

PAKISTAN HOSTING
TALIBAN FAMILIES,
ADmits MINISTER

P9



UN RIGHTS CHIEF
SEEKS REPARATION
FOR BLACKS

P10



'TERROR GROUPS TAKING
ADVANTAGE OF COVID
TO TARGET CHILDREN'

P4



BELGIUM STOP
RONALDO

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. Strong surface winds during the day. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 41 and 27 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 79% Min: 38%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 40.2°C (+3) Min: 27.6°C (-1)

SUN RISES

05:27 hrs

MOON RISES

23:21 hrs

SUN SETS

19:23 hrs

MOON SETS

10:56 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Youngsters bathe in a canal during a hot day, at Magura in Malda district on Monday. ■ IANS

Conducive time to hold CA exams, ICAI to SC: The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India told the Supreme Court on Monday that it is the most conducive time to hold CA exams as the Covid-19 spread is now at a substantially low level, offering an opportune moment for chartered accountants to further their professional career. The CA examinations which are conducted in May were postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and are now scheduled to be held from 5-20 July.

New variant of Agni missile test-fired: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested a New Generation Nuclear Capable Ballistic Missile 'Agni P' from the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha, Balasore at 10.55 a.m. on Monday, said an official DRDO press release. Various telemetry and radar stations positioned along the eastern coast tracked and monitored the missile. The missile followed the designated trajectory, meeting all mission objectives with high level of accuracy.

Second wave still not over, vaccines effective against Covid variants: GoM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

Continue following Covid appropriate behaviour to keep safe as second wave of Covid-19 "still not over", the Group of Ministers (GoM) said at the central governments 29th meet here on Monday.

All anti-Covid vaccines, currently available in the country, are found effective against alpha, beta, gamma and delta variants of the Covid, the GoM clarified. The GoM strongly reiterated the importance of Covid appropriate behaviour at a time when restrictions are being lifted across the country. Dr VK Paul emphasised on the benefits of mask-wearing and

hand hygiene while ICMR Director General Balram Bhargava also cautioned that the "second wave of Covid-19 has still not subsided", noting that 80 districts in the country still have high positivity rate.

With cases of the Delta Plus variant of Covid getting reported from various parts of the country, the Union Health Ministry said that lab test results of the effectiveness of the Covid vaccine on the new mutant will be out in 10 days.

Meanwhile, Serum Institute of India (SII) has requested the government to take up the matter of inclusion of Covishield in the EU Covid-19 Vaccination Passport with the EU and other countries, citing this will affect students and business travellers.



India overtakes US in total number of inoculations

NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

India has overtaken the US in the total number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered so far, the Union Health Ministry said on Monday.

While India launched the Covid-19 vaccination drive on January 16, and has administered over 32.36 crore doses till date, the US which started its inoculation drive on 14 December, 2020 has given over 32.33 crore doses.

"India achieves another milestone in Covid-19 vaccination," the ministry said.

India's cumulative vaccination coverage exceeded 32.36 crores on Sunday.

A total of 32,36,63,297 vaccine doses have been administered through 43,21,898 sessions.

WB extends curbs till 15 July with relaxations

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA 28 JUNE

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today extended the existing Covid related restrictions till 15 July but announced further relaxations including permission to public transport facilities to ply with 50 per cent seating capacity though local trains will continue to remain suspended.

Government and private buses, taxis, autos, totos, inter-state buses and all public transport facilities will ply with 50 per cent capacity from 1 July onwards.

The vehicles will have to be regularly sanitised and wearing of masks is mandatory while effort is on to complete vaccination of drivers and conductors. All shops and vendors selling vegetables and fish will be allowed to remain open from 6 am to 12 pm instead of 7 to 11 am. Rest of the shops would be allowed to remain open from 11 am to 8 pm. Private and corporate offices can function from 10 am to 4 pm with 50 per cent

staff strength instead of 25 per cent. The employees have to be vaccinated, maintain physical distance, wear masks and the employers should arrange necessary transport facilities for them.

Saloons and beauty parlours will be allowed to remain open from 11 am to 8 pm. Gyms will be allowed to remain open from 6 to 10 am and 4 to 8 pm with 50 per cent capacity. Banks and financial institutes will continue to operate in the existing restricted hours.

"The Covid situation has been brought under control and we are recording a patient discharge rate of 97.36 percent while the positivity rate is 3.3 per cent. We have vaccinated 2.12 crore of the population of which 40 lakh are super spreaders. Though we

are offering some relaxations, the restrictions will continue to remain till 15 July. It is mandatory to wear masks and maintain physical distance so that we are able to combat the third Covid wave.

"Saloons and beauty parlours will be allowed to remain open from 11 am to 8 pm. Gyms will be allowed to remain open from 6 to 10 am and 4 to 8 pm with 50 per cent capacity. Banks and financial institutes will continue to operate in the existing restricted hours.

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T20 WC to be shifted from India to UAE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

The T20 World Cup scheduled to be held in India is being shifted to the UAE owing to the health safety concerns posed by Covid-19. BCCI president Sourav Ganguly said on Monday, ending weeks of speculation surrounding the mega-event in October-November.

"We have officially intimated the ICC that the T20 World Cup can be shifted to the United Arab Emirates. The details are being chalked out. The decision was taken keeping health safety concerns of all stakeholders in mind," he added.

"We have officially intimated the ICC that the T20 World Cup can be shifted to the United Arab Emirates. The details are being chalked out. The decision was taken keeping health safety concerns of all stakeholders in mind

BCCI PRESIDENT SOURAV GANGULY

hasn't yet been finalised."

Even an ICC spokesperson confirmed that the global body is yet to zero in on a final schedule. The ICC, at the start of the month, had given BCCI a four-week window to decide and inform whether India could host the marquee event considering the Covid-19 situation all along."

"However with the second wave causing such devastation, the decision ultimately boiled down to the safety and well-being of the players and organizers," he admitted.

This was after the pandemic forced the postponement of IPL, the second part of which is also being held in the UAE in September-Octo-

ber. BCCI secretary Jay Shah, in a letter to all state units, said that the decision was taken keeping in mind that "safety of players and other stakeholders is of paramount importance."

Shah also wrote that "it was not an easy decision and we mulled over it for months, constantly keeping an eye on Covid situation all along."

"However with the second wave causing such devastation, the decision ultimately boiled down to the safety and well-being of the players and organizers," he admitted.

This was after the pandemic forced the postponement of IPL, the second part of which is also being held in the UAE in September-Octo-

Twitter drops distorted India map from website after outcry

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

Twitter today removed from its website a wrong map of India that showed Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as separate country. This is not the first time that Twitter has misrepresented India's map. Earlier, it had shown Leh as part of China.

The distorted map was flagged by a Twitter user and generated many angry reactions and demands for action.

Government sources had warned of tough action, saying that the distortion of the country's map is a serious offence. Twitter could face financial penalties, seven years in jail for its officials and could even be blocked under Section 69A of IT rules, the sources said.

Twitter is a repeat offend-

er, said sources. In the past, it had shown Leh as a part of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as a part of China.

This is not the first time that Twitter has misrepresented India's map. Earlier, it had shown Leh as part of China.

A mail sent to Twitter on the issue did not elicit a response. The US digital giant

has been engaged in a tussle with the Indian government over the new social media rules. The government has confronted Twitter for deliberate defiance and failure to comply with the country's new IT rules, despite repeated reminders.

Notably, the microblogging platform has lost its legal shield as an intermediary in India, becoming liable for users posting any unlawful content. On Monday, social media users slammed Twitter's gross misrepresentation of India's map, that appears on its career section.

In October last year, Twitter came under heavy criticism and faced backlash after its geotagging feature displayed "Jammu & Kashmir, People's Republic of China" in a live broadcast from Leh's Hall of Fame.

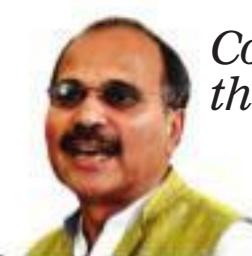
Mamata labels Guv as 'corrupt'

KOLKATA 28 JUNE

Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee today accused Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar of being "corrupt" alleging his involvement in the Jain Hawala case as well as asserting that his recent north Bengal trip was to intentionally fan unrest while reiterating her demand for his removal.

"He is a corrupt man. I'm sorry to say this but he is a corruption-oriented man. Why has the Central government deputed such a man to be the Governor of our state? I have tolerated a lot but did not say anything. Who is he to tell what we will eat, which officer will go where? Why will he dictate an elected government with such a huge mandate? He is dictating both higher and lower officials," said Miss Banerjee. ■

DETAILS ON P5



Congress did not enter into any electoral understanding with ISF. It was the CPI(M) that had joined hands with Siddiqui's party

WEST BENGAL CONGRESS PRESIDENT ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY
SAYING HE WAS NOT IN FAVOUR OF HAVING ANY TIE-UP WITH ISF

Sisodia launches certificate course for health assistants

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

Keeping in mind the possibility of the emergence of a third wave of Covid-19, the Delhi government, in collaboration with Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, has initiated a certificate course for health assistants to be trained to help doctors and nurses in hospitals and also support their families and communities in medical emergencies.

The course was launched on Monday by Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Health Minister Satyendar Jain in the presence of senior AAP leader Atishi and professors of the university.

The two-week long course will include 500 trainees in the first batch, who will be equipped with the knowledge of life support, heart functioning, Covid-care, blood testing, sampling,

first aid and home care. The trainees will be taught how to measure oxygen and blood pressure as well as how to inject medicines. The two-week-long course for all 5000 health assistants, to be selected by the government, is divided into two stages – the first week will include didactic and demonstrative training while in the second week, trainees will receive practical experience.

Nine hospitals have been roped in for this course --- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Hospital, Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, Chacha Nehru Child Clinic, Sanjay Gandhi Hospital, Ambedkar Medical College, ESIC Hospital Basaidharupur, Hindu Rao Hospital and Vardhaman Mahavir Hospital. The Delhi government has disbursed an amount of Rs 5 crore for this initiative.

Sisodia said, "We want to cre-

ate a model youth force in Delhi which will be equipped with all the basic skills and knowledge to fight any medical crisis. Not only will our youth be prepared to handle any crisis, they will also be able to provide medical assistance to their family members and others."

He pointed out that within four days, a large number of people applied to join this training programme. This indicates that people are enthusiastic to be a part of this course and learn. While in the first batch the government has induced 500 trainees, there is a plan for making it a long-term initiative.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain stated that this certificate course is extremely important to tackle any medical crisis. It will be able to provide employment opportunities to the trainees, considering that there is an increasing need for health assistants in hospitals.

2 deaths added, positivity rate slips to 0.10 pc; over 2L Covid jabs given on Monday

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

The national capital today logged 59 fresh coronavirus cases—the lowest rise this year—and 2 Covid-linked deaths while the positivity rate dipped to 0.10 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The city's cumulative Covid tally rose to 14,33,993. Of this caseload, over 14.07 lakh patients have recovered so far while the death toll stood at 24,967, the health bulletin said.

The fresh infections were detected out of 58,895 tests, the bulletin stated.

Delhi now had 1,553 active cases and the Covid patients under home isolation numbered 467.

The number of containment zones in the national capital came down to 1,828, the bulletin said.

There were 22,683 vacant hospital beds out of 23,698 beds meant for Covid patients in the city.

Delhi had yesterday recorded 89 cases with a positivity rate of 0.12 per cent, and 4 deaths.

On 26 June, the city had reported 85 cases with a positivity rate of 0.12 per cent and 9 deaths.

Delhi had reported 89 cases and 11 deaths on 21 June. That was the first time that the daily count of cases in the city had gone below the 100-marks since 16 February, when 94 people were diagnosed with the disease.

The city had recorded 134 cases with a positivity rate of 0.20 per cent and 8 deaths on 22 June. It had registered 111 cases and 7 deaths on 23 June, when the positivity rate was 0.15 per cent, as per the official figures.

On 24 June, 109 cases and 8 deaths were recorded while on 25 June 115 cases and 4 deaths were logged.

Meanwhile, more than two lakh Covid vaccine doses were administered in Delhi today, according to the CoWIN portal, an online platform used for monitoring the delivery of jabs nationwide.

This is the second time in the last three days that the num-



ber of daily vaccinations crossed the two-lakh mark in the city.

According to the Centre's CoWIN portal, 2.02 lakh vaccine doses were given in Delhi today, while 2.07 lakh beneficiaries were inoculated on Saturday.

According to Atishi, 25 per cent of Delhi's population in the 18-44 age group has received at least one dose of vaccine. Ninety-two lakh people in this age group are eligible for vaccination in the city.

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

FORM NO. 5 Debts Recovery Tribunal Lucknow

600/1 University Road
Near Hanuman Setu
Mandir, Lucknow-226007
(Area of Jurisdiction - Part
of Uttar Pradesh)

Summons for filing Reply &
Appearance by Publication
OA No. 346/2020
Date: 19-03-2021

(Summon to defendant under Section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts Due to Bank and Financial Institution Act, 1993, read with rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure Rule 1993))

Indian Overseas Bank
— Applicant

Mr. Vinod Rawat & Another
— Respondents

1. Mr. Vinod Rawat, s/o Mr. Upendra Rawat, r/o 1031, Pratap Vihar, Block-B, Near H. S. Public School, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201001.

2. M/s. Gayatri Infra Planner Pvt. Ltd. Th. Its Managing Director, Office at : B-121, 1st Floor, Sector-2, Noida-201303.

In the above noted application, you are required to file reply in Paper Book form in Two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorised agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorised agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 13-09-2021 at 10-30 a.m. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal
Seal of the Tribunal

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600/1 University Road
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2. M/s. Gayatri Infra Planner Pvt. Ltd. Th. Its Managing Director, Office at : B-22, 1st Floor, Village - Gazipur, New Delhi-110096.

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Indian Overseas Bank
— Applicant

Mr. Deepak Oberoi & Others
— Respondents

1. Mr. Deepak Oberoi, s/o Sh. Rajnath Oberoi, r/o A-40, Upper Ground Floor, Near Gopal Mandir, Dabri Ext, Palam Vihar, South West Distt., Delhi-201345.

2. M/s. Maple Falcon Pvt. Ltd. Th. Its Managing Director, Office at : B-22, 1st Floor, Village - Gazipur, New Delhi-110096.

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Indian Overseas Bank
— Applicant

Mr. Sunil Kumar Meena and
Another — Defendants

1. Mr. Sunil Kumar Meena, House No. 389, Janta Flat, G.T.B. Enclave, Delhi-110095.

Also at : Mr. Sunil Kumar Meena, s/o Mr. Mahaveer Prasad Meena, H. No. 314, Meenakishani, Kishanpura,

Jaipur, Rajasthan-303602.
2. M/s. Gayatri Infra Planner Pvt. Ltd. At Office B-121, Sector-2, Noida U.P.-201301.

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Debts Recovery Tribunal
Seal of the Tribunal

COURT NOTICE (U.O 5 Rule 20 CPC) IN THE COURT OF MS. NARINDER KAUR (Additional Principal Judge, Additional Family Court), Gurugram

Savita Versus
Manoj Versus
CNR No. HRGR01-016605-
2019

Next Date: 28-07-2021

Publication Issued to:

Manoj, s/o Ram Kumar, r/o Najafgarh, Prem Nagar, Gali No. 84, Phase III, Najafgarh, New Delhi
R/o Village Bagpat Kheda, ka, UP.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through coun-

sel on 28-07-2021 at 10-00 a.m.

For details logon to

https://highcourtchd.gov.in/?rs=district_notice&district=gurugram

Dated this day of 15-04-2021.

Additional Principal Judge
(Additional Family Court),
Gurugram

Seal of the Court

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Why did he suddenly tour North Bengal? I can sense a conspiracy to divide North Bengal

MAMATA BANERJEE

WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Haryana slashes GST on services, items related to Covid treatment

This notification, approved by CM Khattar, will remain in force up to 30 September

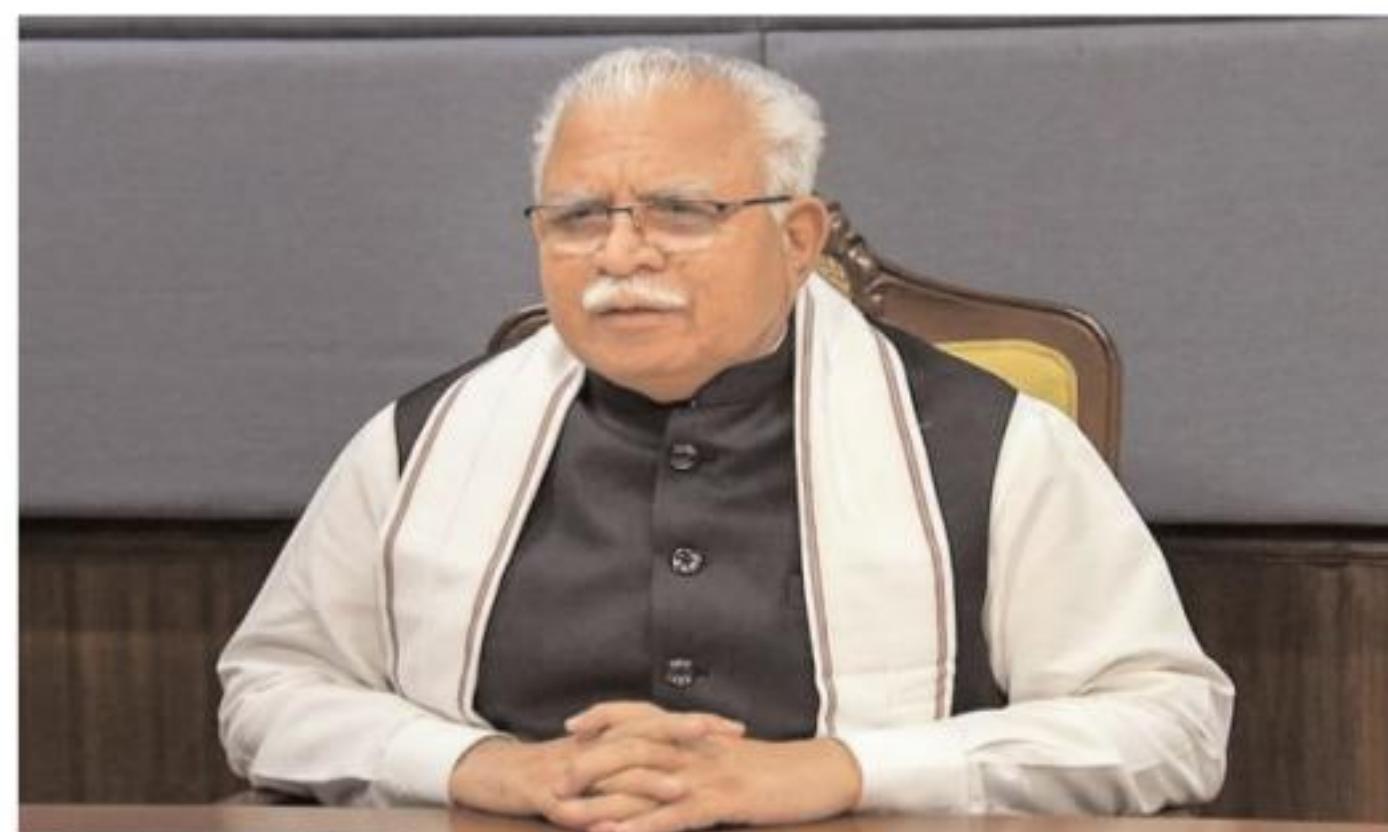
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 28 JUNE

Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, on Monday accorded approval for the notification related to the reduction in Goods and Services Tax (GST) on goods and services relating to the Covid-19 treatment.

This reduction was recommended by the GST Council in its 44th meeting held on 12 June 2021.

This notification will be deemed to have come into force with effect from 14 June, 2021 and will remain in force up to and inclusive of 30 September, 2021, an official spokesperson said.

As per the notification, the GST rates on two medicines, Tocilizumab and Amphotericin B, would be fully exempted.



The spokesman said the GST at the rate of 2.5 per cent

will be levied on 15 other items used in Covid treatment such as "Medical Grade Oxygen, Remdesivir, Heparin (Anti-Coagulants), COVID Testing Kits, Inflammatory Diagnostic (marker) Kits, namely D-Dimer, IL-6,

This reduction was recommended by the GST Council in its 44th meeting held on 12 June 2021.

CRP(C-reactive protein), LDH, Ferritin, Pro Calcitonin (PCT) and blood gas reagents, hand sanitizer, helmet for use with non-invasive ventilation, gas/electric/other furnaces for crematorium, Pulse Oximeters, high flow nasal canula (HFNC) device, Oxygen Concentrator/ Generator, Ventilators, BiPAP Machine, non-invasive ventilation nasal or oronasal masks for ICU ventilators, temperature check equipment" while the GST rates of ambulances have been fixed at 6 per cent.

Meanwhile, Haryana

home and health minister, Anil Vij said the slogan "Mahamaari Alert-Surakshit Haryana (Epidemic Alert-Safe Haryana)" carries the message of safety and caution. "We need to be careful and alert when it comes to Covid-19. While defending oneself, one has to inspire others to be careful as well."

Vij said the system of "Mahamaari Alert - Surakshit Haryana" in the state indicated that the chain of Corona has started breaking.

He said the main objective of it is to keep the people of the state careful and alert in order to protect them from Covid-19. "The lockdown has yielded fruitful results, so it is necessary for all of us to jointly follow the instructions issued by the government from time to time."

The incident took place at around 5 am in a room adjacent to the operation theatre of the Emergency Department and no injury was reported in the incident, according to fire officials.

room near the casualty area.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said, "all the patients in the vicinity were evacuated. Seven fire brigade vehicles reached the spot and extinguished the fire."

The situation is now normal under control, and there is neither any casualty nor any injury to any person, he said.

The casualty area has been reopened for patients, police said, adding an investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause of the blaze.

Earlier on 16 June, a fire broke out at an AIIMS hospital building on the ninth floor of the hospital's Convergence Block.

Jai Ram hails Rajnath for dedicating 3 bridges for HP

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 JUNE



Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur on Monday thanked defence minister Rajnath Singh for virtually inaugurating 3 bridges in the state.

In the event, Singh dedicated a total 63 bridges from Kungyam in eastern Ladakh constructed by Border Road Organization (BRO) in eight states across the country including three in Himachal.

Thakur said three bridges dedicated in Himachal were vital as they provide connectivity to far flung regions of the state where paramilitary forces were deployed on Indo-China border areas.

The 40-meter Pang bridge

on Powari-Pooh road constructed at a cost of Rs 4.27 crore will provide round the year connectivity and would enhance logistic support to boost the morale of troops.

Kiran khud bridge constructed with a cost of Rs 5.55 crore will play an important role

In addition, a 30-meter Titan bridge on Pooh-Kaurik road had been constructed at a cost of Rs 2.16 crore which will ensure uninterrupted supply to the border area as this road was life lifeline for troops deployed on the Indo-China border, he added.

The Director General Border Road Organization Lt General Rajiv Chaudhary welcomed the Raksha Mantri and other dignitaries and detailed various projects being executed by the BRO.

Lt Governor Laddakh RK Mathur accompanied Rajnath Singh whereas Chief Ministers of Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Nagaland and other dignitaries joined the event virtually.

Himachal to launch mega plantation drive in July

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 JUNE

A mega plantation drive will be organized throughout HP under the aegis of Himachal Pradesh State Red Cross Society in the 3rd week of July in which about 1 lakh saplings will be planted, Governor Bandaru Dattatreya said on Monday.

Dattatreya said in view of Covid pandemic, there had been a greater feeling among the people towards environmental protection which needs to be made realistic.

"Such campaigns should be organized regularly and efforts should be made to maintain the liveliness of the plants.

Students, Mahila Mandals and NGOs should be

No case of delta plus in Himachal Pradesh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 JUNE

No case of delta plus strain has been reported in Himachal Pradesh till date, a state health department official said on Monday.

The official said 1,113 samples had been sent to National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Delhi for testing the variant of concern amongst the positive cases of Covid-19 in Himachal Pradesh.

"As per the reports received, 109 samples have shown presence of UK strains whereas eight samples have tested positive for Kappa strain and 76 samples positive for Delta strain. However, no case of Delta Plus strain has been reported in the state," he added.

The official said the second Covid wave had witnessed a higher number of mortality (2,475) as 1,493 more lives were lost during the period as compared to the first wave.

The positivity rate of 5.48 was seen in the first wave and a positivity rate of 10.73 had been recorded in the second wave, he added.

The official said the case fatality rate had increased from 1.68 to 1.72 in the second wave and was double as compared to the first wave.

The positivity rate also increased to more than double in the second wave. There have been 2,475 deaths in the second wave as compared to the first where only 982 deaths were reported," he stated.

He further stated that the case fatality rate had increased from 1.68 to 1.72 in the second wave and was double as compared to the first wave.

The positivity rate of 5.48 was seen in the first wave and a positivity rate of 10.73 had been recorded in the second wave, he added.

Himachal Pradesh Cong demands BJP MLA's arrest for 'assaulting' his wife

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 28 JUNE

Himachal Pradesh Mahila Congress on Monday sought the arrest of Dharamshala BJP MLA Ashish Nehria for allegedly physically assaulting his wife and said it is unbecoming of a public representative to indulge in such behaviour.

Talking to media in Shimla, state Congress women wing chief Jenab Chandel said strict action should be taken against Nehria for allegedly assaulting his wife Oshin Sharma, a 2020-batch HP Administrative Service officer.

"Congress condemns the physical and mental harassment of Sharma by Nehria and it is a sad affair wherein a public representative indulged in such behaviour," she said while urging the state government to provide security to her.

Chandel criticised BJP MLA and said if the leader assaults

She added the state Women Commission had taken cognizance of the entire cases but it remains to be seen as to what action the Commission will take in case against Ashish Nehria.

Meanwhile, chief minister Jai Ram Thakur while responding to a media query, said Nehria's case was a family matter and politics shouldn't be played on such issues.

"It is a sad affair. Nehria and his wife are discussing the issue with each other and we should all wait for the outcome," he added.

It is worth mentioning here that HAS officer Oshin Sharma on 25 June had released a video on Facebook in which she claimed physical and mental harassment by the BJP MLA.

Sharma, who is posted as block development officer at Nagrota Surian in Kangra district, and Nehria knew each other since college days and they got married in April this year.



His wife who was an administrative officer then what kind of message will it give to our society.

She demanded that the BJP should immediately suspend the MLA and stated that such kind of behaviour couldn't be tolerated in a civilized society.

Chandel further stated that Mahila Congress will continue to strive for ensuring justice to Oshin Sharma and urged chief minister Jai Ram Thakur to direct police officials to register a case as soon as possible.

Minor fire at emergency ward of AIIMS, no injuries

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

The incident took place at around 5 am in a room adjacent to the operation theatre of the Emergency Department and no injury was reported in the incident, according to fire officials.

room near the casualty area.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said, "all the patients in the vicinity were evacuated. Seven fire brigade vehicles reached the spot and extinguished the fire."

The situation is now normal under control, and there is neither any casualty nor any injury to any person, he said.

The casualty area has been reopened for patients, police said, adding an investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause of the blaze.

Earlier on 16 June, a fire broke out at an AIIMS hospital building on the ninth floor of the hospital's Convergence Block.

ASHIANA AGRO INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Reg. Office: No.792/5, Eswari Hotel Complex, Bangalore High Road, Sungvavacharam, Sripurumbudur Taluk, Kanchipuram Distt.- 602106 (Tamil Nadu) Tel No.: +91-44-28344620, Website: www.aail.in

Extract of the Standalone Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended 31st March, 2021 (Rs. in Lacs)

S.No	Particulars	Quarter Ended				Year Ended	
		Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations including Other Income (Net)	20.43		23.75		28.55	76.24
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (Before Tax, Exceptional Items and/or Extraordinary items)	0.65		1.97		2.36	3.85 (0.89)
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional Items and/or Extraordinary items)	0.65		1.97		2.36	3.85 (0.89)
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items and/or Extraordinary items)	0.05		1.97		2.36	3.25 (0.89)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit /(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive income (after tax)	0.05		1.97		2.36	3.25 (0.89)
6	Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Rs.10/- per share)	460.00		460.00		460.00	460.00
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance sheet of previous year	-		-		(220.77)	(224.02)
8	Earning Per Share (EPS) (In Rs.) (Face Value of Rs.10/- each)	0.00		0.04		0.05	0.07 (0.02)
	(a) Basic and diluted EPS before Extraordinary items	0.00		0.04		0.05	0.07 (0.02)
	(b) Basic and diluted EPS after Extraordinary items	0.00		0.04		0.05	0.07 (0.02)

Notes: 1) The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors in their meeting held on June 28, 2021.
2) This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Standards specified under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 7 of the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014.
3) The above is an extract of the detailed format of the Standalone Audited Financial Results for the quarter and Year ended March 31, 2021 filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Audited Financial Results for the quarter and Year ended March 31, 2021 are available on website of the Stock Exchange at www.bseindia.com and also on the Company's website at www.aail.in.

For Ashiana Agro Industries Limited
Sd/-
Pavan Kumar.M
Whole-Time Director
DIN: 02438906

BREEZ BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS PVT. LTD. "GLOBAL HEIGHTS" Sector-33, Sohna, Gurgaon AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT							
Applications are invited from general public for booking of Residential Apartments in the Affordable Housing Project proposed to be developed as per terms and conditions of the policy prescribed by the Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Haryana vide notification no PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 (details available at the Department website i.e. tcpaharyana.gov.in)							
Project Details							
1 Project Approvals							
Coloniser/Developer: M/S Breez Builders & Developers Pvt. Ltd; Haryana RERA No. 130 of 2017 dated 28/08/2017; License No. 67/2014, Building Plans Approved on 05/09/2014 via Memo no							



Schools can't deny admission on ground that child has declared name of one parent..

DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER MANISH SISODIA
ON CHILDREN LOSING ONE OR BOTH PARENTS TO COVID

India

THUMBNAILS



Pigeons quench thirst on a hot afternoon, in the Capital on Monday.

■ SUBRATA DUTTA

'Rivaldo's rescue plea': BJP MLA Vanathi Srinivasan on Monday requested Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin to take steps to release Rivaldo, an injured elephant, put in kraal in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) in Nilgiris district. PTI

SC pays tribute to 77 lawyers: The Supreme Court on Monday paid tribute to 77 advocates of the apex court lawyers' body, who lost their lives due to Covid. At the start of the day's proceedings, a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana expressed condolence on behalf of the Supreme Court judges. PTI

Kumaun Himalaya susceptible to earthquakes: More than a third of the Kumaun region of the Himalayas is susceptible to moderate damage in case of earthquakes of magnitudes ranging from 7 to 8.6, says a new study by scientists at Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology. PTI

Ghaziabad assault case: The Ghaziabad police will be recommending detention of a local Samajwadi Party worker under the National Security Act over a case related to the assault on an elderly Muslim man, officials said on Monday. The worker, Ummad Pehelwan Idrisi, was arrested from Delhi on 19 June after an FIR was lodged against him at the Loni Border police station. PTI

'Bonded' medicos knock Guj HC against FIRs

AHMEDABAD, 28 JUNE

More than 250 post graduate doctors have approached the Gujarat High Court challenging the state government's decision to file FIRs against them for not joining duties as per the condition of their bonds for mandatory rural service.

Though medicos enrolled in government medical colleges sign bonds of few lakhs for serving rural areas for few years, after graduating most of them opt out by paying the money thus causing a perpetual shortage of health professionals in the villages.

Such a vacuum in rural areas is often filled by quacks practising as 'doctors' few dozens of whom were arrested all over Gujarat during last few months when many Covid-19 patients 'treated' by them reached the regular hospitals with complications. In midst of shortage of doctors during the pandemic, the Gujarat government had in April this year asked all graduates from its medical colleges to join Covid-19 duties at the nearest hospitals.

Many of these medicos wanted to skip the compulsory duties and instead offered to pay the promised bond money, a proposal the government rejected and invoked the Epidemic Diseases Act to ask them to join duties immediately.

The petition filed in the High Court by the 250-odd post-graduate doctors says that the bond agreement signed at the time of admission did not have any clause that the government can refuse to accept the money and insist on the compulsory service.

The State Health Department has ordered filing of FIRs against the bonded doctors not reporting for duties. The doctors have challenged the government's decision to file FIRs against them under the Epidemic Diseases Act. PTI

Terror groups taking advantage of Covid

India says children targeted; calls for a more coordinated global approach to implement child protection & counter-terrorism agendas

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

India today drew the international community's attention towards the fact that terror groups were taking advantage of the closure of schools due to Covid-19 to target children for radicalisation and indoctrination and called for a more coordinated global approach to implement the child protection and counter-terrorism agendas.

"We are witnessing a dangerous and worrying trend in global terrorism and that is an increase in the number of children that are being recruited and involved in terrorism-related activities. Terror groups take advantage of the fact that children are the most susceptible to manipulation," Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said addressing an open debate at the UN Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict.

He said countries across the globe need to demonstrate greater political will to hold the perpetrators of terrorism and their sponsors to account, and to fulfil the UNSC's child protection obligations.

"We also call for ending impunity for all actors responsible for inciting and perpetrating grave violations against children. There must be greater accountability and sincere efforts in bringing the perpetrators to justice by governments from whose territory

Cases with variants of concern rose from 10% in May to 51% till 20 June: Par panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

Covid-19 cases with variants of concern rose from 10.31 per cent of total infections in May to 51 per cent till 20 June, top government officials told a parliamentary panel on Monday and stressed that both Covaxin and Covishield work against these strains albeit with slightly reduced potency.

The panel was informed that the economic impact of the second wave of viral infection was "asynchronous in its onset and wider in its spread particularly in rural hinterland", a source said.

such entities operate," he added.

The top Indian diplomat was of the view that Covid-19 has further negatively impacted children in situations of armed conflict, including by hampering their access to education, health and social services.

It has made them susceptible to grave violations, particularly through recruitment and abduction. It was, therefore, important that all countries keep child protection concerns at the core of their pandemic response measures

About the availability of vaccine doses, officials informed that 135 crore jabs will be made available in the country during the August-December period this year.

The doses would be of Covishield, Covaxin, Bio E Subunit vaccine, Zydus Cadila's DNA vaccine and Sputnik V, they said.

Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla, health secretary Rajesh Bhushan, Additional secretary in the Home Ministry Govind Mohan, additional secretary in the finance ministry K Raja Raman were among the officials who deposed before the Parliamentary Standing

Committee on Home Affairs on 'Socio-economic fallout of the Covid pandemic's second wave'.

Sharing details about various variants of concern, officials told the panel that it includes the Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta variants.

These variants have been traced in 174 districts of 35 states and UTs, with the maximum reported from Maharashtra, Delhi, Punjab, Telangana, Bengal and Gujarat, the parliamentary panel was informed. The panel was informed that a similar study on Delta plus is being conducted and will be completed within the next two weeks.

rehabilitation and reintegration process in post-conflict situations," he added.

He also stated that assistance to national governments for capacity building and strengthening legal and operational tools for child protection was vital. The monitoring and reporting mechanism of the UN should ensure continuous involvement of and close cooperation with the member states concerned, including ensuring the veracity and reliability of data collection.



A woman gets covid vaccine jab in the Capital on Monday. SNS

Vaccination halted in TN

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHENNAI, 28 JUNE

As the Covid-19 vaccination camps were called off in Chennai and other parts of Tamil Nadu today due to the shortage of doses, chief minister MK Stalin wrote to Union health minister Harsh Vardhan asking to increase the allocation of vaccines to Tamil Nadu and also increase the sub-allocation of vaccines procured by the Union government for the states to 90% instead of the existing 75%.

Stalin in his letter has asked that the allocation between the government and private institutions be revised to 90:10 as against the current allocation of 75:25, stating that the remaining 25% allocation to private hospitals is grossly higher when compared to the actual vaccinations done by them.

Meanwhile, state health minister Ma Subramanian said today that only two lakh vaccines were available in Tamil Nadu and they would get over by afternoon. "Vaccination drive has been halted at 45 locations. In Chennai, only 5,000 doses are available," he said.

Meanwhile in his letter Stalin said, "While I agree

that a part of the available vaccines has to be shared with the private institutions, I wish to bring to your notice the fact that this 25% allocation to private hospitals is grossly higher when compared to the actual vaccinations done by them.

Meanwhile, state health minister Ma Subramanian said today that only two lakh vaccines were available in Tamil Nadu and they would get over by afternoon. "Vaccination drive has been halted at 45 locations. In Chennai, only 5,000 doses are available," he said.

Meanwhile in his letter Stalin said, "While I agree

SEEKING BLESSINGS



J&K Lt-Gov Manoj Sinha, also chairman of Amarnathji Shrine Board, pays obeisance at the Holy Cave Shrine of Amarnath. The annual yatra has been cancelled this year due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. ■ SNS

DSGMC demands return of 'abducted, forcibly converted' Sikh girls in Kashmir



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 28 JUNE

Claiming that two girls belonging to the Sikh community have been 'abducted and forcibly converted' and married to elderly Muslim men in the recent past in Kashmir, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, president of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC), on Monday demanded that anti-conversion law be enacted in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing media persons in Srinagar, Sirsa alleged that the family of the abducted girls had to face discrimination and the family of the abducted girls wasn't allowed to enter the court complex.

DSGMC delegation led by Sirsa met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday and sought the safe return of a Sikh girl who was recently 'abducted, forcibly converted and married off in the valley.'

While expressing disappointment over not getting enough support from the majority community, Sirsa highlighted that the Sikh community was always at the forefront whenever help was needed by the people of Kashmir.

"We were expecting people

from the majority community will share our grief but unfortunately, they didn't. During the 2014 floods in Kashmir, we would come with food every day from Delhi for 50,000 people," said Sirsa.

Adding, "When Kashmiri students were being harassed outside, the Sikh community arranged their travel to valley."

He said that Union home minister Amit Shah has assured them about the safety of minority Sikh girls in the Valley and that the girls would be soon returned to their families. "He has given time to meet Jammu and Kashmir Sikh delegation soon to discuss the minority's concerns," Sirsa said.

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President and former deputy chief minister of Punjab, Sukhbir Singh Badal also took to Twitter and expressed 'shock' over the abduction and marriage of a Sikh girl in Srinagar.

"Shocked to learn that our Sikh daughter Manmeet Kaur was kidnapped and forcibly married to an elderly man of a different community in Srinagar. Have asked DSGMC president Manjinder Singh Sirsa ji to immediately rush & ensure justice is delivered to the victim family," Badal tweeted.

Ex-BJP MLA: BJP outsourcing leaders

BALLIA (UP), 28 JUNE

A former UP BJP MLA and party office bearer on Monday accused his party of "outsourcing" its leaders while reiterating his charge against the Yogi Adityanath government of mishandling the Covid crisis.

Within days after claiming atleast ten deaths in each village of Uttar Pradesh due to Covid during its second wave, BJP's state Working Committee member Ram Iqbal Singh on Monday upped his claim, saying the Covid death toll in the state could be "over 10 lakh".

Reacting to Ram Iqbal's statement, BJP's Gorakhpur region president Dharmendra Singh said the party has taken note of his continued anti-government statements and the state leadership will take action against him.

Details of his controversial statements are being collected and being sent to the party leadership, he added.

Earlier on Saturday, former MLA Ram Iqbal Singh had said at least ten people died due to corona infection in every village and this number could be many times more in villages having larger populations.

New alliance faces no seat-sharing problem:

Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party, a former BJP's ally which has forged pre-poll alliance Bhagdari Sankalp Morcha of parties, including Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM, has asserted that the coalition faces no problem in seat sharing.

SBSP chief Om Prakash Rajbhar, a former minister in the Yogi Adityanath government, said he was ready to give 125 seats to his coalition partner AIMIM against its chief Owaisi's demand of 100 seats.

BIRNAGAR MUNICIPALITY E-TENDER NOTICE

Name of Work :- House Service Connection (New) upto consumer premises with MDPE pipes of required dia. and necessary accessories including Water Meter and 1 years O/M within Birnagar Municipality.

Sl. No.	NIT No.	Estimated Amount (Rs.)	Date of Publishing	Bid submission closing date online
01	WBMAD/BM/1e/2021-22 Memo No. – 210/pwd Date- 28/06/2021	2,79,76,000.00	28/06/2021 at 06.00 PM	28/07/2021 at 3.00 PM.

For details please visit www.wbtenders.gov.in

Sd/- Partha Kumar Chatterjee
Chairperson
Birnagar Municipality

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG "NOTICE INVITING e-PROCUREMENT BID"

The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Solan invites e-tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors/firms for the following work through e-tendering process.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earliest Money	Time of Completion	Tender ID	Cost of form	Last date of filing/uploading the tender through e-tendering up to
1.	Providing WSS to various villages in Kasuli Constituency from Ghil River in Tehsil Kasuli, Distt. Solan, H.P. including trial & testing run period of 01 month after physical completion of all components of the scheme and running, operation and maintenance for 5 years.	1,03,41,87,105/-	1,03,41,87,105/-	Twelve months	2021-49094-1	2500/-	12/07/2021 upto 12 P.M.

The tenders forms and other detailed can be obtained from website htptenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer,
1900/2021-2022 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK
Jal Shakti Division, Solan

निदेशालय

गृह रक्षा, राजस्वान, जयपुर

निदेशालय की जाने वाली सेवा हेतु नियमित सेवा देने वाले एवं बोर्डर विभाग के साथ उन नियमित लिंग एवं मानवाधार के साथ उनका विवरण दिया जाता है।

नियमित सेवा देने वाले एवं बोर्डर विभाग के साथ उनका विवरण दिया जाता है।

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नियमित सेवा देने वाले एवं बोर्डर विभाग के साथ उनका विवरण दिया जाता है।

नियमित सेवा देने वाले एवं बोर्डर विभाग के साथ उनका विवरण दिया जाता है।

नियमित सेवा देने वाले एवं बोर्डर व



The state government is looking into the OBC quota issue...
We will not let Fadnavis take political sanyas

SHIV SENĀ RAJYA SABHA MP SANJAY RAUT
SAYING BJP LEADER DEVENDRA FADNAVIS MUST COOPERATE WITH MAHA CM ON OBC QUOTA

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 29 JUNE 2021

05

THUMBNAILS



Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu garlands the statue of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao on his 100th birth anniversary, in Visakhapatnam, on Monday.

■ AGENCIES

Nation gets 63 bridges: Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Monday dedicated to the nation 63 bridges built by the BRO in six states and two UTs in sync with the government's focus on enhancing border infrastructure. Himachal Pradesh gets 3 bridges. SNS

Mission Gaganyaan: ISRO is racing against time to launch the first uncrewed mission in December, as part of 'Gaganyaan' programme, due to adverse impact of Covid-induced lockdowns that disrupted hardware delivery schedules. PTI

Drone attack: Owaisi draws parallel with Pulwama strike

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, 28 JUNE

Blaming the Narendra Modi-led government for the drone attack at the Air Force base in Jammu airport, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi drew a parallel with the Pulwama attack and said the Centre should retaliate in the same way as it had done two years ago.

The Centre had launched surgical strikes on terrorist camps on the other side of the border after the Pulwama attack by a vehicle carrying a sui-

Rift widens over CM post in K'ataka Cong

Leaders from Dalit, OBC are pitching in for the top post

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BENGALURU, 28 JUNE

The rift in the state Congress over its chief ministerial candidate, post the 2023 Assembly polls, appears to be widening with leaders from the Dalit and other backward communities also pitching in.

In this connection, meeting between leaders of these sections, including former Union minister KH Muniyappa, G Parameshwara and B H Hariprasad fuels speculation

Pradesh Congress Committee president D K Shivakumar.

After the state Congress unit issued a statement that its president would have handled Covid pandemic better had he been at the helm of the state, instead of the BJP, Siddaramiah's loyalists exclaimed that as far as they were concerned, he alone would be the next CM. That is, if the party came to power.

While this upset Shivakumar, Parameshwara, was equally annoyed by the four vocal supporters of Siddaramiah. More so, as he had lost the race to the latter in 2013 even while holding the post of party's state president.

He was unhappy at being pipped to the post by Siddaramiah in 2013 and continues to nurse ambitions of becoming chief minister. Accordingly, his meeting with senior

leaders like Muniyappa, who is sore with the party for not giving him prominence, becomes important.

This apart, when Parameshwara went to meet the Sutturswami on Thursday, his supporters raised slogans, describing him as the future CM. While urging them to restrain themselves, he told the newsmen "when the time comes I'll speak on whether I'm in the race for the post."

Congress insiders maintain Muniyappa-Parameshwara meeting should not be taken lightly and when the time comes, the latter is bound to throw his hat into the ring. They claim the possibility of other backward leaders coming out in support of their favourites now, cannot be ruled out, opening up the demand for a Dalit CM.

If this was not enough, Congress leader and former minister M B Patil, a Lingayat, said yesterday that like others, he, too, was an aspirant to the post and added quickly that it was up to the people to decide and no amount of self-certification would help.



cide bomber on a convoy of vehicles led to the killing of 40 security personnel.

In the attack on Jammu airport for the first time drones were used for terror strike though there was no casualty.

Pointing out at the annual defence budget of Rs 3 lakh crore, Owaisi wondering where the money is being spent. He said drones are either American-made or Chinese-made. "How did the drones travel such a long distance? Who is responsible for this breach?"

Owaisi took a dig at PM Narendra Modi's swing diplomacy with Chinese President and wondered: "Is Modi's stalling talk about the swing and demonstrate his weakness? This is a Pulwama kind of attack. The Modi government

is responsible for this. Is this the kind of talks that is going with Pakistan which is being mediated by UAE?"

He asked: "Is the government going to retaliate or is it going to be the same like the way Modigovernment was unable to respond to the Chinese incursions? Just like there was retaliation after Pulwama this too should be retaliated." The Centre's Kashmir policy was a failure. Those politicians who were accused of joining anti-India forces and then inviting them for talks.

Guv corrupt, named in Jain Hawala case: Mamata

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, 28 JUNE

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today accused Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar of being "corrupt" alleging his involvement in the Jain Hawala case as well as asserting that his recent north Bengal trip was to intentionally disturb the region while reiterating her demand for his removal.

"I have got details that he has involvement in the Jain Hawala case of 1996. Though the matter was first settled in the court, a PIL was filed later and the case is still unresolved. He is a corrupt man. I'm sorry to say this but he is a corruption oriented man. Why has the central government deplored such a man to be the Governor of our state? If the Centre does not know then I will tell them to bring out the charge sheet and see whether his name is there or not. He was charge-sheeted. I have tolerated a lot but did not say anything. Who is he to tell what we will eat, which officer will go where? Why will he



dicate an elected government that has won with such a huge mandate? He is dictating both the higher to lower officials, threatening them. Who is he to say such rubbish things? Who does he think he is? He is nothing but a mere governor," said Miss Banerjee at Nabanna.

Miss Banerjee reiterated that she has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi thrice requesting Dhankhar's removal. "Till he is a governor I will meet him, speak to him. It is a courtesy. But I have written three letters for his removal. The Centre should think about this instead of insisting," she said.

Alleging that Dhankhar's

recent visit to north Bengal was an intentional move to disturb the region, Miss Banerjee said the former met people who believe in 'divide and rule'. "Why did he go to north Bengal? How many people did he take with him? Today a new team went there. Dhankhar met the MP and MLAs of BJP. I know that some people have been asked to create a movement on the issue. This is not the work of a governor. There are some responsibilities and duties of the governor I have never seen such a governor in my life," Miss Banerjee said, pointing out that before going to north Bengal Dhankhar went to Delhi. "Why did he go to Gurao?" she asked.

BJP MP John Barla, who had recently demanded a separate state or Union Territory in north Bengal, met Dhankhar during the latter's visit to the region.

Slamming the Centre for sending the National Human Rights Commission, Miss Banerjee assured full cooperation to the latter provided they worked impartially. "Is this

the way Centre should function? Sometimes they are sending the governor or the National Human Rights Commission or the tribal commission or the minority commission. Even they are not keeping in mind the restrictions of the pandemic situation. Why no action is not being taken against the Uttar Pradesh CM for the unrecorded dead bodies that were floated in the river or in Gujarat where vaccines were distributed from the party offices? Why are they only obstructing and abusing Bengal? What wrong have we done? Everybody saw how they organised the election by capturing the government. It was a party oriented election. But after poll results they should have accepted the verdict. Instead, they are sending the governor, ED and what not to disturb us. Isn't it a shame that we are not allowed in other countries for non vaccination. What are they doing except capturing polls, playing dirty games through social media? I'm worried for my country," she said.

APPOINTMENT

RATHINDRA KRISHI VIGYAN KENDRA

Palli Siksha Bhavana
Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan

Advertisement No. RKVK-1/2021

Applications are invited for the following posts of Rathindra Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Sponsored by ICAR) of Visva-Bharati attached to Palli Siksha Bhavana, Sriniketan. The continuations of the posts depend on tenure of Rathindra Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

Name of the post:

1. Programme Coordinator / Senior Scientist & Head: One post (Unreserved).

Pay Scale: Rs. 37,400 – 67,000 with RGP of Rs. 9,000 (Pay Band-4) (Level 13A as per 7th CPC).

2. Subject Matter Specialist / T6: One post (Home Science) (Reserved for OBC).

Pay Scale: Rs. 15,600 – 39,100 with grade pay of Rs. 5,400 (Pay Band-3) (Level 10 as per 7th CPC).

3. Assistant: One post (Unreserved).

Pay scale: Rs. 9,300 – 34,800 with Grade Pay Rs. 4,200 (Pay Band-2) (Level 6 as per 7th CPC).

4. Programme Assistant (Lab Technician): One post (Unreserved).

Pay Scale: Rs. 9,300 – 34,800 with GP Rs. 4,200 (Pay Band-2) (Level 6 as per 7th CPC).

The application forms duly completed in all respects should reach to the Principal, Palli Siksha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, P.O.: Sriniketan, Dist.: Birbhum, Pin-731236 (W.B.) within 30 days of the publication of advertisement. Candidates already under employment must apply through proper channel and submit release order at the time of joining in Rathindra Krishi Vigyan Kendra. No Objection Certificate has to be produced at the time of interview. Details are also available in the Visva-Bharati Website (www.visvabharati.ac.in) and Rathindra KVK Website (www.rkvk.ac.in). Advertisement for the posts of Sl.No. 3 and Sl.No. 4 published in the Statesman on 6th November, 2017 (Advt. No. RKVK-1/2021) is hereby cancelled due to some unavoidable circumstances.

Principal
Palli Siksha Bhavana
Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan

KCR unveils 26-ft statue of ex-PM Rao

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD,
28 JUNE

Telangana chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao unveiled a 26-feet tall statue of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao on his birth centenary while Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan inaugurated the PVNR Marg after the state government decided to rename the iconic Necklace Road by the Hussain Sagar Lake after the former chief minister of unified Andhra Pradesh.

Eight books were published, including a collection of essays by personalities, like Manmohan Singh and Montek Singh Ahluwalia.

The CM and governor paid rich tributes to Rao at PV Gnanaboomi adjacent to Hussain Sagar Lake where he was cremated. The CM spoke about the reformist in Rao, as he ushered in economic reforms as well as land reforms in AP. Six more stat-

ues of Rao will be set up, including the one in New Delhi. A memorial and museum will be set up in Hyderabad. The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee, too, held a programme to mark the occasion as Manmohan Singh took part in it virtually from New Delhi.

BJP criticised Congress MP Rahul Gandhi for ignoring the occasion. "Sri PVNR was a lifelong Congressman, yet appalling to see how one dynasty tramples over his legacy," tweets state home affairs minister G Kishen Reddy.

SPO, wife & daughter shot dead by JeM in S Kashmir

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 28 JUNE

A special police officer (SPO), his wife and daughter have been shot dead by terrorists of the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit in Awantipora area of south Kashmir.



Two terrorists, one of whom is believed to be a Pakistani, barged into the house of SPO Fayaz Ahmad around midnight on Sunday and indiscriminately fired at him. His wife Raja Begum and daughter Farah tried to rescue him but they were also shot.

Fayaz died on the spot and his wife later succumbed in the hospital. Their daughter died in a Srinagar hospital on Monday.

Police said that the SPO, his wife and daughter received critical gunshot injuries during the indiscriminate firing by ter-

rorists. The area has been cordoned and a massive search operation launched for the terrorists. IGP (Kashmir) Vijay Kumar said movement of terrorists was reported in the area. Two terrorists came on Sunday night and one of them appeared to be Pakistani. They were also shot.

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Doctrinal dilemma

The problem for a medium-sized, aspiring regional power such as India in evolving a strategic doctrine is to ensure in-built provisions that allow quick pivots as the geopolitical situation evolves. With that caveat entered, on the flip side is the fact that there are emerging meta trends in the world which just cannot be ignored. The most prominent of them, there can be little doubt, is the beginning of what experts have termed the new Cold War, with China replacing the USSR as the USA's primary global adversary or, to use Ronald Reagan's (in)famous phrase, "empire of evil". India, through the decades of the Cold War, opted for the non-aligned route albeit with a pro-Moscow bias, forging solidarity with nations of the global South in the process. While a debate still rages on whether this was the right approach, it is mainly of interest now only to scholars of the period. The new Cold War is very much about the here and now. Countries' aspirations have changed, as has the competitive landscape between them, and the lifting of the shadow of colonialism has ensured ideological motivation is no longer the premise on which national interest is sought to be projected and protected in a world where nation-states and alliances thereof are the primary mode of international engagement.

China is expanding its territory and influence as a global power while seeking to isolate the USA from its allies. But Beijing's expansionism is also having the effect of making its military interests more vulnerable to regional pushbacks and international turmoil. A 2020 United States Department of Defence estimates report iterates that the PLA is the world's largest standing ground force with approximately 9.15 lakh active-duty personnel while the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and PLA Navy aviation wing combined constitute the world's third-largest aviation force with over 2,500 aircraft of which 2,000 are combat jets. To bolster its combat readiness, PLAAF runs four annual training exercises - Red Sword, Blue Shield, Golden Dart, and Golden Helmet - and deploys advanced combat aircraft to bilateral and multilateral exercises. In a recent interview to an Indian publication, General Robert S. Spalding, former US defence attaché in Beijing and senior director for strategic planning at the US National Security Council, iterated: "Although the PLAAF still has limited power projection capability, China has increased circumnavigation flights near Taiwan to deter the island from moving towards independence. The PLA will move on Taiwan within the decade; there is no doubt China seeks global dominance." The US is looking to counter China's threat through deepening economic and security cooperation with the European Union (major countries have a flourishing trade relationship with China which they are loath to jettison), expanding the scope of Nato, achieving a quietus on troubled US-Russia ties so resources can be refocused on China, enhancing its strategic outreach towards traditional East Asian allies Japan and South Korea, and keeping the Quad in play. While these efforts may succeed in keeping China off-balance, what it does for - and to - those front-facing nations which will draw Beijing's ire is a known unknown. In these circumstances, any Indian strategic doctrine may, ironically, have to be a 21st century version of non-alignment.

A chapter closed

Quite the most remarkable feature of the sentence awarded to US white police officer Derek Chauvin must be the promptitude that has marked the end of the trial process following the brutal killing of African-American George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020. He died after Chauvin knelt on his neck for nine minutes - "I can't breathe" were his last words. Chauvin was convicted of the murder in April. Two months later, the judge has spelt out the comeuppance. Floyd's murder ignited global protests against racism and police brutality. The tragedy jolted American society to its foundations. Tragically though, the cancer of man's inhumanity to man still persists in a country that boasts a liberal political philosophy. Chauvin has been sentenced to 22 years and six months in jail - a long enough spell by any reckoning. He was convicted of second-degree murder and other charges. During his trial, his lawyer described the killing as "an error made in good faith". Chauvin was also told to register as a predatory offender and was barred from owning firearms for life. He and three other former officers are separately charged with violating Floyd's civil rights. Yet, almost immediately after the judgment, a debate has been sparked over whether the punishment entails a sufficiently long spell behind bars. The nub of the crime and punishment in Minneapolis must be that it ought not to overshadow racist killings in San Bernardino and Ferguson, to mention two other horrific examples, not to forget the targeting of Asians since March this year and the killing of six Asian women in Atlanta. From grotesque prejudice against the colour of the skin, potential assassins have moved on to the continental origins of victims, both symptoms of a sick society. The judge said the case had been painful for the community and the country, but above all, for Floyd's family.

This isn't juncture to spark a debate on the verdict or the quantum of the sentence. The fact is that such racist crimes must of necessity be probed with the alacrity they deserve. Not wholly unrelated to the malaise is the gun culture in the United States, almost endemic. Sad to reflect, successive presidential administrations, Democratic or Republican, have registered little or no headway in containing the menace. Chauvin's sentence was "one of the longest a former police officer has ever received" for deadly force, said Minnesota's Attorney-General. But will it be long enough to ensure that no one else meets the fate of Floyd?

Planetary Boundaries ~ I

Carrying capacity itself is a well-known and widely accepted concept in ecology. It is a basic idea relating to sustainability. It often serves as a basis of sustainable development policies that attempts to balance the needs of today against the resources that will be needed in the future



In the early 1970s the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) Evening News with Walter Cronkite, an American broadcast journalist, ran a popular series of environmental stories entitled 'Can the World Be Saved?' He dramatically presented the much simpler environmental problems of that period to a huge audience and facilitated the formation of a powerful environmental consciousness. Today, the question - 'Can the World Be Saved?' - is more serious and legitimate than it was then. As we enter the 21st century, human activities are disrupting the great ecological systems and natural cycles that make our planet habitable, bountiful and wondrous.

Back in 1798, Thomas Robert Malthus, an economist and demographer, made a dire prediction. He predicted that the Earth could not indefinitely support an ever-increasing human population. The planet, he said, would check population growth through famine if humans did not check themselves. Changes in population can have a variety of economic, ecological, and social implications. One population concern is that of carrying capacity - the number of individuals an ecosystem can support without having any negative effects. Hence, the theory of Malthus appears to be similar to the carrying capacity of Earth. But Malthus was too early to assume that population pressures would automatically reverse the gains of economic development. Indeed, he had no idea about the power of science-based technological advances that would occur after his prediction.

Moreover, he could not foresee the Green Revolution, which would dramatically expand the capacity to grow more food to feed a larger global population. Nor could Malthus have foreseen the demographic transition which means that richer households would choose to have fewer children. Yet his prediction of population explosion was quite right. When he wrote, the

world population was around 900 million. Now world population is 7.9 billion. And there is more to come: perhaps up to 10.9 billion by 2100, as predicted by the UN Population Division.

Carrying capacity itself is a well-known and widely accepted concept in ecology. It is a basic idea relating to sustainability. It often serves as a basis of sustainable development policies that attempts to balance the needs of today against the resources that will be needed in the future. Carrying capacity is defined as a species' average population size in a particular habitat. Of course, carrying capacity need not be fixed and can be expanded through good management and the development of new resource-saving technologies.

Compared to areas with a lower standard of living, areas with a higher standard of living tend to have a reduced carrying capacity due to greater access to and demand for more resources.

Humanity has become so numerous and so productive that anthropogenic pressures on the Earth Systems have reached a scale where abrupt global environmental change can no longer be excluded. It means that we are crossing the boundaries of Earth's carrying capacity, thereby threatening our nature vis-à-vis our survival. The planetary boundary (PB) concept, introduced in 2009 by the world-leading environmental scientist Johan Rockstrom and others, aimed to define the environmental limits within which humanity can safely operate.

The concept challenges the belief that resources are either limitless or infinitely substitutable.

They identified and quantified a set of nine planetary boundaries within which humanity can develop and feel good in the future. If we cross these limits, abrupt or irreversible envi-

ronmental changes can occur with serious consequences for humankind. The status of each boundary was updated in 2015.

The nine PBs as identified are: (1) Climate change; (2) Ocean acidification; (3) Stratospheric ozone depletion; (4) Biogeochemical flows (Nitrogen and phosphorus cycle); (5) Freshwater use; (6) Land-system change; (7) Change in biosphere integrity (biodiversity loss and species extinction); (8) Atmospheric aerosol loading and (9) Chemical pollution. The first and most important PB relates to climate change which is due to the rise of human-induced Greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere. The GHGs include Carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane, nitrous dioxide, and a few other industrial chemicals.

The greater the concentration of GHGs in the atmosphere, the warmer on average the planet Earth. Earth's climate has changed throughout history. Before the industrial revolution, the Earth's atmosphere contained about 280 ppm of CO₂. As industrialization began to drive up the level of GHGs, predominantly CO₂, began to rise. The global average atmospheric CO₂ in 2019 was 409.8 ppm, with a range of uncertainty of plus or minus 0.1 ppm. The levels are higher than at any point in at least the past 800,000 years. The average temperature in 2020 was about 14.9 degrees C, 1.2 degrees C above the pre-industrial (1850-1900) level. It is widely accepted that keeping global temperature rise below 2 degrees C measured from pre-industrial levels (1850) is the threshold that will leash climate change from being 'dangerous' to becoming 'catastrophic'. The 2 degrees C is possible only if the world limits GHG concentration at 450 ppm CO₂-e taking together the stock and current emissions.

The growing absorption of CO₂ in the oceans interferes with the reproduction of some species. And among the shell-making creatures at risk are tiny zooplankton with very thin shells that play an important role in the food chain of ocean bottom.

(2) The higher levels of acidity are reducing the concentration of carbonate ions that are essential to species that make shells and coral reefs.

(3) Global warming and CO₂-caused acidification are exacerbating the decline in fisheries and marine biodiversity.

(4) Jane Lubchenco, an American environmental scientist, called the ocean acidification global warming's 'evil twin'.

(5) Status as in 2015: still within the boundary.

(To be concluded)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Can't inject the genuine, will use fake

SIR, Apropos of the edit 'Fake vaccines', even if it is criminal, one cannot but admire the manner in which the perpetrators of the fake vaccine centres have organised and executed the entire operation. But for the alertness displayed by the TMC leaders is West Bengal, this would have continued. God knows how many such camps have gone undetected. On the other hand human lives have been put at serious risk and the perpetrators must be punished. States also must keep a check on activities at vaccine centres.

Yours, etc., Anthony Henriquez, Mumbai, 27 June.

MANAGING WASTE

SIR, Under the State Policy & Strategy on Plastics Waste Management, 2017 manualised by the Urban Development & Municipal Affairs Department, every local body in West Bengal was advised to identify and allocate specific land area for sorting plastic from town wastes. Local bodies have also been tasked with creating infrastructure for transportation, storage, and segregation of plastic from dumped garbage at identified sites.

Although recycling to reduce pollution is the avowed objective of this policy, various inadequacies are self-evident. The policy has a clause stressing that the process of sorting plastics from other garbage by operators should not cause any damage to the environment. But the policy is inexplicit about infrastructural requirements for adherence to this clause.



The policy should have specifically included details on necessary infrastructure for segregation of plastic from municipal waste.

The policy is devoid of not only details about mechanical facilities required, it is likely to be misinterpreted because of the words "land for dumping". To ensure that the policy does not lead to environmental pollution around the waste segregation sites, it should be amended with details of the required infrastructure. The policy should also be emphatic that such facilities be created only at the outskirts of the municipal limits, away from residential areas.

As environmental risks for such

waste segregation facilities were already identified in the policy document, NOC from WBPCB should be made mandatory for such facilities at industrial units. Because of policy inadequacies, civic bodies are not caring for the environment while undertaking plastic sorting and recycling operations.

Yours, etc., Kunal Kanti Konar, Kolkata, 28 June.

VIP CULTURE

SIR, An integral part of our VIP culture is stopping traffic on public thoroughfares when a leader passes by, ostensibly for security reasons. Apart from satisfying their bloated egos, it is also a perquisite which they are privileged to enjoy, even in a democracy. So to hell with the critical patient gasping for breath in an ambulance or the expectant mother requiring immediate delivery who are stuck in such blockades and die or miscarry before reaching hospital.

The President and his entourage caused just this in Kanpur when a critical middle-aged woman met an untimely death. Apologies from the police and standard tweets of sympathy by the President are hardly of any consolation or consequence to those who lose their loved ones during such mindless acts which do not happen in any country except ours. There has to be a change in mindset which seems highly unlikely.

Yours, etc., Bhaskar Roy, New Delhi, June 28.



DOWRY SCOURGE

SIR, This refers to the editorial 'Killed for dowry' (*The Statesman*, June 28). It is shocking to read about yet another incident of dowry death and third in a week in India's most advanced and literate state of Kerala when on Friday night, a 32-year-old woman was found hanging in the bathroom of her house, barely hours after her mother had lodged a police complaint against her husband for torturing her.

The spotlight is back on the dowry system after a series of deaths in Kerala this week. According to the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, both taking and giving dowry is a punishable crime, even if it is not mentioned by that name but is referred to as a 'gift'. Even then it still falls under the definition of dowry being any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly by one party to a marriage to the other party.

One fails to understand that how a woman can be killed because she had brought less dowry in terms of money or materialistic items from her parents house in her marriage. No one has any right to ask for anything from the lady getting married or her parents. Whatever parents give to their daughter, is best they can do within the means of their income.

We all are now in modern times and should come out of this evil of giving and accepting dowry. We should educate our sons and daughters the best that we can and ask them to wed without dowry. Such deaths are totally unwarranted and unfortunate and must be condemned by one and all. Persons found guilty of such cruel killings of women must be hanged.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra, Mohali, 28 June.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

Radioactive water plan sidelines science

In their most straightforward engagement to date over the Japanese decision to release radioactive waste water into the sea, Chinese and Japanese representatives made dramatically divergent statements on the matter at the 31st meeting of signatory countries to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Japanese representative tried to emphasize the "harmlessness" of the release, the "transparency" that Tokyo has demonstrated, and the "endorsement" of the plan by the International Atomic Energy Agency. His Chinese counterpart argued the claims were "completely inconsistent with facts", and "intentionally misleading", and he urged the Japanese authorities to abandon its "wrong" decision.

Such an exchange will be viewed through a political prism in the present context of the cooling China-Japan relationship, especially as the average Chinese see Japan as having turned against their country amid the Western attempt to contain China. But at stake is a matter of potentially significant long-term consequences for both countries, the region, even the world, which brooks no politicization. It is a decision of the utmost importance that must be dealt with in strict accordance with science. Nobody wanted a nuclear accident. But it happened, and must be handled. The issue now is how. No matter how hard Tokyo tries to defend its current solution - to release "treated" waste water from the Fukushima facility into the sea - its present approach is problematic, and needs serious repair. In the

CHINADAILY

first place, it must be honest about the basic facts concerning the waste water to be released. With residues of radioactive elements, most noticeably tritium, in it even after treatment, the water can't be harmless. And at the end of the day, the water contaminated in a nuclear accident is substantially different from normal waste water released from a nuclear plant. That the operator of the damaged plant, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, Inc., recently openly solicited ways to filter the remaining tritium shows they are clearly clueless about it.

Instead of seeking approval from international watchdogs, it would make better sense for the Japanese authorities to make greater efforts to tackle the technical difficulties by means of broader international cooperation. For that purpose, the present level of transparency is conspicuously inadequate. How can the international scientific and technological communities lend a hand when they remain ignorant about what is actually taking place at Fukushima? And most important of all, how could that be possible when even Japan's closest neighbors are yet to be properly consulted? It is remarkable that the concerns Pacific Rim and island nations have expressed so far have received no serious responses from Tokyo. Beijing has every reason to ask Tokyo to refrain from proceeding with the planned release until reaching a consensus with stakeholding parties, including neighboring countries.

HARSHA KAKAR

Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met a group of politicians from Jammu and Kashmir seeking to break what he termed, 'dil se doori, dilli se doori.' The group included former chief ministers, deputy chief ministers and representatives of major political parties. There was free and frank discussion on multiple issues concerning the erstwhile state during the three-and-a-half hour meeting. It was Mr. Modi's first interaction with political leaders of J & K after abrogation of Article 370. A number of delegates shared their concerns with the PM.

Major takeaways from the meeting included speedy culmination of the delimitation exercise followed by elections, though no time limit was set. The PM tweeted, "Our priority is to strengthen grassroots democracy in J&K. Delimitation has to happen at a quick pace so that polls can happen, and J&K gets an elected government that gives strength to J&K's development trajectory." The participants were briefed on various projects undertaken in the region and the prevailing security environment. The message given to political entities was that restoration of democracy is a priority, but for that to happen delimitation is a must. Objections to delimitation must end.

As per Ghulam Nabi Azad, the participants placed five demands before the PM, including grant of statehood, conducting assembly elections to restore democracy, rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits, release of all political detainees and on domicile rules. Mehbooba Mufti's suggestion for dialogue with Pakistan was turned down. Restoration of Article 370 was largely not discussed.

This conference conveyed multiple intents of the government. Firstly, restoration of democratic processes is a priority. The delimitation exercise, which many Kashmiri politicians felt was unnecessary, is a pre-requisite and unless all participate in the process, there would be no forward movement. This is Delhi's red-line and all parties must adhere to it. Hence, conducting elections is dependent on cooperation by both the delimitation commission.

Secondly, it proved that Pakistan's political leadership continues to spread lies and half-truths, based on poor intelligence inputs. SM Qureshi, Pakistan's foreign minister, had written a letter to the UN Secretary General a fortnight ago, claiming India was likely to push additional divisions in the valley, as also push demographic changes. This was based on media reports of central

Defining the contours of a Kashmir agenda



police forces returning after having conducted poll duties. The meeting conveyed the reverse and reinforced the immaturity of Qureshi, who hastily sent an official communique, based on half-baked intelligence inputs.

Responding to the conference in Delhi, Qureshi stated in a press interaction, "Yesterday's meeting achieved nothing. In my view it was a drama that can at the best be called as a public relations exercise that yielded nothing." He termed the attendees as pro-India political leaders. When these political leaders, particularly Farooq Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti raise dialogue with Pakistan, they are praised as being forward looking, now since they were silent on Article 370, they were termed pro-India. Mehbooba was the only politician to demand talks with Pakistan, which was shot down.

What further upset Pakistan was that there were no protests or calls within the valley demanding restoration of Article 370.

The third message was that there would be no roll back of Article 370.

Neither did participant insist on it, nor was it discussed; however, the position of the government was clearly spelt out. The logic for ignoring it was that it remains sub-judice. Omar Abdullah stated, "It will be foolish to expect article 370 will be back - there has been no indication it will be restored by the current government." Grant of statehood would be considered after successful conduct of assembly elections, the onus of which lies on political parties.

Accepting finality on Article 370 by valley politicians further hurt Pakistan's ego. Their political leadership had been harping on its restoration as a pre-requisite for commencement of dialogue. The Indian foreign office never commented on these statements, casually mentioning that it was India's internal matter. The current ceasefire is the result of talks between the Indian government and the Pakistani army and has held for over 100 days.

The home minister's comment that statehood would be considered post elections backed General Bajwa's demands on Pakistan's pre-

conditions for talks. General Bajwa had stated to a group of select journalists that restoration of statehood and no demographic change are essential for furtherance of talks, while adding that Article 370 is useless. The tussle within Pakistan, on what should be insisted upon, Article 370 or restoration of statehood, will continue. This is for Pakistan to resolve, while India will watch from the side lines.

Finally, the meeting sent an important message that the Hurriyat, which Pakistan had funded over the years, is now a spent force. The Hurriyat, based on money power flowing through the hawala route, had taken control over levels of violence in the valley, while its members simultaneously built their private financial empires and settled their children away from trouble spots. They held successive governments to ransom and displayed a larger-than-life image, claiming themselves as representatives of the people.

The current government broke this myth, reinitiated pending cases against its leader and effectively shut

down its base. Currently, the Hurriyat is incapable of playing any disruptive role in valley politics. They neither demanded to attend, nor was their attendance sought by other attendees, indicating that no political party trusted the Hurriyat. Its irrelevance is a boon for the region.

The government gained confidence after successfully conducting DDC elections and witnessing declining terrorism in the valley. The ceasefire with Pakistan reduced infiltration, resulting in relative peace. The intention of security forces has shifted to preventing youth from joining terrorist ranks and surrendering, rather than eliminating them in encounters. Tourism has returned to the valley. Kashmir is witnessing calm, and this hurts those who strived on violence and turmoil, including Pakistan. The Valley's political parties have been given a choice, adhere to the government's roadmap and redlines, or Central rule would continue.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

Privatisation a manufactured perception

SATYAKI DASGUPTA AND ANNESHA MUKHERJEE

While the migrant crisis was the highlight of the first wave of the pandemic, unmasking the systemic failure of our economy in providing secure employment, the second wave brought to the fore the collapse of our health infrastructure. Instead of taking measured steps to deal with the shortages of oxygen cylinders, hospital beds, medicines, and vaccinations, governments conveniently chose to focus more on their election campaigning. Their ignorance towards the acute state of public hospitals and health centres has compelled common people to settle for private provision of healthcare. However, reports suggest that private nursing homes and hospitals are charging exorbitant prices for RT-PCR tests, hospital beds, and vaccines.

Severe dependence on the private sector, egged on by the government, points at the incapability of the latter to deal with a deteriorating global health crisis. It can safely be argued that with the majority of the people unable to afford the expensive health care provided by the private sector, the government has essentially left this significant fraction of the population to suffer in negligence.

A common perception is that, albeit expensive, the private sector is



efficient in meeting the needs

of the people. On the other hand, public provision of services is expected to be inferior. The Indian Human Development Survey (IHDS 2011-12) data reveals the lack of confidence in public institutions. Only 9.74 per cent of the respondents reported that they have a great deal of confidence in politicians with regard to fulfilling promises made, with 50.68 per cent having no confidence at all. This glaring prevalence of mistrust that people have is not limited to the nearest agent of the

State. While 71.83 per cent of the respondents believed that private schools provided quality education, the same for public schools was 59.11 per cent. Similarly, respondents showed greater conviction with regard to better treatment in private hospitals (72.46 per cent) than in government hospitals (54.45 per cent). These figures do not vary across income categories.

The data underscores the presumption regarding the government's inefficient provisioning of basic services of food, housing, edu-

cation, and health. The incompetence of the government to provide these services sufficiently which has prevailed through generations, has ingrained the idea of inefficiency of public institutions. The normalisation of this perception implies that instead of demanding accountability from the government for its shortcomings, people deem privatisation as the only alternative.

The goal of profit maximisation acts as an incentive for the private sector to be efficient. Consequently, when services like education and health are turned into marketable commodities, profit plays a major role in determining their distribution. This excludes the majority of citizens from availing these basic services, who are then exclusively dependent on the government for their provision. Rather than aiming at efficient provisioning of the services, the government yields greater ground to private capital to invest in the same, thereby underlining an added dimension of oppression faced by poor people. This in turn perpetuates inequality in every aspect of society. The perception that normalises the poor performance of government institutions also normalises inequality in the society.

We can turn to Antonio Gramsci's work to explain this working of the State. Instead of coercion, the State manages to create consent in favour of privatisation. There is a need to question the government

regarding the poor quality of provisioning of public services like education and health. While the government has shrugged off its responsibilities, it has moulded public perception and consequently, we keep clamouring for increased privatisation. In the Gramscian sense, the manufactured consent that public institutions are more inefficient than private institutions has become an ideology. According to the IHDS data cited here, even the poorest strata have more confidence that the private sector provides better quality of services, showing that the oppressed section of the society subscribes to the dominant ideology, which is also instrumental in perpetuating their oppression. Maintaining this ideology is particularly helpful for the State as it helps to preserve the dominance of private capital.

The production of certain goods and services like health and education are advised to be the exclusive domain of the government, because their distribution should not be driven by profit, but by welfare since these should constitute the basic rights of all people. In the current situation of pandemic, the need of the hour is universal vaccination. However, such a goal will never be achieved if profit is prioritised over welfare in the distribution of vaccines.

The writers are, respectively, a graduate student at Colorado State University and a Ph.D scholar at the Centre for Development Studies, Kolkata.

NO 28957

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

To readers of our weekly letter on Home politics the news conveyed in our special cablegrams yesterday as to the widening of the rift in the solidarity of the Coalition will not give any great occasion for surprise. The marvel is that the Government should have survived so long, considering its inherent weaknesses in structure and personnel and the unprecedented complexity of the problems with which it has had to deal. If it could claim to have solved any one of these problems its position might still be considered unassailable. Even as it is, it is buttressed by the extreme difficulty of replacing it - that is to say, of discovering any prominent politician who could hope for a sufficient following in the country and the House of Commons to justify him in attempting to form an alternative Government. Here, as in so many other ways, Mr. Lloyd George's amazing good fortune still holds. Not only is it difficult to think of any possible immediate successor to him, but, owing to the acuteness of three several crises - the industrial struggle, the Irish question, and the Near Eastern tangle - there is an instinctive feeling that it would be more than ordinarily risky to bring about any change in the Government at the moment. Nevertheless desperate diseases may bring about a desperate remedy, and unless the present Government can add some positive achievement in the realm of statesmanship.

NEWS ITEMS

GOALUNDO CONGRESS LEADER ARRESTED

Goalundo, Je 28

It is understood that Babu Basanta Kumar Mazumdar, a prominent Congress worker, has been arrested. It is stated that the Police went to his house and told him that he was arrested in connection with a case under Section 143 and 341 I.P.C. It is said that Basanta Babu does not intend to defend himself. His arrest caused considerable excitement and a mass meeting is announced for this evening. Immediately after the arrest volunteers paraded the streets singing swadeshi songs. Swami Darsananda said that the arrests of Basanta Babu should not be regretted. The jail should be welcomed as it was sanctified by the presence of Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Tilak and a host of others. Complete hartal was started at Goalundo immediately after Basanta Babu's arrest.

STEAMER STRIKE IN EAST BENGAL

Goalundo, Je 28

Swami Darsananda, interviewed by the Associated Press correspondent said he thought the strike should come to an end very soon. The strikers were asked to go home but if they did so new recruits would soon join. There was not sufficient money to keep them and their families for a long period if they decided to return home. Many had no lands at home, and most of them were unable to send any money home for nearly two months. A large sum would be required to send the strikers home. A volunteer has been arrested and more arrests are apprehended. It is alleged that volunteers interfered this morning with the Indian crew of a steamer. More than one hundred Indian seamen on strike were despatched today by boats.

FOREST INCENDIARISM IN KUMAON

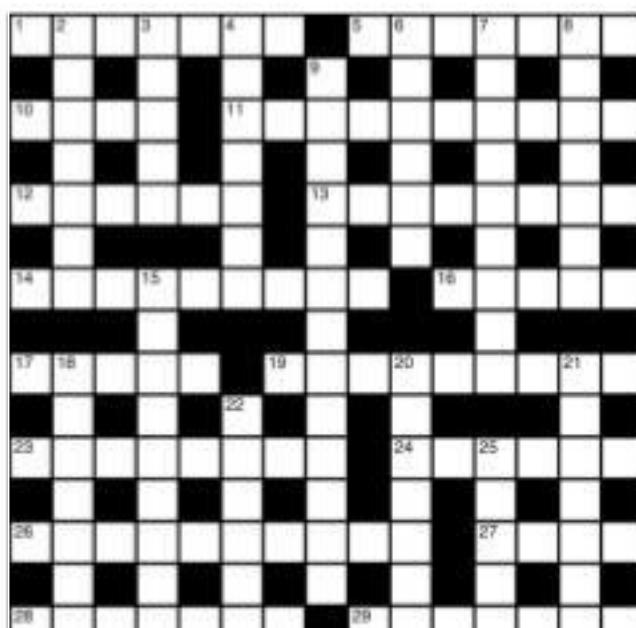
Lucknow, Je 28

A communiqué regarding the recent forest incendiary in Kumaon points out the extent of damage in connection with the activities of political bodies, and particularly the Association known as the Kumaon Parishad. About 400,000 acres in this division of forests have been especially protected from fire by forest administration, by fire lines and by the utilisation of roads and of natural features. During the dry season some fires invariably break out in inflammable and resinous pine areas or through accident, and forests are also fired with the idea that it would be better paying. Such fires as these could be kept down, however to a minimum and confined to blocks affected by means of protection and by invoking the aid of the village communities in the vicinity.

STEAMERS DISAPPEAR IN ATLANTIC

A mystery of the sea which has aroused considerable interest and speculation in America, namely the recent disappearance of various small steamers in the North Atlantic, is apparently explained by a statement of the New York police that documents seized eighteen months ago in a raid on the headquarters of the United Russian Workers of the United States and Canada disclosed a plot to seize American vessels at sea by placing on them sufficient men to overpower the remainder of the crew and divert the vessels to ports of Soviet Russia. Several arrests were made when the documents were seized and persons implicated in the plot were deported.

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 1 Shark tail is seen within banks of Forth (7)
- 5 Bear's paunch (7)
- 10 Hands university a list of courses (4)
- 11 Game monarch hosting cool queen's band at dinner (6,4)
- 12 What workers collect almost swamps court (6)
- 13 Sexy Mike's not into improvised soul music (8)
- 14 Begin introducing a medic at Yankee pre-match bash (4,5)

DOWN

- 16 Story involving very rare organ (5)
- 17 Throw away unfinished jam (5)
- 19 Girl and boy return clasping new spring flower (9)
- 23 Meat loaf half eaten during flight (8)
- 24 Police officer gets bad review (6)
- 26 What's spread before spread? (5,5)
- 27 Like some cakes brought in twice daily (4)
- 28 Red Cross tails vehicle heading off in fog (7)

DOWN

- 29 Cereal producer's large diary kept in barrel (7)
- 8 Tot tucked into ice cream that's put away (7)
- 9 Reveal how to clumsy pod legumes? (5,3,5)
- 15 Greek cross about notice left in V&A fish dish (9)
- 20 Firm to eat and drink to get over depression (2,5)
- 21 Gente arranged to hide, say, savings (4,3)
- 22 Officer is swinging superior sauce (6)
- 25 Cook Fish maybe in Gulf Stream (5)

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



Chhattisgarh steel plant demerger to be completed by the third quarter of the current financial year.

AMITAVA MUKHERJEE
DIRECTOR (FINANCE), NMDC

THUMBNAILS

Emami stake: Kolkata-based FMCG firm Emami Ltd on Monday said it has hiked its stake in Helios Lifestyle Pvt Ltd to 45.96 per cent following the acquisition of additional shares. The company, however, did not disclose the financial details of the transaction. Emami had previously held a 33.09 per cent stake in Helios Lifestyle, known for its male grooming brand "The Man Company" (TMC), through acquisition of shares in two tranches in December 2017 and the latter in February 2019, the company said in a regulatory filing. PTI

CCL contract: Power Mech Projects Ltd on Monday said it has bagged a Rs 9,294-crore contract from Coal India arm CCL to develop and operate a mine. The project has been awarded to a consortium of Power Mech and AMR India Ltd. Power Mech is the consortium leader with 74 per cent equity stake and AMR India will hold 26 per cent stake. PTI

Amazon SBD: To help sellers bounce back from the economic disruptions caused by the second wave of Covid-19, Amazon India has announced that the company will host Amazon Small Business Days (SBD) starting from midnight on 2 July 2021, until 11:59 pm on 4 July 2021. The online sale event is expected to help generate customer demand for products offered by lakhs of sellers, manufacturers, start-ups, women entrepreneurs, artisans & weavers, and local shops, said a Press release. SNS

Tata AIA Life: Tata AIA Life insurance has extended its Covid Kavach insurance cover to over 41,000 advisors and their families during the second wave of Covid. The policy covers the advisors along with spouses and two children (up to 25 years) with a reimbursement benefit of Rs 25,000 in case of hospitalisation and Rs 10,000 home-care package due to Covid-19. SNS

ITC Sunfeast: ITC Ltd's biscuits and cakes brand Sunfeast has introduced another new-to-market biscuit experience with the launch of Sunfeast All-Around. Sunfeast All-Around is an exciting new potato biscuit that is masala sprinkled, crunchy and one of the thinnest biscuits ever manufactured in India, said a Press statement from the company. SNS

Vivo 5G smartphone: Smartphone maker Vivo has announced the launch of its design and camera focused 5G smartphone under V series ~ Vivo V21e. The device has been priced at Rs 24,990 (8GB+128GB) and it will go on sale starting today simultaneously on mainline retail partners, Vivo India e-store, Flipkart, Amazon, Paytm, Tataclik and Bajaj EMI store, said a Press release. SNS

NBFCs' bad assets likely to rise further in FY'22

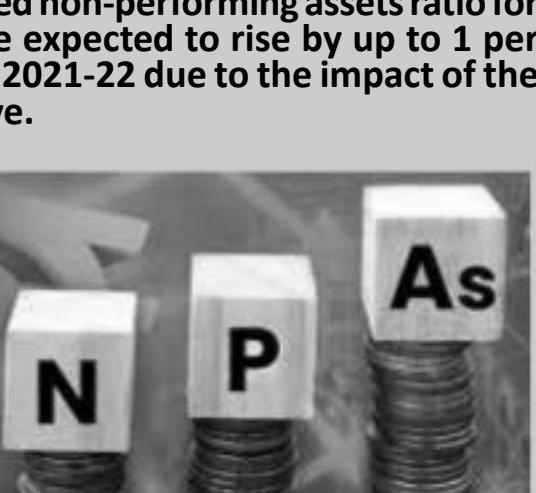
Overall AUM growth for non-bank lenders has been revised down to 7-9 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 JUNE

Nearly a third of loans by NBFCs are in risky segments, and the already elevated non-performing assets ratio for such lenders are expected to rise by up to 1 per cent in financial year 2021-22 due to the impact of the second Covid-19 wave.

ICRA ESTIMATES
► The already elevated non-performing assets ratio for non-bank lenders are expected to rise by up to 1 per cent in financial year 2021-22 due to the impact of the second Covid-19 wave.

► Estimate on the overall assets under management (AUM) growth for non-bank lenders has been revised down to 7-9 per cent as against 8-10 per cent earlier.



Estimate on the overall assets under management (AUM) growth for non-bank lenders has been revised down to 7-9 per cent as against 8-10 per cent earlier by ICRA because of the setback in disbursements in the first quarter of the fiscal, impacted by the second wave.

Entities would also be faced with increased asset quality pressures as prolonged stress in the operating environment would push the gross stage 3/NPAs by about 0.50-1 per cent in the current fiscal; it increased by about 0.40-50 per cent during the last fiscal, the agency's vice-president A M Karthik

said. About 30 per cent of the non-bank exposure is deemed to be in the risky segments like real estate, personal credit, microfinance, unsecured SME and segments of commercial vehicle and passenger vehicle financing, which were more severely affected by the pandemic, he added.

Geographically, large states like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, which accounted for around 40 per cent of the sectoral credit, were among the severely affected states by the second wave and witnessed tighter restrictions.

Demand for restructuring would go up in the current fiscal because of the prolonged stress in the operating environment and the non-availability of any blanket forbearance like loan moratorium, the agency said, pointing that restructuring in the last fiscal was about 1.5 per cent of the sectoral AUM. Disbursements are likely to witness a 50-60 per cent decline in the April-June period when compared to the preceding March quarter, but are expected to revive healthily in the latter part of the year.

to register a 6-8 per cent growth in FY'22 as against the same in FY'21.

The revised down AUM growth estimate of 7-9 per cent will still be higher than the 4 per cent achieved in FY'21 when the pandemic had struck, it said, adding that low base and disbursements growth will be aiding the number.

The NBFCs' sector will require about Rs 2 lakh crore of additional funding if it was to meet the envisaged growth, the agency said, underlining that capitalisation and liquidity profile remain a silver lining for the sector.

Earnings are expected to remain under pressure in FY'22 and similar to FY'21 levels, as credit cost is expected to remain high and similar to the last financial year, in the base case scenario, it noted.

The emergence of any further waves of infections and its consequent impact on the performance of NBFCs would remain key sensitivity in the near term, the rating agency said.

₹1.75 lakh crore divestment target on track: CEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HYDERABAD, 28 JUNE

The target of mopping up Rs 1.75 lakh crore from disinvestments of some of the public sector companies, including LIC and BPCL, during the current fiscal, is on track and groundwork is being prepared for the goal, chief economic advisor Krishnamurthy Subramanian said today.

The Centre budgeted Rs 1.75 lakh crore from stake sale in public sector companies, including 2 PSU banks and one insurance company, in the current fiscal year.

The disinvestment plan includes strategic sale of IDBI Bank, BPCL, Shipping Corp, Container Corporation, Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd, among others, and also legislative amendments required for LIC IPO would be brought in 2021-22, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said in her Budget speech.

"In an interactive session organised by Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the CEA said robust GST collections, over Rs 1 lakh crore per month for eight months in a row, show that consumption is picking up indicating positive signal for growth."

"There has to be a lot of work which is going on and this year there is actually a lot of emphasis on achieving these targets. Remember that Rs 1.75 lakh crore, a good part

of it will be from LIC's IPO (initial public offering). Second is Bharat Petroleum (BPCL) privatisation. And these two together itself can account for a large part of (disinvestment target)," he said.

The Centre budgeted Rs 1.75 lakh crore from stake sale in public sector companies, including 2 PSU banks and one insurance company, in the current fiscal year.

The "issuance of observations (has been) kept in abeyance", according to Sebi's latest update on processing status of Go Airlines' draft offer documents. The information was updated on 25 June.

In Sebi parlance, issuance of observations implies its go-ahead for the IPO.

Normally, Sebi gives its observations on IPO papers in 30 days.

In cases where the Securities and Exchange Board of India feels there is a possible cause for investigation or investigation is already in progress but no show-cause notice has been issued, Sebi can keep the matter in abeyance for 30 days, which can be extended by further 30 days or till conclusion of the investigation.

WhatsApp appoints Mahatme as head of payments in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

WhatsApp today said it has appointed former Amazon executive Manesh Mahatme as a director to lead the growth of its payments business in India.

As director WhatsApp Payments - India, Mahatme will focus on enhancing the payments experience for users, scaling the service offering and work towards contributing to WhatsApp' vision of digital and financial inclusion in India, a statement said.

He has 17 years of experience in digital financial services and payments across Citibank, Airtel Money and Amazon. He joins WhatsApp from Amazon where he spent close to seven years as director and board member of

Amazon Pay India and led product, engineering, and growth teams, the statement said.

"We are excited to have Manesh join our WhatsApp India team. Manesh has been one of key innovators driving the growth of digital payments in India over the last decade, and his experience will help us maximise the impact and scale of payments on WhatsApp," Abhijit Bose, head of WhatsApp in India, said.

WhatsApp has immense potential to digitally empower people across segments and help accelerate the Government of India's efforts to drive financial inclusion through UPI and digital payments, he added.

In 2018, the Facebook-owned company had start-

ed testing its UPI-based payments service in India, which allows users to utilise the messaging platform to send and receive money. The testing was limited to about a million users as it waited for regulatory approvals to come in.

In November last year, WhatsApp received nod from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to start its payments service in the country in a "graded" manner, starting with a maximum registered user base of 20 million in UPI.

In India, WhatsApp - which counts India as its biggest market - will compete with players like Paytm, Google Pay, Walmart-owned PhonePe and Amazon Pay.

As per data cited by the government, India has 53 crore WhatsApp users.

Govt decided to allow ethanol-based 'flex engines' in vehicles: Gadkari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 JUNE

India has decided to allow ethanol-based "flex engines", which power vehicles using local farm produce and not fossil fuels, and will be rolling out a scheme on the same in the next three months, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said today.

Gadkari said other countries of the world like Brazil, the US and Canada have flexengines which are powered by farm produce and exhorted automakers like BMW, Mercedes and Toyota to develop vehicles running on the alternative fuel.

A switch to locally-produced ethanol will be helpful for a country like India which relies majorly on crude oil imports for powering the trans-

port sector, he said, adding that it will also be less polluting and cost-saving.

A litre of ethanol comes at between Rs 60 and 62 per litre as against the over Rs 100 paid for petrol, the minister said, admitting that the calorific value of the ethanol is low.

In the US, Brazil and Canada, they have flex engines, so as the transport minister we are going to launch this flex engine facility to all the consumers in the country, Gadkari said at an event organised by state-run lender Indian Bank.

We are going to launch this scheme now and within three months we are going to start, he added.

Gadkari said the government has already started giving permissions to establish 100 per cent ethanol petrol pumps and added that Prime Minis-

A switch to locally-produced ethanol will be helpful for a country like India which relies majorly on crude oil imports for powering the transport sector. It will also be less polluting and cost-saving.

ter Narendra Modi has already inaugurated two such facilities in PUNE, Maharashtra.

We can make ethanol from sugarcane juice molasses and now the government is giving permission to make ethanol from foodgrain that is from rice, corn and foodgrain, he said,

asking states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh to take the lead.

At present, India allows for 20 per cent ethanol-blending in fuels. The country is saddled with excess stocks of rice and wheat as well, Gadkari said, after flagging hunger as one of the key challenges for the country.

He said Indian automakers including TVS and Bajaj have already developed two-wheelers to run exclusively on ethanol, asking their peers to develop their own models.

Speaking at the launch of a mentoring initiative developed by the bank for small businesses in Maharashtra, Gadkari said bankers also need to take the lead in identifying disruptive technologies of the future and fund them at the appropriate time.

SAT stays Sebi's order on Franklin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE



Franklin Templeton Asset Management (India) today said the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) has stayed Sebi's order, whereby the regulator had barred the asset management firm from launching any new debt scheme for two years.

In addition, the regulator had asked Franklin Templeton to refund investment management and advisory fees to the tune of Rs 512 crore, including interest, collected with respect to its six debt schemes which are now shut.

"With reference to the order issued by whole-time member (WTM) of Sebi on 7 June 2021, Franklin Templeton Asset Management (India) Pvt Ltd filed an appeal and an application for stay before the Hon'ble SAT. After hearing the parties, the Hon'ble SAT has stayed the operation of the

Also, it committed violations in respect of non-exercise of exit options in the face of emerging liquidity crisis, securities valuation practices, risk management practices and investment related due diligence, the regulator had noted.

"As a result of the irregularities in the running of the debt schemes inspected, loss has been caused to the investors. The noticee (Franklin Templeton AMC) was under a statutory obligation to abide by the provisions of the mutual fund scheme and circulars issued thereunder, which it failed to do," Sebi had said.

According to Sebi, serious lapses and violations appear to be a fallout of the Franklin Templeton AMC's obsession to run high yield strategies without due regard from the concomitant risk dimensions, it added.

Franklin Templeton MF

announced shutting its six debt mutual fund schemes on 23 April 2020 citing redemption pressures and lack of liquidity in the bond market.

The schemes - Franklin India Low Duration Fund, Franklin India Dynamic Accrual Fund, Franklin India Credit Risk Fund, Franklin India Short Term Income Plan, Franklin India Ultra Short Bond Fund, and Franklin India Income Opportunities Fund - together had an estimated Rs 25,000 crore as assets under management.

Subsequent to the decision to wind up the schemes, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) ordered a forensic audit and appointed Chokshi and Chokshi LLP, chartered accountants to conduct a forensic audit of Franklin Templeton MF, Franklin Templeton AMC, and trustees, particularly in respect to the six debt schemes.

The 1-litre petrol trims with manual transmission are priced between Rs 10.5

Skoda Auto forays into mid-size SUV segment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

Czech automaker Skoda today forayed into the mid-size SUV segment in India with the launch of its new offering Kushaq, priced between Rs 10.5 lakh and Rs 17.6 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi).

The model, which is the company's first product designed and developed under the INDIA 2.0 project and based on the MQB A0 IN platform, comes with two petrol engines with power output ranging between 85 kW (115 PS) and 110 kW (150 PS).

The BS-VI compliant engine comes mated with a six-speed manual gearbox, a six-speed automatic and a seven-speed DSG transmission.

The company currently sells Rapid, Octavia and Superb sedans in the country. It sold 11,000 units in 2020.

Sensex drops 189 points; Nifty slips below 15,850

MUMBAI, 28 JUNE

Equity benchmark the Sensex tumbled 189 points today led by losses in index heavyweights Reliance Industries, TCS and HDFC amid a negative trend in global markets.

After touching a life-time high of 53,126.73 points in opening session, the 30-share BSE index ended 189.45 points or 0.36 per cent lower at 52,735.59 points. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty settled 45.65 points or 0.29 per cent down at 15,814.70 points. It touched a lifetime intra-day peak of 15,915.65 points.

Titan was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding over 1 percent, followed by TCS, HCL Tech, RIL, UltraTech Cement and Bharti Airtel. On the other hand, Dr Reddy's, Tata Steel, Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharma and HUL were among the gainers.

"After opening at a record high, the domestic markets slipped into the negative zone tracking cues from global peers due to spike in Covid cases across Asia," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services.

PSU banks were in focus in anticipation of progress in privatisation, he said, adding that the market got volatile in the closing hour during the FM's announcement on fresh stimulus, though it was focused on Covid-19 relief package, mainly for healthcare and stressed sectors, which will benefit the broader economy.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul and Tokyo ended with losses. Stock exchanges in Europe were trading in the red in mid-session deals.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.16 per cent lower at \$75.26 per barrel.

Tata Motors plans to have 10 new EVs by 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE

Tata Motors plans to have 10 new battery electric vehicles (BEVs) in its domestic product portfolio by 2025 as it looks to drive its business model towards sustainable mobility going ahead, as per Tata Motors chairman N Chandrasekaran informed shareholders in the company's annual report for 2020-21.



It's better not just always to talk about this among ourselves, but to confront the Russian President with these things(cyberattacks)

GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL

WEATHER

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

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

THUMBNAILS



People receive a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a mass vaccination clinic at Scotiabank Arena in Toronto on Sunday.

Germany's Merkel defends idea of summit between EU and Putin

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BERLIN, 28 JUNE

German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday defended the idea of holding a European Union meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, arguing that it would offer an opportunity to confront Putin with European concerns. The idea was rejected last week by eastern EU members.

At a summit on Friday, EU leaders agreed only to "explore formats and conditionalities of dialogue with Russia. There was no mention of any high-level meetings or plans for a summit with Putin, an idea that Germany and France had pushed. The outcome reflected deep divisions in the 27-nation EU's approach to Moscow.

The EU is concerned that Putin is turning increasingly authoritarian and wants to distance himself from the West. Both it and the NATO military alliance are struggling to bring Russia back to the table.

The concern was that we perhaps wouldn't be able to put up a united front, (and) such a summit of course requires very intensive preparation, Merkel said at a question-and-answer session with German and French lawmakers. She said it would allow Europeans to address all the questions that weigh on us and also those on which we want to cooperate.

Pointing to worries such as hybrid attacks that Germany, France, Italy and the Baltic nations have faced, Merkel added: It's better not just always to talk about this among ourselves, but to confront the Russian President with these things. This was made very clear by President Biden regarding cyberattacks, and why should Europe not be able to do exactly that? Merkel said.

But the Baltic states are among those deeply concerned about reaching out to Moscow when the Minsk agreements meant to bring peace to Ukraine are still not solved to solving the problems.

Russia, China extend friendship treaty

MOSCOW, 28 JUNE

The leaders of Russia and China on Monday hailed increasingly close ties between their countries and announced the extension of a 20-year-old friendship treaty, a show of unity amid their tensions with the West.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the treaty signed in July 2001 in Moscow helped take relations between Moscow and Beijing to an unprecedented height and would be extended for another five years. The Russian leader noted that the coordination of foreign policy efforts by Russia and China has played a stabilising role in global affairs.

Xi in his opening remarks emphasized the importance of a strategic cooperation between Moscow and Beijing in defending their common interests on the global stage. He added that Russia and China have worked to uphold a true multilateralism and global justice. Putin and Xi have developed strong personal ties to bolster a strategic partnership. AP

being respected. On the other hand, Russia is the EU's biggest natural gas supplier, and plays a key role in a series of international conflicts and issues linked to Europe's strategic interests, including the Iran nuclear deal and conflicts in Syria and Libya.

The relationship between Russia and the EU is really not good at the moment, but even in the Cold War we talked to each other, Merkel said. So I think not speaking isn't suited to solving the problems.

US airstrikes target Iran-backed militias in Syria, Iraq border

Pentagon: Militias were using facilities to launch unmanned aerial vehicle attacks against US troops in Iraq

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 28 JUNE

The US military, under the direction of President Joe Biden, has conducted airstrikes against what it said were facilities used by Iran-backed militia groups near the border with Syria. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to give official statements.

Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby said the militias were using the facilities to launch unmanned aerial vehicle attacks against US troops in Iraq. Kirby said the US military targeted three operational and weapons storage facilities on Sunday two in Syria and one in Iraq. He described the airstrikes as defensive, saying they were launched in response to the attacks by

The US took necessary, appropriate, and deliberate action designed to limit the risk of escalation but also to send a clear and unambiguous deterrent message, Kirby said.

The Pentagon said the

facilities were used by Iran-backed militia factions, including Kata'ib Hezbollah and Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada.

Two Iraqi militia officials told The Associated Press in Baghdad that four militiamen were killed in the airstrikes near the border with Syria. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to give official statements. They said the first strike hit a weapons storage facility inside Syrian territory, where the militiamen were killed. The second strike hit the border strip.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based group that closely monitors the Syrian conflict through activists on the ground, reported that at least five Iraqi militiamen were killed in the airstrikes. The Iran-backed Iraqi factions vowed revenge for the attack and would continue to target US forces, in a joint statement.

We...will avenge the blood of our righteous martyrs



Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden walk in White House after stepping off Marine One on Sunday in Washington. AP

against the perpetrators of this heinous crime and with God's help we will make the enemy taste the bitterness of revenge, the statement said.

US military officials have grown increasingly alarmed over drone strikes targeting US military bases in Iraq, which became more common since a US-directed drone killed Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani near the Baghdad airport last year. Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis was also killed in the attack. The strike drew the ire of mostly Shiite Iraqi law-

makers and prompted parliament to pass a nonbinding resolution to pressure the Iraqi government to oust foreign troops from the country.

Sunday's strikes mark the second time the Biden administration has taken military action in the region. In February, the US launched airstrikes against facilities in Syria, near the Iraqi border, that it said were used by Iranian-backed militia groups.

The Pentagon said those strikes were retaliation for a rocket attack in Iraq in February that killed one civilian

contractor and wounded a US service member and other coalition troops. At that time, Biden said Iran should view his decision to authorise US airstrikes in Syria as a warning that it can expect consequences for its support of militia groups that threaten US interests or personnel.

You can't act with impunity. Be careful, Biden said when a reporter asked what message he had intended to send.

On Sunday, Kirby said Biden "has been clear that he will act to protect US personnel. Given the ongoing series of attacks by Iran-backed groups targeting US interests in Iraq, the President directed further military action to disrupt and deter such attacks."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a statement Sunday that the US airstrikes appear to be a targeted and proportional response to a serious and specific threat, adding, Protecting the military heroes who defend our freedoms is a sacred priority.

US warns that Islamic State extremists still a world threat

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ROME, 28 JUNE

and Syria "still aspire to conduct large-scale attacks."

"Together, we must stay as committed to our stabilization goals as we did to our military campaign that resulted in victory on the battlefield," he said. Blinken announced a new US contribution of \$436 million to assist displaced people in Syria and surrounding countries and called for a new effort to repatriate and rehabilitate or prosecute some 10,000 IS fighters who remain imprisoned by the Syrian Defense Forces.

He also announced sanctions against Ousmane Illiasou Djibo, a native of Niger, who is a key leader of the Islamic State affiliate in the greater Sahara. Djibo was designated a global terrorist, meaning that any of his US are frozen and Americans are barred from any transactions with him.

In addition to the meeting on IS, foreign ministers of countries concerned about the broader conflict in Syria met in Rome ahead of a critical UN vote on whether to maintain a humanitarian aid corridor from Turkey. Russia has resisted reauthorising the channel amid stalled peace talks between the Syrian government and rebel groups.

Last week, the UN special envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, said there were worrying signs that the IS may be getting stronger in the country and called for a boost in cooperation to counter it.

Chicago accident: Two adults and a child were killed after a Metra train struck their vehicle Sunday in Chicago, officials said. A train heading north into the city struck a vehicle just after 5 p.m. on the city's Far South Side and pushed it a half-mile before coming to a complete stop.

AP

Spooked nude sunbathers: Police have fined two men who had to be rescued from an Australian forest after they were startled by a deer while nude sunbathing on a beach and got lost. The men called for help about 6 p.m. on Sunday after they were lost in the Royal National Park. AP

Swedish PM asks Parliament Speaker to form new government

ASSOCIATED PRESS
STOCKHOLM, 28 JUNE



Stefan Lofven, Sweden's Social Democratic Prime Minister since 2014, has asked the country's Parliament speaker to find a new government.

Lofven became the first Swedish leader ever to lose a confidence vote in parliament a week ago. He didn't call for an early election as the Swedish Constitution allows him to. He is formally stepping down but will continue in a caretaker role until a new government can be formed.

Its speaker since 2018, Andreas Norlen, will ask party leaders who may be able to form a government. He he alone decides which of the party leaders can begin these talks.

It is expected that Lofven, who heads Sweden's largest

party with 100 of Riksdagen's 349 seats, will start these talks. His Cabinet, a Social Democratic-Green coalition, is a minority government that has relied on votes from the small Left Party to pass laws.

The no-confidence motion against Lofven was called by the nationalist Sweden Democrats party—which has been criticizing the Social Democratic Party for years—but it ultimately succeeded because the Left Party withdrew its support from the government over proposed legislation to tackle a housing shortage.

It's a frequent scene across the US-Mexico border at a time of swelling migration. But these aren't farmers and low-wage workers from Mexico or Central America, who make up the bulk of those crossing. They're bankers, doctors and engineers from Venezuela, and they're arriving in record numbers as they flee turmoil in the country with the world's largest oil reserves and pandemic-induced pain across South America.

In a report titled Ruled by fear and repression, the human rights organisation says Zambia has seen a number of police killings, arrests of opposition leaders and the shutting down of media outlets amid a climate of fear and impunity.

Social media activists are not safe, said Amnesty International, citing the case of a 15-year-old who is awaiting trial on three counts of criminal libel after criticising Lungu on Facebook.

Zambia is on the brink of a human rights crisis, Amnesty International said Monday, alleging that President Edgar Lungu is using repressive tactics to win another term in elections set for Aug. 12.

Zambia has established a good track record of holding scheduled elections since the re-introduction of multi-party democracy in 1991 by founding president, the late Kenneth Kaunda, who had presided over a one-party system for over two decades. Kaunda accepted defeat after 27 years in power and retired. When Kaunda died aged 97 earlier this month, he was widely hailed as a statesman and a revered fatherly figure.

Zambia, a country of 18 million people, won a reputation as a stable democracy in a continent where elections often lead to conflict.

Amnesty International is accusing Lungu of trying to reverse those gains. The human rights situation has drastically deteriorated, said Amnesty of the rule of Lungu, 64, who first took power in 2015

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DEL RIO, TEXAS, 28 JUNE

PRIDE MARCH



People gather and rally at the Queer Liberation March in New York on Sunday. AP

after winning a disputed snap election to finish the term of populist leader Michael Sata who died in office. Lungu was then elected to a full five-year term in 2016, although his main rival again alleged fraud. This will be Lungu's last term in office if he wins, and Amnesty International is alleging that he is using repression to ensure victory. What we have seen in Zambia, especially in the past five years, is an increasingly brutal crackdown on human rights, characterised by brazen attacks on any form of dissent, said Deprose Muchena, Amnesty International's Director for East and Southern Africa.

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Marianela Rojas huddles in prayer with her fellow migrants, a tearful respite after trudging across a slow-flowing stretch of the Rio Grande and nearly collapsing onto someone's backyard lawn, where, seconds before, she stepped on American soil for the first time.

"I won't say it again," interrupts a US Border Patrol agent, giving orders in Spanish for a dozen others to get into an idling detention van. "Only passports and money in your hands. Everything else—earrings, chains, rings, watches—in your backpacks. Hats and shoelaces too."

It's a frequent scene across the US-Mexico border at a time of swelling migration. But these aren't farmers and low-wage workers from Mexico or Central America, who make up the bulk of those crossing. They're bankers, doctors and engineers from Venezuela, and they're arriving in record numbers as they flee turmoil in the country with the world's largest oil reserves and pandemic-induced pain across South America.

Two days after Rojas crossed, she left detention and rushed to catch a bus out

of the Texas town of Del Rio. Between phone calls to loved ones who didn't know where she was, the 34-year-old recounted fleeing hardship in Venezuela a few years ago, leaving a paid-off home and once-solid career as an elementary school teacher for a fresh start in Ecuador. But when the little work she found cleaning houses dried up, she decided to uproot again—this time without her children.

"It's over, it's all over," she said into the phone recently, crying as her toddler grandson appeared shirtless on screen. "Everything was perfect. I didn't stop moving for one second." Last month, 7,484 Venezuelans were encountered by Border Patrol agents along the US-Mexico border—more than all 14 years for which records exist.

The surprise increase has drawn comparisons to the

midcentury influx of Cubans fleeing Fidel Castro's communist rule. It's also a harbinger of a new type of migration that has caught the Biden administration off guard: pandemic refugees. Many of the nearly 17,306 Venezuelans who have crossed the southern border illegally since January had been living for years in other South American countries, part of an exodus of nearly 6 million Venezuelans since President Nicolás Maduro took power in 2013.

While some are government opponents fearing harassment and jailing, the vast majority are escaping long-running economic devastation marked by blackouts and shortages of food and medicine.

With the pandemic raging in many parts of South America, they have had to relocate again. Increasingly, they're being joined at the US border

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GENEVA, 28 JUNE

The UN human rights chief, in a landmark report launched after the killing of George Floyd in the United States, is urging countries worldwide to do more to help end discrimination, violence and systemic racism against people of African descent and make amends to them including through reparations.

The report from Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, offers a sweeping look at the roots of mistreatment faced by Africans and people of African descent, notably from the transatlantic slave trade. It seeks a transformative approach to address its continued impact today.

I am calling on all states

to stop denying—and start dismantling—racism; to end impunity and build trust; to listen to the voices of people of African descent; and to confront past legacies and deliver redress, Bachelet said in a video statement.

While broaching the issue of reparations in her most explicit way yet, Bachelet suggested monetary compensation alone is not enough and would be part of an array of measures to help rectify or make up for the injustices.

Reparations should not only be equated with financial compensation, she wrote, adding that it should include restitution, rehabilitation, acknowledgement of injustices, apologies, memorialization, educational reforms and guarantees that such injustices won't happen again.

der in May hailed from places other than Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras—the traditional drivers of migratory trends.

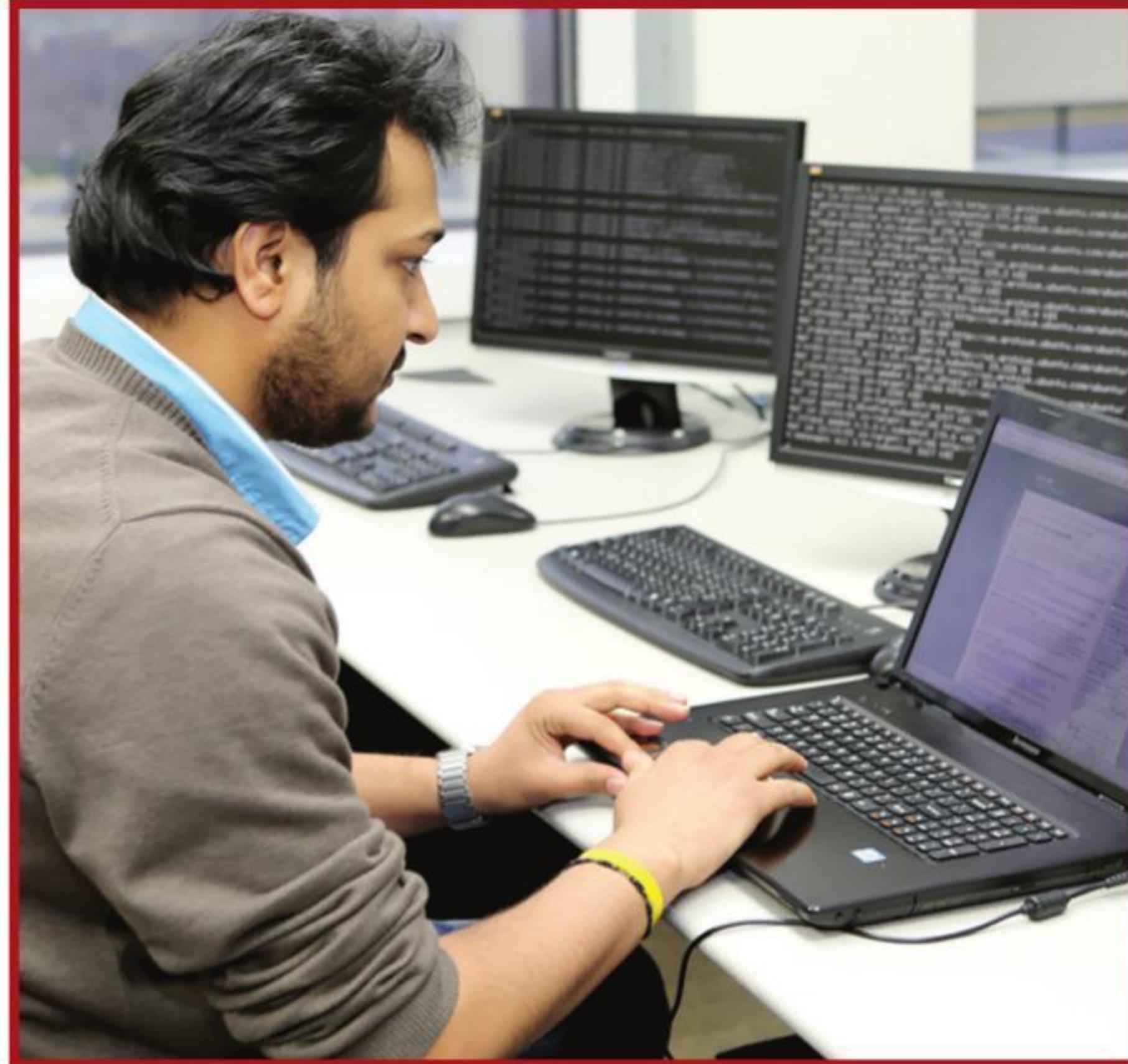
nations hit hard by the virus, like India and Uzbekistan.

US government data shows that 42 per cent of all families encountered along the bor-

Campus & Career

Making knowledge accessible

Online education will help in increasing the gross enrolment ratio of India



SHISHIR KUMAR

Over the years, the Government of India has taken necessary steps to modernise key sectors of its economy to match the strength of other countries. There is one area, however, that has failed to receive much attention -- higher education.

The state of higher education in the country hasn't shown any significant change for a very long time. Owing to its outdated framework, poor budgetary allocation and heavy reliance on textbook learning, the higher education infrastructure faces multiple challenges and demands immediate transformation for the betterment of the future generation. In order to become a global leader in education and technology, the Central government must implement new changes to higher education that allow students to master skills and prepare for future jobs.

To bolster the weak academic sys-

tem of the country, the government launched the National Education Policy 2020 which enables Indian universities to offer online courses and distance-learning programmes to students around the country. The acceptance of online courses, as a part of the new education system, guarantees flexibility and promises to go well with the needs of the 21st century.

For years now, higher educational institutions in India have been limited to campus learning with no regulatory approval for online degrees. It curtailed access to new models which can benefit students who are unable to enrol in full-time campus degree programmes for various reasons.

Such a scenario hurts the gross enrolment ratio (the percentage of total number of students who have enrolled for higher education divided by the total population in the country within the age group of 18-23, the eligible population to enrol for higher education) of India, which touches 27.1 per cent. When compared with

the GER of countries like Brazil (51.3 per cent), China (49 per cent) and Indonesia (36.4 per cent), India lags by a huge margin.

The situation led the government to rule in favour of online education, providing a chance to young individuals to take higher education courses anytime, anywhere. Plus, with the Covid-19 pandemic terrorising the country, online learning will maintain a smooth flow of education and allow students to prepare for post-pandemic jobs.

According to the regulations announced by the University Grants Commission in 2020, the top 100 institutes recognised by the National Institutional Ranking Framework can offer 100 per cent online and distance-learning courses to students at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. It will gradually become applicable to other institutions in the country as well. Only the courses that require laboratory or practical training can be taught offline.

Universities offering campus courses can convert up to 40 per cent of their curriculum online. Through this, around 34 million students (part of the formal education system) can interact with and learn from industry-leading experts. Further, a dedicated batch of teachers will be assigned to offer online or distance education.

Many students are required to travel great distances or even move out of their homes to attend classes in schools or colleges. That adds to the overall educational expenses, which can be difficult to manage. With universities having permission to offer online courses, students can now have access to the relevant academic subjects from any corner of the globe. One will have the opportunity to study in the best universities from the comfort of their homes. Not only will online education eliminate pressure on the wallet, but also safeguard students from the ongoing pandemic since it won't be necessary to step out. Students from remote areas, for whom

pursuing higher education was a challenge, can easily reach for it through the online medium. It will further contribute towards uplifting the GER of the country.

Online education will encourage universities to introduce work-integrated or employer-sponsored degree programmes, which will also help students to be trained for practical tasks.

Working professionals, too, can benefit from online education, especially those who had to leave their studies abruptly to earn a living. Nowadays, one can also opt for upskilling through online courses. This will allow one to learn new skills and stay updated with the modern workforce, while on a job.

Online education opens several opportunities for students. Apart from altering general academic functioning in India, it promises to offer better access to higher education while keeping affordability in mind.

The writer is director, ImaginXP, Pune



PLUS POINTS
Admissions open



The Statesman Print Journalism School is inviting applications for its comprehensive training programme in print journalism including reporting, editing, newspaper designing, social media and news photography for the 2021-22 academic session. Students will learn from working journalists, professionals and subject specialists. They will also get the opportunity to interact with senior journalists and editors of national and international media organisations at seminars and an annual Editors' Conclave.

Each student will be provided a laptop and camera for the duration of the course. Regular reporting workshops and study tours are part of the curriculum. On completion of the course, all students are guaranteed a period of internship at *The Statesman*.

To book your seat contact, 9830841883, 9874350709.

Summer school



The Indian Institute of Management-Jammu has announced the launch of its online summer school for students of Classes X, XI and XII. It is a one-week programme from 3-10 July. B S Sahay, director, IIM-Jammu has envisioned that this programme will expand students' knowledge across various disciplines and help them explore new career options.

The programme structure focuses on three main modules. The first aims to discover new opportunities while the second focuses on learning and acquiring new skills like financial literacy, public speaking, problem-solving and critical thinking, etc. The third module emphasises on self-development of students.

For details contact, +91-8527843609, +91-191-2585837 Extension: 211

For professionals



Indian Institute of Technology-Mandi, in conjunction with IIT-Mandi iHub and HCI Foundation, is hosting a six-day weekend workshop on Deep Learning Crash Course (ADLCC 2021) for executives and working professionals from 3-18 July (six days, over three weekends). It will have extensive theory sessions from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and lab sessions from 2-6 p.m. every weekend. An assessment will be done at the end of the workshop, and based on that, certificates will be provided.

Some of the key points to be covered include basics of machine learning and neural networks, convolutional neural networks, object localisation and detection, autoencoders and variational autoencoder, generative adversarial networks, recurrent neural network and long short-term memory, Siamese network, and transformer network. Interested participants can register through, <https://www.iitmmandi.ac.in/ADLCC2021/>

Skills training

Zupee has announced the launch of their skilling academy recently, which will impart employable skills and promote equal opportunities to the youth of the country. Zupee Skilling Academy will be a first-of-its-kind mission by a corporation, aimed at skilling, upskilling and educating young, disadvantaged Indians.

Zupee has also joined hands with the National Institute of Information Technology Foundation to launch a unique corporate social responsibility vocational skill programme for the underserved youth of Mumbai, enabling them to get entry-level jobs. The Zupee-NIIT Foundation programme will include certification training in digital marketing.

CATERING TO MILLENNIALS

Meme advertising has become a focus area for brand strategy, offering exciting opportunities for growth and development

TAARAN CHANANA

Despite its apparent novelty, the word "meme" actually predates the Internet. It was first coined by British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins to explain how ideas evolve over time. Since that somewhat obscure beginning, we have come a long way.

Today memes are a popular means of communicating in the millennial and generation-Z demographic. Not surprisingly, they have emerged as a powerful means of marketing. With its evolution has come the inevitable growth of opportunities. As brands invest their money in meme marketing, we need more specialists who can lead the field. This is still an evolving sector that holds a promising start for any marketing aspirant looking to make an impact.

The market

Indians are among the highest viewers of social media, well above the world average. At the start of the pandemic, when social media usage spiked worldwide, people in India spent 156 minutes a day on various platforms in comparison to the global average of 142 minutes. Given that it also houses one of the largest active social media user bases at 448 million, we are looking at a substantial market.

But what makes it important for marketers, is the demographics. Most social media users are millennial and generation-Z, between 17 and 24 years of age. These are young people who either have buying power or are just attaining them. They are also trend-setters and hence, hold a certain sway on market opinions.

Interestingly, research shows that



sion, loyalty.

Opportunities

Meme marketing may look effortless, but there is a considerable amount of skill and strategy that goes into making memes and placing them. We must find the right audience and use correct placement to spread the message. Almost every social media user follows one meme page or the other. Planting marketing memes is one of the biggest challenges as it must not come across as direct promotion. As part of social media marketing, it has emerged as a lucrative career avenue.

In this field, one can make a career as a creator, copywriter, content strategist and eventually, become a social media manager. Making a meme is incredibly easy today, thanks to emerging tools driven by Artificial Intelligence. Marketing teams are looking for creators and copywriters with the imagination and flair to use

images and infuse humour into the mundane or find the unusual in everyday affairs. It requires technical skills of working with graphics, images and words along with a creative flair.

With experience, aspirants can become content strategists. They have the responsibility of leading the meme messaging for a brand. Apart from copywriting experience, a content strategist must have content presentation and delivery skills. They must also have extensive campaign experience in order to understand how messaging can be developed. It requires cooperative skills for working with copywriters, graphic designers and other collaborators.

Finally comes social media managers. They plan and align messages across platforms to ensure consistent messaging. Apart from memes, social media managers must have experience of working with different kinds of messaging. They design campaigns

from scratch, deciding on the overall message based on market research. They must also understand social media optimisation.

Today there is high demand for social media managers as brands look for novel ways to lead their marketing campaigns. Although campaign experience is an acceptable qualification, aspirants can also opt for a social media marketing course to understand this nuanced field.

This is a highly competitive industry which is quickly evolving as a main part of any brand's advertising. People who choose to play a role in it today will have the advantage of creating a space for themselves in its developmental stage. With meme marketing becoming a focus for brand strategy, this field offers exciting opportunities for growth and development.

The writer is co-founder and managing director, Meme Chat, Mumbai





For more updates

Star Indian archer Deepika Kumari (*in photo, left*) on Monday regained the number one position in global rankings following her hat-trick of gold medals at the World Cup Stage 3 here. The 27-year-old from Ranchi, who had achieved the top spot for the first time in 2012, on Sunday claimed gold medals in three recurve events – women's individual, team and mixed pair. "This is going to take Deepika to the number one spot in the world rankings on Monday," World Archery had tweeted on its official handle after Deepika's gold rush.

www.thestatesman.com**THUMBNAILS**

South Africa level T20I series: West Indies batsmen couldn't replicate the batting heroics of the opening T20I on June 26 and lost the second game of the five-match series against South Africa by 16 runs at the Grenada National Stadium. Chasing a score of 166/7 in 20 overs, West Indies came up short with opener Andre Fletcher (35) and Fabian Allen (34) being the leading scorers.

Nataraj betters Olympic qualification time: India's Shrihari Nataraj on Sunday shattered the Tokyo Olympic games qualification time in the men's 100 metres backstroke during the time trial at Sette Colli Trophy, but his feat is yet to be approved by the International Swimming Federation (FINA). Nataraj clocked 53.77 seconds, which was faster than the Olympic qualification time of 53.85 seconds.

McLaughlin demolishes world record in 400-metre hurdles: Sydney McLaughlin looked to her left, saw the numbers 51.90, and knew exactly what that meant. She put her hands on her head, then covered her mouth and looked into the night sky. The 400-metre hurdles world record belongs to her now.

Fans return to Wimbledon: Cheery fans, dreary skies. Wimbledon is back after a one-year hiatus and the gray, overcast weather felt right at home at an event notorious for its rain delays. "Perfect spectator weather," said Hannah Scott, a 26-year-old mask-wearing graduate student from London who was among the first fans to arrive on the grounds on Monday.

Nominations for national awards: Olympic-bound Simranjit Kaur, Commonwealth Games gold medalist Gaurav Solanki and world championship silver winner Sonia Chahal have been nominated for the Arjuna award by the Boxing Federation of India.

BWF cancels India Open: The India Open Super 500 and Hyderabad Open Super 100 tournaments were on Monday cancelled by the Badminton World Federation (BWF), which announced a revamped international calendar to salvage the remaining season affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In other announcements, the world body on Monday said that Finland will host the Sudirman Cup Finals in September-October while the season-ending World Tour Finals will be staged in Indonesia.

Cash reward for Prakash: Swimming Federation of India on Monday announced a cash reward of Rs 5 lakh for Sajan Prakash who scripted history by becoming the first swimmer from the country to earn a direct qualification for the Olympics.

Ecuador hold Brazil to 1-1 draw, advance at Copa America

AGENCIES
SAO PAULO, 28 JUNE



Ecuador held a below-strength Brazil to a 1-1 draw to secure a spot in the Copa America quarterfinals.

Neymar (*in photo*), defender Thiago Silva and striker Gabriel Jesus didn't play against Ecuador at the Olímpico Stadium in Goiânia.

The draw moved Ecuador to fourth spot in Group B, eliminating Venezuela and likely setting up a quarterfinal match against Argentina. Brazil had already secured top spot in the group before the match began, allowing coach Tite to continue testing his lineup with an eye on the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The defending champions opened the scoring in the 37th minute with a header by Milton after a corner. Angel Mena equalized for Ecuador in the 53rd when he finished with an angled

shot in front of goalkeeper Alison. The draw ended a streak of 10 consecutive Brazil wins.

Brazil's next challenge will be either against Uruguay or Chile, the two teams which can finish fourth in Group A.

Ecuador coach Gustavo Alfaro feels certain his team will face Argentina in the next stage of the tournament, but adds the draw with Brazil gives him confidence.

"We know who we are and that we can have a good game like the ones we had against Colombia, Peru and Brazil. There's no reason why we couldn't do it against Argentina," said Alfaro, who is Argentinian.

"We respect the hierarchy of Colombia, Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina, but we don't fear. I want them to play like they have played so far."

Brazil defender Marquinhos said the game against Ecuador was important for Brazil "so all players of the squad could have at least some time of play, so everyone can be ready when knockout begins."

"Also," he added, "players who were tired had some rest so they can go to the knockout and play their best."

Marquinhos also expressed concern about the pitch at the

Nilton Santos Stadium in Rio de Janeiro, where Brazil will play in the quarterfinals and, if it wins, in the semifinals of the tournament. Peru beat Venezuela 1-0 with a goal by Andr Carillo from close range in the 48th minute. The Venezuelans needed a win to progress to the play-off stage. The Peruvians started the tournament being hampered by Brazil 4-0, but recovered after a 2-1 win over Colombia. The 2-2 draw against Ecuador had already put the team close to securing its knockout stage place.

"Peru was overcoming itself as matches went on. We played against very intense teams and had little time to recover," coach Ricardo Gareca said.

Tite deserves World Cup title

Brazil coach Tite had an emotional exchange with his Ecuador counterpart Gustavo Alfaro after the teams drew 1-1 and started looking into the knockout stage of Copa America. TV footage showed Alfaro praising his counterpart's ethics and adding that Tite deserves the World Cup title. Alfaro and Tite shared a friendly hug after the exchange at the Olímpico Stadium in Goiânia. Ecuador's coach insisted Tite should remain in the job despite recent internal problems at the Brazilian soccer confederation. Brazilian media reported Tite could have been fired before Copa America because of his team's resistance in playing the tournament on home soil during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Don't go, please. Resist because you will end up being world champion, remember what I am saying," Alfaro told Tite on the pitch after the match.

NUMERO UNO

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Indian team arrives in Sri Lanka

AGENCIES
COLOMBO, 28 JUNE

The India white-ball team led by Shikhar Dhawan, featuring as many as six uncapped players, arrived here from Mumbai for their four-week tour which will feature six limited overs games against Sri Lanka, starting July 13.

Senior all-rounder Hardik Pandya shared an Instagram captioned: "Touchdown, Sri Lanka, Colombo."

The Dhawan-led team will play three ODIs and three T20 Internationals in the island nation.

With regular skipper Virat Kohli and the red ball side, currently touring England, Dhawan will have pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar as his deputy.

The BCCI had named a 20-member squad for the Sri Lanka tour that has all-rounder Hardik Pandya and the spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal from the senior lot.

Young guns like Devdutt

Padikkal, Prithvi Shaw, Nitish Rana, Ruturaj Gaikwad and rookie pacer Chetan Sakariya expectedly feature in the side that also has two wicket-keeper batsmen in the young Ishan Kishan and Sanju Samson.

A day prior to the departure, Dhawan had said that this was "a nice blend of experience and youth."

According to the Sri Lanka Cricket website, the Indian team will be in room quarantine from June 29 to July 1 and then there will be phased out training from July 2 to 4 and subsequently team training from July 5.

They will also play intra-squad simulated games for better idea.

Squad: Shikhar Dhawan (Captain), Prithvi Shaw, Devdutt Padikkal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Suryakumar Yadav, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Nitish Rana, Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Yuzvendra Chahal, Rahul Chahar, K Gowtham, Krunal Pandya, Kuldeep Yadav,



Young guns like Devdutt Padikkal, Prithvi Shaw, Nitish Rana, Ruturaj Gaikwad and rookie pacer Chetan Sakariya expectedly feature in the side that also has two wicket-keeper batsmen in the young Ishan Kishan and Sanju Samson.

Varun Chakravarthy, Bhuvneshwar Kumar (Vice-captain), Deepak Chahar, Navdeep Saini, Chetan Sakariya.

Net Bowlers: Ishan Porel, Sandeep Warrier, Arshdeep Singh, Sai Kishore, Simarjeet Singh.

Three SL players suspended for bubble breach, to fly back

AGENCIES
CHESTER-LE-STREET (DURHAM), 28 JUNE

Sri Lankan cricket suffered a major embarrassment on Monday after three of its players -- Niroshan Dickwella, Kusal Mendis and Danushka Gunathilaka -- were suspended for breaching the team's bio-bubble here on Sunday night.

The three will be flown back home, but it is unlikely the series will be in jeopardy.

The Kusal Perera-led Sri Lanka have lost the T20I series 3-0 and the team strength for the three-match ODI series, commencing here on Tuesday (June 29), will be greatly reduced.

"The players have been suspended pending a full inquiry, but have confessed to having gone out," Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) vice-president Mohan de Silva told ESPNcricinfo. "They are being

recalled from the tour with immediate effect." A 30-second video footage surfaced on social media on Monday showing Dickwella and Mendis sitting in a public place without face masks.

Gunathilaka is not visible in the video, but is reported to have stepped out with the duo.

"The players had been told categorically that they were not allowed to go towards Durham's City Centre, but that is exactly where the trio have admitted to have gone," according to SLC officials.

"Seven other members from the match officials and anti-corruption unit teams were deemed close contacts, including five members due to officiate at the first Royal London ODI on Tuesday, June 29, at Emirates Riverside, Durham. Those impacted will have to self-isolate for 10 days until July 7," ECB added.

Shooting WC: Sensational Rahi grabs gold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
OSUJEK, 28 JUNE



Olympic-bound Rahi Sarnobat displayed sensational form to clinch the women's 25m pistol gold medal at the ISSF shooting World Cup here on Monday but teen sensation Manu Bhaker ended seventh in the same event.

Sarnobat's gold is India's first in the ongoing edition after the country secured one silver and two bronze medals earlier in the tournament.

The 30-year-old Sarnobat fired a final score of 39 after qualifying second with a total of 591. Her stupendous performance in the final included perfect scores in the third, fourth, fifth and the sixth series.

"After I got assurance about the gold, it was more about technicalities for me in the last few series as I wanted to try out a few things so I was doing that," she said about her stellar performance. "This competition was absolutely not about performance or medal because I was trying out a few things which I am going to do

pistol, Russian Vitalina Batsarashkina, won bronze with 28 hits, bowing out after the ninth five-shot series.

In the qualification, Sarnobat fired a brilliant 296 in the rapid fire round on Monday. Her precision score was an equally impressive 295 on Sunday.

Bhaker recorded a total of 588 to qualify third after firing a 296 in the rapid fire round on Monday following an impressive 292 in the precision round on Sunday. However, she was eliminated early in the final with a disappointing score of 11, losing a shoot-off to Bulgaria's Viktoriya Chaika.

There was disappointment for India in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions competition as both Tejaswini Sawant and Anjum Moudgil failed to make the finals. Sawant ended 20th in qualification with a score of 1168, while Moudgil was further down at 32nd after firing 1162.

The top eight shooters from qualification make the final cut. Earlier in the tournament, Bhaker had teamed up with Saurabh Chaudhary for the 10m air pistol mixed team silver.

T20 World Cup in UAE as BCCI confirms it can't host it

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 28 JUNE



The Indian cricket board has decided to inform the International Cricket Council (ICC) that it won't be able to host the T20 World Cup, leaving the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which was kept as standby for the tournament, as the host.

"We have officially intimated the ICC that the T20 World Cup can be shifted to the United Arab Emirates. The details are being chalked out," BCCI President Sourav Ganguly (*in photo*) told PTI.

"The decision was taken keeping health safety concerns of all stakeholders in mind," he added.

The tournament will be held in October-November, reportedly between October 17 and November 14, with some of the initial games also to be played in Oman.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) vice-president Rajiv Shukla said, "We had a meeting of office-bearers today (on Monday). We decided that it will be impossible to

host the T20 World Cup amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. There are talks of a third wave. So, it would be highly risky. We will soon inform the ICC about our decision."

The tournament will be hosted by India even though it will be played in the UAE as ICC has already clarified.

The ICC said it will make a statement once it hears from the BCCI.

"We will make a statement soon, once we hear from the BCCI," said an ICC official.

It has been learnt that the BCCI also failed to guarantee

tax exemption to ICC.

As source aware of the developments told IANS, "The BCCI had filed application for tax exemption but there was no intimation from the [finance] ministry on it."

The BCCI would have had to pay a minimum of Rs 227 crore and a maximum of Rs 906 crore to the ICC on failure to get exemption.

The Board had already missed a few deadlines over the past one-and-a-half years to guarantee exemption.

The shifting of the T20 World Cup to UAE comes

after the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 was suspended on May 4.

In fact, an ICC team of officials that was to visit India for a recce for the T20 World Cup during IPL 2021, cancelled its visit due to the horrific COVID-19 situation in India.

India was ravaged by the second wave in April-May with scarcity of essential medical supplies adding to the horror that unfolded with over 4 lakh daily cases at the peak of the crisis.

If the BCCI is unable to host an eight-team IPL in September, how could it have hosted World T20 within a month? Also now we have a new variant (Delta 3) and there is every possibility of a third wave in the country in October.

The BCCI brass was always well aware that it won't be practically feasible," an ICC board member told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Also, India is on the 'Red List' of countries like England and Australia and travelling could be an issue if the rules are not relaxed by then.

Belgium edge Portugal to reach quarterfinals at Euro 2020

AGENCIES
SEVILLE, 28 JUNE



Belgium stopped Cristiano Ronaldo on one end, and had just enough attacking power on the other.

The top-ranked Belgians held Ronaldo scoreless Sunday and held onto a first-half lead to beat Portugal 1-0 and advance to the quarterfinals of the European Championship.

Ronaldo (*in photo*), who threw his captain's armband to the ground in despair after the final whistle, is still one goal shy of becoming the all-time men's top scorer in international soccer. He came into the match with former Iran striker Ali Daei at 109 goals. Belgium, which has never before won a major soccer title, will next face Italy on Friday in Munich.

Belgium's potent attack, led by Kevin De Bruyne, Eden Hazard and Romelu Lukaku, also struggled, but Thorgan Hazard scored the winning goal in the 42nd minute with a swerving shot from outside the area. Portugal goalkeeper Rui Patrício was left wrong-footed and was late to swat the ball away.

"In these kinds of games you have to grab your chances with both hands," Thorgan Hazard said.

"The goalkeeper expected me to choose the other corner, so the ball went in."

Belgium played most of the second half without De Bruyne, who had to be substituted after being tackled from behind and injuring his left ankle. De Bruyne missed the team's first game at Euro 2020 while recovering from a facial injury sustained in the Champions League final.

Portugal had several good chances to equalize late in the match, including a header by Rben Dias saved by Belgium goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and a shot by Raphael Guerreiro that hit the post.