were infected with the black fungus in the state. They would be provid-

should be ensured in

ed proper treatment. Though the positive cases are on the decline, the health and other departments should be alert. The minister warned of stern action if the injections meant for treatment of black fungus are misused and sold in black market.

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ODISHA SEES A DIP IN CASES, DAILY TOLL AROUND 40

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC

The daily cases of Covid-19 dipped further on Tuesday as the state witnessed 3,405 new cases, 934 less than Monday's figure. With this, the positive tally in the state climbed to

However, despite the fall in the new cases, the fatalities due to Covid continue to surge in the state. At least 42 patients undergoing treatment for Covid have succumbed to the disease in the last 24 hours taking the death toll to 3.388.

Khurdha district with 500 fresh infections in the last 24 hours has the maximum cases among all districts followed by Jajpur (391), Balasore (296), Cuttack (230), Mayurbhanj (187), Angul (183), Bhadrak (179), Puri (141) and Jagatsinghpur (129).

The active cases in the state now stood at 51,104 while 8,04,981 patients have recovered from the disease, state health department said. The state has so far tested a total of 1,27,20,932 samples including 68,535 on Monday. The overall epidemic situation analysis by the state health department brings two contrasting facts. While Kendrapara becomes the only district to post a rise in positive rate in the week ended on June 14, Jharsuguda cuts the test positive rate to around 2 per cent from 12 per cent a week ago.

FAMILY ALLEGES HOSP. NEGLIGENCE, **ATTACKS STAFF**

PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI | DC BERHAMPORE, JUNE 15

Family members of a Covid patient went on rampage at a private hospital in Murshidabad of West Bengal and beat three of its staff following death of the patient on Monday night due to alleged medical negligence even after a payment of ₹10 lakh for her treatment.

The deceased, Santana Mondal (36), was from Bharatpur in Berhampore. She died of suffocation, according to her family members who later erupted in protests and attacked the hospital staff.

Mondal's elder sister Rani claimed, "My sister was admitted at the hospital 28 days ago after she tested positive. She was suffering from suffocation and was on the ventilator. But we came to know that the ventilator was useless which pushed her to death." She added that though ₹10 lakh was paid to the hospital on demand for her sister's treatment, oxygen was not given to the patient.

Hospital official, however, denied the allegations. He said, "The patient died despite our best efforts to save her. But her kin turned violent. Instead of paying heed to us, they ransacked the hospital furniture and assaulted our staff when they tried to resist them.'

IB STARTS DRIVE TO CURB ONLINE

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

With a sharp increase in usage of online medium for financial and business transactions foloutbreak Coronavirus, the Cyber Unit of the Intelligence Bureau has started a drive along with Cvber Cell of various state police to further strengthen their mechanism to check online frauds.

Sources said since the country went into lockdown in March last year following Covid-19, there has been on an average a 20 to 30 per cent increase in cases of financial cyber crime across the coun-

try.
As a large number of people are still avoiding going to banks or other financial institutions there has been a sharp increase in usage of online banking and the financial transactions. This is in addition to increase in online shopping of essential commodities and other stuff also as most states have been imposing some form of lockdown since

last March. Taking advantage of this "cyber criminals" have been using different modus operandi to cheat users of their money. For instance messages are being sent on WhatsApp and SMS to update this vaccination status or KYC or apply for loan. Once a users clicks on the links the entire data from a smart phone or computer gets transferred to the unknown servers of these cyber criminals.



A beneficiary receives a dose of Covid-19 vaccine during a vaccination camp for students and citizens at a polyclin-

India confirms 1st death following vaccination

Docs warn of worse crisis than 2nd wave if norms not followed

VINEETA PANDEY | DC with agencies input NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

A government panel studying Covid-19 vaccine side effects has confirmed the first death due to anaphylaxis following vaccina-

causality assessment of 31 reported Serious Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) cases following Covid-19 vaccination was

carried out by the panel.
"It is the first death linked to Covid vaccination due to anaphylaxis. It re-emphasises the need to wait for 30 minutes after receiving jab. Most of the anaphylactic reactions occur during this period. Timely treatment can prevent deaths," said Dr N.K. Arora, Chairman, of

Covid working group. The Union health ministry in a statement said any death or hospitalisation following vaccination cannot be automatically assumed to be due to vaccination though states have been directed to make causality assessments to understand whether the "Adverse Event Following Immunisation" was caused directly due to

vaccine. "The number of deaths reported following Covid-19 vaccination in the country is only 0.0002% of 23.5 crore doses administered which is within the expected death rates in a population...It is also important to note that the mortality rates for those testing positive for Covid-19 disease is more than 1% and Covid-19 vaccination can prevent these deaths. Therefore, the risk of dying following vaccination is negligible as compared to the known risk of dying due to Covid-19 disease," the ministry said. India



A beneficiary shows the money that she received as Covid relief provided by the state government in Kanyakumari district on Tuesday.

cases of Covid-19 in the last 24 hours which is lowest after 75 days. The daily deaths were 2,726 and recoveries were more than double the fresh detection. The Recovery Rate has reached 95.64%

Mumbai's Dharavi, for the second consecutive day, did not report a single case of Covid. The area has since January 2021 reported 6,861 cases and 359 deaths and has at present 13 active cases. The cases were much less in Mumbai too with 575 new detections. Delhi that too has seen a major dip on Tuesday recorded 228 new

However, a major challenge for these cities that are now opening up is to control the next wave which looks inevitable given the crowd that s out on roads and number of people seen defying social distancing and masks norms. The latest to ease up curbs is Bihar from June 16 to 22 during which government and private offices will function till 5 pm, and shops will remain open till 6 pm. Night curfew will be in place from 8 pm to 5 am. Uttar Pradesh has reduced night curfew timings by two hours from next week while allowing restaurants and malls to function at 50 % capacity.

Doctors have warned recorded 60,471 daily new that a situation 'worse than the second wave' may erupt if people do not adhere to safety norms and lower their guards. The remarks from many doctors have come after visuals of various crowded markets surfaced.

Dr. Suranjit Chatterjee, a consultant at Delhi's Apollo Hospitals warned that if safety norms are not followed by people and if there is no strict enforcement in case of violations, then "we are in for a trouble again". He said if people show laxity then possibly the next wave could be worse than the second wave situation.

Dr Richa Sareen, consultant of pulmonology at Fortis hospital said, "The threat of the third wave hitting is quite real and hypothesis. We hoped that people will learn lessons from the second wave, but seems we are not being wise as common people. Situation will be worse than during the second wave if we do not

wise up."
The Centre is hoping that with more vaccines available now, the pace of vaccination should pick up from next week. Till now less than 4% Indians have been fully vaccinated. Dr V.K. Paul said trial results of new vaccines Novavax are encouraging, and the vaccine is safe and

TO CONTINUE TO REMAIN SHUT

MANOJ ANAND | DC

Despite the failure of state education department in facilitating online education to the students enrolled in government schools for various reasons during the first Covid lockdown in 2020, the Assam government on Tuesday decided to extend the closure of schools further after preponed summer vacation and directed the authorities to conduct online classes for stu-

In an official order issued on Monday evening the principal secretary of the secondary education department B. Kalyan Chakravarthy officials of district administrations to arrange for online classes so that there is continuity in students' learning process. The summer vacation, which was postponed due to Covid lockdown, ended on June 14.

He asked directors of secondary and elementary education, all inspectors of schools, other officials of the department and heads of government and private educational institutes to take steps to conduct online classes until further orders or till the reopening of these

institutes. The order which was issued on Monday came into force with immediate effect.

The government had advanced the one-month summer vacation in schools from May 15 amid a raging second wave of

ASSAM SCHOOLS

Ocean region. QUAD club.

History has had two battles and standoffs between India and China since 1962. Those were in 1967 and 1987: India triumphed over China both times.

Galwan 2020: The night that changed the neighbourhood '

PROBAL DAS GUPTA

year has passed since Colonel Santhosh Babu and his band of gallant men from 16 Bihar Regiment laid down their lives in the Galwan clash against the PLA, the Chinese army. The fateful night, a year ago, which claimed their lives will not go down in history as yet another night of betrayal by a bete noire whose characteristic reliance on deceit and denial is well known. Instead, on this occasion, Col Babu's brave-

hearts decided to not let the enemy's surprise moves stun them. They acted fearlessly and inflicted upon an armed enemy a number of casualties they had never expected. These brave soldiers set into motion the template of India's actions to follow in Ladakh against an enemy that had broken a soldier's code of conduct. The Indian Army redoubled the aggression and vigil against China along the

Through their brave actions, they exposed Chinese doublespeak about honour and patriotism. PLA soldiers who died in Galwan clash were never recognised China or given honour by their country, as the fallen Indian soldiers received. Col. Babu, in his death, showed that a courageous leader on ground can expose the machinations of a powerful nation known for its doublespeak.

The fateful incident was followed by action in August when the Indian outpaced the Chinese to dominate heights of Kailash ranges in eastern Ladakh and put China at a disadvantage.

On a strategic level, two countries slid down a path farther away from nor-malcy. The PLA increased its presence along the LAC and reinforced a robust rear infrastructure to support the forward troops. India too ramped up troop deployment and infrastructure on high priority. Galwan began a clamour for India to widen its sphere of rivalry with China and take advantage of the oceans.

It opened up Chinese insecurity about India's advantage in the region, especially the Indian China rebooted its influence in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Myanmar. India finally shed its inhibitions about expressing closeness to the US and finally threw its lot with the

American interests had traditionally aroused suspicion in India, but in 2020, China made sure it was a choice thrust upon India in the face of medieval hostilities and unconcealed belligerence. Indians are sometimes misled by history to often quote that this Indian Army is no longer the Army of 1962. Such an analogy is misplaced and ludicrous.

Sonia asks govt to come clean on Galwan incident

Gandhi on Tuesday asked the government to come clean on the Galwan Valley incident in which 20 Indian soldiers lost their lives a year ago and sought to know the progress made in restoring status quo ante at the

border. In a statement, she said no clarity is yet available on the Chinese transgressions at the border, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi has denied.

said Gandhi Congress has patiently waited for the govern-ment to come clean and inform the nation about the circumstances in which the unprecedented incident happened and reassure the people that the sacrifice of our brave

jawans was not in vain.
"The Congress party reiterates its concern that no clarity is yet available and the prime minister's last word on the subject a year ago was that no transgression had occurred," she said.

"We have repeatedly sought details of the episode in light of the PM's statement, as well as details of what progress

New Delhi, June 15: has been made towards Congress president Sonia restoring the status quo restoring the status quo ante prior to April 2020,

she also said. The Congress chief said that the disengagement agreement with China "appears to have worked entirely to India's disad-

vantage so far". "The Congress party urges the government to take the nation into confidence and ensure that their performance is worthy of the commitment of our soldiers who are standing bravely and resolutely at the borders,' she said in her statement.

Gandhi also said, "As we approach the first anniversary of the tragic loss of 20 brave soldiers of the Bihar Regiment, including their commanding officer, in the confrontation with PLA troops of China on the night of June 15-16, 2020, the Congress party joins a grateful nation in remembrance of their supreme sacrifice."

The 20 Indian soldiers lost their lives in clashes with PLA troops at the India-China border in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on the interven-ing night of June 15 and



Corps laid a wreath at Leh War Memorial and paid homage to martyrs who laid down their lives at Galwan on

once by inflicting casualties and on another occasion without firing a single bullet.

Therefore, when the Indian Army took the Kailash heights in August last year and turned the tables on China, it was a reminder of 1987 instead, when the PLA was pushed back without fighting a

Over four decades had passed without a single bullet being fired by the two countries at each other. And then, China disrupted history. It all started with that fateful night, when Col. Babu and his band of gallants walked up to the Chinese to ask them to leave.

The columnist is the author of 'Watershed 1967: India's Forgotten Victory Over China, who retired as a Major in the Indian Army and is a visiting faculty at Columbia

MY HUSBAND: PALANI'S WIFE

Chennai, June 15: A year after the Galwan skirmish, Vanathi Devi, widow of Havildar K. Palani, still remembers her beloved was not able to keep his promise of returning home but his final moments and heroic sacrifice in the fight with Chinese troops makes her feel proud of him. Not only his sacrifice in

the mountainous Galwan Valley, but also those of others besides the lives of soldiers guarding the frontiers in high altitude region speak volumes of the untold sacrifices of the country's army men, she said. "Even after a year, my life continues to be gloomy due to his demise."

— PTI

VACCINE I HESITANCY Local initiatives, intervention by state govt help create awareness among people on vaccine

In MP villages, social boycott, fatwa counter 'jab fears'

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC **BHOPAL, JUNE 15**

Elders and religious leaders have joined the campaign to overcome vaccine hesitancy particularly among the rural population in Madhva Pradesh by issuing social boycott calls and fatwas.

Village elders in four panchayats, Ratibad, Sarvor, Sikandarabad and Mundla, in Bhopal districts met in Khekra village, nearly 35 km from here last week to find a way to remove vaccine hesitancy among the locals.

"We have decided to deny the people who refuse to vaccinated to participate in any social and religious functions in our villages since they have the the interest of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders other villagers", Nandan ple of his community to the interest of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders other villagers", Nandan ple of his community to the interest of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of issued a fatwa asking peopotential to turn spreaders of safety of safety

future", Kushwaha (69) of Ratibad, nearly 35 km from here told this newspaper on Tuesday. The four panchayats

have a population of around 20,000. Of them, hardly 4,000 people have so far received

at least the first dose of According to Kushwaha, rumours on the negative impact of the vaccine have

turned many villagers

away from vaccines. "We had held no less than half a dozen meetings of villagers to convince them to get vaccinated. But, they started arguing against vaccination tough decision to keep them away from the social and religious functions in

BESIDES, THE govt has launched 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti' drive to help generate awareness among the people on vaccination in the

Dwividy of Mundla pan-chayat said. Almost the entire popula-

vaccine causes serious illness. The panchayat has around 5,000 inhabitants. The local administration

has taken the help of the local Muslim cleric to ensure vaccination of his community.

tion of Fatehpur Dabra panchayat in Bhopal district has turned away the mobile vaccine teams following rumours that the

Accordingly, the local cleric Abdul Kalam Qasmi

get vaccinated in the interest of their health.

In fact, local sub-divimental was asid.

"We have developed a mechanism to tackle vac-

sional magistrate (SDM) Khan had approached the cleric seeking his help for vaccination of people of his community, leading the latter to issue the fatwa. Similar tactics being

employed by leaders of societies in other villages in the districts of Indore. Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, Damoh, Alirajpur, Dhar, Betul, Raisen, and Chhindwara have started paying dividends, official reports reaching state health department here said.

Besides the initiatives by the locals, intervention by the state government has helped remove vaccine hesitancy in many villages

cine hesitancy among some people in the rural pockets of the state. We have prepared modules of rumours making rounds and how to act on them". state vaccine coordinator Dr Santosh Shukla told this newspaper.

The crisis management committees constituted at the village level have been effectively dealing with the challenge, he added.

Besides, the state government has launched 'Yuva Shakti Corona Mukti' campaign to generate awareness among the people on vaccination. "We are going to deploy

positivity rates. 16 lakh college students in the state after imparting them training to give a big push to the vaccination", Dr Shukla said.

KERALA ALL SET TO LIFT LOCKDOWN **RESTRICTIONS FROM THURSDAY**

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC with agency inputs THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUNE 15

The Kerala government on Tuesday decided to lift lockdown restrictions in the state from Thursday.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Viiavan while addressing his daily news conference said the restrictions would be lifted in a planned manner. However, curbs would continue in areas which still have high number of cases and increased test

The following factors led to the decision to relax lockdown restrictions on May 15 the active cases in Kerala were 4,45,333. As on Tuesday the number stood at 1,12,361. Test positivity rate on May 15 was 27.8 per cent and on Tuesday it was below 15

per cent. Meanwhile, the Jharkhand government on Tuesday extended Covidrelated lockdown-like restrictions till June 24 with some relaxations including opening of shopping

pm, an official said. Inter-state and Intrastate bus transport shall remain prohibited except for the buses specifically used by the district administration till June 24 morn ing, the state government

departmental stores till 4



SHORT TAKES 4 DEAD, 4 HURT **IN CHICAGO** SHOOTING: COPS

Chicago, June 15: An argument in a house on Chicago's South Side early Tuesday erupted into gunfire, leaving four women dead and four other

people injured, police said. The shooting happened at 5:42 a.m. in the city's Englewood neighbourhood, police said, and no arrests were immediately made. Police had few details about the victims, but it appeared that none of them were juveniles. Detectives were still trying to determine if there was more than one gunman and that they were still trying to find witnesses, police spokesman Tom Ahern said. A young child was removed safely from the house and placed in protective custody, he said.

FIVE KILLED AS AFGHAN POLIO TEAMS ATTACKED

Kabul, June 15: Gunmen on Tuesday targeted an anti-polio drive in eastern Afghanistan, two vaccination teams in separate attacks, officials said. No militant group immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks that took place in the city of Jalalabad, as well as in the nearby districts of Kho-yani and Surkhrud, according to Attaullah Khogyani, spokes-man for the governor in Nang-arhar province. Jalalabad is

the provincial capital. Along with the five killed, at least four members of the polio vaccination teams were wounded, said Dr. Jan Mohammad, who coordinates the anti-polio

drive for the country's east. Khogyani added that two of the wounded were in critical

FIRE HYDRANT PLANT WORKER KILLS TWO, SELF

Albertville, June 15: A work wounded two more at an Alabama fire hydrant plant early Tuesday has been found dead, apparently after killing himself in a car, a police chief said. "The person was deceased from what appears to be a selfinflicted gunshot wound," Police Chief Jamie Smith told Al.com. The gunfire — among Al. conf. The guinire — annoing the latest in a spate of shootings across the U.S. — broke out about 2:30 a.m. at a Mueller Co. plant in Albertville, Smith told reporters.

The gunman then got in a vehicle and left the factory. His body was found hours later inside a car in Guntersville, about 15 miles (24 kilometres) wasn't immediately clear what prompted the shooting.

SECOND ARREST MADE IN DEADLY AUSTIN SHOOTING

Austin (US), June 15: Police made a second arrest in a weekend shooting that killed a man and left more than a dozen more people wounded after gunfire rang out on in a busy, downtown Austin entertainment district.

Officers arrested a 17-year-old boy at Harker Heights High School in Harker Heights on Monday, according to statements from Austin police and the Killeen Independent School District. He is facing a charge of aggravated assault

Austin police are working closely with the Killeen Independent School District and its police department in the investigation.

A spokesman for Killeen school police confirmed the arrest of the 17-year-old and referred further questions to the school.

SUICIDE BOMBER KILLS AT LEAST 15 IN SOMALIA

Mogadishu, June 15: Police in Somalia say at least 15 people were killed and more than 20 others wounded when a suicide bomber attacked a military training centre in the capital, Mogadishu, on Tuesday.

Police spokesman Sadiq Ali Aden said that the bomber, wearing an explosives-packed vest, impersonated a trainee to enter the camp in the city's Medina district.

The al-Qaida-linked alextremist group claimed responsibility.

The training centre is used by the Somali National Army for new recruits. All of the dead and wounded were rushed to the Medina hospital, where health officials said at least 14

were seriously wounded. Hundreds of people gathered at the hospital to check whether loved ones were among the victims.

Lancet study says Pfizer, AZ vaccines protect against Delta

Researchers say 2 doses offer better shield against the strain than one dose



Researchers at Public Health Scotland and the University of Edinburgh, UK, found that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine offered better protection against the Delta variant compared to the Oxford-AstraZeneca preventive, known as Covishield in India.

The analysis covered the period from April 1 to June 6, 2021, for the demo-graphic distribution of cases. The team analysed 19,543 confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infections over the period of interest, of whom 377 were admitted to hospital for Covid-19 in

Around 7,723 community cases and 134 hospitalisations were found to have the Delta variant of Coronavirus. The study found that the Pfizer vaccine offered 92 per cent protection against the Alpha variant and 79 per cent against the Delta strain two weeks after the second dose.

For AstraZeneca's vaccine, there was 60 per cent protection against Delta compared with 73 per cent for Alpha variant, the researchers said.

They also found that two doses of vaccine provide much better protection against the Delta variant compared to a single dose.

"Risk of Covid-19 hospital admission was approximately doubled in those with the Delta variant of concern (VOC) when compared to the Alpha VOC, raZeneca and Pfizer-Bio-NTech Covid-19 vaccines with risk of admission pawere effective in reducing rticularly increased in ththe risk of SARS-CoV-2 ose with five or more releinfection and Covid-19 hosvant comorbidities," the authors of the study notpitalisation in people with the Delta VOC," they said. ed. "Both the Oxford-Ast-However, the researchers



Nearly 11,000 graduates, including more than 2,000 students who could not attend the graduation ceremony last

California reopens, bids adieu to most Covid curbs

and no more limits on

capacity at restaurants,

bars, supermarkets, gyms,

stadiums or anywhere else. And masks — one of

in America to put in place a Coronavirus lockdown, is now turning a page on the pandemic.

At the stroke of midnight, California is lifting most of its Covid-19 restrictions and ushering in what has been billed as the "Grand Reopeni-Starting Tuesday,

the most symbolic and fraught symbols of the pandemic — will no longer be mandated for vaccinated people in most settings, though businesses and counties can still require

noted that these effects on infection with Delta variant appeared to be diminished when compared to those with the Alpha VOC. The authors of the study warned that the vaccine

interpreted with caution due to differences in the each type of vaccine, and also in how quickly immunity is developed with each shot. comparison should be

California wants to send the message that life in the

Golden State is getting much closer to normal. The economy is fully reopening for the first

time in 15 months and peo-

ple can largely return to

pre-pandemic lifestyles. Fans can cheer mask-less

at Dodgers and Giants

games. Disneyland is thro-

wing its doors open. — AP

IN OMAN, FATAL **FUNGAL INFECTION** IN SOME PATIENTS

Dubai. June 15: Oman announced on Tuesday that its doctors have detected a potentially fatal fungal infection afflicting some Coronavirus patients, the first such known cases on the Arabian Peninsula as the sultanate faces a surge in Covid-19 infections that has swam-

ped its hospitals.
The country's Health Ministry reported that three Covid-19 patients in Oman have become infected with mucormycosis, a life-threatening condition commonly known as "black fungus", which has spread quickly among virus patients in hard-hit India. Although relatively rare, the disease has raised alarm. -AP

Sedition charge against Suu Kyi on day 2 of trial

Bangkok, June 15: The trial of Myanmar's depo-sed leader Aung San Suu Kyi entered its second day Tuesday, with the prosecution presenting arguments that she incited public disorder and flouted Coronavirus restrictions. part of a package of charges the ruling junta is seen as using to discredit her and consolidate its control. Suu Kyi and other members of her government and party were arrested by the military after the February 1 coup, with criminal charges brought against some of the top figures on litany of char-ges that both their sup-

porters and independent observers say are bogus. The coup reversed years democratic reforms in Myanmar after decades of military rule and sparked widespread protests and international condemnation. Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy party had been due to start a second five-year term of office after winning a landslide victory in a general election last November. Suu Kyi has not been seen in public since her arrest and her laknow exactly where she is

currently being held.



Aung San Suu Kyi

She has also had only limited time to consult with her legal team. Tuesday's session was to cover a sedition charge brought against Suu Kyi along with a second count of violating Covid-19 restrictions. The sedition charge, which is sometimes described as incitement calls for up to two years imprisonment for anyone found guilty of causing fear or alarm that could cause an offence against the state or public tranquility. The offence has been law since Myanmar was a British colony, and has been criticised as a catchall stature that infringes on freedom of speech and is used for political repression. The trial, which is closed to the public and media, opened Monday in the capital Nayptitaw, with police outlining several of the cases against

Taiwan reports China incursion

Taipei, June 15: Taiwan said a record 28 Chinese military aircraft including fighter jets and nucle-ar capable bombers flew into its defence zone on Tuesday, as Beijing hit out at international criticism of its military posturing. The incursion came a day after Nato said China's increasingly aggressive military goals threatened international order — and after G7 leaders issued a landmark statement urging peace in

the Taiwan Strait.
Taiwan's defence ministry said it scrambled its own aircraft to broadcast warnings and deployed missile batteries to track the Chinese jets after they entered the island's southwest Air Defence Identi-

The flights occurred the same day Beijing accused Nato of exaggerating the threat from China and "creating confrontation" after a vow from the

together to counter the "systemic challenges" posed by its policies.

Nato leaders made the commitment on Monday, as US President Joe Biden renewed Washington's trans-Atlantic ties at his first summit with the allies. In a broad statement of intent, the leaders said China's increasingly assertive actions in building a nuclear arsenal and space and cyber warfare capabilities threatened the international order.

Democratic and selfruled Taiwan lives under the constant threat of invasion by China, which has vowed to one day seize the island, by force if needed.

The two sides are separwan Strait and some Chinese jets had crossed over the de facto border or so-called "median line" of the strait in previous

Canadian faces terror charge

Ottawa, June 15: Canada is pressing terrorism charges against a man accused of mowing down a Muslim family with a pickup truck, killing four, prosecutors said Monday. Five members of the Afzaal family were out for a walk in London, Ontario around 125 miles (200 kilometres) southwest of Toronto — on June 6, when a truck driver struck them on purpose, according to authorities.

seriously injured.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau previously said the killings were "a terro-" the Royal Canadian

Salman Afzaal, 46, his wife Madiha, 44, their daughter Yumna, 15, and Salman's mother Talat, 74, were all killed. The couple's nine-year-old son Fayez survived, but was rist attack, motivated by hatred." Prosecutors rev-ealed in a brief hearing Monday that they were adding terrorism charges to the four counts of premeditated murder and one of attempted murder levelled last week against 20-year-old Nathaniel Veltman. "The federal and provincial attorneys general provided their conse nt to commence terrorism proceedings, alleging that the murders and the attempted murder also constitute terrorist activi-Mounted Police (RCMP)

NEW ISRAEL GOVT VOWS CHANGE,

Beita, West Bank: Israel's fragile new government has shown little interest in addressing the decades-old conflict with the Palestinians, but it may not have a choice.

BUT NOT FOR

PALESTINIANS

Jewish ultranationalists are already staging provocations aimed at splitting the coalition and bringing about a return to right-wing rule. In doing so, they risk escalating tensions with the Palestinians weeks after an 11-day Gaza war was halted by an inform-

al cease-fire. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's best hope for maintaining his ruling coalition — which consists of eight parties from across the political spectrum — will be to manage the conflict, the same approach favored by his predecessor, Ben-jamin Netanyahu, for most of his 12-year rule. But that method failed to prevent three Gaza wars and countless smaller eruptions.

That's because the status quo for Palestinians involves expanding settlements in the occupied West Bank, looming evictions in Jerusalem, home demolitions, deadly shootings and an array of discriminatory measures that two wellknown human rights groups say amount to apa rtheid. In Gaza, which has been under a crippling blockade since the Hamas militant group seized power in 2007, it's even worse.

"They talk about it being a government of change, but it's just going to entrench the status quo," said Waleed Assaf, a Palestinian official who coordinates protests against West Bank settlements. "Bennett is a copy of Netanyahu, and he might even be more radical." Bennett said little about the Palestinians in a speech before being sworn in.

China gas blast toll rises to 25

has more than doubled to 25, according to the local authorities. The explosion ripped through a residential neighbourhood in Zhangwan district of Shiyan city on Sunday, killing at least 12 people and trap-

ping a large number of people under the rubble of their homes. The blast rocked a two-storey trade market build-

ing in a residential community. China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported on late Monday night that the death toll has risen to 25. Rescue and debris cleaning are still underway, the information office of the provincial govern-ment of Hubei told the media. A team has been set up to investigate the blast, and Hubei will launch a province-wide blanket inspection to root out potential work safety hazards, said Shi Zheng, the head of the provincial emergency management department.

The Chinese government has ordered an inspection of all commercial and domestic gas pipelines. Chinese President Xi Jinping had called for a thorough probe into the cause of the blast and ordered to Beijing says no radiation after N-power plant leak **LAM CONCERNED**

Beijing, June 15: China on Tuesday played down the reports of a leak at one in Guangdong province in order to avoid having to shut it down. ed". China's response came after *CNN* reported

of its nuclear power plants, asserting that there is no abnormal environmental radioactive level in the surrounding areas and the public "safety is guaranteon Monday that the US government was assessing a report of a leak at a Chinese nuclear power plant, after a French company that partly owns and helps to operate it warned of an 'imminent radiological threat". The warning included an accusation that the Chinese safety authority was raising the acceptable limits for radiation detection outside the Tai-shan Nuclear Power Plant

responsibilities, strength-

en their political compre-

hension and root out the

"I want stress that based on the information we got

from competent authorities to date, the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant meets the requirements of the technical specifications and there is no abnormal environmental radioactive level in areas surrounding the power plant, so safety is guaranteed", Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said.

He parried questions on whether the Chinese authorities have raised the acceptable limits of radiation around the plant.

Zhao said China attaches high importance to nuclear safety

rescue the injured. "In causes of such hazards," light of numerous acci-Xi had said. dents at companies and on campuses, all must work together to shoulder their

Gas explosions occur in

various parts of China every year. The worst being the 2015 explosions in Tianjin port in which 173 people were killed and hund-

reds injured. Sunday's explosion came a day after eight people died and three were injured when toxic methyl formate leaked from a vehicle at a chemical handling facility in

ABOUT CHINESE

NUCLEAR PLANT

Hong Kong, June 15: Hong Kong's leader said

Tuesday that her govern-

ment is "highly concern-

ed" about the situation at

a nearby nuclear power

plant in mainland China,

following media reports

that the plant could be

Still, data from the Hong

Kong Observatory and

other departments show-

night the radiation levels

in the city were normal,

leader Carrie Lam said.

that as of Monday

experiencing a leak.

PAST | DISPUTE | Counter China's non-market practices, says US Trade Representative Tai

Biden eases EU trade friction ahead of Putin meet

President Joe Biden on Tuesday moved to end a long-running dispute with the European Union over subsidies for aircraft manufacturers, a major breakthrough in the US-EU trade relationship that comes on the eve of his highly anticipated meeting with Russian Presid-

ent Vladimir Putin. The announcement that the two sides reached resolution in a 17-year dispute over how much of a government subsidy each can

provide for its aircraft manufacturing giant Boeing in the United States and Airbus in the EU — came as Biden met with European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leven.

With the move, Biden eases a major point of tension in the trans-Atlantic relationship at a moment he's seeking to marshal widespread European support for his efforts to counter Russia prior to his against a common threat,"

Wednesday meeting in Geneva with Putin. US Trade Representative Katherine Tai said that the agreement calls for a fiveyear suspension of the aircraft tariffs, and stressed that it was time to put aside the fight and focus on China's economic asse-

rtiveness. "Today's announcement resolves a longstanding trade irritant in the US Europe relationship. Instead of fighting with one of our closest allies, we are finally coming together

Tai said.
"We agreed to work

together to challenge and counter China's non-market practices in this sector in specific ways that reflect our standards for fair competition."

She added that the tariffs could be reimplemented if the US determines US companies are not able to "compete fairly" with the EU's. The tariffs had been temporarily suspended on March 11 for four months, and the new agreement will officially go into effect on July 11.

To be certain, the US-EU relationship faces other trade-related friction. The continent's leaders are becoming impatient that Biden has not yet addressed Donald Trump's 2018 decision to impose import taxes on foreign steel and aluminum. Even without resolving all trade disputes, White House officials expressed confidence

that they can build more

ahead of the face-to-face

with Europe

goodwill

meeting with Putin. The White House on Tuesday announced the creation of a joint US-EU trade and technology council.

The council will work on coordinating standards for artificial intelligence, quantum computing and biotechnologies, as well as coordinating efforts on bolstering supply chain resilience. Biden is appointing Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Tai to co-chair the US side of the effort.



DECCAN CHRONICLE | NELLORE | WEDNESDAY | 16 JUNE 2021

Chronicle

G-7 endorses US plans to target China, Russia

he G-7 summit, the gathering of the leaders of the seven richest capitalist economies (the US, UK, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, Italy), in Cornwall (June 11-13) might have passed as another deliberative exercise to smoothen the pathways of the international market system, but it turned out to be a lot more, conceptually.

The practical aspects of the agenda of action outlined in the communiqué are for the future as it elaborates high-order political concerns. These ideas will necessarily have to be considered at the summit of the G-20 countries, the top 20 most consequential nations, which is not far away. In this group are China and Russia, which were at the receiving end in the G-7 deliberations. Fighting the pandemic, reviving the world economy, and climate change topped the agenda in Cornwall, but upholding democratic values seemed the real thing.

Leaders of the G-7 began to meet annually in the 1970s when the combined GDP of the member countries was around 80 per cent of the world GDP. The GDP of the G-7 is now only around 40 per cent of that of the world. The 47th summit due in 2020 had to be cancelled on account of the Covid pandemic, which has ravaged the inter-

India backed the summit on free expression, and the need for democracies to take responsibility that pandemics don't strike the world again. It is the company that will matter, not the substance.

national economy. Besides, the US, the driving force in G-7, had a close shave as a political system early this year when authoritarian forces associated with for-mer President Trump nearly overturned the American system.

These key issues, seen through the prism of US foreign policy, appeared to hold primacy in Cornwall. Besides fighting the pandemic, working to arrest greenhouse gas emissions, imposing a minimum 15 per cent tax on international companies, and modernising the rules of the world trading

system, the all-too-clear focus was building of an open society and its obverse — to check the authoritarian countries. In a loose sort of way, authoritarianism seems the new Communism, and fighting it is the new mantra. In this context, China and Russia, more so the former, were flagged as posing a danger to the world.

This was President Joe Biden's first international outing and he was keen to flag that he prioritised the re-building of ties with trans-Atlantic allies, which his predecessor had junked, and announce the return of America as leader. The G-7 communique had paragraphs on regions, countries, and issues of particular interest to US foreign policy, not all of which may be shared with the same intensity by other member countries.

At the Nato summit, held in Brussels just a day after the G-7 meet, Russia was characterised as a "threat" to Nato, but serious concern was raised about the rapid military rise of China, whose military expenditure is now surpassed only by the US. Held in sequence, the two events seemed like a twin-act, the first underlining politics, and the second security matters.

A key takeaway from G-7 was the concept of B3W (Building Back a Better World) to build infrastructure in poor and middle income countries. A counterpoint to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), this evidently seeks to limit China's

India had been invited along with Australia, South Africa and South Korea as a G-7 "guest". PM Narendra Modi attended virtually. His slogan was "One Earth, One Health". India backed the summit on free expression, and the need for democracies to take responsibility that pandemics don't strike the world again. It is the

New era dawns in Israel

Tt is not so much a change of Prime Ministers in a country inured to being ruled amid fractious politics of a coalition of parties as a turn of a whole era with Benjamin Netanyahu, whose uninterrupted 12-year regime ended abruptly and reduced his role to that of a combative Opposition leader.
The new Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's reign began with an immedi-

ate challenge as a nationalist march commemorating the capture of Jerusalem in 1967 was to run through the historic city on Tuesday and air defences were put on alert in case Hamas launches retributive action from Gaza in the form of incendiary balloons, if not quite the explosive rockets that had triggered an 11-day war.

The tests to come will be many for the leaders of a wildly disparate and precarious collection of eight parties, including an Islamic party representing Palestinians of Israel and secular as well as religious parties, which assumed power on Monday. The longest serving Prime Minister Netanyahu's Likud party had led coalitions over the years even as Israel transformed economically into a modern country with a security apparatus to be envied in a region filled with uncertainties, conflicts and eternal religious tensions.

While checks and balances are not new to a country that once saw Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres share power, what is unique about the new arrangement is the veto power that rests with foreign minister Yair Lapid, who will replace Mr Bennett as PM in two years if the coalition lasts long enough. Mr Netanyahu, who recently achieved startling diplomatic success in setting right ties with four more Arab countries, has vowed to bring down Mr Bennett's government.

With the change in regime, years of tension with the Democratic Party led by US President Joe Biden may, however, be a thing of the past. But what will not change is the approach to the Palestinian statehood issue because the new rulers will continue to treat Palestinians as a security threat and will aim to perpetuate control over most of the occupied West Bank. It will be fraught with interest how Iran responds to changes in Israel.

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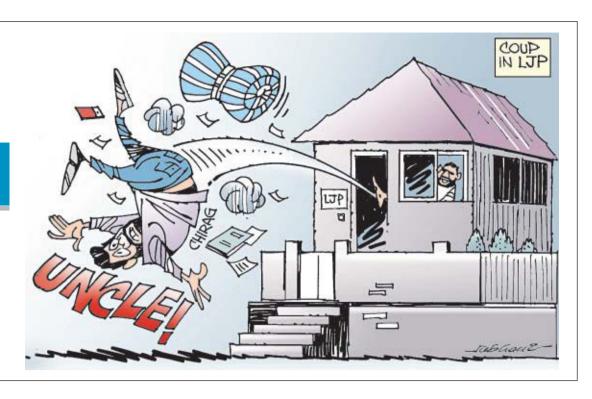
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India must back Dalai's choice on his successor



Claude Arpi

ne issue of the Dalai Lama's succession has been in the news for quite some time, especially after the Tibetan diaspora elected Penpa Tsering as the new "Sikyong", or president; incidentally, this election must have irritated no end Communist China that always proclaims its "superior", though undemocratic, system of governance to the world, especially on the occasion of the centenary of the Communist Party of

China in July. During an interaction with the Tibetan media, the Sikyong, who heads the Tibetan government-in-exile based in Dharamsala, said after taking the oath on May 27 that he already had three video audiences with the Dalai Lama, who "expressed his wish to visit China and Tibet. He has this wish for a long time", Mr Tsering

told Tibetan journalists. Visiting China may not be a great idea now, but it's up to the Tibetan supreme leader and for his people to decide.

The question of succession was apparently not discussed though it is vital in the present context of China becoming more authoritarian and belligerent, using every occasion to reaffirm that it's the Communist leadership who will decide the present Dalai Lama's

The recently published white paper "Tibet Since 1951: Liberation, Development and Prosperity states: "In 1793, the Qing [Manchu] government restored order in Tibet and promulgated the Imperially Approved Ordin-ance for Better Governance of Tibet (the 29-article ordinance) ...[which] stipulated that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and other grand Living Buddhas had to follow the procedure of drawing lots from the golden urn."

Though the Golden Urn procedure was rarely used thereafter, the fact is the Manchus realised the weakness in Tibet's system of governance, that is rule by reincarnation, and were quick to exploit

In the eighteenth century, on three occasions, Manchu troops marchedinto Tibet, each time at the request of the Tibetan government — once to defend Tibet against the Gurkha invasion (1792), and twice to restore civil order after internal trouoles (1728 and 1751).

Each time, the special relationship, known (priest 'Choe-von' patron), was invoked by Lhasa: the Dalai Lamas and other lamas were the gurus (or priests) while the Manchus were the 'patrons", or protectors of the Buddhist state.

The instability of the rule by incarnation can be attributed to the gap between the time a Dalai Lama passes away and when his successor is old enough and able to practically assume power. The 20 crucial years in between the two have always been used by incompetent regents or the Ambans Chinese ambassadors in to influence Lhasa)

Tibetan politics. It was even murmured that the Chinese Ambans had found the trick: during the nineteenth century, four Dalai Lamas died before reaching majority: Luntok Gyatso, ninth Dalai Lama (1805-1815); Tsultrim Gyatso, tenth Dalai Lama (1816-1837); Khedup Gyalsto, eleventh Dalai Lama (1838-1855); and Trinley Gyatso, twelfth Dalai Lama (1856-

75). They never ruled. Later, with the decline of the Manchus, there was no protector to look after the "priests", this until the thirteenth Dalai Lama power and assumed Tibet's asserted

independence. When one studies the history of modern Tibet,

one realises just how unstable what the British officials called the "minority" was; most of officials the time, no decision was taken by regents too cautious that they could be criticised at a later stage.

Many concrete exam-

ples can be given; it would show that it is probably the main reason why lost independence.
After the thirteenth

Dalai Lama passed away in 1933, two regents ruled over Tibet; but soon, a dispute between the Reting and Taktra Rinpoches ended in a near civil war, with the Tibetan Army supporting Taktra and bombarding Sera Monastery, Reting's alma mater. The least that could be said is that most of the regents were not up to the mark.

One solution to avoid the past situation after the present Dalai Lama's departure has been mentioned by the Tibetan leader himself in 2011, in an elaborate statement about his succession.

The Dalai Lama spoke of the origin of the custom of recognising "Emanation Bodies", or "tulkus"; and he elaborated: "The main purpose of the appearance of a reincarnation is to continue the predecessor's unfinished work to serve Dharma and beings. In the case of a lama who is an ordinary being, instead of having a reincarnation belonging to the same mind-stream, someone else with connections to that lama through pure karma and prayers, may be recognised as his or her emanation.'

The Tibetan leader continued with his esoteric description: "Alternatively it is possible for the lama to appoint a successor who is either his disciple or someone young who is to be recognised as his emanation. Since these options are possible

Viewed from a political angle, many issues would be solved if the **Dalai Lama** decides to go for an 'emanation'. First, the Chinese will have no say in the process...

in the case of an ordinary being, an emanation before death that is not of the same mind-stream, is feasible. He cited great nine-

teenth century master Jamyang Khyentse Wang-po, who said: Reincarnation is what happens when someone takes rebirth after the predecessor's passing away; emanation is when manifestations take place with-

out the source's passing

Another problem linked to incarnations is finding a new reincarnation is a rather unscientific process which can be manipulated at will; for example, doubts have been raised about the authenticity of many "high tulkus" such as Gyaltsen Norbu, the Chinese-selected Panchen Lama, as well as other "high" lamas like Reting Rinpoche, the regent's incarnation during the Dalai Lama's minority, Samding Dorjee

Pagmo, the senior-most female "tulku", Tsemoling, reincarnation of another former regent, or Phagpala Delek Namgyal, head lama of Chamdo monastery; all of whom live in Tibet today and are actively collaborating with Communist China.

Are they genuine *tulkus*? Viewed from a political angle, many issues would be solved if the Dalai Lama decides to go for an "emanation". First, he himself would select the next Dalai Lama and the Chinese will have no say in the process; further, it would bring a far greater stability to the political scene in exile. Ultimately, of course,

it's the Dalai Lama's choice and India, a secular republic, cannot intervene in his decision. But New Delhi must officially declare that the Indian government will stand by the Dalai Lama's decision, while he should keep in mind the Indian population on the borders with

In the meantime, one can only wish the new Sikyong good luck to keep the flock together in these tumultuous times.

The writer is based in South India for the past 42 years. He writes on India, China, Tibet and Indo-French relations.

G-7 AND INDIA

G-7 whose heads met in the UK for three days has taken far-reaching resolutions in its Carbis Bay declaration. The grouping also pointed out China in four references that all are negative. But it equally expressed its concern on open societies in the areas of rising authoritarianism, net shutdowns, infodemics, rights violations etc.. But India voiced against them as it resorted to many of them during revoking of Art. 370 in J&K and in protest against Citizenship Amendment Act. Thus India ought to know that there should not be any deviation between words and deeds.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala

BETTER WORLD The world's elite group G7 had

with an attractive slogan B3W i.e. Build Back Better World while the world, including them is reeling under the Covid-19 pandemic. For the famous informal group's collective statement should not remain a non-starter, they have to handhold other countries with their concrete support to fight the pandemic at global stage. The promise of one billion vaccines to the world countries should be made realised earlier along with other needed ges-Dr D.V.G. Sankararao

Vizianagaram



B.Com., B.Sc. HYDERABAD, JUNE 15

There has been heavy rush for admission to the the First Year of B.Com. and B.Sc. (both general) in the Osmania University con stituent colleges in the City.
With the shifting of B.A., B.Sc.

and B.Com. (general courses), except some rare combinations in B.A. and B.Sc., from the campus colleges to constituent colleges, the pressure of admission to the latter is likely to increase.

For 120 seats in B.Com. First Year in Nizam College and Secunderabad Arts and Science College, 1,660 applications have been received. This large number of applications make one feel that only those who secured very high marks (more than 60 per cent) stand a chance of getting selected

Dilip Cherian Dilli Ka Babu



EC & UP: All 3 commissioners from state; Arora yet to find a role

enior about-to-retire babus of two BJP-ruled states are a miffed lot with the appointment of former Uttar Pradesh chief secretary Anup Chandra Pandey as the new Election Commissioner of India having been done and dusted in a surprise move. But it was clearly in the works in Delhi, long before the skirmishes between UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath and the Big Two spilt out into the open. Thanks to the need for surprise, even babus in his home cadre were left

gasping.
Many see the appointment of Mr Pandey as the Centre's initial steps to focus on retaining Uttar Pradesh and remote central control on the coming Assembly polls.
But the incumbents will walk on

eggs since the ghost of election commissioners past still lurks over Nirvachan Bhavan. This because an appropriate landing spot has not yet been found for former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)

Mr Pandey has joined Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar at the poll panel. Not surprisingly, given Mr Pandey's background questions are being raised about his appointment. Some point out the significance of the fact that all three election commissioners are from UP! Current CEC Sushil Chandra did a long stint in the state's revenue department and EC Rajiv Kumar is a former finance secretary of the state. Besides his tenure as the state chief secretary under chief minister Yogi Adityanath until 2019, Mr Pandey was also the state's industrial development commis-

Prepare for more babu surprises to emerge in and around UP as the polls draw near.

A TWIST IN THE AIR INDIA TALE?

The Air India disinvestment has got stuck between a rock and a hard landing! The second wave of the Covid pandemic has now delayed it

further. It is beginning to seem that the government may have been a trifle too ambitious and optimistic about closing this chapter. While there is no dearth of suitors of the beleaguered carrier, the civil aviation ministry babus have come up against a new stumbling block — the potential seizure of Air India's assets by Cairn Energy, after India lost the tax dispute case against the company in an international arbitration tribunal.

Civil aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola actually now has a new headache to deal with, even as the government is still to finalize the timeline for completion of the stake sale or the valuation of the airline and its assets. Too many loose ends!

The loss to Cairn is a major blow and loss of face for the Modi sarkar. Of course, the Centre says that it will defend any attempt by Cairn to take over the airline's assets and has in fact challenged the arbitration award, but until the case is resolved and the award overturned in India's favour, Kharola and his cohorts in the Civil Aviation Ministry cannot rest easy. In fact, as a result of this new threat, civil aviation babus are now scurrying between their ministry and the Law Ministry to deal with this legal threat. This saga may have a few more seasons left to go.

BABU CRISIS AT THE CENTRE

There is a crisis of babus in the Modi sarkar. The department of personnel and training (DOPT) secretary Deepak Khandekar has informed his multiple bosses that despite the government repeatedly requesting the states to depute more officers at the Centre nothing is moving, and nobody is willing. It has reportedly asked for more officers at the deputy secretary, director and joint secretary levels. Most states however say they are dealing with their own shortage of officers, leading to senior state officials holding several portfolios in many states. Though both Karnataka and Himachal have promised to help

recently, this to-ing and fro-ing has been going on for several months now, with the states' response to the Centre being seen as decidedly

Sources say that the department of personnel and training (DoPT) has made a fresh request to the states last week stating that their lack of appropriate response to the Centre's request is creating a cadre management problem for the Centre. But sources say there is a veiled new warning in the Modi sarkar's latest missive to the states on the issue. Apparently, the letter from DoPT says that the cadres who have not sent adequate nominations for the central staffing scheme at various may find that they have to settle for fewer additional senior duty posts in the future. Will the states take note? Is this a babu pushback or due to political masters unwilling to allow their best to migrate to Delhi?

> Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com.













DECCAN CHRONICLE | NELLORE | WEDNESDAY | 16 JUNE 2021

INDICATO	RS	%
Sensex	52773.05	0.42
Nifty 50	15869.30	0.36
S&P 500*	4,245.70	-0.22
Dollar (₹)	73.31	-0.04
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.19	0.06
Euro (₹)	88.90	-0.15
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,853▼303	0.63
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	73.97	1.52
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.040	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.504	0.003
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

Coal India to close down 23 unviable mines

Coal India Ltd will close down 23 unviable mines, which would help it save around Rs 500 crore, officials said. The world's largest miner has shut down 82 such mines in the last four years. Those 23 mines, comprising open cast and underground ones, to be closed were identified in the last fiscal. Some 158 underground mines employ 43 per cent of the workforce but contribute only 5 per cent of the total production, they said.

74% insurance FDI under auto route notified



The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has notified the government's decision to increase the foreign direct investment limit in the insurance sector under the automatic route to 75 per cent from 49 per cent. A press note said the decision will take effect from the date of FEMA (Foreign Exchange Manage-Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021, was passed in March.

HDFC Bank mobile app was down for 1 hour

The mobile banking app of the largest private sector lender HDFC Bank, which has been under the regulatory lens for network outages, was down for an hour on Tuesday due to unspecified issues. The bank said the issues were faced for an hour late in the morning on Tuesday and the same was resolved in an hour. It urged customers to use the net banking alternative to transact in the interim.

BMW Motorrad rides in S1000R naked superbike

BMW Motorrad India launched the all-new BMW S 1000 R naked sports bike in India with price starting at Rs 17.90 lakh. BMW S1000R is a rival to the recently launched Ducati Streetfighter V4 naked sports bike. The second-generation BMW S 1000 R is being imported as a completely built-up unit (CBU). The roadster is fitted with a newly developed water cooled 4-cylinder in-line engine with a displacement of 999 cc.



■ Sharp dip in jobless rate in June 2nd week

Job numbers signal economy on mend

The unemployment rate dropped sharply last week from a week ago, in the first sign that the economy may be on the mend, as the second wave of the coronavirus outbreak subsides. While exports were already growing in May, consumption, mobi-lity and industrial activity have improved in June, as the unlocking process started in several

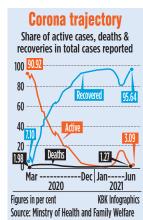
As per the data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), in the second week of June unemployment rate has eased sharply to 8.7 per cent from 13.6 per cent in the first week of June. In the week ended May 23, the jobless rate was as worse as 14.7 per cent. There was a slight improvement at 12.2 per cent in the week to May 30.

The recovery is visible both in the rural and urban markets. Rural unemploy-ment rate has eased to 8.2 per cent from 13.5 per cent. Ūrban jobless rate too has come down to 9.7 per cent from 17.9 per cent.
"We have just received

the data. We will have to analyse the data to understand the factors that have triggered this improve-ment on the job front," Mahesh Vyas, founder and CEO of CMIE told Financial Chronicle.

In the first week of June, CMIE had expected a recovery of sorts in employment. "This relentless loss of employment

UNLOCKING | Weekly jobless rate declined sharply as parts of economy reopened ■ Rural Jobless rate ■ Urban ■ India Total



can be expected to abate somewhat in the coming weeks as many parts of the country that were under a lockdown have started announcing cautious relaxations," it had said. Most of the states, includ-ing Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Maharashtra, Kerala and Karnataka have relaxed their restrictions while getting into the unlocking

Monster.com has also found growth in job postings in several sectors. Around 45 per cent of the industries indicate posimonth-on-month growth in May against

April in job postings, with retail, home appliances and telecom showing the highest growth, it said. Other industries that are doing well compared to the previous month include IT hardware & software, banking & financial services, insurance, office equipment & automation, healthcare, biotechnology & life sciences and phar-

maceuticals. Further, the Google Mobility report released Google recently too has indicated improvement in activity in Indian public places and denoting more relaxation in states under lockdown.

Power consumption too had grown by 12.6 per cent in the first week of June, indicating improved industrial and manufacturing

Merchandise exports grew both yearly as well as sequentially in May. Exports in May 2021 were 67 per cent higher than the low base of the lock-downhit May 2020. The exports were also 7.93 per cent higher than May 2019. Most importantly, exports continued to grow sequentially by 6.6 per cent over

RBI BANS DHFL FROM TAKING DEPOSITS UNDER PIRAMAL FOLD

Mumbai, June 15: The Reserve Bank has revoked the deposit-taking status of Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL) and has reclassified it as a non-deposit taking housing finance company, before approving the Piramal Group's bid to take over the firm towards the end of the

resolution process.

The revelation comes in the June 7 NCLT Mumbai order that has approved the Rs 35,250crore bid for the once second largest mortage lender by Piramal Capital & Housing Finance, forcing over 65 per cent haircut on the creditors and just Re 1 to its NCD holders to whom it owes more than Rs 45.000-crore.

On the 14th page of the 86-page NCLT order by Chaturvedi and Ravikumar Duraisamy, it says DHFL no longer is a deposit taking NBFC but a non-deposit taking one.

The changes were made in February 2021, after the RBI gave a nonobjection to the January 25, 2021 application by R.Subramaniakumar, the DHFL administrator, citing Rule 5 of its FSP (financial

providers) Rules.
In the concluding part of the NCLT order, the bench reiterates that the resolution is subject to the fact that RBI's nonobjection, based on the condition that "the status of the corporate debtor (DHFL) is changed from a deposit-taking company to a non-deposit-taking housing finance com-

Jewellery hallmarking must in 256 districts from today

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 15

The government has announced that mandatory hallmarking will be implemented in 256 districts which have hall-marking centres. There will be no coercive action against jewellers till September 1.

After a meeting with jewellers and trade representatives, the minister of commerce and industry Piyush Goyal said that mandatory hallmarking will come into effect from Wednesday in these 256 districts. The jewellers will have to sell hallmarked jewellery and get their entire inventory hallmarked

September 1. Till then, the government officials will not take any coercive action against the jewellers for stocking non-

hallmarked jewellery.
In the remaining districts, steps will be taken to set up hallmarking centres at a fast pace. As and when the centres are set up, jewellers will have to get the Bureau of Indian Standards licence and get their inventory hallmarked. There will be more than 450 districts which do not have hallmarking centres, said a traders' association.

Mandatory hallmarking has been exempted for jewellers with less than Rs 40 lakh turnover. Kundan and polka jew-ellery, and jewel-studded watches are also exempt from hallmarking.

The fee for BIS registration has been withdrawn. In future hallmarking will be the responsibility

US RETAIL BOON FOR G&J EXPORTS

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 16

With the US retail market projected to grow in double-digits in 2021, Indian gems and jewellery exports are expected to rebound. Over 200 per cent growth in US jewellery sales has already lifted exports of studded gold jewellery and polished diamond sales above pre-Covid levels in April-May. The National Retail Federation of the US has

issued its revised annual forecast for 2021, anticipating that retail sales will grow between 10.5 and 13.5 per cent against the initial projection of 6.5 per cent.

"The combination of vaccine distribution, fiscal stimulus and privatesector ingenuity has put millions of Americans back to work", NRF president and CEO Matthew Shay said.

This is good news for Indian gems and jew-

of the manufacturer. Over 37,000 jewellers have already registered their business with the BIS and another 63,000 are expected to get their registration done.

Meanwhile, the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court has adjourned the hearing of the case on hallmarking to June 28. Earlier, it had given a relief from coercive action till June 14th. This relief will also get extended till then.

ellery exporters, who stagnant growth in shipments for the past few years. US retail jewellery sales grew 203 per cent in May 2021 compared to May 2020 and grew 44.7 per cent compared to May 2019, according to the Mastercard Spending Pulse monthly macroeconomic report.

The positive momentum is already visible in the April-May exports from India. Studded gold jewellery saw a growth of 41 per cent in April-May 2021 compared to pre-Covid April-May of 2019. Cut and polished diamond exports too have witnessed an increase of 21 per cent. "The revival of exports has happened due to the opening of international markets, resurgent demand and strong unstinted support from the Government of India on various issues," said Colin Shah, chairman,

"BIS reports find that around 5 crore jewellery pieces were hallmarked last year and this can come to almost twothirds of the annual consumption, or around 400 tonnes. An additional 200 tonnes need to be hallmarked every year and this can be done at the 25 to 30 per cent of hallmarking centres which are under-utilised," said James Jose, managing director. CGR

Hallmarkers.

CONCESSIONAL GST RATE ON COVID-RELATED ITEMS NOTIFIED

New Delhi, June 15: The finance ministry has notified the concessional rate of GST that will be applicable on Covid-19 relief materials till September

Also, a lower goods and services tax (GST) of 5 per cent will be applicable for work contracts for construction, repair or maintenance of electric furnaces meant for funeral, burial or cremation of the deceased. The earlier tax rate of this service was 12 per cent.

GST Council, chaired by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising state ministers, on June 12. had slashed tax rate on Covid drugs such as Remdesivir and Tocilizumab as well as on medical oxygen, oxygen concentrators and other Covid essentials. The Revenue Department on June 14 notified the lower rates for 18 Covidrelated supplies, like hand sanitiser, pulse oximeters, BiPAP machine, testing kits, ambulances and temperature check equip-

These concessional rates would be applicable till September 30, 2021, it

The GST Council in its June 12 meeting had decided to reduce GST on Covid drug Tocilizumab and black fungus medicine Amphotericin B to 'nil', from 5 per cent.

The rate on Remdesivir and anticoagulants like Heparin is lowered from 12 per cent to 5 per cent.

The Council also decided to cut the GST rate on ambulances to 12 per cent from 28 per cent.

Tax on medical-grade

oxygen, oxygen concentrators (including personal imports), ventilators, BiPmachines and high flow nasal cannula devices has been reduced to 5 per cent from 12 per cent. Also, tax on Covid testing kits, pulse oximeters imports) has been brought down to 5 per cent from 12

per cent. Hand sanitisers, temperature check equipment, gas/electric furnaces for crematoriums too will have 5 per cent tax. — *PTI*

AstraZeneca's antibody cocktail fails to prevent Covid

SUZI RING

AstraZeneca Plc's antibody cocktail was found to be only 33 per cent effective at preventing Covid-19 symptoms in people who had been exposed to the virus, failing the study's main goal and dealing a setback to the drugmaker.

The study, named Storm Chaser, looked at whether the long-acting antibody combination could protect people who had recently been in contact with the Sars-CoV-2 virus in places like care homes.

The outcome is a blow to Astra for a drug that was hoped to be a bright spot in the company's pandemic efforts following the mixed success of its vaccine with the University of Oxford. One of the first shots to be authorised, the vaccine has since faced issues with take-up after a link emerged with rare

The study looked at about 1,121 unvaccinated adults in the US and UK As many as 23 volunteers who got the drug cocktail developed symptomatic Covid-19 after exposure, compared with 17 cases in the group that got a placebo, Astra said in a statement on Tuesday.

The antibody trial is one of six advanced-stage studies Astra is running to test its drug against different endpoints. Another study called Provent, looking at whether the cocktail can prevent infection in people at high risk of catching Covid or with compromised immune svstems, is also expected to readout soon. The US has ordered up to 700,000 doses of the medicine for delivery in 2021, while the UK was already reconsidering an earlier order for one million.

-Bloomberg

MF industry equity assets cross ₹11L cr **RAVI RANJAN PRASAD** MUMBAI, JUNE 15

Equity assets of the mutual fund industry reached a new high of Rs

11 lakh crore in May, aided by a 6.5 per cent rally in the Nifty-50 Index and robust inflows in equity funds and other funds with equity as a component.

Redemption from equity funds also fell, helping the equity assets swell.
"Equity assets under

management including ELSS and index funds of mutual funds,

New Delhi, June 15: The

Promotion of Industry

(DPIIT) has issued a draft

technical report of a

working group, which sug-

gests revising wholesale

price index base year from

2011-12 to 2017-18 and pro-

poses addition of about

480 new items such as

medicinal plants, pen drive, lifts, gymnasium equipment, and certain

motorcycle engines in the

Revising the base year to

Internal

Department

month-on-month (MoM) to Rs 11.1 lakh crore in May 2021. This was on account of a rise in market indices (Nifty up 6.5 per cent MoM) and an increase in equity scheme sales, which was up 15 per cent MoM to Rs 27,700 crore," said the Fund

Folio report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services. The total equity value of the top 20 AMCs increased 7.2 per cent MoM in May '21 versus a rise of 6.5 per cent MoM

in the Nifty. Among the top 10 mutu-

Draft on revising WPI base year issued

2017-18 for computation of wholesale inflation would

help in presenting a more

realistic picture of the

price situation, the report

In the case of agriculture

commodities, new items

such as medicinal plants

like isabgol, aloe vera and

menthol; fennel seed and

methi seed, mushroom

and watermelon were pro-

posed to be added in the

new series subject to avail-

Currently, the index has

a total of 697 items, includ-

has suggested.

ability of data.

sumer, technology, telecom, chemicals, durables, MoM decline in weights.

ing primary articles (117),

fuel and power (16) and

manufactured products

In the new series, a total

of 1,176 items in these three categories have been

proposed—primary arti-

cles (131), fuel and power

(19) and manufactured

"No items have been dropped at this stage. The

items of the current series

would be dropped only

after consultation with the

stakeholders," it added.
— PTI

products (1,026).

MFs top picks in May were PSU banks, oil &

goods, insurance, and pri-

Healthcare, metals, con-

vate banks.

increase was seen in Kotak Mahindra Mutual **LAND ROVER** Fund (8.1 per cent), SBI Mutual Fund (7.7 per cent), Mirae Asset Mutual Fund (7.6 per cent), HDFC Mutual Fund (7.6 per cent), and DSP Mutual Fund (7.5 per cent).

JLR PLANS TO

HYDROGEN

TEST PROTOTYPE



NICK CAREY LONDON, JUNE 15

Jaguar Land Rover will begin tests later this year on a hydrogen fuel-cell prototype model based on its Land Rover Defender vehicle as the carmaker looks to expand its zeroemission car options, the company said on Tuesday. JLR, owned by India's Tata Motors, earlier this

year said that its luxury Jaguar brand will be entirely electric by 2025, and the more rugged, offroad Land Rover brand will launch six pure electric models over the next five years. read more

Most of the auto industry is focusing its efforts on developing batteryelectric cars to meet tightening emission standards in Europe and China.

But JLR is one of a small number of carmakers that sees possibilities for the mass adoption of hydrogen fuel cells, which emit only water as they produce electricity, and has said it believes hydro-gen has a future role in the auto industry.

Hydrogen fuel cells "provide high energy density and rapid refuelling, and minimal loss of range in low temperatures, making the technology ideal larger, longer-range vehicles, or those operated in hot or cold environments," JLR said.

hydrogen Land The Rover Defender will undergo tests to "verify key attributes such as offroad capability and fuel consumption," the company said in a release.

As well as offering the prospect of harmless emissions, hydrogen fuel cells also provide greater range than battery-electric cars. But there is little fuelling infrastructure currently in place to support mass adoption of the

technology.

— Reuters

FIVE-YEAR | TARGET | Auditors are grappling with managing quality in WFH phase PwC to add 100,000 jobs in \$12 bn revamp

BELLA GENGA & ROXANNE HENDERSON

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP is investing \$12 billion across its global business in an overhaul targeting better audits, digitization of services and greener operations.

The professional-services provider will hire 100,000 employees and develop the skills of existing staff over the next five years as it seeks to respond to the post-pandemic operating environit said in an emailed statement on

Tuesday.
"We will continue to evolve our ways of working, and expand our capabilities in the areas that



matter most for the future, while remaining steadfast in our commitment to quality," PwC chairman Bob Moritz said. "We want our people to be the most sought

after in the market." Auditors are grappling with managing quality amid a shift in ways of working introduced by the Covid-19 pandemic. The International Auditing

Board has revised standards for auditors, coming into effect in 2022, to boost technology use, help manage new risks, and improve quality management. PwC is also seeking

and Assurance Standards

ways to address growing calls for transparency in the profession from stakeholders after several accounting scandals among the Big Four auditscandals ing firms knocked public trust. In South Africa, for example, KPMG has put in place a variety of reforms after it came under fire in 2017 for work done for a politicalconnected family accused of plundering the

government's coffers. The South African unit

2,500 new employees over the next five years, chief executive officer in the region Dion Shango told reporters in a conference call. Across Africa, where it has a presence in 34 countries, the firm plans to bulk up its operations with a \$400 million investment. The company is also interviewing for non-executive directors to strengthen audit oversight. PwC has also set aside

of PwC will add at least

\$3 billion of its total global investment to help double the scale of its Asia-Pacific operations, it said. The firm's spending will also focus on responding to environmental, social and governance trends across its operations.

SHORT TAKES

Nurse was told not

to disturb Diego

Buenos Aires: A nurse accused of neglect in Diego Maradona's death told Argentine prosecutors on Monday that he was following orders "not to disturb' the football icon while he slept. Ricardo Almiron, 37, was Maradona's nighttime carer and was one of the last people to see the World Cup winning captain alive. He is suspected of lying when he claimed Maradona was sleeping and breathing normally hours before he died. An autopsy revealed he was dying at that

time. Almiron is one of seven people under investigation for manslaughter after a board of experts looking into Maradona's death found he had received inadequate care and was abandoned to his fate for a "prolonged, agonising period"

Ollie to return for **Sussex 2nd team**

Sussex: Suspended England pacer Ollie Robinson, who had taken a short break last week from international cricket, will return to action with Sussex's second team on Tuesday, the county announced. Robinson was suspended by the ECB for his offensive racist and sexist

tweets, dating back to 2012-13

when he was 18 and 19. Robinson missed Sussex's Vitality Blast T20 fixtures against Gloucestershire and Hampshire Hawks last week as the pacer decided to take a break to spend time with his family. Robinson has already apologised for his tweets and he got support from his teammates even as a few said the ECB did the right thing. - PTI

IOC VP arrives in Tokyo for Games

Tokyo: International Olympic Committee vice-president John Coates arrived in Japan on Tuesday, as organisers ramp up final preparations with just over five weeks until the pandemicpostponed Games open. Ahead of his arrival, several dozen people protested against the Games in Tokyo, though recent opinion polls suggest public opposition may be weakening. Organisers will release the final version of their virus countermeasures for athletes in a so-called "playbook" that they say will keep the event safe. They have already announced measures including daily testing for athletes and GPS tracking of journalists coming from abroad, in an attempt to reassure a sceptical public. — AFP

India, Afghanistan play out 1-1 draw

Doha: India benefitted from an own goal by Afghanistan goalie as they ended their World Cup Qualifiers campaign with a 1-1 draw to book a berth in the next qualifying round of the Asian Cup here on Tuesday. A howler by Afghanistan goalie Ovays Azizi handed India a 1-0 lead in the 75th minute but Hossein Zamani equalised in the 81st minute in a match marred by poor refereeing. The two sides had also played out a 1-1 draw in the first leg match in

Anand to feature in

Dushanbe in 2019. — PTI

Croatia leg of GCT

Chennai: Former world champion Viswanathan Anand will participate in the Croatia Grand Chess Tour Rapid and Blitz tournament to be held in Zagreb from July 5 to 12. The tournament will be the third leg of the 2021 Grand Chess Tour. Apart from the Indian Grandmaster Anand, the event will also see former world champion Garry Kasparov, who will feature in the blitz section. It will be the first across-theboard event for Anand (ELO rating 2753) in over a year as sporting schedules across the world have been hit owing to the Covid-19 pandemic and the

Live on TV

travel restrictions. - PTI

Group Stage: Finland vs Russia from 6.30 pm; Turkey vs Wales from 9.30 pm: Italy vs Switzerland from 12.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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Editor: Kaushik Mitter

RED CHILE BITE Spain & Sweden. Messi on target, but spicy Chile frustrate Argentina in Copa in dull 0-0 draw

Messi on target, but spicy Chile frustrate Argentina in Copa

Argentina

(Lionel Messi 33)

(Eduardo Vargas 57)

Chile

Rio De Janeiro, June 15: Gonzalez headed over the superstar Lionel Messi scored a stunning freekick but Chile hit back to earn a 1-1 draw in the Copa America on Monday.

Messi's magical left foot gave dominant Argentina a deserved first half lead but Eduardo Vargas equalised in the second half after Argentina goal-keeper Emiliano Martinez saved veteran midfielder Arturo Vidal's penalty.

Despite Argentina's dominance, Messi lamented that "we weren't calm, we didn't have control of the ball.

His coach Lionel Scaloni things differently,

'We deserved to win but in the end we drew. In any case, it's only the start of a very tough tournament," said Scaloni.

Before the Group A game started in the Nelson Santos stadium in Rio de Janeiro, there was a light and effects tribute to Argentina legend Diego Maradona, who died in November aged 60, although the ground was empty due to coronavirus

restrictions. The first chance fell to Messi on eight minutes as Leandro Paredes picked out Nicolas Tagliafico on the left and the fullback nodded the ball down for his captain, who sent a volley wide.

Minutes later, Giovani Lo Celso crossed from the left but a sliding Lautaro Martinez could only spoon the ball over the bar from inside the six-yard box. Argentina were in total command and Lo Celso picked out Nicolas Gonzalez to shoot from 20 yards but goalkeeper Claudio Bravo got down well to his right to tip the

ball around the post. From Messi's corner

Rome, June 15: A 74-year-old chain-smoking Czech coach might have

made just as much of an

impact on this Italy squad

Ciro Immobile, Lorenzo

Marco

and

Verratti each had break-

out seasons under Zdenek

Zeman in Serie B nearly a

decade ago at Pescara,

where they learned an

attacking philosophy that

they're currently employ-ing at the European

New Delhi, June 15:

"knockout blow"

form Kiwis.

stint in quarantine.

in Southampton.

Sharma.

January, and Tendulkar

pointed to their wealth of

pace options for the inau-

Bhuvneshwar Kumar did

not make the squad, but India can call on Jasprit

Shami, Mohammed Siraj,

Umesh Yadav and Ishant

"All these guys are tal-ented bowlers and suc-cessful bowlers,"

do their best and are fully

capable of launching a

Tendulkar said it would

be a toss-up between the

veteran Ishant and the

up-and-coming Siraj, who

They would go out and

Tendulkar said.

knockout blow.

championship's title clash starting Friday

bowler

Mohammed

Championship.

as Roberto Mancini has.

bar and moments later he was released by Lo Celos but shot straight at Bravo. It would be a frustrating night for Gonzalez.

Argentina got the goal their domination deserved on 33 minutes, and inevitably it was Messi who scored, curling a free-kick from 25 yards out just beyond Bravo's

They should have had a second soon afterwards but teed up by Gonzalo Montiel 10 yards out, Martinez screwed his shot horribly wide. would be worried if

the team wasn't creating chances. The important thing is we are, we're getting lots of players in the box. And it will go in," said Scaloni. Chile started the second

half with more intent and Erick Pulgar played Vargas into the area but his shot on the stretch was saved by Martinez.

However, Vidal stormed in to try to fire home the rebound and was caught by Tagliafico as he shot.

FOR PARAGUAY

Paraguay lead group A after a 3-1 win over Bolivia at the Olimpico stadium in Goiania. Bolivia scored first via Erwin Saavedra's first-half penalty, but Paraguay changed its fortunes after the break with Alejandro Romero and a brace by Angel Romero. Argentina's next match is against Uruguay

Paraguay

(Alejandro Romero 62, Angel Romero 65, 80)

Bolivia (Erwin Saavedra 10-pen)

3-0 win over Turkey in the

Euro 2020 tournament

opener was a case in

point, as Immobile hardly

even looked when he slot-

ted a pass between two

defenders to set up

Insigne for one of his pre-

Having missed the game

against Turkey as he

works his way back from a

right knee injury, Verratti

is expected to take a spot

second

ADVANTAGE INDIA

Sachin expects fast bowlers to deliver knockout blow

on Italy's bench for

ferred curled shots.

Wednesday's

Swiss ready for Italian challenge Italy's third goal in their Group A game against

Switzerland. **FINLAND FACE RUSSIA**

Lost, perhaps, in the surrounding Christian Eriksen's collapse during Denmark's game against Finland at the Euro was the result after play resumed.

The Finns, playing in their first ever game at a major soccer tournament, won 1-0 in Copenhagen. It will likely go down as

one of the most over-

looked scorelines in the history of the tourna-ment, given what had happened to Eriksen. Indeed. Finland captain Tim Sparv said there were barely any celebrations in the dressing room.

Argentina's Lionel Messi in action during a group game against Chile in Copa

"It was very quiet," Sparv said, "and under-

standabiy so. **TURKEY SEEK WIN**

Turkey will be expecting a big boost from a supportive crowd in Baku, and they might just need it.

ners can bat," Tendulkar

said, when asked about

India's chances of play-

ing two spinners.
"And if the wicket starts

the wicket does not offer much to fast bowlers, for

some reason, then we

have the option of spin-

PUJARA AWAITS
WATERSHED MOMENT

watershed moment for

the revival of the longest

format just like the 2007

World T20 triumph did for

the popularity of the

shortest format, feels

Test cricket needs to sur-

vive and with this WTC

Final, it will definitely help," Pujara said.

players in India will want

to play Test cricket. And

overall, even across the

"If we win, more young

Yes of course, I think

Cheteshwar Pujara.

After a 3-0 loss to Italy without even a shot on target, Turkey will face a Wales team looking to build on their opening when the teams meet Wednesday at the European Championship.

"Hopefully we can feed off the negative energy of tne Turkey ians opposed to the positive one. We can try and have the game on our terms, which is always the objective," said Wales midfield-

er Joe Morrell. — Agencies

UMESH PIPS SHARDUL IN INDIA SQUAD

Southampton, June 15: Veteran speedster Umesh Yadav pipped Brisbane Test hero Shardul Thakur as the 15th member of the Indian squad that will take on New Zealand in World Championship final starting here on June 18. Umesh, along with Mohammed Shami, and Hanuma Vihari all of whom got injured during the Australia tour, were back in the 15 that needed to be announced as per

ICC squad protocol. Apart from Shardul, the notable names to miss out were Mayank Agarwal, and Washington Sundar. England series hero Axar Patel also missed out.

WILLIAMSON TO LEAD KIWIS

Kane Williamson will be available to lead New Zealand against India in World Championship final, head Gary announced. — Agencies India squad: Virat Kohli (c), Shubman Gill, Rohit Sharma, C. Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Rishabh Pant (wk), R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Md Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Sirai, W. Saha, Umesh Yaday and Hanuma Vihari.

NZ squad: Kane Williamson (C), Tom Blundell, Trent Boult, Devon Conway, Colin Grandhomme, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Tom Latham, Henry Nicholls, Ajaz Patel, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Neil Wagner BJ Watling and Will Young.

gled with the familiar problems on Monday as a string of missed chances allowed Sweden to hang on for a goalless draw in their 2020 opener in

Alvaro Morata wasted the best opportunity of a dominant first half, in which Spain churned out 419 passes, the most of any team on record in the opening 45 minutes of a European Championship

fixture.
But Luis Enrique's team lost their rhythm after the interval and Sweden might even have won it, the excellent Alexander Isak hitting the post before his strike partner Marcus Berg missed a sitter from two yards out.

A goalless draw leaves Spain playing catch-up in Group E after Slovakia earlier pulled off a shock 2-1 victory over Poland, raising the stakes for the game between Spain and Poland on Saturday, when a loser would be left struggling to qualify.

Another failure to con-

vert possession into chances was reminiscent of recent disappointments for Spain, most notably when they were frustrated by Russia at the 2018 World Cup, before going out on

In the wake of that

Seville (Spain), June 15: defeat, Luis Enrique was Spain's new team strugtasked with launching a new era as coach, a project that involved promoting a fresh crop of players but also a more direct, penetrative style.

SLOVAKIA PAST POLAND

Inter Milan defender Milan Skriniar fired Slovakia to a 2-1 victory over neighbours Poland on Monday in their opening game in Saint Petersburg. An own goal from Poland goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny handed Slovakia the lead on 18 minutes, but Karol Linetty equalised for Poland right at the start of the second half.

Poland were reduced to 10 men on the hour when midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak picked up a second yellow card, and Slovakia made their advantage count as Skriniar drove in a well-taken win-ner at a corner. "We're delighted to start the competition with a win. It was a difficult game, Poland are a quality team," said Skriniar.

Slovakia

(Wojciech Szczesny 18-own goal, Milan Skriniar 69)

Poland

(Karol Linetty 46)

Quick passes

Eriksen thanks supporters

Christian Eriksen sent his first public message from the hospital on Tuesday, thanking supporters for their "sweet and amazing" well-wishes after his collapse at the European Championship. Eriksen remains in the hospital after suf-fering cardiac arrest during the game against Finland on Saturday, when he had to be resuscitated with a defibrillator on the field. "Big thanks for your sweet and

Christian Eriksen

amazing greetings and messages from all around the world. It means a lot to me and my family," Eriksen wrote in a message that was shared

Ronaldo shuns Cola bottles

 \mathbf{R} on aldo has built a reputation as one of the hardest workers in the game, taking his fitness obsessions to another level in order to push his top playing days well into his late 30s. In a move likely to anger the Euro sponsor, the Juventus and Portugal forward glanced to the side before moving two glass bottles away from his position and saying "drink water" to the media while his microphone was still turned off before disapprovingly saying: "Coca-Cola!".

Swedes sound out police

The Swedish football federation filed a police report on Tuesday after striker Marcus Berg was subjected to a flood of social media abuse and threats from fans after missing a late chance against Spain at the Euro. Berg couldn't connect cleanly with the ball and missed the target when he had an open net in the second half of the 0-0 draw in Seville. He received a torrent of abuse online after the game and team officials said some of the posts contained illegal threats that have been reported to Swedish police. Berg said he turned off his social media channels but had been told about the threats. "It was tough. What happens on social media is really sad," Berg said.

INDIA VS ENGLAND | ONE-OFF TEST

Seven-year wait ends for women

Bristol, June 15: favourable record England and "positive mindset" despite inadequate preparation time will spur the Indian women when they take on the seasoned hosts in their first Test engagement in nearly seven years here

from Wednesday.
After multiple quarantines in India and UK, the Mithali Raj-led squad got little over a week to prepare for their first red ball game since November 2014.

Mithali was among the seven current players, who were a part of that victorious eleven against South Africa in Mysuru.

While experienced play-

ers like the skipper, her deputy Harmanpreet Kaur. Smriti Mandhana and Jhulan Goswami have not played red ball cricket at all in recent times, it will be a tougher test for the vounger lot who don't get to play first-class matches

in domestic cricket. Unlike the men's squad, which played intra-squad games in Southampton ahead of the WTC final, the women prepared only in the nets which might hurt them in the four-day

Mithali said she would not want rookie players to be burdened with expectations and would advice them to enjoy the game. "Well, we did brief them

(players) about how the long format is played and clearly for someone who is making a debut, you don't want to burden them with expectations and responsi-

"So, it is just that I would brief together as a team, support them on the field and they should just enjoy playing this format," the skipper added.

Mithali also batted for having all three formats in bilateral series going ahead, saying the away Tests against England and Australia are just the beginning. India will also play a Test, a day-night match, when they tour Australia.



India skipper Virat Kohli during an ICC photoshoot ahead of the World Test Championship final against New Zealand.

place in the starting XI. "It will be a nice challenge for the team management to have in front of them where you have more bowlers who are capable of playing and delivering," he said.

"All these bowlers are terrific bowlers. I have not seen their practise sessions and don't know who is in good rhythm or not. I feel it is going to be between Ishant and

Siraj, 27, played a key

starred in Australia, for a role in India's triumph in Australia as they recov-

But despite India's pace stocks, Tendulkar also expected spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja to make the team with their ability to bat in the mid-

ered from a heavy loss to win the four-match series 2-1, sealed with a memorable victory by their second-stringers Brisbane.

"I see a high probability

there because both spin-

world, Test cricket needs to survive and this is a very good way to do it, having this WTC," said India's dependable No 3. "Personally, it means a lot as I play just one format (Tests). This is the

first time we are playing this WTC Final. As a team, we have worked hard over a period of time. You have to win so many series away and at home. To be at top, it does require a lot of hard work," said Pujara.



