

US LAWMAKERS PUSH
BIDEN FOR MORE
VACCINES TO INDIA

P10



OLI JOINS HANDS WITH
JANATA PARTY TO
STRENGTHEN GRIP

P9



'DEFENCE REFORMS TO
MAKE INDIA A GLOBAL
POWERHOUSE'

P5



BEFORE THE FINAL,
INDIANS RELISH
RIVALS' PLAUDITS

P12

WEATHER

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

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 81% Min: 30%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 40.3°C (O) Min: 26.1°C (-2)
SUN RISES SUN SETS
05:23 hrs 19:18 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS
04:21 hrs 17:32 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Central team visits a cyclone Yaas-hit area at Gosaba in South 24 Parganas on Monday. IANS

50 killed as passenger trains collide in Pakistan: Two passenger trains collided in Pakistan's southern Sindh Province early Monday morning, killing at least 50 people and injuring 70 others, prompting authorities to call in the Army and paramilitary forces for rescue operations. The accident occurred when the Millat Express train from Karachi to Sargodha derailed and fell on the opposite track and collided with Sir Syed Express headed from Rawalpindi to Karachi. (P9)

IMA writes to PM Modi: In the wake of incidents of assault on doctors by relatives of patients, the Indian Medical Association on Monday sought PM Narendra Modi's intervention in ensuring "optimum milieu" for medical professionals so that they can work without fear.

Maldives foreign minister elected UNGA chief: Maldives Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid has been elected as the president of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that will start in September. Abdulla Shahid received 143 votes during the election. The president of UNGA needs 97 votes in the 193-member strong assembly.

Centre buys time
on scheme for
Covid-hit children

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

The Centre told the Supreme Court on Monday that it needed some more time to apprise the court of the modalities on the recently launched 'PM-CARES for Children' scheme for kids orphaned by Covid-19.

The National Commission of Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) said West Bengal and Delhi have not provided latest data on the number of children who have lost their parents due to Covid.

A bench of Justices LN Rao and Aniruddha Bose was informed by the Centre, that they are in consultation with states and ministries to work out the modalities of the PM-CARES for Children scheme.

Covaxin trials: AIIMS Delhi starts screening of children

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

The screening of children for trial of Covaxin, India's first indigenously developed Covid-19 vaccine, among those aged between 2 and 18 started at the AIIMS here on Monday.

The trial on children has already started at AIIMS Patna to see if the Bharat Biotech jab is suitable for children.

Participants would be given the vaccine after their screening report comes.

The trial is to be conducted on 525 healthy volunteers. In the trial, the vaccine will be given by intramuscular route in two doses at day 0 and day 28. "The screening of children for conducting trial of Covaxin

has started. Participants would be given the vaccine after their screening reports come," Dr Sanjay Rai, Professor at the Centre for Community Medicine at AIIMS, said.

India's drug regulator had granted permission for conducting the phase 2/3 clinical trial of Covaxin in the age group 2 to 18 years on May 12.

Covaxin is being used on adults in India's ongoing Covid-19 vaccination drive.

The government last week cautioned that even though Covid-19 has not taken a serious shape among children till now, its impact can increase among them if there is a change in virus behaviour or epidemiology dynamics, and said preparations are being

strengthened to deal with any such situation.

A national expert group has been formed to review Covid-19 infections in children and approach the pandemic in a renewed way to strengthen the nation's preparedness, NITI Aayog Member (Health) V K Paul had said at a press conference.

The group has examined signs which were not available four-five months before, he said.

It has also considered available data, clinical profile, the country's experience, disease dynamics, nature of the virus and the pandemic and has come up with guidelines, which will be publicly released soon.

Mumbai unlocks: Eateries, gyms reopen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, 7 JUNE

Restaurants, gyms, salons, public grounds and other commercial establishments reopened after nearly two months on Monday in Mumbai, which falls in level-3 of the Maharashtra government's five-level 'unlock plan'.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) appealed to citizens not to let their guard down and follow all precautions to check the spread of Covid-19.

Buses of the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST), the city civic body's transport wing, were allowed to ferry passengers with 100 per cent seating capacity, though local trains were restricted for those working in medical and essential



People workout at a gym in Thane after unlocking process of Covid lockdown began in a phased manner. AGENCIES

Delhi lifts curbs

Jolted by the devastating second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the national capital moved slowly towards normal life as shops in markets and malls reopened on odd-even basis on Monday after nearly two months.

Kejriwal announced to start mass vaccination campaign - Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination, adding that vaccination centres to be shifted to polling booths in each constituency of Delhi. SNS

See Page 2

The Maharashtra government has announced a five-level plan to relax the coronavirus-induced restrictions in the state, based on the weekly positivity rate and the

occupancy of oxygen beds. Easing of curbs under level-3 category are applicable for places where the positivity rate is five per cent to 10 per cent and the oxygen bed occupancy is more than 40 per cent. The BMC on Sunday issued detailed guidelines on the easing of restrictions.

Mumbai is at the level-3 with a positivity rate of 5.56 per cent and oxygen bed occupancy rate of 32.51 per cent for the May 28-June 3 week. As per the government's order, essential shops in Mumbai will remain open on all seven days in a week till 4 pm, but non-essential shops will function only on weekdays till 4 pm, BMC officials said.

Earlier, both essential and non-essential shops were allowed to remain open till 2 pm.

Bengal cancels classes X, XII board exams

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 7 JUNE

West Bengal government today cancelled the Madhyamik and Higher Secondary examinations in view of Covid pandemic. The decision has been taken after seeking opinion from stakeholders and the expert committee.

"Majority of the public and students as well as the expert committee are not in favour of conducting the board exams. We have received 34,000 emails and 79 per cent of them are in favour of scrapping the Madhyamik exams while 83 per cent are against the Higher Secondary exams, said chief minister Mamata Banerjee while announcing the cancellation of the classes 10 and 12 board examinations at Nabanna on Monday."

WHAT LIES AHEAD

► The evaluation methods for Higher Secondary and Madhyamik students will be finalised by the two boards after consultation with experts and the state education department within seven days

Miss Banerjee said that the evaluation methods for Higher Secondary and Madhyamik students will be finalised by the two boards after consultation with experts and the state education department within seven days.

"The evaluation process has to be decided keeping the all-India exams in mind. Students should not face problem in appearing at the competitive exams or pursuing higher studies. Infact the evaluation process will be such that it would be beneficial for the students," she said.

The state government on Sunday had sought public opinion on the issue via email. On 3 June, the state government had formed an expert committee comprising the head of the secondary board, the chief of state child rights protection panel, a doctor and academics to check the feasibility of conducting West Bengal board exams amidst the Covid pandemic.

The West Bengal Board of Secondary Education conducts the Madhyamik which was scheduled to be held in the second week of August as

announced by Miss Banerjee and Higher Secondary exams, conducted by the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education, was slated to be held in the last week of July. Over 12 lakh students are set to appear for Madhyamik and 8.5 lakh for Higher Secondary examinations this year.

Most of the state boards including both the Central boards, CISCE and CBSE have cancelled the Class 12 exams and have decided to assess students based on the internal marks.

CBSE: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Monday asked schools to conduct their pending class 12 practicals and internal assessments only in online mode, and submit marks by 28 June.

Air turbulence injures three in Kolkatta-bound Vistara flight

KOLKATA, 7 JUNE

A Kolkata-bound Vistara flight UK 775 that was flying in from Mumbai experienced air turbulence that has left three passengers critically injured but the flight landed safely at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International airport.

The airport spokesman said that the three critically injured persons have been shifted to Charnock Hospital by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). Other passengers were sent to their destinations after giving first aid. The flight had a total of 123 passengers on board and the air turbulence occurred at 25 nautical miles from Kolkata.

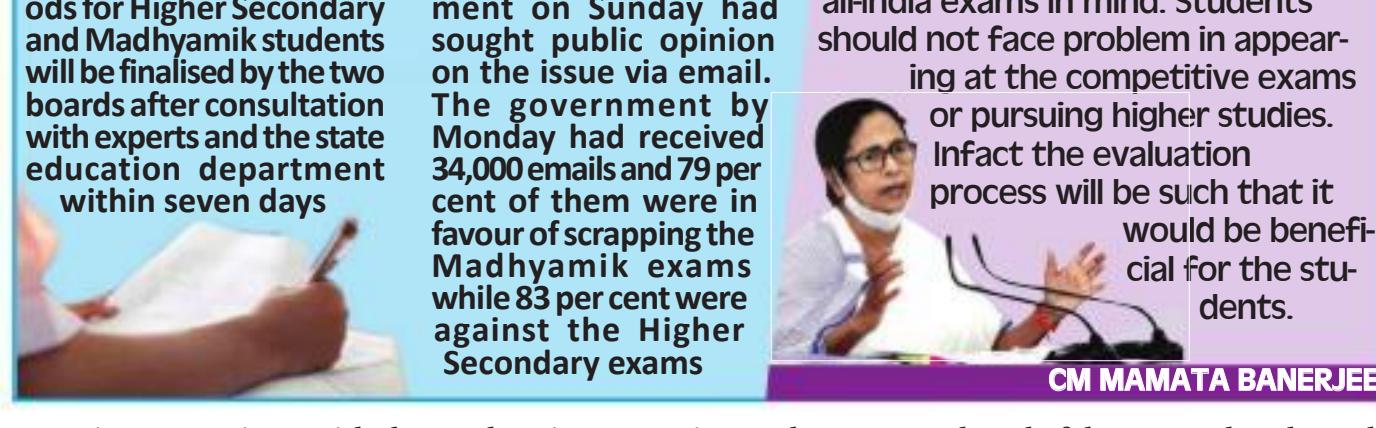
Fire breaks out in Pune sanitiser plant; 17 dead

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, 7 JUNE

At least 17 persons, mostly women, were killed in a major fire, followed by explosions, that erupted in a sanitiser manufacturing factory in Maharashtra's Pune district on Monday afternoon, officials said.

The blaze erupted around 3 p.m. in private chemical company, SVC Ltd, in the MIDC area of Pirangut village, and quickly spread within the enclosed premises, trapping many working there.

While at least 17 persons perished in the blaze, around 10 other workers are feared trapped or missing in the incident, said an official of Pune Rural Police Control. A company official said that while the blaze was brought under control by late evening, questions remained on how the fire could have started. Tehsildar Abhay Chauhan had earlier said that 11 bodies were recovered as rescue operations were going on in full swing. Another six bodies were found later.



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CM MAMATA BANERJEE

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SNS



These announcements by Modi ji has been welcomed by the people of Darjeeling hills, Terai and Dooars and rest of North Bengal

RAJU BISTA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, DARJEELING

ON THE ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE BY PM NARENDRA MODI ON THE COVID VACCINE AND FREE FOOD STUFF FOR THE POOR

45+ Delhi'ites to get Covid jabs at polling booths: CM

The special drive, 'Jahan Vote, Vahin Vaccination', is aimed at giving their first Covid shot to 30 lakh Delhi residents in 4 weeks; city's corona cases drop to 231, positivity rate dips to 0.36 pc

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

The AAP-led Delhi government today launched a special Covid vaccination drive called

"Jahan Vote, Vahin Vaccination" to ensure that everyone in the city above 45 years of age gets vaccinated against coronavirus in their polling booths in four weeks subject to availability of jabs.

Announcing this at a press conference, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said there are 57 lakh people in Delhi in the 45-plus age group and 27 lakh of them had already got their first jab against Covid. This special vaccination drive is aimed at getting the remaining 30 lakh residents of Delhi vaccinated to make them safe from the coronavirus.

A training programme has begun to prepare teams comprising two or three members each,



including civil defence volunteers, implementing the drive. Each team will be headed by a booth-level officer (BLO) and it will knock at the door of every house in the ward assigned to it to convince the eligible persons to go to their polling booth for getting vaccinated.

The visiting team, which will be armed with the voters' list, will begin its task tomorrow and allot a time slot to everybody to get vaccinated smoothly. The time slot will be given for Wednesday onwards, the CM said. He said there are about

280 wards in all the assembly constituencies in Delhi and 70 wards would be covered every week in a five-day cycle. This way, the entire population of those aged 45 years and above will get vaccinated in four weeks, Kejriwal said.

He said some people might not agree to get jabbed. Such individuals will be approached again by the booth-level team to persuade them to get vaccinated at their respective polling booths as the vaccine is the best defence against coronavirus.

The Delhi government has

made arrangements for e-rickshaws too to take people to the polling booths for the vaccination purpose, the CM said. He explained the need for approaching people in their houses arose because it was noticed that very few individuals were visiting the vaccination centres set up all over Delhi and this led to the allotted vaccines for each day remaining unused.

Kejriwal said there is unlikely to be a vaccine shortage for the 45-plus age group as the Centre was arranging enough vaccine supplies for them. This kind of arrangement will also be made for the second dose of vaccines as and when the time comes, he said.

He said those in the 18-44-year age group would also be approached in the same manner to get vaccinated when enough vaccines would be available for them.

Meanwhile, Delhi today reported 231 new coronavirus infections—the lowest since

2 March—and 36 Covid-linked deaths with the positivity rate dipping to 0.36 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin. On 2 March, 217 cases were recorded.

Today's fresh cases were detected out of 63,610 tests, the health bulletin said. The city's cumulative caseload rose to 14,29,475. The cases reported yesterday numbered 381.

The positivity rate came down to 0.36 per cent from yesterday's 0.50 per cent, the bulletin said. The fresh deaths took the city's Covid toll to 24,627. The total number of active cases dipped to 5,208 from yesterday's 5,889 and the count of those undergoing treatment in home isolation was 1,932.

The city currently had 11,420 containment zones in all, the bulletin added.

The bulletin stated that the national capital had currently 21,498 hospital beds vacant out of a total of 24,301 beds reserved for Covid patients.

Delhi 'unlockdown' begins amid fears and concerns; shops in markets, malls reopen

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Reeling under the devastating second Covid wave, the national capital today sought to inch towards a degree of normalcy as shops in markets and malls today reopened on an "odd-even" basis after nearly two months, with chief minister Arvind Kejriwal appealing to Delhi'ites to take all precautions against the coronavirus.

Delhi Metro, the lifeline of the city, also resumed services today, but with 50 per cent seating capacity and no provision for standing travel for commuters.

Although all standalone and neighbourhood shops, including liquor vends, started functioning, cinemas, theatres, restaurants (except home delivery and take-away), bars, gyms, spas, barber shops, salons, beauty parlours and weekly markets will remain closed till further orders.

Kejriwal appealed to people to follow Covid safety protocols amid the unlocking process in the city.

"Many activities are resuming in Delhi from today. But take all the precautions to prevent coronavirus completely—wear a mask, follow social distancing and keep washing hands. There should be no laxity at all," the CM said in a tweet in Hindi. "One has to stay away from the coronavirus infection and also bring the economy back on track."

The shops in the markets and malls reopened on odd-even basis in accordance with their numbers, even as there were markets like south Delhi's Krishna market where most shops remained closed.

Atul Bhargav, president, New Delhi Traders Association representing shop owners in Connaught Place, said all arrangements were in place to ensure Covid-appropriate behaviour.

"However, the odd-even formula for opening retail shops is against our interests. We have enough space here in Connaught Place and most of



People at Connaught Place on Monday. SUBRATA DUTTA

follow norms to protect themselves from the infection.

"Our teams are in the field. People are normally following the precautions, but we are keeping a watch as the day progresses and more people are on the roads and markets," he said.

The Delhi Metro resumed services on Monday after a hiatus for nearly three weeks.

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) services were fully suspended since May 20 in view of the Covid-induced lockdown, which was first imposed on April 19 and then successively extended by the city government.

Metro services initially ran partially, catering only to people from essential services, but from May 10, it was suspended in view of rising cases amid the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

On Monday, trains began plying with the scheduled starting time for services being 6 am.

The Delhi government offices opened with Group A officers and 50 per cent staff of lower ranks working there. However, all officers and staff associated with essential services will work without any restrictions.

Markets and malls in the city wore a dull and deserted look and only a few shops and outlets reopened.

Only a few customers were seen in several markets as shopkeepers cleaned and sanitised their premises, hoping for more people to come during the day and the situation to improve in the coming weeks.

Commuters happy as Delhi Metro back on track

PTI
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

From general commuters to security personnel, everyone was happy to see Delhi Metro services resume on Monday, even as the DMRC urged people to use the rapid transit system only when necessary.

Services were restored this morning from 6 AM onwards after a gap of nearly three



SUBRATA DUTTA

Classified

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

NOTICE is hereby given to all concerned that one of my clients intends to purchase area - 73.33 Dec. m/1 in R.S. Dag - 916, 943, 900, L.R. Dag - 940, 968, 924, L.R. Khatian - 238, 470, 658, 971, 753, Mouza - South Garia, J.L. - 6, P.S.: Baruipur, Dist: South 24 Pgs. from Panchugopal Das Bagani and others residing at Vill & P.O. South Garia, P.S.: Baruipur, Dist: South 24 Parganas, Pin-743613.

Any person or persons having any claim, demand or objection into and over the aforesaid properties should lodge his/her/their claim to my address: Banya Nath, Baruipur, Puratan Bazar, P.O. & P.S.: Baruipur, Dist: South 24 Parganas, Kol-700144 within 15 (fifteen) days from the publication, between 4-6 p.m. with supporting documents, otherwise no claim will be entertained thereafter.

Banya Nath
Advocate
M- 9331879749

SITUATION VACANT
Laxmi College of Education
Rathiwas (Jat), Gurugram, Haryana
REQUIRED
Principal 01
B.Ed : Assistant Prof in Education-04
Assistant Prof : Foundation Course English, Maths, Bio. Sc., Economics Computer Sc., Physical Science Specialized Course : Fine Arts, Music Health & Physical Education
Eligibility & Salary : be as per MDU/NCTE/ State Govt. Norms Note : Candidate will send CV one copy to College and one Copy to College Branch MDU Rohtak within 21 days of publication of the advertisement. Cont : 9416313607, 9050967159 Email : laxmi.coe.rathiwas@gmail.com President Governing body

weeks in view of the improved Covid situation in the national capital, albeit with 50 per cent seating capacity and no provision for standing travel for commuters, officials said.

Sameer Khan, 25, who works at a leading private facility in south Delhi, said he was waiting for metro trains to hit the tracks again. "I work in a hospital so I have to travel every day. In strict lock-

down days, I used to take cabs, which is not very safe in view of Covid. Metro, I feel is very safe, and today I took it from Badarpur to Lajpat Nagar station. All safety norms being followed inside coaches and elsewhere," he said. Laj-

pat Nagar station on the Violet Line is a busy intersection facility that is also connected with Pink Line of the metro.

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation has resumed services with a proviso that passengers will be allowed to travel by seating only on alternate seats with no provision for standing travel till further directions. Commuters, both male and female, PTI spoke too, said they were taking all precautions and maintaining social distancing to ensure safety of all, and concurred that people should not lower their guards.

Covaxin in Delhi only for those who received it as first dose in 18-44 yrs age group, HC told

PTI
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

The Delhi government Monday informed the Delhi High Court that it has directed all government centres, private hospitals and nursing homes here that Covaxin will only be administered to those in the age group of 18-44 years who received it as first dose of anti-COVID vaccine.

The court was hearing three pleas filed by persons who were finding it difficult to get the second dose of Covaxin after getting the first jab.

The Delhi government and the Centre also told the court that an additional of 40,000 vials of Covaxin have been provided to national capital on June 6 to tide over the current situation.

Justice Rekha Palli expressed happiness over the development and the proactive steps taken by both the Central and Delhi government to address the issue of shortage of Covaxin, especially for those who have taken the first dose and finding it difficult to get the second dose before the six weeks window expires.

The court was informed that the Delhi Chief Secretary has issued an order on June 6 that the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) has directed that all private hospitals and nursing homes functioning as COVID Vaccination Centres for Covaxin shall ensure that it shall be used for vaccination to only those people (of age group 18-44 years) who are eligible for receiving it as second dose of vaccination during the month of June, 2021 or till further orders.

The Health Department of Delhi government, on June 3, has already issued similar directions in this regard to all government COVID Vaccination Centres.

One of the petitions has been filed by petitioner and advocate Kushal Kumar, seeking direction to the authorities to urgently provide second dose of Covaxin vaccine to them as their allotted time period for the second dose is about to end.

Kumar and co-petitioners Mansi Sharma and advocate Shashwat Tripathi, said the allotted time period for the second dose of vaccine is between May 31 to June 14.

Another petition has been moved by lawyer Ashish Virmani, who received the first dose of Covaxin on May 3 and since May 29 has been unable to book a slot for receiving the second jab which has to be taken within six weeks of the first.

Subsequently, he had to travel to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh to receive the second dose of the vaccine, advocate Pallav Mongia, representing Virmani, had told the court.

During the hearing, the petitioners raised a grievance that as no doses of Covaxin were available between May 25 to June, there are a number of persons who are going to complete six weeks period on June 14 and therefore, if they do not get the slot in that time period, the whole exercise would be rendered futile.

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI PUBLIC NOTICE

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PSV BADGE / PERMIT HOLDERS OF PARA TRANSIT PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES AND OWNERS OF E-RICKSHAWS

The Government of Delhi has approved a scheme for financial assistance of Rs.5000/- each to the individuals holding public service badge with valid driving license, permit holders of Para-transit vehicles (i.e. Auto rickshaws, Taxis, Gramin Sewn, Phatphat sewa, Maxi cab, Eco-Friendly sewa, E-Rickshaws and school cabs etc.) and owners of E-rickshaws in Delhi to mitigate the hardships being faced by such persons during the lock down period due to spread of Covid-19.

An individual having both PSV Badge, Permit & ownership of vehicle will get financial assistance in one category only.

The eligible persons may file on-line applications on the website of the Transport Department at <http://transport.delhi.gov.in/>.

The beneficiaries of such scheme during last year's lock down are not required to file any application as the Government of Delhi has already transferred Rs.5000/- each in the bank accounts of such persons.

Only in case of left out persons and the persons who have obtained new PSV badges / permits / new registration of E-rickshaws should file fresh applications. The amount will be credited in their Aadhaar linked bank accounts.

- Help line number for any query/complaint - 1076.
- Further if any applicant need assistance for filing application, he can call 1076 to avail facility of Mobile Sahayak by paying nominal charge of Rs. 50.
- Complaint/suggestions on e-mail ID. - mlofa2021@gmail.com

The last date of submission of applications has been extended upto 13.06.2021

DIP/Shabdarth/0090/21-22

Dy. Commissioner (Operations)

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



One simple question - If vaccines are free for all, why should private hospitals charge for them

RAHUL GANDHI

CONGRESS MEMBER OF THE LOK SABHA

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 08 JUNE 2021

03

Punjab extends Covid curbs till 15 June, gives relaxations

Night curfew will remain in force in the state from 7 pm to 6 am on weekdays, including Saturdays, and regular weekend curfew will continue on Sundays, says Capt Amarinder

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, 7 JUNE

Adopting a graded approach to reopening, Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Monday ordered extension of Covid restrictions in the state to 15 June with certain relaxations, including opening of shops till 6 pm and private offices to function at 50 percent strength.

Night curfew will remain in force from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. on weekdays, including Saturdays, and regular weekend curfew will continue on Sundays, the CM said.

With the state's Covid positivity declining to 3.2 per cent and active cases also coming down, the CM allowed gatherings up to 20 people, including weddings and cremations. Entry restrictions (negative Covid test or vaccination) for arrivals in the state have also been done away with.



Recruitment exams will be allowed to be held subject to adherence to social distancing and other Covid appropriate norms, though online mode should be preferred, Capt Amarinder said.

Sports training for national and international events has also been permitted and the department of sports and youth affairs has been asked to issue the necessary instructions and guidelines, which shall have to be strictly adhered to.

Reviewing the Covid situation virtually with ministers, senior police and administrative officials and health experts, the CM said district administration may determine opening of non-essential shops, including on weekend, on the basis of local situation, while ensuring that crowding leading to spread of Covid is avoided.

On government offices, he said that attendance can be decided by the head of the concerned office but co-mor-

bidity/disabled employees at risk may be exempted.

Further relaxations will be allowed in the coming weeks depending on the outcomes, if the cases continue to decline, said Capt Amarinder, adding that gyms and restaurants could be opened after a week with 50 per cent and other conditions as per expert advice, if the situation improves further. Owners and workers of the gyms and restaurants should get themselves vaccinated prior to the reopening, he said.

Asserting that Punjab could not afford to let its guard down despite the decline in Covid caseload and increase in testing, the CM said the virus mutations are a matter of concern, even though the case fatality rate (CFR) was lower than the first wave.

The CM expressed satisfaction over the progress of the Corona Mukt Pendo Abhiyan in the villages, where about

1.5 crore individuals (37 lakh households) have already been screened. These efforts, he said, had resulted in identification of 5889 positive patients who have been assisted as per protocols.

The week on week positivity has also reduced from nine per cent to three per cent, he added, reiterating the need to further strengthen the screening and testing mechanisms to free the rural areas of the state from the pandemic.

Referring to the spread of "black fungus" (mucormycosis), the CM said there were currently 381 cases of mucormycosis in the state, of which 38 have already been cured and 265 were undergoing treatment.

There is an adequate supply of drugs for treatment, he assured the people, adding that his government would continue to augment the supplies and ensure that there is no shortage of any essential drug in the state.

'3L Covid patients benefited from HP Ayush Ghar Dwar scheme'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, 7 JUNE

The Himachal Pradesh government's Ayush Ghar-Dwar programme has provided direct benefit to more than 300,000 Covid patients in home isolation in the state, state health and family welfare and Ayush minister Rajiv Saizal said on Monday.

After launching the second phase of the programme, Saizal said since the launch of first phase on 14 May 2021, the programme had set a milestone by bringing a ray of hope among the patients who were under home isolation.

The patients under home isolation were made aware of the Dos and Don'ts during home isolation along with yoga, breathing exercises, bhajans and interaction with doctors and instructors virtually.

Besides, the volunteers of Art of Living and Yog Bharti Foundation participated and counselled 3 lakh people through 37,000 virtual camps for which 1,047 WhatsApp groups were created as against the target of 1,000 groups," he added.

Saizal stated that the patients

in home isolation were counseled and motivated regularly through the programme which led to a decrease in the stress and anxiety levels of the patients and other associated symptoms like insomnia, mood swings, fear, excessive sweating, malaise, depression which led to a fast recovery.

He further stated that in the second phase of the programme, focus will also be laid on promotion of healthy lifestyle through Ayush along with adoption of Covid appropriate behaviour in the general population through post-Covid Ayush rehabilitation centres.

"Ayush department will work in collaboration with Art of Living and Yog Bharti to generate awareness among the general population on containment of Covid-19 pandemic and on measures to enhance immunity through virtual mediums.

For preventive, prophylactic and therapeutic use in mild and moderate cases of Covid, use of Ayush-64 would be done and 20,800 packs of 40 tablets each will be distributed," he added.

He released 'Kisan Nirdeshika', a booklet for farmers to avail benefits of various government schemes and cultivation of herbal plants and also released a booklet on the report of first phase of Charak Vatikayojna, a medicinal plantation drive.

Himachal Pradesh registers record wheat procurement

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, 7 JUNE

Himachal Pradesh has procured a record 10,065 MT wheat in the ongoing Rabi marketing season 2021-22, which started on 15 April 2021 with still some time to go before the procurement season ends in the state.

Informing about this, HP agriculture minister Virender Kanwar said the state government had set up a target of wheat procurement of 12,500 MT through Food Corporation of India from the state.

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Sirmour district, Haroli, Takarala in Una district, Fatehpur, Thakurdwara in Kangra district, Patta in Ghumari in Bilaspur district and Nalagarh in Solan district.

A total of 29,839 quintal wheat was procured in Sirmour district, 30,520 quintal wheat procured in Una district, 27,270 quintal wheat procured in Kangra district, 42,750 quintal in Bilaspur district and 12,599 quintal in Solan district, Kanwar said.

Kanwar said 8 wheat procurement centres had been opened in five districts at Paonta Sahib, Kala Amb in

the nodal agency for procurement and distribution of foodgrains in Himachal, however, in addition to it, local traders were also purchasing wheat crop.

The Rabi marketing season 2021-22 runs from April and the bulk of the procurement gets completed by June, Kanwar said.

"The procurement of wheat in the ongoing marketing season is continuing smoothly at procurement centres and HP civil supply corporation is engaged in distribution of wheat in the state.

HP state agricultural marketing board provides basic amenities for procurement but is not directly involved in the procurement process.

Estimates showed that at the current rate, the state government was expected to cross its own procurement target set for this year, he added.

He stated that Food Corporation of India (FCI) was

Haryana Police busts gang cloning fingerprints to siphon money

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, 7 JUNE

Haryana Police has busted a gang whose members used to siphon off money from people's account using the Aadhar Enabled Payment System (AEPS) by cloning the fingerprints in Palwal district.

Giving this information on Monday, a Haryana Police spokesperson informed that five members of the gang including a woman who were involved in online fraud worth crores of rupees were also arrested by conducting raids at different locations in Delhi and Palwal.

Police has also recovered one biometric machine, 11 debit cards of different banks, 270 SIM cards (Vodafone, Idea, Airtel etc.), fingerprint rubber stamp machine, 5 bottles rubber gel photo polymer, 1 laptop, printer, one lamination machine, 2078 copies of registries (out of which 10 copies

used in online fraud) 220 finger print clone, 68 blank Aadhar cards, 21 PAN cards, 64 passport size photographs, 5 Aadhar cards, 1 pen drive etc.

He said that a special team was formed after complaints were reported in the district about money being withdrawn without actual account owners making any transactions. Police have registered 43 cases of online fraud between 24 May and 2 June.

Divulging the details, he said that fraudsters made attempts to get the documents used for fraud from the staff of registry offices.

When they did not get any success, the scammers contacted a private person who did the binding of registry documents in Palwal tehsil and obtained copies of documents of registry done at a high cost.

Then they cloned the fingerprints of sellers and purchasers and carried out illegal transactions through bio-

metric devices using Xpresso RoiNetWallet, SpiceMoneyWallet, Payworld Wallet, Payson/Fingpay/Paymonk Wallet. They used to withdraw amounts upto Rs 10,000 using finger print clones and committed online fraud worth crores of rupees.

Arrested accused were identified as Rohit (33), a resident of Ghaziabad in UP, Chiranjan (28) of Bihar, Amir Hussain (27) district Chapra, Bihar, Kiran (28) of Bihar presently living at Najafgarh, Delhi and Tularam (40) of village Khatela in Palwal.

Primary probe and disclosure statement revealed that the gang is involved in all the 43 cases registered.

"We are trying to gather more information about the involvement of others and how many innocent people were cheated by the gang members through online fraud," added Superintendent of Police, Palwal, Deepak Gahlawat.

Delhi WCD dept to collect data on kids who lost one or both parents to Covid

PTI

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Delhi's Women and Child Development department will collect data on children who have lost one or both parents to the coronavirus pandemic so that they can avail the benefits announced by the government, officials said Monday. The data will be collected with the assistance of the health department, WCD Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam said while chairing a high-level meeting to review preparations to deal with a possible third wave of COVID-19.

The minister told PTI that caregivers of such children will be able to apply online also. The meeting was attended by the Director of the Department of Women and Child Development (WCD), Director of Social Welfare Department and senior officers of the Health Department, Rajiv Gandhi Hospital and Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalyana, an official statement said.

Special arrangements are also being made for parents of children who are in hospital in terms of their stay and vaccination. A provision is also being made for the vaccination of parents, it said.

The only effective measure to protect children is by vaccinating the parents and ensuring a sound medical infrastructure catering to the needs of children, the statement said.

Last month, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced that the government will bear the cost of education and upbringing of children orphaned by the pandemic.

Gautam said that his department will execute the schemes.

"The data is being collected to identify such children who can be given benefits. We will be taking the data of fatalities from the health department and also deploy our officers for it."

"Also, people will be applying online to avail the schemes. I have given directions to prepare the form within the next two days. The form will have to be filled by the caregivers of the children," Gautam told PTI.

The form will be available on the respective district portals.

The Delhi Commission For Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) has identified 32

HP CM urges FM to expedite externally-funded projects

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, 7 JUNE

Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur on Monday urged Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to expedite externally-funded development projects in the

state.

Thakur during a meeting with Sitharaman in New Delhi, raised the issue of Rs 1892 crore tourism project for which ADB funding was sought and requested her for according speedy approval to the project.

Thakur also urged for GST compensation due from Government of India (GoI) for the financial years 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-2020 to be provided to the state.

While discussing the Bhanupali-Bilaspur rail line, the Chief Minister requested to consider all rail projects of state of national importance and funded entirely by the Central government keeping in view the weak resource base of Himachal Pradesh.

The Union Minister assured of all possible assistance to the state.

He also met Union Minister for Road, Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and thanked him for sanctioning various projects under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) worth Rs 193 crore to the state.

"Roads are the lifelines of the hill state and these roads would go a long way in strengthening the road connectivity in the state," he stated.

Thakur discussed the issue of four laning of Shimla-Matour and Mandi-Panthkot National Highways and requested for proper maintenance of existing alignments of NHs where work had been started by the executing agency.

He sought speedy notification of 25 national highways approved in-principle.

Gadkari reviewed the progress of road projects under NHAI and assured to include road projects from the state in the second phase of Bharat Mala Road Project which would help in boosting religious tourism in the state.

Shah lauds HP govt over vax drive

SHIMLA, 7 JUNE

Union home minister Amit Shah has lauded the efforts of the HP government in the vaccination campaign as Himachal has the distinction of covering the highest number of people in percentage terms.

Shah made these remarks during a meeting with chief minister Jai Ram Thakur during a meeting last evening in New Delhi and assured all possible help to the state.

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Shops open at Karol Bagh while Delhi government has allowed shops and malls to open on an odd-even basis and private offices with 50 per cent capacity as part of phased unlocking process, in the Capital on Monday.

SNS

Sanjay Dutt to take stock of party activities: Newly appointed co-incharge of HP Congress Sanjay Dutt during his five-day visit of the state from Tuesday will take stock of party activities ahead of the 2022 Assembly polls.

SNS

Jaipur GMC mayor suspended: Rajasthan government has suspended Jaipur Greater Municipal Corporation mayor and three councilors for allegedly misbehaving with local body's commissioner, drawing flak from BJP which calls for statewide protest against the action.

PTI

Madras HC bolsters LGBTQIA+ group's rights

Directs Centre to publish a list of NGOs with contact details for LGBTQIA+

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 7 JUNE

In a historic judgment on 7 June, Madras High Court issued guidelines for a safe environment for LGBTQIA+ in the country.

The court issued the guidelines when it heard a case regarding a complaint from a lesbian couple from Madurai who has been harassed by police after their parents registered a missing person complaint after they eloped to Chennai. The case heralded headlines when the High Court bench of Justice Anand Venkatesh had sought education with a psychologist and members of the LGBTQIA+ community to better understand their issues and deliver an informed judgment.

The court, in its order, has directed the Union ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to publish a list of NGOs with contact details for LGBTQIA+ to approach for safeguarding and protecting their rights. The court also asked the Union government to ban any attempts to medically "cure" or change the sexual orientation of LGBTQIA+ persons also known as conversion therapy.

The judge then instructed the Centre and other central government departments and



The Court has said that sensitization programmes should be conducted for police and prison authorities as well as parents of people from LGBTQIA+ group.

institutions to ensure that the concerned departments file their reports on the steps and measures taken by them to implement the interim directions. The High Court then posted the case for further hearing to 8 August.

The court said, "The list of such NGOs along with the address, contact details, and services provided shall be published and revised periodically on the official website. Such details shall be published within 8 weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of this order."

An activist and another member from the LGBTQIA+ community also alleged harassment by police for giving shelter to the couple. Following this, the two women approached the Madras HC, seeking a direction to stop harassment from police and protection from any form of threat or danger to their safety and security from their parents.

"Any person who faces an issue for the reason of their belongingness to the LGBTQIA+ community may approach any of the enlisted NGOs for safe-

guarding and protecting their rights," the court added. Such NGOs have to maintain confidential records of every person who approaches them and the data should be provided to the concerned ministry twice every year.

The court has asked that suitable changes be made in existing short-stay homes, Anganwadi shelters, and "Garima Griha" (shelter home for transgender persons) to accommodate any and every member of the LGBTQIA+ community, who require shelters

and/or homes. The court has asked the Union government to make adequate infrastructural arrangements within a period of 12 weeks.

The Court has said that sensitization programmes should be conducted for police and prison authorities, district and state legal service authorities, officials in the judiciary, physical and mental health professionals, education institutions, health workers, public or private institutions as well as parents of people from LGBTQIA+ community.

The government has also been asked to take up any other measures that are needed for eliminating prejudices against the LGBTQIA+ community and channelising them into the mainstream.

The High Court has asked authorities to take action against people or professionals who claim to be involved in any form or method of conversion therapy, including cancelling their license.

The High Court has said that if the police in case of a missing complaint, finds the persons and the people are found to be consenting adults belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community, the police should take their statements and close the missing person complaint without subjecting them to any harassment.

Owaisi slams PM over his U-turn on vaccine policy

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 7 JUNE

Owaisi's criticism came in a series of tweets after the Prime Minister announced a change in vaccine policy according to which vaccine procurement will be centralised and supplied to the states for free.

speech he said: "Modi congratulated himself for vaccinating frontline staff" in time".

Of 10 crore priority group that

had to be vaccinated only 10

per cent were vaccinated by

early May. We need 60 crore

doses to vaccinate them by July.

Currently, we get only 8 crore doses per month. Prime Minister failed in basic maths."

"Lastly it is good that Modi pointed out many people have spread propaganda against vaccines. Hope his government takes action against such people and punishes ministers who are always at the services of such anti-science people," wrote Owaisi along with photographs of Baba Ramdev flanked by PM himself as well as his ministerial colleagues Harsh Vardhan and Nitin Gadkari.

TRS supporters took to Twitter to take a dig at the BJP and attributed the change in policy to Telangana IT minister KT Rama Rao's criticism.

In changed political context, all eyes now on Siliguri civic polls

MANAS R BANNERJEE

SILIGURI, 7 JUNE

Political power and equations have seen a change in "greater Siliguri" after the results of the West Bengal state Assembly elections in early May this year. As political leaders settle down a bit after the polls now, speculations have come up as to who will finally rule the roost in the all-important Siliguri when the civic body goes to the polls soon.

Very significantly, three political personalities, who virtually "ruled the region" for many years—CPIM leader Asok Bhattacharya in the Siliguri Assembly constituency, Congress leader Shankar Malakar in Matigara and Naxalbari and Trinamul Congress leader Gautam Deb in Dabgram-Fulbari—have failed to retain their seats this time around.

BJP leaders Shankar Ghosh, Anandamoy Barman and Shikha Chatterjee have been elected the new MLAs of these three constituencies.

However, despite his failure and despite the cloud over elections to the Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC) due to the Covid-19 pandemic, observers in the region feel that the TMC will try to come to power in Siliguri by projecting Mr Deb, the former tourism minister, as the Mayor.

As the Trinamul Congress comes to power for the third



consecutive term under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee, senior TMC leader Gautam Deb, the former MLA and minister, with his long experience in the administration, is still active in the political arena as the chairman of the Board of Administrators at the SMC. The five-year tenure of the elected Left Front Board at the SMC ended in May last year, while the state government has appointed administrators to run the civic body.

The CPI-M had then projected Asok Bhattacharya as the Mayor for the civic body polls and the Left came to power in association with the Congress under the leadership of Shankar Malakar.

"Nobody knows when the state government will conduct the polls in civic bodies, including the SMC, amid the raging second wave of Covid-19, but I think the Trinamul Congress will try to come to power by projecting Gautam Deb as the Mayor whenever the elections are announced," an observer said. "Deb, being the chairman of the SMC board of administrators, is trying hard to bring in massive development in Siliguri so that he and his party can-

The observers are also discussing the role of the new Siliguri MLA, Shankar Ghosh, who was the disciple of Asok Bhattacharya until he switched sides to the BJP just before the recent Assembly elections.

"Being a BJP MLA, Mr Ghosh's role will be like that of his mentor Asok Bhattacharya, as the Trinamul Congress is in power," an observer said. Others believe that Mr Ghosh may "surprisingly build his political career" from Siliguri "by joining hands with the Trinamul Congress."

"The only thing here is whether Mr Deb will allow a strong rival in Siliguri," yet another observer and political leader said.

Meanwhile, it has been reported that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed dissatisfaction with the affairs in the state BJP including the Kodakara case.

also reignited internal feud. Meanwhile, it has been reported that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed dissatisfaction with the affairs in the state BJP including the Kodakara case.

The BJP has appointed a three-member committee comprising "metroman" E Sreedharan, retired IAS officer CV Ananda Bose and retired IPS officer Jacob Thomas to investigate the party's election fund utilization and the alleged hawala controversy that has rocked the Kerala BJP.

The members are not office-bearers. They have been asked to submit a report by the central leadership.

Narada case: Singhvi says no question of accused fleeing

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 7 JUNE

state law minister was in the lower court premises on 17 May, the day the four accused were arrested, the acting Chief Justice pointed out.

The demonstration on that day was organised not by common people but by persons occupying constitutional posts, the acting Chief Justice observed. The lower court judge does not mention any instance in which he was tried to be influenced, Singhvi submitted.

Can you cite any instance of a judge stating that he has been influenced, the acting Chief Justice asked. As for us, we are not aware of it, he pointed out.

Singhvi submitted that three factors have to be considered as to whether there was any administrative difficulty in conducting the court. It is also to be considered whether conducting the court had become an impossibility and if there was any direct influence of the agitation on the judicial process.

Justice Tandon asked Singhvi whether he thinks that there is an impact on the people if the agitation is orchestrated by some elected persons holding constitutional posts. Our legal system is not so weak, Singhvi said.

The hearing will be resumed tomorrow.

No signature campaigns: BSY to MLAs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU, 7 JUNE

Karnataka chief minister B S Yediyurappa on Monday asked ruling BJP legislators not to indulge in signature campaign or issue political statements on speculation about his replacement, and instead focus on Covid management in their constituencies.

His statement was following a series of political statements on speculation about attempts to replace him, and claims by his political secretary M P Renukacharya about having a letter signed by more than 65 legislators in his favour.

Meanwhile, Revenue Minister R Ashoka said, state BJP president Nalin Kumar Katre has constituted a committee to put an end to open expression about resentments and statements on leadership change, which are causing embarrassment to the party and the government. "No one should speak regarding the Chief Minister's position or about replacing him...here no one should make counter statements either in favour or against the CM. This is a direction from state president and central leadership," he added.

Earlier today, MLA Renukacharya said he has a letter signed by more than 65 MLAs in CM's favour.

Vaccine shots at home for Darjeeling elderly, differently-abled likely

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DARJEELING, 7 JUNE

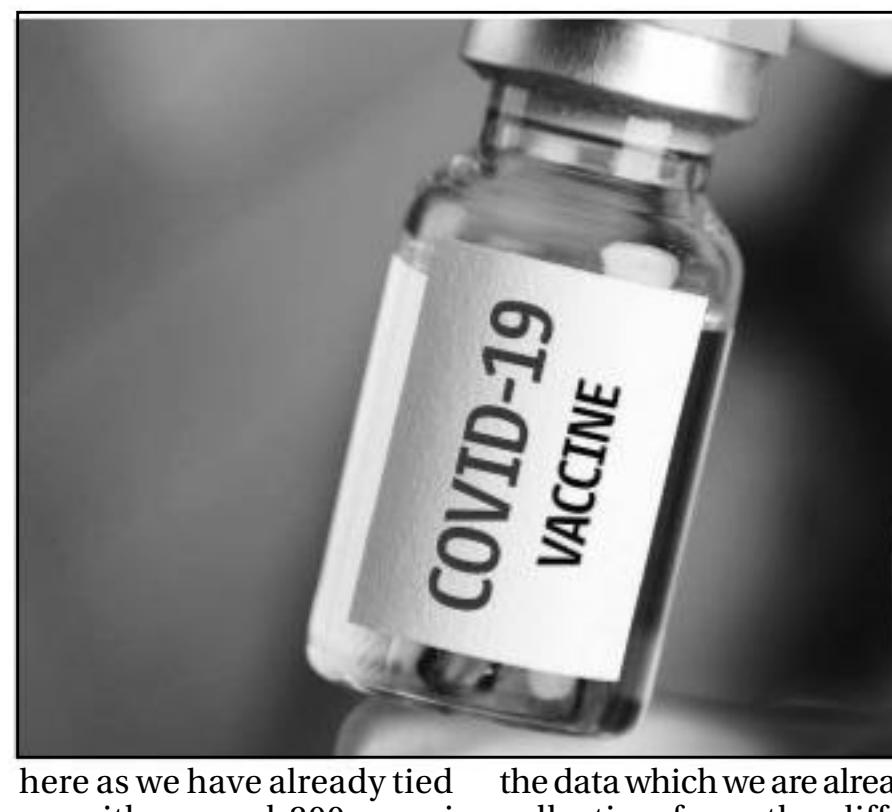
Here is high quality news for people who are differently-abled and those above the age of 70 years and who are willing to be vaccinated against Covid-19. A non-profit organization, Darjeeling Initiative (DI), today said that it is working on a plan to have people belonging to these categories vaccinated right at their homes.

According to the DI, such a vaccination system would be started for Darjeeling at first, and later taken to other places of the Hills after getting feedback in the town.

"We are tying up with the Kolkata-based organization, Liver Foundation, for this and it is for people above 70 years of age and also those who have disabilities. There



discussions going on in writing with the Health Department in this regard. We can also say that this is in collaboration with the state government, as Liver Foundation is working in partnership



here as we have already tied up with around 200 samaj (local committees) here, of which we have the data. The number of vaccination that will be done, however, will depend on the stock that the government has and on the data which we are already collecting from the different samaj of the number of such people," he added.

Mr Edwards maintained that the reason this section of the people were chosen was because they cannot walk and cannot wait for hours in queues. "Moreover, people in these groups are the most vulnerable," he said.

"We also have local partners like Hayden Hall which will provide support such as health workers and nurses. Apart from that, we will also be having vehicles to take them to houses. We are hoping that this will be through within this week and the hospital will provide training on things like uploading data, among other things, to volunteers," Mr Edwards said.

The DI has already been working with the Edward Foundation through their Project CARE (Critical Aid Response), through which they are providing medical equipment and other things related to Covid patients with stress laid on oxygen concentrators.

TENDER

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Chief Administrative Officer/Const/Northern Railway, Kashmere Gate, Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work:-

1. Full Name of work	Construction of permanent way works, TRD and Electrical works in c/w Extension of existing loop lines, construction of new longer loop lines at railway stations-Chheru, Kartarpur, Jalandhar and Manawali stations in FZR Division in the jurisdiction of Dy. Chief Engineer/Const., Jalandhar City.
2. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 4916.38 Lakhs
3. Completion period of the work	18 Months
4. Earnest Money to be deposited	Nil
5. Sale/availability of tender document on Rly. Website	Tender documents will be available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 04.06.2021 to 28.06.2021 upto 11.30 hrs.
6. Last date/Time of upload of tenders	28.06.2021 upto 11.30 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS website w.e.f. 14.06.2021 to 28.06.2021
7. Date and time of opening of tender	28.06.2021 at 11.30 hours (immediately after close of uploading of tender (D2). In case of two packet system, Financial bids of the eligible tenders would be opened subsequently on the date and time to be notified later on. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender Notice No. 74-W-1-1-450-WA-JUC Dated : 04.06.2021 1206/2021 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE



From the very start of the pandemic, the Modi government's attitude towards data was to utilize it as a propaganda tool rather than an invaluable weapon in the fight against Covid-19

CONGRESS LEADER PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA
ACCUSING THE CENTRE OF SUPPRESSING DATA RELATED TO COVID PANDEMIC

THUMBNAILS



The Victory Flame or the 'Swarnim Vijay Mashaal,' lit by PM Narendra Modi in memory of India's 1971 war victory and traversing across the nation to observe the 50th victory anniversary, was on Monday taken to the World's Highest Railway Bridge over Chenab River when it reached SNS

Bengaluru zoo's appeal: Faced with financial crunch due to a dip in footfall owing to Covid-triggered lockdown, Bengaluru zoo ~ Bannerghatta Biological Park ~ is reaching out to people to adopt and name animals and offer donations to raise resources. PTI

Amaranth pilgrimage: With coronavirus casting a shadow on the upcoming annual Amaranth yatra, J&K BJP president Ravinder Raina on Monday said a restricted pilgrimage should be facilitated if the prevailing situation does not allow a full-fledged yatra. PTI

Fotest encroachment: The Supreme Court on Monday directed Haryana and Faridabad municipal corporations to remove all encroachments, consisting around 10,000 residential construction, in the Aravali Forest area near a village, saying land grabbers cannot take refuge of rule of law and talk of fairness. SC passed the order after hearing a plea filed by five alleged encroachers against demolition drive. PTI

DEFYING NORMS



People stand in a queue at Nagar Nigam Vidyalaya to collect ration without maintaining social distancing at Titarpur, in the Capital on Monday. SNS

Defence reforms to make India a global powerhouse: Rajnath

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Defence minister Rajnath Singh today expressed confidence that the reforms undertaken by his ministry would make India a global powerhouse in the defence sector in the times to come.

He was releasing at a function here an e-booklet titled '20 Reforms in 2020', highlighting major reforms undertaken by his ministry last year.

Minister of state for defence Shripad Naik, Chief of Defence Staff, Gen Bipin Rawat, Chief of

MIS-C is serious condition: Experts

Say early diagnosis of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children can reduce morbidity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Early diagnosis of Multisystem inflammatory syndrome, a coronavirus-linked disease, in children can significantly reduce morbidity, say healthcare experts as they advise parents and caregivers not to take fever among the kids lightly and that the condition can be treated well with therapies like steroids.

Experts say some children with asymptomatic or mild Covid-19 have also developed this disease.

Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) is a serious condition that is usually seen two to four weeks after getting infected by the novel coronavirus infection and infants as young as two months old have reported this disease.

The government has also cautioned that even though Covid-19 has not taken a serious shape among children till now, its impact can increase among them if there is a change in virus behaviour or epidemiology dynamics, and steps are being taken to strengthen preparedness to deal with any such situation.

Anational expert group has been formed to review Covid-19 infections in children and approach the pandemic in a renewed way so as to strengthen the nation's preparedness, NITI Aayog member (Health) VK Paul said at a Press brief.

They also advise parents and caregivers to not take fever in their children lightly as some children who had asymptomatic Covid-19 have also developed MIS-C.

Anurag Agarwal, Professor, Pediatrics, Maulana Azad Medical College and Lok Nayak Hospital say most children who become infected by Covid-19 have only mild illness, but in children who go on to develop MIS-C, some organs and tissues such as the heart, lungs, blood vessels, kid-

neys, digestive system, brain, skin or eyes, become severely inflamed.

Any child presenting with three days of fever with signs of at least two organ involvement, for instance, diarrhea, vomiting, breathlessness, fatigue, rashes, conjunctivitis etc., with the history of Covid infection or contact to Covid patient, should report to a doctor immediately for further evaluation.

The disease can present with varying severity from mild forms to life-threatening disease. The illness, if diagnosed on time, responds to therapy like steroids, IVIG (Intravenous immunoglobulin), low molecular weight heparin, among others, very well, he says.

Noting that most major hospitals of Delhi have reported such cases with varying severity, Agarwal says till date mortality has been less in such cases with some patients requiring intensive care and monitoring. At present, social distancing and using masks to avoid Covid infections are the only way of preventing the development of this syndrome, he adds.

Manish Mannan, HOD, Paediatrics & Neonatology, Paras Hospitals Gurugram says it is crucial for parents to identify the problem early.

So if anybody is having high grade fever, they should consult the pediatrician early, preferably on the first or second day. If we diagnose the disease early and intervene early, the treatment needed is less. And the morbidity is also less. The longer you wait, the greater the morbidity, he says.

Sudip Chowdhury, consultant paediatrician, Columbia Asia Hospital, Palam Vihar, Gurgaon says MIS-C is on the rise among children. In the past five days, over 100 cases of multi-organ inflammatory syndrome in children were reported in northern India, of which, more than 50 cases were found in the NCR, he says.



A health worker administers a dose of the Covid-19 vaccine to a woman at the drive-in vaccination centre as Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia looks on, at Akshardham, in New Delhi, on Monday. ■ AGENCIES

Covishield produces more antibodies than Covaxin: Study

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Covishield vaccine produces more antibodies than Covaxin though both generate a good immune response, says a pan-India study of healthcare workers who had received both doses of the preventives. The yet-to-be-published study, posted on the preprint repository MedRxiv on 4 June, covered 515 healthcare workers (HCW) - 305 men and 210 women from 22 cities in 13 states.

Covishield, from the Oxford-AstraZeneca stable, is manufactured by the Serum Institute of India in Pune. Covaxin is the indigenously manufactured vaccine by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech in collaboration with ICMR and National Institute of Virology (NIV).

Seropositivity was observed in a higher number of people vaccinated with Covishield as compared to those immunised with Covaxin. PTI

CORONA BLUES



Passengers sit maintaining social distancing after resumption of Delhi Metro services in a graded manner, in New Delhi, on Monday. ■ AGENCIES

Domestic air travel without Covid-negative report: The Centre is considering a mechanism to allow air passengers who have got both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to travel within the country without a negative test report, senior government officials said on Monday. Central ministries, including the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, are currently discussing the matter with various other stakeholders, they added. Domestic airlines have told the civil aviation ministry that such state-level requirements are hampering the growth of air travel and the fully-vaccinated passengers should be allowed to travel without Covid-negative reports, the officials said. PTI

Doctors caution about post-Covid dermatological problems: From reactivation of herpes infection to loss of hair, several Covid patients in recovery phase are facing one dermatological complication or another due to lowered immunity, say doctors. Skin care experts at leading facilities in Delhi, Mumbai and other cities concurred that coronavirus patients even after being discharged from hospitals or having finished their home quarantine period should watch out for any skin inflammation or consult a doctor immediately if "it grows uncontrollably". Dr D M Mahajan, senior consultant, dermatology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals in Delhi, says many post-Covid patients with skin complications are rushing to OPDs, fearing they have contracted mucormycosis or black fungus but people should be cautious not paranoid. PTI

Dilip Kumar stable, expected to be discharged soon: Legendary actor Dilip Kumar, who was admitted to a hospital in Mumbai after experiencing breathlessness, is stable and should be discharged soon, his wife and veteran actor Saira Banu said on Monday. Kumar, 98, was taken to the suburban Khar-based Hinduja Hospital, a non-Covid-19 facility, on Sunday, where he was diagnosed with bilateral pleural effusion, which is the build-up of excess fluid between the layers of the pleura outside the lungs. Earlier in the day, Kumar's family said in a tweet that the actor was on oxygen support and stable. Banu thanked fans for their prayers and best wishes. PTI

UP gets three new trains

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Indian Railways has announced three new trains for Uttar Pradesh. The first two trains will start from Monday (7 June) and the third will commence from 11 June. The new trains will connect Kanpur to New Delhi, Lucknow to Agra, and Prayagraj to Anand. Train connecting Kanpur to Delhi will run 4 days a week, Lucknow to Agra will operate 5 days a week.

Railways minister Piyush Goyal took to Twitter to announce that "for smooth and convenient travel, train services are being started between Kanpur-New Delhi, Lucknow-Agra, and Prayagraj-Anand Vihar in UP".

The decision comes at a time when the states have started the unlocking process as the Covid cases have come down in UP and Delhi. UP has lifted the Covid restrictions in 72 of 75 districts.

Meerut, Saharanpur and Gorakhpur districts are still under restrictions as the active number of cases are still over 600. Delhi, however, is still under lockdown but partial relaxations have been announced from 7 June.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED GIRL



General public is hereby informed that this girl **Parwati, D/o: Shri Nageshwar, R/o: H. No. 26, Khasra No. 15, Ground Floor, Ambedkar Nagar Extension, Street No. 01, Haiderpur, Delhi, Age: 16 Years 5 Months, Height: 5'2", Face: Long, Built: Normal, Complexion: Fair, Wearing: Light yellow Colour Suit & Salwar**, has been missing/kidnapped since 25.04.2021 at about 02:00 pm from the area of Police Station, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi.

In this regard FIR No. 368/2021, dated 21.05.2021 U/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Shalimar Bagh, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

SHO: E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Website : http://cbi.nic.in
Fax: 011-24368639
PS. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi
Ph. 011-27495198, 8750870226
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/821/NW/2021

SHO
P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi
Ph. 011-27495198, 8750870226
DP/821/NW/2021

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



The general public is hereby informed that a girl named **Najiya D/o Mohd Heera R/o RZ-224, Jain Colony Part-1, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 30.03.2021 from the area of PS Bindapur, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 233/21 dated 01.04.2021 has been registered at P.S. Bindapur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing/kidnapped girl is as under:

Name: Najiya, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** 15 years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Hair:** Black, **Identification:** Injury mark on the hand, **Wearing:** Pink colour suit-salwar and black colour sandal on her feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/ Bindapur, Delhi.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax: 011-24368639
DP/182/DW/2021

SHO
P.S. Bindapur, Delhi,
Ph. No. 011-25633525, 25633526

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that one person namely **Karan Chaudhary S/o Chaudhary Rajender Singh R/o Suraj Park, Badli, Delhi** has been missing since 15.05.2021 from her house the area of P.S. Samaipur Badli, Delhi. In this regard a case video DD No. 39-A dated 16.05.2021 has been registered at PS. Samaipur Badli, Delhi. The description of missing person is as under:-

Name : Karan Chaudhary, **Father's Name :** Chaudhary Rajender Singh, **Age :** 22 yrs., **Built :** Normal, **Height :** 5'4", **Face :** Oval, **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Wearing :** Green Colour Check Shirt and Blue Colour Pyjama and Black Sandal in feet.

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned.

Website : http://cbi.nic.in
e-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/1062/ON/2021

P.S., Samaipur Badli, Delhi
Ph.: 011-21710052
21710073/811885473

CANCELLATION/REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY OF SPECIAL TRAINS

It is notified for the information of passengers that due to operational reasons, Railways have decided to cancel/reduce the frequency of following Rajdhani special trains, as per the details given below:-

CANCELLATION OF TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Date of Cancellation (From the originating Station)
02855 Bhubaneswar - New Delhi Special (Via Sambalpur & Anara)	12.06.2021 & 19.06.2021
02856 New Delhi - Bhubaneswar Special (Via Anara & Sambalpur)	13.06.2021 & 20.06.2021

REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY/CANCELLATION OF TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Existing Frequency	Revised Frequency	Remarks
02823 Bhubaneswar - New Delhi Special (Via Tatanagar Jn.)	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday	Tuesday	Cancelled on 11.06, 14.06, 17.06 & 18.06.2021
02824 New Delhi - Bhubaneswar Special (Via Tatanagar Jn.)	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday	Wednesday	Cancelled on 12.06, 15.06, 17.06 & 19.06.2021
02825 Bhubaneswar - New Delhi Special (Via Adra)	Wednesday & Sunday	Sunday	Cancelled on 16.06.2021
02826 New Delhi - Bhubaneswar Special (Via Adra)	Monday & Friday	Monday	Cancelled on 18.06.2021

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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1229/2021



Sedition loses sting

The Supreme Court has taken the sting out of sedition for practicing journalists. There have been several calls to scrap the colonial-era sedition laws. Ruling that criticism of the government even in strong words does not constitute sedition, a Bench of the Supreme Court led by Justice UU Lalit upheld the right of every journalist to criticise, even brutally, measures of the government with a view to improving or altering them through legal means. Quashing a sedition case against Vinod Dua, a senior journalist and Padma Shri awardee, filed by a BJP leader in Himachal Pradesh and defended by the State government, for his criticism of the Prime Minister and the Union government for the mishandling of the migrant crisis during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the court ruled that "every journalist is entitled to protection under the Kedar Nath Singh judgment." In the Kedar Nath Singh verdict of 1962, the court had mitigated Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code by ruling that it can be used only when someone's word had actually led to violence or generated an inclination for violence. The ruling will come as a relief to several journalists across the country facing sedition cases. Section 124A describes sedition as punishable with imprisonment from three years to life, a fine or both. Among journalists facing such cases is Sidiq Kappan based in Kerala. He was arrested by the Uttar Pradesh police while on his way to Hathras to cover a rape case last year and had been denied bail till date. Kappan and 21 other journalists covering the Hathras rape case have been charged under Section 124A. A string of prominent journalists was charged under the sedition law for their coverage of the farmers' tractor rally in Delhi on Republic Day. The Supreme Court stayed the arrest of all of them.

The Constitution has varying criteria for permissible restrictions on freedom of speech and expression and draws a boundary between serious and aggravated forms of public disorder which are calculated to endanger the security of the State and the relatively minor breaches of the peace of purely local significance. "Only a higher degree of threat pertaining to endangerment of the foundations of the State could justify curtailment of the rights to freedom of speech and expression," observed the Supreme Court in its 1950 judgment on Romesh Thapar v State of Madras. Thapar was editing a weekly journal called Cross Roads which was constantly at loggerheads with the Congress government of the day. This 71-year-old judgment should have put to rest all doubts about sedition, but it continues to haunt even today. When the Indian Penal Code was enacted in 1860, the sedition law was not included. It took another 10 years for Section 124A to be included. When Mahatma Gandhi was tried under this law in 1922, he told the court it was designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Even though the Law Commission of India issued a directive in 2018 that for expression of a thought not in consonance with the government's policy one should not be charged under sedition, the law is being used more flagrantly. The time to scrap this law is long overdue.

Tiananmen echo

Thirty-two years after the brutal repression in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, the gut-churning events of that dreadful summer have resonated in the echo chambers of Hong Kong. The authorities of the island nation, kowtowing to the imprimatur from mainland China, have utilised the opportunity afforded by the Tiananmen Square crackdown in June 1989 to turn the screws with renewed vigour on the ebullient pro-democracy activists. It thus comes about that the police blocked off a park to prevent people gathering to commemorate the 32nd anniversary of the repression that has marked China's narrative. And then to reinforce the mainland's repressive authority, the organiser of the planned vigil was arrested. The annual June 4 vigil is usually held in the former British colony's Victoria Park, with people gathering to light candles for the pro-democracy demonstrators killed by Chinese troops in Beijing in the summer of 1989. Police said at least six people, aged between 20 and 75, were arrested on Friday, tragically on the day of the anniversary. "Being able to have a memory is a basic human right. Taking that away is beyond anyone's authority," was the response of the District Councillor, Derek Chu, in a remarkable moment of candour. "We need to remember those people who have been sacrificed for democracy in the past." Early on Friday, police arrested Chow Hang Tung, vice-chairwoman of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, for promoting an unauthorised assembly. "She only wanted to go to Victoria Park, light a candle and commemorate," said Chiu Yan Loy, executive member of the Alliance. Indeed, the 4th of June is now a test for Hong Kong – specifically "whether we can defend our bottom line of morality". The praxis of the Hong Kong authorities, pre-eminently the likes of the chief executive, Carrie Lam, showcases the degree of repression. The Alliance's chairman, Lee Cheuk-yan, is in jail over an illegal assembly. The authorities have warned of more arrests, saying that anyone who takes part in an unauthorised assembly could face up to five years in jail. The heightened vigilance on the part of the authorities was a marked departure from Hong Kong's freedoms of speech and assembly, bringing the global financial hub closer in line with mainland China's strict controls on society. While this is the perception of activists, police did not say whether commemorating Tiananmen would breach the new national security law. That crucial facet has been left delightfully vague. June 4 commemorations are banned in mainland China. Friday's crackdown is of a piece with that ban.

Universal Basic Income

Cash grants to the poor are better than many traditional forms of aid when it comes to reducing poverty. They are considered one of the fairest, most cost-effective and most impactful ways to alleviate poverty and stimulate economic growth. Cash transfers given directly to poor families will enable them to decide on the most effective ways for them to escape poverty



Covid-19 has caused unprecedented crisis and disruptions around the world. It has inflicted the greatest pain on those who had already been rendered most vulnerable, spurring great hardship and growing unease among low-income families and micro-businesses. It has uncovered existing inequities and created new ones.

A basic income – an unconditional regular payment distributed by the government – has been strongly advocated by economists, industry captains and policy makers across all ideological hues. It is considered an important tool to stave off large-scale hunger, destitution and social unrest in times of crisis like pandemic as also during normal times so that people are not left helpless when a crisis strikes them. We have already seen smaller versions of pandemic during the last hundred years and a case for better preparedness need not be overemphasized.

Denis Goulet argues that the concept of development is best expressed in the phrase, "the human ascent" and in the ascent of all men in their quintessence of humanity, including the economic, biological, psychological, social, cultural spiritual and transcendental dimension. The idea of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) has made recurrent appearances in history – starting with Thomas Paine in the eighteenth century. UBI is premised on the idea that the government would pay a flat fee to every adult citizen, regardless of his or her engagement in skill-building activities or the paid labour market, as a partial or complete substitute for existing social security and welfare programmes.

UBI is gaining traction as governments look to revamp their social safety nets. India is the most serious new aspirant. In a UBI system, the government gives citizens a regular infusion of free cash with no strings attached. These efforts intend to provide a lifeboat to help low-income families and micro-businesses survive this pandemic, and importantly, to continue to cope with daily emergencies as normal economic life stutters through the slowdown.

The proliferation of social benefit transfer programmes in India has already resulted in inequalities and inefficiencies – while some households receive

multiple benefits, others receive none. One of the reasons why despite so many decades of aid work, social disparities have continued to widen is that India lacks databases with information on populations.

UBI is a broad, non-targeted periodic cash payment (Cash Transfer-CT) unconditionally delivered to all, rich or poor, on an individual basis. The idea is to ensure that every person in society has the means to live with a modicum of freedom and dignity, independent of one's capacity to earn or the availability of employment. Cash transfers are not tied to the recipients' behaviour, and they are free to spend the money as they wish. In contrast, an example of a conditional, in-kind transfer in India would be the mid-day meal scheme, where the meal – an in-kind transfer – is conditional upon attending school.

UBI guarantees that people will not be impoverished, will not go hungry, and will be protected from job loss due to automation while cutting the need for many other forms of social security. A basic monthly income can also replace a string of welfare subsidies for the poor that India currently has in place. Getting a guaranteed, regular infusion of cash can certainly make people happier and less stressed (even if that cash isn't enough to cover all their needs). Yet most countries aren't doing it.

The philosopher Michel Foucault, exploring the ideological foundations of neoliberalism in lectures at the Collège de France in 1978-79, argued that neoliberal logic regards the economy as a game in which the state makes the rules and guarantees their application. A guaranteed income "should make it impossible for one of the participants in the economic game to lose all he has and so be unable to continue playing." Nobody should have anything to lose; the state establishes a safety net for everyone.

This system of universal income is "based on the need to help those who are poor, without enquiring whose fault it is that they are poor" and differs from traditional social policies in that it makes no distinction between

the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. "After all," said Foucault, "we take no interest, and it is quite proper that we should take no interest, in why people have fallen below the level at which they can take part in the social game – we don't care whether they are drug addicts, or voluntarily unemployed." The state is content, "without looking any farther and therefore without the need for investigations by civil service (national insurance officers), police and judiciary, to pay them a subsidy, under rules which encourage them to rise above the threshold once more. But it doesn't matter at all if they don't want to: they will still receive the subsidy." This is the essence.

The basic objective of UBI is to reduce inequalities on account of distribution of wealth and other assets. Inequalities of income arise from: (i) inequalities in human capital (levels of literacy, skills health, etc.), (ii) inequalities in opportunities (in education, jobs, etc.), and (iii) inequalities in living conditions.

The four main goals of UBI are security and social protection (for the young, old, disabled, women); development and economic growth give poor people the security they need to invest in higher risk/return options like new crops, or upgrading their livelihoods; breaking intergenerational poverty (though better nourishment and education for children) and rights and equity (narrowing income inequality and promoting the status of girls and women). Cash grants to the poor are better than many traditional forms of aid when it comes to reducing poverty. They are considered one of the fairest, most cost-effective and most impactful ways to alleviate poverty and stimulate economic growth. Cash transfers given directly to poor families will enable them to decide on the most effective ways for them to escape poverty.

But more worrisome is the actual price of procuring and giving away cows, gas stoves, sacks of foodgrains, and the like. The experiences of most development agencies suggest that delivering stuff to the poor is a lot more expensive.

UBI can significantly reduce losses to corrupt intermediaries. Moreover, the digital payment mode leaves no scope for middlemen to sponge funds. But it may not simply overhaul the sometimes-corrupt decision-making process that determines who is eligible for benefits in the first place. The late French philosopher Charles Péguy remarks, in his classic essay on poverty, "The duty of tearing the destitute from their destitution and the duty of distributing goods equitably are not of the same order. The first is an urgent duty; the second is a duty of convenience. When all men are provided with the necessities what do we care about the distribution of luxury?" Envy should not be the motive for equalization of wealth. We need to have a more nuanced understanding of the issue.

But two areas remain the subject of intense debate: targeting and making this income subject to specific conditions. Should recipients be asked to satisfy conditions such as sending their children to school or make them take vaccinations? There is often a conflict between the technocrats' urge for tight targeting to 'maximise efficiency' and public rejection in favour of universality. Targeting appears particularly divisive because there is only a small gap between poor and non-poor in many low-income countries.

There are several downsides: recipients might misuse the money they receive; it will induce people to work less or create a disincentive to work. In the words of Thomas Piketty, the renowned French economist "the cost of substantial fiscal redistribution would be considerable, because it would decrease the return on investments (for individuals) in human capital and thus decrease the incentives for individuals to make such investments..."

The great American President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave us a wonderful mantra way back in 1937. It is more relevant today than ever before: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have too much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

One-China principle

Such an erroneous argument is another attempt to confuse the public, "seek secession under the pretext of pandemic response", and undermine the one-China principle. As is known to all, there is but one China in the world, the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal Government representing the whole of China, and the Taiwan region is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory. The Taiwan region's participation in the activities of international organizations, including the WHO, must be handled in accordance with the one-China principle. This is a fundamental principle affirmed by the Resolution 2758 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the Resolution 25.1 of the World Health Assembly (WHA).

The DPP authorities obstinately adhered to the separatist position of "Taiwan independence", refused to admit the 1992 Consensus embodying the one-China principle, and placed political schemes above the well-being of the people in the Taiwan region. As a result, the political foundation for the Taiwan region to participate in the WHA has ceased to exist. In order to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity and uphold the solemnity and authority of relevant UNGA and WHA resolutions, China cannot agree to the Taiwan region's participation in this year's WHA. This

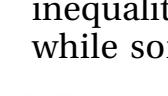
THE NATION
www.nationmultimedia.com

decision by China has received broad-based support and understanding from the international community. At the time when the "Taiwan independence" fallacy was published, the 74th WHA had clearly refused to include particular countries' so-called proposals to "invite Taiwan to participate as an observer at the WHA" on the agenda of the Assembly. Before the opening of the Assembly, over 150 countries voiced their support for China's decision through diplomatic channels. More than 80 WHO members sent letters to the WHO to express their commitment to the one-China principle and opposition to Taiwan's participation in the WHA. This fully shows that there is no way out for "Taiwan independence" and it is against the will of the international community to hype up Taiwan-related issues at the WHA. The one-China principle is the common aspiration of the people, the overriding trend of the world, and the unanimous voice of countries upholding the just and right stand. The Chinese Central Government always attaches great importance to the health and well-being of our compatriots in the Taiwan region. Under this precondition of abiding by the one-China principle, appropriate arrangements have been made for the Taiwan region's participation in global health affairs. Since the early stages of Covid-19, the Chinese Central Government has given the Taiwan region 260 updates about the situation, and approved participation by health experts from the Taiwan region in 16 WHO technical activities. There is an International Health Regulations Contact Point in the Taiwan region. Taiwan enjoys the unimpeded channel and sound mechanism for information exchanges with the WHO and countries in the world. The claim of Taiwan being "ruled out of the global health network" is totally groundless. At present, the pandemic prevention and control situation in Taiwan is deteriorating. The helter-skelter DPP authorities are doing nothing but blindly shirking their responsibilities, which has exacerbated the pandemic and aroused people's complaints and anger.

May, President Joe Biden had condemned the rising incidence of gun violence in the United States, calling it an "epidemic" and an "international embarrassment". His recent call for more gun control measures are the punch line to a bad joke. Never mind that this comes from the leader of the party that for months watched many American cities burn and did nothing but signal tacit approval, embraced anarchists and called to defund the police.

The only certain outcome of Biden's hollow gestures is that they will accelerate the sale of guns just like the anti-gun demagogery of so many Democrats before him. If there's one thing Democrats lack when it comes to solutions for crime, it's a shred of credibility. The fact that Democrats use the moments surrounding mass killings to try and advance their gun control agenda – assault weapons bans, gun buybacks and the like – reveals just how disingenuous they truly are about solving the real problem of violence in America.

Yours, etc., SS Paul, Nadia, 3 June.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Celebrate taxpayers, not leaders

SIR, In news of the last few days in your paper, a question has been raised why there should be the photo of PM Narendra Modi on the vaccination certificate being given to the recipient when the vaccination is done by the state government? And why not the photo and name of the CM? Well, this is a logical question and the alternative, as proposed, sounds reasonable and rational.

However, my questions and those of my wife and the silent majority are more fundamental. Whose money, whether it's the Central or State government, is being used and spent for these activities? The obvious answer is that it is the money of the citizens, either raised by way of taxes, in one or the other form, or raised as loans which are paid back by the citizens themselves. Even the extra currency printed by the Central government, is financed by citizens in the form of inflation of various items, some essential ones like vegetables, fuel, pulses, etc. The

figures dished out by government-monitored entities are nowhere near the actuals in the market place. Just take one item: the bus fares charged by private bus operators, which are the primary means of transport all over the country.

Our suggestion, therefore, is that none of the schemes, or projects, or certificates should carry anyone's name or even title, leave out the question of photograph. Even the foundation stones of various projects should not have the name or title of the inaugurator. It should just carry the date and the message: "funded by taxpayer's, or

'citizens' money'. After all, every minister and bureaucrat lives on citizens' money. Many progressive countries follow the practice of putting citizens' name instead.

Yours, etc., Atmaram Sarangi, Kolkata, 7 June.

GUN VIOLENCE

SIR, This refers to the editorial, 'Gun culture again' (3 June). An Indian-origin Sikh man, who reportedly helped save at least one person in the mass shooting incident that occurred in California's San Jose on Wednesday, 26 May, was shot dead by a fellow transit work-

er. Every year, hundreds of citizens die in the US because of gun violence. However, many Americans are still more concerned about their constitutional right to bear arms than about the need to enact gun control measures.

Former US President Donald Trump said after mass shootings in November 2019 that he wanted the country to have stricter gun laws. Yet he did not make efforts to end the violence. Instead he spoke about protecting the rights of gun owners. The San Jose attack is the 15th mass killing so far in 2021, all of which were shootings. In early

HARSHA KAKAR

Connecting dots flowing from recent statements and incidents provide an understanding of the dilemma faced by Pakistan on ties with India and Afghanistan, especially with the ongoing withdrawal of US and NATO forces. Currently, a ceasefire, part of backchannel talks, is underway between India and Pakistan, while the US withdrawal has opened doors for internal strife in Afghanistan which could spill across the Durand Line into Pakistan. Pakistan cannot risk two active frontiers alongside increasing internal turmoil. This scenario could break Pakistan's economy and overstretch its military capabilities.

The emerging scenario in Afghanistan and its impact can best be summed up by statements from Pakistani politicians. Foreign Minister SM Qureshi mentioned during a discussion in their senate, "what we were fearing and are concerned about is that a vacuum created in Afghanistan can drag the country back into the 1990s. There could be anarchy and God forbid, a civil war." Qureshi had earlier threatened the US that unless Kashmir was resolved, Afghanistan would remain in turmoil. He tried pushing the US into viewing Kashmir through the Afghan prism.

The recently concluded Pakistan corps commanders' conference resulted in the military leadership expressing concern on, "regrouping of terrorist leadership and outfits across the border."

Prime Minister Imran Khan, addressing the Economic Cooperation Org-a-nisation summit last week, stated, "It is imperative that there should be a peaceful transition in Afghanistan, otherwise 1989-like chaos will occur when Sov-iет Union's forces had left." An editorial in Dawn of 3 June states, "What Pakistan and many other regional states fear is a return to total anarchy in Afghanistan." Pakistan knows what a civil war in Afghanistan will imply. It has faced it earlier.

This scenario is Pakistan's own creation. It was warned on multiple occasions that it was backing the wrong horse (Taliban) but refused to listen. Hillary Clinton had stated, "snakes are going to turn on whoever has them in the backyard." Pakistan's Afghan narrative stemmed from fear of growing Indian influence in the country. Hamid Karzai, the ex-Afghanistan President stated in a recent interview, "Pakistan actually would like Afghanistan to break off relations with India." Finally, snakes are returning to bite.

Pakistan views Kashmir through Afghan prism

The US withdrawal, announced by President Joe Biden without any preconditions, has pushed any peace deal between the Taliban and Afghan government further away. Violence levels are rising as the Taliban assumes it possesses the upper hand and can take Kabul. Despite reports of the Afghan army abandoning some posts to the Taliban, the road to Kabul continues to be littered with roadblocks. The Afghan government currently controls 50 per cent of the country.

Realistically accepting the possibility of a civil war, Afghan President Ghani stated in an article last month, "If the Taliban choose the latter path (chaos and violence), Afghan Forces will fight them." Pakistan's NSA, Moed Yusuf, stated "US has assured that Pakistan will not be made a scapegoat amidst the withdrawal, but only time will tell whether they stick to their words." Zalmay Khalilzad, the US special envoy for Afghanistan, in an interview, mentioned, "Pakistan will be blamed (for the civil war) because much of the Taliban's leadership lives in Pakistan."

Global pressure is already increasing on Pakistan to rein in the Taliban and push it for talks. An editorial in Dawn last week stated, "while Pakistan can urge the group to make peace, the decision would be that of the Taliban alone. Indeed, the situation does not look promising." Added to this is the reality that even if the Taliban does reach Kabul, there are collections of militias and terrorist groups willing to challenge it. Most challengers of the Taliban will be funded from abroad increasing instability. Afghanistan will witness violence for a prolonged duration.

Last month there were multiple attacks on Pakistani troops from across the Afghan border. The worsening security situation in Afghanistan opened space for anti-Pak terrorist groups to enhance attacks on its army. Some of these groups are being supported by the Taliban to maintain pressure on Pakistan. The targeting of the Chinese ambassador in Quetta, in April, was claimed by the anti-Pak Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), backed by the Haqqani network. Pakistan's fear is that the CPEC would become a major target, and this would stall



investments from China, adding to their economic woes.

Fahd Hussain writing for Dawn stated that a civil war in Afghanistan could impact Pakistan in multiple ways. It could enhance influx of refugees as also regenerate violence and militancy in border areas, including Baluchistan. The TTP, currently sheltering on Afghan soil, could gain fresh traction and enhance attacks on Pakistani forces. The Baluch freedom groups would exploit this opportunity to target the Pakistan army and CPEC. Thus, for Pakistan, securing its western borders and provinces is gaining greater strategic prominence than backing terrorism in the Kashmir valley.

Pakistan currently has no choice.

Its only option is to seek peace with India along the LoC and reduce support to Kashmir militants. It was with this background that backchannel talks with India gained steam. Pakistan's serious intentions can be gauged from the fact that no terrorist leader has made any counter comment on the ceasefire. The ISI has tightened its leash over them.

Pakistan Army Chief General Bajwa admitted backchannel discussions are ongoing, adding that article 370, India's red line, is of no concern, while the country's policy opposed it. Imran Khan and Qureshi initially insisted on restoration of article 370 as a prelude to talks; however, in a climbdown, possibly prompted by the army, Imran men-

tioned that Pakistan is willing for talks even if India gives a road map for restoring the article.

With no comments flowing from India, the message conveyed is that statements by Pakistani politicians are solely for domestic consumption, as discussions are ongoing between the Pakistan army and the Indian government. The ceasefire continues to hold, despite the odd incident along the Jammu border.

Pakistan, which had claimed that the US must view Afghanistan through a Kashmir prism is now itself compelled to view Kashmir through the Afghan prism.

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

Subjugation of America's natives

ZARRAR KHUHRO

Of all the many genocides that history has witnessed, perhaps the most successful was the one perpetrated on Native Americans, entailing as it did not just the physical elimination of the original inhabitants of North and South America, but also the erasure and commodification of their culture.

Exactly how many died remains a subject of debate, but a recent study estimates that in 1492 the indigenous population of the Americas was around 60 million. This figure was arrived at by calculating the amount of agricultural land needed to sustain one person and then applying that to the total area farmed in the Americas. By way of comparison, Europe's population at the time was 70 to 88 million.

Once the Europeans reached the Americas the situation changed and data models tell us that by 1600, about 56 million Native Americans had died. That means the wholesale elimination of 90 per cent of the American population, and about 10 per cent of the global population at the time. In absolute terms, this slaughter is second only to that of the European power struggle known as World War II, in which some 80 million people died. The scale of this depopulation was such that global cooling took place.

Death came in many forms for the Native Americans, who saw their



settlements and civilisations destroyed by murder, slavery and, most of all, disease. Smallpox, measles and the bubonic plague cut a swathe through the natives who, unlike the Europeans, had no immunity to such diseases. Once the colonialists figured this out, smallpox especially was used as a weapon against the natives in what is perhaps the first widespread modern usage of biological warfare.

Those that survived were herded off to 'reservations' far from their ancestral lands to eke out whatever

existence they could, and thousands more died from exposure, hunger and exhaustion during these treks.

But it's not enough to simply murder a people, one must also break them by erasing their very identity so that they can be recast in the mould of their oppressors and made 'useful', and so was launched a massive campaign to 'civilise' these 'savages'.

Across North America, native children were forcibly removed from their parents and imprisoned in Indian Residential Schools where they were made to convert to Christianity,

wear only Western clothes and were forbidden to speak their native languages. If they were to be caught speaking any language other than English, punishments ranged from beatings to having pins stuck in their tongues. These schools, run by the state and the church, were rife with physical, sexual and psychological abuse and countless children who entered them never came out again. In Canada, this continued until the mid-1970s. Repeated claims of abduction, abuse and murder were ignored.

But truth does not stay buried for long. Recently, a mass grave containing the remains of 215 children, some as young as three years, was discovered on the grounds of what was once the largest such school in Canada, the Kamloops school in British Columbia.

How many more are out there? In 2008, a truth and reconciliation committee was founded to probe these accusations. It concluded that Canada's abduction and education policy amounted to "cultural genocide". It estimated that in the over 120-year history of this project, at least 3,200 children had died in these mini-concentration camps for children and countless thousands had been subjected to repeated sexual abuse.

But here's the catch: the commission was only allowed to investigate 139 of the over 1,300 such schools that existed across Canada. When it asked for funding to probe

allegations of mass graves, the government refused and the commission was wrapped up after presenting its findings in 2015.

The commission's report on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials reads: "The most basic of questions about missing children — Who died? Why did they die? Where are they buried? — have never been addressed or comprehensively documented by the Canadian government."

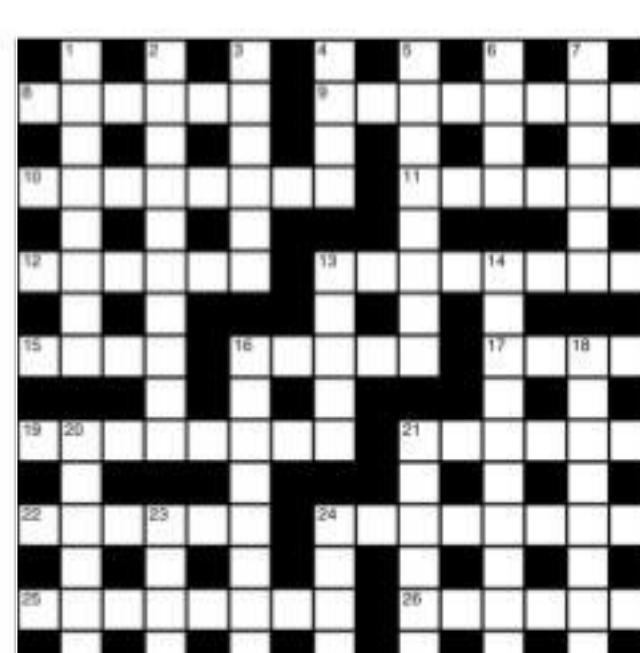
And the genocide of the native population, both physical and cultural, continues in other, more subtle ways. Broken and bleeding after centuries of state-sponsored abuse, rates of crime and alcoholism are far higher in indigenous communities than any other ethnic group in Canada. Also consider that while indigenous children make up less than 8 per cent of Canada's child population (according to 2016 census data), they make up a staggering 52 per cent of all children in foster care.

The murder and disappearance rate for indigenous women (twice marginalised by their ethnicity and gender) is 12 times that of other women in Canada thanks to entrenched systemic white supremacy and a police force that looks the other way when indigenous women and abductees, raped and murdered. All too often the police themselves are the abusers, a logical outcome when it comes to a state that was founded on genocide. The past isn't another country; all too often, the past isn't even past.

Dawn/ANN.

NO 28936

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ANDES	REPELLENT
L E T A	E N O
L A N C A S T E R	A L T E R
T I T E	V O S
H U M B U G	R I T E N U T O
U T I C I N R	
M I L L E N N I U M	H A N D
B Y S F L E G I	
S O M E	T R E A S U R E R S
E T I R P A	
M E R C H A N T	S H R I M P
O E R G B O D P	
D O G M A	I N E B R I A T E
E I C N A I H A	
M E S S E N G E R	A M O U R

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

ACROSS

- 8 Defiant expression from boorish lout around bar's entrance (3-3)
- 9 Pressure a daily feature, maybe? Just a bit (8)
- 10 Northern priest engaged by big story as source of humour (3-5)
- 11 Skinned tuna left to be distributed as a quantity of fish (6)
- 12 Those strongly pressing get fast food but no starter (6)
- 13 One admitted to organisation, say, in debt leaving Britain - cue for reform? (8)
- 15 Ambassador occupying middle of area is former
- 16 Leading poster about male article (5)
- 17 Go without fixed purpose in pilgrimage site reportedly (4)
- 19 Young troublemaker, ordinary figure close to delinquent lacking strength (8)
- 21 Top area almost cultivated for south African shrub (6)
- 22 A slow system of exercises?
- 23 Excellent champion in it making a comeback (3,3)
- 24 Dim element deprived of love the second time in a Fantasy trilogy (8)
- 25 This man surprisingly tours India, a former settlers' leader (3,5)
- 26 European detective in

ASIAN president (4)

- 16 Leading poster about male article (5)
- 17 Go without fixed purpose in pilgrimage site reportedly (4)
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- 22 A slow system of exercises?
- 23 Excellent champion in it making a comeback (3,3)
- 24 Dim element deprived of love the second time in a Fantasy trilogy (8)
- 25 This man surprisingly tours India, a former settlers' leader (3,5)
- 26 European detective in

DOWN

- 1 Nervously ran into river in very cold region? (3,5)
- 2 I love bees flying around second of hives? That's fairly sure (1,7,2)
- 3 Reasons not good for sets of drinks (6)
- 4 Fight in holiday resort, reportedly (4)
- 5 Northern Ireland director among a group of three in Caribbean location (8)
- 6 Colour encapsulated by Fauvist in theory (4)
- 7 Bullies first off put in order for rough conduct? (3-3)
- 8 Foolish patient forgetting a time for treatment (5)

OCCASIONAL NOTE

A new point has been raised in reference to the proposals for a new Howrah bridge. Hitherto it has been taken for granted that an opening span would be needed, whether the design adopted were that of a new floating bridge or that of a fixed arched structure. It has been suggested, however, that an opening span might be dispensed with altogether. The argument is that there will never be any need for ocean-going vessels to pass the bridge, the policy of the Port Commissioners being to concentrate their work at Kidderpore and Garden Reach. All that would be needed, according to this forecast of the future traffic of the port, would be sufficient headway under the bridge to allow the passage of inland craft, and it is considered that an arch type of bridge can be constructed with sufficient headway for the river steamers, without any opening span. The Government of Bengal have rightly deemed this suggestion of sufficient importance to warrant the appointment of a committee to report on the question. It goes without saying that a bridge with no opening span would be very much more convenient for the public than one which is liable as at present to interruptions of the cross-river traffic, which grows larger and larger as time goes on. To make a cul de sac at the bridge so far as sea-going steamers are concerned is a proposal which demands very careful consideration.

NEWS ITEMS

SHIPPING STRIKE IN AMERICA

The marine strikers failed to prevent nine vessels leaving New York during the last twenty-four hours, apart from numerous British ships, which are suffering no inconvenience. The United States Shipping Board has taken drastic measures against certain firms which have agreed to the strikers' terms, by taking from them vessels to which the board holds a title. At New Orleans a number of marine strikers violently attacked a group of strike-breakers, two of whom, as well as a policeman, were wounded. The police, using clubs and revolvers, charged the strikers, and arrested 138. The marine engineers ordered all tow-boat crews not to handle any ships, foreign or American. The order is a retaliation on the Shipping Board's action of taking ships from companies who had agreed to the strikers' terms.

CEYLON AND INDIAN MAHOMEDANS

Very strained relations exist between Ceylon Mahomedans and Indian Mahomedans living in Ceylon arising from the observance of Ramzan. The former maintain that the fast should close tonight if the new moon is visible, or, if not, tomorrow night. The Indians, who began the fast two days after their Ceylon co-religionists, state that it should end on Thursday. The Observatory reports that the new moon is not likely to be visible tonight. The trouble is stated to have originated five years ago in the desire of the Indians to build a mosque not separated by water. Owing to the local Muslims' protest the Indians decided not to hold weekly prayers in the new mosque, but it is believed they will now attempt to do so.

VACCINATION METHODS IN MADRAS

It was pointed out by the Financial Relations Committee that the work of the existing staff of low paid vaccinators in rural and municipal areas was defective, and they suggested that the work should be gradually transferred to qualified medical men to improve its quality. The Government observes that in European countries vaccination is considered so important that operations are always conducted by qualified medical practitioners. They invite the attention of the Municipal Councils to the possibility of contracting with private practitioners to undertake vaccination, suitable arrangements being made with them as to payment, and for the maintenance of proper records of the results obtained. The Government believes this scheme can be tried as an experimental measure by a certain number of selected municipalities.

C.I.D. INSPECTOR ROBBED IN RANGOON

Rangoon, Je 7
Mr. Boyd, Inspector of Police attached to the C.I.D., living in 47th Street, has reported to the police that his home was entered by burglars on Sunday night, who forced an iron bar on one of the front windows and so obtained entry. They took away through the front door which they left open, a box containing diamonds and other jewellery valued at Rs 10,250, and cash and notes valued at Rs 1,000. The loss was discovered at 4 o'clock on Monday, when Mr. Boyd found the front door open. The box, empty, was found in the back drainage space later, and there was no trace of the burglars or clue to their identity.

*I don't foresee any hurdle and remain hopeful that we will get the regulator's approval to come out of PCA*A K GOEL
MD & CEO, UCO BANK

THUMBNAILS

RBI fines BoI, PNB: The Reserve Bank of India on Monday imposed penalty aggregating to Rs 6 crore on Bank of India and Punjab National Bank for contravention of norms, including one related to "Frauds Classification and Reporting". A penalty of Rs 4 crore has been imposed on Bank of India and Rs 2 crore on Punjab National Bank. The RBI, however, added that the penalties have been imposed based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance and are not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into them with their customers.

RInfra cash chase: Reliance Infrastructure Limited (RInfra), in its board meeting held on Sunday, has approved raising of funds up to Rs 550.56 crore by preferential allotment of up to 8.88 crore equity shares and / or warrants convertible into equivalent number of equity shares of the company to promoter group and VFSI Holdings Pte Limited, an affiliate of Värde Investment Partners, LP. The funds raised would be utilised for long-term resources, for general corporate purposes, fund future growth and also to reduce debt, according to a company statement.

HSBC India CEO: Foreign lender HSBC on Monday announced the appointment of bank veteran Hitendra Dave as its new chief executive for India. Dave, who had been heading the largest profit contributing segment of global banking and markets, succeeds Surendra Rosha, as per an official statement.

Fuel price hike: After petrol, diesel is now nearing the Rs 100 per litre mark in Rajasthan as oil firms raised fuel prices yet again on Monday. Petrol price was hiked by 28 paise per litre and diesel by 27 paise, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

Vivo ropes in Sara Ali: Smartphone maker Vivo has on-boarded Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan as its "chief style icon" for its upcoming Y-series smartphones. As part of the association, Sara will be seen across the marketing campaign of upcoming stylish Y-series smartphones, starting from Y73, according to a Press release from the company.

Vaccination: The State Bank of India Officer's Association in collaboration with AMRI Hospital, Kolkata, is organising a Covid-19 vaccination programme on 8 June 2021 for SBI employees, their family members and contractual support staff of the bank. It will be held at Magma House in Park Street, Kolkata. The contractual staffs would be provided free vaccination, according to a Press release.

Bank privatisation plan likely to face hurdles, says Fitch

Government, in its Budget, announced plans to privatise two public sector banks in this financial year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

Fitch Ratings today said the plan to privatisate two state-owned banks in the current financial year ending March 2022 could face delays amid renewed challenges for the Indian banking sector due to the second wave of Covid-19.

The government in the Budget announced plans to privatisate two public-sector banks.

NITI Aayog has been entrusted with the task of selecting the banks and one general insurance company for the privatisation.

"The Indian government's plan to privatisate two state-owned banks in the current financial year (FY22, ending March 2022) could face delays amid renewed challenges for the Indian banking sector," Fitch said in a statement.

Fitch said the current privatisation plan is an extension of the government's broader agenda to reform the Indian banking sector and reduce the number of state-owned banks further, which have

CHALLENGES AHEAD

- Political support in favour of legislative changes to the Act, which are required in order to go through with the sale, could be a significant hurdle for the government.
- There could also be more resistance from the trade unions this time around, who will be against the safety-net withdrawal of state ownership.
- Success of the plan would also require sufficient interest from investor(s) willing to acquire large stake(s) in state-owned banks and run them.

come down from 27 in 2017 to 12 in 2020 after three successive rounds of consolidation.

"Nonetheless, the bold move to privatisate state-run banks faces risk from political opposition and structural challenges, including heightened balance-sheet stress due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which is likely to keep bank performance subdued for the next two to three years," it added.

Fitch believes that political support in favour of legislative changes to the Act, which are required in order to go through with the sale, could be a significant hurdle for the government.

"There could also be more resistance from the trade unions this time around, who will be against the safety-net withdrawal of state ownership. Success of the plan would also require sufficient interest from investor(s) willing to acquire large stake(s) in state-owned banks and run them."

It added, The rating agency said that state banks in general have long been plagued with muted investor appetite due to structurally weak governance frameworks which have resulted in persistently weak performance, reflected in significant asset-quality problems. The Covid-19 pandemic has further dampened business and consumer confidence, with the impact on reported impaired loans manifesting potentially over an extended timeframe, considering the various forbearance and relief measures by the authorities.

State banks have played a

more active role in extending these measures than the private banks, which will make it more difficult to reasonably assess stress for the state banks, thus adding to the risk of weak earnings performance for a protracted period, it added.

"State banks can also be difficult to manage. They have a significantly different culture and organisational practices (eg more bureaucratic) relative to private banks. Similar challenges and the absence of meaningful investor interest resulted in the state ultimately having to sell its majority stake in IDBI Bank to LIC in 2019, which has somewhat been privatised in letter but not in spirit.

"However, this could change in 2021 if both government and LIC are able to divest a majority stake in the bank to an external investor, as it may be indicative of broader investor appetite in state banks with adequate loan-loss reserves.

Fitch believes the govern-

ment prefers to privatisate larger banks to maximise divestment inflows. However, this will be challenging, since banks in this category – despite their wide reach and substantial franchises – have generally compromised financials, with impaired-loan ratios.

"Investor interest might be especially muted for banks which are currently restricted from pursuing loan growth to higher-yielding borrowers and branch expansion under the Reserve Bank of India's prompt corrective framework," Fitch added.

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Fitch believes the govern-

NCLT clears Piramal offer for DHFL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 7 JUNE

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) today gave its approval to Piramal Group's bid for bankrupt DHFL, subject to certain conditions.

The tribunal's Mumbai Bench, chaired by H P Chaturvedi and Ravikumar Duraisamy, said the approval is subject to the final judgement from the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) and the Supreme Court's judgement on Kapil Wadhawan to the CoC.

NCLAT's direction had come on an urgent petition moved by Union Bank of India on behalf of the CoC.

On 19 May, NCLT asked the RBI-appointed administrator of DHFL to present the settlement plan offered by Wadhawan to the CoC.

In January this year, the CoC voted in favour of selling DHFL to the Piramal Group under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

Last year, Wadhawan had made his settlement offer to the CoC. The offer was rejected by the creditors, citing lack of credibility and the valuations attached to the proposed asset sales. In the plan, Wadhawan had proposed to repay lenders by selling assets.

In November 2019, RBI had referred DHFL – then the third-largest pure-play mortgage lender – for resolution under the Code.

to consider the offer by Wadhawan.

The appellate tribunal had also clarified that its order should not come in the way for NCLT to decide on approval for the resolution plan selected by the CoC.

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IOC to invest ₹24,000 cr in Gujarat refinery expansion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) today said it has signed up an investment pact for adding petrochemical and lube plants to its previously announced plan to expand crude oil processing capacity at its Koyali refinery at Vadodara in Gujarat.

Expanding refining capacity by 4.3 million tons per annum to 18 million tons and adding plants to produce 500,000 tons per annum of polypropylene and 2,35,000 tons of tube oil base stock at the site would see total investment of about Rs 24,000 crore.

"Chief minister of Gujarat Vijaybhai Rupani and Union minister of petroleum and natural gas & steel Dhar-

mendra Pradhan today presided over an MoU signing ceremony for "Investment Promotion" between the Government of Gujarat and IndianOil for setting up a Petrochemical and Lube Integration (LuPech) Project and Acrylics / Oxo Alcohol Project along with other infrastructure projects at Gujarat refinery," a company statement said.

The LuPech project will produce import substitutes like tube oil base stock (LOBS) and Polypropylene. The Acrylics/Oxo Alcohol Project at Dumdad and Gujarat refinery will manufacture value-added Butyl Acrylate, a key ingredient for paints, coatings, adhesives, textile chemicals, plasticiser industry, and other similar products.

The inclusion of the petro-

chemical-lube integration component comes as part of IOC's strategy to create a building block for future production of niche chemicals with a potential to increase petrochemical and specialty products integration index on incremental crude throughput to improve margins.

"These projects will strengthen the Corporation's readiness for venturing into petrochemical projects like PVC, Styrene, Acrylonitrile, Poly-Methyl Methacrylate and Ethylene Oxide in future," it said.

IOC said MoU was also signed for infrastructure facilities at Dumdad for Koyal-Ahmednagar-Solapur Pipeline and tank truck loading facility for Linear Alkyl Benzene (LAB) – a feed-stock for detergent industries.

Equity markets mustered solid gains to close at all-time highs today as risk sentiment improved after multiple states began easing Covid-19 restrictions amid falling cases.

A sharp recovery in the rupee added to the momentum, even as lacklustre global cues capped the gains, traders said.

After starting on a tepid note, the 30-share BSE Sensex saw good buying in energy, IT and bank stocks in afternoon trade. It finally finished 228.46 points or 0.44 per cent higher at its new closing record of 52,328.51 points.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty surged 81.40 points or 0.52 per cent to its all-time peak of 15,751.65 points.

Index heavyweight RIL contributed around half of the benchmark's gains.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC, Dr Reddy's, SBI and ONGC were among the laggards, tumbling up to 4.43 per cent.

"Domestic equities extended gains with benchmarks recording fresh all-time highs as sharp decline in daily case-load and states starting easing business curbs lifted sentiments," said Binod Modi, head - strategy at Reliance Securities.

A sharp rebound was seen in private banks, auto and IT which supported market, while metals and pharma

witnessed profit-booking. He further noted that mid-cap and small-cap stocks were again in focus as investors appeared to be lapping up these counters against the backdrop of improved visibility of earnings recovery.

Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services, said: "Domestic equities extended its gains in today's volatile session ahead of PM Modi's address to the nation. Hopes of easing restrictions and Centre's Covid-19 vaccination policy pumped optimism into the market."

Sector-wise, BSE utilities, power, telecom, energy, oil and gas, industrials and IT indices surged as much as 3.33 per cent, while realty, finance and metal ended in the red.

The rupee appreciated by 19 paise to end at 72.80 against the US dollar, buoyed by persistent fund inflows into capital markets.

Sensex, Nifty scale fresh peaks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 7 JUNE

INDICES WATCH

- After starting on a tepid note, the 30-share BSE Sensex saw good buying in energy, IT and bank stocks in afternoon trade. It finally finished 228.46 points or 0.44 per cent higher at its new closing record of 52,328.51 points.
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Jaypee Infra: Suraksha submits revised bid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE

committee of creditors (CoC) should consider its bid during the meeting.

Now, it is up to financial creditors, which includes home buyers which have around 56 per cent voting share in the CoC, to decide whether Suraksha's bid will be considered or not as the same has been submitted after the 4 June deadline.

According to sources, Suraksha Group had offered more than 2,600 acres of land to institutional financial creditors in its last bid submitted on 18 May.

Improving the offer, Suraksha has now promised to issue NCDs (non-convertible debentures) worth Rs 1,200 crore to banks, taking its total offer to nearly Rs 7,800 crore.

For home buyers, the company has reduced the timeline of completion of some projects, wherever feasible.

Coal India's e-auction sales log 52% growth in Apr-May

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 7 JUNE



State-run coal major Coal India's e-auction sales registered a growth of 52.5 per cent during the first two months of the ongoing financial year.

"Coal India's (CIL) e-auction sales are beginning to look up as the company posted 52.5 per cent growth in auction bookings, during the first two months of the ongoing fiscal," CIL said in a Press statement issued here.

CIL's total allocated quantity this fiscal till May moved up to 21.5 million tons, under the five auction windows, compared with 14.1 MTs during the same period of the last fiscal, according to the statement.

To encourage coal consumers lift additional coal quantities, reserve price under all e-auction windows was kept at par with notified price during the first six months of the last fiscal. The upward trend in the allocation was primarily driven up by non-power sector

which evincing a healthy appetite for the dry fuel accounted for 50 per cent of the total booked quantity of 21.5 MTs.

Under "exclusive auction for non-power", this sector booked 10.8 MTs during the referred period, posting 77 per cent growth against 6.1 MTs that it booked during comparable period last year.

E-auction booking by the power sector consumers also logged a robust 49 per cent growth at 6.1 MTs under "Special forward auction" meant exclusively for them.

"Though there is revival in supplies to power sector, our concern is that there is still a bit of vacillation in the demand. We hope it stabilises soon," said a senior official of the company.

Tata Digital to invest \$75 million in Curefit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 7 JUNE

business market is growing at 20 per cent per annum and is expected to reach \$12 billion by 2025, and Curefit will help Tata Digital expand into proactive health management space.

Tata Digital Ltd – a 100 per cent subsidiary of Tata Sons – has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for investing up to \$75 million in Curefit Healthcare, subject to completion of diligence process and other approvals, the official statement said.

The Curefit partnership with its industry leading platform in fitness and wellness aligns very well with our overall healthcare proposition where fitness is increasingly becoming an integral part of a consumer's life," Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran said in the statement.

oxymoron-sounding essential-luxury market is set to reach \$296.9 billion global value by 2026. The watches and jewellery segment is expected to be worth \$58.2 billion by 2026, according to a 27 May study from the San Jose (US)-based Global Industry Analysts (GIA), with luxury market having a compound annual growth of 4.8 per cent from 2020-2026.



She is more than we could have ever imagined, and we remain grateful for the love and prayers we've felt from across the globe.

DUKE OF SUSSEX PRINCE HARRY

AFTER THE BIRTH OF HIS DAUGHTER LILIBET

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	31	27 R
HONG KONG	29	26 R
TOKYO	30	20 CL
LONDON	24	13 H
DUBAI	39	30 S
SAN FRANCISCO	16	11 CL
NEW YORK	31	22 R
MOSCOW	22	14 H

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

THUMBNAILS



A couple dances tango at a park amidst the Covid-19 pandemic in Buenos Aires, Argentina. AP

Oldest male chimpanzee in US dies: The oldest male chimpanzee living in an accredited North American zoo died Saturday at the San Francisco Zoo & Gardens. He was 63. Cobby had been a hand-reared performing chimpanzee before he was brought to the San Francisco zoo in the 1960s. The cause of death had not been determined. AP

Extra Covid vaccine for Victoria: Australian Health Minister Greg Hunt has announced extra coronavirus vaccines for Victoria amid its ongoing lockdown due to the latest Covid-19 resurgence in the worst-hit state. The hardest-hit state by pandemic in the country, has registered around 80 cases linked to the current outbreak. AP

Jordanian MP expelled over insulting King: Jordan's Lower House of Parliament on Sunday voted to expel MP Osama Ajarmeh over his "insulting statements" against King Abdullah II. AP

US lawmakers push Biden for more Covid vaccines to India

This comes after Biden said US will allocate 75 pc of unused vaccines to countries in Southeast Asia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 7 JUNE



Several US lawmakers have urged the Biden administration to ensure that India receives enough Covid-19 vaccines and medical aid, saying the health crisis in the country is "devastating" and America has a responsibility to help its close allies defeat the pandemic.

The American lawmakers called on the US government to send more vaccines and medical assistance to India after President Joe Biden on Thursday announced that the US will allocate 75 per cent - nearly 1.9 crore of the first tranche of 2.5 crore doses - of unused Covid-19 vaccines from its stockpile to countries in South and Southeast Asia as well as Africa by the end of June.

Biden said the US will share the vaccine to many countries to fight the pandemic through the UN-backed COVAX global vaccine sharing programme as part of his administration's framework for sharing 80 million (8 crore) vaccines globally.

"The crisis in India is devastating and demands more action from (President Joe) Biden. More Covid-19 vaccines

and medical supplies are needed to help one of our most important global allies fight this virus," Texas Governor Greg Abbott said.

In a tweet, the Republican governor urged US citizens to join him in praying for India.

Republican Senator Ted Cruz said that almost 300 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been administered in the US.

"India is a critical friend of the US. Biden's vaccine sharing programme is flawed: We should prioritise our allies such as India, and make sure it receives the Covid-19 vaccines it desperately need," he said.

Senator Roger Wicker from

the Senate Armed Services Committee said that it is important for the US to continue helping other nations beat the coronavirus.

"Sending excess vaccines to close allies like India doesn't just make sense, it is the right thing to do," he said.

Congressman Michael McCaul, a ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs, tweeted, "Glad to see critically needed vaccines and other therapeutics will be sent to India to continue to support a longstanding partner and ally."

He said as Texans, this reinforces close ties between "our community and the Indian

an-American diaspora".

Congressman Adam Smith lauded President Biden for the steps taken to assist countries that need help.

"The Covid-19 crisis in India and other countries has been devastating, and more vaccines and medical supplies are still needed," said the chairman of the powerful House Armed Services Committee.

"To defeat Covid-19, we must fight it both at home and around the world," Smith, a Democrat, added.

Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna, also a member of the House Armed Services Committee, said to help India deal with shortage, the US needs to send those vaccines that it will never use, just like India helped America in its time of need.

Congressman Dan Crenshaw said Houston is home to a large Indian community with friends and families in need back in India.

"It should be a priority with in this international programme," he tweeted.

Observing that the Covid-19 situation in India is "heart-breaking", Congressman August Pfluger said that the US has a responsibility to help its ally.

"We should immediately

send additional vaccines and critical medical supplies," he said.

The US has also sent critical medical equipment and medicines to India to fight the second wave of Covid-19.

Congressman Darren Soto said as a member of the India Caucus, he thanked President Biden for announcing 25 million in vaccines to hard hit places like India.

"Let's continue to take the necessary steps to address the deadly second wave of Covid-19 there with surplus medical supplies and vaccines," said the member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Congressman John Curtis said that while 63 per cent of adult Americans have received at least one shot, many of the US' friends have no access to vaccines.

"It's important we share with countries like India a return to normalcy and an eventual end to this brutal pandemic will require some global cooperation," said Curtis, who is a member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Congressman Troy Nehls urged Biden to immediately send surplus vaccines to India to help it in its fight against Covid-19.

sia-U.S. ties that have hit post-Cold War lows after Russia's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, accusations of Moscow's interference in U.S. elections, hacking attacks and other issues.

The Open Skies Treaty was intended to build trust between Russia and the West by allowing the accord's more than three dozen signatories to carry out surveillance flights over each other's territories to oversee troop deployments and other military activities.

More than 1,500 flights have been conducted under the treaty since it took effect in 2002, helping foster transparency.

Trump pulled out of the pact last year, arguing that Russian violations made it untenable for Washington to remain a party, and the United States completed its withdrawal in November.

Russia has rejected any violations, arguing that a few restrictions on observation flights it imposed in the past were permissible under the treaty.

Harris' plane forced to return due to technical problem

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 7 JUNE

A technical issue with the aircraft taking Kamala Harris to Guatemala and Mexico on her first foreign visit had to return about 30 minutes after takeoff, with the US Vice President telling reporters that she and her delegation "said a little prayer" before the plane landed safely.

"I'm good. I'm good," she told reporters, giving a thumbs-up after exiting the Air Force Two aircraft on Sunday.

Harris, who was en route to the two Latin American

countries on Sunday, safely returned to Joint Base Andrews on the outskirts of Washington after the Air Force Two aircraft, a modified Boeing 757 which is mostly used as the vice president's travel, had a "technical issue," according to her chief spokesperson and senior adviser Symone Sanders.

"It is a technical issue. There are no major safety concerns," Sanders said.

The crew "noticed the landing gear was not storing as it should which could lead to further mechanical issues. They returned to Joint Base Andrews," Sanders said.

UK PM's party rebels prepare to challenge foreign aid cuts

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON, 7 JUNE



Senior Lawmakers from Britain's governing Conservative Party are hoping to reverse the government's contentious cut in foreign aid spending just days before Prime Minister Boris Johnson welcomes world leaders to the country for a Group of Seven summit.

The government dropped its long-standing commitment to spend 0.7% of the UK's gross domestic product on international aid, citing the coronavirus pandemic's blow

to the economy. It says the cut to 0.5% is temporary.

But Johnson's predecessor Theresa May, along with former Cabinet ministers Andrew Mitchell and David Davis, are among the Conservatives pushing for a reversal. A vote on the issue could take place on Monday if the amendment is selected for a

vote by House of Commons Speaker Lindsay Hoyle.

Mitchell, a former international development secretary who is leading the rebellion, said he has the support of more than 30 Conservative lawmakers and is confident of pushing that to 45. That would be enough to overturn Johnson's working majority of 83 in the House of Commons.

The move comes just days before Prime Minister Boris Johnson hosts leaders of the G-7 wealthy nations for a June 11-13 summit in Cornwall, England.

Mexico votes in historic mid-term elections

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

MEXICO CITY, 7 JUNE

that everything was ready for the "historic elections" to be held in the country, saying that everything has been done to prevent "our democracy being another victim of the pandemic".

He called on the citizens to vote while observing preventive health measures and asked that if any irregularity or illegal act is witnessed, that it be reported to the Special Prosecutor's Office for Electoral Crimes. In these elections, 15 governors will be elected, 500 federal deputies, 1,063 local deputies as well as 1,923 mayoral posts.

Over 300million Covid vax shots administered in US

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, 7 JUNE

More than 300 million coronavirus vaccine shots have been administered in the US so far, according to figures from the country's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Some 63.5 per cent of all adults in the country have received at least a first dose of coronavirus vaccine while over 52 per cent of over 18s are already fully vaccinated, dpa news agency reported citing the latest CDC figures which were published on Sunday.

President Joe Biden in May said his administration aimed for 70 per cent of adults to have received at least one dose of a Coronavirus vaccine by 4 July, when Independ-

ence Day is celebrated.

Among the higher-risk group of those aged 65 and older, 86.3 per cent have had a first dose and 75.5 per cent are fully vaccinated.

Since the start of the vaccine drive in December 2020, a total of over 301 million doses have been administered in the US, which has a population of 330 million.

A nurse received the country's first jab in New York on 14 December, 2020.

America is largely using Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, which require two doses to be fully effective. The single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine is also in use in the country.

Meanwhile, PM Boris Johnson is to urge leaders of other wealthy countries to commit to vaccinating the world by the end of next year.

The measures include very strict regulations to limit the

commercialisation, carrying and use of weapons, as well as a new system for receiving, processing, and monitoring complaints and reports, Duque said.

The President also emphasised the professionalisation of and supervision for the police with the creation of a police university as well as the acceleration of the use of

body cameras when officers are on patrol.

Duque said that this transformation includes an emphasis on the protection of and respect for the rights of Colombian citizens.

The reform has been presented in the midst of a national strike which began on April 28 due to a proposed tax hike that was later rescinded.

At least 59 people have died in connection with the demonstrations, according to the national ombudsman's office.

Opposition to a health reform, which has also been scrapped, and advocacy for

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Campus & Career

Continuous monitoring needed

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council should seriously consider reforming its evaluation criteria



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

The evaluation of academic quality in higher education institutions is mainly done through various accreditation bodies like the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, National Board of Accreditation, etc. Among those, Naac, an autonomous body of the University Grants Commission established in 1994 and headquartered in Bangalore, is the most common. As of 29 October 2020, a total of 13,411 institutions were accredited by Naac, including 12,802 colleges and 609 universities.

For private institutions, getting an "A grade" is a means to publicise their excellence. Can it be safely said, however, that institutions accredited by Naac are of high quality?

The objective of Naac is to support institutions in getting some rank, rather than maintain the quality of higher education. Infrastructure is one of its criteria. In order to satisfy Naac's team, many colleges spruce up their outward appearance, like installing air-conditioned classrooms, revolving office chairs instead of benches and desks, and replacing black/white boards with smart classrooms. It's true that all such facilities are appealing to students and improve admission prospects, but their relation to quality improvement is questionable.

The shift to smart classrooms has its advantages and disadvantages. Earlier, teachers used to deliver points

by writing them on the board and they varied from one session to another. But today, Microsoft PowerPoint presentations have made teaching monotonous. The process has become easier, but what about subjects that need derivations to explain concepts, like physics, engineering or even genetics? Smart boards have pushed teachers into comfort zones and made them indifferent towards updating new developments. The Covid-19 pandemic has furthered this attitude, as many teachers are uploading their own pre-recorded videos.

If using modern gadgets is a symbol of quality, why aren't enough world-class researchers being produced from the highly accredited institutions? Many great scientists and academicians from India didn't have the opportunity to study in a smart classroom. Still, they excelled in their field of interest.

In the case of laboratory infrastructure, many colleges don't give students the freedom to use instruments freely. There are "A grade" colleges where even today, electronic balance usage is limited to teachers, fearing damage by students. In many colleges, basic scientific instruments like a pH meter or spectrophotometer are handled either by teachers or lab staff. For accreditation purposes, they simply maintain a logbook to show the inspection team.

Another flaw in evaluation lies in students' placement opportunities. Even in colleges where there is

no placement cell, a document is provided showing a particular percentage of students being placed that also includes those accrued by students on solely their own strength.

Several private institutions have a list of eminent faculty members but only on paper. In reality, classes are assigned to less-qualified staff members on meagre salaries. For the purpose of getting tax benefits through the Union ministry of science and technology's department of scientific and industrial research, numerous institutions create research centres. But the actual research work is carried out in some of their sister institutions. How can quality be maintained in such an environment?

There are several private institutions where the misuse of government-backed project funds is rampant. They divert such funds for other institutional needs and provide false documents for auditing. In some cases, the only duty of a principal investigator in research is to write a good project on behalf of the college and get it sanctioned. Once that has been achieved, his duties are curtailed and is managed by vested interests from the college.

In a few reputed private universities, principal investigators take a part of their salary from project fellows. They know quite well that their fellows would keep quiet for the sake of their PhD, and hence, they are exploited. Such practices have been going on for long in various institu-

tions across India. Unfortunately, none of the accreditation agencies, including Naac, has ever questioned them.

In many private colleges and universities, the pay scale for faculty members remains on paper as most are inadequately paid. One's salary is decided according to the discretion of the management and not based on qualification or quality. The only quality they consider is loyalty towards the management. It indirectly impacts students' minds and they get accustomed to the fact that submitting to the management's interests like a slave will bring them a good salary. What kind of a value system does that impart in students?

In the "Teaching, learning and evaluation" criterion, factors except the key indicators – students' performance and learning outcomes – do not hold any significance for quality improvement. In most public sector institutions, recruitments are made through competitive examinations managed by government agencies, so there won't be any variation in faculty profiles. It seems that a few areas for assessment are simply included to support the host institution in getting some points.

An area of serious concern is the omission of "Promotion of research and facilities" from the criterion "Research, innovations and extension" for affiliated colleges. In today's world, research and innovation is the key for success. Even the new National Educational Policy stresses on

them. The view that affiliated colleges don't need to concentrate on research will especially spoil the quality of science education in India. In science, research and teaching cannot be separated for both graduate and post-graduate courses. Many affiliated colleges have started neglecting the research culture because of the clause in Naac. Similarly, the need for an innovation ecosystem has been omitted from affiliated colleges offering undergraduate courses. It is ridiculous, especially at a time when the Government of India is promoting innovation ecosystems in schools. If there is no continuity of the same culture in colleges, it would lose momentum to impart innovation in academic institutions.

The criterion "Research publications and awards" considered together is again a face-saver for colleges. In order to promote a research culture, publications should be given separate weightage. Since, according to the draft National Science Technology and Innovation Policy, popular science writing is also given importance, Naac should include magazine, newspaper and online articles for evaluation. Only then would teachers promote science writing among students. Even though we have a science education journal called *Resonance* published by the Indian Academy of Sciences, very few undergraduate students or teachers read or publish articles there.

In several private institutions, new teachers are recruited close to the Naac re-accreditation period. It is done in order to include the publications those teachers obtained while working in their earlier institution, mostly during their doctoral or post-doctoral work.

The purpose of higher education is to make students take up responsibilities in academics and research in future. The omission of "Consultancy" from the evaluating criteria of affiliated colleges is absurd. Many teachers who are recruited to affiliated colleges and universities have similar qualifications. If they don't need to do consultancy services, they will not grow in the academic domain and shall remain dormant forever. It will ultimately affect the quality of students as teachers will be delivering outdated concepts.

In many institutions the accreditation process has teachers donning more clerical work than concentrating on improving teaching. It is seriously affecting the quality of education. Naac should recommend that institutions recruit separate administrative staff for clerical purposes. It should collect feedback from students and teachers who have worked in a particular institute during the last five years to assess quality. More importantly, it should constantly monitor all accredited colleges without knowledge of the host institute.

If some discrepancies are noticed in the Annual Quality Assurance Report filed by institutions, stringent action, including removing the institution from further evaluation processes, should be taken. Quality in higher education can be achieved only if there is a continuous monitoring process.

Naac should seriously consider reforming its evaluation criteria, otherwise it will be downgraded to a certificate delivering agency like many others.

The writer is a science communicator and can be contacted at bijudharmapalan@gmail.com

PLUS POINTS

Making a debut



Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhopal, has made a debut in the Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2021. The rankings were announced recently. The institute has been ranked 23rd in the overall category among top Indian universities.

Parameter-wise overall rank attained by IISER Bhopal among Indian universities includes – research (21), teaching (20), citations (25), international outlook (35) and industrial income (35).

In a subject-wise break up, the institute has been ranked 14th in electrical and electronics, 14th in economics econometrics, 15th in geology, earth and environmental sciences, 17th in biological science, and 21th in chemistry.

Admission alert



The Indian Institute of Art and Design in collaboration with Kingston School of Art, London, is offering undergraduate programmes in fashion design, fashion business management, communication design and interior architecture, and design, and postgraduate programmes in fashion design and fashion business management. The institute is offering the programmes through its creative studio-based education and strives to groom the next generation of designers and design thinkers at its state-of-the-art campus in New Delhi. The last date for applications is 3 July. For details, visit, www.iiad.edu.in

Vocational training



District Mineral Foundation, state nodal unit of the Government of Gujarat selected Times Centre of Learning for project Samarthya recently. The project aims to address the need of providing vocational training to youth of mining-affected areas, with marketable skills and enhance their capacity to secure employment in the organised sector. TCL will set up training centres in Kutch, Ahmedabad, Dahod, Sabarkantha, Vadodara and Rajkot and also mobilise participants from nearby districts to cover all the mining-affected districts in the state.

The institute will train 990 villagers from 1,946 such villages in the area. The training will be for both men and women. Along with core domain skills, the programme will include development of information technology alongside soft and life skills. They will begin their careers with a starting monthly remuneration between Rs 7,500-10,000.

Webinar on cybersecurity

Great Learning hosted a webinar on "Decoding the Executive Order by Joe Biden on Cyber Security". In the wake of persistent and increasingly sophisticated malicious cyber campaigns being faced by the United States, Joe Biden, President of the U.S., recently signed an executive order that outlines several initiatives and new policies to respond to the cyber incidents and strengthen cybersecurity.

The hour-long webinar was delivered by an industry veteran, Aniket Amdekar. Close to 400 people from diverse sectors including banking, insurance, analytics, architecture, and teaching registered for the webinar. 52 per cent of the participants were students who are currently pursuing engineering in computer science and electronics.

The live session delved into the order by Biden to create an air accident-style cyber review board. People who missed it, can watch the webinar at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laeZhsfPy7A>

MORE THAN COSMETIC CHANGES

To make it big in the beauty industry, one needs to stay updated with the ever-evolving styles and techniques

SHIKHEE AGRAWAL

The global beauty industry is known to generate more than \$ (United States) 500 billion in sales every year. In India, it is growing rapidly with the cosmetics market making up about 15-20 per cent of it. Largely considered to be recession-proof, the field has managed to leverage unprecedented challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic to provide consumers with better experiences online.

The cosmetics industry, like most others, is currently witnessing a shift towards the omni-channel approach, which means offline and online integration. It's a perfect amalgamation of both digital and traditional marketing to widen its reach. A digital presence is unavoidable to survive in the present industry as its growth will only accelerate from this point with an amplification of online shopping.

Channel diversification and digital engagement have thus emerged as



the most significant factors. To pursue one's calling in beauty, it is now important to be knowledgeable in technological advances, besides acquiring industry-oriented skills. Beauty players should aim towards building better virtual experiences while coming up with unique selling points via live streaming on social media platforms. Prioritising digital channels will allow brands to capture the attention of present-generation customers.

Customised skincare needs to be a key inclusion for any brand. To climb up the ladder and thrive in the industry, it is necessary to have good communication skills to clarify all kinds of queries a customer might have about a product. The continuous desire for customisation and connection with brands has allowed a new form of hyper-personalisation to blossom in the beauty e-commerce space with nearly a 150 per cent growth.

It is significant to hold a steady reputation amongst existing cus-

tomers while attracting potential or new ones. One must work towards bridging the gap between brands and customers, which is exceedingly important for such businesses to thrive. Building a successful and long-lasting relationship with customers, whether old ones or new, will establish brand loyalty and ensure that they keep coming back. Understanding customers' needs and sampling accordingly helps one to accomplish one's goal of service.

Those who want to make it big in this industry must specialise in beautification and hygiene. One must be passionate about exploring the subtleties that go behind transforming the look of a person. Intensive research and staying updated with the ever-evolving trends and tech-

niques will take one a long way in this competitive industry. A deep, scientific knowledge for sourcing the right ingredients and chemical components for the making of a beauty product, lays the foundation for experimenting and coming up with unique solutions to various beauty-related problems.

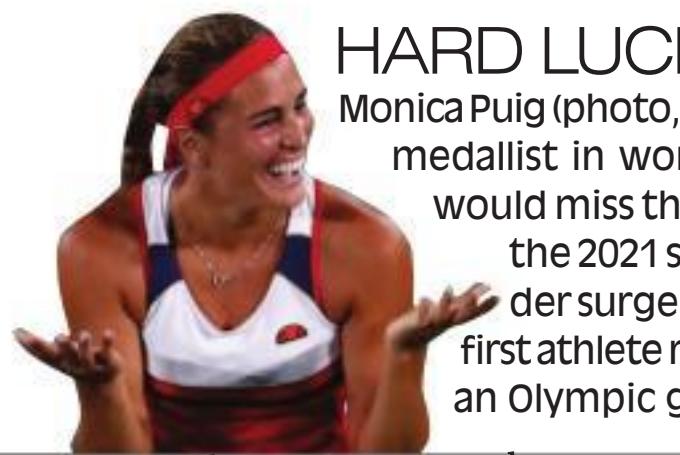
There are different roles one can professionally aspire for ranging from a stylist, cosmetologist or make-up artist to beauty business strategist, skincare therapist, beauty editor or blogger. Such diverse specialist services involve treatments, skin enhancements, massages, body care, make-up, manicures, pedicures and hair-styling among others. A combination of these skills can help one to flourish as an entrepreneur too. Such

profiles are particularly suitable if one is interested in management and leadership positions.

Whilst the conversation around natural and clean beauty started in 2018, it is currently generating all the buzz and will certainly be the future of the industry. Today's consumers are environment conscious and well informed, seeking transparency in brands. They are keen about knowing what goes into the making of a product, how organic is it, etc.

The transition to sustainability in the beauty segment will be long-term. Brands need to display greater transparency while ensuring safety and ethical sourcing to become a pioneer in the industry.

The writer is assistant vice president, Kiehl's India, Gurgaon



HARD LUCK
Monica Puig (photo, left), the reigning Olympic gold medallist in women's singles tennis, said she would miss the Tokyo Games and the rest of the 2021 season after undergoing shoulder surgery. The 27-year-old became the first athlete representing Puerto Rico to win an Olympic gold in 2016.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

Williamson all praise for Indians

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, 7 JUNE

Fierce rivals on the pitch and close friends off it, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson thinks it would be "quite cool" to walk out for the toss alongside his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli in the inaugural World Test Championship final from 18 June in Southampton.

Both Kohli (in photo) and Williamson are looking for the silverware under their leadership and the Black Caps skipper is aware that it won't be easy against a "world-class Indian fast bowling" attack. "We have played against each other at so many different levels and in so many competitions and have known each other fairly well. So, it will be quite cool walking out there, doing the toss and having a bit of contact in the first Test Championship final," Williamson told the International Cricket Council's official website when asked about his rivalry with the India captain since their U-19 days in 2008.

Williamson said that he was well aware of India's bowling depth and their recent historic series win in Australia. "Yeah, they have got a fantastic attack. Brilliant, obviously a brilliant side. Throughout we have seen the depth they have as well, certainly saw that in Australia as well. A lot of strengths in their fast bowling and spin department. So yeah, a brilliant side, ranked right up the



top, which is fair enough, and an exciting opportunity for us to be involved in the final taking on the best," the New Zealand skipper said. Playing with Dukes ball in a different set-up where there would be a forecast of rain is something that Williamson is keeping in his mind. He expects the Southampton pitch to have less grass cover in the days leading up to the final. "Mow it a bit, give it a roll maybe! I do not know the team yet, let us see what the conditions are. What we have seen so far is pretty much rain, every day. It is nice to be outside, to be honest, just getting some experience facing the

duke in different conditions."

New Zealand's primary worry against India will be to choose between a No 7 batsman or an all-rounder and the skipper says that all his cards are on the table.

"Yeah, I guess we will have to assess conditions and make those decisions. That is obviously what we try and do every time, whenever we get to a different venue and work out what might suit us," he said.

The stylish batsman said that their heartbreaking One-Day Internationals World Cup final defeat by England on a boundary count is of no relevance going into the WTC final.

"No, I do not think so, certainly not something that the guys have spoken about. I guess being a different side really with a different format as well," he explained. "The match you mentioned was a very memorable one and obviously it had some controversy and it had everything, and people loved watching it, at the end of the day.

Hopefully, it is a great spectacle, and we get a decent crowd, and it is a really good game!" Williamson also mentioned that bouncer specialist Neil Wagner would play a pivotal role against India as the enforcer.

"His ability to bowl long spells and keep applying pressure for long periods of time has been something that has made him so successful at the international level. He is a big member of our side and a big character in our team. It is always great to have him along."

The soft-spoken skipper did not forget to mention that New Zealand's success has a lot to do with the set-up that was created when Brendon McCullum was captain and Mike Hesson, the chief coach.

"Obviously, Baz and Mike Hesson took over and gave the team a strong direction that was huge in creating a much-improved environment," he said.

Kohli's success

Star Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan says that the reason behind Kohli's batting success is that the Indian skip-

per never deviates from his processes, irrespective of the quality of a delivery bowled at him.

The leg-spinner thinks that Kohli's strong suit is that he has faith in his batting abilities and is not compelled into playing any shots he is not confident of dishing out, showing respect to the better balls. "If there is any other batsman, he will come under pressure if you bowl well to him.

He will play a shot which is not his strength like a sweep, a slog-sweep or any other different stroke," Khan said on YouTube, adding: "But Virat will follow his own process. He goes with his mind. He has his own style and he goes with that.

He doesn't do anything different. I think that is why he is very successful. He has a process. He will respect the loose ball. He has great self-belief. Some batsmen don't have self-belief. That is why they struggle. He believes in his own strength," Khan added.

A vital player in the Sunrisers Hyderabad bowling attack in the Indian Premier League, Khan is eager to play under the leadership of former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

"I dream of playing under Dhoni. Because the experience playing with him, under him is very important. For a bowler, the role of a wicketkeeper is very important and I don't think there is anyone better than him to explain things to you," he said.

Robinson finds sympathisers among Asians

THE INDEPENDENT & PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI/LONDON, 7 JUNE



ing "I'm not racist and I'm not sexist."

Senior India spinner R Ashwin feels sorry for England pacer Ollie Robinson (in photo), who has been suspended for racist and sexist tweets posted back in 2012, and has called his punishment "a strong indication of what the future holds in this social media generation."

Robinson, who made his England debut in the first Test against New Zealand which ended in a draw yesterday, was suspended from international cricket pending an investigation after his tweets, posted when he was a teenager, resurfaced on the opening day of the match at Lord's.

"I can understand the negative sentiments towards what Ollie Robinson did years ago, but I do feel genuinely sorry for him being suspended after an impressive start to his test career," Ashwin said on his Twitter handle, adding: "This suspension is a strong indication of what the future holds in this social media Gen."

Robinson took seven wickets in the match and also hit 42 in England's first innings.

But he will not be available for selection for the second Test starting at Edgbaston on Thursday. He will leave the England camp immediately and return to his county, Sussex. The 27-year-old issued an apology on Wednesday, admitting posting "racist and sexist tweets" as a teenager. He expressed "deep regrets" about his actions while stat-

Zealand squad to the UK after the suspension of Indian Premier League, could play in the second Test against England that begins on 10 June at Edgbaston. It will be warm-up action for New Zealand's World Test Championship final against India.

"There is a chance," New Zealand coach Gary Stead told the media after the end of first Test against England. "There are a few things that have changed since I first said that Boult wouldn't play a few weeks ago.

The British government has relaxed its quarantine stipulations here, and Trent's actually out of isolation. The original plan, with the information we had at the time, was that we were not going to play him in the second Test and that two or three days' training would not be enough to get him where we needed him," he added.

Boult expressed his willingness to play in the second Test immediately after Stead had said that he would not play. Boult reached London from New Zealand on Friday.

"Being out of isolation three days earlier than anticipated does put a slightly different spin on things. Trent is more keen to play than he was a week ago as he is over here now and part of the environment but it's too early to make that call now," said Stead. "He has only been here 48 hours and he is probably still a bit jet-lagged. We have to weigh up all the pros and cons and the risks before we make that decision," added Stead.

Second Test

Pace bowler Trent Boult, who left for home to rest instead of travelling with the New

Open came to an end as Rohan Bopanna and his Croatian partner Franko Skugor lost their men's doubles quarterfinal here on Monday.

The 41-year-old Bopanna and Skugor went down 5-7 3-6 to the Spanish duo of Pablo Andujar and Pedro Martinez in a match that lasted one hour and 17 minutes.

Gauff will next face Barbora Krejčíková, who also reached her first quarterfinal at a major by beating 2018 French Open runner-up Sloane Stephens with a similarly lopsided score 6-2, 6-0.

Later, 22-year-old Sofia Kenin

was to face 17-year-old Maria Sakkari with another spot in the last eight on the line.

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The unseeded Indo-Croat pairing had received a walkover in the pre-quarters on Sunday against Netherlands' Matwe Middelkoop and Marcelo Arevalo of El Salvador.

Last week, Divij Sharan and Ankita Raina had lost their opening round matches of men's and women's doubles events respectively. In the singles events, Sumit Nagal, Ramkumar Ramanathan, Prajesh Guneswaran and Ankita had failed to enter the main draw.

BCCI may push back IPL final to Oct 15 in order to reduce double headers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 7 JUNE



pose. Also, the number of doubleheaders could be reduced to five or six, instead of 10," the source said.

Currently, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, vice-president Rajiv Shukla, acting CEO Hemang Amin, treasurer Arun Dhumal, joint secretary Jayesh George and IPL chairman Brijesh Patel are in the UAE to finalize the T20 event till October 15.

As PTI had first reported, the tournament will start on Sunday, September 19 and while the final was tentatively planned for October 10, the BCCI, as well as the Emirates Cricket Board, are mulling stretching the lucrative T20 event till October 15.

"September 15 to October 15 is the window. Initially, BCCI was thinking of having 10 doubleheaders. But, in the third and fourth week of September, having 10 afternoon matches can be physically exhausting for players in such a short window," a BCCI source said on the condition of anonymity.

"So if October 15, which is a Friday, is zeroed in on, it's basically the start of the weekend in India and Dubai, it's a holiday which will allow fans to come in and enjoy a high-profile game of cricket. It serves a dual pur-

pose. Also, the number of doubleheaders could be reduced to five or six, instead of 10," the source said.

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Djokovic was being outplayed and was facing his earliest Roland Garros exit since 2009, but the match swung his way in rapid fashion as he won the third set 6-1 in 24 minutes.

The Serb won the fourth set 6-0 and was then cruising through the decider before

Secretary Jay Shah is back in India after a series of meetings with the Emirates Cricket Board officials and a recce of the venues.

The Indian team's last Test in England is in Manchester and if it goes the distance, then it will finish on September 14. The next day, the Indian contingent of IPL players will be flown via a charter flight from Manchester to Dubai.

They might have to undergo a three-day hard quarantine in the UAE but that could be waived off since they will be entering from the UK bio-bubble.

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"So if October 15, which is a Friday, is zeroed in on, it's basically the start of the weekend in India and Dubai, it's a holiday which will allow fans to come in and enjoy a high-profile game of cricket. It serves a dual pur-

pose. Also, the number of doubleheaders could be reduced to five or six, instead of 10," the source said.

Currently, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, vice-president Rajiv Shukla, acting CEO Hemang Amin, treasurer Arun Dhumal, joint secretary Jayesh George and IPL chairman Brijesh Patel are in the UAE to finalize the T20 event till October 15.

Djokovic was being outplayed and was facing his earliest Roland Garros exit since 2009, but the match swung his way in rapid fashion as he won the third set 6-1 in 24 minutes.

The Serb won the fourth set 6-0 and was then cruising through the decider before

Secretary Jay Shah is back in India after a series of meetings with the Emirates Cricket Board officials and a recce of the venues.

The Indian team's last Test in England is in Manchester and if it goes the distance, then it will finish on September 14. The next day, the Indian contingent of IPL players will be flown via a charter flight from Manchester to Dubai.

They might have to undergo a three-day hard quarantine in the UAE but that could be waived off since they will be entering from the UK bio-bubble.

As PTI had first reported, the tournament will start on Sunday, September 19 and while the final was tentatively planned for October 10, the BCCI, as well as the Emirates Cricket Board, are mulling stretching the lucrative T20 event till October 15.

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