



GUTERRES RE-ELECTED
AS UN SECRETARY
GENERAL

P10



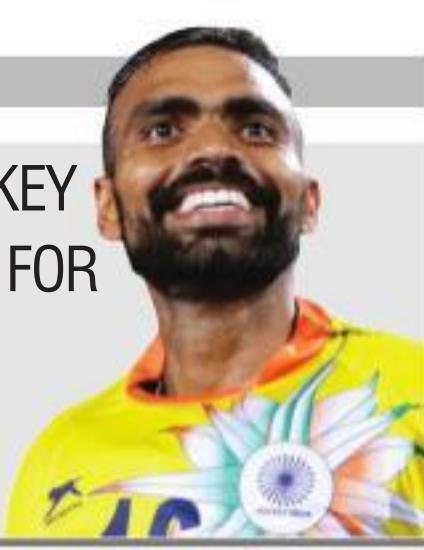
HARD-LINER TIPPED
TO WIN PRESIDENTIAL
POLL IN IRAN

P11



'DIVERSITY
HALLMARK OF
INDIAN MUSIC'

P7



INDIAN MEN'S HOCKEY
TEAM ANNOUNCED FOR
TOKYO GAMES

P12

WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky with light rain/thundershower. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 36 and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 81% Min: 48%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 36.6°C (-3) Min: 25.1°C (-3)
SUN RISES SUN SETS
05:27 hrs 19:22 hrs
MOON RISES MOON SETS
13:30 hrs 01:40 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Indian Medical Association doctors protest, demanding a central law to protect doctors against violence, in Patna, on Friday. IANS

Nandigram election result case: Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee's counsel on Friday wrote to the secretary of the Acting Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, seeking re-signment of her petition challenging the election of BJP's Suvenindra Adhikari from Nandigram, to another bench, alleging that Justice Kaushik Chanda who is hearing Banerjee's plea, "was an active member of the BJP".

Narada sting case: The Supreme Court on Friday decided to hear on 22 June the appeals against Calcutta High Court's denial for filing of affidavits by chief minister Mamata Banerjee and Law Minister Moloy Chakrabarty on their role on the day of arrest of four leaders on 17 May by the CBI in connection with the Narada sting tape case. (P5)

Draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill: The Centre on Friday sought public comments on the draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2021 which proposes to penalise film piracy with jail term and fine, introduce age-based certification, and empower the central government to order recertification of an already certified film following receipt of complaints.

PM launches crash course to skill, upskill one lakh Covid-19 warriors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched a customised crash course programme that aims to skill and upskill over one lakh "Covid warriors" across the country, and said the nation needs to stay prepared as the danger of coronavirus and possibility of its mutation remain present.

Speaking on the occasion, he said the second wave of the pandemic has highlighted the challenges the virus can throw up, and the training of more than one lakh frontline warriors is a step in that direction.

The Prime Minister said the second wave of the pandemic has highlighted the challenges the virus can throw up, and the training of more than one lakh frontline warriors is a step in that direction

"We have to further enhance the preparedness of the country to meet the challenges ahead," Modi asserted. He also said the central government is committed to providing Covid vaccination free to everyone from 21 June.

With the country witnessing shortage of medical oxygen during the recent surge in Covid cases, the Prime Minister said work is

underway on a war footing to establish over 1,500 oxygen plants, with efforts to reach every district.

The customised crash course training will be imparted to people in six customised job roles, namely home care support, basic care support, advanced care support, emergency care support, sample collection support, and medical equipment support.

The course, launched from 111 centres across 26 states, has been designed by top expert. It is a special programme under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0, with total financial outlay of Rs 276 crore, the PMO said.

UP assault case: Twitter India MD summoned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GAZIABAD, 18 JUNE

The Ghaziabad Police has sent a notice to Twitter India Managing Director Manish Maheshwari, asking him to join a probe in connection with the case involving an assault on a Muslim man here earlier this month, officials said Friday.

He has been asked to appear at the Loni Border police station here within seven days to get his statement recorded in the case in which an FIR was lodged against the social media giant also, a senior police official said.

"Manish Maheshwari is the MD of Twitter India and was sent a notice yesterday under CrPC section 166 seeking his cooperation in the probe. Some other details

Rule of land supreme, Twitter told

Amidst a tussle between the Union government and Twitter over the new IT rules, members of a parliamentary panel on Friday strongly objected to Twitter India officials' observations that they abide by their policy and categorically told them that the rule of land is supreme.

Members of the Parliamentary Panel on Information Technology also asked Twitter why it should not be fined as it has been found "violating" rules of the country. Earlier this month, the Centre issued a notice to Twitter giving it last chance to comply with the new IT rules and warned that failure to adhere to the norms will lead to the platform losing exemption from liability under the IT Act. PTT (P5)

have been sought from him and he has been given seven days time to appear at the local police station," Superintendent of Police (Ghaziabad Rural) Iraj Raja told reporters Friday.

The Ghaziabad Police had on 15 June booked Twitter Inc, Twitter Communications India, The Wire, journalists Mohammed Zubair and Rana Ayyub, besides Congress leaders Salman Nizami, Maskoor

Usmani, Shama Mohamed and writer Saba Naqvi.

They were booked over the circulation of a video in which the elderly man, Abdul Shamad Saifi, claims he was allegedly thrashed by some young men who also asked him to chant 'Jai Shri Ram' on 5 June. The police claim the video was shared to cause communal unrest.

The police said the assault took place because the accused were unhappy about the amulets sold to them by Saifi, and ruled out any communal angle in the case.

The 15 June FIR states that the Ghaziabad Police had issued a statement with facts of the incident but despite that the accused did not remove the video from their Twitter handles.

One step closer:
WHO accepts
Bharat Biotech's
EoI for Covaxin



HYDERABAD, 18 JUNE

In a major boost for Bharat Biotech, the World Health Organisation has accepted its Expression of Interest (EoI) for Covaxin from 23 June and scheduled a pre-submission meeting on 23 June, a step that will take the vaccine maker closer to a WHO emergency use listing (EUL).

Though the meeting will not be a detailed review on the product, the vaccine maker will have an opportunity to submit a summary on overall quality of the jab, according to the WHO.

The information was provided in the WHO website in the Status of Covid-19 Vaccines within WHO EUL-PQ evaluation process document.

Bharat Biotech had said last month that it expects approval for its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin from the World Health Organisation for emergency use listing during July-September.

EUL is a procedure to streamline the process by which new or unlicensed products can be used during public health emergencies.

Meanwhile, Ahmedabad-based vaccine manufacturer Zydus Cadila has told the Centre that it could apply for emergency use authorisation for its Covid vaccine ZyCoV-D in the next ten days. PTT

Top court refuses to cancel PG final year medical exams

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to direct the medical universities to cancel or postpone the final year Post Graduate exams on the ground that the examinee-doctors have been engaged in Covid duty.

A vacation bench of Justices Indira Banerjee and M R Shah said it cannot pass any general order to all the universities to not conduct or postpone the final year post graduate medical exam.

The top court noted that the National Medical Council (NMC) has already issued an advisory in April asking the universities in the country to take the Covid situation into

consideration while announcing the dates for final year examination.

We have interfered where it was possible like postponing by one month the INI CET examination conducted by AIIMS, New Delhi, where we have found that there was no justification in fixing the date for the exam without giving appropriate time to students to prepare, the bench said.

Decision on JEE, NEET entrance exams soon: The Ministry of Education is expected to soon decide on conducting the two remaining editions of the engineering entrance examination JEE-Mains and the medical entrance test NEET in August, according to officials.

Past years' grades to factor in Madhyamik, HS scores

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 18 JUNE

MADHYAMIK Equal weightage (50:50) would be given to the marks obtained in class IX annual exam (total marks is 100) and the internal assessment (total marks is 10)

HIGHER SECONDARY Total marks obtained in the best of four out of seven subjects in Madhyamik will be given 40 per cent weightage. Remaining 60 per cent would be given to the marks obtained in class XI annual theory exam and class XII project or practical.

er Secondary Education today jointly announced the evaluation system for candidates who were supposed to appear in the class X and XII board exams this year. For evaluating the Madhyamik candidates, equal weightage (50:50) would be given to the marks obtained in class IX annual exam (total marks is 100) and the internal formative assessment

ing opinion from experts. This is proven to be very student-friendly," said Ms Mohua Das, president of the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education.

For the Higher Secondary exams, the marks obtained by the candidates in Madhyamik, class XI annual exam and class XII practical or project would be considered.

The total marks obtained in the best of four out of seven subjects in Madhyamik 2019 will be given 40 per cent weightage. Remaining 60 per cent weightage would be given to the marks obtained in class XI annual theory exam (for non-lab subjects the total marks is 80 and for lab-based it is 70) and class XII project (20 marks for non-lab subject) or practical (30 marks for lab subject).

The evaluation system has been finalised after tak-

(total marks is 10). "The schools have the records of the class IX annual exam, which they have to submit to us while the internal formative assessment marks have already been sent to us. Based on the marks obtained in these two exams, the Madhyamik marksheets will be prepared," said Mr Kalyanmoy Ganguly, president of the West Bengal Board of Sec-

ondary Education at a joint press conference today.

For the Higher Secondary exams, the marks obtained by the candidates in Madhyamik, class XI annual exam and class XII practical or project would be considered.

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The evaluation system has been finalised after tak-





I believe in quality rather than quantity

BINOY TAMANG, LEADER, GORKHA JAN MUKTI MORCHA
ON HIS PARTY'S FURTHER PLANS TO RESHUFFLE THE KALIMPONG COMMITTEES

LG, CM discuss action plan for tackling 3rd Covid wave

The meeting deliberates on arrangements for O2, hospital beds, medicines & Covid jabs in Delhi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today held a meeting to deliberate on an action plan and a roadmap as part of the Delhi government's preparations to effectively handle a possible third wave of the coronavirus infection in the city in coming months.

A statement tweeted by the Chief Minister's office stated: "The Delhi government's preparations for the future (threat from the Covid-19 pandemic) include a state-level task force, an increase in the number of healthcare professionals and creation of a special task force for the treatment of children. Arrangements for oxygen, hospital beds, medicines and anti-Covid-19 vaccination were also discussed during the



meeting." Kejriwal had announced on 16 June that the Delhi government would train 5,000 youths to assist doctors and nurses to take care of coronavirus cases in the city during a possible Covid third

wave. To be called "community nursing assistants", they will be imparted a two-week training in nursing and other healthcare tasks from 28 June in batches of 500 candidates. These nursing assistants will

be called for doing their duty when there is a need for them. They will be given their salary according to the number of days they work. Online applications can be filed starting 17 June for selection of candidates for training as community nursing assistants, Kejriwal had announced.

The Delhi government had last month constituted a 13-member committee to finalise an action plan for tackling the feared third wave of Covid-19 after assessing the current status and projected requirements of health infrastructure including hospitals, oxygen-generation and storage plants and arrangements for adequate availability of medicines in the city. Another eight-member expert committee was reportedly set up to formulate a strategy for mitigation and management of the third Covid wave in the national capital. Kejriwal had earlier said

his government has made preparations for about 37,000 Covid cases a day which is expected at the peak of the third wave in Delhi.

A paediatric task force has been set up to give suggestions on protecting children during the third wave. Two genome sequencing labs, to identify variants of coronavirus, are coming up in the city at the Delhi government-run Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Hospital and the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS).

The Delhi government is also working on creating a buffer stock of essential medicines. The CM had last Saturday inaugurated 22 oxygen plants at nine Delhi government hospitals. These Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen plants have a total production capacity of 17.3 metric tonnes. Seventeen more oxygen plants are scheduled to become operational in the national capital by July.

Police issues over 1,650 challans for not wearing face masks

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Over 1,650 challans were issued to people across the city on Thursday for not wearing face masks, police said.

In a statement, the city government said the order shall be applicable from April 1.

"These steps have been taken in the interest of the poor and working class, who have suffered disproportionately due to the current (COVID-19) pandemic. This order shall also benefit those in clerical and supervisory jobs," Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said.

He added that those in the unorganised sector, who are employed on minimum wages, should not be deprived of the dearness allowance.

Under the dearness allowance, the monthly wages for unskilled labourers have been increased from Rs 15,492 to Rs 15,908.

For semi-skilled labourers, the monthly wages have

been enhanced from Rs 17,069 to Rs 17,537. For skilled labourers, the wages have been increased from Rs 18,797 to Rs 19,291 a month.

"Additionally, the minimum wage rates for the supervisor and the clerical cadre of employees have also been increased. The monthly wages for non-matriculate employees have been increased from Rs 17,069 to Rs 17,537 and for matriculate employees, from Rs 18,797 to Rs 19,291," Sisodia said.

For graduates and those with higher educational qualifications, the monthly wages have been increased from Rs 20,430 to Rs 20,976.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader claimed that the minimum wages in Delhi are the highest in comparison to any other state.

"Every section of the society has been adversely affected due to the pandemic. Adding to the woes of the masses is the soaring prices of daily essentials such as oil and pulses. I hope that this increase in wages will provide some relief to our labour brethren," he said.

Centre again asks Delhi to resume e-PoS devices in PDS; seeks compliance report by June 30

PTI

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

The Centre once again on Friday directed the Delhi government to resume at the earliest e-PoS (electronic point of sale) devices in the public distribution system (PDS) for transparent distribution of ration to beneficiaries.

The Centre has also asked the state government to submit a compliance report by June 30.

This also comes amid row between the Centre and the Delhi government over PDS grain supply in the national capital.

The Delhi government in April 2018 had temporarily suspended distribution of ration through the e-PoS system. The Centre wants the Delhi government to implement e-PoS distribution of foodgrains from all ration shops for rightful targeting of the ration.

"More than 12 letters/DOs (demi-officials) have been written to the Delhi government from all levels in this department.

"However, the distribution of foodgrains in Delhi is still being done using old/manual register-based mechanisms," D K Gupta, director in the Union food ministry, said in the letter written to the state gov-

Coaching classes for SC/ST/OBC students enrolled in city govt scheme to start soon: Min

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Online or offline coaching classes will resume soon for students enrolled under a city government scheme under which those from SC/ST/OBC and EWS categories receive private coaching for competitive exams, Delhi Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam said on Friday.

Reforms under targeted PDS are mandated under the Act to promote transparency and rightful targeting, he added.

Gupta stressed again that e-PoS machines are necessary not only for transparent distribution of subsidised foodgrains under the NFSR but also for the implementation of the 'One Nation-One Ration Card (ONORC)' ration card portability service.

Further, this non-compliance of e-PoS is also blocking the implementation of ONORC for numerous migrant beneficiaries in the national capital, he said.

Hence, directives are here-by given under Section 38 of the NFSR that the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) shall take steps to fulfill the pending obligations of Section 12 of the Act immediately..." he said.

This will enable transparent distribution of foodgrains through e-PoS devices under NFSR and Pradhan Mantri Garib Anna Yojana (PMGAY) to all NFSR beneficiaries in the SC/ST minister, said.

Capital records 165 fresh Corona cases, 14 deaths

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Delhi today recorded 165 new Covid cases and 14 coronaviruses-related deaths while

its infection positivity rate stood at 0.22 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The national capital had yesterday reported 158 coronavirus infections and 10 Covid-linked deaths while the positivity rate was then 0.20 per cent.

Today's fresh Covid cases were detected out of 76,480 tests, the health bulletin said.

4km long groundwater recharge zone to be created in Shahdara drain: Minister

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Delhi Water Minister Satyendar Jain on Friday said a four-kilometer-long groundwater recharge zone will be created in Shahdara drain, the second largest of all the drains in the national capital.

"Visited the outfall of Shahdara Drain and reviewed the progress of the low-cost weir being constructed inside the drain. Ponds will be created to augment groundwater recharge using 70 MGD treated water from Kondli STP (sewage treatment plant). Only clean water will be allowed to flow into the Yamuna," the minister tweeted.

"Jain said that treated water from Kondli STP will be utilized to develop a four-kilometer-long groundwater recharge zone inside the drain. He also instructed officials to lay pipelines to carry treated effluent from the STP to rejuvenate Sanjay Lake and Smriti Van Lake," a statement read.

Commercial vehicles without RFID tags, sufficient recharge to be not allowed in Delhi from July 1

PTI

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Commercial vehicles without valid radio frequency identification tags or sufficient recharge amount will not be allowed to enter Delhi from July 1, authorities said on Friday.

According to a public notice dated June 14, issued by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), the work on installing the radio frequency identification (RFID) system at entry points of the national capital, has been completed, and tags can be purchased or recharged at several points of sale system.

"Honourable Supreme Court of India vide orders 10.08.2020 and Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) have directed for cashless collection of ECC and toll tax from specified commercial vehicles entering Delhi," reads the notice.

"It has also been directed that commercial vehicles without valid RFID tags and sufficient recharge be not permitted to enter Delhi w.e.f. 01.07.2021," it said.

So, owners, drivers and transporters of all specified commercial vehicles, entering Delhi from any of the 124 entry points, are required to be equipped with RFID tags, the

Delhiites experience sultry Friday

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Delhiites experienced a sultry Friday with the maximum temperature settling at 36.6 degrees Celsius, three notches below the season's average.

The humidity levels oscillated between 81 per cent and 48 per cent and the minimum temperature was recorded at 25.1 degrees Celsius, three notches below normal.

Palam recorded a maximum temperature of 35.2 degrees Celsius and a minimum temperature of 24.6 degrees Celsius.

Lodhi Road recorded a high of 36.6 degrees Celsius and a low of 27.5 degrees Celsius. The neighbouring Noida recorded a maximum temperature of 35.1 degrees Celsius and a minimum temperature of 25.5 degrees Celsius. Gurgaon recorded a high of 34.8 degrees Celsius and a low of 25.3 degrees Celsius.

The weatherman has forecast a generally cloudy sky with light rain or thunderstorms for Saturday. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 36 degrees Celsius and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

The Statesman

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AIR-SURCHARGE

Kathmandu - Re. 2, Eastern Region - Re. 1
All other stations in India - Re. 1



Sisodia reviews Sports University's progress

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

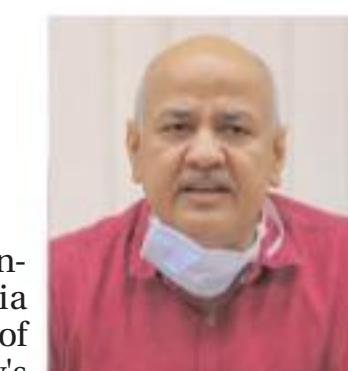
Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia reviewed the progress of Delhi Sports University's functioning on Friday along with the senior officials concerned.

According to a statement issued by his office, Sisodia told the meeting that through Delhi Sports University, the government's vision was to train and prepare players who could bring home 50 gold medals from the Olympics, making the country proud in the field of sports.

The university will have world-class facilities and provide exceptional training to budding sportspersons.

It will nurture players to showcase India's sporting potential at international tournaments and bring umpteen medals to the country, he pointed out. The Deputy Chief Minister said, "Delhi Sports University will be a unique institution in the world of sports, conferring degrees up to the Ph.D level. Till now, irrespective of the accolades they win, sportspersons need to choose another discipline to get an academic degree. Otherwise, applying for a job becomes difficult. Now, sportspersons will not need a degree in any other discipline. They will be conferred degrees based on their sporting performance. A team of the university will decide on the course structures after due consideration of various sports disciplines."

It is worth taking note of that the objective of establishing such a university is to provide opportunities for world-class training, research and academics in health, wellbeing and sports. The Delhi government is committed to making sports training and education multi-dimensional so that sportspersons have varied employment opportunities. Along with popularising different kinds of sports, Delhi Sports University will also provide a boost to people's health and wellbeing, Sisodia added.



Owner of 'Baba ka Dhaba' attempts suicide, hospitalised

PTI

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

The owner of south Delhi's 'Baba ka Dhaba', Kanta Prasad, allegedly attempted suicide and has been admitted to the Safdarjung Hospital, police said on Friday.

Prasad, 81, attempted suicide on Thursday. The reason behind his extreme step is not yet known, they said.

Hospital sources said he is on ventilator support in the ICU. He is critical but stable.

"On Thursday at 11.15 pm, information was received from the Safdarjung Hospital that Prasad was admitted there. Police reached the hospital and collected the MLC (medico-

legal case), which states intake of alcohol and sleeping pills as the cause of unconsciousness," Deputy Commissioner of Police (south) Atul Kumar Thakur said.

The statement of Prasad's son Karan was recorded. He said his father consumed alcohol with sleeping pills, the police said, adding that further inquiry is underway. Speaking to reporters, Prasad's wife said she has "no idea" about what her husband consumed.

"I am clueless about what happened to him. I was at the 'dhaba'. He fainted and we took him to the hospital around 4 pm (on Thursday). No one has told us anything about his condition," she said.

Prasad shot into the lime-light last year when a video of him tearfully talking about the lack of customers at his eatery and his financial woes went viral, triggering an outpouring of support in cash and kind from all over the country.

The video was shot and uploaded by YouTuber Gaurav Wasan. Later, the octogenarian filed a complaint against Wasan for alleged misappropriation of funds raised through donations. Prasad went on to open a restaurant. However, he faced losses and had to shut it. Recently, Prasad returned to his 'dhaba' and apologised to Wasan. The YouTuber visited Prasad and accepted his apology.

Cong to observe Rahul Gandhi's b'day as 'Sewa Diwas', distribute medicines, cooked meals

PTI



I am happy everyone has agreed to sink all differences in the interest of entertainment industry, everyone thinks work should start

FILM-MAKER RAJ CHAKRABORTY
AFTER TALKS AMONG ALL STAKEHOLDERS FOR OVER 30 TV SERIALS

Punjab govt accepts 6th pay panel's recommendations

The Amarinder govt's move will benefit over 5.4 lakh serving & retired state employees

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 18 JUNE

In a move that will benefit over 5.4 lakh serving and retired state government employees in the state, the Punjab government, led by Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, on Friday decided to accept most of the recommendations of the 6th Pay Commission, and decided to implement them from 1 July, 2021, with retrospective effect from 1 January, 2016.

With this decision, taken today at the Punjab Cabinet meeting, the Amarinder government has fulfilled another major promise to the people, despite the precarious financial health of the state, an official spokesperson said.

As a result of the decision, the minimum pay for a government employee would increase from Rs 6,950 per month to Rs 18,000 per month. The implementation will entail 2.59 times increase in salaries and pensions over the previous pay commission's recommendations, with an annual



an increment rate of three per cent, resulting in pay scales of all existing employees continuing to be higher than in neighbouring Haryana.

With the implementation of the 6th Pay Commission's recommendations, minimum pension will go up from Rs 3,500 to Rs 9,000 per month, and the minimum family pen-

sion would increase to Rs 9,000 per month under the revised structure, an official spokesperson said after a Cabinet meeting that gave the approval for implementation of the 6th Punjab Pay Commission (PPC) recommendations. Under the new structure, divorced or widowed daughter will be eligible for family

pension, and the eligibility criteria of income for family pension has been enhanced from Rs 3,500 plus dearness allowance (DA) to Rs 9,000 plus DA per month.

The expected amount of net arrears from 1 January 2016 to 30 June, 2021 is about Rs 13,800 crore. Significantly, the Punjab government employ-

ees have already been getting five per cent interim enhancement since 2017.

The net arrear amount of employees and pensioners for the year 2016, estimated at Rs 2,572 crore, will be paid in two equal instalments in October 2021 and January 2022.

An official spokesperson said after the Cabinet meeting that the implementation of the Pay Commission's major recommendations will lead to an annual additional burden of Rs 8,637 crore to the state exchequer, with prospective additional net annual burden expected per annum to be about Rs 4,700 crore.

A new allowance — higher education allowance, in the form of a lump sum incentive to all employees who attain higher educational qualification during the course of employment and in the field directly relevant to an employee's job—is being introduced by the government.

New employees will, however, be paid as per the Central government pay scales, which now apply to all new recruits.

Amarinder giving jobs towards of Cong MLAs to save chair: Badal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 18 JUNE



Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Friday condemned Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh for allegedly giving jobs in the police and revenue departments to wards of Congress legislators to "save" his chair, said all such "illegal appointments" would be quashed once the SAD-BSP alliance forms the government in the state in 2022.

In a statement, the SAD president said it was shocking that while the poor and meritorious were awaiting jobs under the 'ghar ghar naukri' scheme of the Congress government the latter had changed the scheme for Congressmen only.

"Earlier rules were given the go by to appoint former CM Beant Singh's grandson as a DSP on fake compassionate grounds. Now, again false compassionate grounds have been created to give jobs to the sons of Congress legislators Fateh Singh and Rakesh Pandey who have been appointed to the posts of Inspector and Naib Tehsildar respectively," Badal said.

Terming the appointments as illegal, the SAD leader said jobs could not be given to the

wards of the legislators in lieu of the alleged sacrifice of their grandfathers. It is deplorable the CM has given this false premise while explaining the act which is aimed at saving his chair in the ongoing tussle in the Punjab Congress party. The CM of all persons should know the contents of the FIR which was registered when former minister Satnam Singh Bajwa was shot down in 1987. The FIR stated that Satnam Bajwa was killed in a case involving personal rivalry. Whereas the question of sacrifice in this case on the basis of which Bajwa's grand-son is being rewarded with a government job 33 years after his grandfather's death?" Badal asked.

Stating that jobs on compassionate grounds needed to be given only to genuine beneficiaries including army martyr families as per laid down rules, Badal said special exception given to families of Congressmen was very demoralising for society at large.

Tourism stakeholders included among priority HP groups for Covid jabs



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 18 JUNE

The Himachal Pradesh government on Friday announced that the tourism sector stakeholders will be included in the priority group for Covid vaccination in the state.

A state government official said the health department decided to include categories of people associated with hotel industry, truck unions, private bus operators and taxi in priority groups for vaccination.

"The specific formats of identification certification to be generated for the purpose of Covid vaccination to be issued by con-

cerned bus, taxi, truck operator or the hotel owner," he added.

He further stated that these groups have been added for Covid vaccination only and these will not be eligible for any other benefits.

"With the partial easing of restrictions and the start of public transport and inflow of tourists, this initiative would definitely help in improving the vaccination coverage in the persons engaged in economic activities in the state," he said.

He added Himachal had vaccinated 1,81,665 frontline workers with first dose and 42,528 frontline workers with second dose till 17 June.

Doctors in Delhi protest violence against healthcare professionals

PTI
NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

Several doctors on Friday held protests here as part of a nationwide stir called by the IMA against the recent incidents of violence against healthcare professionals in some parts of the country, and to demand a central law to curb such cases.

In Delhi, a group of doctors belonging to both the IMA (Indian Medical Association) and FAIMA (Federation of All India Medical Association) stood with placards outside the AIIMS main gate to raise their voice on the issue.

FAIMA founder Dr Manish Jangra told reporters that the AIIMS RDA is not part of the protest but members of IMA and FAIMA are leading the protest, and "we will be having a protest at RML Delhi too at 1 PM near the hostel".

FAIMA lodges its strong protest against the "recent incidents of violence" against doctors, he said.

The call for the nationwide protest was issued by the IMA, which on Thursday had said that around 3.5 lakh doctors of the association will participate in it.

IMA national president Dr JA Jayalal had said that besides its members, a number of organisations such as the Association of Physicians of India, the Association of Surgeons of

India, the Medical Students Network and Junior Doctor Network will participate in the protest.

The IMA had said in a statement on Thursday that in Bihar and central Kerala, doctors will close their clinics in the morning to press for the demand of a central law against violence against doctors. In the evening, public interaction has been arranged to form a coordination team in each branch of IMA to stop such violence from taking place.

The Health Services Personnel and Clinical Establishment (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill, 2019, which sought to impose a jail term up to 10 years for assaulting on-duty doctors and other healthcare professionals was opposed by the Home Ministry, saying the special law was not feasible as health is a state subject.

"There are many central health laws such as the PCPNDT Act and the Clinical Establishment Act. Currently, 21 states have local laws, but what we need is a strong central law to protect doctors from violence," the doctors' body said.

Cases of violence against doctors and other healthcare workers have been reported lately from some parts of the country, including Jammu and Kashmir and Assam among other places.

On June 1, a doctor at a medical facility in Hojai in Assam was allegedly assaulted by attendants following the death of a patient suffering from COVID and pneumonia at Udali Model Hospital.

The National Human Rights Commission had later taken cognisance of the case and asked the Assam government and the state police chief to inquire into the alleged assault and take "heedful, preventive and punitive action" in the case.

Jai Ram urges BJP workers to gear up for bypolls

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 18 JUNE

Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur on Friday urged the ruling BJP workers to gear up for bypolls to two assembly constituencies of Jubbal-Kothhai and Fatehpur and the Mandi Lok Sabha constituency to ensure the party's victory.

These seats had fallen vacant due to the deaths of Fatehpur MLA and former minister Sujan Singh Pathania, Jubbal Kothhai MLA and ex-minister Narendra Bratga and Ram Swaroop Sharma, the two time MP from Mandi Lok Sabha seat.

Thakur said the 3-day meeting of state BJP had provided an opportunity to the party to pon-



der over the achievements of the state government and also gear up for the coming by-elections.

"The party workers should start preparation for the Mandi Lok Sabha seat, Fatehpur and Jubbal-Kothhai assembly constituencies byolls besides general elections to the state assembly that will be held in 2022," he

said. He stated that detailed discussions were held with the party office bearers, MLAs and party candidates for general elections to Vidhan Sabha during the core committee meeting of state BJP unit.

Besides, a meeting was also held with chairmen and vice chairmen of various boards and

corporations and it will become fruitful in preparing the roadmap for 2022 assembly elections.

"The candidates for by-elections would be announced as soon as the schedule for by-elections is announced," he said, adding the party was confident of winning the by-elections by huge margin.

He further stated that the cases of Coronavirus were gradually declining which was a sign of relief to the people of the state.

The state government was fully aware of the situation and was ensuring that no laxity and casualness was adopted ahead of expected third Covid wave, he said, adding the pace of vaccination will also be speeded up in the state.

THUMBNAILS



Manipur CM N. Biren Singh launches AYUSH-64 a polyherbal formulation, at a programme organized by the Directorate of AYUSH, Government of Manipur, at the Chief Minister's Secretariat in Imphal.

AGENCIES

Court dismisses Christian Michel's bail: A Delhi Court on Friday dismissed the bail pleas of Christian Michel in connection with alleged AgustaWestland scam related corruption case filed by the CBI, and the money laundering case by the Enforcement Directorate. Special CBI Judge Arvind Kumar refused to grant relief to the British national, who was extradited from Dubai in 2018.

PTI

No political crisis at all in K'taka: Yediyurappa

CM said BJP high command will decide action against A.H. Vishwanath

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU, 18 JUN



Karnataka CM B S Yediyurappa on Friday ruled out any political crisis, even as the rumblings within the ruling BJP have come out in the open during the visit of its national General Secretary in-charge of the State Arun Singh, amid speculations in some quarters about his replacement.

The CM said that the BJP high command will decide on action against party MLC A.H. Vishwanath for his recent "open statements" as he rubbished as "baseless" his allegations against his younger son and party vice-president B.Y. Vijayendra of interference in administration and "kickbacks" in an irrigation project.

"There is no political crisis at all...what is happening is just because one or two people (legislators) are saying something in the media, it is creating misunderstanding...these one or two people speaking against me is not new, they have been doing it since the beginning and it is getting

highlighted," Yediyurappa said. Speaking to reporters here, he said, about 60 legislators have met national General Secretary Arun Singh on Thursday, but these one or two people who are making statements were not even allowed to meet him.

"There is no confusion or crisis, we are all together and united, and are focusing on the development work. None of my cabinet colleagues are disturbed by any of these things... we will try and talk to one or two people who are involved in such activities,

and try to resolve things," he added.

Speculations have been rife for some time now that a section of the ruling BJP is trying to push for unseating Yediyurappa, despite Singh ruling out replacing the Chief Minister and asserting that the 78-year-old Lingayat strong man will continue in the top post.

MLA from Hubli-Dharwad West Arvind Bellad and Vijayapura MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal who are said to be from the faction seeking Yediyurappa's replacement

did not meet Singh on Thursday. Not willing to comment on Vishwanath's statements, Yediyurappa said, the high command will decide on what action should be taken against him.

Regarding his allegation against his son and kickbacks in an irrigation project, the CM said, "these are all baseless allegations and the Irrigation Department Secretary will clarify everything...unnecessarily such allegations are being made, there is no basis for it. It is being done for political reasons."

Decision on further relaxing restrictions: A decision on further relaxing lockdown restrictions in the state after June 21 when the current curbs come to an end, will be taken on Saturday, Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said.

"The situation is improving. There is also a possibility of a third wave in the future, but despite that we will have to give some relaxations. We will discuss it at a meeting tomorrow evening, and take a decision," Yediyurappa said.

Incessant rain triggers flood alarm in Bihar as rivers swell

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
PATNA, 18 JUNE



Farmers in Bihar were ecstatic when the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted about "normal to above normal" rainfall in most parts of the country this year. They, however, have suffered the first major setback when the floodwaters entered their villages in June itself, prompting them to flee for safer places so early.

Strange though it may sound, several villages of Gopalganj, East Champaran and West Champaran have been left flooded following heavy rainfall in the state and also in catchment areas of rivers in Nepal, such as Gandak, Lalgabaya and Sikrana. Officials said more than 5,000 people have been evacuated in these three districts while many of them have been living under their flooded homes.

Reports said the water resources department officials have been literally caught unawares by floods which hit the region too early. The repair works of quite many embankments are yet to be completed. This has caused panic among the people living along the embankments in the flood-prone district.

lages in Gopalganj district alone. Water level in Gandak has increased by 12-18 cms at several places in Gopalganj.

TV footage showed children sitting atop plastic-covered bullock carts while their parents were busy somehow cooking meals standing in knee-deep water which has entered their homes. "This has become a part of our life. We face this situation every year although the trouble started too early this year," said a local villager.

In a related development, National Disaster Response Force teams saved 13 villagers from getting drowned after the boat they were riding overturned while they were crossing the river in Gopalganj district.

Panicky villagers climbed the trees and started crying for help when the disaster team rushed to the spot and saved them. Floods have been causing massive destruction every year.

Trade unions back protest by defence PSU employees

NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

The joint platform of Central Trade Unions and Sectoral Federations today extended its support to the nationwide protest action programme by employee-federations in the defence sector tomorrow, opposing the Government's decision to corporatize the ordnance factories.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Defence Civilian Employees had supported a call for an indefinite strike from 12 October, 2020 against the arbitrary decision of the Government.

However, there was a settlement and the strike was deferred.

But the Government has gone against the agreement and the clear provisions of Sec. 33 of the ID Act 1947 and proceeded with its decision to corporatize the OFB, the Joint Platform said.

Maoist camp busted, woman cadre killed

RAIPUR, 18 JUNE

A Maoist camp was busted after an encounter between DRG jawans and Left-Wing ultras in the area bordering Bastar and Sukma districts of Chhattisgarh today.

The gunfight that claimed the life of a woman guerilla took place between the hills of Chandameta and Kumakoleng. Bastar IG Sundaraj P confirmed.

IG Sundaraj said that there was a tip-off about the presence of a group of Maoists belonging to the Kanger Ghati Area Committee in Chandameta, Patelpara, Gadmpara, Andalpara, Tuls Dongri, and Paybarhat in the areas bordering Bastar and Sukma. DRG team from Bastar and Dantewada, District Police Force Sukma, 80th battalion of CRPF 80th and 227th battalion were sent to conduct an anti-Naxal operation. A gunfight broke out between Maoists and Bastar DRG when jawans were carrying out a combing operation between in forest between Chandameta and Pyarhat this morning, Sundar Raj said.

Cops recovered the body of a woman Maoist with an AK-47 rifle, two pistols, 12 bore guns, a Bhamra (muzzle loading) gun, and a huge quantity of material used in setting up a Maoist camp after the encounter was over. A massive search operation was carried out in the surrounding area afterward, Bastar IG said.

SNS

Unscientific to open only liquor shops in Kerala: Congress

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 18 JUNE

KPCC president K Sudhakaran MP has on Friday come out against the state government's lockdown policy saying that it (the government) opens only the institutions that provide them profit while majority of the services useful for the public remain shut. Calling the weekend lockdown as illogical, he urged the government to review it. This will only lead to super spread due to heavy rush on Fridays, he added.

Sudhakaran asked the government to explain the logic behind the decision to open liquor shops while the places of worship remain closed. At a time when the people are going through financial crisis, it is unscientific to open only liquor shops, he said.

He demanded that the government should grant permission to open places of worship, libraries, movie theatres and other public utilities on the basis of test positivity rate (TPR) and following Covid protocol.

The state witnessed record sale of liquor with the relaxations in lockdown. According to reports, liquor worth Rs 52 crore was sold out on Thursday.

Long queues were seen outside liquor shops as the government eased lockdown curbs from Thursday onwards.

SNS

TENDER

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT * INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) *

The Executive Engineer HPPWD Nalagarh, Dist. Solan HP on behalf of Governor of HP invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registered with HP PWD for the works as detailed in the table.

Sr. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs)	Starting Date for downloading Bid and end date	Earnest Money (Rs)	Deadline for submission of Bid	Time	Eligible class of Contr.
1	C/o road from Ghanirola put to Chandi via Ghat Doeche, Kaker Doeche, km 0/0 to 5/700 (SH: ROFD and CD work in km 0/0 to 0/600 and C/o 900 mm dia RCC Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/600, 0/300, 0/440 and 0/510 = 4 Nos.	5,88,248.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 PM to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	12,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
2	C/o road from Thyaora to Banedar via Balshi, Dodam, Dharmana km 0/0 to 3/060 (SH: C/o 900 mm dia R.C.C. Hume pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/160, 0/220, 0/340, 0/41 and 0/500 = 5 Nos.	6,46,303.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	13,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
3	C/o Shyeda Pardeep Kumar Marg from Diggal Pandal km 0/0 to 3/500 (SH: C/o RCC Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 2/660 1 No.)	2,56,314.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	5,100.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
4	C/o link road to village Balshi km 0/0 to 3/060 (SH: ROFD in km 0/0 to 0/500 and c/o 900mm dia R.C.C. Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/180, 0/300 and 0/540, 4 Nos.)	5,12,604.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	10,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
5	C/o Link road form Bhagura km 0/0 to 1/300 (SH: C/o R.C.C. Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 1/100 = 1 Nos.)	2,93,518.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	5,800.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
6	C/o road Harjan Basti Luma to Chittar km 0/0 to 2/600 (Under SCSP) (SH: ROFD in km 0/0 to 0/600 and C/o 900mm dia R.C.C. Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/400, 0/210, 0/340 and 1/0 = 4 Nos and C/o 900mm dia R.C.C. Hume pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/550 and 0/660 = 2 Nos. and P/L WBM Grading 1 in km 0/60 to 1/00.)	13,22,009.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	27,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
7	C/o Link road to Jubbar km 0/0 to 4/500 (under SCSP) (SH: C/o 4 mtr RCC Slab culvert along with wing wall at RD 0/005)	11,54,918.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	23,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
8	C/o road form village Pandar to Jokhi nichil via Ram Nath Kaushal House to Dev Raj House km 0/0 to 0/800 (SH: P/L W.B.M. Grade -II, W.B.M. Gr-III and 25mm thick bitumen concrete in km 0/0 to 0/500). (Under MMSY)	8,11,226.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	16,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
9	C/o Link road from Dalmaham to SC Basti near Budh Ram House km 0/0 to 0/750 (SH: C/o R.C.C. Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/350, P/L WBM Grade-1 km 0/0 to 0/400 and 1/0 = 4 Nos and C/o 900mm dia R.C.C. Hume pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/500 to 0/500) (Under MMSY)	7,89,913.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	16,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
10	C/o Link road from Panighat Balshi via Dodan km 0/0 to 3/060 (SH: ROFD in km 0/0 to 0/500 and C/o 900mm dia R.C.C. Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/500 and 0/660 and 1/00 = 2 Nos) (Under MNP)	3,83,673.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	16,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
11	C/o Link road to Chittar to Gharamula Put Mantog Kalan km 0/0 to 2/700 (SH: C/o 900mm dia R.C.C. Hume Pipe Culvert with wing wall at RD 0/080, 0/280, 0/385, 0/580 and 0/670 = 5 Nos.)	6,53,914.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	13,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
12	C/o Ambwala Rator Rajwahan Jaglu Jamithear Brahm in km 0/0 to 7/000 (SH: C/o R.C.C. Hume Pipe culvert with wing wall at RD 0/350, P/L WBM Grade-1 km 0/0 to 1/00 and 1/0 = 1 Nos)	14,49,510.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	29,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
13	RR Damages on link road to village Kundu km 0/0 to 0/500 (Sh/C/o R/Wall at rd 0/420 to 0/447)	2,51,120.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	5,000.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
14	Improvement of Black Spots on various roads under Nalagarh Sub Division (SH: C/o Speed Breaker, Cat Eyes etc.)	15,28,539.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	30,60,000	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
15	R/R Damages on Baghela Rajwati Malehni road km 0/0 to 12/600 (SH: C/o R/Wall at Various reaches)	6,94,311.00	25.06.2021 at 3:00 P.M. to 09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	17,400.00	09.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M.	Six Month	Class C to D
16	A/R M/O to Nalagarh Bharatgarh road km 0/0 to 9/400 (SH: C						



All-round development of people of J&K is
the Modi govt's top priority

UNION HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH
REVIEWING VARIOUS PROJECTS BEING IMPLEMENTED IN J&K

The Statesman

05

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 19 JUNE 2021

THUMBNAILS



Children dive into the Arabian Sea during high tide, in Mumbai on Friday. IANS

Assam Cong MLA resigns: In a jolt to the Opposition Congress in Assam, Mariani legislator Rupiyoti Kurmi on Friday resigned from the party and the Assembly, announcing that he will join the BJP soon. He alleged that the party ignores the workers at the grassroots and do not provide an opportunity to them to move ahead in its organisational structure. SNS

Police recruitment in JK: Giving a fresh impetus to the recruitment process which had slowed down due to the ongoing Covid pandemic, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Friday approved the proposal for recruitment of 800 sub-inspectors in the Jammu and Kashmir Police. SNS

MP: IAS officer claims threat to life & family, seeks protection

BHOPAL, 18 JUNE

MP Cadre IAS Officer Lokesh Kumar Jangid has alleged that he received a life threatening call from an unknown person and the IAS officer has written to the DGP of MP to provide security to him and his family.

Jangid had recently raised questions about corruption in the system. He has even applied for an inter-state deputation to his home state Maharashtra, allegedly on being fed up by frequent transfers in MP though his official reason is to look after his ailing grand father and aged widow mother. Jangid has been transferred nine times in four-and-a-half years in MP.

In his recent application for security, the 2014 batch IAS officer has written to MP DGP Vivek Johri that he received a phone call on the 'Signal' App two days ago at 11.50 PM and the caller threatened him and his family, including his son, of life.

"As soon as I answered the call, a man on the other side began threatening me," Jangid told The Statesman. "The man also threatened me to immediately proceed on a six-month leave if I cared about my and my son's life," he alleged. "I have mentioned all this in my application to the DGP," he said about his application.

"A DSP from the Cyber Crime Cell of the Police subsequently contacted me and inquired about the threat call. The number that came on the call was an encrypted number. The Cyber Cell must get the actual number to identify the caller to find out why and on whose behalf did he threaten me," he said. A couple of days ago, he had raised serious questions on corruption prevalent in MP. SNS

Rule of law supreme: Parl panel to Twitter

Twitter India officials grilled by Standing Committee on IT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE



Amidst a tussle between the Union government and Twitter over the new IT rules, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on IT on Friday told the US-based social media giant that the rule of the land was supreme and the company must abide by the Indian laws.

During a 90-minute deposition before the panel, chaired by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, the Twitter India officials were asked "tough and searching questions", including why the company should not be fined as it has been found "violating" rules of the country, sources said.

Twitter India's public policy manager Shagufta Kamran and legal counsel Ashu Kapoor deposed before the parliamentary panel.

Later in a statement, a Twitter spokesperson said the company "stands prepared to work with the Committee on the important work of safeguarding citizens' rights online in line with our principles of transparency, freedom of expression, and privacy."

"We will also continue working alongside the Indian Government as part of our shared commitment to serve and protect the public conversation", the spokesperson said while appreciating the

opportunity to share views over Twitter before the Standing Committee on Information Technology.

BJP MPs Nishikant Dubey, Rajyawardhan Rathore, Tejasvi Surya, Sanjay Seth, Zafar Islam, Subhash Chandra were among those present during the meeting while from the opposition there were TMC MP Mahua Moitra and TDP MP Jaidev Galla apart from Tharoor.

During the meeting, panel members mostly from ruling BJP asked Twitter officials whether their policy is more important or rule of land, to which officials responded that they respect the Indian laws but they have to follow their policy as well for larger interest, sources said.

The panel members took strong objection to Twitter stance and categorically told them that the rule of land is supreme not the company policy, sources said.

As per sources, there was unanimity in the panel that the Twitter should abide by the IT Act.

Gudiya case: Lone accused gets life imprisonment

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 18 JUNE

MPCadre IAS Officer Lokesh Kumar Jangid has alleged that he received a life threatening call from an unknown person and the IAS officer has written to the DGP of MP to provide security to him and his family.

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'Rise of China has placed India in central role at global stage'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 18 JUNE

The rise of China has placed India in a central role at the geopolitical stage, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said today.

"It is our largest neighbour and one with which we share more than just a border and proximity. We have also had to confront a specific strategic challenge posed by China and its tactics on our shared border," he said addressing a seminar on "India's Foreign Policy in the Post-Covid World: New Vulnerabilities, New Opportunities". He was obviously referring to the current tense military stand-off between India and China at Eastern Ladakh. Referring to

the recent second wave in India, Shringla noted that India received extensive support and assistance from its partner countries. "This reflected the goodwill earned by India for the assistance extended by it to other countries when they needed it."

The Indian diplomat pointed out that vaccines have complex supply chains. India has worked to ease regulatory disruptions to these supply chains by diplomatic interventions with some of its key

partners. He said India had to deal with the disruption caused by the pandemic in different sectors. However, in the last one year, India has seen a great collective effort to overcome the challenges it was facing.

"Our scientists have produced vaccines and know more about the virus and the dangers that it poses. Businesses have adapted; economic and logistical systems have withstood extreme stress; and technology has enabled creation of new paradigms in education, social equations and commerce," he added.

Shringla observed that a pandemic of this nature required not just a whole-of-government approach but a whole-of-society approach.

The matter had come to light after a man complained to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) that he received a message on his mobile phone about his test report coming negative at the Kumbh even though he had not given a sample for it.

After receiving the complaint from the ICMR, the Uttarakhand government asked the Hardiwal district magistrate to investigate the matter and a three-member panel was constituted for it.

The Uttarakhand government on Thursday had lodged a case against a company

officer Shambhu Kumar Jha. He said the company and both labs have been booked under the Epidemic Diseases and the Disaster Management Acts besides Sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 420 (cheating) of the IPC.

The scam is old. It took place in March. However, a probe has already been ordered into it and stern action will be taken against those involved," he told reporters here on the

and two private labs for fudging coronavirus test reports during the Kumbh Mela in April. The firm, Max Corporate Service, Nalwa Laboratories Private Limited of Hissar and Delhi-based Dr Lalchandani Lab have been accused of issuing fake negative test results.

The Uttarakhand High Court had directed the state government to test 50,000 samples daily to control the spread during the religious congregation, for which the Health Department awarded the contract to Max Corporate Service, who further hired the two labs. Confirming the lodging of the case, DGP Ashok Kumar said the complaint was lodged on behalf of Hardiwal Chief Medical

Officer Shambhu Kumar Jha.

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and 420 (cheating) of the IPC.

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Agree to Disagree

There was arguably a measure of pregnant symbolism when Joe Biden shook hands with Vladimir Putin in Geneva on Wednesday. The Presidents of the United States of America and Russia have agreed to disagree at the summit, which was potentially hugely significant. This is perhaps quite the most charitable construct that can be drawn on the interaction. Little concrete progress was effected. Disagreements were stated, said President Biden, but not in a hyperbolic way, and he said Russia did not want a new Cold War. President Putin said his counterpart across the Atlantic was an experienced statesman and the two "spoke the same language". It was presumably a calculated diplomatic exercise at a rarefied level. The talks lasted around three hours, less time than was scheduled. Mr Biden said they did not need to spend more time talking and there was now a genuine prospect to improve relations with Russia. There were two striking developments. The two sides agreed to begin a dialogue on nuclear arms control. They also said they would return ambassadors to each other's capitals. These were the two specific issues raised; for the rest, the talks were rather generic. The envoys, it bears recall, were mutually withdrawn for consultations in March, after the United States accused Russia of meddling in the 2020 presidential election. There was little sign of agreement on other issues, including cyber-security, Ukraine and the fate of the Russian opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, who is currently serving a two-and-a-half-year sentence in a penal colony. Mr Biden was emphatic that there would be "devastating consequences" for Russia if Navalny died in prison. Mr Putin hinted at a possible deal on exchanging prisoners, saying he believed compromises could be found. There was no consensus on the other contentious issue of cyber-attacks. Mr Putin brushed away accusations of Russian responsibility, saying that most cyber-attacks in Russia originated from the US. The US President told Mr Putin that critical infrastructure, such as water or energy, must be "off-limits" to hacking or other attacks. "I looked at him and said how would you feel if ransomware took on the pipelines from your oil fields? He said it would matter," Mr Biden said, adding that if Russia violated these "basic norms" the US would retaliate. The two sides differed sharply on human rights, including the right to protest. Mr Putin dismissed US concerns about Mr Navalny, who recently undertook a 24-day hunger strike. He said Mr Navalny had ignored the law and knew he would face imprisonment when he returned to Russia after having sought medical treatment in Germany. Mr Navalny says he was poisoned with a nerve agent on Mr Putin's orders, an accusation the latter denies. Overall, however, the comity of nations does concur with Mr Navalny. What is the benchmark for success following this summit? Arguably, President Biden will see success in the fact that they engaged in detailed conversations.

Timeless final

And Sachin Tendulkar said, 'Let there be hype,' and there was hype. So much so, truth to tell, that a very interesting point made subsequently by a not-so-iconic character in a very run-of-the-mill media colloquy came quite amusingly to be relegated to the customary pad-it-up blabber that would make up the bulk when the ambitious hack aimed high, which was the top of the page. So much for how the media was warming up for the current World Test Championship final, though well might what was suggested would resonate beyond it. An impressive array of former cricketers, mostly Indian, had been left disappointed that one solitary match would decide the global tournament played over a long period, but there was someone stepping a little aside from them loudly to wonder why the high-ups hadn't gone for a timeless Test considering the game's determinant importance. "Everybody wants a conclusive result" is presumably the idea that underlies the argument. A draw followed by the sharing of the trophy is deemed somewhat anticlimactic. It cannot really be said with any measure of certainty that the International Cricket Council considered it before announcing the dos and don'ts pertaining to the match ~ would time-conscious television have welcomed such a proposal with a whoop and a holler, dancing all the while on the tips of its toes? ~ but the direction-pointing can indeed be a spur for going back in time to try and find out why timeless Tests were moved on from. There had been some 99 of them between 1877 and 1939, or thereabouts, when the practice stopped. Scheduling complications were a major reason for that, and while Australia was all for them, with the experiment being extended to its domestic cricket as, strange as it may seem today, paying people loved these, England had its strong, ideological reservations. There were indignant people who asked why the game was being commercialised. They also pointed out that teams were meant to try and outscore one another within a stipulated time ~ and not carry on ad nauseam. To win the toss in a timeless Test was to be ahead by some 100 runs, given half-decent batting, it was said. Whether organisational convenience won the battle, or ideology held the edge in an innocent, pre-television era might be hard to specify today, but a sidelight was Hoary Antiquity's firm refusal to think poorly of inconclusive endings. And a lot of great matches have indeed finished with the teams staying equal without gumming up the world's everyday wheels or causing cataclysms. "Some of the best contests which it has been my pleasure and privilege to play in and to witness," Ranjitsinhji wrote in 1903, "have been those wherein the weaker eleven has struggled gamely to avoid defeat and the stronger one has striven its uttermost to bring the game to a definite conclusion within the allotted period." He was leading Sussex at the time.

Gaza Gloom

If we ordinary mortals all approved, as sheer common sense, the repulsive notion that 'might makes right', there would be no need for crafty leaders to resort to deceit about their uglier self-serving activities. Yet most state leaders do believe that they must prevent embarrassing or incriminating information leaking out



Few things ought to perplex us more than the immense energy exerted by state authorities to disguise their most unsavory actions. What are they afraid of? These powerful agents routinely survey the entire planet in terms of who they can or cannot afford to bully.

As ancient Greek historian Thucydides easily deduced, "the powerful do what they will, and the weak suffer what they must." Drop into an International Relations course anywhere and you'll get an earful of that cynical sentiment being lauded as the supreme bottom line. Thucydides' rueful lament is regarded in elite circles as a hearty endorsement, and they rarely bother to hide it among themselves. Anyone who believes otherwise is regarded as a hopeless rube, ripe for exploitation.

Still, if we ordinary mortals all approved, as sheer common sense, the repulsive notion that "might makes right," there would be no need for crafty leaders to resort to deceit about their uglier self-serving activities. Yet most state leaders do believe that they must prevent embarrassing or incriminating information leaking out.

Even Hitler's hideous Nazis during the Second World War conscientiously lied not only to the outside world but to the German people, who were totally under their control, about the holocaust and other mass crime sprees. Good PR is deemed almost as vital in international politics as arms manufacturing, and indeed has long been considered a pretty potent weapon in itself.

Every government does its best to daub on beautifying cosmetics: a few indignant denials here, a few frothy distractions there, and shiny humanitarian rhetoric spread everywhere. No one can surpass the state of Israel in fashioning a heroic image of itself as a tiny endangered democracy threatened by surrounding tyrannical regimes and internally by irrationally hostile Palestinians.

That carefully cultivated international image nonetheless is slowly cracking up against Israel's plainly apartheid reality and its huge military power, both aspects undeniably on display in every major clash. Even sympathetic mass media can't quite conceal

the rougher aspects of Israel anymore.

During the Gaza strip clash last month, the mainstream press offered a fascinating evidence of a subtle shift in reporting practices. A May 23 Associated Press report - one could pick many others ~ typified the sly strategic style.

First, the AP announces that Gaza long-range rockets, unprovoked, rained down on perfectly innocent Israel, which was forced to defend itself with artillery and air strikes that managed to kill or wound about 20 Gazans for every Israeli casualty.

This thumbnail narrative usually is the



KURT JACOBSEN



SAYEED HASAN KHAN

The writers are well-known commentators and the authors of *No Clean Hands, Parables of Permanent War* and many other books.

entirety of the account, but this time around the customary attribution of blame on irrational Palestinians was followed in the next few sentences by an amazing admission that the rocket attacks were retaliation for sweeping evictions by Jewish settlers of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem and for provocative acts by what AP described as heavy-handed" Israeli police action against Muslim protesters around the Al-Aqsa mosque. Well over 1500 Palestinians were arrested by Israelis since the rockets began firing. Of Israeli arrests only a handful are noted.

US outlets mostly echoed this blithe pattern of contradictory reportage. The facts, or enough of them, were there. It is as if the journalist, or more likely the news agency, was hoping readers wouldn't notice the connection between the key events.

The regional eruption still was defined by the AP as "the Fourth Israel-Hamas War in

a just over a decade" rather than as a conflict since at least 1948 between Israel and Palestinians over the steady ethnic cleansing of the latter.

Israel Defence Minister Benny Gantz is quoted as hailing a "punishing blow" to Hamas, as if Hamas is the source, and not a symptom, of Middle East woes and was around at the time of the Nakba. If you are a hasty reader, the intended impression is that the Palestinians themselves instigate all the agony they suffer. If you read carefully, though, there is plenty of subversive content in the devilish details to alarm Israeli authorities.

Bernie Sanders and legislators such as Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib, and Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez are the most visible political figures opposing the annual stream of nearly \$4 billion to Israel during its latest assaults which occurred, as the Associated Press noted with rare candor, on the "Israeli national holiday that marks the seizure of East Jerusalem in the six day war of 1967."

Usually unmentioned in the Western press is that annexation of East Jerusalem, let alone efforts to drive out Arab residents, is illegal under UN law. Seven hundred thousand Israeli settlers are usually absent.

A map displaying the pathetic polka dot existence of West Bank Palestinian areas is extremely unlikely to grace front pages. The Western press hardly mentions that outside money poured in to rebuild shattered Palestinian areas is another subsidy to Israelis, who can count on complicit Western philanthropy to pay for all the damage they do.

Yet, if 'might makes right,' Israel would be hailed internationally for its callous actions, and plainly is not. The press is slowly recognizing what Israel likes to call, when favourable, "facts on the ground," but these facts expose cruel bigoted practices.

The two-state solution, as journalist Gideon Levy, among others, argues, is now long gone and only a single state with equal rights for all residents is a realistic option. For Israel's own sake, a reckoning with its own systemic faults may pave, however tortuously, the way for an equitable and genuine peace.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Of that mystery boat

Time was when Sri Lanka remained on high alert to prevent the movement of armed groups from Tamil Nadu, a haven for terrorists who brought boatloads of arms and ammunition here.

It has now been reported that Tamil Nadu is worrying about such a security threat from this side of the Palk Strait; its police and the Indian Central intelligence agencies have reportedly been placed on the highest alert level following a warning that some armed persons from Sri Lanka are trying to enter India via the sea. Search operations are being conducted in several cities in Tamil Nadu and road blocks have been set up, we are told. Kerala is also reported to have adopted similar measures in view of the threat. However, the identities of the suspected infiltrators are not known, and they had not been intercepted or sighted at the time of going to press.

It is not clear from what has been reported of the security threat at issue whether the armed persons are from a terror group, or any other criminal outfit.

Gunrunning and drug smuggling between India and Sri Lanka have been going on despite attempts by the two countries to stop them, but what has prompted Tamil Nadu to go on red alert cannot be a boat carrying weapons or drugs with some armed smugglers aboard; it is believed to be a boatload of armed persons presumably

The Island

intent on carrying out an attack on Indian soil. This is a very serious situation that warrants a high-level probe here as well.

Sri Lankan underworld figures flee to India when the police close in on them here. Some of them have been arrested in India. Drug dealer and contract killer, Maddumage Lasantha Chandana Perera, alias Angoda Lokka, who fled Sri Lanka, fearing his capture, is believed to have died while hiding in India, last year. But such characters usually do not carry weapons while fleeing in boats; they travel disguised as fishers, and make good their escape in most cases. They have links to their counterparts in India, where they have protection, and therefore do not take the trouble of moving their weapons in boats and run the risk of being captured. Some attempts by the LTTE rump to smuggle explosive devices to this country have been foiled in South India since the end of the Vanni war, but there have been no reports of former Tigers trying to infiltrate India. Drug smugglers also do not carry weapons when they cross the Palk Strait; their operations are far more sophisticated.

So, who are the armed persons trying to reach India by boat? Are they members of a foreign terror group using Sri Lanka as a transit point? Some years ago, the Indian intelligence warned of the possibility of such terrorist operations.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

In support of the elderly

SIR, The article "Our abused elders need help" by Nanda Lal Mishra and Preksha Seth (17 June) depicts the real plight of senior citizens, elderly persons who are considered these days as great burdens on society, and on youngsters and family members in particular.

Among the elderly population who are suffering and are in a state of physical and mental trauma due to living alone or with rude children and their spouses or facing other wretchedness are many who do not surface in official data. The situation in rural areas is even more grave.

In urban areas, elderly persons are targeted by property dealers, neighbours and covetous relations. The memorable bonds bet-

ween grandparents and grandchildren are now illusive. Elderly parents or a widow or widower who have no alternative but to live with the family of children bear the brunt of suffering. Those who live alone have to suffer the misbehaviour of neighbours and locals.

Elders face harsh treatment and toxic comments in the bank, post-office, and from Medclaim and insurance agents. In buses and trains, youngsters are reluctant to vacate seats reserved for senior citizens.

In the good old days, youngsters used to value their parents and seniors. This was our age-old tradition. There is crying need for social intervention to re-establish relations between the young peo-

ple and elders.

The Government, sociologists, social reformers and others should take steps to resolve the growing problems of ageism and elderly. Local clubs and social organisations as well as student and youth organisations should be motivated to come forward to help the elders.

Yours, etc., Pramatha R Bhattacharya

Kolkata, 17 June.

CONGRESS SURRENDER

SIR, I refer to the ongoing tussle in Karnataka as to who should lead the State. It is unfortunate that the ruling party is immersed in the fight for the CM's position instead of addressing the many serious problems faced by the citizens.

The Central leaders who are

visiting the state often to resolve this issue do not seem to have the time or feel the need to address more pressing problems. There are three Deputy CMs in office and that seems inadequate. It is not that there are no dynastic parties in our country and that includes the BJP.

Congress seems to have surrendered to the BJP narrative that it is the only dynastic party and has lost the will to assert and correct the public perception. There are many issues facing the country - from a sliding economy, rising fuel and food prices, loss of jobs, industrial production going south, pandemic management and a host of other tribulations.

If the BJP had been in the opposition, it would have capitalised on each and every issue and come out guns blazing to cor-

ner the ruling party of the day. The Congress party's response to these developments seems muted and lock-jawed. It must realise that it owes a responsibility to the nation to be an effective opposition.

It is the only party with a national presence that can do so. With its long history of leading the nation with great stalwarts playing an active role during the freedom struggle and nurturing India as a democracy.

Congress still has the important responsibility to be a responsible and valuable opposition. India needs a strong opposition if we are to be a vibrant democracy. It is time for dissidents to come together and give ample scope and opportunity for talented and capable leaders within the party.

Yours, etc., H N Ramakrishna, Bengaluru, 17 June.

END OF ERA

SIR, The article "Being an executive" by Manish Nandy (*The Statesman*, 14 June) chronicles the state of affairs in some organisations in the early post-colonial era. Kolkata as well as the country struggled to come out of the colonial hangover for a long time. Companies with a British connection retained fancy and luxurious corporate frills in their offices and operations which produced glamour for them, but spelt doom in later years.

The appreciation for aristocracy, rooted in English culture, permeated English cricket in the past quite naturally. It classified cricketers into two - "Gentlemen" and "Players". They played against each other for some period of time in the past. Such matches ceased to be played by the early sixties, highlighting the irrelevance of the aristocracy on the cricket field.

In Kolkata, collapse of business organisations flaunting an aristocratic and sophisticated British ambience in their offices was a defeat inflicted upon them by their rough and ready, professionally managed counterparts. It more or less coincided with the change in English cricket.

Yours, etc., Prasenjit Baidya, Subhasgram, 15 June.



Diversity hallmark of Indian music'

Born into a family of musicians, **MANASI PRASAD** spent her early childhood in Kuwait learning Carnatic classical music under the guidance of her mother. In 1990, when she was nine, the family relocated to Bengaluru after the Gulf War broke out. She continued learning music under different gurus alongside completing her engineering degree and then an MBA from IIM, Bangalore. Offered a job by an investment bank in New York, she refused in order to follow her passion to become a full-time Carnatic classical music singer. An empanelled artist with the ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations), she has been performing widely in India, the US, Europe, Australia, Africa, South America and Middle East for the last 25 years. She invited the ire of temple authorities when she decided to perform on themes related to people's lives instead of pure devotional ones. She has also learnt nuances of Hindustani Classical music. The accomplished musician has been conferred with many prestigious awards including the Sangeet Natak Academy's Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar award. In an interview with **DIPANKAR CHAKRABORTY**, Manasi shares her thoughts about her musical journey and India's first interactive music museum, Indian Music Experience (IME), that she currently heads. Excerpts:

Q. Your concert Olave Jeevana Saakshaatkata or 'Love is life's fulfilment' has been a strong statement against traditionalists deeply rooted in devotional traditions of the classical Carnatic music. You even invited their ire and were denied permission to perform in temples for some time.

A. Yes, some people did react negatively. During that period some of the temples did not want to invite me for their concerts because they felt I was moving away from tradition. But what I did was to expand and not exclude anything. I do regular Carnatic music concerts with devotional themes.

Q. You did your engineering and then MBA from IIM Bangalore, and interned at a Wall Street bank in the US. And, then you chose to become a full-time musician and questioned prevailing tradition. How do you assimilate these contradictions and how have they been helpful in your journey?

A. While doing an engineering degree course I continued to do an MBA. Music which was earlier a passion is now a career. Both the corporate and academic world and art and creative world have a lot to teach each other. As a Museum Director at Indian Music Experience and with my background as an artist, I have been able to bring creative thinking into my administrative work. My exposure to the corporate world and academics has brought values like discipline and analysis to my life as

an artist. It allows me to ask questions and look at traditions with a fresh pair of eyes and see how I can contribute in my own way to it.

Q. According to you, Russian dancer Anna Pavlova and Meerabai, a 16th century mystic poet, have been your inspirations. What aspects of these two personalities have impacted you the most as a musician?

A. I have always been inspired by strong female characters. Meerabai had decided to walk away from the material comfort of the palace and go out to the world at a time when women's rights was a far cry. As a child I had read the biography of Anna Pavlova, 'Dancing star'. She devoted her entire life to the pursuit of perfection in ballet. After the performance, she sees the audience lost in the beauty of art. For a while people had forgotten about their worries. She said her purpose was to bring joy to the lives of people through art. I also try to bring joy to the lives of people through my music.

Q. Could you tell us about your childhood in Kuwait, learning music under your mother's guidance, then your visit to New York, etc?

A. We are all products of our many experiences. I have spent nine years of my life in the Gulf — in Kuwait. My first memory is of all



those children who would come home to learn music from my mother. I would be in her lap. I formally started learning music from my mother at the age of four. She has been a great influence as my guru and critic. Once the Gulf war began my family had to come back to India. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise for me. I became a lot more serious about my music and dance.

Q. Could you name the gurus under whose guidance you learned Carnatic music?

A. I have mainly learnt from my guru R K Padmanabha, a renowned musician from Bangalore. He is responsible for shaping my music and giving me plenty of opportunities. Pandit Bhimsen Joshi's music has influenced me a lot. I have also learnt from Dr Sriram Parasuram in Chennai, an exponent of both Carnatic and Hindustani music.

Q. How has the different music in India or in countries like South America influenced your music?

A. I stay tuned to the tradition of Carnatic music. But we have to make music relatable to the audience. In 2004, as a 19 or 20 year old girl I travelled to Chile in South America as a cultural ambassador. I got the opportunity to present workshops, concerts and lectures at the local universities.

It was a unique experience for me. Their main language of communication is Spanish which I can't speak. That's where I found dance very useful. Sometimes I would explain a song through gestures. I also found that music has a universal language.

Q. Did you have any chance to collaborate with Bengali artists or other musicians from Bengal?

A. I listen to a wide variety of music. I do listen to Rabindra Sangeet. I see how some compositions from Carnatic music have been adapted to Tagore songs. Apart from Carnatic music I have been greatly influenced by Hindustani music. I have adopted Hindustani music and western vocal techniques into my music. Whether it is music from North or South, the best part of Indian music is its diversity. The audience should be exposed to all kinds of music.

Q. In what ways do you think have the Covid pandemic and lockdowns impacted music, its creation and musicians?

A. Lockdown has opened the door to collaborations. But it has also impacted the livelihood of a large number of artists. Live performance is very important, especially for performers of classical music. The way music is performed and consumed has come to a standstill. The corporate sector and the government must come forward to extend a helping hand to the artists across the country.

Q. How did the Indian Music Experience or IME centre in Bangalore, the only one of its kind in India, come about? What does it seek to achieve? Do you plan to set up similar museums in other parts of the country?

A. IME is affiliated to the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles. We organise a lot of programmes together. It was conceptualised about 10 years ago thanks to the initiative of the Brigade Group CMD M R Jaishankar. It is India's only interactive music museum. It uses a lot of interactive technology and showcases musicians and instruments from all over India. There is a place where visitors can record their own music in a studio setting. There is a learning centre where about 120 students are engaged in learning various types of music. Similar interactive museums should come up in other parts of the country. They will serve an important purpose of protecting our musical traditions such as our folk music traditions from extinction.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

With reference to the trouble in Kenya a writer in the London press, who claims to know something both about the colony and about India, says that "the future of Kenya, as it is now shaping, promises a handful of wealthy white men outside the Government service, a few, scarcely so opulent, within it, and, for the rest - India." After emphasising the hold which the Indian merchant and trader has obtained in Kenya, the writer goes on to descant upon what he describes as the economic drain resulting from this state of things. "The money acquired by the Indian," he says, "is no asset to the country in which he earns it. It is indeed lost to it for ever." He suggests that, as in South Africa, there is a ceaseless drain of money from East Africa to India. As to South Africa "some weeks ago a candidate for election to the Union of South Africa Government stated in public that the amount of gold coin and bullion taken to and sent to India from South Africa amounted since the Boer War to many millions sterling. And, in spite of every precaution since the procedure became illegal, it is common knowledge that huge sums have been smuggled from Natal and Delagoa Bay to the same destination." It would thus appear that the "drain" from India is being at least partially compensated by a substantial inflow from the African dominions.

NEWS ITEMS

STEAMER STRIKE IN EAST BENGAL

Dacca, Je 18

Since the commencement of the strike of steamer employees the Buzzard has been the only steamer of the I.G.N. and Railway Company and R.S.N. Co. plying regularly between Naraingunj and Chandpur. On Thursday afternoon the steamer was ready to leave for Chandpur, and a large number of passengers, including ladies, had boarded the steamer when suddenly the crew left in a body. Mr. A.L. Godden, Joint Agent of the steamer company, immediately informed Mr. Burton, superintendent of the river police, Narainganj. He arrived promptly with the crew of the police launch and took the Buzzard to Chandpur. Yesterday the steamer was run in the same way. The inconvenience to passengers would have been very great had not timely and vigorous steps been taken by Mr. Burton.

BOY BURIED ALIVE FOR REVENGE

Multan, Je 18

In the Muzaffargarh murder case judgment has been pronounced by Rai Bahadur Gangaram, Sessions Judge, convicting the accused, Amir Chand, a medical practitioner, under 302 I.P.C., and sentencing him to death, subject to the confirmation of the High Court, for causing the death of a boy named Ram Swarup, a student and the only son of a lady doctor, Parmeshwar Devi, Sub-Assistant Surgeon at the Zenana Hospital, Muzaffargarh. It was alleged that the daughter of the accused fell ill and was put under the treatment of the lady doctor along with other doctors but did not live. Accused formed the idea that his daughter's death was due to the negligence of the lady doctor, and he decoyed Ram Swarup to a lonely place and buried him alive.

ARMY EDUCATION IN INDIA

Simla, Je 18

The Indian Army School of Education, which has been established at Belgaum, Bombay Presidency, will open on July 1. The objects of school are: (a) to train the personnel of the Indian Army Educational Corps; (b) to train Indian officers and non-commissioned officers of units in the principles and practice of educational training; (c) to compile the standards of requirements for certificates of education for an Indian soldier; (d) to prepare suitable text-books for use in educational training. All subjects will be taught with a view to the development of a right type of Indian soldier citizen - an efficient soldier and a loyal and a useful citizen. The courses will consist of approximately one-third instruction by the staff and two-thirds class taken by the students under supervision.

HOWRAH-AMTA RAILWAY STRIKE

The Conservancy and the Health Department of the Howrah Municipality are endeavouring to cope with the difficulties arising from the Howrah-Amta Railway strike. The Railway Company is bound by a contract with the Municipality to run a scavenger train to remove refuse to a trenching ground outside Howrah town. In consequence of the strike the accumulated refuse could not be removed for two days, but the Municipality succeeded in disposing of it yesterday. It is understood that the Municipality have made arrangements for running a train from Telkuli Ghat to the trenching ground with the aid of drivers and guards appointed by them. The District Magistrate of Howrah met a number of officers of the Light Railway yesterday at Kadamtola Station.

ANNA PLUNKETT

Concern for the future of Myanmar's deposed leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, is mounting after her appearance in a purpose-built courtroom in the country's capital Naypyidaw at the start of what is expected to be a seven-week trial. Since the coup on February 1, little has been seen of Aung San Suu Kyi, and her future appears uncertain after the initial court proceedings.

Initially charged with the illegal possession of walkie-talkies, charges against the pro-democracy leader have escalated dramatically. She now stands accused of various counts of corruption that, if she is found guilty, could result in what is effectively a life sentence.

On February 1, at what should have been the opening of the new parliament, the military detained Aung San Suu Kyi alongside the leaders of her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD). The coup sparked outrage across the world – but curiously, the military claims the

putsch was legal. Sections of the 2008 constitution allow the military to declare a state of emergency if there is an insurgency or an attempt at taking over power unlawfully by force.

If the coup can be legal, questions must be raised over the fairness of Aung San Suu Kyi's trial.

Since 2008, Myanmar has been

struggling through a transition to

democracy after more than 60 years of military rule. Landslide victories for the NLD in 2015, and again in 2020, were both assessed as free and fair. But the transition has been far from linear and one of the core causes for concern has remained the issue of rule of law, which should be providing checks and balances and enshrining citizen rights at the centre of the government.

Research suggests the law is seen as an undesirable profession in Myanmar and those that do pursue it are rarely able to effectively support their clients through the court for various reasons, including a lack of funding and arbitrary practices such as prisoner transfers and random changes of trial dates. The judiciary remains highly reliant on the military, which will often outline the outcome of cases for the judges before the case is heard. It was nominally provided with independence in the 2008 con-

stitution, but in practice, it is anything but. The murder of Ko Ni is widely seen as an indication of what can happen to lawyers who defy the will of the military.

Aung San Suu Kyi faces seven separate indictments, ranging from the initial charge of illegally importing walkie-talkies to the much more serious charges of breaking the Official Secrets Act and committing corruption using her rank for allegedly accepting over US\$600,000 and 11kg of gold in bribes, based on allegations by the detained former chief minister of Yangon.

It is these more recent charges that pose the greatest concerns, as they hold sentences of up to 14 and 15 years, respectively. The former leader turns 76 on June 19, so if found guilty on these counts she will be effectively sentenced to life in prison. Her lawyers claim such charges to be bogus and politically motivated and are aimed at keeping her out of politics and the public eye.

The pre-court proceedings – as well as the first week of the trial – suggest she is very unlikely to have a fair

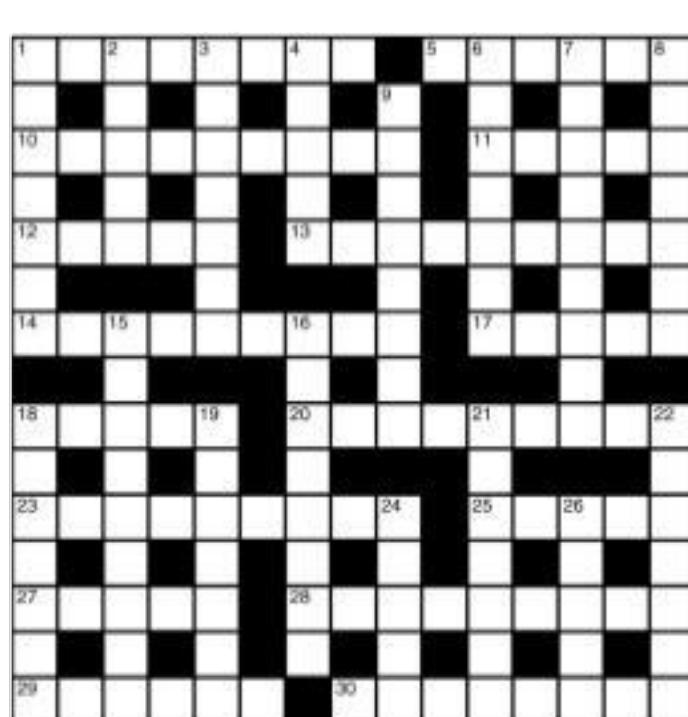
trial. Though she does have a legal team, she has only met with them three times since she was arrested. Public and media access has been restricted and the only attendees permitted are court officials, judges, prosecution and Aung San Suu Kyi and her defence team. The police and security presence has been increased around Naypyidaw.

What is really concerning is the way charges against Aung San Suu Kyi have mounted over the past few weeks. It feels reminiscent of her period of incarceration between 1989 and 2012, when she was held in almost continual house arrest after her party won elections in 1990. Each time she was released, there would be a new reason to return her to detention in her Yangon home.

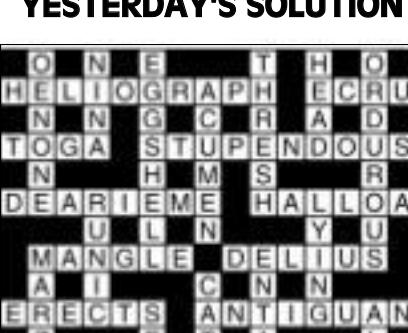
This suggests two things. First, that the regime has form for using the constitution to "legally" silence opposition. And, second, that while there may be nominal rule of law under Myanmar's 2008 constitution, it exists as a tool for – rather than a limit on – the military.

The writer is a Ph.D candidate in the Department of War Studies, Kings College, London. This article was published on www.thecornerstone.com

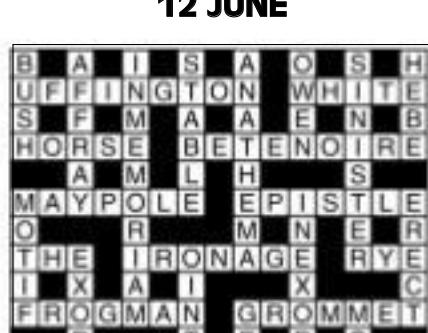
CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



SOLUTION FOR
12 JUNE



ACROSS

- 1 The Spanish miss having enough characters to fill all this! (8)
- 5 Shakespeare's to be second person, first could be Francis Bacon (6)
- 10 Objective and popular speaker's pulling power (9)
- 11 Giant bird with origins in Arabian Nights (5)
- 12 Quite wasting good dope! (5)
- 13 News coming in supports witness for the state (9)
- 14 They make good soldiers among those on furlough (9)
- 17 Odd glimpses of station terminus from Fleet St (5)
- 18 It is absent from 7 disease record (5)
- 20 Savour speed, making Hamilton's start time (9)
- 23 It could improve your mood to snore in turns (9)
- 25 Armchairs should be this
- 27 Tin symbolically represented German industrial centre (5)
- 28 Flower against Vauxhall bridges (9)
- 29 Former statesman and astronaut's body's pronounced sound (6)
- 30 Parasite going into eyes via the ear feasted on blood (8)
- 31 Wind-up twizzle-stick (7)
- 32 Staffroom paper undelivered? Letters quickly written (5)
- 33 Encountered turbulent start of Russian nation (3,4)
- 34 Corrupt document finally isn't (5)
- 35 River mammals in river, snakes in the grass (7)
- 36 Armchairs should be this
- 37 Gut instinct's three

quarters about outwardly tangible energy (9)

The least roofless car in the competition (7)

Sanctions designed to exclude foremost of caber tossers (8)

The panel of Mock the Week? Is it sprinkled with stars? (9)

Storm circles one by one revealing Uralic language (8)

Great for Brunel as each ship's back (7)

European IT errors holding up our pupils' targets? (7)

Without hesitating splinter stripped naked in front of six-footer (7)

Japanese teacher said "Time I'm going" with feeling (7)

Unsportsmanlike yo-yoing? (3,2)

Meal including fillets of tender fish (5)

NO 28947

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

Covid 3rd wave likely to infect 1,500 kids, teens every day in Odisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 18 JUNE:

Be fully prepared for a possible third wave: Naveen

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 18 JUNE:

Odisha could witness 1,500 daily infections in the 0-18 year group of population comprising kids and adolescents in the event the third wave of COVID-19, according to a study by the state's health department.

While the pandemic had largely spared the children and teenagers during the first wave, the second wave had affected this group comparatively on a larger scale.

In the ongoing second wave, around eight percent of positive cases of the total COVID-19 cases in Odisha are in the age-group of 0-18 years of age group, the COVID care services study of children and adolescents maintained.

The projections are that there could be nearly 1,500 daily cases of children and adolescents contracting the virus during the possible outbreak of the third wave. Of the daily infections, around 20 percent (300) will require hospitalization.

Five percent of the infected children and teenagers (15 numbers of cases every day) will be required to be put under intensive care support, the study pointed out.

For providing care to chil-

several states ran out of medical oxygen, patients were affected by low level of oxygen saturation. Odisha was equipped with the required oxygen and had provided LMO to several states, he noted.

The two effective weapons against Covid are vaccines and the protocol of wearing double masks, maintaining social distance and hand hygiene, he said.

Odisha government has adopted a policy of each life is precious and is providing free treatment to all Covid patients, stated the CM.

He laid the foundation stone of LMO and PSA plants in Jharsuguda, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Sonepur, Nayagarh, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts.

Ministers and MP's of the region were present at the locations.

headquarters hospital should be earmarked for sick children. These facilities should be upgraded to meet emergencies with enough high dependency unit (HDU) beds, it said.

Based on serological survey reports, COVOD-19 infection in children above ten years of age occurs in similar frequency to that of adults, even though among the confirmed cases, 12 percent are individuals below 20 years of age.

Eight percent of cases are in the 10-20 years' age group. The children have less severe disease infection than the adults. In most of the cases, it has been found that the cases are asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic.

There may be intermittent surge in infection after the withdrawal of lockdown and school reopening, paving the way for the third wave, according to the projections.

The estimates of additional beds capacity of pediatric care may be calculated based on the peak daily infection in different districts during the second wave.

Adequate number of trained manpower both doctors and nurses is required.

Majority of children have asymptomatic or mild illness and can be managed at home by parents and guardians.

In the community setting, ASHA workers should be involved for management of sick children at home and for assessment of the need for referral admission to hospitals, it suggested.

Fully vaccinated Odisha govt employees to attend office from 1st July

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 18 JUNE:

Odisha government has asked employees who have received two doses of Covid vaccines to attend office from 1 July.

Those who have not been able to get vaccinated with the second dose need to apply and seek exemption from office duties, said the government notification today.

Presently all departments of the government are functioning at fifty per cent strength.

Covid situation stabilising in Odisha

3,806 new cases, 37 fatalities

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 18 JUNE:

Odisha on Friday clocked 3,806 new COVID-19 cases while 37 fresh fatalities raised the toll to 3,508.

With the latest positive cases, the state has logged less than 4,000 cases for the fourth consecutive day, giving evident signs of declining trend of the contagion.

The overall COVID-19 situation in the state is showing signs of stabilizing with steady drop in positive cases and positivity rate in June.

The districts in western Odisha which witnessed an

exponential spike in infection in May are showing a clear pattern of decline in the Covid graph while the coastal districts mainly Khordha and Cuttack are still on the higher side as far as new cases are concerned.

The samples tested during the last 24 hours found the test positivity rate (TPR) at six percent.

The mineral-rich Jajpur district has reported the highest TPR at 23.5 percent, said the health and family welfare department officials.

Of the 3,631 new cases 2,172 were registered in quarantine units and the

rest detected during contact tracing.

Khordha district, of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of new cases at 617, followed by Cuttack at 393 and Jajpur at 346.

The maximum of 5 deaths were reported from Khordha followed by Jharsuguda, Kalahandi and Cuttack at 4 and Bargarh, Puri and Sundargarh at 3.

A total of 63,421 samples were tested on Thursday.

The State's recovery rate currently stands at 94.61 percent.

Minor raped, beheaded in Nayagarh

BHUBANESWAR, 18 JUNE
Police in Odisha's Nayagarh district have arrested a man who perpetrated a dastardly crime by committing the rape of a six-year-old girl and then beheading her to escape detection.

The accused, who worked as a skilled labourer in Tamil Nadu had returned home last month after enforced lockdown in the southern state. He raped the minor, finding her alone in a deserted place of the village. The victim who fell unconscious after the sexual assault was later decapitated by the accused, police said.

On 12 June, the minor was mysteriously reported missing from the village. SNS

CHSE Odisha evaluation process: Marks on basis of Xth board score

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 18 JUNE

The Council of Higher Secondary Education, Odisha has decided to award scores to the Annual Higher Secondary Examination 2021 on the basis of the marks secured by students in their 10th Board Examination.

Since the annual higher secondary examination 2021 has been cancelled in view of the pandemic, the Council had constituted an expert committee to suggest modalities of awarding marks to students.

It was decided to accord scores of papers on basis of the performance of the exam-

inee in the 10th Board Examination. Detailed subject mapping has been prepared.

The scores awarded at the H.S. School level will be scrutinized and moderated.

The results will be declared during the second week of August.

An examinee who is not satisfied with the result declared on the basis of Alternative

Assessment Criteria, can opt to appear the examination in the Off-line mode which will be conducted when the situation will be conducive, stating the CHSE today.

As for college students, the Higher Education Minister Dr Arun Sahu said that examinations for the last semester of UG/PG students will be held online. A meeting of vice chancellors had been held and it was decided to conduct online examinations for UG/PG students.

In flat areas where net connectivity is a problem, colleges have been identified where the students can avail such facilities and appear at the examinations, he said.

Tribal panchayat in Pallahara untouched by Covid

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
ANGUL, 18 JUNE

Even as there is concern over the dreaded coronavirus infiltrating into remote tribal pockets of Odisha during the second wave, quiet a few tribal villages inhabited by the Paudi Bhuyan tribe in Pallahara subdivision of Angul district, have warded off the virus.

Baradiha panchayat with six villages – Tanugula, Baradiha, Salei, Rada, Khadaka and Barundihai have not reported a single Covid positive case.

While Paudi Bhuyan population is the other 26 panchayats have fallen to the contagion, Baradiha panchayat of the region has insulated itself from the disease.

The panchayat is located 40 km from the Pallahara subdivision. According to officials the area is totally isolated from the rest of the sub division. There have been a massive awareness campaign door to door survey and activities of health workers in these villages.

People were giving sanitization materials, mask and sensitized. On 8 June the first round of testing was conducted and not a single Covid case was found said officials.

Interestingly, unlike a few primitive tribes in other parts of the state, the Paudi Bhuyan's

Covid-free panchayat in Koraput, self-discipline key to success

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KORAPUT, 16 JUNE

At a time when the world is struggling to fight Covid , a panchayat in the remote tribal dominated Koraput district has warded off the virus infection.

Khemunduguda panchayat with 14 villages and 11 wards was free from coronavirus last year and remains so during the second wave this year.

Majority of the villagers above 45 years of age have been vaccinated, said Dambarudhar Gond, the sarpanch .

Keeping the panchayat free of Covid was a task taken up by the villagers and everybody cooperated. Right from the youth to the ASHA workers and PRI members everyone was involved, he said.

While door to door campaign was done to sensitize people

of Baradiha panchayat responded in a positive manner to the awareness campaigns said officials.

The sarpanch Dhanamantri Dehury thanked the local administration and the local people who followed the Covid protocol.

on the protocols prescribed by the government , efforts were made to see that every eligible person was vaccinated.

Almost all the elderly persons above the age group of 45 were vaccinated with first dose and the names of the rest had been sent to the higher officials for vaccinating them in the next camp , Daimati Khemundi , the ASHA worker of Khemunduguda said .

The younger generation is

Pallahara sub collector Ajit Pradhan said due to the co-operation of the people and the initiatives taken by health workers the panchayat has remained free from COVID 19.

This is significant in the backdrop of the fact that several primitive tribes living in

hilly forest regions like the Bonda's of Malkangiri district, Dongaria's of Rayagada and Kalahandi district, kadia's in Mayurbhanj district which were unaffected during the first wave last year had reported Covid positive cases in the second wave this year.

confident that the panchayat will remain free of the virus in the eventuality of any waves in the future.

People in the panchayat use masks and on return from the nearby markets they ensure the use of sanitizers, wash their hands and feet before entering the house.

Those who return to the village from other states are put on quarantine for 14 day in the panchayat said the sarpanch .



Congress leaders protest against the proposed relocation of the statue of a horse and a warrior which is a landmark at the main Master Canteen junction in the state capital Bhubaneswar. The sculptor was late Padmashree Raghunath Mahapatra who died recently. The state BJP and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan also opposed the proposed relocation. ■ SNS



'Aahar' succour to poor in trying pandemic times

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 17 JUNE:

For the people battling hunger in this trying pandemic time, the Aahar centres in the city are providing the succor to the needy who are finding it tough in arranging a square meal a day.

The civic authorities have made operational all the 12 Aahar outlets in Bhubaneswar since May 5. Special protocol is being followed in managing the outlets. With this protocol only takeaway packs are allowed and no one is allowed to eat inside the Aahar centres. Cooked meals, duly

shutdown Saturdays, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) officials said. "During the lockdown and weekend shutdown, I am able to get takeaway food from Aahar centres. These centres are of great help to poor people in this crisis time", said Alok Kumar Das (22) an employee of a private security agency.

Aahar, a popular scheme by the Naveen Patnaik government, was launched in the state on April 1, 2015 with an objective to provide cooked meal to the poor and needy people in urban areas. Since then, the noble scheme has turned out to be a success

ever, while three of them remain open in evening hour and shutdown Saturdays, two Aahar centres near AIIMS Bhubaneswar do not provide service in evening hour and

packed at the centers are being provided to the beneficiaries after 11 am.

Out of the 12 Aahar outlets of the city, five are in close proximity of major hospitals. How-

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We are a great one-nation party and we will continue with our mission to unite and level up because that is the best way to deliver jobs, prosperity across the country

UK PM BORIS JOHNSON

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	31	26 R
HONG KONG	31	28 H
TOKYO	28	19 CL
LONDON	28	14 S
DUBAI	38	30 S
SAN FRANCISCO	19	12 H
NEW YORK	22	18 R
MOSCOW	26	16 R

S=sunny, CL= clear,
H=hazy, R=rainy...

THUMBNAILS



Liberal Democrat leader Ed Davey during a victory rally at Chesham Youth Centre at Chesham in England on Friday. AP

US locks down embassy in Afghanistan: The US Embassy in Afghanistan has ordered a near-complete lockdown because of a massive spike in coronavirus cases among employees. Already on uncertain footing due to the imminent withdrawal of American forces from the country, the embassy in Kabul on Thursday ordered remaining staffers into virtual isolation. Covid has already killed at least one person, sent 114 into quarantine and forced several to be medically evacuated. AP

Greek pilot detained in British wife's deaths: Police arrested a Greek helicopter pilot who had claimed his British wife was killed during a robbery at the couple's home outside Athens. Police detained 33-year-old pilot and flight instructor Babis Anagnosopoulos late Thursday for the 11 May killing of Caroline Crouch, 20, who died of suffocation. Babis is due to appear in court on Friday. The pilot had publicly claimed that robbers tied up and gagged the wife. AP

Conservatives suffer defeat in UK's 'Blue Wall' seat

LONDON, 18 JUNE

In a surprising result, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party has been easily defeated in a special election for a seat that it has held for decades.

The Liberal Democrats, which was in a coalition government with the Conservatives between 2010 and 2015 before seeing its electoral fortunes wane dramatically, won Thursday's election in Chesham and Amersham, 35 miles (57 kilometers) northwest of London.

Sarah Green, the Liberal Democrat candidate, picked up around 57 per cent of the vote and won a seat the Conservatives have held since it was created in 1974. She added around 30 percentage points to the party's result from the 2019 general election. This Conservative Party has taken people across the country for granted for far too long, Green said Friday.

Her party leader, Ed Davey, said the result sent a shockwave through British politics by showing that the Blue Wall of Conservative seats in southern England could be vulnerable. Chesham and Amersham are leafy, prosperous towns that are synonymous with traditional Conservative territory.

The Conservatives have made big inroads into Labour's Red Wall in recent years, winning a swathe of seats on a combination of factors, notably Johnson's insistence that he would ensure that Britain leaves the European Union after years of parliamentary haggling. Having secured that, Johnson has managed to capture more support in Labour's heartland by promising to level up Britain through big infrastructure spending and other initiatives. AP

Black Americans laud Juneteenth holiday

President Joe Biden: This day doesn't just celebrate the past. It calls for action today. He singled out voting rights as an area for action

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 18 JUNE

Black Americans rejoiced Thursday after President Joe Biden made Juneteenth a federal holiday, but some said that, while they appreciated the recognition at a time of racial reckoning in America, more is needed to change policies that disadvantage too many of their brethren.

It's great, but it's not enough, said Gwen Grant, president and CEO of the Urban League of Kansas City. Grant said she was delighted by the quick vote this week by Congress to make Juneteenth a national holiday because it's been a long time coming.

But she added that we need Congress to protect voting rights, and that needs to happen right now so we don't regress any further. That is the most important thing Congress can be addressing at this time.

At a jubilant White House Bill-signing ceremony, Biden agreed that more than a commemoration of the events of 19 June, 1865, is needed. That's when Union soldiers brought the news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas some two and half years after President Abraham Lin-

coln's Emancipation Proclamation had freed slaves in Southern states. This day doesn't just celebrate the past. It calls for action today, Biden said before he established Juneteenth National Independence Day. His audience included scores of members of Congress and Opal Lee, a 94-year-old Texas woman who campaigned for the holiday.

Biden singled out voting rights as an area for action.

Republican-led states have enacted or are considering legislation that activists argue would curtail the right to vote, particularly for people of colour.

Legislation to address voting rights issues, and institute policing reforms demanded after the killing of George Floyd and other unarmed Black men, remains stalled in the Congress that acted swiftly on the Juneteenth Bill.

Other people want the federal government to make reparations or financial payments to the descendants of slaves in an attempt to compensate for those wrongs. Meanwhile, efforts are afoot across the country to limit what school districts teach about the history of slavery in America.

Community organiser Kimberly Holmes-Ross, who helped make her hometown of



Evanston, Illinois, the first US city to pay reparations, said she was happy about the new federal holiday because it will lead more people to learn about Juneteenth. But she would have liked Congress to act on anti-lynching legislation or voter protections first.

"I am not super stoked only because all of the other things that are still going on, said Holmes-Ross, 57. You haven't addressed what we really need to talk about."

Peniel Joseph, an expert on race at the University of Texas at Austin, said the US has never had a holiday or a national commemoration of the end of slavery. Many Black Americans had long celebrated

Juneteenth. "Juneteenth is important symbolically, and we need the substance to follow, but Black people historically have always tried to do multiple things at the same time," Joseph said.

Most federal workers will observe the holiday on Friday. Several states and the District of Columbia announced that government offices would be closed Friday.

Juneteenth is the 12th federal holiday, including Inauguration Day once every four years. It's also the first federal holiday since the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday was added in 1983.

Before 19 June became a federal holiday, it was observed

in the vast majority of states and the District of Columbia. Texas was first to make Juneteenth a holiday.

Most white Americans had not heard of Juneteenth before the summer of 2020 and the protests that stirred the nation's conscience over race after Floyd's killing by a Minneapolis police officer, said Matthew Delmont, who teaches history at Dartmouth College. He said the new federal holiday hopefully provides a moment on the calendar every year when all Americans can spend time thinking seriously about the history of our country.

The Senate passed the Bill earlier this week by unanimous agreement. But in the House,

day will help promote understanding and unity.

All holidays have significance, no matter what the occasion or what it's about, but by it being a federal holiday, it speaks volumes to what the country thinks about that specific day, said Henley, who studied at the school before it was integrated and is president of the cultural center.

He said his family traces its roots back to enslaved men and women in the Texas city who were among the last to receive word of the Emancipation Proclamation.

As a country, we really need to be striving toward togetherness more than anything, Henley said. If we just learn to love each other, it would be so great.

Holmes-Ross recalled first learning about Juneteenth in church in Evanston, a Lake Michigan suburb just outside Chicago. Over the years, she said she made sure her three children commemorated the day with community events including food, dancing and spoken word performances. She said it was about more than a day off for her family.

We were intentional about seeking out Black leaders and things we could celebrate as African Americans, Holmes-Ross said.

GOP needs new health care target; 'Obamacare' survives again

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 18 JUNE

have been atop dozens of failed Republican repeal attempts in Congress. Most spectacularly, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., flashed a thumbs-down that doomed Trump's drive to erase the law in 2017.

Along with the public's gradual but decisive acceptance of the statute, the court rulings and legislative defeats underscore that the law, passed in 2010 despite overwhelming GOP opposition, is probably safe.

Stingingly for Republicans, the decision emerged from a bench dominated 6-3 by conservative-leaning justices, including three appointed by President Donald Trump. Those high court setbacks

"The Affordable Care Act remains the law of the land," President Joe Biden said, using the statute's more formal name, after the court ruled that Texas and other GOP-led states had no right to bring their lawsuit to federal court.

more than 30 million people. The Affordable Care Act remains the law of the land," President Joe Biden said, using the statute's more formal name, after the court ruled that Texas and other GOP-led states had no right to bring their lawsuit to federal court.

It's not as sacred or popular as Medicare or Medicaid, but it's here to stay," said Drew Altman, president of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation.

And it's moved from an ideological whipping boy to a set of popular benefits that the public values.

Highlighting the GOP's shifting health care focus, in interviews and written statements on Thursday, more than a dozen Republican lawmakers called for controlling medical costs and other changes, but none suggested another run at repeal.

Congressional Republicans hadn't even filed a legal brief supporting the latest Supreme Court challenge. Just practically speaking you

need 60 votes in a Republican Senate, a Republican president, right? And we've tried that and were unable to accomplish it," said Sen. Bill Cassidy.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and other top Republicans issued a statement illustrating one line of attack the party is preparing trying to handcuff all Democrats to Medicare for All, a costly plan for government-provided health care backed by progressives that goes beyond what Biden and many in the party have proposed.

The GOP should focus on health issues people care about, like personalised care and promoting medical innovation, not repealing the health care law, said David Winston, a pollster and political adviser to GOP.

Texas Gov signs permit-free gun carrying legislation

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HOUSTON, 18 JUNE

permitless carry and expanded gun rights at the state level.

The law, a huge win for gun rights advocates, was one of the most controversial measures passed in this session.

Bill supporters said the legislation would simply restore Second Amendment rights to law-abiding Texans, while critics have said the move will only lead to more gun violence.

Opponents of the bill have pointed to incidents of gun violence in Texas including the 2018 Santa Fe High School shooting that left 10 dead and the 2019 mass shootings at an El Paso Walmart and Midland-Odessa that left 30 people dead.

Last week, one person was killed and 13 were injured in a mass shooting in downtown Austin.

Texas police chiefs and some firearm instructors who run licensing courses have also opposed the bill.

Before the permitless carry law, applicants for a license would have to attend a training class, pass a shooting proficiency test and exam, and undergo fingerprinting and background checks.

Antonio Guterres re-elected as UN Secretary General

ASSOCIATED PRESS
UNITED NATIONS, 18 JUNE

UN General Assembly on Friday appointed Antonio Guterres as the UN Secretary General for a second term beginning 1 January 2022, days after the powerful Security Council unanimously recommended his name to the 193-member body for reelection.

President of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir announced that Guterres has been appointed by acclamation as the Secretary General of the United Nations for the second term of office beginning on January 1, 2022 and ending on December 31, 2026. Bozkir then administered the oath of office to 72-year-old Guterres at the podium of the UN General Assembly Hall.

On June 8, the 15-nation Council had held a closed meeting where it adopted by acclamation the resolution that recommended Guterres' name to the 193-member General Assembly for a second five-year term as Secretary General from 1 January 2022-31

December, 2026. Estonia's Ambassador to the UN Sven Jurgenson, President of the Council for the month of June, had told reporters after the meeting: We have all seen actually the Secretary General in action.

"I think he has been an excellent Secretary General. He's a bridge builder, his views on the conflict zones in the world and he's able to speak to everybody. And I think this is something that is expected from the Secretary General and he has proven worthy of the post already with the five years that he has been in office, Jurgenson said.

India had expressed its support for re-election of Guterres as UN Chief and welcomed the adoption of

the resolution recommending his name.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti tweeted India welcomes the adoption of @UN #SecurityCouncil resolution recommending a second term to #UnitedNations Secretary-General @antoniofutur.

Last month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Guterres at the United Nations headquarters and expressed New Delhi's support to him for his second term as the world's top diplomat.

India values UNSG's leadership of the UN, especially in these challenging times. Conveyed our support for his candidature for a second term, Jaishankar had said in a tweet after the meeting.

Latera press release issued by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN also stated that Jaishankar conveyed that India values Secretary General's leadership of the United Nations, especially in these challenging times. He conveyed India's support for his candidature for re-election for a second term.

UN: Millions driven from homes in 2020 despite Covid crisis

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GENEVA, 18 JUNE

ber of people forcibly displaced.

Filippo Grandi, the United Nations high commissioner for refugees, said conflict and the impact of climate change in places such as Mozambique, Ethiopia's Tigray region and Africa's broad Sahel area were among the leading sources of new movements of refugees and internally displaced people in 2020.

They added hundreds of thousands more people to the overall count, which has for years been dominated by the millions who have fled countries such as Syria and Afghanistan due to protracted

ed wars or fighting.

This is telling, in a year in which we were all locked down, confined, blocked in our homes, in our communities, in our cities, said Grandi in an interview before the report's release. Almost 3 million people have had to actually leave all that behind because they had no other choice.

UNHCR, which has its headquarters in Geneva, said that 99 of the more than 160 countries that closed their borders because of Covid-19 didn't make exceptions for people seeking protection as refugees or asylum-seekers. Grandi acknowledged the

reopening, if pandemic eases.

A good example is the United States where already we have seen a surge in people arriving in recent months, Grandi said, and referred to the US provision called Title 42 that let US authorities temporarily block people seeking asylum from entry for health reasons. Title 42 will be lifted eventually and I think this is the right thing to do but this will have to be managed.

Asked about US Vice President Kamala Harris' recent trip to Central America, where she told would-be migrants to the US do not come, Grandi expressed hope that the remark

was not reflective of overall US policy.

"I think that messaging indeed, as it was reported, is stark, and maybe shows only one part of the picture now," Grandi said, adding that he had heard a more complex response from other officials in Washington when he was there recently.

Among recent hotspots, Grandi said hundreds of thousands of people were newly displaced in Mozambique and the Sahel last year, and up to 1 million in the Tigray conflict that started in October.

"I'm worried that if the international community is not able to stop these conflicts, we

will continue to see the rise in the numbers," he said.

The report said that at the end of last year there were 5.7 million Palestinians, 3.9 million Venezuelans and an additional 20.7 million refugees from various other countries displaced abroad. Another 48 million people were internally displaced in their own countries. Some 4.1 million

more sought asylum.

Turkey, a neighbor of Syria, has taken in the most refugees in absolute numbers 3.7 million a figure more than twice that of the No. 2 host country, Colombia, which borders Venezuela.



I am saddened by the news of the death of countless Pakistanis living & working abroad who have fallen victim to the Covid-19.



PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN

OFFERING CONDOLENCE TO THE FAMILIES OF THE DECEASED

THUMBNAILS



People cool themselves, take selfies at Clifton beach in Karachi, Pakistan, to beat the heat as temperatures reached 34 Celsius (94F), on Friday. AP

At least 30 al-Shabab terrorists killed in Somalia: The Somali National Army (SNA), backed by regional forces, killed 30 al-Shabab militants and injured 24 others in an operation in the country's Middle Shabelle region. IANS

Hong Kong reports three imported Covid cases: Hong Kong's Centre for Health Protection (CHP) reported three imported cases of Covid-19 on Friday, taking the overall infection tally to 11,884. It has not reported locally-transmitted Covid-19 cases for 11 consecutive days. IANS

Pakistan's Covid caseload reaches 9,46,227: Pakistan reported 1,043 new Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, increasing the overall infection tally to 946,227, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) said on Friday. The NCOC also said that the country's total recoveries rose to 8,88,505. IANS

Fighting reported in 200 Afghanistan areas: Fighting between the Afghan National Security and Defence Forces (ANDSF) and the Taliban were reported across 200 areas in 24 hours amid escalating violence in the war-torn country, official data revealed. The Defence Ministry on Thursday claimed that 148 Taliban fighters were killed in the fighting and more than 160 others were wounded. IANS

Iran votes in presidential poll tipped in hard-liner's favour

If elected, Raisi would be the first serving Iranian president sanctioned by the US government

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI, 18 JUNE

Iran voted on Friday in a presidential election tipped in the favour of a hard-line protege of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, fuelling public apathy and sparking calls for a boycott in the Islamic Republic.

State-linked opinion polling and analysts put hard-line judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi as the dominant front-runner in a field of just four candidates.

Former Central Bank chief, Abdolnasser Hemmati, is running as the race's moderate candidate but hasn't inspired the same support as outgoing President Hassan Rouhani, who is term limited from seeking the office again.

If elected, Raisi would be the first serving Iranian president sanctioned by the US government even before entering office over his involvement in the mass execution of political prisoners in 1988, as well as his time as the head of Iran's internationally criticised judiciary one of the world's top executioners.

It also would firmly put



In this picture released by the official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei arrives to vote at a polling station at Imam Khomeini mosque in his residential compound in Teheran, on Friday.

hard-liners in control across the Iranian government as negotiations in Vienna continue over trying to save Tehran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers, as it enriches uranium to the closest point yet to weapons-grade levels.

Tensions remain high with both the US and Israel, which is believed to have carried out a series of attacks targeting Iranian nuclear sites and assassinating the scientist

who created its military atomic program decades earlier.

Polls opened at 7am local time for the vote, which has seen widespread public apathy after a panel under Khamenei barred hundreds of candidates, including reformists and those aligned with Rouhani.

Khamenei cast the ceremonial vote from Tehran, where he urged the public to take part.

Through the participation

of the people the country and the Islamic ruling system will win great points in the international arena, but the ones who benefit first are the people themselves," Khamenei said.

"Go ahead, choose and vote. But by mid-day, turnout appeared far lower than Iran's last presidential election in 2017. State television offered tight shots of polling places, several of which seemed to have only a handful of voters in the election's early hours.

Those passing by several polling places in Tehran said they similarly saw few voters.

Raisi, wearing a black turban that identifies him in Shi'ite tradition as a direct descendant of Islam's Prophet Muhammad, voted from a mosque in southern Tehran, waving to those gathered to cast ballots.

The cleric acknowledged in comments afterward that some may be upset that they don't want to vote.

"I beg everyone, the lovely youths, and all Iranian men and women speaking any accent or language from any

region and with any political views, to go and vote and cast their ballots," Raisi said.

There are more than 59 million eligible voters in Iran, a nation home to over 80 million people.

However, the state-linked Iranian Student Polling Agency has estimated a turnout of just 42 per cent, which would be the lowest ever since the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Fears about a low turnout have some warning Iran may be turning away from being an Islamic Republic a government with elected civilian leadership overseen by a supreme leader from its Shi'ite clergy to a country more tightly governed by its supreme leader.

As supreme leader, Khamenei has final say on all matters of state and oversees its defense and atomic programme.

Yet the disqualification of candidates seemed aimed at preventing anyone other than Raisi from winning the election, as Khatami did in 1997 by surprisingly beating a hard-liner favoured by Khamenei.

S Korean nuclear research institute potentially hacked



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO, 18 JUNE

tute's network was breached multiple times between 14-31 May.

The ministry said the institute has since taken security measures, such as halting its virtual private network and blocking the attacker's internet protocol address, reports Yonhap news agency.

Lawmaker Ha Tae-keung of the main opposition People Power Party said in a Facebook post earlier in the day that the institute was the target of a cyberattack on 14 May by a hacker group suspected to be associated with a North Korean intelligence agency.

The science ministry said in a statement that it was currently examining the extent of the hacking incident and the source of the attack.

HK newspaper increases print run after arrests

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HONG KONG, 18 JUNE

Hong Kong pro-democracy newspaper *Apple Daily* on Friday increased its print run to 500,000 copies as residents showed support for beleaguered Press freedom a day after police arrested five top editors and executives and froze \$2.3 million worth of assets on national security charges.

The raid on the paper's offices followed by the arrests on Thursday marked the first time the sweeping national security law, which Beijing imposed on Hong Kong last year, was used against the media, one of the symbols of civil liberties in the semi-

autonomous city that don't exist elsewhere in China.

Police said the editors were arrested on suspicion of foreign collusion to endanger national security, based on over 30 articles that authorities said had called for international sanctions against China and Hong Kong.

With anti-government protests silenced, most of the city's prominent pro-democracy activists in jail and many others fleeing abroad, people snapped up copies at newsstands and in convenience stores.

There are lots of injustices in Hong Kong already. I think there are a lot of things we cannot do anymore, said resident Lisa Cheung. Buying

a copy is all what we can do. When the law cannot protect

Hong Kong people anymore, we are only left to do what we can.

The front page of Friday's edition splashed images of the five editors and executives led away in handcuffs. Police also confiscated 44 hard drives worth of news material.

A quote from Cheung Kim-hung, the arrested CEO of *Apple Daily's* publisher Next Digital, said Hang in there, everyone.

Another resident, William Chan, said he bought a copy of the paper as a show of support.

Earlier during the turmoil, *Apple Daily* had pledged to readers that it will continue its reporting.

SC cannot overturn her decision, says Nepal President Bhandari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KATHMANDU, 18 JUNE

Asserting that the House of Representatives was dissolved as per the constitutional provisions, Nepal's President Bidya Devi Bhandari has told the Supreme Court that it cannot overturn her decision on the matter or subject it to a judicial review.

President Bhandari, on the recommendation of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli, dissolved the lower house for the second time in five months on 22 May and announced snap elections on 12 November and 19 November.

Prime Minister Oli is currently heading a minority government after losing a trust vote in the House. President Bhandari, Prime Minister Oli and

Speaker Agni Sapkota separately presented their clarifications in writing to the apex court on the government's 21 May decision, The Kathmandu Post reported.

While the President and Prime Minister defended their decisions, Speaker Sapkota has called the House dissolution an unconstitutional move.

President Bhandari referred to Clause 16 of the Remunerations and Benefits of the President and Vice President Act-2017 that gives immunity to the President.

Sheetal Niwas, the presi-

dent of the Remunerations and Benefits of the President and Vice President Act-2017 that gives immunity to the President.

They called on North Korea to engage and resume dialogue and respect human rights conditions. Kim has recently threatened to enlarge his nuclear arsenal and build high-tech weapons targeting the US mainland if Washington refused to abandon its hostile policy on North Korea.

In March, Kim's military performed its first short-range ballistic missile tests in a year. But North Korea still maintains a moratorium on long-range missile and nuclear tests in an indication that Kim still wants to keep prospects for diplomacy alive.

Details of his North Korea policy haven't been publicized, but US officials have suggested Biden would seek a middle ground between Trump's direct meetings with Kim and former President Barack

UN to call for halt of arms to Myanmar

ASSOCIATED PRESS
UNITED NATIONS, 18 JUNE

The UN General Assembly is expected to approve a resolution calling on Myanmar's junta to restore the country's democratic transition and for all countries to prevent the flow of arms into Myanmar, diplomats said.

The draft resolution also condemns deadly violence by security forces and calls on the junta to unconditionally release the ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint and all those who have been arbitrarily detained, charged or arrested.

The 193-member assembly is scheduled to consider the resolution, which has more than 50 co-sponsors, on Friday afternoon and its sponsors are hoping it will be

approved by consensus to send a strong message to the military of global opposition to its Feb 1 takeover and support for a return to Myanmar's democratic transition, though any nation can call for a vote.

The draft resulted from negotiations by a so-called Core Group including the European Union, many Western nations and the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations known as ASEAN, which includes Myan-

mar. A UN diplomat said there is an agreement with ASEAN to seek consensus, but what will happen with ASEAN members if there is a vote remains unclear.

The resolution's approval would mark one of the few times that the UN's most representative body expressed itself against a military coup and called for an arms embargo.

Canada's UN Ambassador Bob Rae, a member of the Core Group, said on Thursday that everyone has been working hard to reach a broad consensus on the text, and discussions were still underway on whether it would be approved by consensus or be put to a vote.

Myanmar for five decades had languished under strict military rule that led to international isolation and sanctions.

Detention extended

YANGON, 18 JUNE

A court in Myanmar has extended the detention of American journalist Danny Fenster for another two weeks, while the US State Department urged that it be granted consular access to him.

Online news and business magazine Frontier Myanmar, where Fenster is managing editor, said he faces a charge that carries a potential three-year prison term.

He was detained at Yangon International Airport on 24 May while trying to board a flight to go to the Detroit area. AP

North Korea's Kim vows to be ready for confrontation with US

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SEOUL, 18 JUNE

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered his government to be prepared for both dialogue and confrontation with the Biden administration but more for confrontation, state media reported Friday, days after the United States and others urged the North to abandon its nuclear programme and return to talks.

Kim's statement indicates he'll likely push to strengthen his nuclear arsenal and increase pressure on Washington to give up what North Korea considers a hostile US policy, though he'll also prepare for talks to resume, some experts say.

During an ongoing ruling party meeting Thursday, Kim analysed in detail the policy tendencies of the U.S. under President Joe Biden and clarified unspecified steps to be taken in relations with Washington, the Korean Central News Agency said.

get prepared for both dialogue and confrontation, especially to get fully prepared for confrontation in order to protect the dignity of our state and its interests for independent development and to reliably guarantee the peaceful environment and the security of our state.

In 2018-19, Kim held a series of summits with then-President Donald Trump to discuss his advancing nuclear arsenal. But their negotiations fell apart after Trump

rejected Kim's calls for extensive sanctions relief in return for a partial surrender of his nuclear capability. Biden's administration has worked to formulate a new approach on North Korea's nuclear program that it describes as calibrated and practical.

Obama's strategic patience to curb Kim's nuclear program. Earlier this week, leaders of the Group of Seven wealthy nations issued a statement calling for the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the verifiable and irreversible abandonment North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

They called on North Korea to engage and resume dialogue and respect human rights conditions. Kim has recently threatened to enlarge his nuclear arsenal and build high-tech weapons targeting the US mainland if Washington refused to abandon its hostile policy on North Korea.

In March, Kim's military performed its first short-range ballistic missile tests in a year. But North Korea still maintains a moratorium on long-range missile and nuclear tests in an indication that Kim still wants to keep prospects for diplomacy alive.

Kwak Gil Sup, head of One Korea Center, a website spe-

China is 'pacing challenge' for US: Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 18 JUNE

China is a "pacing challenge" for America, Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin has said, asserting that it is "really important" for the US to focus more on creating opportunities to better partner with its allies and partners in the strategically vital Indo-Pacific region.

Austin told members of the Senate Appropriations Committee during a hearing on 2022 Budget Request for the Defense Department on Thursday that China was his priority focus.

China is, in fact, our pacing challenge and it is my priority focus. You've seen that through quite frankly our actions. My first overseas trip along with Secretary Blinken was over to the Indo-Pacific region, he said.

You saw me stand up a China task force that has

efforts that will, among other things, help bolster deterrence against Beijing and revitalise network of regional allies and partners and accelerate the development of cutting-edge capabilities and new operational concepts.

"My first trip overseas - was out to the region, the Indo-Pacific region where I met with our allies in Japan and South Korea and further traveled to India to meet with our partner there and just as recent as two nights ago, I was in a conference with ASEAN nations and exchanging ideas about how we could better work together," he said.

China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea, though Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam all claim parts of it. Beijing has built artificial islands and military installations in the South China Sea.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

TEAM BONDING

The 10-day quarantine period in Paris did wonders for team bonding, feels seasoned Deepika Kumari (*in photo, left*) as Indian women's archery team gets ready for their final Tokyo Olympic qualifier event on Sunday. The world number three Deepika, who has already qualified for Olympics in the individual recurve category, has a different challenge this time though. "Normally, I stay aloof and take time to gel with the juniors but during this quarantine in Vichy, we would spend hours together after practice," the senior-most Indian archer told PTI from Paris, ahead of their women's team Final Qualifier for Tokyo Olympics on Sunday.

THUMBNAILS

Mary Kom skips training: Olympic Games bound women boxer MC Marykom will skip a short training stint in Assisi, Italy, that starts on Monday, and will instead continue to train in Pune, said a national boxing coach. "Due to personal reason Marykom has decided to train at home and skip the tour," said a senior official of the Boxing Federation of India. A coach said that Marykom would continue to train in Pune.

National Sports Awards applications: The Sports Ministry on Friday extended the deadline to submit applications for this year's National Sports Awards by a week, enabling the online process to continue till June 28. Earlier the last date of submission of nominations and applications was fixed at 21 June.

Bottas leads 1st practice at French GP: Valtteri Bottas overcame a poor start to top the first practice session ahead of Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton at the French Grand Prix on Friday. Bottas had some early trouble at the Paul Ricard circuit in southern France, bouncing over kerbs and appearing to damage the front wing on his car.

Boniperti dies: Giampiero Boniperti, who was part of Juventus' famed Magical Trio' attack with John Charles and Omar Sívori, has died. He was 92. Juventus and the Italian soccer federation said Friday that Boniperti passed away during the night, without giving a cause of death.

SAI allows training for Chopra, Phogat: Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and star wrestler Vinesh Phogat will continue to train in their respective locations in Europe till July 25 before leaving for the Tokyo Olympics, Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Friday.

Hyderabad FC sign striker Aaren D'Silva: Building on their youth-centric set-up, Hyderabad FC continue to add exciting talent to their squad and the latest player to arrive is striker Aaren D'Silva. The 23-year-old attacker signs on a three-year deal till the end of 2023-24 season, the club announced on Friday.

Aim for a better finish: Akhil Rabindra the only Indian driver in the European GT4 Championship is back on the grid with a power packed round three race weekend at the Circuit Zandvoort in Netherland. Akhil, alongside his 19-Year-Old French teammate, Hugo Conde, will aim for a better finish this time given his previous experience on the track in 2019.

TEAM BONDING

TEAM BONDING

The 10-day quarantine period in Paris did wonders for team bonding, feels seasoned Deepika Kumari (*in photo, left*) as Indian women's archery team gets ready for their final Tokyo Olympic qualifier event on Sunday. The world number three Deepika, who has already qualified for Olympics in the individual recurve category, has a different challenge this time though. "Normally, I stay aloof and take time to gel with the juniors but during this quarantine in Vichy, we would spend hours together after practice," the senior-most Indian archer told PTI from Paris, ahead of their women's team Final Qualifier for Tokyo Olympics on Sunday.

TEAM BONDING

WTC final: First day's play called off due to rain

AGENCIES
SOUTHAMPTON, 18 JUNE

The eagerly-awaited opening day of the World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand was rained out here on Friday, which is set to bring the reserve day into the equation.

As per ICC playing conditions guidelines for the WTC final, if required the reserve sixth day can now come into effect with six hours of play lost on Day 1 itself. There was forecast of rain and thundershowers and the heavens opened up last evening with relentless downpour continuing till afternoon.

With puddles forming throughout the outfield, even the best drainage system couldn't have possibly forced some action on the opening day.

Umpires Michael Gough and Richard Illingworth, after multiple inspections, called off the game at 7:30 pm IST (3 pm local time).

While there has been talk about Southampton being the preferred venue, it has been learnt that BCCI was taken into confidence by both the ICC and England and Wales Cricket Board before they finalised the venue which also has a five-star facility within the premises, helping create a tight bio-secure bubble. The English weather is known to be fickle and in any case, there was no guarantee that the match being played at any other venue would have not led to a wash-out on the first day.

Women's Test: India 83/1 at tea after England enforce follow-on



The first day's play of the World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand at the Hampshire Bowl here has been called off due to incessant rain. The match can still be a five-day affair since there is a reserve day on 23 June.

Earlier, resuming at overnight score of 187 for 5, India were all out for 231 in their first innings, 165 runs short of England's first innings score of 396.

India Women were left with a mountain to climb in the one-off Test against England as they were forced to follow on after being shot out for 231 in their first innings during the morning session of the third day here on Friday.

After a dramatic collapse on the second day on Thursday,

India's batting woes continued as they lost five wickets for the addition of just 44 runs in 21.2 overs, undoing the tremendous effort by 17-year-old Shafali Verma (96) and Smriti Mandhana (78).

Debutants Deepi Sharma (29 not out) and Pooja Vastrakar (12) put up a 33-run stand for the ninth wicket but could not save the team from follow on in response to England's first innings of 396 for 9 declared.

Trailing by 165 runs, India were 29 for 1 at lunch after Mandhana was dismissed for 8. India still trail by 136 runs with nine secondinnings wickets in hand.

Debutant Verma was batting beautifully on 20 off just 14 balls, with the help of 5 boundaries.

The Indian batters struggled in their first innings against the

England spin duo of Sophie Ecclestone (4/88), who was the tormentor, and Heather Knight (2/7) for most part before pacers Katherine Brunt and Anya Shrubsole took the last two wickets. India scored their first runs of the day after 20 balls and by then had lost two wickets including the crucial one of vice captain Harmanpreet Kaur. For India, all-rounder Deepi Sharma (29 not out) was the only lower-middle order batter to put up some fight as others were all dismissed cheaply. From 167 for no loss, India lost eight wickets for 30 runs with left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone getting 4 for 88. Brief Scores: Eng Women: 396/9 decl, Ind Women: 231 and 83 for 1 in 24.3 overs (Shafali Verma 55 not out; Brunt 1/21).

Milkha Singh battles 'rough day', oxygen saturation level dips

CHANDIGARH, 18 JUNE

Legendary Indian sprinter Milkha Singh has developed a fever and his oxygen saturation level has also dropped as he battles to regain his health, after a bout with COVID-19, in the Intensive Care Unit of the PGIMER hospital here on Friday.

The 91-year-old, who tested negative for COVID-19 on Wednesday and was shifted to the general ICU, is being closely monitored by a team of doctors.

"He suddenly developed a fever Thursday night and his oxygen saturation levels dipped. A team of doctors is monitoring him," PGIMER

sources said on Friday.

Milkha had been "stable before this. It's been a slightly rough day for Milkha Ji. But he is battling away," read a statement from his family.

He had contracted COVID-19 last month and his 85-year-old wife Nirmal Kaur, who had also been infected by the virus, passed away at a private hospital in Mohali on Sunday.

Kaur was a former national women's volleyball team captain. Milkha was admitted to PGIMER on June 3 after his oxygen levels dipped at home following treatment at the Fortis hospital in Mohali for a week. **PTI**

National team not a factory to produce players: Stimac

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 18 JUNE

Super League.

Stimac was asked about the next Chhetri and he shot back: "Who do you see in India who can replace Chhetri? Do you see anyone in a striking position to play as centre forward?" The national team should exploit players coming out from the clubs. National team is not an academy, we are not a factory to produce players."

He said the national team suffered from "all the weakness that is apparent in the country's top league, the ISL".

"We can just use what we get from ISL and I-League or other lower leagues in India. National team door is open to everyone. But where to find someone like that (like Chhetri)?" Stimac asked.

"To be honest there are not many players with the technical ability."

Against quality side like NZ, you need to keep things simple: Rohit

AGENCIES
SOUTHAMPTON, 18 JUNE

Rohit Sharma believes that keeping things "simple and realistic" against a quality side like New Zealand should be the way to go for the Indian team in the Word Test Championship final, the opening day of which has already been affected by a heavy downpour.

Rohit, who will be opening for the first time in England, is also confident of tackling the New Zealand attack, having faced it enough in the shorter formats.

"I have played those guys and know about their strengths and weaknesses. It will all boil down to what the conditions are, what sort of situation the team is in, whether we are batting first or second,"



Rohit told broadcasters 'Star Sports'.

The marquee game's opening session was rained out here on Friday.

"All that will count and it's important not to overthink."

Against a quality side, it is also very important to keep things simple, and realistic," said the senior opener, who has scored 1000 plus runs in the World Test Championship cycle as an opener.

A white ball superstar, Rohit loves the traditional format for the challenges that it poses for sustained periods of play.

"You are challenged for five days and which I think doesn't happen anywhere. Everyday brings a different challenge, a longer game that needs patience, you play in different conditions and it's not the easiest," he said.

"You have to be mentally fresh for five days to make good decisions on the field. Physically you need to be fit to accept and overcome those challenges," he added.

Naomi Osaka withdraws from Wimbledon

AGENCIES
LONDON, 18 JUNE

US Open in 2018" and that she gets "huge waves of anxiety".

"Naomi Osakawill be greatly missed by all of us at Wimbledon this year, but we completely understand her decision. We wish her a happy time with her friends and family and look forward to welcoming her back to Wimbledon next year," the All England Club said.

Rafael Nadal too is sitting out Wimbledon, leaving the oldest Grand Slam tennis tournament without two of the sport's biggest stars as it returns after being canceled last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Nadal, a two-time champion at the All England Club, announced via a series of social media posts Thursday that he would also miss the Tokyo Olympics to rest and recover after listening to my body.

Ten Olympic debutants in Indian men's hockey squad for Tokyo Olympics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU, 18 JUNE

India on Friday named 10 Olympic debutants in its 16-member men's hockey squad, which also features seasoned performers like PR Sreejesh and Manpreet Singh, for the Tokyo Games to be held from July 23 to August 8.

Amit Rohidas, Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilakanta Sharma, Sumit, Shamsher Singh, Dilpreet Singh, Gurjant Singh and Lalit Kumar Upadhyay are the 10 players who will make their Olympic debut in Tokyo.

Besides, the 16-member team also includes six seasoned campaigners like former skipper and goalkeeper Sreejesh, midfielder Manpreet, defenders Harmanpreet Singh, Rupinder Pal Singh and Surender Kumar and forward Mandeep Singh.

These players were a part of the previous Olympic squad in Rio de Janeiro.

Veteran defender Birendra Lakra, who missed the 2016 Games due to a knee injury, has also been named in the side and is set to make his Olympic debut in Tokyo.

The team has only one goalkeeper in Sreejesh, which



means promising Krishan Bahadur Pathak missed out on an Olympic berth despite being an integral part of the team in the lead up to the quadrennial Games. The Olympic-bound Indian team has five defenders, five midfielders and as many forwards. The notable absences in the squad are strikers Akashdeep Singh and Ramandeep Singh, who were a part of the Rio Games team. Even though Manpreet has been the captain of the side for sometime now, Hockey India hasn't named the leader of the Tokyo-bound team but it is expected that the ace midfielder will be retained in the role.

"It has not been an easy process to make the final selection of 16 players as there is a lot of quality and ambition in this group of players. The per-

Depay, Dumfries score, Netherlands top Austria at Euro 2020

AGENCIES
AMSTERDAM, 18 JUNE

This time, the Netherlands never looked like throwing away their two-goal lead.

Memphis Depay (*in photo*) and Denzel Dumfries scored a goal in each half as the Dutch comfortably beat Austria 2-0 Thursday to advance to the round of 16 at the European Championship.

We showed some different qualities today," Netherlands coach Frank de Boer said. "Defensively we were much better than (against) Ukraine.

Depay sent a penalty kicklow into the corner in the 11th minute for his 27th goal in 66 international matches. Dumfries then scored his second goal of the tournament following his late winner against Ukraine in the 67th after an unselfish pass from PSV Eindhoven teammate Donny Malen.

A foul by Austria captain David Alaba on Dumfries earned the Dutch penalty at the Johan Cruyff Arena, although only after referee Orel Grinfield had a second look at the incident on a screen. Dumfries, a wing back who has played a role in all five Netherlands goals at the tournament, was asked after the match if his tournament was beginning to resemble a boy-



hood dream. "It's starting to look that way," he said.

The Netherlands is playing at a major international soccer tournament for the first time in seven years and qualified for the knockout stage with a game to spare. The Dutch, whose only major tournament victory came at the 1988 European Championship, finished third at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Austria rarely threatened to equalize against a well-ordered Dutch defense led by Matthijs De Ligt on his return from a groin injury. He made a couple of interventions where you could see his power, his speed, his strength in the air, De Boer said of the Juventus player.

The closest Austria came was a long-range shot by Alaba in the 82nd minute. The team had slightly more possession than the Netherlands but only managed one shot on target in the entire game.

In the group's other match, Ukraine beat North Macedonia 2-1 in Bucharest. The Dutch win eliminated North Macedonia. Austria was playing without Marko Arnautovic. The forward was handed a one-match ban by UEFA for insulting a North Macedonian player in the teams' Euro 2020 opener. The incident soured Austria's first victory at a major tournament in 31 years and its first ever at the European Championship.

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Dumfries' goal and overall performance again vindicated

much better before the team's final Group F match against Hungary, also in Munich.

"We have zero points. But we still have to keep our heads up," Germany midfielder Toni Kroos said. Defending champion Portugal can secure a spot in the round of 16 with a win ahead of its last group game against World Cup champion France. "It will be a difficult game for us, but for Germany, too," Portugal playmaker Bruno Fernandes said.

Spain vs Poland

Spain and Poland will have a common challenge when they meet on Saturday at the European Championship.

Spain created chance after chance against Sweden but was still held to a 0-0 draw in its opening match at Euro 2020. Poland lost to Slovakia 2-1 as Robert Lewandowski was held scoreless in yet another lackluster performance at a major soccer tournament.

The focus on Spain at La Cartuja Stadium will be on Ivaro Morata, the striker singled out by fans and Spanish media for his misses against Sweden. He had also been ineffective in Spain's warm-up match against Portugal, which ended 0-0.