

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 22 | JUNE 2021



SPORT | 8
Jamieson relishes Kohli wicket

WORLD | 5
Raisi says no Biden meet, missiles non-negotiable

STATE | 2

This govt is guided by spirit of Dravidian movement: Governor



Amarnath yatra again cancelled

YUSUF JAMEEL
SRINAGAR, JUNE 21

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

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

He also said: “It’s important to save people’s lives. So, it is not advisable to hold and conduct this year’s pilgrimage in the larger public interest”.

BENGAL EX-CS TO FACE CENTRAL INQUIRY

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, JUNE 21

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

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

In a “Memorandum” to the retired bureaucrat on June 16, department of personnel and training (DoPT) under the ministry of personnel and public grievances and pensions, of which Mr Modi is the minister, informed him, “...the Central Government proposes to hold Major Penalty Proceedings against him under Rule 8 of the All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969 (hereinafter referred to as Discipline Rules), read with Rule 6 of the All India Services (Death-cum-Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958 (hereinafter referred to as Retirement Benefit Rules).”

PM: Vax record gladdens heart

DC CORRESPONDENT WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

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

Madhya Pradesh saw



Raghuram Rajan



Arvind Subramanian

Subramanian, former Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India, Jean Dreze, Development Economist and S Narayan, former Union Finance Secretary.

Based on the recommendations of this Council, the Government will revitalise the State’s economy and ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach all segments of society, the Governor said, adding that there could be no social justice when there was high economic inequality and stratification.

HIGH FUNDA PLANS

● Based on recommendations of the Council, State’s economy to be revitalised and ensure the benefits of economic growth reach all segments

● An annual budget for agriculture would be introduced with the objective of increasing agricultural productivity and protecting farmers’ welfare.

S. Narayan

“Growth and progress must benefit all of society, and not just the top of the economic pyramid,” he said and explained how the health infrastructure was being strengthened in the State like expediting the ongoing construction projects, including the 11 new medical colleges and a new 500 bedded multi-specialty hospital in the King Institute campus, Chennai at a total cost of Rs 250 crore.

The Covid pandemic had disrupted all sectors and exposed several structural weaknesses in the econo-

● A separate Ministry for Water Resources has been established

● The boundaries of Chennai Corporation extended by including 42 adjacent local bodies

S. Narayan

my, as well as in governance structures, providing the motivation and the opportunity for structural reforms, he said.

Recognising the role and importance of farmers, the Government has renamed the Department of Agriculture as the Department of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, giving emphasis to new technologies, new methods of cultivation and modernising agriculture with the active participation of Farmers’ Producers Groups, Uzhavar Nala Sangams and experts. ■ **P2**



Jean Dreze



Esther Duflo

DMK GOVT DID NOT KEEP ITS WORD, SAYS EPS

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Edappadi K Palaniswami, flayed the DMK Government for not having any plans of fulfilling the promises given during the elections as many of them were not mentioned in the Governor’s Address.

Among the missing things that Palaniswami referred to while speaking to the media after the Assembly session were the DMK’s promise to write off jewel loans, agriculture loans and education loans.

He said the promise to increase the relief for women from ₹1000 to ₹1500 was also not mentioned in the address. Similarly, there was no reference to the writing off of loans of SHGs, subsidy of ₹100 for LPG cylinders and reducing petrol and diesel prices. AIADMK’s coordinator O Panneerselvam found the Governor’s Address not adhering to the principles enunciated by C N Annadurai. ■ **P2**



Pawar calls non-Cong Oppn meet

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

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

The meeting is expected to be attended by, among others, the NCP’s Majeed Memon and Samajwadi Party’s Ghanashyam Tiwari, who is also the convener of the Rashtra Manch, as well as AAP, RLD and RJD representatives. It is likely to see discussions on possible strategies for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Besides this, the leaders may also explore plans to jointly take on the BJP in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh elections.

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



SIDHU SPEAKS UP AGAINST PUNJAB CM

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

Navjot Singh Sidhu said on Monday that he was “willing to work with Amarinder Singh” but added that a condition was that issues should be resolved. Punjab CM Amarinder Singh has shown no willingness to accommodate Sidhu’s demands, which include fair representation in the government and the party in the state.

The Punjab CM was called to Delhi for the second time by a Congress panel tasked with recommending a solution to the infighting. Does he think Singh is shutting the door on him? “Who is he to close doors to Navjot Singh Sidhu? He lost three elections, he lost his deposit and later Madam Sonia (Gandhi) makes him the party president. He threatened to split the party,” Mr Sidhu lashed out, insisting that it was the Chief Minister who was isolated.

Sidhu criticised CM Singh for suggesting his rebellion was weakening the party and asserted that he was not hankering for any post.

— PTI

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+38,923)	(+1,101)
2,99,73,306	3,89,266

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+7,427)	(189)
TN: 24,29,924	31,386

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

17,94,08,786

DEATHS
38,85,167

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
219

worldometers.info

Fraud Ram temple donation website busted, 5 held in UP

Noida: Five men who allegedly made an illegal website in the name of the Ram Janmabhoomi Trust Ayodhya and duped people of lakhs of rupees by receiving donations on the pretext of the Ram Temple construction were arrested on Monday, the Uttar Pradesh police said. The accused were nabbed by a joint team of the Noida Cyber police station and Lucknow Cyber Crime headquarters, it said in a statement.

HC rejects recall of order for probe into post-poll violence

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, JUNE 21

In a major blow to West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, a five-judge bench of the Calcutta high court on Monday rejected her government’s prayer seeking recall of its order last week for a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) probe into the state-wide post-poll violence allegedly unleashed by the Trinamul Congress on BJP workers.

COUNTER POINT



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

Top court reserves verdict on Covid deaths compensation

New Delhi, June 21: The Supreme Court Monday reserved verdict on the pleas seeking directions that ex-gratia compensation of ₹4 lakh be paid to the families of those who have died of Covid-19.

A special vacation bench comprising Justices Ashok Bhushan and M.R. Shah heard Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and senior advocate S.B. Upadhyay and other lawyers for

almost two hours. The top court asked the parties to file written submissions in three days and specifically directed the Centre to simplify the process of grant of death certificates to the dependents of those who have died of Covid-19.

The Centre had earlier informed the apex court that the ex-gratia compensation of ₹4 lakh cannot be paid to the families of those who have died of Covid as



the finances of state governments and the Centre are under severe strain. In an affidavit filed before

● **The Centre had earlier informed the apex court that the ex-gratia compensation of ₹4 lakh cannot be paid to the families of those who have died of Covid**

the top court, the Ministry of Home Affairs said the Centre submitted that it has by ways of “Minimum

Standard Relief” under section 12 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, taken several steps providing for substantial and speedy measures by way of increase in the health, infrastructure, ensuring food safety to every citizen.

Advocate Gaurav Kumar Bansal, one of the petitioners in the matter, had argued that under section 12(iii) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005,

every family whose member died due to disaster is entitled for ex-gratia compensation of ₹4,00,000. He had argued that since Covid-19 has been declared as a disaster and as per the order dated April 8, 2015, every family whose member dies due to disaster is entitled for ex-gratia compensation of Rs 4 lakh.

The counsel, appearing for another petitioner Reepak Kansal, had argued

that a large number of deaths were taking place due to COVID-19 and death certificates need to be issued, as only after that the affected family members can claim compensation under section 12 (iii) of the Act. In his plea, Kansal has said that states should be directed to fulfil their obligation to take care of victims of Covid and also their family members.

— PTI

■ **REPORT ON PAGE 4**

OTHER STORIES

Stray dogs kill spotted deer

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

A three-and-a-half-year-old deer, which sneaked into Kuzhipanthaladalam village from the nearby forest, died after it was attacked by stray dogs on Monday. The deer sneaked into the village in the early hours of Monday, in search of food.

But as soon as it reached, stray dogs surrounded and attacked the animal, killing it on the spot.

According to the police, the villagers rushed to help but failed to save the deer.

They then informed the local police and the Forest department officials who reached and seized the carcass of the spotted deer.

Chengalpet Ranger Pandurangan said the carcass has been sent to Thirukazhukundram Veterinary hospital, where an autopsy will be conducted. He said an investigation will be conducted.

DMK govt failed to keep poll promises, says EPS

From P1

In a statement, he too pointed out to the DMK Government not bothering to honour the promises it gave during the elections through the manifesto and campaign meetings.

Among the government failures that he pointed out were not abolishing Neet and not introducing the monthly electricity bill.

He found the demands made to the Centre on a plethora of issues as vacuous, seemingly made just for the sake of making it as there was no assurance that they would be acceded to.

The promise to reintroduce the old pension scheme for government staff and teachers, too, have been totally forgotten, he said.

Leader of the TNCC, K.S. Alagiri, however, praised the government, saying that the Governor's address gave the hope of the state marching towards progress.

He lauded Chief Minister M. K. Stalin for giving priority to tackling the Covid-19 situation and removing the vaccine hesitancy in the State. He also appreciated him for raising funds through the Chief Minister's general relief fund to tackle the pandemic situation.

TNCC president Alagiri also had a word of praise for the appointment of an Economic Advisory Council to the Chief Minister comprising eminent economists from around the world.

Leader of the TNCC, K. S. Alagiri, however, praised the government, saying that the Governor's address gave the hope of the state marching towards progress



MTC buses started running with 50 per cent occupancy in the city on Monday.

— DC

Dip in Covid cases leads to increase in traffic at airport

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

With the decline in the number of Covid-19 cases in the state, the number of travellers and flight services at the Chennai Airport has seen a sharp increase.

Officials at the Airports Authority of India (AAI) said that for the last two days, the number of passengers was around 8,000, as against less than 3,000 earlier. The number of aircraft movements had also seen a slight up over the last two days. Additional flights from Chennai to Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Trichy, Madurai, Bengaluru began their operation on Monday.

According to an official, since the beginning of the Covid-19 second wave in the state, the passenger traffic and flight operations at the Chennai airport came down slowly. The airport saw the lowest passenger traffic (less than 3,500) in over a year on May 11.

People in the state got

more cautious and avoided travelling.

From June 11, there was a slight increase in passenger traffic at Chennai airport. The air traffic started growing slightly and reached more than 4,000 passengers a day. Around 80-83 flights operated in and out of Chennai airport.

Meanwhile, for the last two days, the air traffic started growing sharply and reached more than 8,000 passengers a day. This may be due to the dip in the state's Covid-19 cases. On Monday, 8,000 passengers travelled in 127 flights, both ways, the airport sources said.

The airport authorities are positive that the air traffic might increase further in the coming days.

The number of fresh Covid-19 cases fell to 7,427 on Monday, bringing down the total number of active cases in Tamil Nadu to 61,329. Chennai reported 439 fresh cases and 387 were discharged, according to the daily bulletin from the Directorate of Public Health.

1.13 cr administered vaccines in state: TN

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

The Tamil Nadu government has informed the Madras high court that so far till June 17, 2021, 1.13 crore doses of vaccines have been received from the government of India for above 45 years category and 18-44 years category and 86 lakh beneficiaries have been administered under 45+ category and 27 lakh beneficiaries under 18-44 category.

State health secretary Dr J.Radhakrishnan stated this in his status report filed in response to a suo motu petition and another batch of PILs, before the first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy on Monday.

The bench posted to June 22, 2021, further hearing of the case.

The bench had on April 22, initiated the suo motu proceedings pursuant to the newspapers reports relating to alleged shortage of oxygen and drug Remdesivir. Meanwhile another batch of PILs relating to Covid-19 were

The bench had on April 22, initiated the suo motu proceedings pursuant to the newspapers reports relating to alleged shortage of oxygen and drug Remdesivir. Meanwhile another batch of PILs relating to Covid-19 were also filed.

With reference to awareness of vaccination amongst people, Radhakrishnan in his report submitted that all the heads of departments and all collectors have been instructed to organize the awareness programmes about the importance of vaccination and to remove the fears about vaccination among all citizens. Based on that all the collectors and commissioners, Greater Chennai Corporation have already started the awareness campaign in their areas, he added.

With regard to recording of passport number in vaccination certificate, he said the government have issued necessary instructions to all head of the departments to follow the standard operative procedure

Dress code for online classes

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

Teachers and students should observe a dress code suitable for classroom setting while participating in online classes, said one of the guidelines issued by the state government for ensuring Students' Safety and Protection from Sexual Violence.

An orientation programme would be organised for all stakeholders associated with the school to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the Pocco Act, said the guidelines, adding that the school education department would provide the orientation module.

The guidance for students' safety and protection

The student safeguarding advisory committee should inform the state level CCC immediately on receipt of any complaint through any mode of communication, the guidance made it clear

review, monitor and recommend measures on all aspects of students' safety. The school education department will set up a state level "Central Complaint Centre" (CCC) with a hotline facility as well as a dedicated e-mail.id in a month time to enable receipt of all school based complaints of sexual abuse against students, from anyone.

The student safeguarding advisory committee should inform the state level CCC immediately on receipt of any complaint through any mode of communication, the guidance made it clear.

A trained multidisciplinary team drawn from different fields will guide callers/ complainants with clarifications/

review, monitor and recommend measures on all aspects of students' safety.

The school education department will set up a state level "Central Complaint Centre" (CCC) with a hotline facility as well as a dedicated e-mail.id in a month time to enable receipt of all school based complaints of sexual abuse against students, from anyone.

The student safeguarding advisory committee should inform the state level CCC immediately on receipt of any complaint through any mode of communication, the guidance made it clear.

A trained multidisciplinary team drawn from different fields will guide callers/ complainants with clarifications/

queries regarding the protocol to be followed on receipt of an allegation, the guidelines said adding: All interaction between CCC and callers will be documented and kept strictly confidential.

The purpose of the CCC is to offer an alternate complaint mechanism and provide guidance on the protocol to be observed so that all complaints received are addressed appropriately.

A standard safety self-audit tool will be developed by the School Education Department, which is mandatory for all school management to be completed annually.

All online classes should be recorded and a random audit should be undertaken by a quorum of Student

Safeguarding Advisory Committee periodically.

Safety boxes will be placed in school campuses to receive complaints and feedback. It should be reviewed by the Student Safeguarding Advisory Committee periodically and appropriate action should be taken.

A separate register should be maintained by the student safeguarding advisory committee to document all complaints received through all modes of communication including oral communication.

All schools should observe a "Child Abuse Prevention Week" (from Nov. 15 to Nov. 22) annually through awareness programmes, the guidelines said.

Awareness sessions, techniques mark Yoga Day

Chennai, June 21: The COVID-19 pandemic did not appear to deter yoga enthusiasts here from spreading their mats and stretching their limbs to perform various asanas (postures) to mark the 7th International Day of Yoga on Monday.

Several organisations, observing the day, adhered to COVID protocols while others performed yogasanas from the comfort of their homes.

Tamil Nadu Minister for Medical and Family Welfare Ma Subramanian said the DMK had introduced yoga as a curriculum in the Chennai Corporation schools and for pregnant women lon-

gago.

Today, we are observing the 7th International Day of Yoga. But, about 13 years ago, I introduced yoga in the Chennai Corporation schools during my tenure as the city Mayor, he said in his message.

Yoga was introduced for pregnant women then, the Minister added.

The faculty and PG scholars of the National Institute of Siddha (NIS), Tambaram, near here, led by its director Prof Dr R Meenakumari observed the day by performing asanas.

Doctors and yoga experts, attending on the COVID-19 patients at the institute, held a session to

impart pranayama (breath control techniques) and yogasanas.

BJP national general secretary & in-charge of Tamil Nadu C T Ravi and party's State president L Murugan displayed their skills in yoga.

Yoga can bring inner peace that calms our senses and declutters our minds, said Chennai Liver Foundation (CLF).

In its message, the non-profit organisation, promoting awareness on liver health by supporting research and educational activities, said, "It is essential to make yoga a habit. This International Yoga Day, let us raise awareness on the significance of yoga."



Differently-abled persons perform yoga on World Yoga Day at Ramapuram.

— DC

‘Spl vaccination camps organised in districts for diff-abled persons’

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

The Tamil Nadu government has informed the Madras high court that special vaccination camps are being organised in the districts for the differently-abled persons.

State health secretary Dr.J.Radhakrishnan stated this in his status report filed in response to a Public Interest Litigation filed by M.Karpagam, before the first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy.

He said in Greater Chennai Corporation, willing persons having greater immobility issues are being vaccinated at their door steps, duly following the protocol.

In his petition, Karpagam sought a direction to the authorities to frame a standard operating procedure for vaccinating homebound persons, persons with disability, persons at institutions, nursing homes etc.,

In his report, Radhakrishnan further said guidelines have been issued to vaccinate the differently-abled persons without waiting in queue on presenting a differently-abled certificate. The director for the welfare of the differently-abled was nominated as state nodal officer and the District Collector nominated as District level nodal officer for vaccination of differently-abled persons. A special drive was being carried out in all residential institutions for screening and Covid-19 vaccination to prevent Covid-19 infection among the inmates of residential homes for differently-abled persons, he added.

He said as regards persons residing at institutions, correctional homes /special homes, the social welfare and women empowerment department/ Department for the welfare of the differently-abled persons and home department have been requested to coordinate with the deputy director of health services in the concerned districts to organise the vaccination camp at the institutional level.

The bench posted to June 23, 2021, further hearing of the case.

Travel to persons intending to undertake international travel for education purpose, for joining employment in foreign

countries and to provide full coverage of vaccination and facilitating international travel for such genuine reasons.

Travel to persons intending to undertake international travel for education purpose, for joining employment in foreign

This govt is guided by spirit of Dravidian movement: Governor

Chennai: This government is guided by the spirit of the Dravidian movement, and identifies social justice, gender equality, economic equity, opportunity-for-all through reservations, and progress through education and social reforms as its core values. These values will drive every action, every legislation, every scheme, and every initiative of this government.

This is a government which will always work for each and every person in Tamil Nadu irrespective of whether they voted in its favour or not. In keeping with this inclusive ethos, this government has consulted with all stakeholders, all shades of public opinion and all the political parties with a presence in the Legislative Assembly in formulating its response to the Covid pandemic.

This government stands fully committed to achieving its ultimate goal of greater autonomy for states and establishment of true federalism at the Union level through constitutional means. Strong States are needed to create a strong Union. This government will staunchly stand in defense of the rights of the states and constitutionally

oppose any infringement of such rights.

The huge second wave of the Covid pandemic was the immediate crisis that engulfed the country and Tamil Nadu as this Government assumed office. The Chief Minister very rightly prioritized the battle against the Covid pandemic above all other tasks, to overcome the inertia that had set in during the election process in Covid prevention activities.

The unprecedented spike in the requirement of oxygen and essential lifesaving drugs has been met through special efforts. Access to private medical facilities for the common man has been enhanced by liberalizing coverage for all Covid related treatment including for mucormycosis under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme. The vaccination drive has been intensified. From a situation where there was considerable vaccine hesitancy, Tamil Nadu's vaccination delivery performance has improved considerably.

So far, ₹335.01 crore have poured in as contributions to the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund from

Session to go on till Thursday

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

The State Assembly session that began with the Governor's Address on Monday will go on till Thursday with most of the time devoted for discussing the motion to thank the Governor, according to the Assembly Secretary K Srinivasan.

The discussions on the motion to thank the Governor for his address will begin on Tuesday after the House makes obituary references as the first item in the agenda.

The former members of the Assembly who passed

various quarters, and of this ₹141.10 crore has been immediately and transparently utilized for procurement of the most essential life-saving drugs and medical equipment. A further amount of ₹50 crore will be allotted for augmenting the supply of Liquid Medical Oxygen to Government hospitals and ₹50 crore for preparatory activities for the anticipated third wave of Covid.

To honour the glory of Tamil language, this gov-

away after the last session would be remembered first, followed by obituary references to actor Vivekh, Tamil writer Ki Rajanarayanan, freedom fighter K. Thulasi Vandiayar and Constituent Assembly member and member of first Assembly T M Kaliannan.

While the whole of Wednesday would be devoted to the discussions on the Governor's address, the last day will have the reply to the discussions.

After that other official matters and the examining and passing of bills will be taken up before adjourning the House.

This government will urge the Union Government to declare Tamil, as one of the official languages of India.

This government will urge the Union government to advise the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that Eelam Tamils have equal civil and political rights. This Government will also urge the Union Government to make necessary laws and amendments to grant Indian citizenship to Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka.

gories of electricity consumers in the State is the foremost objective of this Government. Tangedco and Tantransco are facing severe financial crisis due to mismanagement in recent years.

This Government believes strongly in the principle of Local Self Governance and will revitalize the Rural and Urban Local Bodies in the State. Elections to rural local bodies in the remaining nine districts and all urban local bodies were due in 2016 and not held. Necessary steps will be taken to hold elections after the intensity of the Covid pandemic subsides and after ensuring that the delimitation exercise undertaken previously is appropriate in all respects.

Provision of rural housing, drinking water supply, street lights, roads connectivity and recharge of water bodies, will be emphasised. Ensuring supply of drinking water to each house directly in urban and rural areas will be the highest priority of government.

A systematic plan to upgrade, widen and strengthen highways will be taken up. Bypasses will be formed for major towns.

OTHER STORIES

Locals rejoice as Cauvery reaches Nagai tail-end areas

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC
NAGAPATTINAM, JUNE 21

The Cauvery river water, which was released for this year's farming from the Mettur dam by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on June 12, reached the tail-end areas of Nagapattinam district on Monday, after a gap of 8 years.

The Kuruvai paddy cultivation had failed for the last eight years following the Cauvery water not reaching the tail-end areas.

The Cauvery water reached the dead-end regulator at Pandavaiyaru at Irayankudi in Nagapattinam district on Monday where the public welcomed it. A section of women performed puja to river Cauvery by performing the traditional Kummi Attam.

The delta farmers thanked the Tamil Nadu government for bringing the Cauvery water to the tail-end areas on time.

Farmers welcome separate budget for agriculture

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, JUNE 21

The farmers of Thanjavur district have welcomed the announcement in the Governor's address at Tamil Nadu assembly on Monday that a separate budget will be presented for agriculture.

Sami Nadarajan, district secretary of Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam affiliated to the CPI(M), said that a long-time demand of farmers had been met by the Government. "We welcome it," he said. He also welcomed the announcement that "Uzhavar sandals" will be renovated.

Sundara Vimalanathan, secretary, Thanjavur District Cauvery Farmers' Protection Association, said that only the Tamil Nadu government has taken the step to present a separate budget for agriculture when it has not been done in agriculture-dominated states like Punjab, etc. Farmers have been demanding this for a long time. "Government should consult farmers before presenting such a budget as it will help in addressing the issues of farmers," Vimalanathan said.

Plea to protect Maratha-era gallows

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, JUNE 21

The people of Thanjavur, particularly in the Sevappanayakan lake area, have appealed to the government to protect the 200-year-old Maratha period gallows in brick and mortar and maintain it by the archaeological department.

The gallows on the banks of Sevappanayakkan lake is 10-feet-high, 30 ft broad, and runs to a length of 200 ft.

Pazha Rajendran of Periyakoil meetup kudzu said that those who committed heinous crimes were hanged in the gallows during the Maratha period.

HC shocked over record maintenance in MCOP courts

J. STALIN | DC
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

Appalled over a large-scale irregularities committed in the maintenance of the registers of MCOP (Motor Claim Original Petition) Courts, which had paved the way for embezzlement, Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee of the Madras high court had on June 15, 2021, initiated suo motu proceedings and constituted a Special Bench comprising Justices P.N. Prakash and Abdul Quddus, with a mandate to streamline the existing practice and usher in a foolproof mechanism in the matter of disbursement of compensation amounts in the MCOP jurisdiction.

The special bench in its first sitting on June 18, 2021, in turn, issued a set of 10 directions which included the appointment of chief nodal officer and assistant chief nodal officers and the appointment of district judges as district nodal officers in the districts.

In its order, the special bench said, "We are of the view that in order to undertake the massive exercise of cleaning the Augean stables, competent officers of the rank of district judges should be appointed in all the districts, who must first be

given training as to how they should have to proceed with the task of inspection of the records of MCOP Tribunals and set them straight, if they are not in order".

The Special bench said at the outset, it may be necessary to briefly record the circumstances under which this special bench has been constituted by the Chief Justice. It came to the notice of the High Court that a staff member in the III Additional District court, Patukottai, has misappropriated a sum of about Rs 1.50 crore of MCOP compensation amounts, which resulted in the Portfolio Judges appointing three Committees viz., High Court Inspection Committee, 3-member Sub Judge Committee and Additional District Judge-Principal Sub Judge Committee. Notwithstanding the above, a police complaint was lodged, based on which, the District Crime Branch, Thanjavur registered a case and arrested the staff.

The first two committees aforementioned were directed to go into the records of all the MCOP courts in Thanjavur District and the mandate for the third committee was to inspect the records

of the court of the Principal District Judge, Thanjavur, E.C. Act Court, Thanjavur and P.C.R. Court, Thanjavur, the bench added.

The bench said the reports submitted by the three committees disclosed several appalling features in the system of record maintenance in the MCOP courts in the district which had paved the way for embezzlement. To cite a few, it was noticed that the actual number of fixed deposit receipts pending in the courts did not find a reflection in the ledgers. In hundreds of cases, the transport corporations and insurance companies had deposited the compensation amounts without mentioning the MCOP case numbers to the credit of which they ought to be deposited or to a different head, as a sequel to which, the compensation amounts had not reached the claimants. In several hundreds of cases disposed of decades ago, lakhs of rupees were found lying in the civil court deposit without being invested in fixed deposits, thereby depriving the claimants of their legitimate interest component.

"We have set out above only a few irregularities since we do not want to

make this order prolix by listing out all types of irregularities", the bench added.

The bench said the portfolio judges also brought to the notice of the Chief Justice that the situation in the other districts also may be no better and suggested some remedial measures. The Chief Justice was of the view that this whole aspect requires to be gone into more on the judicial side, so that appropriate directions can be issued from time to time for regularizing the records and to put in place a robust, foolproof and uniform system throughout the state in order that there would not be any scope for such possible misappropriation in future. "With this objective in mind, the Chief Justice has constituted the present special bench with a mandate to streamline the existing practice and usher in a foolproof mechanism in the matter of disbursement of compensation amounts in the MCOP jurisdiction", the bench added.

The special bench also appointed advocate N. Vijayaraghavan as amicus curiae to assist the court in this matter and posted to July 2, 2021, further hearing of the suo motu petition.

Idols found in Ekambareswarar temple

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

Sixteen ancient idols were found inside a room in Ekambareswarar temple in Kanchipuram.

Ekambareswarar temple dedicated to Lord Shiva located in the town of Kanchipuram is associated with the five elements, the Pancha Bhoota Stalas, and specifically the element of earth.

According to sources in the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, since they

have received a complaint regarding the ancient idols being stored in a secret room on the temple premises, officials launched a search and found 16 ancient stone idols, including that of Lord Ganesha and Nayanmars.

They could be worth several lakhs of rupees. A senior HR and CE office, Tyagarajar said they will conduct an inquiry into the matter. The idols were seized and are being examined by the officials.

TN sees 7,427 new cases, 189 deaths

Chennai, June 21: Tamil Nadu on Monday recorded 7,427 fresh cases of Covid-19 and 189 deaths, said the Health Department.

Three returnees from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka were among the fresh cases.

The caseload so far was 24,29,924 and the death toll till date was 31,386, the department said.

As many as 15,281 people got discharged today, taking the tally to 23,37,209 leaving 61,329 active infections, a bulletin said.

Tamil Nadu recorded its highest daily infection at 36,184 on May 21 and since then it has been reporting a decline.

On May 30, the State saw daily cases dropping below 30,000; on June 7 the numbers were below 20,000; and on June 17 they were less than 10,000.

Coimbatore, Erode, Salem, reported in excess of 500 cases today while 22 districts reported new infections in triple digits. Chennai registered 439 new cases aggregating to 5,29,650 till date.

Lockdown exposes lack of roads, transport in tribal villages

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, JUNE 21

Continuing lockdown in the hills here has exposed the lack of road and transport infrastructure in the tribal hamlets in Coonoor slopes making life miserable for the tribespeople.

Earlier, they used the available options to travel up to the nearby suburban limits to procure the essentials.

While the tribal folks at Chinnalakombai tribal village in the Coonoor slopes are used to this problem, this summer the

prolonging lockdown and the lack of transport facilities made them

walk nearly 8 km stretch to reach the Pilloorattam village to buy ration items and other essentials from the PDS shop.

Though these hamlets are located in the Ulikkal town panchayat limits in Nilgiris, access to the nearby Mettupalayam and Karamadai in Coimbatore district is easy

for these tribespeople when compared to the travel up to Coonoor. While stringent forest laws were a hurdle to lay proper roads to connect

these hamlets with the Coonoor town, use of two-wheelers and jeeps in the rugged jungle roads is helpful for the tribes to move up the slopes to buy their essentials.

But now, due to lockdown and lack of transport facility, private transport is also not available now. "It is good if the administration makes arrangements to bring essential items, food and vegetables from the nearby Mettupalayam to Chinnalakombai until the situation improves," the tribes folks in Chinnalakombai felt.

HC to come down heavily on illegal constructions

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

The Madras high court has made it clear that it may ultimately come down heavily on the illegal constructions and deviation from the sanctioned plan, if such matters are not attended to and the deviations and illegalities removed by the Greater Chennai Corporation before the court take steps in such regard.

The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy made the observation while passing further interim orders on a Public Interest Litigation, which sought a direction to the authorities to take action against the illegal construction put up in Zone-V of the Chennai Corporation.

In its present order, the bench said the matter pertains to illegal construction in Zone-V under the Greater Chennai Corporation and the petitioner says that it was symptomatic of the rampant illegal construction across the 15 zones of the Corporation. The matter last came up in January 2021



when, at the request of then Advocate General, the time to file the counter affidavit by the authorities was enlarged by six months for an exhaustive exercise to be completed regarding the violations in construction or deviation from the sanctioned plan. It was understandable that because of the second surge, the Corporation may have had more pressing matters to attend to and the exhaustive exercise could not be completed. The time to complete the exercise was extended by eight weeks from date, the bench added.

The bench said, "It is made clear that the Court may ultimately come down heavily on the illegal constructions and deviation from the sanctioned plan, if such

'State should ensure quarrying activities are undertaken in accordance with terms of licences'

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

Pointing out that the matter pertaining to the alleged illegal quarrying has been pending for sometime and, primarily because of the second surge of the pandemic, not much attention could be given to it in the last few weeks, the Madras high court has said however, that does not mean that the State does not have to be vigilant to ensure that quarrying activities are undertaken only in accordance with the terms of the licenses granted and that the licensees adhere to the limited areas earmarked for them and allotted.

matters are not attended to and the deviations and illegalities removed by the Corporation before the Court take steps in such regard". The matter must receive the attention of the highest officials. A copy of this order should be for-

The bench was passing interim orders on a Public Interest Litigation, which sought a direction to the authorities to take action against illegal quarrying activities taken in and around Thirupair village, Kallakurichi district

The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy further observed, "There are others who are indulging in quarrying without obtaining any license or permission. In several cases, it is not only the State's assets which are being looted, but an environmental hazard is also being presented".

warded immediately to the Commissioner and the relevant Ministry of the State government for some kind of order to be maintained in the urban areas in the State as regards construction activities. It must not be lost sight of that this was a

The bench was passing interim orders on a Public Interest Litigation, which sought a direction to the authorities to take action against illegal quarrying activities taken in and around Thirupair village, Kallakurichi district.

In its present order, the bench said the application was for the immediate stopping of illegal quarrying undertaken at several

prime area where unwanted elements were involved and there was a nexus between persons in positions of authority with realtors and even mafia and large amounts of money exchange hands, the bench added.

places. Though the main matter also pertains to illegal quarrying, the applicant says that the areas indicated in the present application need to be attended to immediately, the bench added and made the above observation.

The bench further said the State must attend to this malaise immediately and deal with the perpetrators in a befitting manner. An appropriate report should be filed by a senior official in the government when the matter appears next on June 29, 2021, the bench added and requested the Advocate General to ensure that the matter be dealt with seriously by the State.

The bench said, "Advocate General is available on the virtual mode and there is no doubt that the State will address the obvious malaise with the degree of seriousness that it deserves. List the matter on August 23, 2021".



Two persons died and another person injured during an explosion at an illegal firecracker manufacturing unit in Thayilpatti in Sattur, near Sivakasi in Virudhunagar district on Monday.

— DC

Lord Vishnu idol unearthed in Ariyalur

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC
ARIYALUR, JUNE 21

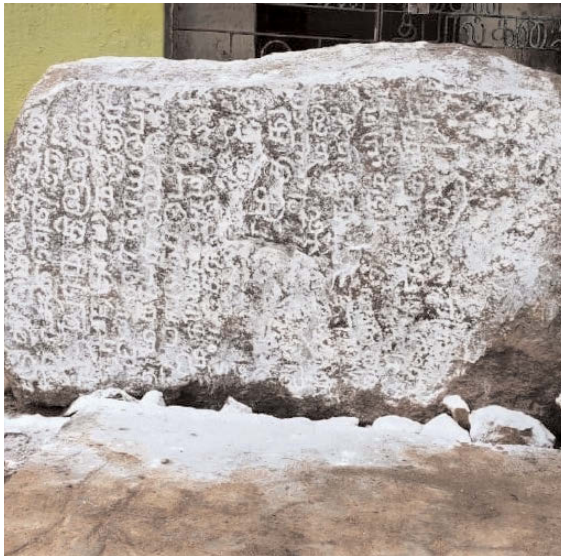
An 8-foot-tall Lord Perumal statue, made out of granite, was unearthed while people were digging earth at Karaiyankurichi village near Ariyalur on Monday.

Workers found the statue while digging earth at the property of one Saravanan for constructing his house. They retrieved it on Monday with the help of an earth mover.

The villagers cleaned the statue and performed

puja. Later, it was handed over to Ariyalur RDO Elumalai.

Official sources said the statue will be sent to the museum at Tiruchy and from there the archaeological department will analyse in which era it was made.



Two stone inscriptions belonging to Nayak period found in Javadumalai.

— K. Senthilnathan



A Lord's idol worshipped by the Cholas in the 12th century found in Madapalli village in Tirupattur.

Off-centre

No road, no job: Tribes get tough

The tribespeople of Patthamyen hamlet in Pandalur taluk in the Nilgiris last week took a tough stand with the health officials who came to vaccinate them against Covid-19 by saying that they will take the jab only if their grievances like poor infrastructure facilities and arrangements for storm water are solved. Though the health team talked to the tribes and tried to convince them on the need to take vaccine against the dreaded Coronavirus, most of the tribesmen refused to take the shot, forcing the hapless officials to return in the evening without completing their mission.

— B. Ravichandran

A boon for special kids

With the schools on the online mode due to the pandemic, Chetana Charitable Trust's Accessible Reading Materials (ARM) has come up with an online library to help children with special needs. The library contains over 30 books, and counting, in five languages including Indian sign language. ARM has created stories with illustrations and uploaded them to their website with some tips for the parents. For children with low-vision, there are lessons in large text size, well spaced-out and highlighted to understand easily. Another feature is 'read-aloud', which provides an extra support to children to read without anyone's help when the volume is kept low. Hearing-impaired students can also learn using sign language and their parents can help them using audio lessons. These online stories can also be downloaded enabling children to read it anytime.

— Sindhiya Samuel

Vijay's shotgun-wielding 'Beast' poster released

ANUPAMA
SUBRAMANIAN | DC
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

On the eve of Vijay's birthday (June 21), Sun Pictures, the makers of Thalapathy 65 unveiled the title and first look of his next, much to the delight of his fans. The actor turns 47 on June 22. Nelson Dilipkumar who celebrated his birthday on June 21 directs the film.

The movie has been titled Beast and in the FL, Vijay sporting a white vest and a black jean is holding a shotgun and looks as if ready to take on his nemesis. There's also a smoke grenade that appears to have been tossed near him.

Touted to be an action thriller, the film has Pooja Hegde as Vijay's romantic pair.

The film also has M'town actress Aparana Das in a key character and Yogi Babu teams up with Vijay for comedy. While Anirudh composes the music, Manoj Paramahansa is the cine-



matographer. The first schedule was wrapped up at Georgia earlier in April. Now that shooting permits were given by the state government from June 21, the second schedule which is a set song with the lead pair participating is being planned at a studio in the city.

SHORT TAKES

ODISHA STARTS CLASSES ON YOUTUBE

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

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

LENS ON MISHAP THAT CLAIMED FIVE LIVES

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

CRUCIAL MEET ON SECURITY THIS WEEK

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

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

Health is wealth



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

— PTI



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

— D. KAMRAJ



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

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

Amritsar, June 21: Delhi Chief Minister and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal on Monday announced that the party's chief ministerial face for the 2022 Punjab Assembly polls will be from the Sikh community.

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

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

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

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

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

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

To a question on from

2 CONG MLAS TOLD TO ASK THEIR SONS TO REFUSE GOVT JOB DOLE

Chandigarh, June 21: Amid a fissure in the Punjab Congress over the government jobs given to the sons of two MLAs, party MP Partap Singh Bajwa on Monday urged the party's two legislators to reject the job dole for their sons.

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

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

The government job beneficiary, Arjun Bajwa, is a grandson of former Punjab Minister Satnam Singh Bajwa, who, the Amarinder Singh government says, laid his life in 1987 for the sake of peace and harmony in the state.

Similarly, Bhisham Pandey is the grandson of former state minister Joginder Pal Pandey who, the government

said earlier, was gunned down by terrorists in 1987.

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

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

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

Minister Amarinder Singh, the AAP leader said, Sidhu is a Congress leader, a senior leader. I respect him a lot. So, I think there should be no loose talk regarding any leader.

— PTI

VITAL | COUNSEL

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

BSY sounds alarm as K'taka unlocks more

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

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

rate, the state government said in its order.

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

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

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

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

corona still looms large."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— PTI

82.7L jabs given in single day

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

DC CORRESPONDENT
WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The overall fresh cases of Covid-19 fell to 53,000 in India after 88 days while the figure in Delhi came down to two digits (89). With cases coming down, the Bihar government announced an easing of the restrictions.

From June 23 to July 6, all government and private offices can function at 100 per cent capacity, shops can remain open till 7 pm,

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

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

drive, the central government has been supporting states and UTs by providing them Covid vaccines free of cost.

In addition, the Centre has also been facilitating direct procurement of vaccines by the states and UTs, the ministry said.

Vaccination is an integral pillar of the comprehensive strategy for containment and management of the pandemic, along with 'test, track, treat' and Covid appropriate behaviour, it said.

Implementation of the liberalized and accelerated phase-3 strategy of vaccination started from May 1 and under it, every month, 50 per cent of the total Central Drugs Laboratory cleared vaccine doses of any manufacturer would be procured by the Centre, the ministry said.

It said that as part of the nationwide vaccination

MP VACCINATES 14.71 LAKH PEOPLE IN A DAY

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY
BHOPAL, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

NINE CATALAN SEPARATISTS TO BE PARDONED

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

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

DESPITE VISA ISSUES, TAIWAN TO KEEP HK OFFICE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ARMENIA PM'S PARTY WINS SNAP PARL ELECTION

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

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

PHOTO SHOWS DUBAI PRINCESS IN SPAIN

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

An Instagram image published by a woman identified in British media as former Royal Navy member Sioned Taylor shows Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed Al Maktoum at Adolfo Suarez Madrid-Barajas Airport.

Taylor's caption, punctuated by a smiley face emoji, read: Great European holiday with Latifa. We're having fun exploring!" Comments by Taylor acknowledged the location of the image, which match other images of the airport.

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

Taliban take key Afghan district

Insurgents add to string of recent victories

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— AP

Raisi says no Biden meet, missiles non-negotiable

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

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

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

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

Tehran's fleet of attack

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

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

Israeli FM in UAE next week

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Palestinians strongly criticised the normalisation agreements.

— AP

Tumult over statue



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

— Photo by Frederic J. Brown/AFP

EU curbs to hurt Belarus economy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Oz official: Stick with AZ for 2nd dose

92 Indian factory workers in Lanka Covid positive

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

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

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka on Monday ended its

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

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

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

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

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

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

PAK'S DEATH TOLL CROSSES MARK OF 22K

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

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

SENSITIVE | PROJECT

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

Museum on WWII-expelled Germans raises Nazi crimes

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

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

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

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

"heated arguments about priorities and contextualisation."

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

European Jews?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DECCAN Chronicle

22 JUNE 2021

Will harassment of Sena MLAs hit Maha coalition?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Can Raisi make peace with US?

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

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

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

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER

Editor

K. SUDHAKAR

Printer & Publisher

R. MORAN

Resident Editor

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748

Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256

Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMT Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55

Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2755285

Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax: (0866) 2555234

Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618

Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904

Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/ 82, Telefax (0861) 2348580

Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagtiala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax (0878) 2220433

Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Emakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408

Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax : 0495 4019018

Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycad post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/67, Fax: 0471-0416112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08s

Subhani



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



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

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

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

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

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

sented India from 2009 to 2013.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

LETTERS

REDUCE FUEL PRICE

The Tamil Nadu finance minister P.T.R. Palanivel Rajan has said that it is not possible to reduce the fuel prices at present as the state had to spend a lot to contain the second Covid wave and that it had already spent more than '9,000 crore. It is a matter of concern and regret that the second wave has hit Tamil Nadu badly due to the election process in which lakhs of people had violated the pandemic protocols and DMK was also responsible as its supporters and party men had also contributed handsomely to the spread. Having come to power it has the moral responsibility of spending more towards Covid control measures and this cannot be given as a reason for not implementing the poll promises, especially reduction of fuel prices which will help contain the price rise in the state.

M.C. Vijay Shankar, Chennai

WELCOME MOVE

TN government has constituted a five-member economic advisory council - which includes Nobel Prize-winning economist Esther Duflo and former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan - to guide Chief Minister in managing the state's economic and social policies. It is a welcome measure. The fiscal position of the state is poor with debts amounting to a huge over six lakh crores. Most of the money goes towards freebies. Instead, it can be invested in development activities which in turn provide employment opportunities to the youth. The main revenue for the state comes from the sale of liquor and the registration department. Prohibition is likely to be implemented in a phased manner, which is the motto of the government. In this situation, striking a balance between generating revenue and expenditure of the state without taxing more on the people is important.

Sravana Ramachandran, Chennai

Aakar Patel



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

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

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

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

Since we have not accepted that

anything is wrong, we will continue.

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

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

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

Sixty per cent of Indians depend on

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

quick BITES

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

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Housing prices up in major cities in Q4: RBI data



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

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

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JUNE 21

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

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

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

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

HEMMING IN BIG SELLERS

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

similar charges

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

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

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

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

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

An e-commerce entity

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

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

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

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

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

SAT sets aside Sebi direction; allows PNB HF voting today

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

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

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

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

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

Murdoch Jr. to tap billionaire families for India investment

BEN STUPPLES
JUNE 21

James Murdoch

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

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

A spokesperson for Murdoch declined to comment.

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

that will focus on India as it hunts for targets across South and Southeast Asia.

Nitin Kukreja, a former Morgan Stanley banker, is managing director of Lupa Systems's operations in India.

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

the owner of the Tribeca Film Festival.

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

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

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

—Bloomberg

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

FC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 21

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

Bharti Airtel has started 5G trials in major cities using spectrum allocated by the Department of Telecom. The tieup underscores a push for indigenous 5G solutions in India,

as the world's second-largest telecom market gears up for fifth-generation mobile networks that would enable connecting virtually everything together including machines, objects, and devices at ultra-high speeds.

Notably, the partnership with Tata Group allows telecom operator Airtel to take head-on, rival Jio's pitch on homegrown 5G solutions. Reliance Jio is accelerating the rollout of digital platforms and

indigenously-developed next-generation 5G stack.

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

COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



Aries: On the romantic front you are likely to fall in love or you will have a good marital life with your partner. Avoid investments as they might lead to losses.



Taurus: Some of you might gain from stocks or shares. Relations with children can be a cause of concern. Family disputes can turn aggressive.



Gemini: An expected encounter on the romantic front is likely. Money matters improve. Avoid careless expenditure. Don't indulge in self-pity on failure in love.



Cancer: Government officials will enjoy the trust of senior management. Making compromises for your partner will please them. Stay busy and avoid over thinking.



Leo: Sticking to hard and fast rules in love life could backfire. Discuss problems with friends to find solutions. You will be successful in reviving business links.



Virgo: Mature handling of a crisis would restore the harmonious atmosphere at home. Choose your words carefully while interacting with the opposite gender. Shoulder responsibilities.

You share your b'day with

Karan V Grover is an Indian television actor. He is best known for his portrayal of Arjun in Saarrthi, Shantanu Kant in Bahu Hamari Rajni Kant and Dr. Rohit Sippy in Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum.



Libra: You will have to make certain adjustments to earn business profits. In love, you are likely to face some obstacles. Focus to professional endeavors.



Scorpio: You are likely to enjoy the company of a true friend. Use your energy to help someone in distress. You find it difficult to achieve professional targets.



Sagittarius: Restlessness to change things around you on the personal front might deceive you. Be more open to suggestions from subordinates to succeed.



Capricorn: Strike a balance in budget to strengthen your financial health. Today you need to make a lot of efforts to make the right kind of investment. Assess professional activities wisely.



Aquarius: A long separation on the romantic front is likely to end today. Your long-awaited financial crisis are likely to wither away today. Take special care of your belongings during travelling.



Pisces: You are likely to enjoy a better sleep as mental outlook improves. Channelize your energies into meaningful pursuits at professional front. Financial benefits are on the cards.



THE RIGHT HAND TYPE FOR A TIMELY PASS

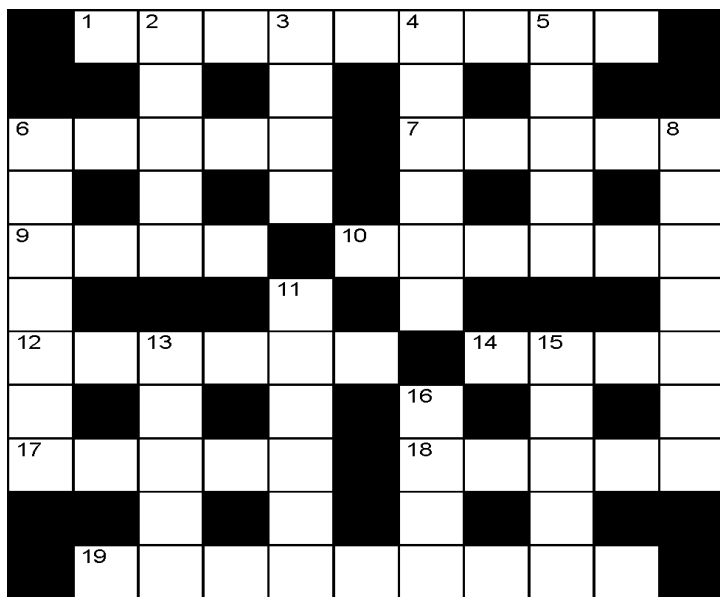
Yesterday, I gave a deal in which I advanced (North) had passed with only K-Q-9-3-2 of spades when his partner had made a two-spade Michaels Cue-Bid, showing at least 5-5 in hearts and either minor. After your right-hand opponent passes, what would you do?

If you are ever going to pass partner's Michaels, one feels that this North hand is about as suitable as you are ever going to get. Yes, if the heart nine were the heart 10, it

hand in today's diagram. Your left-hand opponent deals and opens one heart. Your partner overcalls two hearts, a Michaels Cue-Bid showing at least 5-5 in hearts and either minor. After your right-hand opponent passes, what would you do?

If you are ever going to pass partner's Michaels, one feels that this North hand is about as suitable as you are ever going to get. Yes, if the heart nine were the heart 10, it

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- Gave way suddenly (9)
- Foreign (5)
- Toss (5)
- Window glass (4)
- Stone fruit (6)
- Alleviation (6)
- Large fish (4)
- Wanderer (5)
- Moved gradually, furtively (5)
- Bottom surface (9)

Down

- Pungent vegetable (5)
- Wild cat (4)
- Irregular in quality (6)
- Mistake (5)
- In pairs (anag) (7)
- Errant (7)
- Interfere (6)
- Citrus fruit (5)
- Encouraged (5)
- Military dining room (4)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Gullible, 7. Exile, 8. Chasm, 9. Outlaw, 10. Inca, 12. Pact, 14. Comet, 17. Still, 18. Dogma, 19. Escargot.

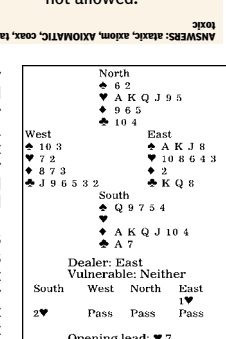
Down: 1. Guilt, 2. Leeway, 3. Itch, 4. Learn, 5. Decompose, 6. Impartial, 11. Topdog, 13. Coins, 15. Night, 16. Ulna.

Word Mine

X
C I A
M A I O T

TODAY'S RATINGS: 4 AVERAGE; 5 GOOD; 6 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.



jumble

MLEUP
FAXIF
VILRED
GLUTLE

©2021 Tribune Content Agency, LLC
All Rights Reserved.

Yesterday's Jumbles: GRAND SNARL DIVERT ABACUS
Answer: The protestors at Buckingham Palace can't sit down on the job, so they — STAND GUARD

would be even better, but such is life at the bridge table! How do you think the play went in two hearts? After two hearts was passed out, West understandably led a trump. Declarer took dummy's four top hearts (discarding three spades and one club from his hand) played a diamond to his ace and returned a diamond to dummy's nine. East ruffed and unwisely shifted to the club king. So,



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



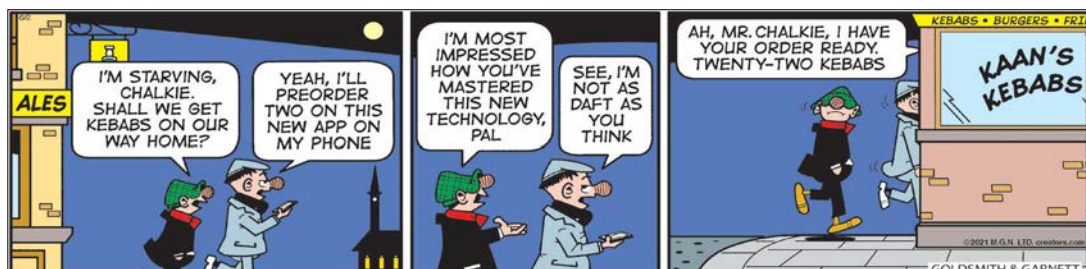
ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



SHORT TAKES

Maharaj hat-trick puts SA on course

Gros Islet: Keshav Maharaj became just the second South African to take a hat-trick in Test and the Proteas were on course for a series victory as West Indies slid to 109-6 at lunch on day four of the second Test on Monday. West Indies were still 215 runs short of its target of 324 and South Africa was in sight of a 2-0 series sweep. Maharaj's hat trick came in the second-to-last over of the session. He claimed a big breakthrough when Kieran Powell was caught near the square leg boundary for 51. But the spinner added the wickets of Holder and Joshua Da Silva off his next two balls. — **AP**

Brief scores (Day 4, at lunch): South Africa 298 & 174 (van der Dussen 75 n.o., Roach 4/52) vs West Indies 149 & 109/6 in 38 overs (Kieran Powell 51, Keshav Maharaj 3/20).

Rahm wins first US Open crown

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

Chhetri extends stay with BFC

Bengaluru: India captain Sunil Chhetri has extended his contract with Bengaluru FC for another two years and will be with the Indian Super League side till 2023. The new deal will enable Chhetri, who joined 'the Blues' in 2013, to extend his stay with the club into the 10th season. Chhetri has made 203 appearances for the club, scoring 101 goals in eight seasons. "I'm really happy to have signed on for two more years at Bengaluru FC. The city is home now, and the people at this club are like family to me," said the 36-year-old, who has led the club since its inception in 2013. — **PTI**

Elina into top five in WTA rankings

Paris: Elina Svitolina of Ukraine moved into the top five in the latest WTA rankings published on Monday, displacing American Sofia Kenin a week before Wimbledon starts. Recently crowned French Open champion Barbora Krejickova slipped two places to 17th while Swiss Belinda Bencic is once again on the cusp of the top ten after her run to the grass-court final in Berlin. Ashleigh Barty retains the top rank ahead of Naomi Osaka, who will miss Wimbledon and hence an opportunity to close the gap. — **AFP**

Hawks upset top seeded Sixers

Los Angeles: Kevin Huerter scored a playoff career-high 27 points as the upstart Atlanta Hawks punched their ticket to their first Eastern Conference finals in six years on Sunday, with a 103-96 game seven win over the Philadelphia 76ers. All-star Trae Young finished with 21 points and 10 assists, John Collins had 14 points and 16 rebounds and Danilo Gallinari came off the bench to score 17 points for the Hawks, who won three games in Philadelphia to take the series 4-3. — **AFP**

Live on TV

CRICKET

World Test Championship final, Day 5: India vs New Zealand from 3pm on Star Sports 1, HD1

EURO

Group Stage: Czech Republic vs England; Croatia vs Scotland from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1, 2

Regd. No. TNENG/2010/35692

Printed & Published by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited and Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at No 222, Sengalipalayam Road, N.G.O Colony Post, Kurudampalayam Village, Coimbatore - 641 022, RN. Registration No: TNENG/2010/35692 Ph No : 2231252, 253, 255, 257 & 358 Editor: **KAUSHIK MITTER**

DRAW LOOMS

Weather plays havoc as another day washed out

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

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

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

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

The fans who were patiently waiting for the play to start had to leave disappointed. "We thank our fans who turned up and kept the tempo high. See you again, tomorrow," the BCCI added.

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

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

The final was nicely poised at stumps on day three with New Zealand reaching 101 for two in response to India's 217 all out. The Black Caps however remain in control of the game despite a late strike from Ishant Sharma close to stumps.

Weather has played havoc with the final and Former India opener Virender Sehwag was among many who questioned ICC's decision to host the final in Southampton. — **PTI**



India's Ajinkya Rahane (left) and Cheteshwar Pujara during Day 4 of the World Test Championship final in Southampton on Monday. — **ICC**

Jamieson relishes Kohli wicket

Southampton, June 21: Rookie New Zealand pacer Kyle Jamieson, who rattled India with a fifer, on the second day of the World Test Championship final, feels that any batsman could have been dismissed with that inswinger that got rid of rival skipper Virat Kohli.

Jamieson got a five-wicket haul as New Zealand dismissed India for 217 on the third day of the WTC final.

Asked if setting up Kohli with outswingers and then bringing one back in like they did in New Zealand is a template

they have said, Jamieson answered in affirmative.

"Oh, I guess yes. May be there is some sort of pattern and this we know talk about huge amount, the one that I was able to get him (Kohli) today certainly seemed back a little bit."

"And that was pretty hard to control as a bowler and pretty harder to manage as a batter no matter who you are. So I don't think it is necessarily just for him (Kohli)," Jamieson said.

According to the 26-year-old lanky speedster, who returned with fine figures

of 5-31, Kohli's dismissal played a key part in how things unfolded on the second day.

"Yeah, obviously he (Kohli) is a massive part of their team and pretty big wicket to get, so to get him pretty early morning, was I guess was nice and pleasing and pretty crucial for how the day followed," added the right-arm pacer.

However he didn't feel that Kohli has any apparent glitches in his technique.

"Oh, not really I think, he is (Kohli) world class batter and those guys

FINAL SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN HELD IN UK: KP

Southampton, June 21: Former England captain Kevin Pietersen feels that no "one-off" cricket games of "incredible importance" should ever be held in the UK, which is famous for its fickle weather as one is witnessing during the World Test Championship final.

"It pains me to say it, but a ONE OFF & incredibly important cricket game should NOT be played in the UK," Pietersen tweeted taking a dig at the ICC for opting Hampshire Bowl in Southampton as the venue for a marquee final.

"If it was up to me, Dubai would always host a one off match like this WTC game. neutral venue, fabulous stadium, guaranteed weather, excellent training facilities and a travel hub! Oh, and ICC home is next to the stadium," the former England batsman wrote.

— **PTI**

Lack of practice hurt India: Doull

Southampton, June 21: Former Kiwi pacer Simon Doull feels lack of match practice in the run-up to the ongoing World Test Championship final against New Zealand was hurting India's pace bowling attack.

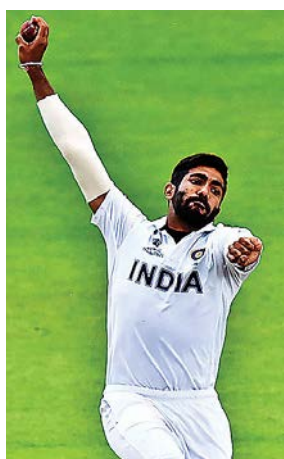
Unlike New Zealand, who played two Tests against England before the WTC final, India have been devoid of match practice ahead of the marquee clash.

The Virat Kohli-led side's last five-day match was against England in a 2-1 series win at home in March. "...at times you look and overthink and say 'did they (India) have enough preparation?' I think they did. I am sure in the last 10-12 days they would have bowled enough deliveries to make sure they are ready and raring to go," Doull told Harsha Bhogle in a *cricbuzz* show.

"But its hard to simulate match practice. You can try in these intra-squad games but it just doesn't quite work and that's the key. It is genuinely hard to replace match practice that makes you better and get you ready for those matches."

Doull made the statement in reference to Indian pacers below-par display in New Zealand's first innings score of 101 for 2 in reply to India's 217 all out.

The pace trio of Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami failed to extract consider-



Jasprit Bumrah

able amount of swing from the favourable Ageas Bowl conditions, unlike their Kiwi counterparts.

Kyle Jamieson (5/31), Neil Wagner (2/40) and Trent Boult (2/47) used the seaming conditions well to bundle out India for a timid total in the rain-affected match.

Doull said New Zealand were definitely benefited by the two games against England ahead of the marquee clash.

"...New Zealand went into their first Test match at Lord's against England, they had the very same preparation that India had coming into this Test match. New Zealand were in Southampton for around 10-11 days, played intra-squad matches, training practices and when they turned at Lord's they looked pretty set and ready to go." — **PTI**

THUNDER & SAINT



In a social media post, Usain Bolt shared the names of his newborn twin sons, Thunder and Saint Leo. — **Twitter**

Olympic briefs

Shot-putter Toor qualifies

Shot-putter Tejinder Singh Toor qualified for the Tokyo Olympics with a new national record at the Indian Grand Prix 4 on a day when the national women's 4x100m relay team and sprinter Dutee Chand also breached the previous best marks in the country. Toor crossed the Olympic Qualification mark with a throw of 21.49m and broke his own National Record. The Olympic Qualifying effort in this event is 21.10m. The previous record, which was also in Toor's name, stood at 20.92m and was set in 2019. The women's relay team, however, failed to place themselves inside the Olympic qualifying bracket despite the record effort of their own. The quartet of Hima Das, Dutee Chand, S. Dhanalakshmi and Archana Suseendran clocked 43.37 seconds to win the race ahead of India 'B' team (48.02 seconds) and Maldives (50.74) in the three team race.

Trailblazing transgender

Laurel Hubbard hefted 628 pounds (185 kilograms) in two lifts on the way to qualifying in the women's super-heavyweight division for the Tokyo Olympics. That's heavy. But it's nowhere near the figurative weight Hubbard has carried to become the first transgender athlete to compete at an Olympic Games.

Hubbard was among five weightlifters confirmed Monday in New Zealand's team for Tokyo. At 43, she will also be the oldest weightlifter at the games, and will be ranked fourth in the competition on Aug. 2 for women 87 kilograms (192 pounds) and over. Hubbard won a silver medal at the 2017 World Championships and gold in the 2019 Pacific Games in Samoa.



Laurel Hubbard

Local fans limited to 10K

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

England look to get back on track against Czechs

London, June 21: English football manager Gareth Southgate insists England can overcome their growing pains as his young side aim to get their Euro 2020 campaign back on track by winning Group D against the Czech Republic on Tuesday.

England are level on four points with the Czechs and will be guaranteed a first-place finish if they win their last group match.

A victory at Wembley feels essential for England to lift the gloom that descended after they were booted off following Friday's lacklustre 0-0 draw with old rivals Scotland.

With an average age of 25 years and 31 days, England's starting line-up against Scotland was the youngest they had ever fielded in a major tournament.



(From left) England's Harry Kane, Jack Grealish and Harry Maguire during a training session. — **AP**

SCOTLAND ON BRINK OF QUALIFYING

After a 23-year wait to even reach a major tournament, more history beckons for Scotland on Tuesday if they can beat Croatia at Hampden to reach the knockout stage for the first time at Euro.

A hard-earned 0-0 draw against England at

Wembley has restored belief in the Scottish support that had been shaken by a 2-0 defeat to the Czech Republic in their opening match.

Victory against the World Cup finalists should be enough to seal Scotland's place in the last 16.

— **AFP**

Peru pip Colombia, keep hopes alive

Sao Paulo, June 21: Peru beat Colombia 2-1 on Sunday to keep alive their chances of advancing to the knockout stage of Copa America.

Sergio Pena opened the scoring for the Peruvians in the 17th minute. Miguel Borja equalised from the spot in the 53rd but an own goal 11 minutes later by Colombian defender Yerry Mina decided the match at the Olimpico stadium in Goiania.

Peru are in third position in Group B with three points after two matches. Colombia remains with four points in the second spot, but with only two games remaining. Leader Brazil has six points. The top four teams will qualify for the quarterfinals.

"This gives us a lot of hope in what is to come at



Peru's Christian Cueva (left) and Colombia's Wilmar Barrios in action during their Copa America match on Sunday. — **AP**

this Copa America," Peru defender Renato Tapia said. "We are in a good position, but we have to keep rowing to go further."

Peru lost 4-0 to Brazil in their first game in the tournament, which raised doubts about coach

Ricardo Gareca's team. The 2019 Copa America finalists are also struggling in South American World Cup qualifiers.

VENEZUELA, ECUADOR SHARE SPOILS

Ronald Hernandez scored an injury time equaliser

to earn minnows Venezuela a share of the spoils in a 2-2 draw with Ecuador on Sunday.

Ecuador twice took the lead through Ayrton Preciado and Gonzalo Plata either side of a powerful headed goal from Venezuela's Edson

COPA RESULTS

Peru 2 (Sergio Pena 17', Yerry Mina 64-og)

Colombia 1 (Miguel Borja 53)

Venezuela 2 (Edson Castillo 51, Ronald Hernandez 91)

Ecuador 2 (Ayrton Preciado 39, Gonzalo Plata 71)

Castillo.

It was a remarkable achievement for a team still missing 12 players due to testing positive for Covid-19 or injury.

"I have no words to describe my admiration for these lads," said Venezuela's coach Jose Peseyro.

"The way they played for the first time in the professional team, they're here showing an ability to sacrifice, to fight, to defend the Burgundy (jersey), which excites me."

The point left Ecuador bottom of the five team group on one point, with Venezuela a place and a point above them after having played a game more. Hosts Brazil lead the group with a perfect two wins from two ahead of Colombia. — **Agencies**