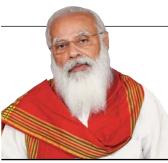
THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI FRIDAY 28 MAY 2021



NATION 4

PM reviews Cyclone Yaas' impact, will visit Odisha and West Bengal today



SPORT 8

Soccer legend Zinedine Zidane resigns as Real Madrid manager

TABLOID 11

Kim Kardashian draws flak for sporting earrings with symbol Om & posting pic on Twitter

Cyclone Yaas: As rains continue, 5 die in

WB and threat of flood looms in Odisha



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Britain's Catherine Duchess of Cambridge at Craiglockhart Tennis Centre in Edinburgh, Scotland, on Thursday.

N-E girl brutally tortured by 5, video goes viral

Guwahati: A video posted by the official handle of Assam police showing a young girl being brutally tortured by five persons in Assam has gone viral on social media. The video shows five unidentified people (four men, one woman) thrashing and torturing a young girl. However, the time or place of this incident is not clear. In view of the viral video, the Assam Police has released the images of the five suspects and sought more information from the public leading to their arrest.

More on Page 4

YouTuber held over video of 'flying' dog

New Delhi: A Delhi-based YouTuber, who made his pet dog "fly" by tying it to a bunch of helium balloons and then posted a video of the act, was arrested after an NGO accused him of cruelty towards the animal. ■ More on Page 2

Hawking's archive, office acquired by UK

London: London's Science Museum and the Cambridge University library said on Wednesday they have acquired a large collection of items belonging to late physicist Stephen Hawking, from his personalised wheelchairs to landmark papers on theoretical physics and his scripts from his appearance on The Simpsons.



Not cash... he has sent Coronil worth ₹1,000 crore, sir!





Max: 40°C Min: 26°C **RH:** 35% Rain: 0%

Forecast: Sunny

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana Tithi: Vaishakha Bahula Vidiya till 9.38 am Star: Moola till 8.05 pm **Varjyam:** 6.39 pm to 8.05 pm and from 4.54 am (Saturday) **Durmuhurtam:** 8.20 am to 9.12 am; 12.39 pm to 1.31 pm Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12

> **SUNSET TODAY 5.24 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 7.12 AM**

■2.11L fresh cases, 3,847 die in 24 hrs ■ 'Mixed vaccine' trials likely

Keep Covid-19 norms in force till June 30, Centre tells states, UTs

With Covid-19 cases still significantly high and the virus now spreading into rural areas, the Centre on Thursday directed all the states and Union territories to continue the ongoing Covid-19 guidelines till June 30 and go in for "intensive and local containment measures" in districts that are reporting a high count. In the past 24 hours, 2.11 lakh fresh Covid-19 cases and 3,847 deaths from the deadly virus were reported across

In a fresh order, Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla said strict imple-mentation of the containment and other measures had led to a fall in new and active cases in a majority of states/UTs, barring some areas in the

AGE CORRESPONDENT

As the nation grapples

with Covid-19's second wave, a first-of-its-kind case of "white fungus",

causing multifocal perfo-

rations in the food pipe,

small bowel and large

bowel has been detected at

Delhi's Sir Ganga Ram

Hospital. This is the first

time such a case has been

Doctors say the case came to light when a 49-year-old cancer and Covid

woman patient was admit-

ted to the hospital with

J&K chief secy

RAW heads get

1-yr extension

Mehta was appointed in

his place as the new

chief secretary of the

union territory by the

government which also

granted one-vear exten-

sion to the heads of RAW

and Intelligence Bureau,

the country's premier

According to official orders issued on

Thursday, Subrahmanyam, a 1987-

batch IAS officer of

Chhattisgarh cadre, will

come to the Centre as an

officer on special duty in the commerce ministry

and will take over as

Secretary, Department

of Commerce, upon Anup Wadhawan's

superannuation on June

30. Mr Subrahmanyam

had taken over as the

Jammu and Kashmir in

June 2018, and during

his tenure its special sta-

tus was scrapped in 2019

and the state was bifur-

cated into two union ter-

ritories — Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. The government also

granted one-year exten-

sion to Intelligence Bureau (IB) head Arvind

Kumar and country's

external intelligence

agency Research and

Analysis Wing (RAW)

chief Samant Goel beyond their current

two-year tenure ending

Mr Kumar and Goel are

experts on Pakistan and

had contributed actively

in the February 26, 2019

Balakot airstrike on Jaish-e-Mohammed ter-

ror camps across the

Line of Control.

on June 30.

Samant Goel

secretary

intelligence agencies.

orders

Kashmir and

changed; IB,

reported anywhere.

NEW DELHI, MAY 27



A health worker feeds a Covid-19 patient inside Dhanvantri

Northeast and South India. He said that in spite of the declining trend, the number of active cases was still very high, which was why the containment measures needed to be implemented

"Any relaxation by states/UTs may be considered at an appropriate

severe abdominal pain,

constipation and vomit-ing. A CT scan revealed

perforations in the lower end of the food pipe. The patient had chemotherapy

"White fungus (Candida)

causing multifocal perfo-

rations in the food pipe,

small bowel and large

bowel in Covid-19 infec-

tions has not been report-

ed anywhere to the best of our knowledge," said Dr Anil Arora, chairman of the hospital's Institute of

Liver, Gastroenterology and Pancreaticobiliary

■ Turn to Page 4

some time ago.

In a 1st, cancer patient with

Covid-19 has 'white fungus'

time, in a graded manner, after assessing the local situation, requirements and resources," Mr Bhalla said. The order comes as some states have started easing the strict restrictions imposed when the cases were very high.

Delhi, which has been

Turn to Page 4

Delhi Lt Governor declares black fungus epidemic

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI MAY 27

The Delhi government on Thursday declared black fungus as an epidemic. With the city witnessing over 600 cases of Black fungus, Lt Governor Anil Baijal issued regulations declaring it an epidemic under the Epidemic Diseases Act to contain and manage cases of the deadly mucormycosis in the city.

All healthcare facilities in Delhi will follow guidelines for screening, diagnosis and management of black fungus issued by the health ministry.

More on Page 2

Biden to intel agencies: Report on virus origin within 90 days

Washington/Beijing, May **27:** President Joe Biden has ordered the US intelligence agencies to "redouble" their efforts in investigating the emergence of the deadly Covid-19 pandemic and report back to him in 90 days, amid growing controversy about the virus's origins from a bio laboratory in China.

Covid-19 was first detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019. The announcement comes after a US intelligence report found several researchers at China's

Wuhan Institute of Virology fell ill in November 2019 and had to be hospitalised — a new detail that fuelled fresh public pressure on Biden to order a detailed investigation into the origin of the deadly virus.

"I have now asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyse information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to me in 90 days," Mr Biden said in a statement esday. -PTIMore on Page 6 on Wednesday.

with agency inputs NEW DELHI/KOLKATA/ BALASORE, MAY 27 Kolkata: The Mamata

A day after the "Very Severe" Cyclone Yaas ravaged India's east coast, a thunderous rain due to depression left five persons dead and injured five others in West Bengal, while in Odisha the threat of floods loomed large as water levels of major rivers increased on Thursday.

West Bengal chief minis-ter Mamata Banerjee estimated the extent of damage due to the cyclone at around ₹15,000 crore and announced that her government will spend ₹1,000 crore as Duare Traan (Relief at Doorstep) to reha-

■ Twitter worried about staff, intimidation tactics

Govt to Twitter: Follow

CM extends Covid curbs by June 15

NDRF members attempt to remove an uprooted tree from the roof of a house in the aftermath of Cyclone Yaas in Bay of Bengal, near East Midnapore, on Thursday. -PTI

Didi pegs losses at ₹15K cr,

announces ₹1,000 cr relief

Banerjee government on Thursday extended the restrictions due to the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic in West Bengal for another two weeks from May 31 till June 15. It also declared the fresh schedule of the higher secondary and secondary examinations, which were recently postponed, in July and August respectively.

At the state secretariat Nabanna, Ms Banerjee said, "A preliminary assessment estimates the

Twitter's statement

is an attempt to dic-

tate its terms to the

democracy. Through

its actions and delib-

legal system. Twitter

has refused to com-

world's largest

erate defiance.

Twitter seeks to

undermine India's

ply with the new

digital rules.

are allocating ?1,000 crore for immediate relief to house building and to meet the agricultural losses, among others. Once water recedes in villages in the next seven days, our government will run Duare Tran camps like Duare Sarkar for the enrolment of the affected from June 3 to 18 and verify their claims of losses from June 19 to 30. From July 1 to 8 the funds will be distributed to the beneficiaries through the direct bank transfer mode. In Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reviewed the impact of Cyclone Yaas

at a meeting on Thursday. He asked the Central and states to ensure that normal life is restored. — Agencies More on Page 4

Sikh among 8 killed in San **Jose shooting**

San Francisco, May 27: A Sikh man was among the eight people killed in a mass shooting on May 26 at the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority light rail yard in San Jose, California. According to a media

briefing, San Jose police responded around 6.30am to reports of an active shooter at the VTA Guadalupe facility West Younger Avenue. Deputy Russell Davis, the sheriff's office spokesman, did not dis-

close the cause of the gunman's death. The Washington Post reported that Sean Webby, a spokesman for the Santa Clara County district attorney's office, said the shooter is believed to have killed

himself. Other reports identified the shooter as Samuel Cassidy, 57, a VTA employee. Among the victims was

Taptej Singh Gill, also a

Save Lakshadweep, its future under threat: Rahul to PM

New Delhi, May 27: B.V.R. Subrahmanyam AGE CORRESPONDENT was on Thursday transwith agency inputs NEW DELHI, MAY 27 ferred from Jammu and



Minister Rahul Narendra Gandhi Modi seeking his urgent intervention in Lakshwadeep. He demanded that "anti people policies" being announced by the Lakshwadeep adminis-trator, Praful Khoda Patel, be withdrawn. Mr Gandhi also claimed that the dilution in quarantine rules by Mr Patel in Lakshadweep has led to a "lethal spike in Covid

Mr Patel, a former MLA of Gujarat who served as a minister of state for home under Narendra Modi's chief ministership in Gujarat, was made administrator of the country's smallest Union Territory in December 2020 after the death of Dineshwar Sharma, the then administrator of the island. He is being blamed for the Covid-19 surge in Lakshadweep and is accused of creating of tension in where Lakshadweep Muslims form nearly 97 per cent of the population and most are

Scheduled Tribes. Mr Gandhi, in his letter to the Prime Minister, has said that the "admindemolished istration structures used by the fisherfolk, fired contractual workers in various government

Stalin, Vaiko call for Lakshadweep

administrator recall

Chennai: Tamil Nadu chief minister M.K. Stalin on Thursday urged Prime Minister

Narendra Modi to recall Lakshadweep administrator Praful Khoda Patel for imposing "anti-people" laws in the Union Territory. The action of administrator Patel in forcibly bringing in "anti-peo-ple" regulations to "alienate Muslims" living there is causing anguish, Stalin tweeted. The Prime Minister's Office should intervene in the matter and ease him out of the office of administrator, he said adding "our country's strength

ments". Calling the moves "draconian", Mr Gandhi said these "regulations penalise dissent and undermine grassroots democracy". Since taking over as Lakshadweep's adminis-

is pluralism."

trator last year, Mr Patel has been making changes in the local administration, sparking a country-wide outcry. His new rules, which he says are "reforms", include imple menting the anti-social Activities Regulation bill, 2021, or the Goonda Act in the island territory where the crime rate is already very low.

Mr Gandhi also said in his letter that the administrator's attempt to undermine the islands Turn to Page 4

law, don't defame India New Delhi. May 27: In a Right now, we are sharply-worded statement, Twitter on Thursday conconcerned by recent events regarding our employees in India and the potential threat to freedom of expression for the

demned the Delhi Police's actions and flagged concern about its employees in India, "the potential threat to freedom of expression" and "the use of intimidation tactics by the police", inviting the wrath of the BJP-led government at the Centre. "Right now, we are con-cerned by recent events

regarding our employees in India and the potential threat to freedom of expression for the people we serve. We, alongside many in civil society in India and around the world, have concerns with regards to the use of intimidation tactics by the police in response to enforcement of our global Terms of Service, as well as with core elements of

have concerns with regards to the use of intimidation tactics by the police. — Twitter 🍺 the new IT Rules," Twitter said on its clash with the government over the "Congress toolkit" row and the new digital rules.

people we serve. We

The social media giant added that while it will "strive to comply with the applicable law", it planned to ask for changes in the open conversation".
Twitter added that it will continue to be strictly guided by principles of transparency and protecting freedom of expression.

— Govt 🛭

The government responded by saying the messaging platform was levelling baseless and false

Rwanda genocide: Macron seeks 'forgiveness' our responsibilities," Mr

Kigali, Rwanda, May 27: In a key speech on his visit to Rwanda, French President Emmanuel Macron said he recognizes that France bears a heavy responsibility for the 1994 genocide in the central African country. Mr Macron solemnly detailed how France had failed the 800,000 victims of the genocide but he stopped short of an apology.

France "was not an accomplice" in the genoa history and a political responsibility in Rwanda. cide but ended up siding It has a duty: That of looking history in the face and with Rwanda's "genocidal regime" and bore an "overrecognizing the suffering whelming responsibility" that it inflicted on the in the slide toward the Rwandan people by favormassacres, the French ing silence over the examileader said, speaking Thursday at the genocide nation of truth for too long." Macron said. memorial in the capital, When the genocide start-



France has a role, a history and a political responsibility in Rwanda. It has a duty: That of looking history in the face and recognising the suffering that it inflicted on the Rwandan people by favoring silence over the examination of truth for too long. -Emanuel Macron, France Prez

Kigali. "France has a role, ed, "the international community took close to three months, three interminable months, before reacting and we, all of us, abandoned hundreds of

thousands of victims." France's failures contributed to "27 years of bit-ter distance" between the two countries, he said. "I have to come to recognise

Macron said. Although Mr Macron didn't apologize, he won praise from Rwandan President Paul Kagame for his "powerful 'His words were something more valuable than

an apology, they were the truth," Kagame said. "This was an act of tremendous courage. Mr Kagame and Mr

Macron both signaled that a page had been turned in France-Rwanda ties. "This visit is about the future, not the past," Mr Kagame said, adding that he and Mr Macron discussed a range of issues, including investment and support for businesses.















3 arrested for selling

used surgical gloves New Delhi: Three men were arrested in Dwarka for allegedly selling used surgical gloves after washing and

repacking them, police said on Thursday. The accused were identified as Manish Kumar (30), Arun Shriniwasan (37) and Dinesh Kumar (28), they added. Preliminary investigation has revealed that used surgical gloves were procured from scrap markets and hospitals through a dealer based in the Tikri area, the police said,

adding that efforts are underway to nab him. According to the police, a team led by SHO, Dabri, Surinder Sandhu raided two godowns in Dabri and Bindapur on Tuesday and seized 848 kg of surgical gloves. The used surgical gloves were mostly sold to factories, salons and hotels at cheap rates at washing and repacking, a senior police officer said. "On Tuesday, our team at picket duty received information through an

informer that used gloves are being repacked after washing at two buildings in Dabri and Bindapur. A raid was con-ducted by our team and 848 kg used surgical gloves recovered," DCP (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said

2 held for beating stray dog to death

New Delhi: A 23-year-old man has been arrested and a juvenile apprehended for allegedly beating a stray dog to death, police said on Thursday. The video of the incident, that took place on Wednesday evening, was widely shared on social media platforms, they said. In the purported video, the accused Jaivinder and his juvenile accomplice can be seen beating a stray dog with stick while another dog is seen barking, police said. Based on a complaint from Gaurav Gupta, the animal

welfare officer of an NGO named "People for Animal" a case was registered under sections 429 (mischief by killing or maiming cattle, etc of any value) and section 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) and other sections of Prevention of Animals to Cruelty Act and

Delhi records max

temperature of 41.2°C

New Delhi: Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 41.2 degrees Celsius on Thursday, a notch above the season's normal, the meteorological department said. The minimum temperature settled at 22.2 degrees Celsius, five notches below the season's average, while the humidity at 5.30 pm was 22 per cent, it said. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had predicted mainly clear sky on Friday with the minimum and maximum temperatures hovering around 24 degrees Celsius and 40 degrees Celsius, respectively. - PTI

2 COMMITTEES FOR 3RD WAVE OF COVID: GOVT

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI MAY 27

The Delhi Government formed

2 different committees to keep a check on issues pertaining to Covid-19 which would oversee issues like an action plan for possible third wave, devise a strategy for mitigation and management of the third wave of Covid and assess cases of Covid patients who died due to lack of oxygen recently in the national capital for grant of compensation. While a 13member committee which has been set-up by Delhi government on Thursday would prepare an action plan for a possible third wave of Covid after assessing the current status and projected requirement of the health infrastructure such as hospitals, oxygen plants and drug supplies in the city,

another eight-member expert committee has been set up to devise a strategy for mitigation and management of the third wave of Covid. Both the committees will be chaired by IAS officer Satya Gopal, ACS (Power) and Nodal Officer

(Covid). The 13-member committee will "assess the present status and projected requirements of the different verticals of health infrastructure such as hospitals, oxygen plants, drug supplies etc and prepare an action plan for the 3rd Wave", an order issued by the health department said.

Jabs for 18-44 yrs remain suspended for 4th day in Delhi

34,000 people were vaccinated in Delhi on May 26 and the majority of jabs were provided by private hospitals, AAP MLA Atishi said on Thursday, high-lighting the acute shortage of vaccines the city government has been grappling

She also said 42 per cent of the people (24.32 lakh) in the 45 plus category have received at least one dose of vaccine.

"This is the fourth consecutive day that the vaccination drive for the 18-44 age group has remained suspended," Atishi said.

It's a cause for serious concern. Delhi has not received any more doses from the manufacturers so far. The makers have made it clear that they have been supplying vaccine to states according to the directions by the Centre, she said.

"As many as 34,147 people got vaccinated on May 26. Of this, most of the jabs were given at private hospitals," Atishi said.

She appealed to the central government to immediately approve vaccines such as Moderna, J&J and Pfizer which have been approved for use by around 60 countries.

A total of 52.25 lakh doses have been administered in Delhi so far since the inoculation exercise started on January 16. As many as 11.79 lakh people have

received both the doses.
"Delhi government has exhausted its Covaxin stock for people over 45 Covishield will last only 12 tion, states that all health-days." she said. — PTI care facilities, govern-



Volunteers distribute food to needy people during the lockdown amid Covid-19 pandemic near Safdarjung hospital in New Delhi on Thursday.

Delhi declares 'black fungus' epidemic

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI MAY 27**

The Delhi government on Thursday declared black fungus as an epidemic. With the city witnessing over 600 cases of Black fungus, L-G Anil Baijal issued regulations declaring it an epidemic under the Epidemic Diseases Act to contain and manage mucormycosis in the city.

The Delhi Epidemic Diseases (Mucormycosis) Regulations, 2021, which will be valid for a year from the date of publica-

report each and suspected or confirmed

Anil Baiajl cases of black fungus in the national capital to the city

health department.
All healthcare facilities in Delhi will follow guidelines for screening, diagnosis and management of black fungus issued by the

health ministry, it said. "No person or institu-tion or organisation will spread any information or material for the management of black fungus without prior permission of the health depart-ment," the new regulation stated.

The regulations further said that any person or institution or organisation disobeying these new norms on black fungus shall be deemed to be committing an offence under Indian Penal Code's Section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant).

About 600 cases of black fungus or mucormycosis have been reported here till May 26, with over 200 being recorded on May 23 alone, Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain said on

BJP says pvt hospitals procured more vaccines than Delhi govt

New Delhi, May 27: The BJP on Thursday said private hospitals in Delhi have procured more Covid vaccines than the Delhi government has done on its own as it sought to put the Arvind Kejriwal dispensation in the dock over inoculation gramme and claims about ramping up oxygen production in the city.

BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said the Delhi government has directly procured over 8.17 lakh doses while pri-vate hospitals have bought over 9.04 lakh doses, and wondered if the private facilities are stronger than a government. While Mr Kejriwal does

daily press conferences to do his "politics" and engages in a battle of "one-upmanship", the fact is that his government has on its own provided for only 13 per cent of the total vaccination done in the national capital so far, Patra said, adding that the Centre has given over 45 lakh doses free to it.

Noting that exactly a month back, the Aam Aadmi Party leader had announced that the city will have 44 oxygen plant, including eight from the Centre in a month, Patra sought his response on how many plants his gov-ernment has established

Pfizer should be procured as soon as possible: Kejri

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MAY 27

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday sought pro-curement of Pfizer Covid vaccine as soon as possible to inoculate children. This comes after the US pharma company sought fast-track approval for its

jab in India. The US major has told Indian authorities that its vaccine is suitable for everyone aged 12 years or above and can be stored for a month at 2-8 degrees Celsius, sources had said.

"We should procure this vaccine asap for our children," Mr Kejriwal tweet-ed, citing a news story on fast-track approval sought by the company.
The Delhi chief minis-

ter has been requesting the Central government

The BJP leader also accused him of spreading misinformation over his demand that the Centre should procure vaccines for children as soon as possible after pharma giant Pfizer claimed that its jab has been proved

Arvind Kejriwal to explore suitable vaccine options, citing opinion of experts that a pos-

sible third wave of Covid

in coming months may affect children. The Delhi government has also suggested that the Centre should vaccinate students and teachers if it decides to conduct class 12 Board exams delayed due to the

suitable for everyone over 12 years of age.

second wave of the virus.

Mr Patra said as of now nowhere in the world children are being vaccinated. "We cannot use children as guinea pigs. Kejriwal should not drag them into his politics," Mr Patra

Centre approves ₹5L aid for kin of 26 journos who died of Covid

AGE CORRESPONDENT

The Centre, on Thursday, approved the proposal of the Press Information B u r e a u 's (PIB) Journalist Welfare Committee (JWC) to provide ₹5 lakh each as financial relief to the families of 26 journalists who died due to Covid-19 this year. In the financial year 2020-21, the Central government provided assistance to families of 41 journalists who died

due to the infection. Such aid has now been extended to the kin of a total of 67 media persons. The PIB. under the guidance of Union minister Prakash Javadekar, had compiled and collated the details of journalists who lost their lives due to the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and started a special drive to provide assistance to their families under the JWC.

In its meeting, the JWC decided to provide ₹5 lakh each to the families of 26 deceased journalists. The JWC meeting was chaired by I&B secretary Amit Khare. Joint secretary Vikram Sahay and PIB Principal DG Jaideep Bhatnagar were also present in the meet-

ing.
The PIB reached out to the families of many journalists who lost their lives to Covid-19 and guided them about the scheme and filing of claims. The committee also decided to hold JWC

Black fungus: HC allows duty free import of drug

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MAY 27

The Delhi High Court on Thursday allowed duty import Amphotericin B, used for treating black fungus patients, primarily those affected by it after recovering from Covid-19, on furnishing of a bond by the importers till the Centre takes a final decision on waiving the customs duty on it.

cine is required to save lives of thousands of peosuffering Mucormycosis and the central government shall seriously consider waiver of customs duty till the drug is in short supply in

A bench of Justices

considered the applica-

those journalists who site where a journalist or In a suo-motu move, the

Vipin Sanghi and Jasmeet Singh said: "We direct that

in case the import duty is not waived, the duty shall be paid by the importer."
Mucormycosis or black

The court said the mediiungus

meetings on a weekly basis so that the applications for financial assistance under JWC can be processed expeditiously. The committee has also

tions of 11 families of had passed away due to reasons other than Covid-19. The PIB has given a link on its webthe family members can write to the government for help.

I&B ministry and the

if any import is made by any person of this drug (Amphotericin B), it shall be allowed on a bond furnished by the importer without the actual duty being paid, till a decision is taken by the is taken by the Centre...The bond shall have the undertaking that

is a complication caused by a fungal infecmucormycosis by coming in contact with the fungal spores in the environment. It can also develop on the skin after the fungus enters the skin through a cut, scrape, burn, or other types of skin trauma.

PIB under the guidance of I&B minister Prakash Javadekar had compiled and collated the details of the journalists who lost their lives to coronavirus in 2020 and this year, and started a special drive to provide assistance to their families under the JWS scheme, the ministry said.

Journalists and their families can apply for financial assistance under the JWS scheme through the PIB website,

1,072 cases, 117 more deaths in Delhi On May 2, the city had

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MAY 27

Delhi recorded 117 more Covid fatalities, the lowest since April 15, and 1,072 new cases on Thursday, while the positivity rate dipped to a nearly twomonth low of 1.53 per cent, according to the daily

health bulletin.
This is the fifth day in a row when the daily cases in Delhi have remained below 2,000 and the second consecutive day when the

cases are below 1.500. The number of deaths reported on Thursday (117) is the lowest since

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA

A plea to restrain the

media from 'sensational-

ising' the trial of wrestler

and Olympic medallist

Sushil Kumar in connec-

tion with the death of a

23-vear old man, and

seeking rules for report-

ing criminal cases, was

mentioned on Thursday

before the Delhi High

Court which agreed to

The petition was men-

tioned before a bench of

chief justice D.N. Patel

and justice Jyoti Singh

which allowed it to be

Friday. The plea has been

moved by a law student

alleging that Kumar's

career and reputation

has been damaged by the

media's reporting of the

case against him in con-

for hearing on

hear it on May 28.

listed

NEW DELHI, MAY 27

THIS IS the fifth day in a row when the daily cases in Delhi have remained below 2,000 and the second consecutive day when the cases are below 1,500.

April 15 when the national capital had reported 112 fatalities, while the positivity rate (1.52 per cent) is the lowest since March 23, when it was 1.31 per cent, official data showed.

The national capital had recorded 1,491 cases and fatalities Wednesday with a positivity rate of 1.93 per cent.

with

death

On May 23, a Delhi

court sent Kumar to 6-day

police custody for inter-

rogation in connection

with the killing of a fel-

low wrestler, saying the

allegations against him

are serious in nature and

that no one is above the

Kumar and his associ-

ates allegedly assaulted wrestler Sagar Dhankar

(23) and two of his

friends, Sonu and Amit

Kumar, at the Chhatrasal

stadium here on the

intervening night of May

4 and 5. Sagar succumbed

to the injuries later.

1137/2021

old wrestler.

Chhatrasal

Stadium

brawl that

led to the

the 23-vear-

HC agrees to hear plea to restrain

'media trial' of Sushil Kumar

Delhi had recorded 1,568 cases and 156 fatalities on Tuesday, while the positivity rate was 2.14 per cent. On Monday, the national

capital had recorded 1,550 fresh cases of Covid, 207 fatalities and a positivity rate was 2.52 per cent. On Sunday, 1,649 cases and 189 deaths were and recorded, while the positivity rate was 2.42 per

Since April 19, both daily cases and single-day death count had been spiralling up with over 28,000 cases and 277 deaths recorded on April 20; rising to 306 fatalities on April 22.

registered a record 407 deaths, according to the official data. A total of 70,068 tests,

including 49,348 RTPCR/CBNAAT/TRUN AT and 20,720 rapid antigen tests, were conducted a day ago, according to the health bulletin on Thursday. The 117 fatalities took

the death toll to 23,812, it The number of cumulative cases on Tuesday stood at 14,22,549, while nearly 13,82,359 people have recovered, been discharged migrated, it said.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi paying floral tribute to Indias first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on his death anniversary at his memorial Shanti Van in New

Always at your service

YouTuber held for video of 'flying dog'

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MAY 27

A 27-year-old YouTuber was arrested for cruelty against animals after he uploaded a video showing his pet dog floating in the air with helium gas balloons tied to its collar, the police said on Thursday.

The accused, Gaurav Sharma, who has 4.15 million subscribers on his YouTube channel, is resident Panchsheel Vihar in South Delhi's Malviya

Nagar, it said. In the video shot on May 21, Sharma can be seen with his pet dog in a park. The dog is strapped to a bunch of balloons and is set loose

In the same video, the YouTuber sits on top of a four-wheeler in a narrow street and flies his dog up in the air using



Screengrab of the video showing a pet dog tied to helium balloons.

hydrogen balloons. The dog is seen floating up to a balcony on the second floor of a building. A case was lodged against Sharma under Section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Penal Code, the Disaster Management Act, and relevant sections of the

Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act on the complaint of Gauray Gupta, a member of the People For Animals (PFA) society, deputy commissioner of police (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said, adding that the footage was After receiving criti-

cism for the video, the

another one with apologies the following day. On Sunday, the video

was taken down and Sharma posted another video to explain why he pulled down the original. He pointed out that he told his viewers that safety precautions were taken to keep the dog

"I apologise if you felt bad after watching the Dollar video. I won't try such things again. Those who're getting influenced by such things, please don't get influenced. If senti-ments have been hurt, I truly seek your apolo-Gaurav said.

He said that he took adequate safety measures while shooting the video featuring his pet dog, Dollar, and assured viewers that he would not repeat it in the future.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that the timings of the following Special Trains will be revised as under:-

Train No. & Name	Station	Existing Time		Revised Time		Date (from Originating Station)
		Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.	
02269 Chennai Central - Hazrat Nizamuddin Duronto Special Train	Jhansi Jn.	05:35	05:40	05:30	05:35	Ex. Chennai Central from 28.05.2021
	Gwalior Jn.	06:38	06:40	06:33	06:35	
	Hazrat Nizamuddin	10:50		10:40		
02270 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Chennai Central Duronto Special Train	Gwalior Jn.	19:29	19:31	19:18	19:20	Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin from 29.05.2021
	Chennai	20:45		20:50		

Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

For any kind of Information such as detailed Time-Table and Stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

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SHORT TAKES

UP men threaten doctor, open fire

Noida: Two young men on Thursday allegedly hurled abuses at a doctor and his staff, issued threats and opened fire outside their clinic in Greater Noida after one of them was told to enter only with a face mask on in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the police said. The police said it has arrested the accompanying friend of the key accused, and a nanhunt is underway to nab him. Additional deputy commissioner of police (Greater Noida) Vishal Pandey said the incident took place in Jarcha police station area in the morning when 22-yearold Parmeet, a resident of Phulpur village, had gone to the clinic for consultation with the doctor. "He was not wearing a face mask and was told by the doctor and the clinic staff to not enter without a face mask, as per Covid protocols, However, the words of caution turned into a heated argument and Parmeet left the clinic," Mr Pandey said. — PTI

Relief for orphaned children in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala government on Thursday announced a special package for children orphaned by Covid-19 in the state. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said, "We need to take care of the children who have lost their father and mother due to COVID-19. A special package will be implemented for the care of such children." Under the package, initially, an amount of ₹3 lakh will be given to the children as a lump sum. In addition, an amount of ₹2,000 per month will also be given till they reach the age of 18. "The government has also decided to bear the cost of their education up to the degree level." he said. Meanwhile, 24,166 new coronavirus cases were confirmed in the state on Thursday from 1,35,232 sample tests during the last 24

Odisha: 816 inmates tested Covid+ in May

hours. — PTI

Bhubaneswar: As the second wave of Covid-19 infections sweeps Odisha, as many as 816 prisoners have been tested positive for disease in the state during the month of May 2021, a statement released by the state prison headquarters revealed on Thursday. As per the release, at least 420 prisoners have recovered from the viral disease while others are under treatment as per the protocols of the Odisha health and family welfare department. Till May 26, 658 prisoners have been shifted from over-congested jails with permission of trying courts to Covid care centres, said the prisons department statement. Most importantly, 54 out of 87 jails in the state have not been touched by the Covid pandemic which is a major relief for the government.

RESTRICTIONS IN MAHA NOT TO BE **LIFTED: MINISTER**

SHAHAB ANSARI MUMBAI, MAY 27

Maharashtra Public health minister Rajesh Tope on Thursday informed that the Covid restrictions in the state will not be lifted completely on June 1 as 21 districts still have more than 10 per cent positivity rate. However, the government may allow the shops and establishments to remain open for more than four hours. An issue of lifting lockdown like strict restrictions was discussed in a cabinet meeting which was chaired by Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday. In addition to this, the Covid situation and vaccination drive were also discussed in the cabinet meeting. Mr Tope said that the current restrictions would be extended. He said that discussions would be held with the task force formed by the government to tackle the pandemic to see if shops other than essential items can be allowed to open. However, chief minister Uddhav Thackeray will take a final decision on this. Mr Tope said that in the 21 districts, the positivity rate is lot higher than the average

positivity rate of the coron-

avirus in the state.

■ 'Making unit operational to help ramp up domestic vaccine production'

Lease out Centre's vaccine unit in TN to us: Stalin to PM

CHENNAI, MAY 27

minister M.K. Stalin on Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demand-ing that the Centre hand the now-defunct multi-crore Integrated Vaccine Complex (IVC) at Thirukazhukundram in Chengalpattu district on lease. The state government will make the facility, with an annual production capacity of 585 million doses, operational to produce Covid-19 vaccine, he said in the letter.

The development comes close on the heels of Mr Stalin's visit to the IVC on Tuesday.

This newspaper had published a series of reports on the necessity of reviving the IVC ever since the pandemic outbreak reported in the state in

March last year.
"The state is ready to

Anti-terror

ops in J&K

hampered

amid crisis

The lingering coron-

avirus pandemic has

hampered greatly if not

halted completely coun-

terinsurgency opera-tions in Jammu and

Stating this, the Union

Territory's director gen-

eral of police Dilbag Singh said on Thursday

that a large number of policemen and other

security forces person-

nel too have contracted

Covid-19, thereby mak-

ing it difficult for the

counter-militancy grid to continue its opera-

tions with the pace it would conduct these

The other reason he

gave for limiting these operations is the huge

deployment of uni-

formed forces on the

roads and other public

places to enforce the

lockdown which entered

28th day

Mr Singh, while speak-

southern Kulgam dis-trict, said, "Covid pan-demic has affected anti-

militancy operations to

some extent. But it is not

like we are leaving areas

free for terrorists to

roam around."
"Many policemen and security forces personnel have tested positive

for the virus. But despite

the fact that the J&K

police are fighting Covid

pandemic and enforcing

lockdown through their

deployments on roads

and streets across the

Valley, specific lead

operations are being conducted in South

Kashmir and other parts

Asked if it was true

that the recruitment

of Kashmir," he said.

RAJIB CHOWDHURI

A larger bench compris-ing five judges of the Calcutta high court on

Thursday made the Mamata Banerjee gov-

ernment a party in the

Narada sting bribery

case while giving no relief to the four high-

profile arrested, now

under "house arrest", as

the hearing will contin-

ue on Friday.

The "larger bench"
judges are acting Chief
Justice Rajesh Bindal

Mukerji, Harish Tandon,

Soumen Sen and Arijit

KOLKATA, MAY 27

based

anti-militancy

to reporters in

until recently.

Thursday

YUSUF JAMEEL

Kashmir.

SRINAGAR, MAY 27



A family member performs last rites of a Covid victim at a cremation ground in Amritsar on Thursday.

lease without bearing past liabilities," Mr Stalin wrote to Mr Modi. "We will identify a suitable private partner to start vaccine production at the earliest. Other issues including profit sharing and the existing financial liabilities can be sorted out sub-

sequently." Highlighting the current vaccine shortage across the country, the chief minister pointed out that making IVC operational would help the Centre ramp up domestic vaccine production and help meet the requirements, especially in Tamil Nadu

Universal vaccination is the only panacea available now to fight the raging "Hence, favourable decision has to be taken to fulfill the Prime Minister's vision of self-reliant India," Stalin pointed out.

Mr Stalin recalled that

the IVC, run by HLL Biotech Limited (HBL) under the Union ministry of health and family welfare (MoHFW), was lying dysfunctional after its launch in 2017.

The Centre has already invested around ₹700 crore in this facility, he adding that recent attempts to find a private partner to run the vaccine complex have also not borne fruit.

State health minister Subrahmanian, meanwhile, expressed the hope that the past liabilities and legal disputes can be sorted out once vaccine production started there.

Minor relaxations likely in TN amid rise in Coimbatore cases

AGE CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, MAY 27

Certain minor relaxations to the total lockdown that is now in force could be expected from next week in Chennai and other districts that have shown a decline in the number of daily infections when the government formally makes the announcement on Friday or Saturday.

At a meeting of high level officials and ministers at the secretariat, presided over by chief minister M.K. Stalin, on Thursday to take stock of the Covid-19 situation and chalk out plans to contain the spread of the virus,



suggestion for relax-

with the numbers shooting through the roof in many parts of the state, particularly Coimbatore, there is no possibility of lifting the lockdown all over, the sources said, adding that even the relaxations would be to just allow groceries, vegetable and meat shops to open for a few hours daily and

nothing more than that. The other restrictions that are in place are expected to continue for some more time till the

there was a situation improves all over the state.

Addressing collectors of Coimbatore, Tiruppur, Madurai, Trichy, Salem and Erode Districts, the chief ministers pointed out that the spread of coronavirus in the second wave was high in those district.

Though the strict implementation of the total lockdown had led to a slight fall in infection and deaths in Chennai and neighbouring areas, these six districts had shown an increase in numbers. those they have a robust medical infrastructure both in the government and private sectors.

Bengal lockdown till June 15; board exam dates announced

jute industries due to a

demand. So the workforce

attendance for daily pro-

duction in the jute indus-

tries will be allowed from

30 per cent to 40 per cent

in a shift. The construc-

tion workers can also

start their job if they are

vaccinated even in private. We are now putting

our focus on the super-

spreaders like hawkers,

rickshaw-pullers, fish-

sellers at markets in a

She, however, pointed

out that her government's

strict curbs have resulted

in a mild drop in the daily

details of tender documents can be seen

RAJIB CHOWDHURI

The Mamata Banerjee government on Thursday extended the restrictions due to the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic in West Bengal for another two weeks from May 31 till June 15. It also declared the fresh schedule of the higher secondary and secexaminations, which were recently postponed, in July and August respectively.

Announcing another round of extension of the curbs, the chief minister said, "We are not calling it lockdown. Punjab has been requesting us to increase the ceiling in the

In the evening the state health department, which

model.

is also headed by the mo, said that the daily spike in Covid-19 cases, which was 16,225 on Wednesday, stood at 13,046 while 148 deaths in the last 24 hours dropping from 153 a day before.

The CM also announced that while Class 12 examinations would be held in July, Class 10 examinations would be conducted in August. Both will be held at home centres for 90 minutes less than its scheduled duration and only for the compulsory subjects.

rate of infection in the The schools will give marks for the additional subjects based on internal assessment.

Even their father can't arrest me: Ramdev in new video amid row

Dehradun, May 27: Amid raging controversy over Ramdev's alleged disparaging remarks against allopathy, anocontroversial surfaced on social media in which the yoga guru is seen reacting to the demand for his arrest, saying "even their father cannot arrest him"

"They are just making a noise. They keep creating trends like Thug Ramdev, Mahathug Ramdev, Giraftar Ramdev and so on," he said responding to #Arrest Ramdev trends on social media.

"Arrest to khair unka baap bhi nahin kar sakta Swami Ramdev ko (even their father cannot arrest Swami Ramdev)," he is caught saying in the video.

The IMA has demanded that Ramdev be booked under sedition

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NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, Invites open e-te single packet system for the under noted work:

Balance work of Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 25 KV AC OHE inconnection with Electrification of stabling line no. 8 & 9 at NDLS and Washing line at DLI.

Approximate Cost of work | ₹78,95,480.05/- | Earnest Money Deposit | ₹0.00/-E-Tender Bid online 08.06.2021 (00:00 Hrs.) to 22.06.2021 (15:00 Hrs.)

22.06.2021 (15:00 Hrs.)

E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time Website Particulars where complete www.ireps.gov.in

E-Tender No.: 03A-TRD-NDLS-2021-22 Dated : 27.05.2021

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMAL



General public is hereby informed that this female Name: Laxmi (Along with her daughter Ananaya, Aged- 3 year), W/o Jugal Kishore, R/o G-114, Dakshinpuri, New Delhi, Age: 30 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Normal, Wearing: Light pink & gray colour suit -

silver colour legging, has been missing since 05.05.2021 from her house in the area of PS. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi. In this regard a DD 36A, dated 07.05.2021 has been lodged at

P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this female but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this female and her daughter kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Website: http://cbi.nic.in Fax: 011-24368639 Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi Ph.: 011-29054705, 8750870832 DP/530/SD/2021

Partial unlock in MP June 1, C'garh opens up 15 dists

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY

The Madhya Pradesh government on Thursday decided to unlock the state partially from June 1.

decision taken following recommendation by a ministerial panel constituted by chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to study the current pandemic situation in different districts in the state and suggest if restrictions imposed in the districts could be

relaxed from June one. "The ministerial committee assessed the situation and recommended the state government to relax restrictions imposed in 47 out of 52 districts from June one", state home minister Narottam

militant outfits Mishra said. from among the local He said the pandemic youth has plummeted in situation in the state the recent past, the has been contained conpolice chief "Unfortunately, said, siderably leading to drop in positivity rate recruitment is still takto 2.5 percent and rise ing place, but the graph in recovery rate to 94 is very less compared to previous years.

MP MINISTER said the pandemic situation in the state has been contained considerably leading to drop in positivity rate

> government relaxed lockdown in five districts after the districts recorded dip in positivity rate below five percent.

> Mr Mishra, however, said cinema halls and gyms would remain closed till further order. Besides, restrictions on political activities and festivals

> MP on Thursday recorded 1289 fresh cases and 70 deaths. Meanwhile,

ously contemplating to partially lift restric-

Last week, the state

Calcutta HC makes TMC govt

direction following the

Investigation's petition

dragging chief minister

and Trinamul Congress

supremo, her cabinet

colleague Moloy Ghatak

and her party MP of

Banerjee into the case for their alleged role of

exercising influence on

May 17 after the arrest of

accused including two

Fighting for the CBI, solicitor general Tushar

Serampore

state ministers.

Bureau

a party in Narada bribery case

to 2.5% and rise in recovery rate to 94%

would remain in force. Chhattisgarh govern-

ment has opened up partially 15 out of 27 districts in the state following dip in positivity rates in these districts. Sources said the state government was seri-

tions imposed in the rest 12 districts from



हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने पूरा किया अपना वादा घर द्वार पर दी सुविधाएं ज्यादा से ज्यादा

- 20 किलोवाट से कम विद्युत भार (लोड) वाले घरेलू, वाणिज्यिक, कृषि सहित सभी वर्गों के उपभोक्ता Trust based billing सुविधा का लाभ उठा सकते हैं।
- Trust based billing से प्राप्त बिल का भुगतान अन्य सुविधाओं व बोर्ड की अधिकारिक बैब साईट www.hpseb.in सहित भारत बिल पैमेंट प्रणाली, पेटीएम ऐप, नैट बैंकिंग और नैफ्ट जैसे ऑनलाइन विकल्पों से किया जा सकता है।

जिन उपमोक्ताओं के बिल इस माह के दौरान बन चुके हैं वह इस सुविधा के अंतर्गत दोबारा बिल इस प्रक्रिया से नहीं



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1. हिमाचल प्रदेश स्टेट इलेक्ट्रिसिटी बोर्ड लिमिटेड की आधिकारिक वेबसाइट www.hpseb.in पर जाएं।

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3. Instruction for Trust based billing को OK करने के पश्चात Generate bill कॉलम पर जाएं।

4. अपना Consumer Id या installation number दर्ज करें । अब अपनी वर्तमान नवीनतम विद्युत मीटर रीडिंग दर्ज करें जो की मीटर में स्क्रोल बटन दबाकर देखी जा सकती है और kwh में होती है। कृपया इस रीडिंग में दशमलव दर्ज न करें।

5. अब Enter करते ही विद्युत बिल स्वतः ही स्क्रीन पर आ जाएगा।

6. इस तरह प्राप्त विद्युत बिल का भुगतान अन्य माध्यमों व हिमाचल प्रदेश स्टेट इलेक्ट्रिसिटी बोर्ड लिमिटेड की आधिकारिक वेबसाइट सहित भारत बिल पेमेंट प्रणाली, पेटीएम ऐप,नेट बैंकिंग और नेफ्ट जैसे आनलाइन विकल्पों से किया जा सकता है।



कोरोना से बचने के लिए मास्क पहनें, अपने हाथ बार-बार धोएं, उचित दूरी बनाकर रखें।



सम्पर्क रहित सुविधाएं

देने को बढ़ावा

out even hearing them on May 17 evening.

Mehta argued of "mobocracy" led by the CM and other ruling party lead-

trend continues, a gang-ster's aides would lay siege to a CBI office in protest of it's action. The high court however wanted to know from Mr Mehta then how Article 226 could be invoked unless the allegations of 'mobocracy had an effect on the proceedings of the CBI

submitted that if such a

Court. Appearing as defence counsel Mr Banerjee pointed out the high court's cancellation of bail to the accused with-

Banerjee. It gave the ers after the arrests. He

Kalyan

heavyweight

Station damaged as

train passes through

Bhopal: A railway station in Burhanpur district in Madhya Pradesh suffered damages soon after a superfast express train passed through it on Wednesday afternoon. Signal room of Chandni railway station suffered damages, leading to disruption of train movement in the route for some time. "The incident took place just a few minutes before the Mumbai- Lucknow Pushpak Superfast Express passed through the railway station. The train had to be halted for around 30 minutes at the outer of the railway station following damage to panels in the signal room in the incident", railway sources said. "The incident took place at around 4 pm on Wednesday. Signal room of the Chandni railway station suffered damages", Central railways public relations officer Jeevan Choudhury told this newspaper on Thursday.

NCP legislator's son held for murder bid

Pune: Pimpri Chinchwad

police in Pune district has arrested the son of NCP MLA Anna Bansode in a case of attempt to murder and kidnapping, an official said on Thursday. The case was registered on a complaint by Tanaji Pawar, manager at a solid waste management firm who himself was arrested for allegedly opening fire on the premises of the Pimpri MLA's office on May 12. Mr Pawar claimed that two of Bansode's men kidnapped him from his office in the Akurdi area on the morning of May 12 and took him to a place in Chinchwad where Sidharth Bansode (21), the MLA's son, and 10 to 15 others thrashed him using iron rods, leather belts

Aircraft lands on UP

e-way, nobody hurt

Mathura: A two-seater training aircraft made an emergency landing Thursday on the Yamuna Expressway near here after developing a snag, the police officials said. Both the trainee pilot and the instructor were safe after the aircraft landed on the expressway in the afternoon, the officials said. The Aligarh-bound Cessna-152 touched down as vehicles ran on the highway, one of the most modern in the country. The small plane was returning from Narnaul in pilots of the two-seater aircraft made an emergency landing near the 72nd milestone of the Yamuna Expressway after it developed a snag around 1.15 pm, the SP said. - PTI

Mamata govt to spend ₹1,000cr for Yaas relief

To meet Modi today ■ Bengal estimates damage at ₹15,000cr ■ 5 killed as heavy rains lash state

RAJIB CHOWDHURI and PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI KOLKATA/BERHAMPORE,

A day after "very severe" Cyclone "Yaas" ravaged West Bengal, heavy rains due to depression left five persons dead and injured five others in the state as chief minister Mamata Banerjee estimated the extent of damage due to the natural disaster at around ₹15.000 crores She also announced to spend ₹1,000 crores as Duare Traan (relief at you doorstep) in line with her key initiative Duare Sarkar (government at your doorstep) to rehabilitate the affected.

Among the five victims, two each were from East Midnapore, one of the four worst affected districts, and Murshidabad while one was from

At the state secretariat Nabanna, the CM said, "A preliminary assessment estimates the damage caused by the cyclone at ₹15,000 crores. We are allocating ₹1,000 crores for immediate relief to house building and to meet the agricultural among others. Once the water recedes in the villages in the next seven days, our govern-ment will run *Duare Tran* camps like *Duare Sarkar* for the enrollment of the affected from June 3 to 18 and verify their claims of losses from June 19 to 30. From July 1 to 8 the funds will be distributed to the beneficiaries through the bank transfer mode. No one else can

conduct the relief work."

2 babies born during Yaas' named after

Bhubaneswar: Two babies in Odisha who were born during Cyclone 'Yaas' on Wednesday have been named after the storm. The state government had of the vulnerable areas to cyclone shelters and nearest hospitals before the storm.

As many as 95 babies were born during the storm in various districts of Odisha under active surveillance of state health and family welfare department officials.

The Trinamul Congress supremo, who embarks on a two-day aerial survey of the devastated areas in three districts from Friday, will also meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the afternoon when he lands at Kalaikunda Air Force Station in West Midnapore after taking stock of cyclone-hit

"From Odisha, the PM will fly over Digha to take stock of the extent of the damage before returning Kalaikunda. I will discuss the situation with him at a review meeting there at

around 2.15 pm," she said. Asked if she would demand any special relief package from the Prime Minister, Ms Banerjee, who often alleges of no financial assistance from the Centre, however, kept it secret. "How can I tell you beforehand about what I would tell him?"



People wade through a flooded road in the aftermath of Cyclone Yaas at a village in North 24 Pargana district, West Bengal, on Thursday.

Flood threat looms large in Odisha as rains batter state

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO

BALASORE/ KENDRAPARA,

As the cyclone-hit people in Odisha's coastal districts tried to collect their belongings and hardearned treasures buried deep under the rubbles of their houses that collapsed on Wednesday under the influence of Cyclone Yaas' 150 km per hour gusty winds, a threat of flood loomed large over the state as water levels in major rivers increased on Thursday.

The rivers are in spate since Wednesday due to cyclone-induced heavy downpours in their upper catchments and basins. According to reports, water levels in the rivers Budhabalang, Salandi, Subarnarekha and Baitarani

were rising, causing inun-

dation of low-lying areas, including farmlands. While majority of the rivers were still flowing below their danger marks, the Baitarani touched the red level at Anandpur in Keonjhar district.

'Water levels in some major rivers are rising. But there is no reason to panic as it is the peak summer and the water will flow down to the sea in the river beds without causing any harms to embankments," said spe-

cial relief commissioner

P.K. Jena. He. however. assured that engineers of water resources departensure that no breaches occur at places. Chief minister Naveen

Patnaik on Thursday made an aerial survey of the cyclone-hit areas and later reviewed post cyclone relief and restora tion work at a high level meeting.

The chief minister has asked collectors of the affected district to submit their cyclone damage reports evening.

Reports last came in said water level Baitarani is above 38.36 metres at Anandpur.

PM Modi will visit Odisha, WB today

Minister Narendra Modi reviewed the impact of Cyclone Yaas at a meeting on Thursday during which he asked the central and states agencies to ensure that normal life is restored in the affected

areas at the earliest.
The Prime Minister chaired the meeting during which officials made a detailed presentation on various aspects of preparedness, assessment of damage and related mat-ters, the PMO said in a statement

According to another PMO statement, Mr Modi will visit Odisha and West Bengal on Friday and will chair review meetings in the two states to assess the impact of the cyclone.

an aerial survey of the affected areas in the two states, it said.

Cyclone Yaas pounded parts of India's eastern coast on Wednesday, killing at least four people and forcing more than 21 lakh people to be evacuated to safe shelters in West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand.

At the meeting held on Thursday, it was informed that about 106 teams of National Disaster Response Force were deployed with 46 teams each in West Bengal and Odisha that rescued more than 1,000 people and removed more than 2.500 trees and poles that had fallen and obstructed roads, the PMO said.

8L affected in J'khand, rescue ops underway in some places

Ranchi, May 27: At least eight lakh people in Jharkhand have been Cyclone "Yaas", which barrelled through the state early on Thursday, unleashing copious rain that lashed parts of the state, including Ranchi, and throwing life out of gear in many

areas, officials said. Around 15,000 people have been evacuated and moved to safety, and rescue operations are still underway in East Singhbhum district among other places, as water level in several rivers, including Kharkhai and Subarnarekha, continues to flow above the danger mark.

One person has been killed due to lightning in Bokaro. R.K. Jenamani, a senior

scientist of IMD, said the cyclone, which has now weakened into depression, is hovering over south Jharkhand, 75 km west of Jamshedpur.

"We have issued alerts for 'extremely heavy rain-

■ Assam police releases images of culprits, announces award

Girl tortured by 5, video goes viral

MANOJ ANAND GUWAHATI, MAY 27

A video posted by the official handle of the Assam police showing a young girl being brutally tor-tured by five men in Assam has gone viral on social media. The video shows five unidentified men thrashing and torturing a young girl.

However, the time or place of this incident is not clear. In view of the viral video, the Assam police has released the images of the five suspected culprits and sought more information from the public leading to their

announced a reward for



mation about the culprits.
"These images are of 5

culprits who are seen brutally torturing and violating a young girl in a viral video. The time or place of this incident is not clear. Anyone with informa-

tion regarding this crime or the criminals may please contact us. They The police has also will be rewarded handsomely," the Assam police



of suspects said in a post from its

In the viral video, the culprits can be seen slapping the girl, believed to be from the northeast, and also nitting the victim's face before stripping her

> Taking the note of the viral video Union minister Kiren Rijiju in his social media post through his official Twitter handle

girl from Northeast being brutally raped and tor-tured by 4 men & 1 women is not related to Jodhpur suicide case. I had a detailed discussion with the Police Commissioner of Jodhpur. However, there must be all-out efforts by all State Police to catch the devils.

The special commissioner of Delhi police, Robin Hibu, told reporters that police is trying to ascertain the identities of the criminals

He also clarified that this video has nothing to do with the late Lovikali Sumi, a Nagaland resident who had committed suicide in Jodhpur, Rajas-

India keeping a close watch on China-backed project in Lanka

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, MAY 27**

Government sources on Thursday said India is watch on developments regarding the Chinesebacked Colombo port city project in neighbouring Sri Lanka, adding that New Delhi hopes that concerns raised by Sri Lankans themselves on the project are looked into.

Sources also said the project should be transparent and respect the sovereignty of Sri Lanka, and hinted that if it is purely commercial, then there could be no objection. However, New Delhi not yet formally

raised the issue with Colombo, sources said. The views reflect New Delhi's concerns about

the increasing Chinese footprints in the island nation amid apprehensions from certain quarters that the project could also be utilised by the Chinese military at a later Sources also pointed out

that the final text of the project bill has not yet been made public. The Kajapaksa protners President Gotabaya and Prime Minister Mahinda – are seen as pro-China.

According to media reports, the Sri Lankan Parliament recently approved the controverEconomic Commission Bill, with the island nation's government saying the Chinese-backed project would bring in investment and boost the island-nation's economy. Sri Opposition parties reportedly alleged the bill would lead to the creation of a Chinese colony in Sri Lanka.

sial Colombo Port City

meanwhile, Sources. also said India was watching political developments in Nepal closely, adding that the impression in some quarters that New Delhi was tacitly backing embattled Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli

Save Lakshadweep, its future under threat, Rahul tells Modi

■ Continued from Page 1 ecological sanctity is evident

in the draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation.

"Livelihood, security and sustainable development are being sacrificed for commercial gains... Under the guise of development and maintaining law and order in a low crime union territory, the draconian regulations penalise dissent and undermine grassroots democracy," his letter said.

The administrator has also taken over the control of the local administrative powers of the elected Zilla panchayat regarding education, health care, agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries. He also gave a nod to opening liquor bars in the island, a non-alcoholic zone due to its Muslim population, to promote tourism, and introduced a beef ban while eliminating non-vegetarian food from the menu of Anganwadi children. The tribal population of Lakshadweep is about 95 per

■ Continued from Page 1

Sciences. The doctors imme-

diately placed a tube inside

the abdomen and drained

about one litre of bile-stained

A team of surgeons led by

THE CONG had demanded the immediate removal of the Lakshadweep administrator, alleging he is not only destroying the peace and culture of the islands, but also 'harassing' the people by imposing arbitrary restrictions

cent and beef is part of their regular diet. Mr Gandhi wrote, "The

administrator has unilaterally proposed sweeping changes without duly consulting elected representatives or the public. The people of Lakshadweep are protesting against these arbitrary

actions. The Congress leader alleged that proposed changes to the Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation 2021, Lakshadweep Animal Preservation Regulation 2021 and lifting of restrictions on sale of alcohol are a deliberate assault on the cultural

fabric of the local communi-

Patient with Covid-19 has 'white fungus'

food pipe. A part of the small

intestine had developed gan-

grene and sloughed off, and

the patient had multiple

thinned-out patches in the

wall of the colon with one

ty. He further wrote, "I request you to intervene in this matter and ensure that orders are withdrawn. The people of Lakshadweep need a developmental vision that respects their way of life and reflects their aspirations.

The Congress had earlier demanded the immediate removal of the Lakshadweep administrator, alleging he is not only destroying the peace and culture of the islands, but also "harassing" the peo-ple by imposing arbitrary restrictions.

Lakshadweep was a Covid-19 green zone during the first wave of the pandemic in India. Protesters allege that loosening quarantine and travel rules by Mr Patel has led to Lakshadweep having the "highest positivity" rate.

Lakshadweep reported its first Covid-19 cases on January 18. It now has over 7,000 cases of Covid-19. According to Census-2011, Lakshadweep has a population of less than 65,000.

Keep Covid norms in force till June 30: Govt

Continued from Page 1 under a strict lockdown since April 17, has been significant decline in fresh infections. On Thursday its new cases came down to 1,072, and the positivity rate dipped to 1.53 per cent, while there were 117 deaths. It is likely that Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal might announce a graded easing of the lockdown from June 1. However, several states have extended the lockdown till June 15, including West Bengal.

Maharashtra, which has faced the worst of the pan-demic, decided not to lift all Covid-19 restrictions as 21 districts still have a positivity rate of more than 10 per cent. "Relaxations could be given in districts where the cases are declining, but not in the entire

state. The guidelines will be issued in a few days," Maharashtra health min-

ister Rajesh Tope said. With India's vaccination drive for the 18-44 age group almost coming to a halt and second-dose vaccination for the 45-plus also being stretched in the absence of sufficient vaccine doses with the states and UTs, the Centre has started pursuing global vaccine players more vigorously. The Union health ministry said Thursday it was in talks with companies like Pfizer, Johnson Johnson Moderna.

"We are engaged with Pfizer as they have indicated the availability of a certain volume of vaccines in the coming months, possibly in July. They have against liability to all nations. We are examining this request. There is no decision as of now," said Dr V.K. Paul, Niti Aayog's

member (health). The Centre has said it "proactively" eased the entry of vaccines approved by America's FDA and the British, European Union and Japanese health regula-tors, as well as those on the WHO's Emergency Use Listing into India, and these vaccines will not need to undergo prior bridging trials. The provision has now been further amended to waive off the trial requirements altogether for all well-established vaccines manufactured in other countries and no application of any foreign manufacturer for approval was pending

with the drugs controller. Officials said many rounds of discussions have taken place with Pfizer, J&J and Moderna, and all assistance was offered to have them supply or manufacture their vaccines in India. "However, it is not that their vaccines are

> need to understand that buying vaccines interna-tionally is not similar to buying 'off-the-shelf' items. Vaccines are in limited supply globally, and companies have their own priorities, gameplans and compulsions in allocating finite stocks," officials

tive vice-chairperson, said the Sputnik V Russian

vaccine will be available

Shobana

available in free supply. We Kamineni, Apollo Hospitals' execu-

the Apollo Hospitals from the second week of June. Meanwhile, Dr Paul said plating holding trials on giving cocktail doses of vaccines to people on a trial basis. However, he said as per protocol, vaccinators must stick to the same dose of vaccine as the first one. "You ask me if a person can get inoculated with a vaccine different from the one he received in the first dose, scientifically and theoretically it is possible. But recommending this is an evolving situation and there is no robust scientific evidence. Only time will tell," Dr Paul said when asked about the incident Siddhartha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, where 20

villagers were given two

Follow law, don't defame India: Govt to Twitter

allegations to defame India

and was dictating terms to the world's largest democracy. The ministry of electronics and IT issued a statement saying, "Twitter's statement is an attempt to dictate its terms to the world's largest democracy. Through its

actions and deliberate defi-

ance, Twitter seeks to

undermine India's legal

system.' Stating that Twitter has refused to comply with the new digital rules requiring identification of the originator of a flagged message

istry said the purported commitment of the US-based firm to India not only sounds hallow but completely self-serving.

'Twitter needs to stop beating around the bush and comply with the laws of the land," the ministry said without saying what action it could take in case non-compliance continued. Police said Twitter's statement was "mendacious" and design-ed to

impede a lawful inquiry.
Twitter and the Thursday, the Delhi Police said Twitter was purport-Government of India have ing to be both investigatbeen on a collision course and adjudicating since the social networking authority and had "taken

by ruling BJP leaders on the alleged "Congress toolkit" — purportedly a strategy document to tarterms of service, to adjudicate the truth or otherwise of documents in public space". The reference being to the alleged "toolkget the government over Covid — as fake or "manipit" which was tagged as ulated media". This led to "manipulated the Delhi Police raiding Twitter uses fact-checking Twitter's empty offices in websites. Delhi and Gurgaon late on The Delhi Police is inves-Monday. Twitter India's

tigating the allegedly fake "toolkit" on a complaint filed by the Congress.

Delhi Police said it had gone to the Twitter office to ask its India head to join the investigation as the messaging platform seemed to have information based on which it

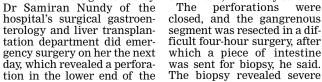
"Twitter has a large user base in India, it earns significant revenue from its Indian operations but is

manipulated media.

declared the "toolkit"

also the most reluctant to appoint an India-based grievance redressal officer and mechanism, chief compliance officer and nodal officer to whom its own users can complain when they are subjected to offensive tweets," the IT ministry said. It went on to say that Twitter employees are safe in India and there is no threat to their personal security.

The biopsy revealed severe



small leak, Dr Nundy said. The perforations were closed, and the gangrenous segment was resected in a difficult four-hour surgery, after

wall with resultant perforation and necrosis caused by invasive white fungus. Dr Arora said. Her antibody levels were markedly elevated, and after she was put on antifungals showed remarkable improvement, he said. But five days later she had to undergo a second surgery for a small leak from the anastomotic site and is currently

ulceration of the intestinal

and appointing grievance

employees have been on

In its statement on

work-from-home

since March 2020.





THE ASIAN AGE

28 MAY 2021

Stop govt repression of Lakshadweep residents

The quiet life of about 70,000 people in Lakshadweep, an archipelago of 36 islands in the Arabian Sea about 300 km off the Kerala coast, has been in turmoil for the last six months, in direct consequence to the efforts of Praful Khoda Patel, a BJP leader from Gujarat, who landed in the Union territory as administrator in December last year. Mr Patel has been working overtime to overturn, both through legal and administrative measures, every system that has been existing there — some for centuries, some recent — creating deep

resentment among the people.

The administrator has taken over the powers of the local self-governments with respect to agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, health and education, virtually denuding the elected representatives of whatever little say they have in the administration of their society. The newly introduced Lakshadweep Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation 2021 provides for preventive detention of people whom the administration feels engaged in or preparing for activities which include crimes are normally tried under IPC and Information Technology Act,

The government must instead strengthen the local self-government system in Lakshadweep. quickly and undo the damage the administrator has done.

2000. That the goonda act, as the new regulation is called, is sought to be imposed in a place which has reported hardly a heinous crime in decades shows the intentions of the administrator in poor light. The Lakshadweep Animal Preservation Regulation 2021 the administrator It must act, and act has introduced seeks to ban cow slaughter and consumption or sale of beef in any form in a place where an estimated 65 per cent of the population consumes meat. The draft Lakshadweep Town and Country Planning Regulation 2021 virtually ends the rights of landowners once

that land falls under the development plan of the administration.

Apart from the legal route, Mr Patel has launched a series of administrative actions that has left the islanders high and dry. Among them are the demolition of makeshift-yards where the fishermen keep their boats to save them from the marauding cyclones which never fail to touch the island and the introduction of bureaucratic procedures for emergency evacuation of medical cases to Kerala, depriving the people of their assurance of emergency medical help.

Union territories are formed with a view to taking to tiny communities the benefits of the best of Indian democracy; it is undemocratic, unfair and unjust to serve them the worst of it. Every single act of Mr Patel is aimed at unsettling the lives of the people with little regard to their welfare or opinion. It is nothing less than an assault by the mighty Indian State on a hapless people and an attempt to impose its will and lifestyle on a society which is made up of 93 per cent indigenous people who have been classified as Scheduled Tribes.

The Union government must immediately recall Mr Patel and stop the process he initiated in the island at the earliest. The government must instead strengthen its local self-government system to administer the people taking the best of Indian democratic traditions.

Lakshadweep and its people are geo-politically and strategically important to India. Short-sighted, thoughtless and haphazard acts of administrators sent from Delhi should not be allowed to play havoc with it. The Union government must act, and act quickly and undo the damage the administrator has done.

Minimise curbs on social media

he new IT laws that have kicked in seek to moderate content on social media and most major platforms are planning to fall in line. Accountability in hosting content in media is desirable but the grave danger is the government, in its zeal to thwart what it sees as content aimed at denigrating its leaders, might use the laws to abridge the freedom of expression which has been a great feature of

Indian democracy.

The reaction to WhatsApp going to court on the premise that users will lose their privacy protection has been projected as a challenge to India's sovereignty, which it is not. As a platform that essentially enables communications, WhatsApp has apprehensions regarding its end-to-end encryption which ensures confidentiality of messages shared between individuals and groups. There is a need for further engagement on this count as over 500 million users, including many departments of the Government of India, use WhatsApp regularly.

If a law challenged is seen as an affront to official India it only betrays the authoritarian nature of government. What is needed is a more nuanced approach to find a balance between the right to privacy and the need to allow action against malicious content, like those which have harmed Indian society as in rumours spread on internet platforms leading to the exodus of northeastern people, the lynching of and denigration of minorities etc

As the county with the most recorded objections to social media content. India must realise it needs to liberalise laws on content that are way too draconian, respect the right to privacy in matters that do not transgress the laws of the land and face up to the Internet age freedoms without trampling upon them.

The knotty issue involving those wishing to establish a wholesome degree of control over social media just to aggregate more power and the millions of Indians who use global platforms for their sheer convenience must be resolved by placing the most reasonable restrictions on fundamental rights through fair grievance



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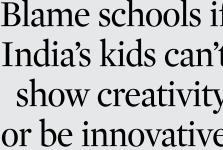
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e often hear educators lamenting the lack of creativity and innovativeness in Indians as a whole. Indeed, it is shocking that hardly any inventions have emerged from India in the past 50 years. However, we can't continue to blame our colonial shackles for the lack of creativity in terms of

inventions and patents. reasons for this sad state of affairs. which steadily destroys imagination

tional system. of plagiarism is woefully absent in our school education. This year, when we announced in school that we would be tackling the issue of plagiarism, one of our senior students spoke up, saying: were not warned about this when we produced cut-and-paste projects and presentations in the lower classes?" out for factually correct and visually attractive presentations rather than original work. Unfortunately, our board examiners too reward students who produced attractive portfolios, the contents of which were gleaned from the Internet. Before the advent of the Information Age, the cut-and-paste jobs were carried out with the help of illustrated books and magazines, scissors

Forget about projects and presentathemselves and to do their own a rainy day. Moreover, students have always been encouraged to quote at sented research-based evidence of his

In art class children have been made to copy images and patterns. Imaginative composition — if set as an

and modified to conform to the teacher's ideas. Where music is concerned, how many children are encouraged to compose their own tunes? It is a shame that creative writing is not part of the regular school curriculum. In language and grammar classes, a child's originality is killed at the primary level itself. A schoolboy, asked to write a sentence with "mother", had his simple sentence: "My mother has big eyes". But this was crossed out with a thick red marker and changed to: "My mother is a noble lady". The next sentence, "I hate drinking milk", using the word "milk", was rejected in favour of: "Milk is a nutritious drink". The poor boy was being set in a mould cre-

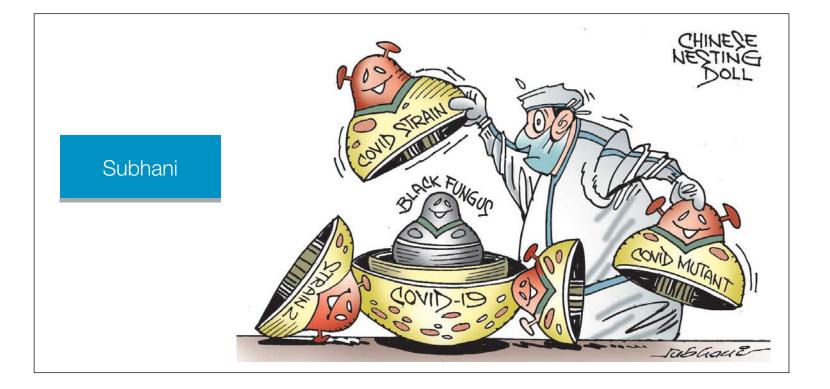
pen again?

Also, looking upon the prescribed textbook as the students' Bible causes considerable damage to creative minds. If an answer was based on the subject-related textbook, it was marked correct, but if certain "key" phrases and terms were not used but explained in the student's own words, it was more than likely that the student would be heavily penalised. This is what defeats

correct all these mistakes and the lacunae of the past and begin by introducing the concepts of plagiarism and intellectual property right from the iunior classes. It is true that much of early learning happens by observing and imitating. But children are imaginative too. We teachers must learn to foster this natural gift and be less rigid about the need to conform. As Picasso said: "All children are born artists. The problem is to remain an artist as we

As children grow older, they could be taught to consciously acknowledge the sources from where they have taken content. This practice, if well inculcated in our young, will go a long way to making them intellectually honest. Apart from developing academic honesty, educators should encourage and celebrate original work. When our children join school in the kindergarten, they are curious, imaginative and creative. It is we adults who cramp their style and freedom by straitjacketing them. The fault that India does not produce inventors lies in ourselves

> The writer is a veteran school educator based in Kolkata



7 yrs of PM Modi: Can he lead us out of the abyss?



Karan Thapar

As I See It

s we approach Narendra Moseventh anniversary as ister I think I've realised why so many are disappointed with him. The one quality we looked for when we voted for him in 2014 — and which some believe they had found in immediate years the immediate years
thereafter — is what is
missing today when we
most need it. And it's
called Leadership.

Let me explain what I
mean. I'm not simply

referring to assertiveness and conviction. They are necessary but not sufficient. What I have in mind is the capacity to paint a vision for the future, convince the country to ascribe to it and then boldly lead towards its realisation. It might sound fanciful but it's not unlike leading Israelites through the parted waters of the Red Sea to the promised land to deliver.

Think back to 2014. Perhaps he was misunderstood but Dr Manmohan Singh was widely perceived as a paralysed Prime Minister. Not just silent but also a prisoner of his own coalition and, even, his own party. He was not his own man and, therefore, could not be our leader either. The country saw him as Mrs Sonia Gandhi's "poodle" and he did precious little to

change that impression. Mr Modi, on the other hand, presented himself as the chief minister who had worked miracles in Gujarat. Many accepted that as fact and refused to entertain any doubts because they wanted a saviour. Here was a selfmade man who had risen by his own efforts and talent. He didn't carry the burden of family nor the taint of compromise. He also had the gift of oratory and thus knew how to present himself. During the 2013-14 campaign he sold himself to us and we read

ily bought him. Yet behind this truth lies another and it's possibly more important. Each of us saw in him what we wanted to see even if it wasn't there. The Narendra Modi that we voted for was probably more our creation and less of his own making.

So you could say disappointment and disillusionment were perhaps inevitable. The real Narendra Modi was bound to be different from the image we had created and convinced ourselves we were acquiring. But in the early years so strong was our belief in him that we overlooked — foolishly and myopically — the first signs our faith had been misplaced. We found excuses for his impetuous and thoughtless demonetisation. We accepted his silence when Muslims were baited and lynched or dalits thrashed for being uppity, on the grounds that the Prime Minister can't speak on every occasion. Indeed, most people didn't even pay heed when he mistook mythology for science. Finally, the way the diaspora cheered him and foreign leaders like Barack Obama, Theresa May, the Asean heads of government and Middle Eastern potentates courted him convinced us that this was

There's no doubt on some things he has made a difference — Swachchh Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, medical insurance and electricity in villages. We applauded him, forgetting it's what governments are elected to do.

Mr Modi defied his own scientists and continued with massive political rallies and shahi snans. He didn't care this could fan the flames. Ultimately, when the pot boiled over, he handed the problem to the state governments.

quite a man.

Even when the scales began to drop — and for some they did fast and furiously — there was a reluctance to accept that the Prime Minister lacked the one quality we so badly wanted: Leadership. His promises of a \$5 trillion economy or doubling farmers' incomes in five years were a beguiling illusion many refused to see through. His boast of standing up to Pakistan and making India feel good again was bombast but we failed to recognise it as hot air. His talk of reform was tantalising because we knew we needed it badly — but he didn't deliver, yet many kept

hoping that he would. Of course, there's no doubt on some things he Swachchh Bharat, Jan Dhan, Ujjwala Yojana, rural roads and houses, medical insurance and electricity in villages. We applauded him for this, forgetting that it's what governments are elected to do. These aren't extraordinary achievements. They are just the simple expectations of needy people. Perhaps this is why he gets little credit for them

It was against this background the Covid-19 pandemic hit us and we suddenly realised that our colossus has feet of clay. He had nothing to say beyond the trite and the foolish. He reduced us to banging dishes and lighting candles, all in the hope this "mahabharat" could be won in 21 days. Even his fabled oratory took flight. In the early months he didn't stop speaking, but what he said was lead en. I suspect he realised this because he soon opted

The last year has revealed a Prime Minister

who has failed repeatedly and has only himself to blame. He failed to anticipate how many vaccines we need and we are, as a result, woefully short. Yet all he had to do was enhance capacity by supporting our own vaccine manufacturers. It would have been "atma nirb-har", but he didn't do it. After that he defied his own scientists and continued with massive political rallies and shahi snans. He didn't care this could fan the flames. Ultimately, when the pot boiled over, he handed the problem to the state governments. He told them to acquire their own vaccines, knowing it would be both expensive and difficult to do, whilst exacerbating the problem by opening up vaccinations for every adult in the country although he knew the jabs did not exist. In one single stroke he made a bad problem considerably worse.

So if I were to say our great leader — the man we thought could be our Moses — has led us into a blind alley, would I be wrong? If I were to say the qualities of strength and decisiveness that we identified in 2014 have turned and recklessness, would I be wrong? If I were to say the power of speech that mesmerised us when we heard it from Madison Square Garden become theatrical and, even, exasperating, would

I be wrong? Now the only question is this: Is Mr Modi the Prime Minister to lead us to the other shore? The truth is that we have no other. We have to believe he is. We have three years to find out, but for all our sakes I hope he has it in him. We can't change captains midsea, particularly when we don't know if there is another cyclone heading our way. But when we reach dry land, we must ask ourselves two simple questions: Why did we err in our judgment? And can we be certain it won't hap-

> The writer is a television commentator

MOMENT OF TRUTH

The WhatsApp messaging service, owned by Facebook, has approached the Delhi high court against India's new rules for intermediaries. One key requirement for large social media providers is that under certain conditions, they will have to trace the originator of a message. The fear is that if an option is given to break the end-to-end encryption used by WhatsApp, it will lead to mass surveillance. The case by WhatsApp could lead to a reckoning on the right to privacy as it pertains to online platforms and on the safe harbour provisions for social media. It will be a moment of reckoning.

C.K. Javanthi Maniam Navi Mumbai

REINVENT EDUCATION

TO BE OR NOT to be is no longer a Shakespearean dilemma. It has been endlessly nagging the Indian high school student for two years now. Assuming that we all do and hold the exams, do we then go back to the ever-confusing college admissions system with impossible cut-offs set at 99 per cent. Here, Covid-19 provides India an opportunity to reinvent higher education per se and college admissions in particular.

R. Narayanan Navi Mumbai

GANDHIAN DEPARTS

THE DEATH of centenarian H.S. Doreswamy removes from the scene a freedom fighter, citizen activist, journalist and anti-corruption crusader. He joined the free dom struggle at a young age and was jailed during the Quit India Movement and the Emergency. Strongly influenced by Gandhian ideology, Doreswamy remained a committed Gandhian until the end and never craved any official position. May his tribe increase!

N.J. Ravi Chander Bengaluru

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.



Blame schools if India's kids can't show creativity or be innovative

It is upsetting to learn from the latest data compiled by WIPO, the Genevabased World Intellectual Property Organisation, that in 2019, companies like Samsung and Huawei filed more international patent applications each than the whole of India. India was responsible for less than one per cent of the total global applications for patents that year. It is also disturbing to know that unlike colleges and universities abroad, our higher educational institutions have no presence at all in this area. It has been inferred that not only do these figures indicate the sad state of innovative initiatives in India, they also confirm the low spending in research and development by our government. It is important to explore the

There are many deep-rooted reasons

for this intellectual famine that our country has been experiencing. Most people cite rote learning in schools, and creativity in young minds, as the main culprit. This article will deal with a single major reason — that is the unconscious but constant reinforcement of plagiarism in our entire educa-

First, the very concept and awareness "No offence meant, but why is it we She was spot on. Schools always looked

tions, even answers to questions and essays have been written with the help of readymade notes and guidebooks. Since these fetched enviably high scores, including in the board exams, they were in great demand, making it unnecessary for students to think for research or write their own notes. I remember an oft-repeated joke that you could write a good essay on almost any topic if you prepared just a single essay on God. So, if you were asked to write an essay on "a rainy day", you could write about God's natural creations, which included the sky and earth, sun and of course rain, and then move on to length, to enhance the richness of an answer or essay. Even in undergraduate class, students quoted writers to support an argument, but seldom pre-

assignment — was usually "corrected"

ated by his unimaginative teacher.

the making of independent minds.

It is extremely urgent today that we

BAGHDAD TENSE AFTER MILITIA COMMANDER HELD

Baghdad, May 27: Tensions mounted in Iraq's capital after the arrest of a militia commander on terrorism charges prompting a dangerous showdown by the detainee's paramilitary supporters and the Iraqi government.

The confrontation began on Wednesday after Iraqi security forces arrested at dawn militia leader Qassim Mahmoud Musleh based on a judicial investigation and arrest warrant on terrorism charges, Iraq's mili-

tary said in a statement.

Musleh is the head of the Popular Mobilisation Forces in Anbar province. Shortly after the arrest, forces affiliated with the PMF, which maintains offices inside the heavily forti-fied Green Zone, were deployed surrounding Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi's headquarters. Tensions reached fever pitch when Iraqi security forces and the elite Counter-Terrorism Service were deployed to protect the government and diplomatic missions.

HAWKING'S ARCHIVE, OFFICE ACQUIRED

London, May 27: London's Science Museum and the Cambridge University library said Wednesday they have acquired a large collection of items belonging to late physicist Stephen Hawking, from his personalised wheelchairs to landmark papers on theoretical physics and his scripts from his appearance on The Simpsons.

The entire contents of Hawking's office at Cambridge, including his communications equipment, memorabilia, bets he made on scientific debates and office furniture, will be preserved as part of the collection belonging to the Science

Museum Group.
Hawking occupied the office at the university's department of applied mathematics and theoretical physics from 2002 until shortly before his death in 2018. Highlights will go on display at the London museum early next year. Museum officials are also hoping to create a touring exhibition in the UK before setting up a permanent display in London.

3 JAILED OVER '17 BARCELONA **ATTACKS**

Madrid, May 27: A Spanish court on Thursday imposed prison sentences ranging from 8 to 53 years on the three surviving members of an extremist Islamist cell that killed 16 eopie and injured 140 otners in two consecutive attacks in and near Barcelona in 2017.

The three convicted by Spain's National Court were accused of forming part of the cell or aiding it, but not of directly carrying out the attacks. Two cell members, including a Muslim cleric believed to have been the ringleader, died in an apparently accidental blast at a country house while preparing explosives before the attacks.

Six more were shot and killed by police after driving vehicles into groups of bystanders in Barcelona and the nearby coastal town of Cambrils. The Isl amic State group later claimed responsibility for their actions. A panel of judges convicted Mohamed Houli Chemlal, a 24year-old Spaniard who surviv-

ed the explosion days ahead of the attacks, and Driss Oukabir, and originally from

U.S. RESIDENT SOUGHT BY CHINA FREED IN DUBAI

Dubai, May 27: A permanent resident of the United States wanted by China was freed by Dubai on Thursday, taking off on a flight to Turkey after spending weeks in detention.

Beijing had sought Wang Jingyu over his online comments about a deadly confrontation between Chinese and Indian forces last year.

Activists and his supporters say plainclothes police officers arrested the 19-year-old student as he came off an Emirates flight in April at Dubai International Airport, trying

to connect onto New York The State Department acknowledged his arrest, described the case as a human rights' concern and warned that he could have faced extradition to

He was freed just hours after The Associated Press began asking questions about his

China.

Wang's case comes as the United Arab Emirates, long a US defence partner in the Mideast, has drawn closer to China in recent years in trade and in efforts to combat the Coronavirus pandemic.

UK health min defends virus record

Hancock responds after ex-aide Cummins alleged govt's poor Covid response caused deaths

London, May 27: Britain's health minister on Thursday defended his handling of the Coronavirus pandemic after a former top government aide alleged the government's botched response had led to tens of thousands of needless

Health Secretary Matt Hancock hit back after Dominic Cummings singled him out for criticism in an excoriating attack on the government. In testimony lawmakers

to lawmakers Wednesday, Cummings accused Hancock of lying to the public and said he "should have been fired" for mistakes including testing failures that saw patients with the virus discharged from hospitals to nursing

Thousands of people died with Covid-19 in British care homes in the first months of the outbreak. Hancock said "the unsubstantiated allegations around honesty are not true." "I have been straight with people in public and in private throughout," he told legislators in the House of Commons.

"Every day since I began working on the response to this pandemic last January, I've got up each morning and asked: What must I do to protect life?" Cummings, who left his job as Prime Minister Boris Johnson's top adviser in November, claimed the government's slow and chaotic initial response, and Johnson's failure to learn from mistakes, meant that tens of thousands of people had

died unnecessarily.

He said Johnson was "unfit for the job" of prime minister. Johnson brushed aside the criticism, saying "some of the commentary I have heard doesn't bear any relation to reality." "What people want us to get on with is delivering the (reopening) road map and trying, cautiously, to take our country forward through what has been one of the most difficult periods that I think anybody can remember," he told reporters on Thursday. Opposition Labour Party health spokesman Jonathan Ashworth said that, whether or not Cummings' allegations were true, the government had questions

'These allegations from Cummings are either true, and if so the secretary of state (Hancock) potentially stands in breach of the ministerial code ... or they are false and the prime minister brought a fantasist and a liar into the heart of Downing Street," he said.



A waiter sets up tables at an outdoor dinning area of a restaurant in Islamabad on Thursday as restaurants prepare to reopen for outdoor dining following a lift on a nationwide lockdown imposed to curb the spread of the Covid-19.

Melbourne set for fourth lockdown as cluster grows

Canberra, May 27: Australia's second-largest city was set to enter its fourth lockdown Thursday as concern grew over the rapid spread of infections from a Coronavirus variant. The seven-day lock-down for Melbourne and the rest of Victoria state comes after a new cluster in the city rose to 26 infections, including a person who was in intensive care. Another 10,000 people

have had some degree of

contact with those already

infected. "Unless some-thing changes, this will be increasingly uncontrolla-ble," Victoria Acting Premier James Merlino said. The federal government declared Melbourne a hot spot, which entitles the city to additional federal resources. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said 218 military personnel were in Victoria helping in pandemic operations and more would be sent if

vaccine doses were also

being sent to Victoria. Only 3.9 million vaccine doses have been administered among Australia's population of 26 million. Health Minister Greg Hunt described the lockdown as "highly regrettable, but necessary restrictions under the current circumstances. People will only be able to leave home to shop for food and essential items, provide or receive care, exercise, work or Merlino asked. Additional study if they are unable to do so from home.

FB reverses course, won't ban laboratory virus theory

Washington, May 27: Facebook has reversed its policy banning posts suggesting Covid-19 emerged from a laboratory amid renewed debate over the origins of the virus, raising fresh questions about social media's role in

policing misinformation.

The latest move by Facebook, announced late Wednesday on its website, highlights the challenge for the world's largest social network of rooting out false and potentially harmful content while remaining open for discourse.

"In light of ongoing investigations into the origin of Covid-19 and in consultation with public health experts, we will no longer remove the claim or manufactured from our

 A RECENT Wall Street Journal report said three researchers from China's Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick in November 2019, ahead of the wider outbreak of

the disease.

apps," the statement said. 'We're continuing to work with health experts to keep pace with the evolving nature of the pan-demic and regularly upda-te our policies as new facts and trends emerge." The new statement updates guidance from Facebook in February when it said it would remove false or debunked claims about the novel Coronavirus which created a global pandemic killing more than three million. The move President Joe Biden's directive to US intelligence agencies to investigate competing theories on how the virus first emerged through animal contact at a market in Wuhan, China, or through accidental release from a research laboratory in the same city.

Biden's order signals an escalation in mounting controversy over the origins of the virus which emerged in Wuhan.

A recent Wall Street Journal report, citing a US intelligence report, said three researchers from China's Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick in November 2019, ahead of the wider outbreak of the

-AFP

POLITICS BEHIND U.S. CALL FOR VIRUS ORIGIN PROBE: CHINA

Beijing, May 27: China on Thursday accused the Biden administration of playing politics and shirking its responsibility in investigation into the origins of the Coronavirus pandemic that was first detected in China in late

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a daily briefing that President Joe Biden's order showed the US "does not care about facts and truth, nor is it interested in serious scientific origin

tracing". Biden told US intelligence officials to redouble their efforts to investigate the origins of the pandemic, including any possibility the trail might lead to a Chinese laboratory.

After months of minimising that possibility as a fringe theory, the Biden administration is joining worldwide pressure on China to be more open about the outbreak, aiming to head off Republican has not been tough enough to press China on alleged obstruction.

Taiwan struggles with test backlog

Taipei, May 27: Facing Taiwan's largest outbreak of the pandemic and looking for rapid virus test kits, the mayor of the island's capital did what anyone might do: He Googled it. "If you don't know, and you try to know some-thing, please check Goog-le," Taipei Mayor Ko Wenje quipped.

Praised for its success at keeping the virus away for more than a year, Taiwan had until May recorded just 1,128 cases and 12 de-

But the number of locally transmitted cases started growing this month

that the central governme nt was ill prepared not only to contain the virus, but to even detect it on a large scale due to a lack of investment in rapid testing. That left officials like Ko scrambling to catch up as the number of new infections climbed to some 300 a day.

Ko's search put him in contact with six local companies who make rapid tests and his government was soon able to set up four rapid testing sites in a district that had emerged as a virus hotspot.

FDA NOD TO THIRD ANTIBODY DRUG

Washington, May 27: US health officials have granted emergency authorisation to a third antibody drug to help reduce hospitalisations and deaths due

The FDA said Wednesday it authorised the drug irom GlaxoSmithKline and Vir Biotechnology for erate cases of Covid-19 who face extra risks of severe illness, including

underlying health prob-

to Covid-19. seniors and those with

There has been low demand for two similar

drugs already available, due mainly to the logistical hurdles of delivering them and confusion about their availability. US their availability. health officials have been trying to raise awareness the treatments, connecting people who test positive for Covid-19 with information about nearby

3 cops wounded in Dallas shooting

Flower Mound (US), May 27: Three officers were and wounded Wednesday night while answering a report of a suicidal person in a Dallas suburb, police said.

The three officers were responding to a 911 call about 7 p.m. Wednesday at a house in a Flower Mound residential neighbourhood about 25 miles (40.23 kilometres) northwest of Dallas. According to a police statement, they were trying to contact the man, who was alone in the house, when gunfire erupted from inside.

The officers returned fire, but police have had no contact with the man since a standoff ensued.

THE THREE officers were responding to a 911 call about 7 p.m. Wednesday at a house in a Flower Mound residential neighbourhood about 25 miles northwest of Dallas. They were trying to contact the man, who was alone in the house, when gunfire erupted from inside.

Two officers were taken to hospitals in stable condition, while the third was treated at the scene of the shooting and cleared. No further information was immediately avail-

Garcetti US 'envoy' to India Washington, May 27: President Joe Biden is expected to nominate Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, a trusted political ally, as America's next ambassador to India, according

to media reports. Biden is expected to announce the names of political ambassadors, including for India, as soon as next week, according to a report in Axios.

President Biden, a Democrat, is also expected to announce Nicholas Burns the ambassador to China and Rahm Emanuel and Tom Nides as ambassadors to Japan and Israel respectively, the report in the American news website said on Wednesday.

Garcetti, 50, who served as the co-chair of Biden's presidential campaign,

PIO VENKATARAMAN NOMINATED TO **KEY BIDEN ADMINISTRATION POST**

Washington, May 27: US President Joe Biden has announced his intent to nominate Indian-American trade expert Arun Venkataraman to a key position in his administration related to foreign

commercial service. Venkataraman is the nominee for Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service and Assistant Sec-

was initially considered

Mayor of Los Angeles, the

second-largest city in the United States, after New

Garcetti is the 42nd

for the Cabinet.

Department of Commerce, the White House said on Wednesday. With over 20 years of

retary for Global Markets,

experience in advising companies, international organisations and the US government on international trade issues. Venkataraman is currently the Counsellor to the Secretary of Commerce. -PTI

York City. The important position of US envoy to India has been lying vacant since January 20. In the absence of a fulltime ambassador. Daniel

Smith, the director of the Foreign Service Institute, who recently served as acting Secretary of State and Acting Deputy Secretary of State, has been sent to New Delhi to serve as Charge d'Affaires, ad interim. However, the White House declined to comment on the nomination of Burns or Garcetti, saying no one is final until they're announced."

According to the Axios report, the White House is still finishing the vetting process for potential ambassadors, including Garcetti, following which, Biden is expected to formally send more than a dozen names to the Senate to begin the confirmation process for his first batch of political ambassadors.

POLITICAL ITSUNAMI Politicians accused of corruption, ties to drug trafficking, rape, murders

Wild claims of crime boss shake Turkish govt

Ankara, May 27: Millions of Turks have been glued to their screens, watching a crime boss tell wild stories about international drug smuggling, murders and the murky ties between politicians and the mafia.

But the gang boss starring in these videos is real, and his claims have set off a political tsunami that has unsettled President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government, leaving his popular interior minister particularly exposed.

The accusations thrown

by Sedat Peker at close Erdogan allies — including a former prime minister, top officials and their relatives - range from corruption and drug trafficking to rape and multiple murders. Peker's message, delivered with dramatic flare and punctuated by occasional tweets, appears to have gripped the imagination of so many because of his own reputed role in Turkey's underworld.

a man who knows everyth-

ing about everyone, Peker

is an ultranationalist co-

the United Arab Emirates, where he speaks into a camera from a carefully arranged desk and chuckles while telling a particularly juicy tale.

After only addressing the allegations obliquely, Erdogan on Wednesday force-Speaking with the air of

"We have crushed crimi-

nvicted of multiple crimes, including fraud and ruming a criminal organisations one by one for 19 years," Erdogan said in parliament. "We tion. He fled Turkey last follow criminal gang members wherever they may flee to in the world." No year to avoid prosecution and now claims to live in heads have rolled and the position of Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu — the anti-hero of Peker's stories - still seems to be secure. Erdogan has insisted he stands "side by side" with his nationalist minister. But while the allegafully defended his governtions remain unproven, ment's record on tackling they come at an inoppororganised crime. tune time for Erdogan,

opinion polls because of a depreciating currency and runaway inflation. Peker, 49, has already posted seven videos to his

YouTube account, each about an hour long — the latest, posted Sunday, has had more than 14 million views — and he says he is planning several more. They are all meticulous-

ly staged, with a big screen in the background showing still images and a different book on the table in each episode. One of them features a biography of Bob Dylan, entitled

"Wicked Messenger". Peker has accused expremier Binali Yildirim's

son, Erkam, of setting up international drug routes. He also alleges that former interior minister Mehmet Agar was involved in the 1993 murder of a prominent investigative reporter.

Both the former prime minister and Agar have dismissed the claims.

Turkey specialists have compared the videos to a 1996 scandal in which a fugitive mafia boss and a senior police official were killed. — AFP

GERMANY LAYS 1ST STONE FOR 'HOUSE OF ONE'

Berlin, May 27: Religious leaders and politicians in Berlin laid the foundation stone Thursday for a new multi-faith place of worship which aims to bring Christians, Jews and Muslims together under one roof.

"The idea is bigger than the building," project director Roland Stolte said at a ceremony to mark the beginning of construction work on the so-called "House of One". Conceived a decade ago, the ambitious project is scheduled to open by 2025 on Museum Island in central Berlin. Built on the site of a former church which

was demolished under the former East German communist regime, the building will contain three separate places of worship for Christians, Jews and Muslims. Yet the mosque, the

synagogue and the protestant church will be connected by a large communal hall designed to host communal events and festivals. "It's a very symbolic step forward for us," said Kadir Sanci, who will be the imam of the future mosque.

"In these times of polarisation which cast a huge shadow on the world, the 'House of One' embodies the constructive spirit of faith and spirituality," he added. It would be "a place of peace and security" at a time when tensions between Berlin's Jewish and Muslim communities have flared.







who is losing ground in







FINANCIAL

INDICATO	%	
Sensex	51,115.22	0.19
Nifty 50	15,337.90	0.24
S&P 500*	4,206.76	0.26
Dollar (₹)	72.59	0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	102.49	0.63
Euro (₹)	88.49	0.78
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,223▼319	0.66
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	69.16	0.42
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.987	0.25
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.617	0.043
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

US first quarter GDP unchanged at robust 6.4%

The US economy grew at a robust annual rate of 6.4 per cent in the first three months of this year, unchanged from the government's initial estimate. The recovery from last year's deep recession gained steam at the beginning of this year, helped by vaccines to combat the virus and trillions of dollars in government assistance. The rise in the GDP was the same as the government's first look one month ago.

Sun Pharma Q4 net zooms over 2-fold to ₹894 cr



Sun Pharmaceutical Industries reported a more than two-fold iump in consolidated net profit to Rs 894.15 crore for the March quarter, from Rs 399.84 crore a year ago, mainly on a robust performance in the Indian market. Consolidated total revenue from operations stood at Rs 8,522.98 crore against Rs ,184.94 crore. For the full year 2020-21, Sun posted a net profit of Rs 2,903.82 crore against Rs 3,764.93 crore.

Ikea launches shopping app in India

Swedish home furnishing retailer Ikea announced the launch of its shopping app in India, in a bid to expand its omni-channel approach in the country. The Ikea app would be available on both iOS and Android platforms and will offer 7,000 home furnishing products, Ikea said in a statement. Customers from cities Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Baroda will be able to buy products with the app, Ikea said.

BPCL says no plans to sell stake in Petronet, IGL

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) said it has no intention to sell a part of its stake in Petronet LNG Ltd and Indraprastha Gas Ltd (IGL) to help its new owner avoid making an open offer for the two gas companies. "We have no intention to pare down our stake in IGL or Petronet. Any paring down will be value destruction," BPCL director (finance) N. Vijayagopal said at an earnings call with investors.

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■ Health crisis more pervasive and debilitating than financial crises

Near-term outlook clouded: RBI

FALAKNAAZ SYED

The Covid-19 pandemic has unleashed a once-in-a-lifetime crisis on the world economy and the outlook remains grim. India's nearterm outlook is clouded, with an accentuation of downside risks and potential externalities of global spillovers, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in its annual report for 2020-21, published on Thursday. Faster vaccination holds the key to an escape from the pandemic, said the RBI.

The central bank warned that compared to "financial crises, a health crisis can be more pervasive, persistent and debilitating in its impact on the real economy. Letting down the guard is perilous; it is best to prepare for future

It also rued the fact that private investment is the missing piece in the story

FROM THE RBI ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

RBI balance sheet size increased by ₹3.72 lakh crore to ₹57.07 lakh crore as on March 31, 2021, up 6.99 % from ₹53.34 L cr on June 30, 2020

Covid 2.0 biggest risk to growth forecast

For a self-sustaining GDP growth trajectory post-Covid, a durable revival in private consumption and investment demand would be critical as they account for around 85% of GDP

Services sector contraction unprecedented in **Indian history**

Inflation remains a key concern, constraining monetary policy from using any available room to support growth

of the Indian economy in 2020-21 and reviving it awaits an environment in which 'animal spirits' are rekindled and entrepreneurial energies are released so that backward and forward linkages and multipliers prepare the ground

for a durable investment-

driven recovery.

"Embattled by new waves of infections and mutant strains of Covid-19, the slow pace of inoculation in several parts of the world and visceral vaccine protectionism, the global and domestic outlook has once again turned grim and

uncertainty and downside risks," the RBI said

The central bank said the impact and the duration of the second wave of the pandemic are the biggest threats to its growth estimates for the country for the ongoing financial year, with consensus gravitating towards its earlier forecast of 10.5 per cent.

The report said the deterioration in major fiscal indicators in 2020-21 may be attributed to the pandemic superimposed on a cyclical slowdown in tax revenues and a counter-pandemic fiscal push through higher government expenditure.

Going forward, growth revives and the economy gets back on track, it is important for the government to adhere to a clear exit strategy and build fiscal buffers, which can be tapped into in events of future shocks to

It also said that it will ensure a comfortable level of liquidity in the system during the current financial year and monetary transmission will continue 'unimpeded"

The apex bank asked banks to closely monitor their bad loans and pre-pare themselves for higher provisioning in the wake of the second wave and the Supreme Court order lifting the ban on classification of non-performing assets. The waiver of compound interest on all loan accounts which opted for during moratorium March-August 2020 may put stress on banks' financial health. The RBI, however, noted that banks are better positioned than before in managing stress in their balance sheets in view of higher capital buffers, improvement in recoveries and a return to profitability.

Paytm eyes \$3 bn IPO, more than \$25 bn valuation

SARITHA RAI

Paytm, India's leading digital payments provider, is aiming to raise about Rs 21,800 crore (\$3 billion) in an initial public offering late this year, according to a person familiar with the deal, in what could be the country's largest debut ever.

The startup, backed by investors including Berkshire Hathaway Inc, SoftBank Group Corp and Ant Group Co, plans to list in India around November and its offering could coincide with the Diwali festival season, said the person, asking not to be named because the details are private.

Paytm, formally called One97 Communications Ltd, is targeting a valuation of around \$25 billion to \$30 billion. The One97 board plans to meet this Friday to formally approve the IPO, said the person. Paytm declined to comment in response to emailed questions. If successful, Paytm's

initial share sale would surpass Coal India Ltd's offering, which raised more than Rs 15,000 crore in 2010 in the country's largest IPO so far. Banks shortlisted to run the Paytm offering include Morgan Stanley, Citigroup Inc and JPMorgan Chase & Co, with Morgan Stanley the leading contender, the person said. The process is expected to get rolling in late June or early July. The banks did not immediately respond



Viiav Shekhar Sharma

to requests for comment. The public market debut will include a mix of new and existing shares to meet regulatory obligations in India. The country's regulations require that 10 per cent of shares are floated within two years and 25 per cent within five years. Paytm, led by founder and chief executive officer Vijay Shekhar Sharma, has been focusing on ramping up revenue and monetis-ing its services over the past year. It's expanded beyond digital payments into banking, credit cards, financial services, wealth management and digital wallets. It also supports India's financial payments backbone, the Unified Interface or UPI.

Paytm has fended off stiff competition from a swathe of global players including Walmart Incowned PhonePe, Google Pay, Amazon Pay as well as Facebook Inc-owned WhatsApp Pay. It has the biggest market share of India's merchant payments. Paytm has over 20 million merchant partners and its users make 1.4 billion monthly transactions. — Bloomberg

Prices of edible oils, pulses to pressure inflation

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, MAY 27

The sharp price rise in edible oils and pulses had led to historically high infla-tion in March. Pressure from these food items is likely to persist in view of supply-demand imbalances, says the RBI.

Oils and fats went through a sharp price build-up, leading to a historically high inflation of 24.9 per cent in March 2021. Precautionary buying on account of the pandemic and rise in interna-

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD

The RBI has warned of a

bubble formation in the

Indian equity market in

the context of a sharp

contraction in GDP in

2020-21 and soaring stock

The widening gap between stretched asset

prospects for recovery in

real economic activity,

has emerged as a global policy concern, the RBI

said in its Economic

Review, as the central

bank wondered if the

bubble in stock markets

surged across the coun-

tries due to unparalleled

levels of monetary and

fiscal stimulus, and the

turn in market senti-ments following positive

news on the development

of and access to vaccines

and the end of uncertain-

ty surrounding US elec-

tion results," RBI said. "India's equity prices

also surged to record

highs, with the bench-

mark index (Sensex)

crossing 50,000 mark on January 21, 2021 to touch

"Prices of risky assets

relative

prices.

rational?

led to this adverse development. In fact, international food prices firmed up from June 2020, primarily led by palm oil, sunflower oil and soybean oil prices, driven by supply shortfalls as well as depreciation of the US dollar, the RBI said in its annual report.

In order to contain the price escalation, basic customs duty (BCD) on crude palm oil was revised down to 27.5 per cent from 37.5 per cent with effect from November 27, 2020. However, it got revised fur-

Multiple events fuelling

stock market 'bubble'

February 15, 2021, which

represents a 100.7 per cent

increase from the slump just before beginning of

the nationwide lockdown

(i.e., since March 23, 2020)

and a 68.0 per cent

increase over the year 2020-21. This order of

asset price inflation in the

context of the estimated 8

per cent contraction in

GDP in 2020-21 poses the

risk of a bubble," the apex

bank noted. "The stock price index is

mainly driven by money supply and FPI invest-

ments. Economic pros-

pects also contribute to

movement in the stock

market, but the impact is

relatively less compared

to money supply and FPI.'

the present stock market

valuation, by comparing

(P/E) ratio with its histor-

ical trend, the trailing

P/E ratio of Sensex hov-

ering between 30 to 35 (31.9 on Thursday) was at

an all time high since the

year 2000. "The deviation

of the actual P/E from its

long-run trend shows that

Measures of dividend

the ratio is overvalued."

price-to-earnings

According to the RBI,

ther to 32.5 per cent when the agricultural infrastructure development cess was introduced in the budget. Increasing global prices, increase in export levy on crude palm oil by Indonesia from December 2020 and imposition of 8 per cent export tax on crude palm oil by Malaysia from January 2021 kept prices high.

Similarly, prices of pulses recorded a 45-month high inflation of 22.8 per cent in April 2020 primarily led by tur and urad. Prices witnessed robust

yield also signal that mar-

kets are getting over-

priced, it said. A decom-

position of changes in equity prices indicate

that the rise in equity

prices during 2016 to early

2020 was mainly support-

ed by a decrease in inter-

est rates and equity risk

premium, with increase

expectations contributing

Thereafter, a spike in ERP on Covid-19 concerns

initially contributed to

equity prices declining

sharply to compensate for

increased risks. However,

equity prices registered an impressive recovery,

subsequently, aided by easing of equity risk pre-

"Currently, dividend yields have fallen below

their long-term trends. As such, two-way price

movements are possible

The RBI attributed the

record stock market rise to multiple events, includ-

ing liquidity infusion by the central bank, govern-

ment's Rs 1.5 lakh crore

PLI schemes for 10 sectors

and record high FPI

inflows, among others.

mium," the RBI said.

going forward."

to a lesser extent.

of April-May and September-November 2020, reflecting stockpiling by consumers, lockdown and rain related supply disruption and a decline in kharif pulses production, higher exports and lower imports during April-

February 2020-21. The government released 2 lakh tonnes of tur from the buffer stock through open market sales, extended the time limit for import of tur under an import quota of 4 lakh tonnes for 2020-21 as

BEZOS WILL PASS

BATON TO NEW

CEO ON JULY 5

on December 31, 2020, expedited imports of urad under the already issued import quota of 1.5 lakh tonnes and extended the MoU with Mozambique for import of 2 lakh tonnes of tur for another five years. With pulses production rising by 6 per cent for 2020-21 over 2019-20, tur, gram and masur prices eased during December 2020-February 2021.

However, the RBI expects that pressures from pulses and edible oils might persist in view of supplydemand imbalances.

Cadila seeks human trial nod for antibody cocktail



Jeff Bezos

New York, May 27: Amazon founder

Amazon from an internet bookstore to an online shopping behemoth, said Wednesday Amazon executive Andy Jassy will take over the

meeting. He explained that it was exactly 27 vears ago on that date in 1994 that Amazon was

Seattle-based Amazon. com Inc announced that Bezos was stepping down as CEO in February, but didn't provide a specific date. Jassy, his replacement, currently runs the company's cloud-computing business.

Bezos has picked a date to step down as CEO. Bezos, who

CEO role on July 5.
"We chose that date because it's sentimental for me," Bezos said during an Amazon shareholder

incorporated.

Andy Jassy

May 27: Zydus Cadila has sought regulatory approval for clinical trials of its antibody cocktail to treat mild Covid-19, as the country grapples with a short-age of medicines and vaccines needed to effectively tackle a devastating second wave of the pandemic.

The treatment candidate, ZRC-3308, was earlier shown to reduce lung damage during animal trials, the drugmaker said, adding it was found to be

safe and well-tolerated. The therapy is a cocktail of two monoclonal antibodies, which mimic natural antibodies that the body generates to fight infection.

"At this juncture, there is a critical need to explore safer and more efficacious treatments to Covid," Zydus Cadila's managing director, Sharvil Patel, said in a stock exchange filing.

The company is seeking permission to conduct early-to late-stage human clinical trials from the Drugs Controller General of India The US FDA has given

emergency use authorisations to similar treatments developed by Vir Biotechnology and GlaxoSmith-Kline as well as ones made

SANOFI, GSK KICK OFF PHÁSE III TRIAL FOR COVID SHOT

DOMINIQUE VIDALON

Sanofi and GlaxoSmith-France's Britain's Kline launched a latestage human trial for a recombinant Covid-19 vaccine candidate on Thursday which they hope to get approved by the end of 2021. The study is one of the first late stage trials that combines tests for boosters and variants. Their double-blind phase III study would include more than 35,000 adults in the US, Asia, Africa, and Latam.-Reuters

by Regeneron Pharma-ceuticals and Eli Lilly Regeneron and Roche's

be distributed by drugmaker Cipla. The first batch of the cocktail became available in the country earlier this week.

- Reuters

antibody cocktail has also received emergency use approval in India, and will

EXTRAORDINARY | YEAR | Consumer staples, healthcare sectors generated highest listing gains

IPOs give decadal high listing returns in FY21

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, MAY 27

The RBI annual report, released on Thursday throws light on primary equity market dynamics as FY20-21 proved to be a year of decadal high average IPO listing returns at 36 per cent, which according to the RBI, might have been fuelled by oversubscription along with other factors in play, like underpricing of IPO as well as

nesses attracting listing premium. "The exuberance witnessed in the secondary market gripped the pri-

consumer-focused busi-

mary market, with the year 2020-21 turning out to be an extraordinary one for initial public offers (IPOs) by Indian companies, as 21 out of 29 IPOs have generated positive returns for investors on listing," the RBI said.

"A sector wise analysis of 201 IPOs over the last 10 years (2011-12 to 2020-21) indicates that IPOs from consumer staples and healthcare sectors generated the highest listing gains in India.

Main board IPO average listing returns in the last 10 years (sector-wise) were –consumer staples (27.5 per cent), healthcare (21.4 per cent), industrials (16.5 per cent), materials (15.4 per cent), information technology (15.2 per cent), consumer discretionary (14.6 per cent), financials (12.7 per cent) and communication services (4.3 per

"The firm specific characteristics are found to be not statistically signifi-cant in explaining the price run-ups on the IPO listing day," RBI said and felt oversubscription as a major factor for the listing gains/returns. "Thus, the decadal high average IPO listing

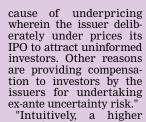
returns of 36 per cent realised during 2020-21

IPO issue size.'

might have been fuelled by Delving on underpricing

an average oversubscription rate of 71.3 times of

of IPOs as one of the reasons for higher listing gains, the RBI said, 'Information asymmetry is regarded as the root underpriced,



oversubscription rate is a signal to the investors in the secondary market on the potential increase in share prices and expected

returns."
Also, RBI's study of last 10 years IPOs on BSE and NSE suggest's that IPOs issued during the boom period are relatively more

The primary segment witnessed increased activity during 2020-21.
Resource mobilisation through IPOs, follow-on public offers (FPOs) and rights issues increased by 43.1 per cent to Rs 1.1 lakh crore during 2020-21 from Rs 76,965 crore in the previous year, the RBI said.

Of these, Rs 46,060 crore were mobilised through 57 IPO/FPO issues, out of which 27 issues amounting to Rs 246 crore were listed on the SME platform of BSE and the NSE. Resource mobilisation through rights issues rose to Rs 64,059 crore in 2020-21 from Rs 55,642 crore.

ASCI ASKS INFLUENCERS TO DISCLOSE PAID BRAND PITCHES



Dolly Singh

Mumbai, May 27: Come June 14, with wide following on social media who advertise brands from their accounts will have to disclose paid partnerships, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) said on Thursday. self-regulatory body pegged the size of

the digital influencers industry at \$150 million, with digital marketing coming a long way over the past few years. It has been engaged in

stakeholder interactions since last year and released a draft of the influencer advertising guidelines in February Dhruv Chitgopekar,

founding partner of the Collective Artists Network and the chief executive of Bigbang.Social, who was among those consulted, told reporters that influencers started off as "guerillas" on the marketing scene but are now at the forefront.

He exuded confidence that the guidelines will not result in any dip in revenues for such influencers and there will be better transparency.
Dolly Singh, a digital

influencer, admitted that she has seen a dip in engagement ever since she started disclosing a paid partnership but urged everyone to be

more optimistic. ASCI secretary-general Manisha Kapoor said the organisation has hired technology firms to trawl content to identify nondisclosure.

Its chairman Subhash Kamath said so far it has seen 95 per cent compliance with its actions after flagging norm violations, and if nothing works, the body can also escalate it to the sectoral regulators.

















SHORT TAKES

Nadal, Djokovic & Roger in same half

Paris: Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer, the three most successful men in Grand Slam tennis history, were on Thursday all drawn in the same half of the French

Having slipped to number three in the world, it was always likely that Nadal, the 13-time champi on, would face top-ranked Djokovic before the final. The two great rivals could now meet in the semi-finals this

Djokovic is top seed and could possibly face 2009 winner Federer in the quarterfinals. All three men are chasing history at the French Open which starts on Sunday. Nadal and Federer are locked on 20 Grand Slams each while Djokovic, who has 18, can become the first man in over half a century to win all four majors on more than one occasion. - AFP

Nagal misses

French Open cut

Paris: India's top player Sumit Nagal could not make a hattrick of Grand Slam main draw appearances following a straight-set defeat in the second round of the French Open Qualifying event here. The Haryana youngster crashed out of the Clay Court major with a 3-6, 3-6 loss to Alejandro Tabilo from Chile, last night. In the engrossing contest that lasted one-and-a-halfhours, Nagal could break the serve of his rival, ranked 23 places below him at 146, only twice while he himself dropped his serve five times. With the defeat of the 23-yearold from Jhajjar, India's challenge has ended in the Ramkumar Ramanathan, Prajnesh Guneswaran and Ankita Raina have already exited from the tournament. — PTI

Osaka won't talk

to media in France

Paris: Tennis star Naomi Osaka says she is not going to speak to the media during the upcoming French Open. The world's highest-earning female athlete wrote in a Twitter post on Wednesday that she hopes the considerable amount that I get fined for this

will go towards a mental health

charity. The French Open is scheduled to begin Sunday in Paris. Osaka heads into the clay-court tournament ranked No. 2 in the world. The 23-year-old Osaka has won four Grand Slam titles. That includes last year's U.S. Open and the Australian Open

this February. "I've often felt that people have no regard for athletes mental health and this very true whenever I see a press conference or partake in one," wrote

Athletes to be vaccinated for Olv

New Delhi: Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Thursday said all the Tokyo Games-bound athletes and officials have got their first Covid-19 vaccine and they will get their second doses before their departure from the country for the multi-sporting spectacle.

"The IOA is ... ensuring that all the participants through the IOA for the Tokyo Olympics including athletes, technical officials and delegate members will follow all precautions and will be vaccinated before leaving for Japan," the IOA said. presently each of the above (athletes, technical officials and delegate members) has had the first vaccination and 2nd will happen as per vaccination protocols," IOA President Narinder **Batra and Secretary General** Rajiv Mehta said in the state-

76ers exorcise Wizards 120-95

ment. - PTI

points. — AFP

Los Angeles: Ben Simmons silenced the critics with a 22 point, nine rebound, eight assist Philadelphia 76ers routed the Washington Wizards 120-95 to grab a 2-0 playoff series lead on Wednesday. Joel Embiid also scored 22 points and grabbed seven rebounds while **Tobias Harris garnered 19**

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per copy.



Villarreal players celebrate winning the Europa League final against Manchester United in Gdansk, Poland, on Wednesday.

ILL-A-REA

Gutsy Villarreal kill Man U with last kick in sudden death

Gdansk (Poland), May 27: Villarreal defeated Manchester United 11-10 on penalties to win their first major trophy after a 1-1 draw in the Europa League final as goalkeeper David de Gea missed the decisive spot-kick in a remarkable shootout.
Gerard Moreno gave

Villarreal the lead 29 minutes into the Spanish first European final, but Edinson Cavani equalised early in the second half before Unai Emery's team prevailed on spot-kicks, extending United's four-year trophy

Eric Bailly replaced the injured Harry Maguire in central defence, with the United captain surprisingly named among the substitutes despite suffering ankle ligament damage two weeks ago.

De Gea started ahead of Dean Henderson in goal, while Paul Pogba took up a more orthodox midfield role as Fred was only deemed fit enough for a spot on the bench.

early between Juan Foyth and Pogba left the former Tottenham defender bloodied but both sides were slow to click into gear on a damp and chilly night on the Baltic coast.

Carlos Bacca's clever rabona cross created an opportunity for Pau Torres, the centre-back linked with a summer move to United, while



Villarreal players throw their coach Unai Emery into the air as they celebrate winning the Europa League final match against Manchester United in Gdansk, Poland, on

Marcus Rashford tested shirt. Geronimo Rulli with a More alpping effort from alstance.

Yeremy Pino scuffed wide on the counter, but Villarreal were ahead.

Dani Parejo swung in a free-kick from the left and Moreno peeled away from Luke Shaw and Victor Lindelof, steering beyond De Gea as the Swede desperately tugged at his

Villarreal equalled the club record of former

Manchester United forward Giuseppe Rossi. United continued dominate possession as Villarreal soaked up the pressure, Spaniards remained a

threat as Torres curled over at the end of normal time. Weariness and a raft of

Moreno's 82nd goal for tempo in the closing stages as the rain intensi fied with penalties almost inevitable

The first 21 penalties were successfully converted before De Gea had his attempt palmed away by Rulli as United lost for the sixth time in seven shootouts, handing Emery a record fourth Europa League crown.

substitutions slowed the

-AFP

Mark not happy with ECB's take

London, May 27: Former opener Mark Butcher feels the ECB should have agreed to the BCCI's request to change the Test to poportunity where the opportunity was the opportunity where the opportunity where the opportunity was the opportunity where the opportunity where the opportunity was the opportunity where the opportunity was the opportunity was the opportunity where the opportunity was the opportunity was the opportunity where the opportunity was the opportunit series schedule to accommodate the remaining games of IPL as it would have given the England Board the leverage to get top Indian players for its Hundred' tournament.

The Indian Board had informally made a request to shift the five-match Test series between India and England, starting August 4, by a week in order to accommodate the remaining 31 IPL games but it has not met with any favourable response from England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

'Well, listen. I take a deep breath here ... as does the nation. I think it's a massive missed opportunity," Butcher said during the

latest Wisden Cricket
Weekly Podcast.
Butcher said accepting
the request would have
given ECB the leverage to get top Indian cricketers such as Virat Kohli and M. S. Dhoni for 'The Hundred' tournament, the ECB's flagship project.
"...the ECB is absolutely

desperate to make this (Hundred) work. They have to be, they have bet the house on The Hundred, but at every turn, it seems

you'll say 'Okay, we'll bite the bullet... We would do this for the BCCI on the proviso that we get Kohli, Dhoni, whoever we like, signed up for three years to play in The Hundred, start-

ing 2022'," he added. The inaugural edition of 'The Hundred', a 100-ball tournament involving eight men's and women's teams, was scheduled to take place last year but was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"And you have leverage for the first time ever: you have something that they need, that they want. Obviously, the BCCI will lose a lot of money if they don't get the IPL in the window," Butcher said.

"You also have the extraordinary spectacle of the IPL being finished at the behest or because of English cricket. And you use that lever in order to get something you desperately need. So I think there's an opportunity missed," he added.

The IPL was suspended early this month after multiple Covid-19 cases were reported inside its bio-bub-ble.

ASIAN BOXING

ZIDANE RESIGNS AS

REAL COACH WITH

IMMEDIATE EFFECT

Madrid, May 27: Zinedine

Zidane has resigned as Real Madrid manager

with immediate effect, the

Spanish club said Thursday just days after they were beaten to the La

Liga title by Atletico

The Frenchman's departure comes at the end of a

disappointing campaign

for the 13-time European

champions, who also lost

to Chelsea in the Champions League semi-finals, as they failed to win

a trophy for the first time

now respect his decision

and express our gratitude

for his professionalism, dedication and passion

over the years and what he

means to Real Madrid," a

Only 10 days ago Zidane,

who has a contract until

2022, denied press specula-

tion ne nad aiready toid

his players he would be

leaving at the end of the

season. "How am I going

to tell my players that I am

going now? It's a lie," he

said after a 1-0 win at

"I'm focused on this sea-

son. There is a game left

and we are going to give everything," he said.

Athletic Bilbao.

club statement said.

Madrid.

Mary stands tall, cruises into final

Dubai, May 27: Six-time world champion M. C. Mary Kom (51kg) and Sakshi (54kg) stormed into the Asian Boxing Championship finals after notching up gruelling victories in their last-four stage bouts here on

Thursday.
While Mary Kom prevailed 4-1 over Mongolia's Lutsaikhan Altantsetseg, two-time youth world champion Sakshi upstaged top-seeded Kazakh Dina Zholaman 3-2. However, Monika (48kg)

settled for a bronze medal after going down 0-5 to secseeded Balkibekova Kazakhstan. The top-seeded Mary Kom dug from her

nuge reservoir of experi ence to outwit the sprightly Altantsetseg. The veteran's right hooks were particularly impressive in a compelling performance. She fought with

perilously low guard despite the aggressive intent shown by her rival and relied on her sharp reflexes to score on counter-attacks.

The 38-year-old will now be gunning for her sixth gold medal at the continental showpiece. She will be up against Kazakhstan's Nazym Kyzaibay.

Sakshi also endured a tough one against Zholaman but came out trumps, riding on her grit.

Earlier, in an intense contest, Monika just could not keep pace with Balkibekova, who craftily dodged the Indian's attacks and connected some eye-catching combination punches to dominate the proceedings.
On Wednesday night,

Ashish Kumar (75kg) lost 2-3 to Asian Games silvermedallist Amankul of Kazakhstan in quarteriinai. going down in the quarters was Narender (+91kg). He lost 0-5 to Kazakhstan's Kamshibek Kunkabayev.

On Friday, five Indian — Amit Panghal Varinder Singh (60kg), Shiva Thapa (64kg), Vikas krishan (69kg) and Sanjeet (91kg) — will fight it out in the semifinals.

CHANDHOK SUBJECTED TO RACISM

New Delhi, May 27: Denied entry into a restaurant on the basis of his skin colour recently, former Grand Prix driver-turned TV expert Chandhok says more awareness needs to be created against racism through Formula 1 though it has already taken 'impressive steps to address the

Chandhok competed in Formula 1 between 2009-2010. He is now a well-respected commentator and alongside seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton. one of the few nonwhite faces seen in the paddock.

After posting about his recent experience at a restaurant during the Monaco GP last week, Chandhok said on social media that he would not dwell on the past but focus on contributing to make the sport more diverse including having more Indians on board. He didn't reveal in which country the incident took place.

"I'm not really interested in talking about the past (about that incident) — the key is to talk about the future,'

Haryana Government's **Relief Schemes Related to Covid-19**

Free of Cost Treatment to COVID-19 Positive Patients

- Free treatment to every COVID-19 patient in all Government Medical Colleges and Hospitals (including Remdesivir injection and other expensive medicines).
- Free treatment to patients of all BPL families in private hospitals also. Complete payment to these private hospitals through https://gmdahrheal.in/portal by the Government.
- For other COVID-19 patients also the Maximum Rates Prescribed for Tests, Oxygen Beds, Ventilators, I.C.U. beds, Ambulance etc. in private hospitals.
- Financial assistance of Rs. 1000 per patient per day to private hospitals.

Financial Assistance in Case of Death Due to COVID-19

🊏 Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana | 🜚 www.prharyana.gov.in 💆 @Cmohry🛂 @DiprHaryana

 Financial assistance of a lump sum amount of Rs. 2 lakh to BPL families, in case of death of a family member between 18 to 50 years of age due to COVID-19 after March 1, 2021

· The Government will pay or reimburse insurance premium of Rs. 330 per person under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, for BPL families so that they could be provided with financial assistance of Rs. 2 Lakh, in case of any natural death.

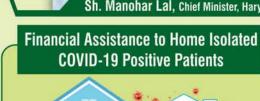


Haryana Government

for the people of age group

of 18 to 45 years

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana





Financial Assistance of Rs. 5000 per patient through D.B.T. to those Home Isolated COVID-19 positive patients of BPL families who have been infected after March 1, 2021

For more information, contact below helpline numbers

8558893911 (For Entire State) & 1075 (Except Gurugram & Faridabad)

करते हैं आश्वस्त, होंगे सभी स्वस्य