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HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | 22 JUNE 2021

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Max/Min temp. 34/24°C

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana
Tithi: Jyeshtha Shuddha Dwadasi till 10.20 am
Star: Vishakha till 2.20 pm
Variyam: 5.54 pm to 7.20 pm
Durmuhurtam: 8.23 am to 9.15 am; 11.12 pm to 11.56 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm
HJRI CALENDAR
Zeeqad 10,1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.32 am
Zohar: 12.28 pm
Asar: 4.55 pm
Maghrib: 6.58 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.53 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.43 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 4.25 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 3.07 AM

COUNTER POINT

Don't be jubilant... it is for those leaders who have defected from other parties!

SHORT TAKES

Eamcet 2021 in August 1st week

Hyderabad: The Eamcet 2021 exams for students in Telangana seeking entry into engineering courses will be held on August 4, 5, and 6, while the entrance exam for those seeking admission into agriculture and medical courses will be held on August 9, and 10, it was announced on Monday. Education minister Sabitha Indra Reddy also announced the dates for Ecet, PGECet, Icet, Lawcet, Edcet and Polycet for 2021 admissions.

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■ Report on Page 5

CBSE panel to resolve disputes

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday was told by both CBSE and CICSE that they have amended their respective evaluation scheme to assess Class 12 students and incorporated a dispute resolution mechanism for the candidates who have any objections. The CBSE said it has incorporated a clause which said that the dispute with regard to computation of results will be referred to a Committee constituted by the board.

Amarnath yatra cancelled again

Srinagar: The Amarnath Yatra has been cancelled for the second year in a row due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Like last year, the pilgrimage will be only “symbolic”, with all rituals to be performed quietly by a select number of priests and hermits at the revered cave-shrine at a height of 13,000 feet (3,882 metres) in the lower Himalayas in south Kashmir. Like last year, the morning and evening aarti will be telecast live, tweeted Jammu and Kashmir’s lieutenant-governor, Manoj Sinha.

■ Full report inside

Warangal to get 24-storey super speciality hospital

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC WARANGAL, JUNE 21

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Monday laid the foundation stone for a 24-storey multi-super specialty hospital in Warangal at the site where the 138-year-old Warangal Central Prison was demolished. He said it would be the tallest tower in Warangal city once completed. and set a deadline of one-and-a-half years for the officials and public representatives to complete the hospital.

“I read somewhere that they built a 10-storey building in just 28 hours. Our old habits must die. Instead of taking years to complete a project, this one must be ready in the quickest possible time,” he told the officials.

Asking a team of health officials and public representatives to visit Canada and study how the hospitals are built there, he said the Warangal hospital should be even better.

The Chief Minister said that the mother mortality rate (MMR) and infant mortality rate (IMR) in Telangana had come down. He said focus on mother and child safety must increase and centres must be set up at every level for them across the state.

■ Page 2: Mamnoor airport to be reopened soon: CM

SIDHU SLAMS AMARINDER, SAYS HE IS NOT ‘SHOWPIECE’

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh landed in Delhi to meet the high powered committee amidst the infighting in the Punjab Congress. Hectic parleys continued during the day with several MPs, MLAs having separate meetings.

Insiders claim that some of them even met senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

Meanwhile, dissenter Navjot Singh Sidhu opened a direct front against Punjab CM. Hitting out at him, the former Punjab minister said, “I am not a show-piece that you will take me out campaigning, win the elections and then keep me back in the almirah. I can see how you do mining, how you do this, how you do that. Selfish vested interests are overriding the interests of the state. This is unbearable for me.”



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao lays the foundation stone for a new multi super-specialty hospital in Warangal on Monday.

WARANGAL URBAN, RURAL TO BECOME HANAMKONDA, WARANGAL DISTRICTS

DC CORRESPONDENT WARANGAL, JUNE 21

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao announced that Warangal Urban and Warangal Rural districts would be renamed Hanamkonda and Warangal districts to facilitate faster growth of the old city of Warangal.

Addressing the people after inaugurating the integrated collectorate complex in Hanamkonda on Monday, the Chief Minister said, “A similar building would be set up either in the Autonagar area or in the Azam Jahi

Mills ground which will house offices of all government departments. This building will function as the administrative centre of Hanamkonda district and the proposed building will be for Warangal district administration.” Ever since it came into existence in 2016, Warangal Rural didn’t have a headquarter and all its offices were operated from Hanamkonda. The CM’s announcement clears the air on the fate of the districts.

■ Page 2: Orders for renaming districts soon: CM

UP min: CM pick after elections

Lucknow, June 21: Uttar Pradesh minister Swami Prasad Maurya has said the state’s next chief minister will be decided by the BJP’s central leadership after the Assembly polls, prompting the Samajwadi Party to suggest that the ruling party is divided on the leadership issue. The labour minister made the remark Sunday at the BJP’s state headquarter here while replying to a question from reporters.

The Chief Minister will be finalised by the central leadership after the Assembly elections, Maurya said. The remark appeared to go against the statements made earlier by other party leaders who suggested earlier that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will be the party’s CM face again in the Assembly elections early next year. Last week in Etah, BJP’s state unit president Swatantra Dev Singh said the polls will be contested under Adityanath’s leadership.

“Corruption and hooli-

ganism have ended and development is taking place. We will fight the 2022 elections under the hardworking and honest chief minister Yogi Adityanath,” Singh had told reporters.

But Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya had earlier said in Bareilly that the party’s national leadership will decide under whom the upcoming elections will be fought.

When asked if there was any confusion in the party over this, BJP spokesperson Harishchandra Srivastava played down the issue. Swatantra Dev is the state unit president and what he has said is important. What Keshav Prasad Maurya and Swami Prasad Maurya have said is on the basis of the party’s norms and traditions, he said.

Formally, the announcement of the chief minister’s name is made by the parliamentary board, and so Keshav Prasad Maurya and Swami Prasad Maurya would have said this, Srivastava added. —PTI

Modi: Yoga offers hope as world fights Covid-19

Says it’s a way from stress to strength, negativity to creativity

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

On the seventh International Yoga Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said yoga remains a “ray of hope” as the world fights the Covid-19 pandemic while asserting that in these difficult times it has become a source of inner strength.

The theme for this International Yoga Day was “Yoga for Wellness”.

Mr Modi, who conceived the idea of International Yoga Day during his speech at the UN General Assembly in September 2014, said with the World Health Organisation India has taken another important step and now the world was going to get the power of M-Yoga application, having many videos of yoga training based on Common Yoga Protocol available in different languages of the world.

“At a time when the whole world is fighting the Coronavirus pandemic, yoga remains a ray of hope,” the PM said while adding that the app will help to make the “One World, One Health” motto successful.

Noting that there may not have been any major public events in most countries and in India for around a year and a half, but the enthusiasm for Yoga Day had not diminished. Mr Modi said for many nations across the world “Yoga Day is not their age-old cultural festival and in this difficult time, people could have forgotten about it and ignored it, but on the con-



People participate in a yoga session in front of Charminar on Monday morning on the occasion of International Yoga Day.

— P.SURENDRA

trary, people’s enthusiasm for yoga has increased”.

“When the unseen Coronavirus knocked on the doors of the world, no country was prepared for it in terms of resources, capability and mental state. We all have seen that in such difficult times, yoga has become a great source of inner strength,” he said adding that yoga shows the way from

stress to strength and from negativity to creativity. He also noted that medical science focuses as much on “healing” as on treatment, and yoga plays a role in healing. Many schools now begin their online classes with yogic exercises like pranayam, the PM said, adding that this would prepare children physically to deal with Covid.

Pawar renews Third Front bid under Rashtra Manch

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

In a fresh attempt to set up a Third Front, Maharashtra strongman and NCP supremo Sharad Pawar has called a meeting of several Opposition parties on Tuesday under the aegis of the Rashtra Manch, which was started by him and Yashwant Sinha, a former BJP Union minister who is now in the Trinamul Congress.

According to sources, Mr Pawar, to start with, aims to bring together all the non-Congress Opposition parties.

The meeting is expected to be attended by, among others, the NCP’s Majeed

Memon and Samajwadi Party’s Ghanshyam Tiwari, who is also the convener of the Rashtra Manch, as well as AAP, RLD and RJD representatives.

It is likely to see discussions on possible strategies for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Besides this, the leaders may also explore plans to jointly take on the BJP in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh elections.

Invitations have gone to several parties on behalf of Mr Pawar and Mr Sinha, who joined Mamata Banerjee’s TMC just before the West Bengal elections. “Sharad Pawar ji and Shri Yashwant Sinha ji are co-chairing a

discussion on the present national scenario. Yashwant Sinha has requested your kind presence and participation in the meeting,” says the invitation sent out by the Rashtra Manch.

Interestingly, some Congress leaders who were also part of the Rashtra Manch have politely declined the invitations that were sent out. These include leaders like Shatrughan Sinha and MPs Vivek Tankha and Manish Tewari. The Rashtra Manch is a coalition of Opposition parties formed by former finance minister Yashwant Sinha in 2018 to take on the BJP-led Central government.

AFTER 82L JABS IN 1 DAY, PM URGES ALL TO TAKE IT

New Delhi, June 21: With over 80 lakh doses of anti Covid vaccine administered on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the feat as “gladdening” and asserted that vaccine remains the strongest weapon to fight the disease.

The PM had earlier appealed to people to get vaccinated to strengthen the fight against the pandemic as the Central government has made free Covid vaccination available to all adults.

Over 82.7 lakh doses were administered till evening on the first day of the revised vaccination guidelines coming into force, under which all those above 18 years of age will be inoculated free of cost at government centres. Vaccines were so far free for people above 45 years of age.

Modi tweeted, “Today’s record-breaking vaccination numbers are gladdening. The vaccine remains our strongest weapon to fight Covid-19. Congratulations to those who got vaccinated and kudos to all the front-line warriors working hard to ensure so many citizens got the vaccine. Well done India!”

The previous high was of over 48 lakh doses on April 1. The poor, and middle class will be biggest beneficiary, he added.

—PTI

DID NDMA LED BY PM DECIDE NOT TO PAY EX GRATIA, ASKS APEX COURT

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

The Supreme Court on Monday reserved its verdict on the ex gratia compensation of ₹4 lakh to the next of kins of those killed by Covid-19.

Taking a dim view of the Centre’s position that complying with provision of Disaster Management Act (NDMA) on the payment of ex gratia would severely strain the government coffers, a vacation bench comprising Justice Ashok Bhushan and Justice M.R. Shah asked if NDMA, headed by the Prime Minister, took a decision not to pay any ex gratia to the families of Covid-19 victims.

As Justice Shah said that it will have a wide ramification if the government says that it has no funds, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta appearing for the Centre said that it is not that government does not have money but the focus is on augmenting health infrastructure, food, medical care, oxygen, vaccination instead of a one-time compensation of ₹4 lakh each.

Justice Shah asked if the Finance Commission fixes ₹15,000 crore for disaster management and Covid occurs and Centre needs another ₹10,000 crore, can it say it will only spend ₹15,000 crore?

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People gather in crowded public places without maintaining social distancing as the government removes the lockdown, in Hyderabad on Monday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Third wave fears rise as crowds hang out

Majority claim to be vaccinated; move without masks

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

As the state government lifted the clampdown on the movement of people and vehicles from Sunday, the city erupted in joy with residents rushing out in the open, without caring two hoots about a possible third wave of the pandemic of which experts have been warning for quite a while.

These unmindful assemblies of crowds in restaurants, malls, community halls and small gatherings in apartments and complexes create an ideal environment for proliferation of SARS-CoV-2, the Coronavirus that causes Covid-19, said experts. Majority of people who are out on the roads claim that they are vaccinated hence not wearing masks properly or following social distancing.

With the second wave on decline, economic considerations led to lifting of lockdown but the manner in which unnecessary activities are taking place has caused concerns among the authorities and medical fraternity.

Despite being vaccinated, the protection is only 80 per cent and there are concerns already being raised by scientists on the emergence of new variants.

The delta variant which was highly transmissible in the country leading to a large number of cases still exists around. Dr Prabhu Kumar C., a senior Covid-19 specialist, said, "The virus is an organism looking for survival. When people get vaccinated, it looks for means to fight the vaccine and escape it. This means that it evolves with another combination to survive. This survival

Herd immunity in near future a myth: Experts

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Herd immunity is not possible with the risky behaviour of people immediately after unlocking, say experts. The process of unlocking according to the guidelines by epidemiologists has to be slow and gradual. Dr Rajan Shukla, associate professor of Indian Institute of Public Health says, "Restrictions are to be lifted in a controlled manner and according to step-wise plan using a two-week incubation period. Closure of essential business must be lifted first and returning of work-force to establishments

mechanism of the virus gets a boost when there is opportunity provided by humans — both vaccinated and non-vaccinated. With innumerable host bodies available, their opportunity to survive is much better leading to an increase in their numbers."

Experts state that variants from the virus are expected but if the behaviour of people is lax, it gives an opportunity for a stronger variant.

Rushab Shah, a businessman, explained, "Unlocking has been for overcoming the economic crisis and livelihood challenges. But we are seeing luxurious weddings in community halls with more than 100 people participating. No masks and no so-

cial distancing. These are super spreader events which have already started."

Interstate travel and movement of people from one part of the country to another also lead to movement of the virus giving it the opportunity that it requires for further strengthening itself.

Experts state that only the most necessary and important activities must be curtailed till the full population is vaccinated. Dr Minhaj Nasirabadi, general secretary of Indian Psychiatric Society, Telangana branch, said, "The main reason for this behaviour is that people want to come out and enjoy themselves. They are confident not to

be infected with the virus as they were previously infected."

He said that those who have been vaccinated are confident that it will protect them. "With the government lifting the lockdown, they believe that everything is normal and they can go out. The point is that there must be proper awareness on the need to use masks and social distance for their safety and of the community to protect health and also revive the economy. Practical implementation must be the target which will be easy to follow."

Experts are of the opinion that livelihood challenges are a consideration but luxurious superspreader events can be avoided till the situation improves.

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TS might not begin free vax for 18+ soon

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The new phase of free Covid-19 vaccination for the 18-plus years category that was launched in the country on Monday will take some time before it arrives in Telangana state, it is learnt.

According to health department officials, Telangana state, with its current stocks of vaccines, was focused on vaccinating people from high-

● **ON SUNDAY**, the health dept said a total of 1,06,210 people had received their Covid-19 shots of whom 1,03,145 got their first dose.

risk categories that include people in the 18-44 age group, along with vaccinating those in the other upper age groups and those with existing comorbidities.

The new phase of free vaccination was recently announced by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi as part of the Centre's plan to provide vaccines free to all states.

According to the officials here, the current vaccination drive in the state is likely to continue till the end of this month with the existing doses supplied so far to the state.

Around 70 lakh people in the state will require, beginning July, to start getting their second dose shots. Adding fresh free

vaccination at government centres for the 18-plus category will mean a bigger requirement of vaccines.

On Sunday, the health department said a total of 1,06,210 people had received their Covid-19 shots of whom 1,03,145 got their first dose and 3,065 their second.

According to the Union ministry of health, on Monday Telangana state administered a total of 1,46,302 doses of vaccine.

ORDERS FOR RENAMING DISTRICTS SOON: CM

From Page 1

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao said relevant orders would be issued within two or three days.

"We have set up smaller districts to ease administration and bring the officials closer to the public. It has caused an administrative reform in the state and aided uninterrupted democracy. However, we still have a long way to go and hence there is a need for such changes to be made," he stated.

He also said the collector's bungalow, which is in a dilapidated state, would be demolished to expand the integrated collectorate complex. He said he was not entirely happy with the new collectorate as there were much better ones in other districts. "By including the area of the adjacent collector's bungalow, more amenities like lawns and a helipad can be accommodated. The collector's residence may be constructed elsewhere," he opined.

CM: MAMNOOR AIRPORT TO BE REOPENED SOON

From Page 1

Rao noted that the existing MGM Hospital, Warangal Central Prison area, Kakatiya Medical College and Regional Eye Hospital which were set up adjacent to each other constituted about 200 acres.

"A major health hub must come up in the entirety of this area. A dental hospital and a college will also be sanctioned here. The MGM Hospital and the Regional Eye Hospital may be demolished if required and better buildings can come up in their places. The state would bear the expense even if it costs ₹3,000 crore," he said.

The Chief Minister said Warangal, which is the second most important city in the state, must have all health facilities so that it would spread into rural areas. Even the airport in Mamnour will be reopened soon to fulfil this purpose.

"In a bid to not centre everything around Hyderabad, I proposed to set up the Kaloji Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences in Warangal and also inaugurated its administrative building today," he said.

A specially-abled man carries a placard seeking vaccination at home for disabled persons, on Monday.



— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

COVID | ALERT Laboratory started testing animals for virus in August 2020

LaCones issues rules for zoo staff

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The city-based Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) has called on veterinary staff, and animal keepers to be on the alert for Covid-19 symptoms in zoo animals, and immediately segregate them if they were found showing signs of having the disease. It also asked the zoo staff to take proper Covid-19 safety precautions. LaCones, one of the four designated centres in the country for testing animal samples for the Coronavirus, on Monday released guidelines for zoo front-

DETAILS OF VIRUS IN ANIMALS

COVID SUSCEPTIBLE ANIMALS: Lions, tigers, pumas, cougars, snow leopards, gorillas, cats, dogs, fruit bats, hamsters, pigs, rabbits.

SYMPTOMS IN ANIMALS: Lack of appetite, anorexia, coughing, sneezing, wheezing, nasal discharge, fever, respiratory distress.

SAMPLE COLLECTION FROM: Nasal or oral swabs if possible, nasal discharges/saliva/faecal samples, or rectal swabs.

line staff on Covid-19 investigation in captive animals. "The guidelines provide detailed protocols that include pictorial and frequently asked questions for an easier understanding of those collecting samples for Covid testing in wildlife", said Dr Vinay K. Nandicoori, Director, CSIR-CCMB. LaCONES said it started testing animal samples for possible SARS-CoV-2 infection in August 2020 with its scientists finding the first positive samples from Asiatic lions in Nehru Zoological

Park in the city in April. As part of developing a protocol for collecting samples from animals showing Covid-19 symptoms, the lab tested different kinds of nasal, oropharyngeal, rectal and fecal samples from the animals. "We hope that our recommendations help zoo staff in collecting and packing the samples appropriately before they are sent for testing. Given how difficult it is to get samples from animals, it is all the more important that we make most of the samples we get," said Dr Karthikeyan Vasudevan, scientist-in-charge, LaCONES.

SHORT TAKES

TELANGANA PLANS
GRAND BONALU
CELEBRATIONSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The state government has decided to celebrate Bonalu in a grand manner this year. The celebrations were suspended last year due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

"The Chief Minister has directed us to make elaborate arrangements to celebrate Bonalu in a grand manner this year. Following his directions we have convened a high-level meeting with officials of all departments concerned on June 25," said minister Talasani Srinivasan Yadav on Monday.

Speaking to media personnel, the minister said the CM had sanctioned ₹15 crore to spruce up facilities in temples where Bonalu celebrations will be held.

The Golconda Bonalu will be held on July 11, Secunderabad Bonalu on July 25 and the Hyderabad Bonalu on August 1, he said.

Srinivas Yadav said that the Chief Minister had asked them to present aol bonam to the Goddess this year with a prayer to save mankind from the Coronavirus pandemic.

He said several programmes will be conducted to showcase Telangana culture during celebrations.

CHILDREN IN 6-9
AGE GROUP TO GET
AFFECTED: SURVEYDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Amidst the threat of the third wave of Covid-19 affecting children, the fourth round of community based sero-surveillance of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the disease, will for the first time include children in the age of six to nine years.

The sero prevalence in this group is being studied to understand how many children were affected in the second wave. With children being mostly asymptomatic carriers of the virus, the study will indicate prevailing numbers in this age group in the state. The other two age groups are 10 to 17 years of age and above 18 years. The general population and healthcare workers are going to be studied to understand the spread of the virus in these two groups.

The study will be taken up in the districts of Jangoan, Kamareddy and Nalgonda from Tuesday. The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) will be conducting the study with the state government. The earlier studies were carried out in May and August and December 2020.

The IgG (Immunoglobulin G) antibody based sero-positivity will indicate the extent of spread of the Coronavirus in the general population. This will help monitor transmission of the virus and monitor the trends. It will give an indication of the spread and the measures which must be taken up to control the spread and strengthen the control measures.

DEMOLISHING | HERITAGE

AIMIM okays razing old OGH building

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday said that his party had no objection even if the government demolishes the heritage building of the Osmania General Hospital (OGH) for the construction of new buildings and developing infrastructure.

Owaisi was speaking after visiting the hospital along with party MLAs, MLCs and corporators. He demanded that the TRS government construct a new building for the OGH at an estimated cost of ₹1,000 crore.

Owaisi said there should not be more delay in fulfilling the promise of constructing a new building and developing infrastructure under the prevarication of the heritage building in the premises. "We will not compromise on the name of the hospital," he said and added that the structural design of the new buildings should be reflective of the heritage building.

"We are not concerned

with the heritage building. It is for the government to decide what they want to do. We are concerned for human life. We want the Chief Minister to save human life and save Osmania Medical College (OMC) and OGH and that can only be saved if a new building is constructed. If you want to keep the heritage building, keep it or want to demolish, demolish it. It is a matter of saving not a single human life but thousands of lives."

He said the MIM was of the view that the government should immediately sanction a new building with a built-up area of 30 lakh square feet for the hospital. "This is essential for the healthcare needs of the people of not only Hyderabad but also Telangana and neighbouring states," he said.

"We know very well that the old building is not in use because it is in a dilapidated condition. It is a known fact that there is a need for a new outpatient block, a new inpatient emergency block and a



OGH doctors give memorandum to AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi for the new hospital building. — P. SURENDRA

nursing training block and hostel, which existed earlier and are now closed.

Owaisi observed that during the first and second wave of Covid people had to face trouble. Every year before the closure of the old building 90,000-odd surgeries are performed, now it has been reduced to 44,000.

He said Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao has

announced that he will be developing three hospitals and a medical college around Hyderabad. "The decision has come as a shock to us. The Chief Minister agreed to build a medical college, but the premier medical institute, Osmania Medical College and Hospitals, which has historically been in the service of the poor, is neglected," he said.

Yoga fans celebrate with 'unlock'

Teachers concerned students had to suspend regular yoga classes on account of pandemic

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The International Yoga Day on Monday here was marked by yoga teachers expressing their concern over their students having had to suspend the regular courses due to the Covid pandemic. Yet, the day was celebrated with fanfare amid the sudden freedom the society gained from the 'unlock' exercise.

With no restriction of any kind, several yoga centres in the city opened their doors on Monday.

Some of the teachers expressed their concerns over the total lifting of the lockdown sans any restriction. They were also concerned over the general physical condition of those learning yoga who have returned for the classes after a long spell of confinement at their homes.

Rakesh Aripula, a yoga instructor, said, "Many of the trainees discontinued practising yoga at home during the lockdowns even though they could have continued their practice from their homes. Yoga needs no equipment. All



BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar celebrates International Yoga Day at the BJP State Office in Nampally, Hyderabad on Monday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

that it needs is about 30 minutes of concentration a day," he said. "Some of my students are out of shape, several have gained extra weight during the lockdown," he noted.

Ravindra Kapadia, director, Gandhi Gyan Mandir Yoga Kendra, said: "This time we are lucky that there are no restrictions on fitness activity centres, unlike the last year. We

● **YOGA CONSULTANT** for Eflu Dr T. Venkata Rajaiah demonstrated both the systemic techniques and some useful functional yoga postures.

reopened on Monday to mark International Yoga Day and celebrated it with physical classes as well as online classes attended by

around a hundred participants."

He said, "After the nationwide lockdown, relaxations for the fitness center were given on August 5, 2020, during which the number of students grew to about 200 till December. From end of January, people started discontinuing the sessions because Covid19 cases were rising."



Women participate in a yoga camp on the International Yoga Day in Secunderabad on Monday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

He was worried over the physical state of the students. "After re-imposition of the lockdown from May 12, many have put on extra weight, lost their flexibility and disorders have been noticed in them. People should practise yoga at home and keep themselves fit."

Padmaja, a yoga trainee practising it from 1987, said, "I am happy that

yoga exercises at the centers has restarted. I am sure the Yoga-Day will have bigger events. Soon the trainees will be getting back for their sessions. I also recommend the authorities that they not put any restriction on yoga centres and treat these as any other essential service."

At the English and Foreign Languages

University, International Yoga Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm. Yoga consultant for the university Dr T. Venkata Rajaiah demonstrated both the systemic techniques and some useful functional yoga postures. He advised the participants to adopt a yogic way of life by adopting changes in their lifestyle.

MMTS to resume services

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The Multi-Modal Transport Service (MMTS) suburban services in Hyderabad and Secunderabad will begin from June 23, the South Central Railway (SCR) announced on Monday.

The SCR also appealed to all rail users to ensure that they acted with responsibility and supported the railways in ensuring safe journey for everyone. Every passenger should follow all Covid-19 safety protocols like maintaining social distance, compulsorily wearing masks and frequent sanitisation while in trains and on station premises.

The MMTS trains, which used to carry on an average, around one lakh passengers a day, are returning to the rails 15 months after the services were suspended

Sl. No	Train No	From	Departure	To	Arrival	Secunderabad Timings Arrival/Departure
1	47154	Falaknuma	07.50	Lingampalli	09.07	08.20/08.22
2	47178	Lingampalli	09.20	Falaknuma	10.42	10.10/10.12
3	47157	Falaknuma	10.55	Lingampalli	12.20	11.30/11.32
4	47181	Lingampalli	12.40	Falaknuma	14.00	13.25/13.27
5	47162	Falaknuma	16.20	Lingampalli	17.45	16.55/16.57
6	47188	Lingampalli	18.05	Falaknuma	19.32	18.50/18.52
7	47131	Lingampalli	08.43	Hyderabad	09.28	--
8	47107	Hyderabad	09.36	Lingampalli	10.21	--
9	47141	Lingampalli	17.15	Hyderabad	18.05	--
10	47119	Hyderabad	18.15	Lingampalli	19.05	--

from March 23, 2020, because of Covid-19 concerns. This popular service was first introduced on August 9, 2003, and over a period of time, saw as many as 121 daily services plying between different stations in and around the twin cities.

To begin with, the SCR said it would start with 10 services on June 23 -

six services between Falaknuma and Lingampalli, and four services between Lingampalli and Hyderabad station (Nampally).

The first MMTS train will leave Falaknuma at 7.50 am and reach Lingampalli at 9.07 am. On the return journeys, the last train in this sector will leave Linga-

mpalli at 6.05 pm and reach Falaknuma at 7.32 pm.

Between Hyderabad and Lingampalli, the first train will leave Lingampalli at 8.43 am and reach Hyderabad at 9.28. The last train in this section will leave Hyderabad at 6.15 pm, and reach Lingampalli at 7.05 pm.

Cops bust gang for illegal biz

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The Central Zone Task Force police busted a gang, including three pharmacy shop owners, for selling injections to treat black fungus infection in the black market.

Also on Monday, the Rachakonda cybercrime police arrested two persons for duping people under the guise of selling medicines used in the treatment of Covid-19 and black fungus.

● **POLICE SAID** the trio illegally procured amphotericin B and posaconazole injections and hatched a planned to sell them.

The three accused arrested by the Task Force police were identified as Konduru Kranti Kumar, 27, owner of Medix Pharmacy, Nangunuri Venkat Dinesh, 28, of Shankari Pharmacy and Shikakolla Srinivas, 51, owner of Sri Balaji Medicine World.

Police said the trio illegally procured amphotericin B and posaconazole injections and hatched a planned to sell them at ₹35,000 to ₹50,000 per vial.

The Central Zone Task Force police laid a trap near Necklace Road and apprehended the trio with 30 amphotericin B and six posaconazole injections, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar said.

Elsewhere, the Rachakonda cybercrime police arrested Guniseti Rajk-

umar and Sandu Divakar for cheating people looking for Covid-19 and black fungus drugs and oxygen concentrators.

Police said Rajkumar posted an advertisement on Facebook for the purpose. Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh M. Bhagwat said, "When people contacted them on the phone, the accused collected money as advance but did not supply the drugs." They collected ₹1 lakh from a victim through online transfer.

NCB seizes 2 tonnes
of smuggled goodsCORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

In one of its biggest busts, the Narcotic Control Bureau (NCB) of Hyderabad seized around 2 tonnes of contraband which being smuggled in a lorry to Pune in Maharashtra. The officials, acting on a specific intelligence input developed by the Bengaluru unit, arrested four persons for smuggling the ganja under the guise of transporting raw cashew nuts.

On Monday, NCB Hyderabad and Bengaluru units intercepted a truck near Pedda Amberpet toll

● **AN NCB** official said the ganja was packed into two-kg compressed bricks which is typical of the drug sourced from the Andhra Odisha Border (AOB)

plaza and seized the vehicle which was contraband. The arrested persons were identified as K. Kale, S. Kale, C. Kale and B. Dhoralkar from Osmanabad district of Maharashtra.

An NCB official said the ganja was packed into two-kg compressed bricks which is typical of the drug sourced from the Andhra Odisha Border (AOB).

190 micro CZs exist
in TS despite 'unlock'DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

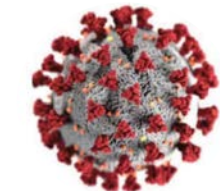
Despite the state 'unlock' on Sunday, there are 190 micro containment zones (MCZ), the highest 41 at Nalgonda. There are another 32 MCZs are in Mahbubabad 24 in Bhadaradri Kothagudem, 17 in Jagtial and 10 each in Hyderabad and Rajanna Sircilla districts.

Micro containment zones are created to isolate patients and suspected con-

tacts in certain areas and not allow for further spread.

With more than 1 lakh tests carried out everyday tracing is going on. Experts state that testing must continue at this level.

With unlocking, experts said the next two weeks are crucial and urged the government to continue tracking, tracing and testing to prevent the spread of Covid-19. This will give an indication of how much the situation is under control.

DAILY COVID
BULLETIN DATA

Update: Cases | Deaths

Fresh Cases	1,197
Deaths	9
Tests Done	1,19,537
Active Cases	17,246
Total Cases	6,14,399
Total Deaths	3,576

Highest New Cases		Lowest New Cases	
GHMC (Hyderabad)	137	Nirmal	1
Nalgonda	84	Kamareddy	2
Suryapet	72	Adilabad	4
Bhadradi Kothagudem		Narayanpet and	
Medchal Malkajgiri	71	Jogulamba Gadwal	8
Khammam	67	Komarambheem Asifabad	9

IMA doctor opposes
demolition of OGHDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Dr Md Iqbal Jaweed, executive committee member of the IMA and Osmania Medical College Alumni Association, opposed the idea of demolition of the heritage building of the Osmania General Hospital, and said that it is sound and can be preserved by renovating it.

He claimed that the inpatient block was closed citing inundation of rainwater which occurred only on July 16, 2020. The main reason was the clogging of manholes. All the working operation theatres have been closed for various problems. Each one was serving a speciality from general surgeries to the transplant of kidneys, livers and

● **DR IQBAL** said the heritage building had a sentimental attachment for many people as their ancestors and the elite were treated there.

knee repair. The surgeries have been reduced to less than half since then.

Dr Iqbal said the heritage building had a sentimental attachment for many people as their ancestors and the elite were treated there. Almost all the injured activists of the Telangana statehood movement breathed their last at the building. "This heritage building should be conserved and a memorial should be erected in the memory of the 1,000-odd martyrs," he said.

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SHORT TAKES

MAN WEDS
13-YEAR-OLD
IN WARANGALDC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, JUNE 21

Warangal Rural child protection officials on Monday identified a child marriage conducted in Gopanapalle of Parvathagiri mandal where a 13-year-old girl was married to a 26-year-old man.

Ch Sridevi, project officer with the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Society) and G. Mahender Reddy, district child protection officer, gathered information regarding the child marriage and lodged a complaint with the police station.

Mahender Reddy said officials verified the age of the girl with the school and anganwadi centre. "The police officials are investigating the matter and the culprits would be taken into custody. It is shocking that the girl was married to a man who is double her age," he said.

VHR ASKS
CONGRESS TO
SEND OBSERVERDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Senior Congress leader and former MP V. Hanumantha Rao has urged the AICC to send an observer to Telangana as it did for some other states before naming the next TPCC president. Opinion is divided on the selection of TPCC president and the party should consider the views of seniors, he said. Speaking to the media here on Monday, Hanumantha Rao said there was neither a core committee meeting nor any discussion on this so far. "Political equations are changing fast in the state, but no one in the Congress reviewed this scenario," he lamented.

The Congress high command had sent Madhusudan Mistry as observer to settle the KPCC issue amicably in Karnataka, where there was a difference of opinion, he said.

Hanumantha Rao alleged that TPCC president Uttam Kumar Reddy and CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka were responsible for the Congress party's downfall in the state. More than taking a recommendation of names from the Telangana Congress in-charge Manickam Tagore, the AICC should send an observer to select the TPCC president, he said.

TRASH IN
DRAINS ANGER
MINISTERDC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, JUNE 21

Transport minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar on Monday got visibly angry seeing piles of garbage dumped into side drains at Pandillapalli village in Chintakani mandal.

He was on a surprise visit of Pandillapalli when his eyes fell on piled up garbage in the drains. He immediately pulled up panchayat secretary V. Nikhil who was accompanying him. "Get them removed immediately. Otherwise, diseases will spread in the village," he warned.

At the minister then went to Jagannathapuram and inspected the Vaikuntadhamam, roads, streetlights and Rythu Vedita in the village. Here also he found fault with officials over garbage piled up on both sides of the road.

In Khammam, Ajay Kumar handed over cheques worth ₹10.68 lakh to 24 beneficiaries under the CM's Relief Fund.

Collectors touch CM's
feet, trigger a big row

Officials, Cong. say it's inappropriate, violates code

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The Congress and bureaucrats, both working and retired, criticised the collectors of Kamareddy and Siddipet who touched the feet of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao during his official visit for inauguration of the collector's complexes.

"It is a matter of shame that Kamareddy collector A. Sharat and Siddipet collector P. Venkatrama Reddy touched the feet of KCR in full public view. They are not only IAS officers but also district magistrates. They have sent a wrong message and set a wrong precedent by bowing down before the Chief Minister," said Mohammed Ali Shabbir, senior Congress leader and former minister.

The Congress, he said, will lodge a formal complaint against their behaviour and seek action. "We will also refer the matter to the Governor and the President, as the two senior officials have insulted the Constitution," Shabbir Ali told the media here on Monday.

This action of the collectors became a topic of hot debate in political and bureaucratic circles on Monday.

The general feeling among working bureaucrats and retired bureaucrats was that the collectors have forgotten the thin line between the legislature and the executive and set a wrong precedent besides sending a wrong message to their subordinates as well as new entrants into the administrative set

up. Shabbir Ali said some IAS officers are trying to please the CM as they were involved in corruption, land grabbing and other activities. "The Chief Minister did not meet the common people, farmers, students, traders, or any other person except a few TRS leaders. Functionaries of Opposition parties like the Congress and the BJP were either arrested or placed under house arrest," he said.

The Congress leader said many sections of society were planning to submit representations to the CM on various matters. However, the local police and administration took all such people into preventive custody before the CM's arrival. "This is the worst form of dictatorship," he alleged.

Though both the collectors justified their action, saying that they were just taking blessings of an elderly person as mark of respect, it has not gone down well in various quarters.

"It was not a private function but an official programme. There is a code of conduct for IAS officers. By touching feet of the CM at an official programme, they have violated the code," said a bureaucrat on condition of anonymity.

A retired bureaucrat said, "This will embarrass junior officers and they too will be forced or prompted to resort to such actions when higher-ups touch the CM's feet openly in front of them. They will believe that such acts are needed to sustain in bureaucracy"



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao during his surprise visit to the Lakshminarasimha temple at Yadadri, while returning from Warangal to Hyderabad, on Monday.

— DC

KCR drops in at Yadadri:
15th visit to temple as CMDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Monday visited the Yadadri temple and inspected ongoing renovation works. While returning from his Warangal tour, the Chief Minister arrived at Yadadri by helicopter at 6 pm.

Chandrashekar Rao inspected the temple premises and held a

review meeting with officials on the progress of renovation works for four hours. He left for Hyderabad by road at 10 pm.

The Chief Minister directed officials to speed up works and make renovated temple ready for pilgrims.

This is Chandrashekar Rao's 15th visit to Yadadri in his capacity as Chief Minister since he initiated reno-

vation of temple at a cost of over ₹1,000 crore.

At Warangal, the CM inaugurated the integrated district offices complex, an administrative block of the Kaloji Narayana Rao Health University and laid the foundation stone for the multi-specialty hospital which is coming up at the premises of the Central jail.

Reservation blues hit Adivasis

PILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, JUNE 21

The Supreme Court order scrapping Government Order (GO) 3, which guaranteed 100 per cent reservation in teacher jobs to local Adivasis in the Agency areas, is proving costly for tribals with the officials implementing the judgment in other departments.

Non-tribals are mounting pressure on the government to implement the judgment in filling the posts in all departments. The GO 3 was

being implemented in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh state till the Supreme Court judgment came out.

The panchayat raj, police and forest departments are filling up many posts with non-tribals as per the judgment and now officials have allotted panchayat secretary posts also to non-tribals.

Adivasis have been demanding that the state government bring out an ordinance or an Act by guaranteeing 100 per cent jobs to local Adivasis as per GO 3 as the tribals will suffer a

lot in terms of lost job opportunities.

Various tribal organisations and the state government have filed a review petition in the Supreme Court on its previous judgment on GO 3. The Adivasi government teachers allege that the officials tried to follow the judgment even in the promotions to teachers recently. They demanded that the state government issue orders not to implement the judgment since the review petition is pending in the Supreme Court. Asifabad MLA Athram Sakku said it

was unfortunate that the Supreme Court judgment on GO 3 was being implemented in various departments while filling jobs though the GO was related only to teachers' jobs. He asked the officials to stop recruiting candidates in the panchayat raj department as per the GO No 3 during the zilla parishad meeting recently.

However, district collector Sikta Patnaik clarified that they were recruiting for panchayat secretary posts as per the Supreme Court judgment.

ELECTION | TIME

BJP to step up party work, inform people of TRS' misdeeds

Jithender incharge of Huzurabad bypoll

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Senior BJP leader A.P. Jithender Reddy has been appointed the party's incharge for the upcoming Huzurabad Assembly byelection. The bypoll has been necessitated by the resignation of former minister Etala Rajendar from the Assembly; he subsequently joined the BJP.

Jithender Reddy played a key role in the Dubbak Assembly byelection last year which the BJP wrested from the TRS.

Tarun Chugh, BJP national secretary and Telangana incharge, made an announcement to this



Top BJP leaders, including state party president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, former MLA Etala Rajendar and others participated in a preparatory meeting ahead of Huzurabad elections at BJP State Office on Monday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

effect on Monday. Earlier, Chugh held a meeting with party state president

● IT WAS decided to step up party activities in the constituency and reach out to all sections of the people and inform them of the TRS government's misrule and failures over the last 7 years.

Bandi Sanjay and senior leaders to discuss on the strategy for the Huzurabad bypoll.

It was decided to step up party activities in the Huzurabad constituency and reach out to all sections of the people and inform them of the TRS government's misrule and failures over the last seven years.

Dalit woman dies in lock-up;
TPCC wants action on copsDC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, JUNE 21

TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy asked Governor Tamilisai Soundarajan to render justice to the Dalit woman who died in Addagudur police station in Bhongir district due to alleged police torture.

He wrote a letter to the Governor to take action against the police involved in the incident. "The atrocities against Dalits have increased after the formation of Telangana," he said.

The TPCC chief said in the Addagudur incident a Dalit woman, Mariamma, a cook in a house in Govindapuram, died in lock-up.

"Mariamma and her son Uday Kiran were taken into custody from his house in

Komatlagudem in Chintakani mandal in Khammam district on charges of theft in the owner's house on June 16. They were taken to Addagudur police station," the state Congress chief alleged.

He said Mariamma and Kiran were beaten on June 17 from 10.30 pm to 3.30 am. She died in the police station while police tried to show it as a death by cardiac arrest, Utam Kumar Reddy said.

Congress Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka urged the Governor to get all the information on the lockup death of Mariamma.

Bhatti called on members of the victim in Khammam. He said that she was lifted by the police as a suspect in a theft case.

"The Congress will fight against the atrocity resorted to by police. We will go to any extent to get justice for her family," he said.

Bhatti said that Mariamma was beaten for four days at various places on her body and in the presence of her daughter.

"Mariamma's daughter requested the police not to beat her mother and the victim died in the hands of her daughter," he said.

The police had not stopped there but also beat Uday Kiran indiscriminately. He is undergoing treatment in the government hospital in Khammam.

Bhatti said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao was not doing anything to check such high-handedness of the police.

1st Death Anniversary
of our most beloved

M.J. THOMAS
A year has gone by, but the pain of losing you will remain forever.
Rest in peace.
Inserted by: **Jessy, Dominic, Mintu, Roselene & Satya**
(CA - 3647)

IN LOVING MEMORY

KOTAGIRI VIJAY KUMAR
D.O.B: 10-10-1953 D.O.D: 22-05-2021
Your absence cannot be replaced by anyone we all miss you always
Inserted by: **Kotagiri Family**
(S/2122/D00360)

OBITUARY
"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" 2 Timothy 4:7

OOMMEN VARGHESE
79 YEARS
D.O.D: June 21, 2021
Funeral Service on 22 June 2021
2PM at Residence
Bethel Church Neredmet 3PM,
#12 Garrison Cemetery, Trimulgherry 4PM.
Inserted by:
Wife, Children & Grand Children
Ph:040-27122177/7284072352

OBITUARY

Shri. K.B. VIJAY KUMAR
D.O.D: 22-05-2021
You will be remembered for every moment in our lives. Times flies away so soon but not a single day passes without you in our thoughts.
We miss you a lot Anna.
Inserted by: **K. Chandrakala**
(S/2122/D00361)

IN LOVING MEMORY

ANANT KISHAN DHAGE
D.O.B: 4-11-1939 D.O.D: 14-6-2021
With profound grief we inform the Sad Demise of our Father **Mr. Anant Kishan Dhage** on June 14th 2021. Mechanical Engg, Social Worker, Regular Walker in Public Gardens.
The most caring & independent person. May his soul be blessed with eternal peace.
In Grief: Wife: **Shalini Dhage**
Son & Daughter: **Anup & Archana Dhage**
(B/2122/D00056)

OBITUARY

DHADVAI SREENIVAS RAO
B.Sc., LL.B., Advocate
Senior Congress Leader, Freedom Fighter
S/o. DHADVAI SAHANA
"Your vision continues to guide us, your deeds continues to inspire us."
Inserted By: Sons, Daughters-in-Law, Daughters, Sons-in-law, Grand children
Dhadvai Pruthvi Chakravarthy, Dr. Dhadvai Dilip, Dhadvai Sagar ASIF Nagar, Hyd. Ph-999834150
EKG Enclave, RTC Cross Road, Hyd.
(S/2122/D00361)

1st Anniversary

Sri Asharam Sohni
(City Secretary, BJP, Hyderabad)
DOD: 22nd June 2020
Inserted by:
Family Members

1st Death Anniversary

DHADVAI SREENIVAS RAO
B.Sc., LL.B., Advocate
Senior Congress Leader, Freedom Fighter
S/o. DHADVAI SAHANA
"Your vision continues to guide us, your deeds continues to inspire us."
Inserted By: Sons, Daughters-in-Law, Daughters, Sons-in-law, Grand children
Dhadvai Pruthvi Chakravarthy, Dr. Dhadvai Dilip, Dhadvai Sagar ASIF Nagar, Hyd. Ph-999834150
EKG Enclave, RTC Cross Road, Hyd.
(S/2122/D00361)

1st Death Anniversary
"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Timothy 4:7

Sunil Alfred Madugula
DOB: 01.03.1977 DOD: 22.06.2020
We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts, you are always there.
Inserted by: **Beloved Wife, Sons and Family Members**
Mob.: 9848216004, 9010981834

1st Death Anniversary
The memory of the righteous is blessed - Prov. 10:7

Smt. B. L. PENINA
W/o Mr. G. M. Victor
Retired Head Mistress
Govt. High School Banjara Hills
DOD: 22.06.2020
Inserted by: **Family Members**

9th ANNIVERSARY
"I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever".
Psalms-23:6

MEDARI SUGUNAMMA
W/o Late Medari Sadanandam
Slept in the Lord on 22.6.2012 (Age 86 yrs)
We have no words to express our grief since the past 9 years... We miss you... You will live in our hearts forever & ever.
Children, Grand Children & Great Grand Children
Michelle, Riya, Shreyas, Suhana, Riva, Swaran & Sohan
(S/2122/D00291)

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY
"The memory of the righteous is blessed" (Proverbs 10:17)

Rev. VADALA SAM ERASTUS
Retd. Engineer, SRSP
Born: 09-11-1939
Left for heavenly abode: 22-06-2019
Memorial Service will be held on 22nd June 2021 at 6:30 PM at our residence (Smyrna Prayer House), Church Street, Teacher's Colony, Vanasthalipuram.
Inserted by: **Rev. V. Manoharam Erastus, Mrs. & Mr. P. Shashi Kanth, Mr. V. Sunny Heracles, Mrs. & Mr. V. Sujulu Cleopas, Vivian Seryl, Vinay Abraham, Sandra & Shirley, Ph: 9399929094, 998915712**

IN LOVING MEMORY
The memory of the righteous is blessed - Prov. 10:7

MARY VICTORIA
Your life was a blessing your memory a treasure you are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure.
Husband: M.I. Paul
Children and Grand Children
(S/2122/D00359)

SHORT TAKES

GANESH FEST: K'BAD TO HAVE 10-HEAD IDOL

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Come September 10, people in the city should be able to celebrate Vinayaka Chavithi with a 10-headed Lord Ganesha idol at Khairatabad.

The Khairatabad Ganesh Utsav Samiti on Monday said plans have been made for installing a 10-headed Ganesha idol, but no decision has been taken on how tall the idol would be.

The samiti had made a smaller idol last year due because of the prevalence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

WOMAN'S PHOTO MORPHED, ONE ARRESTED

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The marketing intelligence team of the Hyderabad cyber-crimes police on Monday arrested a person, Mogili Anjaneyulu, 21, of Kothapet, for harassing women by morphing her pictures.

Police said he used to create fake Instagram accounts and induce victims to chat with him and collect their photos. He would send nude morphed photos and videos of others, and threatened to do to same to the complainant, the police said. Hyderabad cybercrime police advised people not to accept friend requests from unidentified persons and not to share any photographs and videos.

AP MINISTER RUBBISHES TS CHARGES

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 21

AP minister for water resources P. Anil Kumar Yadav has refuted the allegations of Telangana state that Andhra Pradesh was constructing irrigation projects illegally. He claimed that AP was using water allocated for the projects. He alleged that TS was constructing irrigation projects without any permissions and had increased the capacity of Kalwakurthy and Nettekpadu projects. This would damage water allocations to AP. Yadav clarified that the construction of irrigation projects in the state are subject to water allocations by tribunals and ridiculed the objections of Telangana state.

The minister said that for the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Project, the state cannot draw the allocated water of 44,000 cusecs from Srisailem through Pothireddypadu if the level drops below 848 feet. He further said that to provide water for Rayalaseema and Nellore districts, water could be drawn only at 881 ft level, which could suffice for 15-20 days during floods.

He wanted to know from where else could Telangana state can withdraw over six thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) of water, even when the water level is below 800 ft besides taking up projects like Palamuru-Ranga Reddy Lift Irrigation Project.

The minister said that the Rajolibanda project has an allocation of 4 tmc ft.

GHMC officials ignore KTR's demolition order

No weak structure razed despite minister's directives

MADDO DEEKSHITH
IDC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Apparently, authorities of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) care a hoot about directions given by minister K.T. Rama Rao. This is quite evident from no action being taken in identifying and demolishing a single dilapidated structure in the city limits, though there is every possibility of southwest monsoon picking up and posing a threat to these buildings, which may even lead to loss of lives.

Surprisingly, field level staff even ignored instructions of a top bureaucrat on expedit-

ing demolitions as per instructions of the minister.

It may be recalled that after a couple of wall collapses in the last week following rains, Rama Rao, the municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) minister had asked GHMC to increase surveillance on old structures, evacuate people in case they posed a threat to people. Following this, commissioner D.S. Lokesh Kumar asked officials to identify the dilapidated structures.

Incidentally, it is customary for town planning wing officials to annually identify dilap-

dated buildings, issue notices to their owners, get the premises vacated and demolish the structures. This year, however, no notice has so far been issued in this regard. This is despite corporation authorities circulating a paper that 377 such structures have been identified this year, in addition to 316 structures earmarked for demolition last year.

During last four years though, GHMC has razed nearly 1,400 old structures across the city.

When asked about the subject, senior GHMC executives, requesting anonymity, said that civic body officials have been not cooperating in identifying and demol-

ishing the weak structures. One of them disclosed that corporation employees have been turning a blind eye to the top official's instructions, claiming his transfer is around the corner.

The official, however, maintained that 15 buildings have been demolished this year. Though more of the old buildings are to be demolished, works got delayed due to incessant rains. But it is these very incessant rains that cause such buildings to collapse.

The official clarified that they are stressing on staff to identify and demolish weak structures before any untoward incident happens.

Testing time



A large number of people turned up for Covid-19 test at the regional health and family welfare centre at the Sultan Bazaar in Koti on Monday.

— P. SURENDRA

Series of TS entrance tests starts on July 17

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The Eamcet 2021 exams for students in Telangana seeking entry into engineering courses will be held on August 4, 5, and 6, while the entrance exam for those seeking admission into agriculture and medical courses will be held on August 9, and 10, it was announced on Monday.

Education minister Sabitha Indra Reddy also announced the dates for Ecet, PGEcet, Icet, Lawcet, Edcet and Polycet for 2021 admissions on Monday. All the entrance tests, with the exception of Polycet which is scheduled for July, will be held in August.

She said the exams would be conducted with strict Covid-19 safety protocols in place, and special attention for the conduct of these

EXAM SCHEDULE		
Polycet	:	July 17
Eamcet-Engg	:	Aug. 4,5,6
Eamcet-Ag	:	Aug. 9, 10
Ecet	:	Aug. 3
PGEcet	:	Aug. 11 to 14
Icet	:	Aug. 19, 20
Lawcet	:	Aug. 23
Edcet	:	Aug. 24, 25

exams was being paid following instructions from Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for safe conduct of the exams. Sabitha Indra Reddy chaired a meeting at her office to review preparations for conducting the exams with senior officers of the education department.

The minister also said that the final year exams for students pursuing various diplomas, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees would begin in the first week of July and be completed

by the end of that month.

"It is important to conduct these exams in time to ensure students wishing to pursue advanced studies in other states or countries are able to do so," she said.

Sabitha Indra Reddy also said arrangements must be made for conduct of exams in July for students with backlogs so that they could clear them too in the same month. All exams must be conducted with Covid-19 safety protocol in place, she said.

Staggered opening of schools, teachers to report by June 25

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Teachers in government, local body, model, and government-aided schools as well as those with the TS Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas and DIET colleges must attend work from June 26, the government said on Monday.

According to instructions issued by the director of school education, all heads of schools and DIET colleges should take steps to

ensure physical attendance by teachers beginning June 25.

According to education minister Sabitha Indra Reddy, all private schools should collect only tuition fees monthly from students as per orders issued last year under GO 46. A final decision is expected after a meeting with managements of private schools sometime later this week.

She said the Intermediate second year results will be announced next week.

On holding classes in schools and colleges, the

minister said the plan was to start classes from July 1 for Classes 8 to 10, with schools functioning from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm. Classes in the middle school section, for Classes 6 and 7, the sessions will begin from July 20, while for students going to Classes 3 to 5, the classes will begin from August 16.

For degree, PG, and engineering colleges, the classes will begin from July 1.

No decision has been taken with respect to reopening of residential schools and colleges that are run by the government.

2 DOC BROTHERS DROWN IN SHAMIRPET LAKE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Two brothers, both doctors, drowned in Shamirpet lake on Sunday evening. The police retrieved their bodies on Monday.

The deceased were identified as Dr Goutham, 28, an Ayurveda practitioner at Varanasi, and his brother Dr Nandan, 26, who worked at a private hospital in the city.

According to the police, Dr Goutham came to the city a week ago to spend time with his brother, a resident of Alwal. On Sunday evening, they went to Shamirpet lake for sightseeing.

"Dr Nandan and Dr Goutham both accidentally fell into the Shamirpet lake and drowned," said Shamirpet inspector V. Sudheer Kumar.

On receiving information of the incident, police reached the spot and took the help of swimmers to try and rescue the brothers. The operation was halted when darkness fell. It was resumed on Monday, and the bodies were retrieved in the afternoon. The bodies were shifted to the Osmania General Hospital for autopsy.

Shamirpet police booked a case of suspicious death and further investigation is underway.

AP GOVT TO GIVE ₹5 LAKH TO RAPE VICTIM

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JUNE 21

Home minister Mekathoti Sucharitha and minister for women welfare Taneti Vanitha on Monday visited the gang-rape victim who is undergoing treatment at GGH in Guntur and assured justice to the victim.

They stated that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has announced ₹5 lakh compensation to the victim.

The ministers affirmed that the police had launched searches to arrest the culprits and subject them to severe punishment.

NIZAM'S INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
(A University Established Under State Act)
Panjagutta, Hyderabad - 500082, Telangana. Ph: 040-23489001/9244, 040-2338552, Fax: 040-23310076, www.nims.edu.in

NOTIFICATION

Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), requires Assistant Professor and Senior Resident for Geriatric Medicine (Contract basis). Walk in Interviews will be conducted on **02-07-2021** from 11 am onwards to 12 noon. Candidates are requested to see the details for eligibility and application from www.nims.edu.in Contact Tel. No.040 - 23489353. R.O. No.: 268-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2021-22 Sd/- DIRECTOR

**Office of the Chief Engineer
Public Health Engineering Department
Raipur Zone Raipur**

**Notice for Expression of Interest
EOI No. 07/ 18-06-2021**

Name of Work:- Public Health Engineering Department hereby intend to invite Expression of Interest (Eoi) from reputed manufacturers/ firms of "PE-AL-PE Pipes shall conform to IS: 15450 duly inspected and tested and having BIS certification mark." Which is to be used for Functional House Hold Tap Connection under Jal Jeevan Mission Program in the state for empanelment in Jal Jeevan Mission, Public Health Engineering Department under Water Grid.

The detailed Eol Document will be available in the portal <https://phed.cg.gov.in> on 22-06-2021 from 10.30 onwards. Bids are to be submitted by post/speed post/courier services/by hand in address The Chief Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department, Neer Bhawan Civil Line, Raipur on or before 17.00 hrs of 03-07-2021.

Sd/- (A.K.Sahu)
Chief Engineer,
Public Health Engineering Department,
Raipur Zone Raipur

G-61439/5

NMDC Limited
(A Government of India Enterprise)
'Khanji Bhavan', 10-3-311/A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028. CIN: L13100TG1958G01001674

CONTRACTS DEPARTMENT

Tender Enquiry No: HO/Contracts/NISP/LDCP(Bal Work)/2021/118, Dated : 22-06-2021

NMDC Limited, A "NAVARATNA" Public Sector Company under Ministry of Steel, Govt. of India, invites online bids from prospective domestic bidders for "Completion of Balance work of Lime & Dolomite Calcination plant (2 Nos. of 500 TPD Capacity Lime Kilns and 1 No. of 300 TPD Capacity Dolomite Kiln with one Lime Sizing Unit of 25 t/hr capacity) for 3.0 MTPA Integrated Steel Plant at Nagarnar near Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh State" on divisible turnkey basis from experienced, reputed and Competent Tenderers. MECOM Limited is the consultant for this package.

The detailed NIT and Bid Documents can be viewed and / or downloaded from NMDC website <http://www.nmdc.co.in>, Central Public Procurement Portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.in> and MISC portal <http://www.mstccommerce.co.in> from 22-06-2021 to 20-07-2021.

For Accessing the Bid document from NMDC website, the bidder has to register as 'New User' in Bid section at NMDC's website link - <http://www.nmdc.co.in/nmcdtender/default.aspx>.

For accessing the bid document from MSTC, bidders to visit website link - <http://www.mstccommerce.co.in> and login to <http://www.mstccommerce.co.in> and search Tender Event No. NMDC/HO/24/21-22/ET/128. Bidders are requested to register as 'New Vendor' for downloading the tender document. For further help refer to 'vendor guide' given in MSTC website.

The bidders are requested to submit their bids through online mode and details of submission of bid through online are given in NIT.

The bidders on regular basis are required to visit the NMDC's website / CPP Portal / MSTC website for corrigendum, if any, at a future date.

For further clarification, the following can be contacted :

- General Manager (Contracts), NMDC Limited, Hyderabad, Fax No. +91-040-23534746, Tel No. +91-040-23532800, email: steelcontracts@nmdc.co.in
- Sr. General Manager (NMDC Project), MECOM Limited, Ranchi, Fax No. +91-651-2482214, Tel No. +91-0651-2483508, email: projnmcd@meconlimited.co.in

General Manager (Contracts)

RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA

On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No. & Due Date	Description	Qty.(Nos./Sets)	EMD (₹)
1.	14211097 14.07.2021	STRESS RELIEVING SHOT BLASTING PAINTING AND MACHINING & TRANSPORTATION OF BOGIE FRAME FOR IR-FIAT BOGIES	360 Nos	6,00,550/-
2.	12211186 12.07.2021	Gangway Bridge Mounting	600 Nos	64,110/-
3.	17211382 14.07.2021	1) FRP Modular Toilet (Pre Assembled) for LHB NON AC Chair Car Coaches To P1 No 33615834 2) Supply of FRP Lavatory Modules for LHB GS Coaches To P1 No 33615810 3) Installation of FRP Lavatory Modules for LHB GS Coaches To P1 No 3361N810 4) Supply of FRP Modular Toilet (Pre Assembled) for LHB SLR HOG Coaches To P1 No 33615871 5) Supply of FRP Modular Toilet (Pre Assembled) for LHB SLR HOG Coaches To P1 No 33615913 6) Installation of Modular Toilet (Pre Assembled) for LHB SLR HOG Coaches To P1 3361N913	33 Sets 34 Sets 34 Sets 28 Sets 28 Sets 28 Sets	12,90,200/-
4.	17211380 12.07.2021	FRP MODULAR TOILET (PRE ASSEMBLED) FOR LHB AC COACHES (3 TYPES)	As per Tender Document	18,49,810/-

1. For details and making On-line bids, visit Website <http://ireps.gov.in>. Drawings/specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF Website <http://www.rcf.in> and www.cce.gov.in. Class IIIb digital signature certificate required for on-line bidding, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at <http://www.cce.gov.in>. 2. Tenders will close at 14.25 Hrs. on due date and tender will be opened at 14.30 Hrs. Tenders will be opened at RCF Kapurthala. 3. For queries, contact IREPS helpdesk at 011-24102855, 011-24105180 or RCF helpdesk at 011-23378658.

Note: GST Number of RCF is 03AAGM0289C1ZT. All the suppliers are advised to quote this in dispatch documents for the supplier made by them. All above mentioned tenders are e-tenders and all tenders are requested to submit their bids on-line through the IREPS website at <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. For more details regarding the above mentioned tenders and other supply tenders please visit IREPS website.

PCMM
No.: G-RCF/122-01/Stores/029/2021-22 Dated: 21.06.2021

BIG | MISTAKE First jab was Covishield, second Covaxin

AP health dept mixes up doses for 27 in Chittoor

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, JUNE 21

The mega Covid-19 vaccination programme at a remote village in the Chittoor district went amiss, as 27 villagers were administered with a mixed dose of vaccine due to an administrative oversight. However, there was no adverse side-effect, claim health officials.

People from Gudayanampalli village in Penumur mandal were given Covishield vaccine for their first jab in the first week of April. Without checking the details about their first dose, the health staff administered them with Covaxin as the second dose on Sunday last.

Officials said this mistake happened due to technical glitches in the date-entry software. This troubled the health staff in downloading the first dose data, due to which the

ANM had to rely on physical records. Health officials said the villagers who received the different dose did not experience any negative side-effects. "Those who are responsible for this will be punished," they said.

"Due to technical glitches, the nurse was unable to download the data. Without checking with the villagers, she administered vaccines to nearly 27 people before she was alerted by the villagers. Fortunately, no one has experienced adverse effects," district medical and health officer Dr U. Srihari said.

The DM&HO said an inquiry was held into the matter. The medical and health department will seek an explanation from those who did this and action would be taken if a guilt is established, he said.

He said the villagers are sup-

porting the ANM, who administered the different doses.

"The villagers say this ANM has been extending great service to them for the past many months. They are requesting us to not take any action on the ANM," the official further said.

The official also maintained that they checked with those who got the different doses and found they remained healthy. "Our medical teams are camping at the village and closely observing their health conditions," he said.

However, the villagers alleged that no health official visited them.

They told the media that the mistake was noticed when one of the victims of this oversight saw the vaccine vial and questioned the health officials. The villagers said they are scared about the outcome.

RURAL WORKS DEPARTMENT

**Expression of Interest cum Request for Proposal
(Notice No:-RWD/MR/HQ/AI/2021-22/01)**

for

**Consultancy Services for Development of Technology based
Intelligent Rural Road Maintenance and Monitoring System**

1. RWD intends to develop an online road maintenance and monitoring system using 3-D Imaging device mounted on vehicle followed by the analysis of data captured and report generation there off to manage assets on its rural road network in an efficient and effective manner. **The proposed system is planned to be developed for Hajipur division in Vaishali District on Pilot Basis.**

2. Proposals are invited from prospective **Knowledge Partners** of national and international repute to provide the aforesaid consulting services.

3. The Knowledge Partner will be selected through Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) procedure based on the information provided which demonstrates that they have required know how to perform the services and are meeting the eligibility criteria as laid out in the EOI cum RFP.

4. The detailed EOI cum RFP can be downloaded from the website : www.rwdbihar.gov.in from 01/07/2021, 15:00 Hrs to 15/07/2021, 17:00 Hrs. Further information can be obtained from Sri Amrendra Kumar Sinha, CE-2 cum Nodal Officer (MR) on Mobile No.8986915038 at the address below during office hours i.e. 10:00 to 17:00 Hrs from 01/07/2021 to 15/07/2021.

**Engineer-in-Chief
Rural Works Department
5th Floor, Vishweshwaraiya Bhawan
Bailey Road, Patna-800001**

1. This EOI cum RFP does not entail any commitment on the part of under signer, either financial or otherwise. Under signer reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposal without incurring any obligation to inform the affected applicant/s of the grounds.

निस्सृत जानकारी के संबंध में निस्सृत जानकारी एवं सहाय्य हेतु टोल फ्री नं. **104** पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

(Ashok Kumar Mishra)
Engineer-in- Chief

PR. No. 02605(RWD) 2021-22

नोचल कोसोन के संबंध में निस्सृत जानकारी एवं सहाय्य हेतु टोल फ्री नं. **104** पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

DECCAN Chronicle

22 JUNE 2021

Will harassment of Sena MLAs hit Maha coalition?

Three Shiv Sena MLAs, including transport minister Anil Parab who is said to be close to Chief Minister Udhav Thackeray, are being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate and other central agencies for money laundering and other corrupt practices. One of the three has gone public and urged the CM to re-forge ties with BJP and ditch NCP and Congress, Sena's alliance partners in the MVA government. The MLA in question contends that the harassment of Sena legislators and their families will cease if the Sena returns to partnering BJP, to begin with in the upcoming local bodies election. On the face of it, this is an old tactical line in play.

Investigation agencies of the Union government have been unleashed in the past to harass political opponents, break parties, and re-shape politics. In Maharashtra, the most prominent case was the ED notice to NCP leader Sharad Pawar before the October 2019 Assembly poll, with the ED running for cover only when Mr Pawar threatened to descend on the agency's office in Mumbai with thousands of his supporters. In West Bengal too, the central agencies tormented Trinamul Congress leaders until their defection to BJP was secured. In the end, the low tactics failed to impress and the BJP suffered a humiliating defeat in the recent state poll. The defectors are now begging CM Mamata Banerjee for forgiveness.

For the ruling alliance in Maharashtra, security is not likely to lie in succumbing to BJP's indirect pressure, and Mr Thackeray reneging on his own coalition allies on the strength of a legislator becoming a cry baby. He had broken off ties with the BJP after fighting the polls in alliance with the saffron party because the latter evidently went back on its promise to share the post of CM with the Sena. If the Sena, on the strength of a complaining MLA, returns to the BJP's embrace, it is unlikely Mr Thackeray will be able to hold on to his position for long.

On the other hand, if the partners in the ruling coalition contest the forthcoming municipal polls jointly, rather than separately as the Congress has threatened in pique, a strong political message will go to the electorate- and to the BJP. If the event they perform creditably, BJP pressures may be expected to ease. It is useful to bear in mind the full import of the words of Sena leader Sanjay Raut, who urges that it is important to fathom who is building pressure on Sena MLAs, and why.

The pressure on the Sena MLAs has come at about the same time as Sena and NCP agreeing to contest elections together in the foreseeable future, with the Congress being the outlier in the ruling alliance. Although the Congress in Maharashtra won 44 seats — three more than in 2014 — on its own steam, and when the party received no assistance from its headquarters in Delhi, it remains organisationally weak in the state.

There is glaring factionalism which keeps the party weak and the ruling coalition somewhat off-balance. The state party chief, Nana Patole, is cultivating the habit of firing broadsides at the Sena. For the overall health of the state government and the Congress organisation, the party's leadership at the Centre will do well to impart the lesson of responsible political conduct to its Maharashtra unit.

Can Raisi make peace with US?

The election of hardline cleric Ibrahim Raisi as Iran's new President was a foregone conclusion. To say the disillusioned electors were guided into choosing the former chief justice is to put it mildly, since there were reasons to assume this was a rigged election in which blank ballots placed second to Mr Raisi, who took 62 per cent of the "popular" vote. The new President has a dubious record that goes beyond his being the chosen one from seven candidates who were allowed to contest by Iran's conservative Guardian Council from among 600 who had initially applied. He was the youngest member of the 1988 Tehran death commission that has been accused of killing 3,000 Opposition prisoners.

What Mr Raisi, who is known to be close to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, inherits as President is an economy in shambles, riven by corruption and mismanagement and throwing into disaffection large sections of its people. The question that arises despite his known record is whether Mr Raisi, as a member of the innermost ruling theocracy, can make peace with the Americans under President Joe Biden and pursue the 2015 Obama-era nuclear deal that Mr Biden's predecessor Donald Trump had torn to pieces in 2018. A revival of the economy would be contingent on US sanctions being lifted and Iran being allowed to sell its oil internationally without constraints.

The suspicion is that Iran has been enriching its uranium to levels far beyond what constitutes a peaceful programme. Its offer to abandon enrichment, which could be made in talks that are on in Vienna among Iran, Russia, China, Germany, France and Britain, with the US indirectly involved, may be contingent on a guarantee that any nuclear deal it signs with the West would be permanent and not subject to the whims of a US President, but a democratic America can hardly make such a commitment unless a treaty is forged. The fact remains that Iran is a major player in a region fraught with tensions and the mullahs would have to be willing to pursue real peace at least for the sake of its people.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani



Biden B3W vs China BRI: Is India the odd man out?



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray
Reflections

India's embattled government cannot draw much comfort from US President Joe Biden's promise (or was it a threat?) to lead an alliance of global democracies against the world's autocracies, with specific reference to the challenge that Communist China presents.

But then, does the government at all feel embattled? Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcements, bland when not boastful, suggest that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Evidence to the contrary can be brushed aside, as Mr Modi has told us that "neither have they (the Chinese) intruded into our border, nor has any post been taken over by them". Why then the defensive rhetoric, the emphasis on security in a region that we are flattered to note has been dubbed the "Indo-Pacific"? Why, too, the "Quad" or the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, with the United States, Japan and Australia which everyone, the Chinese especially, see as countering Beijing?

True, "20 of our jawans were martyred" in hand-to-hand combat with the People's Liberation Army in eastern Ladakh. But we can gloat over the revelation that "those who dared Bharat Mata, they were taught a lesson".

Were they? Mr Modi has no doubts. India is so mighty "that no one can eye even one inch of our land". It's the Chinese who should quake in their boots for "India's armed forces have the capability to move into multiple sectors at one go". It would be interesting to hear what defence officials have to say about that. Or diplomats. Or the external affairs minister, with his experience of Beijing where he repre-

sented India from 2009 to 2013.

Far from indulging in braggadocio or inviting ridicule, Mr Biden used his first official overseas trip to mobilise support against his country's two main perceived adversaries. Problems with Russia revive the Cold War postures that were briefly laid to rest during Mikhail Gorbachev's time. But China, whose all-powerful ruling Communist Party is celebrating its centenary next month and which has now sent three astronauts into orbit to become the only country to own and run its own space station, is seen as the real threat of the future. Of course, China rejects the view of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation leaders that its rise presents "systemic challenges" for the world. When Jens Stoltenberg, Nato's secretary-general, levelled that charge in Brussels, China promptly accused Nato of "slandering" its "peaceful development". Being committed to a "defensive" defence policy, China did "not present 'systematic challenges' to anyone" but would "not sit by and do nothing if 'systematic challenges' come closer to us".

Echoes of the arguments that preceded the first Opium War (1839-1842) between Qing China and Britain can be heard all over again. Then, the British reported that the Chinese hoped there would be "much talk-ee-talk-ee" before "fight-ee-fight-ee". This time round it's the West that appears to be sending pacific smoke signals even while the defiant talk gets louder.

The main reason why there might not be any serious friction after all lies in the disclosure that in the last few weeks, top Chinese and US trade and treasury officials have

engaged in a series of virtual chats on the business of doing business. China has invested substantially in British companies as well as public utilities. The US, the European Union and Japan are among China's biggest trade partners, with exports and imports totalling more than \$1,660 billion. Neither side will easily risk that.

India can expect even less sympathy (and no support) from Asean, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, whose collective trade with China jumped last year to \$731.9 billion, making Asean China's largest trading partner for the first time while China remained Asean's largest trading partner for the 12th successive year.

Vietnamese or Filipino grievances in the South China Sea or Malaysia's complaint about Chinese military aircraft intruding into its Exclusive Economic Zone are not likely to be vigorously or collectively pursued when trade registers seven per cent growth.

China has also redefined aid to make it an integral feature of about 60 developing countries that can expect \$500 billion from Beijing over the next few years, while President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative could mobilise \$1 trillion of Chinese state financing. Conventional aid plays only a marginal role in China's commerce-is-development vision of growth as articulated by Justin Yifu Lin, a former World Bank chief economist and author of the book *Going Beyond Aid*. More than 100 countries have joined

India can expect even less sympathy (and no support) from Asean, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, whose collective trade with China jumped to \$731.9 bn last year, making Asean China's largest trading partner for the first time

BRI projects, of which there were more than 2,600 costing \$3.7 trillion in mid-2020. Beijing says that the Covid-19 pandemic has seriously affected about 20 per cent of them.

The G-7 representatives whom Mr Biden met in England at the start of his European mission enthusiastically supported his Build Back Better World (B3W) Partnership, an alternative to the BRI, and promised to "collectively catalyse hundreds of billions of dollars of infrastructure investment". While China's focus is on big-ticket projects in traditional infrastructure — like Sri Lanka's \$1.4 billion Hambantota Port — Mr Biden's plan will focus on climate, health and health security, digital technology, gender equity and equality. That doesn't suggest direct competition. But the commitment to "rally the world's democracies to meet the challenges" of dictatorship, human rights abuse and forced labour identifies the target easily enough.

These are worthy aims in keeping with the lofty vision of the nation whose Marshall Plan rescued Europe from the ravages of World War II. But they are not of as much gripping interest in war-torn Yemen or famine-stricken Somalia as the BRI's promised ports, highways, airports and dams. Whether or not the promises will be kept is another matter but the hope generates at least initial support.

Various factors make India the odd man out in this contest for hearts and minds. It cannot promise lavish help like the BRI or B3W. It doesn't brandish an ideological banner like the United States. So far as anyone knows, the dispute is only over territory, and rocky, inhospitable, uninhabited terrain at that. And if India's Prime Minister is to be believed, there is no aggression either.

So, what are we fighting about? And why do we need the Quad?

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

LETTERS

SCHOOL PLAN

It is a welcome decision to open schools. However, it must done be in a phased manner. Otherwise it may add to the health problems of students as they are not vaccinated. Let students till Class IV go to school from July 1. Classes for students in Classes V, VI and VII can be held on alternate days with Classes VIII, IX and X. This will restrict the number of students in school. After a month, classes for all students can be started.

Suhas Kate
Secunderabad

CM'S PV OBSESSION

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao must change his name to P.V. Narsimha Rao given the way in which he is renaming different projects after the late prime minister. First he renamed the Mehdiapatnam-Attapur bridge as 'P.V. Narsimha Rao expressway'. Recently he renamed the Necklace Road as P.V. Narsimha Rao Marg. Earlier he submitted a request to Centre to change the name of University of Hyderabad to P.V. Narsimha Rao University. Now he is planning to rename Huzurabad after Narasimha Rao.

Khazi Atiyyuddin
Hyderabad

MONSOON READY

With the onset of monsoon, the TRS government has done well to clean all drains in the twin cities and in important villages and districts. The government providing new vehicles for works to be done efficiently is laudable. Now, officers in charge must take advantage of the facilities and the youngsters must prove their mettle.

Vishal K.
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Soyuz men resume research

MOSCOW, JUNE 21.

The Soviet cosmonauts began their third week abroad world's first manned space laboratory today.

The operation of the orbital astrophysical "Orion" observatory on board the station was continued today.

In the new orbit a "grip" of one of the stars in ophiuchus constellation was carried by means of a sight system.

Aakar Patel



No good news: It's difficult to be an optimist in India today

It is not easy to find good news in India and has not been easy for a long time now. A recent report said that the Indian economy is contracting again in this quarter, between April and June, by more than double digits.

This report from one agency was carried in multiple media outlets but it was not refuted or commented upon by others, including by the government. It was just assumed to be true. After 24 months of slowdown starting in January 2018 before the Covid-19 pandemic, and then 18 months of collapse since January 2020, we have turned into the world's worst performing economy.

India's economic growth has been falling for 42 months now, but the government has not spoken about why that is so and what went wrong or what it plans to do to correct it. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in an interview last year offered five points to correct course, but he also added that a course-correction was possible only after one had acknowledged that there was a problem.

Since we have not accepted that

anything is wrong, we will continue.

CMIE, the only body offering regular employment data (the Narendra Modi government has little data and says that it is conducting some surveys, whose results will come around the end of the year) says that unemployment in India is at 11 per cent, higher than Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Inflation is high though demand is low, and wholesale prices are at their highest since 1992. Petrol is around ₹100 a litre, diesel is almost there and the price of crude oil is expected to rise another 20 per cent by the end of the year. Exports are at the same level as they were in 2014 and in seven years under Narendra Modi have shown no growth, though in the same period Bangladesh and Vietnam have grown and China has held onto its share.

Eighty crore Indians are being given free food for seven months from May till November. Five kilos of wheat or rice per person per month and one kilo of dal. In May, 16 lakh tonnes of wheat and 15 lakh tonnes of rice was distributed.

Sixty per cent of Indians depend on

free food. This should tell you more than enough about the state of poverty in India today.

When Mr Modi took over in 2014, he said MGNREGA was a monument to the failure of the Manmohan Singh government. He would give people real jobs, and not MGNREGA jobs. The MGNREGA programme's size last year was three times what it was under UPA rule because crores of people have lost their jobs and fallen into poverty and now depend on MGNREGA and free foodgrains. The Gujarat government put out a statement last week which said that MGNREGA was a lifesaver.

Elsewhere, it has been a year since the clash in Ladakh. China has stopped its disengagement. This means India has to keep tens of thousands of troops in that area almost permanently.

China has also told us that it is demoting the level of talks, and now only area commanders will discuss specific issues rather than general disagreement. Our soldiers still cannot patrol in the Depsang Plain but the government has not acknowledged that or held a single press

briefing on Ladakh since the crisis began a year ago. Opacity is the hallmark of dictatorships and not democracies, but this is the status of our national security.

India was supposed to be the Vaccine Guru and Vaccine Factory for the world. Instead, India has wrecked the world's vaccination programme by stopping the delivery of vaccines others already paid for in advance and which were manufactured in India. Our government has begun taking over those stocks while the world waits. Even with that, India has only managed to fully vaccinate only three per cent of its population against the world's average of nine per cent. Why? We have not been told.

Every day there is a report of excess deaths from states being between four and 10 times the official Covid-19 toll. India seems to lead the world by far in both cases and deaths. There has not been a government initiative to find out the true number of cases and deaths and the media continues to parrot the official numbers and at the same time publishing reports on the excess deaths. Mass faking of

tests at the Kumbh Mela has been reported, and this is also par for the course.

At the G-7 summit earlier this month in Britain, Prime Minister Modi, who attended virtually, endorsed a document called the "Open Societies Statement" in which he pledged India would practice and promote human rights and civil liberties. At home, those who ask for these have been locked up under UAPA. The farmers' protest continues with tens of thousands living on the highways outside Delhi. The three controversial farm laws have been suspended, but not withdrawn. Why? We do not know because Mr Modi has not spoken about the laws since they were suspended by the Supreme Court six months ago.

It doesn't matter whether you are a supporter of Prime Minister Modi or an opponent or neutral. Anyone looking around the state that India finds itself in will find it hard to extract any good news and will find it difficult to be optimistic.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

SHORT TAKES

ODISHA STARTS CLASSES ON YOUTUBE

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 21

With no immediate possibility of reopening of schools for classroom teaching in sight, the Odisha government on Monday kicked off live streaming of classes on YouTube for Class I to Class X students.

The state school and mass education department has prepared a detailed blueprint to reach out to the students through virtual mode. The department has also prepared the time table for the subjects to be taught every day.

The teaching process for the students of Classes IX and X will continue till July 31. As many as four periods, beginning from 10.45 to 1 pm, will be held for five days from Monday to Friday for Class IX and X. Classes for the students of Class I to III will be held from 9 am to 10 am while class IV to VIII will be held live from 9 am to 10.30 am.

Teachers of the concerned subjects will look after their classes through online mode and clarify doubts of students through WhatsApp chat and voice call.

According to reports, 33 per cent students could access online classes last year while the rate has gone up to 40 per cent this year.

LENS ON MISHAP THAT CLAIMED FIVE LIVES

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JUNE 21

A major accident that took place at Ramanattukara in Kozhikode district of Kerala in the wee hours of Monday killing five youths, has come under a cloud of suspicion.

The ill-fated car rammed into a lorry near Ramanattukara. Five youths who were in the car died on the spot.

Initially the police thought over speeding could have led to the mishap. However, the cops grew suspicious when they came to know that the vehicle had gone to Kozhikode from the airport before returning to Cheruplassery. Moreover the vehicle was followed by two other cars.

Six persons who were travelling by one of these vehicles have been detained. "We are looking into all aspects. These people belong to Cheruplassery. We are investigating why they went to Kozhikode. We are questioning the people who were following the vehicle," said Kozhikode city police commissioner A.V. George. The police suspect that the persons in the vehicle could be conduits of gold smugglers. They are examining the CCTV footage to obtain links of the detained persons with the deceased.

CRUCIAL MEET ON SECURITY THIS WEEK

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

The high level committee constituted to sort out differences on the new military structure of unified commands - Theatre Commands - is proposed to meet this week to formulate a way forward.

The different Theatre Commands will integrate the assets of Army, Air Force and Navy in a domain under one commander to give punitive response to any external threat. The committee has been formed to look into the issues raised by services and other ministries before a note is prepared on Theatre Command to be presented to Cabinet Committee on Security.

"The first meeting of the Committee is planned for this week. It will be one of the series of meetings to work out a plan," said a senior official.

The committee has three Vice Chiefs of the Armed Forces, Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, and representatives from defence and other ministries.

India is expected to have two to three Integrated Theatre Commands over land looking at China and Pakistan, a Maritime Theatre Command and a National Integrated Air Defence Command. Each of the theatre commands will have units of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and all of them will work as a single entity looking after security challenges in a specified geographical territory under an operational commander.

Health is wealth



Doctors and health workers perform yoga on International Day of Yoga at Government Institute of Medical Sciences in Greater Noida on Monday.

— PTI



Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu with his wife Usha performing yoga on the occasion of the 7th International Day of Yoga in New Delhi on Monday.

— D. KAMRAJ



Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla with his wife Amita Birla and daughter performing yoga.

Amarnath yatra cancelled for second year in a row

YUSUF JAMEEL
SRINAGAR, JUNE 21

The Amarnath Yatra has been cancelled for the second year in a row due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Like last year, the pilgrimage will be only "symbolic", with all rituals to be performed quietly by a select number of priests and hermits at the revered cave-shrine at a height of 13,000 feet (3,882 metres) in the lower Himalayas in south Kashmir. Like last year, the morning and evening aarti will be telecast live.

Jammu and Kashmir's lieutenant-governor, Manoj Sinha, who is also the chairman of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB), while announcing the cancellation of this year's yatra on Monday, tweeted, "Shri Amarnathji Yatra cancelled in wake of Covid-19 Pandemic. Decision after threadbare discussion with Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board members. Yatra to be symbolic only. However, all the traditional religious rituals shall be performed at the Holy Cave Shrine as per past practice". (sic)

He also said: "It's important to save people's lives. So, it is not advisable to hold and conduct this year's pilgrimage in the larger public interest". A J&K government spokesman said that after the decision to cancel the yatra was taken by the SASB at a "threadbare discussion" among its members, Mr Sinha held detailed deliberations with J&K chief secretary Arun Kumar Mehta, DGP Dilbag Singh, and other senior officers and direct-

● **THE SASB CEO** said the shrine board has made the arrangements for the mace of Lord Shiva 'Chhari Mubarak' to be taken to the holy cave on August 22, when the yatra is to conclude coinciding with the festival of Raksha Bandhan.

● **HE SAID** that both morning telecast of aarti at 6 am and evening aarti at 5 pm, each for 30 minutes, is to be live-streamed on the board's official website and an app specifically dedicated for devotees.

● **THE DEVOTEES** can pay their virtual obeisance through the Shrine Board's aarti link.

ed them to ensure that devotees are able to attend the morning and evening aarti at the cave-shrine in online mode as it would help them to "pay their obeisance while also avoiding and travel and exposure".

The spokesman said the meeting was informed that the SASB has put in place a virtual and televised mechanism for live darshan of the aarti from the cave-shrine.

The 56-day annual pilgrimage was due to begin from both traditional Pahalgam and shorter Baltal routes on June 28, coinciding with Ashaad Chaturthi, an auspicious day in Hindu calendar, and end on Shrawan Purnima (Raksha Bandhan) on August 22.

However, the SASB had on April 22 suspended registrations for the yatra

temporarily due to the grim Covid-19 situation across India.

Last year, the yatra was cancelled at the eleventh hour in the face of the threat posed by the pandemic, while in 2019 the government had asked devotees who had arrived in the Valley to pay obeisance at Amarnath and also tourists to cut short their visit and leave immediately, claiming that Pakistan-sponsored militants were planning a terror attack against the yatra, while the lives of outside holidaymakers too were in danger in view of the prevailing security situation in the Valley.

Subsequent events, however, proved it beyond a shadow of doubt that all the statements issued and measures taken by the government and other official agencies right from mid-July 2019 were part of the government's "strategy" to ensure the return of pilgrims and tourists from the Valley before the Centre's stripping J&K of its special status under Article 370 of the Constitution and splitting it up into two Union territories on August 5, 2019.

The SASB had on March 13 this year said it has decided to increase the pilgrims' intake by 5,000 a day this year.

It also said the authorities were making arrangements to host over 600,000 devotees during the event after its decision to enhance the daily route-wise pilgrim ceiling from 7,500 to 10,000 on each route, excluding pilgrims who would be flying in helicopters to Amarnath.



2ND LAPSE IN SCINDIA'S COVER IN 10 DAYS

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, JUNE 21

Senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member Jyotiraditya Scindia's pilot vehicle missed the car in which he was travelling at Nirawali point in Morena-Gwalior border on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, causing security scare.

Fourteen policemen including five sub-inspectors were on Monday suspended for lapse. This was the second case of security lapse involving Scindia in the last ten days.

A police vehicle started piloting the car in which Scindia was travelling from Delhi to Gwalior when it entered Morena in Madhya Pradesh late on Sunday night. The pilot vehicle, however, got confused when another car had overtaken it at the Morena-Gwalior border and followed it mistaking it to be Scindia's car.

Following this, Scindia had to travel without security for nearly ten km. Later, a police inspector posted in Hazira police station in Gwalior district spotted Scindia's vehicle and followed it to its destination of Jay Vilas palace in Gwalior. Sources attributed the lapse to lack of coordination between security forces of Morena and Gwalior.

82.7L jabs given in single day

Well done India, says Modi; Covid cases continue to fall

DC CORRESPONDENT
WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

Over 82.7 lakh vaccine doses, the highest in a single day, were administered across the country on Monday as the revised guidelines for Covid-19 vaccination came into effect, the Union Health Ministry said.

India's cumulative Covid-19 vaccination coverage was recorded at over 28.33 crore since January 16, according to the data from the CoWIN portal.

"Today's record-breaking vaccination numbers are gladdening. The vaccine remains our strongest weapon to fight COVID-19. Congratulations to those who got vaccinated and kudos to all the front-line warriors working hard to ensure so many citizens got the vaccine. Well done India!" Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.

The previous single-day record was of over 48 lakh doses on April 1. In June so far, India saw an average vaccination of over 31 lakh per day.

The average single-day vaccinations fell to as low as around 16 lakh in the first week of May when the country was at the peak of the second wave.

Madhya Pradesh saw the maximum vaccinations on Monday followed by Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh.

Union home minister Amit Shah said the pace of vaccinations will be stepped up in July-August and the target to vaccinate almost all will be reached "very fast".

The overall fresh cases of Covid-19 fell to 53,000 in India after 88 days while the figure in Delhi came down to two digits (89). With cases coming down, the Bihar government announced an easing of the restrictions. From June 23 to July 6, all government and private offices can function at 100 per cent capacity, shops can remain open till 7 pm,

OVER 2.98 CR COVID VACCINE DOSES STILL AVAILABLE WITH STATES, UTS

New Delhi, June 21: More than 2.98 crore Covid vaccine doses are still available with states and union territories, the Union health ministry said on Monday.

So far, 29,35,04,820 vaccine doses have been provided to states and union territories (UTs) through the Centre's free of cost channel and the direct state procurement category, it said.

Of this, the total consumption, including wastage, is 26,36,26,884 doses, according to data available at 8 am on Monday, the ministry said.

"A total 2,98,77,936 Covid-19 vaccine doses are still available with the states and UTs to be administered," the ministry said.

It said that as part of the nationwide vaccination

MP VACCINATES 14.71 LAKH PEOPLE IN A DAY

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY
BHOPAL, JUNE 21

Madhya Pradesh set a new single-day vaccination record in the country with inoculation of 14.71 lakh people on Monday.

The Shivraj government launched a 10-day special vaccination drive in the state coinciding with the International Yoga Day on Monday.

Madhya Pradesh has overtaken the single-day vaccination record set by Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. As many as 13.41 lakh people were vaccinated in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday.

Indore set a record as being the first city in the country to have vaccinated 2.10 lakh people in a single day on Monday.

"The vaccination campaign started in all the 52 districts in MP simultaneously in an atmosphere of enthusiasm", chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan who launched the vaccination campaign at Parasari village in Datia district after paying obeisance to presiding deity of the famous Maa Pithambara temple in the district, told reporters.

Long queues of people were witnessed in all the 7,000 vaccination Centres established across the state on the opening day of the drive on Monday.

"We had set a target to vaccinate 10 lakh people on the first day. We have exceeded our target as more and more people poured in the vaccination Centre", Mr Chouhan said.

parks and gardens will open from 6 am to 12 noon, through night curfew will remain in force from 9 pm to 5 am.

VITAL | COUNSEL

Don't be under illusion that Covid is gone, says Karnataka Chief Minister

BSY sounds alarm as K'taka unlocks more

Bengaluru, June 21: The Karnataka government on Monday added six more districts to the list of 17 districts under "Unlock 2.0", where Covid-19 curbs have been relaxed, allowing hotels, gyms, and public transport bus services to resume operations.

Udupi, Bengaluru Rural, Shivamogga, Ballari, Chitradurga and Vijayapura have been placed under Category-1 after considering the weekly moving average positivity rate and also taking into account the consistent declining trend of the Covid-19 case positivity

rate, the state government said in its order.

Earlier, the government had issued guidelines on Saturday, further relaxing the Covid-19 curbs in 17 districts where the positivity rate is below 5 per cent, including Bengaluru, that came into effect from 6 am today, allowing all shops to function from 6 am to 5 pm and public transport to resume operations with 50 per cent capacity.

In all, the government has now relaxed Covid-19 restrictions in 23 districts.

As the state entered into another phase of relaxation of lockdown meas-

● **AMONG OTHER THINGS**, hotels, clubs and restaurants have also opened for service until 5 pm with 50 per cent seating, but liquor will not be permitted.

ures, Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa told people not to be under the "illusion" that the Covid-19 pandemic is gone and asked them to be vigilant and follow all preventive measures. He said, "Covid numbers have come down than expected, so we decided to relax lockdown restrictions, but the fear of

corona still looms large."

Though bus operations have come as a relief to office-goers and others who depend on them for commuting, they plying in lesser numbers and with 50 per cent capacity is causing chaos at bus stands in several places of the city, with higher number of people wanting to avail its service. Similar reports are emerging from other places.

While the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation had said it is deploying 3,000 initially for local and inter-district long route bus operations,

the Bangalore Metro-politan Transport Corporation had said it will ply 2,000 buses.

KSRTC also said it will restart inter-state bus services to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana States as per the guidelines of respective States with effect from June 22 based on traffic density and need with 50 per cent seating capacity.

Hotels, clubs and restaurants without air conditioning opened this morning for service until 5 pm with 50 per cent seating, but liquor will not be permitted. Also, gyms began

their function at half capacity, and parks will be open from 5 am to 6 pm for walking and jogging.

Functioning of lodges and resorts with bookings up to 50 per cent, outdoor sports activities without spectators, outdoor film shooting are among the other things that are permitted from today.

However, there will be a curfew in place between 7 pm and 5 am on weekdays and during weekends curfew will be in place from 7 pm on Friday evening to 5 am on Monday morning throughout the state.

— PTI

MAHA TEEN ENDS LIFE OVER ONLINE CLASSES

Aurangabad, June 21: A 17-year-old girl in Maharashtra's Nanded district allegedly committed suicide as she did not have a mobile phone to attend online classes and her parents' financial condition did not permit them to buy her one, police said.

The girl, a resident of Naygaon hanged herself in her home. "She is a Class XI student. A suicide note has been found. Her parents have also confirmed lack of a phone as the reason for the act," police said.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

BJP'S NORTH BENGAL LEADER, 7 OTHERS JOIN TMC

Kolkata, June 21: In yet another jolt to the BJP, the party's Alipurduar district president, Ganga Prasad Sharma, joined the TMC on Monday, as senior leader of the state's ruling party Mukul Roy, who also switched sides two weeks ago, claimed that this was the "beginning of the saffron party's end" in the state.

Seven other BJP leaders from the region, too, followed in Sharma's footsteps and joined the Mamata Banerjee camp.

Roy, addressing a press meet here, said the BJP's rise in the state began with the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, when it managed to bag several seats in north Bengal, and its downfall, too, will start from the region.

"This is just a glimpse of what lies ahead... The BJP's fall in the state is imminent," Roy, who was the saffron party's national vice president until recently, underlined.

HC GRANTS BAIL TO RANA AYYUB

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, JUNE 21

The Bombay High Court on Monday granted transit anticipatory bail to journalist Rana Ayyub in a case filed by UP police over her tweet on an assault incident in Gaziabad.

Senior counsel Mihir Desai, on behalf of Ayyub contended before the Justice Prakash Deu Naik that she was a globally renowned journalist who has won several awards for her work and she had only made a tweet based on news reports about the incident of the Muslim man being attacked.

He argued that she deleted the tweet after conflicting versions emerged about the incident.

Advocate Desai also told the bench that Ayyub had recently undergone a spinal surgery and therefore required 3-4 weeks time to approach the jurisdictional courts in UP.

He also pointed out that all offences mentioned in the FIR are punishable with less than 3 years imprisonment.

2 INDIAN WORKERS HELD CAPTIVE IN SAUDI ARABIA

Kota (Raj), June 21: Two Indian workers are being held captive by their employer in Yanbu city of Saudi Arabia despite an assurance by authorities that they will be allowed to return by April-end, a local Congress leader alleged on Monday and appealed to President Ram Nath Kovind to intervene.

Gaffar Mohammed (49) of Bundi district and Vishram Jatav (46) of Bharatpur district had gone to Saudi Arabia over three years ago on a work agreement, which expired in November 2020.

They requested their employer to send them back to India. However, it is alleged, the two were held captive under inhuman conditions, and the issue was brought to the notice of the central government.

"The PMO website, on complaint number PMOPG/D/202-1/0105100, dated April 3, 2021, responded that the case was closed on April 26, 2021 as the sponsor of two Indians granted them the permission for exit by end of the month (April)," Charnesh Sharma, Congress' Bundi district vice president, claimed.

WOMAN GIVES 'QUOTATION' TO KIDNAP EX-LOVER

Kollam (Kerala), June 21: A 30-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly giving quotation to a criminal gang for kidnapping and assaulting her estranged lover and his friend for rejecting her marriage proposal, in this south Kerala district on Monday, police said.

Lincy Lawrence, the accused woman and Ambu (33) and Anandhu Prasad (21), members of a notorious gang, were arrested for allegedly kidnapping and assaulting Gautham Krishna (25) and his friend Vishnu Prasad (22).

She was taken into custody from a local hospital, where she had been admitted in the name of post-Covid treatment. Already married and a mother of two, the woman had been in an affair with Krishna, who was working in a micro-finance institution here, for over one year, police said.

SANJAY RAUT DENIES UNREST IN SHIV SENA

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, JUNE 21

A day after Shiv Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaik asked Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to join hands with the BJP again, senior Sena leader Sanjay Raut has tried to downplay the issue saying the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) is united and its government will complete the five-year term in Maharashtra. He has also made it clear that there is no groupism in Shiv Sena.

"The MVA alliance partners — Shiv Sena, Congress and NCP — support the Chief Minister. They are standing together and will remain together. We are committed to run the government for five years," Raut said on Monday.

The MVA government is model example of how a coalition government should work. Attempts to create a rift among its allies will not succeed, he added.

The Sena leader's comments have come on the backdrop of allegations levelled by Sarnaik who said the NCP and Congress are trying to weaken the Shiv Sena. In a letter written to Thackeray, he said that the party should reunite with the BJP for the forthcoming municipal polls in the state.

Sarnaik, who is facing an ED probe into an alleged money laundering case, also claimed that he and his family are being harassed by the central agencies and he received no support from his party.

However, Raut said that there is no groupism in the party. "Shiv Sena has only one faction, led by Uddhav Thackeray. Our party is yet to be affected by factionalism. The party's stand of joining hands with the Congress and NCP was taken after due consultation with all Shiv Sena leaders," he said.

Meanwhile, state Congress chief Nana Patole alleged that the frustrated BJP is trying to destabilise the MVA government by using the central agencies. "All the BJP's attempts to dethrone the MVA government have so far and this time too their play will not work. The government will complete its five-year term," he said.

● **THE MVA government is model example of how a coalition government should work. Attempts to create a rift among its allies will not succeed, Sanjay Raut said.**

HC rejects WB plea against NHRC probe

DC CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA, JUNE 21

In a major blow to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, a five-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court on Monday rejected her government's prayer seeking a recall of its order last week for a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) probe into the statewide post-poll violence allegedly unleashed by the ruling Trinamul Congress on the BJP workers.

Within hours of the step by the HC, NHRC chairperson Justice (retired) Arun Mishra constituted a seven-member "committee to enquire into complaints of post poll violence" in the state.

Headed by NHRC member Rajiv Jain, the panel has National Commission for Minorities vice chairperson Atif Rasheed, National Commission for Women member (Dr.) Rajulben L. Desai, NHRC director general (investigation) Santosh Mehra, West Bengal State Human Rights Commission registrar Pradip Kumar Panja, West Bengal State Legal Services Authority (WBSLSA) member secretary Raju Mukherjee and NHRC DIG (investigation) Manzil Saini.



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal offers prayer at Golden temple in Amritsar on Monday. Former IPS officer Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh who joined Aam Aadmi Party ahead of the Punjab Assembly elections is also seen. — PTI

AAP's CM face for Punjab to be from Sikh community

Kejriwal says people of the state are fed up with present leadership

Amritsar, June 21: Delhi

Chief Minister and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal on Monday announced that the party's chief ministerial face for the 2022 Punjab Assembly polls will be from the Sikh community.

When asked who will be the CM's face of the party for the 2022 polls, Kejriwal said, discussions are going on in the party regarding this, when time comes, you will be informed.

"But one thing I can tell you is that the entire Punjab will be proud of him. One thing is certain that AAP's CM face will be from the Sikh community," he said.

Arvind Kejriwal, who is the AAP national convenor, asserted that the people of Punjab are fed up with the present leadership ruling the state and added that the state is looking for a new type of leadership.

Kejriwal was here to induct former IPS officer Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh, who was part of the SIT probing the 2015 Kotkapura police firing incident in Punjab, into the Aam Aadmi

Party here.

Singh joined the party fold in presence of Kejriwal and other senior leaders including Raghav Chadha and AAP state unit chief and MP, Bhagwant Mann.

When asked during a press conference if the AAP's CM face can be from the Dalit community, Kejriwal replied, entire Punjab will be proud of him and he will be from Sikh community.

To a question from where Kunwar Vijay Pratap will fight the polls, Kejriwal said it will be decided later.

Asked if there have been any talks with Navjot Singh Sidhu, the Congress leader, who has been at loggerheads with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, the AAP leader said, Sidhu is a Congress leader, a senior leader. I respect him a lot. So, I think there should be no loose talk regarding any leader.

To a question if there been any meeting with Sidhu, Kejriwal said, If anything happens, you will be the first to know.

— PTI

2 Cong MLAs told to ask their sons to refuse govt job dole

Chandigarh, June 21:

Amid a fissure in the Punjab Congress over the government jobs given to the sons of two MLAs, party MP Partap Singh Bajwa on Monday urged the party's two legislators to reject the job dole for their sons.

MP Bajwa made the appeal to MLAs Fatehjang Singh Bajwa and Rakesh Pandey, whose sons Arjun Partap Singh Bajwa and Bhisham Pandey have been made police inspector and naib tehsildar respectively on compassionate ground, triggering the opposition outrage.

Partap Singh Bajwa is also the elder brother of Qadian MLA Fatehjang Singh Bajwa. Rakesh Pandey is a Congress MLA from Ludhiana.

The government job beneficiary, Arjun Bajwa, is a grandson of former Punjab Minister Satnam Singh Bajwa, who, the

Amarinder Singh government says, laid his life in 1987 for the sake of peace and harmony in the state.

Similarly, Bhisham Pandey is the grandson of former state minister Joginder Pal Pandey who, the government said earlier, was gunned down by terrorists in 1987.

Senior Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa on Monday said Satnam Singh Bajwa and Joginder Pal Pandey were mass leaders who served the public with distinction for many decades.

They laid down their lives defending the unity and integrity of the nation during the dark times of militancy in Punjab, said Bajwa. These two great leaders of the Indian National Congress in the true spirit of Punjabiyat engaged in selfless service and strove for the betterment and prosperity for the people of the state.

They upheld the flag of the Congress and its ideology, said Bajwa.

"Given their long legacy, I appeal to my younger brother, Fatehjang Singh Bajwa, MLA and my associate Rakesh Pandey, MLA, to voluntarily give up the offer from the Cabinet of Punjab for jobs to their kin on compassionate grounds. I am certain that this would be the best way to honour the memories of the departed leaders," said Bajwa in the statement.

Several Congress leaders including party's Punjab unit chief Sunil Jakhar and party MLAs Kuljeet Nagra, Amrinder Singh Raja Warring and Pargat Singh — have raised questions over their own government's decision of giving jobs to the sons of the two sitting MLAs and urged Chief Minister Amarinder Singh to rollback this ill-advised move. — PTI

BJP TO CHALK OUT PLAN TO COUNTER PAGD AT PM'S MEET

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, JUNE 21

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will devise its own careful strategy and prudent manoeuvre for the all-party meeting called by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, at his official residence on Thursday to discuss certain critical issues concerning Jammu and Kashmir.

The party's strategy will be worked out necessarily to counter that of People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an alliance of J&K's regional opposition parties and their allies from the national Left parties, at the meet, a senior BJP leader said on Monday.

The proposed June 24 meeting is seen by political watchers as the first post-August 2019 major attempt by the Central government to end the political stalemate in the erstwhile state.

However, the government sources in the Union capital had said on Sunday that the agenda of the meeting will be to discuss the issue of delimitation and possibility of holding elections to the Assembly in the Union Territory after the restructuring of the constituencies and not the restoration of its statehood.

The sources also categorically ruled out the possibility of granting any special status to J&K, a demand the PAGD is likely to exude at the meet.

ASSAM: 2 CHILD POLICY TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN PHASED WAY

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, JUNE 21

The BJP government has decided to implement the population control policy in government jobs which was introduced last year in a phased manner in Assam.

Assam Chief Minister Himanata Biswa Sarma said that the state will take into account population norms for selecting government beneficiaries be it loan waiver or any other government schemes.

He, however, made an exception saying that the rule won't be applicable to tea garden workers and the SC/ST community.

"In future, population norms will be taken into account as eligibility for government benefits. Population policy has begun," said the Chief Minister.

"We will gradually incorporate a two-child policy for availing government benefits. You can consider this as an announcement," said Sarma.

It is significant that Madhya Pradesh had imposed restrictions on people with more than two children from taking up judicial positions in 2001.

Rajasthan enacted a law in 1994 that stated that if an individual had more than two children then that person would not be allowed to contest any elections in the state.

Sonia convenes meet on June 24 to discuss strategies for protests

New Delhi, June 21:

Congress president Sonia Gandhi has convened a meeting of the party's general secretaries and state in-charges on June 24 to chalk out a strategy to plan protests against the government on issues such as the hike in petrol and diesel prices.

In the meeting, which will be held virtually, party leaders will also discuss the current Covid and political situations.

They will give their sug-



Sonia Gandhi

gestions for taking on the government and reaching

● **THE CONGRESS has been attacking the government on issues related to the farmers' agitation against three new agri laws.**

out to the people to highlight its failures, sources said.

Besides the hike in fuel prices, the Congress will also plan protests against the government over high inflation, the pace of Covid-19 vaccination and

handling of the pandemic, they said.

The economic situation of the country is also likely to figure during the discussions.

The meeting comes ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament which is likely to start in July.

The Congress has been also attacking the government on issues related to the farmers' agitation against three new agri laws.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Alapan Bandyopadhyay likely to face misconduct charges

Bengal ex-CS faces penalty proceedings

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JUNE 21

The Centre has initiated 'major penalty proceedings' against former West Bengal chief secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay with the charges of his service "misconduct" apparently for ignoring its order of his deputation suddenly to a Union ministry, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after he skipped the Prime Minister's meeting on the devastation of Cyclone Yaas and took

retirement.

It has directed the retired 1987-batch IAS officer of the West Bengal cadre to respond in writing on the charges against him to North Block in the next 30 days. Otherwise, an "ex-parte" inquiry will get underway against him.

In a "Memorandum" to the retired bureaucrat on June 16, department of personnel and training (DoPT) under the ministry of personnel and public grievances and pensions, of which Modi is the min-

ister, informed him, "...the Central government proposes to hold Major Penalty Proceedings against him under Rule 8 of the All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969 (hereinafter referred to as Discipline Rules), read with Rule 6 of the All India Services (Death-cum-Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958 (hereinafter referred to as Retirement Benefit Rules)."

It elaborated, "The substance of the imputations of misconduct or misbe-

havior in respect of which the inquiry is proposed to be held is set out in the statement of Article of Charge enclosed as Annexure-I. A statement of imputations of misconduct or misbehavior in support of the Article of Charge is enclosed as Annexure-II. A list of documents by which and a list of witnesses by whom the Article of Charge is proposed to be sustained are enclosed as Annexure-III and Annexure-IV respectively."

The department of personnel and training also directed Bandyopadhyay, now chief adviser to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, "to submit within 30 days of the receipt of this Memorandum a written statement of his defence and also to state whether he desires to be heard in person" with a caution, "an inquiry will be held only in respect of the Article of Charge as is not admitted. He should therefore specifically admit or deny the Article of Charge."

SHORT TAKES

NINE CATALAN SEPARATISTS TO BE PARDONED

Madrid, June 21: Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said Monday that the Spanish Cabinet will approve pardons for nine separatist Catalan politicians and activists imprisoned for their roles in the 2017 push to break away from Spain.

Sanchez made the announcement on Monday in Barcelona during a speech set to lay the roadmap for the future of the northeastern region before a few hundred representatives of the region's civil society. He said the Cabinet would approve the pardons on Tuesday.

DESPITE VISA ISSUES, TAIWAN TO KEEP HK OFFICE

Taipei, June 21: Taiwan says it will continue operating its de facto consulate in Hong Kong in spite of visa difficulties for its staffers while also providing consular services online.

The Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Hong Kong has been unable to get new visas for its staff after the Hong Kong government in 2018 began requiring that Taiwanese personnel at the office sign a statement accepting the one-China principle, Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said.

The office has just one staffer left in Hong Kong whose visa is due to expire next month. The one-China principle holds that Taiwan is part of China and the Communist government in Beijing is China's sole legitimate government.

U.S. ENVOY HOPES N. KOREA ACCEPTS OFFER FOR TALKS

Seoul, June 21: President Joe Biden's special envoy for North Korea said on Monday he hopes to see a positive reaction from the North soon on US offers for talks after the North Korean leader ordered officials to prepare for both dialogue and confrontation.

Sung Kim, Biden's special representative for North Korea, is in Seoul to speak with South Korean and Japanese officials about the United States' stalled diplomacy with the North over its nuclear programme and US-led sanctions.

The trilateral talks followed a North Korean political conference last week where leader Kim Jong Un called for stronger efforts to improve his nation's economy.

ARMENIA PM'S PARTY WINS SNAP PARL ELECTION

Yerevan, June 21: Results released on Monday showed the party of Armenia's acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan won the snap parliamentary elections he called to ease anger over a peace deal he signed with Azerbaijan.

With all precincts counted, Pashinyan's Civil Contract party won 53.9% of the vote and former President Robert Kocharyan's bloc was a distant second place with about 21%, the election commission said Monday. A bloc affiliated with another former president came third with 5.2%, and another party had nearly 4%. Blocs need 7% to get into parliament, however, Armenia's laws allow a third party or bloc to get seats if only two political forces pass the threshold to get into parliament. Pashinyan called the early election after months of

PHOTO SHOWS DUBAI PRINCESS IN SPAIN

Madrid, June 21: A Dubai princess who has been the subject of concern from a United Nations panel after being seized trying to flee the sheikhdom in 2018 appeared in a social media post early Monday that described her as being in Spain on a European holiday.

An Instagram image published by a woman identified in British media as former Royal Navy member Sioned Taylor shows Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed Al Maktoum at Adolfo Suarez Madrid-Barajas Airport. Taylor's caption, punctuated by a smiley face emoji, read: Great European holiday with Latifa. We're having fun exploring!

Comments by Taylor acknowledged the location of the image, which match other images of the airport. Asked about Sheikha Latifa, Taylor wrote in another comment she is great with a thumbs-up emoji. Taylor, the United Arab Emirates' embassies in London and Madrid, as well as the government's Dubai Media Office, did not immediately respond to requests for comment Monday.

Taliban take key Afghan district

Insurgents add to string of recent victories

Kabul, June 21: Taliban fighters took control of a key district in Afghanistan's northern Kunduz province on Monday and encircled the provincial capital, police said, as the insurgent group added to its string of recent victories on the battlefield.

Fighting around Imam Sahib district began late Sunday and by mid-day Monday the Taliban had overrun the district headquarters and were in control of police headquarters, said Inamuddin Rahmani, provincial police spokesman said.

Taliban militants were within a kilometre of Kunduz, the provincial capital but had not entered into the city, he said, although there were reports of small bands of Taliban near the outskirts and residents trying to leave for Kabul.

Dozens of districts have fallen to the Taliban since May 1, when United States and Nato troops began their final departure from Afghanistan. Like Imam Sahib district in northern Kunduz, their significance often lies in their proximity to roads and major cities. Imam Sahib is strategically located near Afghanistan's northern border with Tajikistan, a key supply route from Central Asia.

● **DOZENS OF districts have fallen to the Taliban since May 1, when United States and Nato troops began their final departure from Afghanistan. Like Imam Sahib district in northern Kunduz, their significance often lies in their proximity to roads and major cities.**

ern border with Tajikistan, a key supply route from Central Asia.

Rahmani said police and Afghan National Army soldiers had jointly tried to defend the district. He said it still wasn't clear how many casualties the Afghan National Security and Defence Forces suffered in the protracted battle or how many Taliban were killed or wounded. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed confirmed Imam Sahib district was in Taliban hands.

Several other districts in Kunduz have also fallen to the insurgent group in the latest round of fighting, including Dasht-e Archi, which neighbours Imam Sahib, said Rahmani.

Syed Mohammad Mousavi drove with his family to the relative safety of Kabul from northern

Mazar-e-Sharif, about 120 kilometres west of Kunduz on Sunday. He said people were trying to leave Kunduz city for Kabul fearing additional fighting. "The Taliban were all over the road, checking cars. We were very scared," he said after reaching the capital.

In recent days, the Taliban have taken several districts across the three northern provinces of Kunduz, Baghlan and Balkh, said Mousavi. Significantly, witnesses said Doshi district in Baghlan province was in Taliban hands, which if it true gives the insurgent group control of the one road that links five northern provinces to the capital Kabul.

The Taliban have circulated videos on their website and to WhatsApp groups which they claim show government soldiers who have surrendered being told to return to their homes and receiving money from the Taliban.

On Sunday, Taliban leader Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhonzada issued a statement ordering his soldiers to "treat those who surrender well and display good behaviour with them".

— AP

Israeli FM in UAE next week

Jerusalem, June 21: Israel's new foreign minister will head to the United Arab Emirates next week for the first-ever visit by a top Israeli diplomat to the Gulf Arab country, the ministry said Monday.

Foreign Minister Yair Lapid's trip comes after the two countries normalised relations last year in an agreement brokered by the Trump administration, the first of four similar deals with Arab states that had long shunned Israel over its conflict with the Palestinians.

Both Israel's new government and the Biden administration have said they hope to reach similar accords with other Arab sta-

tes. Israel and the UAE have meanwhile continued working to deepen ties despite last month's Gaza war. The Israeli Foreign Ministry said Lapid will visit the UAE June 29-30, and will inaugurate an Israeli Embassy in Abu Dhabi and a consulate in Dubai. "Ties between Israel and the UAE are an important relationship, the fruits of which will be enjoyed not only by the citizens of the two countries, but by the entire Middle East," it said in a statement.

Lapid was the driving force behind a new Israeli government sworn in just over a week ago that ended Benjamin Netanyahu's record 12-year run as prime

minister. Netanyahu and Trump had held up the agreements with the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco as among their biggest achievements.

Israelis have flocked to the UAE since the agreement was reached to enjoy futuristic Dubai. The UAE is a major global travel hub, and normalisation has made it much easier for Israelis to travel further afield. The two countries have also signed a raft of agreements to cooperate in commerce, technology and other fields.

Shortly after the accord was reached, the Trump administration authorised the sale of 50 advanced F-35 fighter jets to the

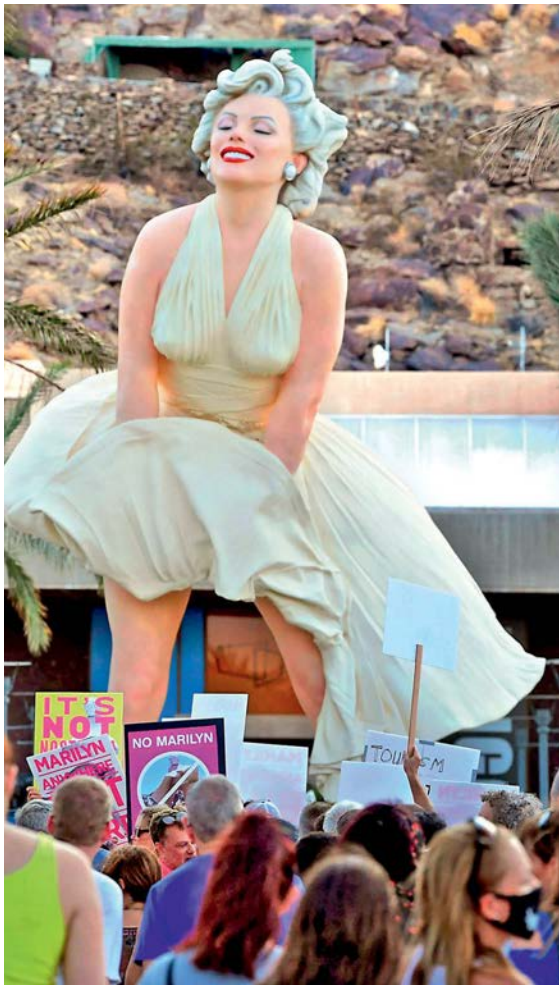
UAE, which would make it only the second country in the Middle East, after Israel, to acquire them.

The Biden administration put that agreement on hold in January after it drew fierce criticism from Democrats in Congress, who argued that the sale had unfolded too quickly and without sufficient transparency. But in April, the administration decided to proceed with the \$23 billion arms sale, saying it would work with the UAE to ensure adherence to human rights standards and the laws of war.

The Palestinians strongly criticised the normalisation agreements.

— AP

Tumult over statue



Protesters gather in front of the "Forever Marilyn" statue unveiled on its return to Palm Springs, California. The 26-foot tall and 17-tonne sculpture by artist Seward Johnson Atelier was displayed earlier this decade in Palm Springs, but the return has drawn the ire of residents on infringement of surrounding natural landscape views and on allegations that the statue is sexist and inappropriate, despite the popularity of Marilyn Monroe's iconic dress-flying pose from the 1955 comedy "The Seven Year Itch".

— Photo by Frederic J. Brown/AFP

Raisi says no Biden meet, missiles non-negotiable

Dubai, June 21: Iran's president-elect said on Monday he would not meet with President Joe Biden nor negotiate over Tehran's ballistic missile programme and its support of regional militias, sticking to a hard-line position following his landslide victory in last week's election.

Judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi also described himself as a "defender of human rights" when asked about his involvement in the 1988 mass execution of some 5,000 people. It marked the first time he's been put on the spot on live television

over that dark moment in Iranian history at the end of the Iran-Iraq war.

"The US is obliged to lift all oppressive sanctions against Iran," he said at the news conference. Raisi sat in front of a sea of microphones, most from Iran and countries home to militias supported by Tehran. He looked nervous at the beginning but slowly became more at ease over the hourlong news conference. Asked about Iran's ballistic missile programme and its support of regional militias, he described the issues as "non-negotiable". Tehran's fleet of attack

aircraft date largely back to before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, forcing Iran to instead invest in missiles as a hedge against its regional Arab neighbours, who have purchased billions of dollars in American military hardware over the years. Those missiles, with a self-imposed range limit of 2,000 kilometres can reach across the Middle East and US military bases in the region.

Iran also relies on militias like Yemen's Houthi rebels and Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group for counterbalance against enemies such as Saudi Arabia and Israel.

— AP

EU curbs to hurt Belarus economy

Brussels, June 21: European Union foreign ministers will approve Monday a fresh set of sanctions against scores of officials in Belarus and prepare a series of measures aimed at hurting the country's economy, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

The EU has ratcheted up sanctions since President Alexander Lukashenko won a sixth term last August in elections slammed as fraudulent by the 27-nation bloc. The measures have targeted people accused of electoral misconduct and responsibility for the police crackdown that followed.

We will approve the package of new sanctions, which is a wider package, Borrell told reporters as he arrived in Luxembourg to chair the ministerial meeting. He said asset freezes and travel bans will be slapped on a total of around 86 people and organisations.

Diplomats have said that a number of those targeted are linked to an in-

cident last month in which a Ryanair flight travelling from Greece to Lithuania was diverted to Minsk, where authorities arrested Raman Pratasevich, a dissident journalist who was on board the airliner. The EU has already banned Belarus airline companies from flying over the bloc's territory or using its airports.

Borrell said the ministers will also prepare a raft of economic sanctions for EU leaders to endorse at a summit on Thursday. These are going to hurt, going to hurt the economy of Belarus heavily, he said. The measures may include action against the export of potash and petroleum products.

"We will no longer just sanction individuals. We will now also impose sectoral sanctions — meaning that we will now get to work on the economic areas that are of particular significance for Belarus and for the regime's income," German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said.

— AP

Oz official: Stick with AZ for 2nd dose 92 Indian factory workers in Lanka Covid positive

Colombo, June 21: Niney two Indian workers at an iron works factory in Sri Lanka tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday, health officials said.

The Indians were among the 128 workers at the factory in Colombo north suburb of Wattala who were found to have contracted the virus. They have been put under quarantine. The factory, which has a total of 194 workers, has been closed temporarily, a report in the Newscenter.lk said. Those who have tested negative have been put under quarantine in the factory premises, the report said.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka on Monday ended its

Covid-19 lockdown by lifting travel restrictions, amid concerns by health officials who insisted that it must be continued in view of the raging third wave. For the first time in nearly four weeks, the travel restrictions were lifted at 4 am on Monday and will be re-imposed at 10 pm on June 23.

"We will be closely monitoring people's movements through special units," police spokesman and Senior Deputy Inspector General Ajith Rohana said. He said the public must stay indoors as much as possible despite the lifting of restrictions. No inter-district travel will be allowed, the police said.

lifted its recommended age limit for AstraZeneca from 50 to 60 after a 52-year-old woman died of clots. A 48-year-old woman

died in April. Pfizer is currently the only alternative to AstraZeneca in Australia, although Moderna is expected to be registered

Health officials issued more guidelines on public behaviour during the lifting of the lockdown. The health authorities were wary of the Delta variant of the coronavirus which is spreading fast across the country. "We still view this as dangerous, the travel restrictions were only loosely observed. The lifting of even that could be dangerous," Upul Rohana, a spokesman for the public health inspectors said.

The nation has recorded nearly 2,000 cases per day since the third wave which began mid April. The total number of cases in the country stood at 239,689, while 201,389 are recovering.

— PTI

PAK'S DEATH TOLL CROSSES MARK OF 22K

Islamabad, June 21: Pakistan's Coronavirus death toll crossed the grim figure of 22,000 on Monday, as Sindh province continued to report the highest number of fresh cases in the country. Thirty patients died and 907 new cases were detected in the last 24 hours, the Ministry of National Health Services said in its daily bulletin. Now, the death toll stands at 22,007 and national caseload at 949,175.

Of the 907 new cases, the majority of them were reported from Sindh province at 595 cases. The Coronavirus has greatly impacted the province. So far, Sindh has reported over 3.07 lakh cases. Pakistan on Sunday received 1.55 million doses of a China-made Coronavirus vaccine, as the immunisation drive picks up pace in the country.

— PTI

SENSITIVE | PROJECT

Millions of Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian or Slovakian citizens had lost their homes

Museum on WWII-expelled Germans raises Nazi crimes

Berlin, June 21: Germany is opening a museum exploring the fate of millions of Germans forced to leave eastern and central Europe at the end of World War II, along with other forced displacements of the 20th and 21st centuries — a sensitive project that has taken years to realise.

Chancellor Angela Merkel is due to speak to an opening ceremony Monday for the Documentation Ce-

nter for Displacement, Expulsion, Reconciliation, more than 13 years after her government gave the plan the go-ahead.

Housed in a late-1920s building in downtown Berlin, it features some 700 exhibits over 1,500 square metres (16,000 square feet). Making the project reality was long viewed as "an impossible balancing act," said the center's director, Gundula Bavendamm, recalling

"heated arguments about priorities and contextualisation."

Controversies revolved around one central question, she said: "How can the exodus and expulsion of Germans at the end of and after World War II be portrayed without raising the slightest doubt that this country is aware of its lasting responsibility for the German crimes of World War II and the murder of

European Jews?"

The project centres on the millions of Germans who fled from advancing Soviet forces or were kicked out of parts of eastern and central Europe as Germany's borders were moved westward after the war, "in the historical context" of Nazi crimes, said Bavendamm — the project's third director.

"Without the Nazi policies of expulsion and annihilation, 14 million Germa-

nians wouldn't have lost their homes as a result of flight and expulsion," she added. "But that doesn't change the fact that their expulsion by the Allies and the eastern and central European states in the aftermath of World War II was also an injustice."

In its efforts to provide context, the exhibition explores "forced migration as a phenomenon of mod-

ern Europe," including displacements during World War I, the arrival of Vietnamese "boat people" in West Germany in the 1970s, the fallout from the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1990s and the European migration crisis of recent years.

Exhibits include some 30 passports, including a German Jew's passport stamped with the letter "J" in the Nazi era, a "Nansen

passport" for stateless refugees from 1937 and a modern-day provisional refugee passport. There is the diary of a girl from East Prussia, a territory Germany lost at the end of the war, chronicling sexual violence. There's also a bicycle used by a Syrian refugee to cross the Russian-Norwegian border in 2016. There are audio accounts by people recounting their arrival in Germany.

— AP

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52,574.46	0.44
Nifty 50	15,746.50	0.40
S&P 500*	4,216.89	1.21
Dollar (₹)	73.87	0.28
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.18	0.31
Euro (₹)	88.36	0.19
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,277.250	0.54
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	74.85	1.82
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.029	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.468	0.018

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Transmission charges waived for RE till June '25

The power ministry announced the extension of timeline by two years for waiver on interstate transmission charge for electricity generated from solar and wind sources. Now, the waiver would be available till June 30, 2025 against June 30, 2023 earlier. Besides, the waiver would now be available for hydro pumped storage plant (PSP) and battery energy storage system (BESS) projects also.

Housing prices up in major cities in Q4: RBI data



The All-India Housing Price Index (HPI) increased 2.7 per cent year-on-year in the March quarter of 2020-21, the latest RBI data shows. The index takes into account transaction-level data received from housing registration authorities in ten cities—Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai. The All-India HPI rose year-on-year by 2.7 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2020-21.

Umbrella unit of 170 MSME bodies formed

As many as 170 industry associations have joined hands to form All-India Council of Association of MSMEs (AICA) in order to deal with issues of the sector hit hard by the pandemic. "AICA today announced that 170 industry associations have joined together to address post Covid issues faced by two lakh MSMEs across India," AICA said in a statement. It said the pandemic has affected every industry.

Honeywell's new tech to detect counterfeit drugs

Honeywell announced digital authentication technology for the pharmaceutical industry in response to the growing menace of counterfeit products, especially in vaccines and Covid drugs. The Honeywell solution comprises a digital code embedded in the packaging of pharmaceutical products. The end user can validate the authenticity of the product by scanning the digital code with a smartphone.

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Govt to alter consumer protection norms Rules seek to curb e-com flash sale

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 21

Tightening the rules governing e-commerce companies, the central government has proposed to restrict e-commerce entities from organising "flash sale" of goods or services. It also seeks to bar any e-commerce entity from using information collected through its platform for unfair advantage of its related parties and associated enterprises and manipulating price of the goods or services to gain unreasonable profit.

By the proposed amendments to the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020, notified by the government on Monday, no e-commerce entity should organise a "flash sale" of goods or services offered on its platform. This restricts the entity from organising a sale at significantly reduced prices, high discounts or any other such promotions or attractive offers for a predetermined period of time on selective goods and services or otherwise with an intent to draw a large number of consumers.

E-commerce entities have been holding such sales around festivals and similar occasions and have been receiving tremendous response from customers.

However, the rules restrict such sales "provided such sales are organised by fraudulently intercepting the ordinary course of business using technological means with an intent to

HEMMING IN BIG SELLERS

- ▶ No e-commerce entity should organise a "flash sale" on its platform
- ▶ It should not use any info collected for the unfair advantage of its related parties
- ▶ It should not impose cancellation charges unless it bears

similar charges

- ▶ Should appoint nodal contact, grievance officer and compliance officer
- ▶ Sellers should also have a grievance officer
- ▶ No seller should post false reviews about goods or services.

enable only a specified seller or group of sellers managed by such entity to sell goods or services on its platform."

Experts doubted the practical impact of this measure. "At first glance it will be interesting to see how practically these changes will be implemented," said Archana Tewary, partner, J Sagar Associates.

According to the proposals, no entity having a dominant position cannot abuse its position. "Abuse of dominant position" will have the same meaning as prescribed under Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2002.

It should not use any information collected through its platform for unfair advantage of its related parties and associated enterprises; none of its related parties and associated enterprises are enlisted as sellers for sale to consumers directly; and ensure that nothing is done by related parties which the e-commerce entity cannot do itself.

An e-commerce entity

should ensure that sponsored listing of products and services are distinctly identified.

It should not impose cancellation charges on consumers unless similar charges are also borne by it.

The e-commerce companies are mandated to register with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. It should appoint a nodal person of contact, Resident Grievance Officer to address concerns of customers, Chief Compliance Officer to ensure compliance to rules and a nodal contact person for 24x7 coordination with law enforcement agencies.

Sellers on the e-commerce platform also should also have a grievance officer, acknowledge receipt of consumer complaints within 48 hours and redress the complaint within one month.

No seller should falsely represent itself as a consumer and post reviews about goods or services.

SAT sets aside Sebi direction; allows PNB HF voting today

New Delhi, June 21: Setting aside Sebi's direction, the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Monday allowed PNB Housing Finance to go ahead with the shareholders' meeting on Tuesday to consider a Rs 4,000 crore investment by private equity firm Carlyle and others in the mortgage firm.

However, results of the shareholders' voting will not be disclosed till further directions from the tribunal.

The ruling comes hours after PNB Housing Finance informed stock exchanges it has appealed against Sebi's direction on June 18 wherein it was asked to defer consideration of the proposed capital infusion proposal till a valuation of the company's shares is done by a registered independent valuer.

The extraordinary general meeting (EGM) is scheduled for June 22.

Taking up the matter on an urgent basis, a two-member bench of the tribunal said as "electronic voting has already commenced it would not be fair to stay the consideration of agenda no. 1 (issuance of preference shares)." The bench of Justices Tarun Agarwala and M. T. Joshi said no factual dispute exists and only an interpretation of the provisions of the ICDR Regulations and Companies Act read with Articles of Association is required to be considered. —PTI

Top economists to advise TN CM

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 21



Some of the globally acclaimed economists, including Nobel laureate Esther Duflo, former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan and former chief economic advisor to the Government of India Arvind Subramanian will advise the chief minister of Tamil Nadu, Development Economist Jean Dreze and former Union finance secretary S. Narayan also will be part of the 'Economic Advisory Council to the Chief Minister'.

"In recent years, we have seen a slowdown in Tamil Nadu's economic growth rate. This government will make all out efforts to reverse this trend and usher in a period of rapid economic growth taking full advantage of the available limited window of the demographic dividend. To chart out a rapid and inclusive economic growth path for Tamil Nadu, this government will constitute an 'Economic Advisory Council to the Chief Minister' with leading economic experts from all over the world as its members," governor Banwarilal Purohit announced on Monday in his customary address to the first session of the 16th state legislative assembly, which also marks the commencement of the first session after the formation of the DMK government last month.

Esther Duflo is professor of Poverty

Alleviation and Development Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She along with her husband and economist Abhijit Banerjee and co-researcher Michael Kremer received the Nobel Prize in economics for in 2019 for their "experimental approach to alleviating global poverty".

Former Reserve Bank of India governor Raghuram Rajan is Katherine Dusak Miller Distinguished Service Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

Former chief economic advisor Arvind Subramanian is non-resident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Belgian-born development economist Jean Dreze is an Indian national. He has been a member of the UPA's National Advisory Council and is visiting professor at the department of economics, Ranchi University. S. Narayan has served as

the finance secretary of Government of India and as the economic advisor to the Prime Minister.

"Based on the recommendations of this council, the government will revitalise the state's economy and ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach all segments of the society," Purohit said.

He also noted that the fiscal health of the state is a cause for concern. The government will focus on improving the fiscal position and bringing down the overall debt burden. As a first step, a white paper detailing the true state of Tamil Nadu's finances will be released in the month of July, so that the people of Tamil Nadu are fully informed, he said.

There could be no social justice when there is high economic inequality and stratification. Inclusive growth is government's priority and growth and progress must benefit all sections of society and not just the top of the economic pyramid, the governor noted.

KKR TO MAJORITY OWN VINI COSMETICS FOR ₹4,600 CR

Mumbai, June 21: Global buyout major KKR on Monday announced a \$625 million, or Rs 4,600-crore, investment in deodorant maker Vini Cosmetics for a controlling stake.

The PE major has signed a definitive agreement, by which Vini's founder group led by Darshan Patel, chairman and joint managing director (JMD), and Dipam Patel, JMD, and Sequoia Capital will sell stakes.

The co-founders of the 11-year-old company, which manufactures and markets brands like FOGG, will continue to hold a significant stake in Vini and will collaborate with KKR in the next phase of the company's growth, as per the statement. In addition, existing investor Westbridge Capital will acquire a further stake from the founder group to increase its shareholding, it said.

The statement said Patel will continue to be the chairman while Dipam Patel will be appointed as the vice-chairman.

Murdoch Jr. to tap billionaire families for India investment

BEN STUPPLES JUNE 21



James Murdoch

James Murdoch is considering raising funds from ultra-rich families around the globe, a move that would give him more firepower to make acquisitions and further establish his investment firm.

Murdoch's Lupa Systems is looking for about \$150 million each from fewer than half-a-dozen family offices for investments in India, according to a person with knowledge of the matter. It intends to use an external fundraiser to help with the drive, said the person, who asked not to be identified as the plans are private and still tentative.

A spokesperson for Murdoch declined to comment.

James, 48, set up Lupa Systems in 2019. Based in New York and Mumbai, it already counts Indian startups Doubnut and Harappa Education among its investments. The firm is also backing a US blank-cheque company

that will focus on India as it hunts for targets across South and Southeast Asia. Nitin Kukreja, a former Morgan Stanley banker, is managing director of Lupa Systems's operations in India.

The firm also owns a \$160-million stake in MCH Group, the organiser of the Art Basel shows. In 2019, it invested in Norwegian drone technology company UBIQ Aerospace, New York-based comic book publishing startup Artists Writers & Artisans and

the owner of the Tribeca Film Festival.

James Murdoch was once in pole position to lead his family's sprawling media operations. He was chief executive officer of 21st Century Fox before Walt Disney Company acquired most of its assets in 2019, leaving him and Rupert Murdoch's five other children in line to receive about \$2 billion each from the deal.

James cut ties with his family's media businesses -- News Corp and Fox Corp -- last year after clashing over its editorial direction. His brother Lachlan, 49, now helps to run both companies.

Rupert Murdoch, 90, has a net worth of \$8.9 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. "At great news organisations, the mission really should be to introduce fact to disperse doubt—not to sow doubt, to obscure fact, if you will," James told the New York Times in October. —Bloomberg

Aparna to invest ₹100 cr to strengthen Alteza brand

FC BUREAU HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Hyderabad-based building materials firm Aparna Enterprises Ltd said on Monday it would invest Rs 100 crore towards building its aluminium window and door system brand Alteza in the next four years. The investment will also be used for setting up a new manufacturing unit in Hyderabad.

Sixty per cent of our investment will be used for strengthening our manufacturing capacity and the rest towards research & development and building our dealership network, said Ashwin Reddy, the managing director of Aparna Enterprises.

After launching the company's latest range of slim aluminium sliding door system, the ACA M-19 series, Reddy said the demand for quality products and services is growing in the country and wants the company to gear up to address this demand.

The aluminium window and door system market is worth around Rs 20,000 crore in India and is growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 7.9 per cent.

MARUTI SUZUKI TO HIKE PRICES IN Q2

New Delhi, June 21: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Monday said it will increase prices of its entire product portfolio in the second quarter of the current fiscal due to rise in prices of various commodities, including steel.

The auto major, which has already taken a price increase in April, noted that the price of steel and various precious metals has gone up considerably, prompting the company to pass on some of the impact to the customers. —PTI

Airtel, Tata team up for India-made 5G solutions

FC BUREAU MUMBAI, JUNE 21

Telecom major Bharti Airtel and Tata Group's flagship Tata Consultancy Services announced a strategic partnership for implementing 5G networks solutions for India.

Bharti Airtel has started 5G trials in major cities using spectrum allocated by the Department of Telecom.

The tieup underscores a push for indigenous 5G solutions in India, as the world's second-largest telecom market gears up for fifth-generation mobile networks that would enable connecting virtually everything together including machines, objects, and devices at ultra-high speeds.

Notably, the partnership with Tata Group allows

telecom operator Airtel to take head-on, rival Jio's pitch on homegrown 5G solutions. Reliance Jio is accelerating the rollout of digital platforms and indigenously-developed next-generation 5G stack.

On Monday, Airtel and Tata Group/TCS announced a collaboration for 'Made in India' 5G. Tata Group has developed O-RAN (Open Radio Access Network) based Radio and core elements and integrated a totally indigenous telecom stack, while Airtel will pilot and deploy this indigenous solution as part of its 5G rollout plans in India, with a pilot beginning in January 2022.

"The 5G solutions, once commercially proven in Airtel's diverse and brown-field network, will open export opportunities for India," said a joint release.

FIFTH LARGEST

Inflow rose from \$51 bn in '19 to \$64 bn in '20

FDI inflow surges 25% in 2020

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 21

FDI inflow into India grew 25 per cent to \$64 billion in 2020, taking the country to the fifth position globally.

Pushed up by acquisitions in the information and communication technology (ICT) industry, FDI inflow into India grew from \$51 billion in 2019 to \$64 billion in 2020. India improved its global ranking from eight to fifth position in the pandemic year, finds Unctad.

Amid India's struggle to contain the Covid-19 outbreak, robust investment through acquisitions in ICT (software and hardware) and construction bolstered FDI. Cross-border mergers and acquisitions surged 83 per cent to



\$27 billion, with major deals in ICT, health, infrastructure and energy.

Large transactions included the acquisition of Jio Platforms by Facebook's subsidiary Jaadhu for \$5.7 billion, the acquisition of Tower Infrastructure Trust by Brookfield and GIC Singapore for \$3.7 billion and the sale of the electrical and automation division of Larsen & Toubro India for \$2.1 billion.

India helped FDI in South Asia rise by 20 per cent to \$71 billion.

Meanwhile, FDI outflow from South Asia fell 12 per cent to \$12 billion, once again driven by a drop in investment from India. FDI from India dropped to \$12 billion 2020 from \$13 billion 2019. Companies in India are South Asia's largest investors, with more than 90 per cent of outflows in 2020. Investments from India are expected to stabilise in 2021, supported by the country's resumption of free trade agreement (FTA) talks with the European Union (EU) and its strong investment in Africa, finds Unctad.

India's FDI stock stood at \$480 billion in 2020 against \$205 billion in 2010.

Going ahead, Unctad says India will continue to attract foreign investment in high-tech industries, given their market size and their advanced digital and technology ecosystem. However, the recent second wave of Covid-19 shows that significant uncertainties remain. This has major impacts on the prospects for South Asia as well.

According to the UN body, announced green-field projects in India contracted by 19 per cent to \$24 billion, and the second wave in April 2021 is affecting economic activities, which could lead to a larger contraction in 2021. The outbreak severely hit main investment destinations such as Maharashtra and Karnataka, it said.



SHORT TAKES

Rahm wins first US Open crown

La Jolla, United States: Jon Rahm made tension-packed long birdie putts on the last two holes Sunday to win the 121st US Open and capture his first major title, defeating South African Louis Oosthuizen by one stroke. The 26-year-old Spaniard curled in a spectacular birdie putt from just inside 25 feet at the par-4 17th hole then made his fourth birdie of the week at the par-5 18th, blasting out of a bunker and rolling in an 18-footer to seize the lead. "I have a hard time explaining what just happened because I can't even believe I made the last two putts," Rahm said. At 17, Oosthuizen sent his tee shot left into bushes and made bogey to fall two adrift and a closing birdie only made him a major runner-up for the sixth time in his career. — *AFP*

Dussen, Rabada prop up Proteas

Gros-Islet, Saint Lucia: Rassie van der Dussen's unbeaten 75 and support from Kagiso Rabada saved South Africa from a complete second innings collapse as they recovered from 73 for seven to eventually be dismissed for 174 on the rain-shortened third day of the second Test against the West Indies in St Lucia on Sunday. That left the home side with a daunting victory target of 324 to level the series after they were thrashed by an innings and 63 runs in the first Test at the same Daren Sammy Stadium venue a week earlier. There have been no successful run-chase in Tests at this venue. **Brief scores:** South Africa 298 & 174 (van der Dussen 75 n.o., Roach 4/52) vs West Indies 149 & 15 for no loss. — *AFP*

Rani to lead girls at Tokyo Games

New Delhi: India on Monday named striker Rani Rampal as skipper and Deep Grace Ekka and Savita as two vice-captains of the national women's hockey team for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics to be held from July 23 to August 8. India had last week announced a 16-member team for the Tokyo Games but refrained from naming the captain although it was more or less certain that Rani would lead the side. "It is a huge honour to lead the Indian team at the Olympic Games. In these past years my role as a captain was made easy with teammates who have shared the responsibilities as senior players," Rani said in a statement issued by Hockey India. Under Rani's captaincy, the Indian team has achieved significant results over the last few years. — *PTI*

Tokyo to allow 10,000 local fans

Tokyo: The Tokyo Olympics will allow some local fans to attend when the games open in just over a month, organising committee officials and the IOC said on Monday. Organisers set a limit of 50 per cent of capacity up to a maximum of 10,000 fans for all Olympic venues. The decision was announced after so-called Five Party talks online with local organisers, the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee, the Japanese government and the government of metropolitan Tokyo. The decision contradicts the country's top medical adviser, Dr. Shigeru Omi, who recommended last week that the safest way to hold the Olympics would be without fans. — *AP*

Difficult DTM debut for Maini

Monza, Italy: Mercedes-AMG driver Arjun Maini finished 14th in race one before a mechanical issue forced him to retire in race two on his debut at the DTM Championship here. Maini, who became the first Indian to race in DTM over the weekend, faced a stern challenge from the championship's more experienced campaigners. Racing for the GetSpeed team, Maini made steady progress over the course of the weekend with the Indian feeling more comfortable in his Mercedes AMG GT3 car as the sessions progressed. The high point of Maini's weekend came in race two when he was locked in a battle with Mercedes stablemate Vincent Abril (who finished second in Race 1) before a mechanical failure ended his weekend prematurely. — *PTI*

Southampton, June 21: The fickle English weather played spoilsport in a game promising high quality contest as day four of the inaugural World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand was washed out due to rain.

For the second time in the one-off clash, a whole day was lost after no play was possible also on the opening day.

With the weather not improving since morning at the Hampshire Bowl, the umpires took the call almost four hours and 30 minutes after the scheduled start time of 10.30 am local time (3 pm IST).

"Day four of the #WTC21 Final has been abandoned due to persistent rain," read an ICC update.

Rain is not forecast for the remaining two days of the big final but it is likely to remain overcast as it has been the case so far when play did take place. When it wasn't the rain, bad light stopped play on both day two and day three.

A maximum of 196 overs can be played in the game to force a result. The trophy will be shared if the game is drawn.

The final was nicely poised at stumps on day three with New Zealand reaching 101 for two in response to India's 217 all out.

UK BAD CHOICE TO HOST FINAL: KP

Weather has played havoc with the first ever World Test Championship final and former cricketers including Kevin Pietersen has questioned the scheduling of the game in the UK.

"It pains me to say it, but a ONE OFF & incredibly important cricket game should NOT be played in the UK," tweeted the former England batsman, who wants these kind of games to be played in the Dubai with minimal chance of weather intervention.

Former India opener Virender Sehwag was also among the ones who questioned ICC's decision to host the final in Southampton.

Sehwag was even more sarcastic in his criticism of ICC.

"Batsman ko bhi Timing nahi mili dhang ki, aur ICC ko bhi," he tweeted. It meant that "neither the Indian batsmen nor the ICC got their timing right".

— *PTI*

DAMP SQUIB

Draw looms as Day 4 of WTC final washed out



India's Ajinkya Rahane (left) and Cheteshwar Pujara walk across the field after rain delayed start of the fourth day of the WTC final on Monday. — *AP*

Gill rues missing Taylor wicket due to bad light

Southampton, June 21: Indian opener Shubman Gill feels that bad light robbed them of a chance to have a crack at Ross Taylor and make further inroads into the New Zealand batting on day three of the World Test Championship final.

New Zealand ended at 101 for two with Devon Conway (54) being dismissed at the stroke of

stumps. "It (Conway) was a crucial wicket for us and I feel that if we would have been able to bowl a few overs to Ross Taylor, we might have been able to get couple of more wickets," Gill said. Gill did admit that it's been a problem as they have now failed to cross 250 against New Zealand on five successive occasions. "I think the Tests we

played in New Zealand (in 2020), we didn't have too much time to prepare as the focus was more on ODIs and T20s. As you said, we haven't been able to cross 250 in the last five Tests.

"This Test also we were in a solid position but we lost couple of early wickets today. But hopefully if we get some time, in next innings, we will cross 250," he said. — *PTI*

HOLDING HITS OUT AT RACISM IN ENGLAND

London, June 21: The fieriness in his youth would have cost him his life if he grew up in England, feels fast bowling great Michael Holding who has also become a leading voice against racism in sport and society.

"I don't think I would be alive today. As a young man I was a bit fiery. I kicked a stump out of the ground in New Zealand (1980) so can you imagine me going through what Ebony went through? No, I would not have made it," Holding told *The Telegraph* referring to what his co-commentator and former England woman international Ebony Rainford-Brent endured growing up in the UK.

Since George Floyd was killed by a white cop in the United States last year, Holding's voice has shone through as the leading light on the sensitive aspect of racism.

"Growing up in Jamaica, I didn't experience racism. I experienced it every time I left Jamaica. Each time I experienced it I just told myself 'this is not your life', I will soon be going back home", Holding said.

"And if I had made a stand my career would not have lasted as long as it did, I would not have had a long television career. We have seen through history that black people who stand up for their rights and call out injustice are victimised.

"Mercy, if I had spoken out they would have said another angry young black man get rid of him." I would have been another person on the dung heap," he added.

Holding's new book on racism *Why We Kneel, How We Rise* is soon to be released. — *PTI*



Laurel Hubbard in this file pic.

NZ weightlifter 1st transgender at Oly

Wellington, June 21: New Zealand weightlifter Laurel Hubbard was selected as the first transgender Olympic athlete Monday after Kiwi officials made a groundbreaking call on "a highly sensitive and complex issue". New Zealand Olympic Committee chief Kereyn Smith said Hubbard, 43 — who was born male but transitioned to female in her 30s — met all the qualification criteria for transgender athletes.

"We acknowledge that gender identity in sport is a highly sensitive and complex issue requiring a balance between human rights and fairness on the field of play," Smith said in a statement. "As the New Zealand team, we have a strong culture of manaaki (caring) and inclusion and respect for all."

Hubbard, who also competed as a male, became eligible to lift as a woman after showing testosterone levels below the threshold required by the International Olympic Committee.

She will contest the women's +87kg category in Tokyo, an event in which she is currently ranked 16th in the world. Former New Zealand weightlifter Tracey Lambrechts, who was forced to drop a division to make the 2018 Commonwealth Games because Hubbard was selected in her preferred event, said the selection was unfair. Lambrechts, now retired, said the concerns of female-born weightlifters had been ignored by officials.

"Everyone's just shut up and worried about how they'll be viewed in regards to talking out about transgender athletes," she told *Radio New Zealand*. — *AFP*



Boys from the Yacht Club of Hyderabad Foundation are all smiles after being picked to join the Army and Navy Sailing teams.

TAJINDER MAKES TOKYO CUT; DUTEE BREAKS NATL RECORD

Patiala, June 21: Shot-putter Tajinder Singh Toor qualified for the Tokyo Olympics with a new national record at the Indian Grand Prix 4 here on a day when the national women's 4x100m relay team and sprinter Dutee Chand also breached the previous best marks in the country. Toor crossed the Olympic Qualification mark with a throw of 21.49 metres and broke his own National Record. The Olympic Qualifying effort in this event is 21.10m. The previous record, which was also in Toor's name, stood at 20.92m and was set in 2019.

DUTEE CHAND REWRITES HER OWN NATIONAL TOP MARK

Sprinter Dutee Chand also shattered a national record in the women's 100 metres event. She completed the race in 11.17 seconds. However, the Olympic

Qualification time in this event is 11.15s. The previous record was 11.21 seconds, also by Dutee.

The women's relay team also failed to place itself inside the Olympic qualifying bracket despite the record effort of their own. The quartet of Hima Das, Dutee Chand, S. Dhanalakshmi and Archana Suseendran clocked 43.37 seconds to win the race ahead of India 'B' team (48.02 seconds) and Maldives (50.74) in the three team race.

The Indian team bettered the previous record of 43.42 seconds set in 2016 in Almaty by the quartet of Merlin K. Joseph, H. M. Jyothi, Srabani Nanda and Dutee. But the quartet failed to clock below 43.05 seconds needed to be among the top 16 teams in the Road to Tokyo list. Sixteen teams will run in the women's 4x100m relay race in Tokyo Games. — *PTI*

Enter, Lightning and Leo Bolt



Sprint legend Usain Bolt posted this Father's Day family photo to announce the birth of his newborn twin sons Thunder and Saint Leo. Also in the pic are Bolt's partner Kasi Bennett and daughter Olympia Lightning Bolt. — *Twitter*

Jeev remembers his 'friend & mentor'

Chandigarh, June 21: Ace golfer and late Milkha Singh's son Jeev Milkha Singh on Monday paid tribute to the sprint legend, who died of Covid-19 complications last week, saying he would need a lifetime of resilience to deal with the loss of his best friend, guide, and mentor.

Milkha, one of independent India's biggest sporting icons, died here on Friday after battling the infection for a month. The 49-year-old Jeev said Father's Day on Sunday was "another sad reminder of what I've lost".

"Dad was much more than my father — he was my best friend, my guide, my mentor," Jeev, who was in Dubai when Milkha tested positive for Covid-19 and reached here in a couple of days to be with him, said in a tweet.



Jeev Milkha Singh poses with his father Milkha Singh.

"I hope I've the same resilience & inner strength to overcome all odds. I really need it now. And I will need it for the rest of my life," he added. Milkha was cremated here on Saturday evening

with full state honours with Jeev lighting the pyre. Milkha also had three daughters. Sports Minister Kiren Rijju, Punjab Governor and Chandigarh Administrator VP Singh

Somehow, I don't remember much of Dad's funeral procession, but one sight I will never forget. A military van coming to a stop and these soldiers getting out and giving dad the salute.

— **JEEV MILKHA SINGH**

Badnore, Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal and Haryana's Sports Minister Sandeep Singh were among the dignitaries who attended the last rites.

The family's tragedy was compounded by the loss of Milkha's wife and former national volleyball captain Nirmal Kaur just five days before the legendary sprinter's death. Nirmal had also been battling Covid-19. "Somehow, I don't

remember much of Dad's funeral procession, but one sight I will never forget. A military van coming to a stop and these soldiers getting out and giving dad the salute.

"The Milkha family has always been grateful of the Indian Army, and I want to thank them again," said Jeev.

Jeev had had earlier described his mother's death as the "loss of family's backbone." The seasoned golfer thanked people for the outpouring of support.

"I lost my mom and dad. But what has been even more emotional is the thousands of messages we have been getting from people as if they have lost someone of their own," he said.

"Thank you to all dad's fans and well wishers for supporting us at this time," he added. — *PTI*

Underprivileged boys from the State have been selected on the Army and Navy sailing schools.

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

Little did Sunil Mudavat, 14, or his mother of tribal descent know that a casual volunteering to learn sailing at the Yacht Club Foundation would lead to his career in the Navy.

Hailing from Rampur thanda at Vikarabad, child to small farm labour. Sunil's father passed away in 2008 when Sunil, the youngest of four kids, wasn't even a year old. He was an alcoholic, who abused his wife and left the burden of taking care of their four kids on her. His mother, M. Budda Bai, works in farms as labour.

Sunil was inspired by his cousin Vamshi a Swaroe and a YCH Foundation sailor, who was accepted by the Navy. Sunil moved to Hyderabad in the year 2014 in second grade and studied at Government High School Mudfort, Secunderabad.

He stayed at the Telangana Tribal Welfare Hostel, Bowenpally, from where he first joined YCH in 2018.

"Sunil is young and talented and has an incisive mind when it comes to sailing and is the first and only tribal boy selected by the Navy. The work we are doing at the YCH is truly rewarding and fulfilling when our sailors get placed," said his coach Suheim Sheikh also the President of The YCH Foundation.

The YCH foundation has enabled the recruitment of a whopping 19 children

from Telangana into the sport. The kids are sent for the selections to both wings of the forces who run Boy Sports Companies and have large sailing centres at Krishnaraja Reservoir Mysore and the training centre at INS Mandovi at Goa with the Army and Navy respectively.

Once recruited to the Navy school the kids are provided with superb education facilities at the nearest Kendriya Vidyalaya and top of line training, nutrition and fitness and the boys are prepared for a career in the forces. Based on final medical, fitness and academic tests and an interview the kids are re-absorbed at various levels but get the opportunity to participate even at International events.

Of the 19 boys selected all are from poor marginalised farmers or autorickshaw drivers or house help and often single income or single mother families.

"It's a matter of deep pride that a land locked state such as Telangana has produced so many sailors that are sailing in the high seas across the world," said an elated Lt Gen. K. S. Rao, President of Telangana Sailing Association, himself an Arjuna Awardee and India's first circumnavigator.

— AFP

$$-AP$$

— *AP*

There will be a return to its home stadium for the Round of 16 if England can win and dislodge the Czech Republic from first place. There would be a trip to Copenhagen if England stays in second place. Gareth Southgate has been trying to relax his players by running through past group-stage records of successful teams. — *Agencies*

— *AP*

Scotland may not have Croatia's experience when it comes coping with the rigours of three energy-sapping tournament games in eight days. But they will have 12,000 of the Tartan Army on their side at Hampden in their quest for history. —AFP

Meanwhile, a couple of days contemplating why England haven't already advanced at the European Championship allowed Raheem Sterling to fully assess the team's shortcomings. England can't