

Fire guts shoe godown, four workers missing

Officials claim delay in information led to workers being trapped in building; six rescued safely with no injuries

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Four workers are suspected to be trapped inside a shoe godown in west Delhi's Udyog Vihar where a massive fire broke out on Monday morning, police said.

Search and rescue operations at the two-storey building are under way.

Earlier in the day, the police and firefighters received a call about the blaze in a factory. During an enquiry, officials said, it came to light that the building houses a godown where shoes are assembled and packed for sale.

Initially, 10 workers were trapped inside the godown.

While four of them managed to come out safely, two others were rescued later.

They had minor burn injuries and were given first aid.

The remaining four workers were untraceable till Monday evening.

"We got a PCR call about a fire in a shoe factory in Udyog Nagar at 8.56 a.m. Twenty-four fire tenders



Fire-fighting operation in progress; family members of workers outside the shoe factory in west Delhi's Udyog Nagar on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

were sent to the spot and 15 more vehicles were pressed into service later," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Parvinder Singh.

The police suspect the fire started from the first floor of the building and spread to other floors. The exact cause of the fire is not known yet but a short-circuit is likely to be the reason, they added.

He said the godown was shut at the time of the incident. The operations usually start around 8.30 a.m. but the workers had arrived earlier. However, police said, no major injuries have been reported in the incident so far.

Case against owner

The owner of the godown has been identified as Pankaj Garg. A case has been registered in connection with the

incident.

Delhi Fire Services officials said over 35 fire tenders and around 140 fire personnel were eventually brought in to control the blaze.

"The fire is under control and cooling operation is under way. The building has been declared 'dangerous' by the civic body," said DFS director Atul Garg.

Two CATS ambulances are also at the spot to attend to any emergencies.



Family members of workers outside the shoe factory in west Delhi's Udyog Nagar on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

hours into the operation, we found out that there were people trapped inside," said Mr. Garg, adding that those trapped could have been saved in time if correct information was shared with them in a timely manner.

"While the fire has been doused, because of the heat and smoke, it's become tough to trace those reported missing," Mr. Garg added.

we

also at the spot to attend to any emergencies.

No fire safety equipment

The building did not have any fire safety equipment and was packed with highly combustible materials.

"We were not given correct information in the first place. We were not informed that workers were trapped inside. It was only after two

Miscreants loot bank of over ₹50L

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A group of unidentified miscreants entered a bank and fled with around ₹55 lakh in Shahdara, the police said on Monday.

The accused entered the bank after breaking the wall of a neighbouring under-construction building in Shahdara, they said.

The bank officials then informed the police.

The money was kept in one of the chambers of the vault.

A case has been registered. Sources said the accused had all the equipment, including a drill machine. It must have taken around seven to eight hours for the accused to break the wall.

"The burglars had disabled CCTV cameras installed inside the bank premises. We are trying to find out leads from other CCTVs installed in the locality," added the officer.

He added that they are also examining the role of an insider in the crime because the burglars were aware of the location of the vault and they didn't take any other valuables kept in lockers. The police said they are also taking help of technical surveillance to get clue in the case.

Four members of Nandu gang held following shoot-out

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Four members of Nandu gang were arrested following a shoot-out in Delhi's Jafarpur Kalan, the police said on Monday. Three of the accused sustained injuries, they said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Sanjeev

Yadav said the accused have been identified as Vinay (23) from Najafgarh, Robin Balayan (19) from Sonipat, Sumit Poonia (20) from Mahendergarh district in Haryana and Deepanshu (19) from Jaffarpur Kalan.

The accused had plans to kill a businessman in Najafgarh. "Police received infor-

mation regarding this and a team reached the spot. Two bikes were seen coming from Kharkhri Village and heading towards Ujwa. Police tried to stop the riders, but they tried to flee from the spot," Mr. Yadav said adding that one of the motorcycle riders lost his control while the other left the vehi-

cle and they tried to run away from the spot. The accused then started firing at the police party after which the officers retaliated.

During interrogation, Vinay allegedly told police that he used to provide arms and shelter to members of Nandu and Jyoti Ba-gang and that Robin was

assigned with the task to open fire on some businessmen of Malikpur Village.

Sumit was hiding in Delhi to shoot at another businessmen and Deepanshu provided information about the targets as per the directions of Rohit Dagar, sharpshooter of Nandu Gang, the police added.

DMRC floated four civil tenders during lockdown

They are all for underground sections

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

In the last two months, when a lockdown was in place in the city, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) floated four civil tenders for underground sections of the upcoming Phase 4 network.

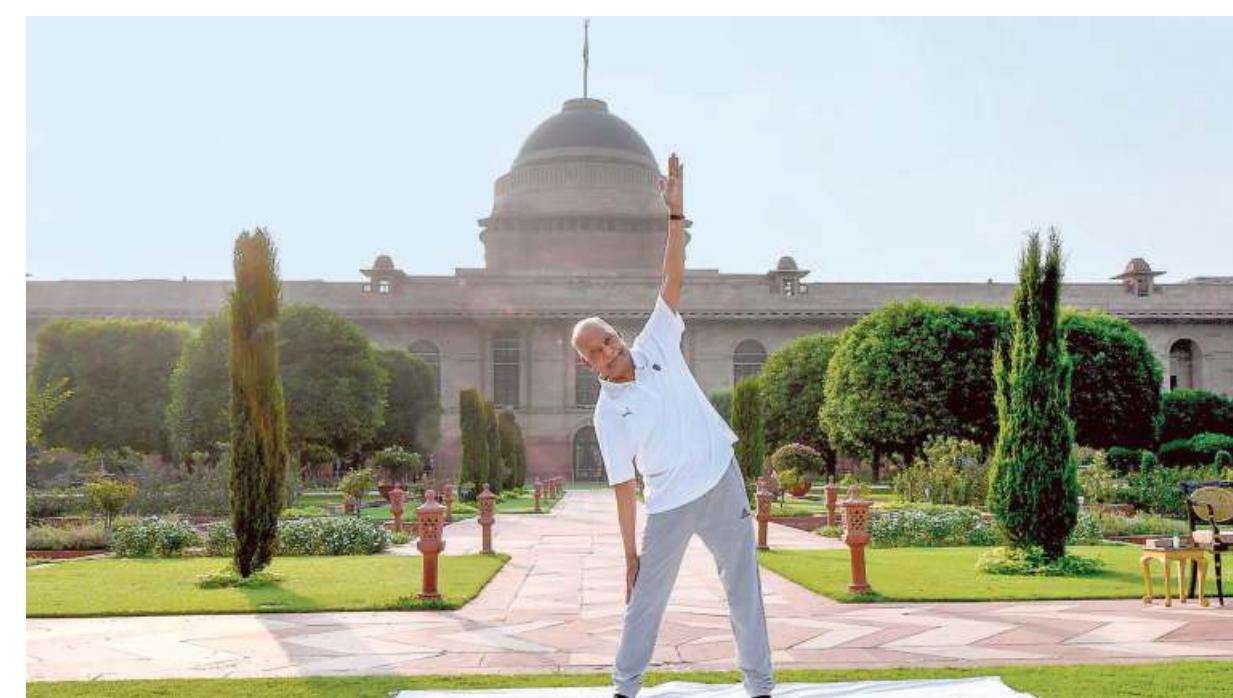
Despite reduced strength of workers, the DMRC said construction of the Phase IV network had achieved a few landmarks as well.

"During these months, DMRC completed tunneling of 500 meters of one of the 2.8-km twin tunnels. It also completed casting of over 50% of tunnel segments in the casting yard. The first of the twin tunnels on this stretch is expected to be completed by September 2021," a senior official said.

Monkey inside train

After a video of a monkey traveling on the Delhi Metro surfaced online, the DMRC on Monday said it had plans to devise an SOP in consultation with the forest department to deal with such "unexpected situations" to ensure the safety of passengers.

Staying fit



Good for health: President Ram Nath Kovind performs yoga on International Day of Yoga at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday. The BJP organised 3,600 yoga camps in as many locations across the Capital. ■ PTI

Member of Irani gang arrested

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 36-year-old member of Irani gang was arrested for allegedly posing as Crime Branch officers and fleeing away with gold ornaments from a man after intercepting him in north Delhi's Baba Hindu Rao, the police said on Monday.

Accused Qasim Zafri alias Joju, a resident of Maharashtra was arrested from Bhopal on Saturday, they said. The Irani gang is known to have a presence across India. They are also known for posing as police officers or senior government officials to dupe people. In most of the cases, the accused operate on a group of two to four, the police said. Three more involved in the case are said to be absconding.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT *** Notice Inviting Tender ***

Sealed item rate tender on form No. 6 & 8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, HP PWD Division Tanda at Nagrota Bagwan on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh for the following work from the approved and eligible contractors enlisted in HP PWD (B & R) whose registration stood renewed as per revised rules so as to reach in his office on or before on 24.07.2021 up to 11:00 A.M. And the same shall be opened on the same day at 11:30 A.M. in the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representatives. The tender form can be obtained from his office on cash payment (non-refundable) on 23.07.2021 up to 4:00 P.M and the application for issue of tender form shall be received on 22.07.2021 up to 12:00 noon. The applications for issue of tender forms accompanied with enlistment letter or renewal letter and the earnest money in the shape of National Saving Certificates/Saving Account of the Post Office/Time Deposit account/FDR in Himachal Pradesh duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, HP PWD Division Tanda at Nagrota Bagwan.

The conditional tender and the tender received without earnest money will summarily be rejected. The offer of the tender shall be kept open for 120 days.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Time limit
1.	Construction of link road to Mehta Basti in G.P. Jalot in Distt Kangra (HP) (SH-Construction of 900mm dia/Hume pipe culvert, C/O R/Wall and providing and laying cement concrete pavement)Deposit Work	498998/-	10000/-	Three months
2.	Construction of Path in SC Basti Chahari in Distt Kangra (HP) (SH-Providing and laying interlocking tiles flooring) Deposit Work	425818/-	8550/-	Three months
3.	Construction of link road Ustehar to Khajan Chand House in Distt Kangra (HP) (Under SCSP) (SH-Improvement of road width by providing retaining wall at RD 0/170 to 0/195 and C/O Wall at RD 0/20 to 0/235)	330201/-	6700/-	Two months
4.	Construction of Guru Ka Tila to Tikka Ranhan Kawari Km 0/00 to 1/300 road in Distt Kangra (SH-Construction of cement concrete cause way at RD 0/060)	370247/-	3450/-	Two months
5.	Construction of Kaithwari Sabha Hall in Ward No Village Thara in Tehsil Nagrota Bagwan Distt Kangra (HP) (Deposit Work)	269750/-	5400/-	Two months

1. The contractor/firm should be registered as or dealer GST No.
2. The intending contractor / firm have to produce the copy of latest enlistment and renewal enlisted in HPPWD.
3. If any of the date mentioned above happened to be Gazetted Holidays the same shall be processed on next working day.
4. The Executive Engineer reserves the right to accept/reject any tender/application or all tenders without assigning any reason.
5. The Contractor will have to submit affidavit along with application for issue of tender that he has not more than two works in hand.
6. Next tender will be issued only after completion of previous works in hand.

Executive Engineer
H.P.P.W.D. Tanda Division
at Nagrota Bagwan

(On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh)

HP / 1741/21-22

INTERVIEW | ASIF IQBAL TANHA

'UAPA being misused to silence voices against injustice'

With the threat of a third COVID wave, the pattern of protests will have to change, says the student activist

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ

Asif Iqbal Tanha, one of three student activists who was recently released on bail after being arrested under the UAPA for his alleged role in the Delhi riots, says the fight against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, National Population Register and National Register of Citizens is alive and the struggle for justice will continue. Excerpts.

You have been in jail for over a year. How does it feel to be free?

It was a feeling of immense joy to come out of prison and meet my family, friends, fellow students from Jamia Millia Islamia and other activists. I was ecstatic to know that the passion with which the work began to oppose the CAA/NPR/NRC was still alive. I sometimes felt while in prison that because I was arrested under the UAPA, those who were involved in the movement may have gotten scared, silent or backed out but I was happy to know that that was not the case.

I can now say with pride that when it comes to saving the unity and integrity of India, now or in the future, the will to fight for the cause is alive in people and they will not feel afraid to fight

to save the Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb of the country.

My friends, family or members of civil society stood by me and were fighting from outside while we were inside. While I was in jail, there were days when I was scared as I knew that getting out would be tough due to the stringent UAPA, but my legal team did a wonderful job and the High Court delivered a verdict that gave us protection.

Do you feel UAPA is being used to silence dissenting voices and keep students away from activism? Do you feel your bail order will help stop this?

UAPA is being misused to put people like independent journalists, students and activists who are fighting for justice into prison with the hope of silencing their voice. It is being used as a tool to silence those who are asking questions of the government. UAPA should not be misused and should be used for the purpose it was made for – to put terrorists behind bars.

Instead, those who are against violence and are raising their voice for the unity of the nation, are being held behind bars. I feel that the bail order from the Delhi High Court for



Asif Iqbal Tanha

Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita and me will help those who are innocent, political prisoners and it will bring justice to them.

You have raised a lot of questions on the condition of prisons and the way you were treated inside. Tell us about your experience.

For people who are outside, what all happens inside a jail is something that they will be unable to fathom. The conditions are very bad. It is not enough to just provide food to prisoners and ask them to lead their life in prison. There is continuous violation of human rights inside prison. People inside are not being given basic medical facilities. In the time of COVID-19, pri-

soners are not being given access to tests or vaccinations. If they want to complete their studies from inside, they are not being given the facilities to study. People are put in prison so that they may reform themselves and become better people but they are not being given the opportunity to reform themselves. They are just being locked up and are being given food to survive. There is no access to any aid, legal, medical or counselling for them to understand what they have done and become better.

Even when you ask for something that you are entitled to according to the jail manual, it is denied citing safety and security concerns. It is my humble request to the jail authorities that inmates should be given access to their basic human rights.

How will the movement against CAA/NRC/NPR continue, especially during the pandemic?

To lead a good life, it is important to study. If you do not study, you will not be able to raise questions. I will be continuing my academics by doing my Masters and a PhD. When it comes to activism, I will continue with it on campus and outside by tying up with well-known activists who are fighting for similar causes across the nation.

Activism will be a part of my life. As a student or after as well. With the threat of a possible third wave of COVID, the pattern of the protest will have to change. Social media will be used more, there will be more debate and discussion on the media to make people aware so that we can all sit down together and find a solution. These discussions will throw up ideas on how to take the movement forward. If the government decides to implement NPR immediately, then we will have to find an immediate way to oppose it. We will also have legal discussions to ensure that the way forward for the movement is not against the Constitution. But as long as the threat of the pandemic remains, it will not be right to gather in large crowds.

What is next for you when it comes to academics as well as activism?

Lead a good life, it is important to study. If you do not study, you will not be able to raise questions. I will be continuing my academics by doing my Masters and a PhD. When it comes to activism, I will continue with it on campus and outside by tying up with well-known activists who are fighting for similar causes across the nation.

Activism will be a part of my life. As a student or after as well.

Constable 'breaks arm' of minor for not wearing mask

Timings DELHI		
TUESDAY, JUN. 22		
RISE 05:25	SET 19:23	
RISE 16:50	SET 02:58	
WEDNESDAY, JUN. 23		
RISE 05:25	SET 19:23	
RISE 18:01	SET 03:44	
THURSDAY, JUN. 24		
RISE 05:25	SET 19:23	
RISE 19:12	SET 04:37	

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	37	26
Safdarjung	37	26
Palam	37	25

Delhi Palam Today
38°C Easy morning and hot day likely with partly cloudy sky. Moderate warm winds during day.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
39°C The weather will be mostly dry. A very warm and humid weather to continue. Night will be comfortable.

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THE HINDU
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Four agencies approved by govt. for tree transplantation

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has approved empanelment of four agencies to carry out tree transplantation in the city, authorities said on Monday.

As per the Tree Transplantation Policy (2020) which was notified late last year, during any project, tree transplantation has to be done through a technical agency empanelled by the government. An expert committee was constituted to decide the minimum technical eligibility criteria for empanelment of agencies and later examine the proposals received.

"To carry out transplantation from any project site in Delhi, the applicant shall be required to select an agency from among the empanelled agencies only. The four agencies are Green Morning Horticulture Pvt. Ltd, Hyderabad, M/s Rohit Nursery, New Delhi, M/s DD MEP Engineers, Gurugram, and RP Entrepreneurs," an official statement said.

'45-60 age group residents have got the most number of doses'

Healthcare, front-line workers most likely to be covered sooner, show govt. data

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

Even as the Delhi government awaits the supply of extra doses to rollout the centralised vaccination drive in the Capital, residents aged between 45 and 60 have been administered the most number of COVID vaccine doses in the city so far.

According to Delhi government records, residents in this age group account for almost 32% of the total 65 lakh-plus COVID vaccine beneficiaries followed by the 18-44 age group, which accounts for around 27% and the 60-plus category constituting around 24%.

Healthcare workers, at almost 7%, were given the least number of COVID doses in the city followed by front-line workers who constitute around 11% of the total beneficiaries.

To be covered sooner
However, a closer look at vaccination data alongside the estimated population of each group of beneficiaries reveals that healthcare and front-line workers are most likely to be covered sooner than the others.



A beneficiary getting vaccinated at a centre in north Delhi. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The total number of vaccine doses administered in Delhi till June 20 stood at 65,95,009.

Number of doses

The population of residents in the 18-44 category is estimated at 92 lakh among which 17,91,758 doses have been administered.

While 15,95,283 lakh of these were first doses, 1,39,420 people have also received their second dose.

The population of citizens in the 45-plus category – in-

cluding beneficiaries falling in both the 45-60 and 60-plus age groups – is estimated at 57 lakh among whom 36,59,191 doses have been administered.

As many as 26,65,730 of these have been the first and 9,83,401 the second doses.

Of their estimated population of three lakh, as many as 4,38,552 doses have been administered to healthcare workers; 2,52,051 of these have been first doses and 1,86,085 second doses.

The city also has an esti-

mated population of 6 lakh front-line workers among whom 7,05,508 doses have been administered; 4,35,324 have received the first dose and 2,69,476 the second.

Almost 17% of the 18-44 age group, over 62% of the 45+ beneficiaries, over 82% of healthcare workers and over 72% of the population of front-line workers in the city have received at least one dose of COVID vaccination.

While the Delhi government blamed the Centre for not providing adequate doses to the city for the universal vaccine drive, former North Corporation Mayor Jai Prakash, at a vaccination centre on the premises of the Bara Hindu Rao Hospital welcomed walk-in vaccine beneficiaries with a band and refreshments.

"We also took out a rally after that, telling people to step forward and walk in to our centre any day so that complacency does not set in.

The North Corporation will, over the coming two to four days, be able to offer walk-in vaccination at all its centres," Mr. Jai Prakash said.

Sisodia attacks Central govt.'s 'messed up' inoculation drive

'It will take 15-16 more months to vaccinate all Delhiites'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday criticised the Central government for calling the vaccination drive against COVID-19 in India as the world's largest inoculation drive.

In reality, it has become the world's "longest and most mismanaged" vaccination drive, Mr. Sisodia said.

Publish ads

He said that BJP-governed States have taken out advertisements in newspapers about the "world's largest vaccination drive", and alleged that the Central government is "pressurising" Delhi government officials to also publish advertisements thanking the Central government's inoculation drive.

"At present, Delhi needs 2.3 crore doses to vaccinate the entire Capital. However, instead, under the so-called free vaccination drive, the Central government will provide only 15 lakh doses to Delhi in July. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government has also put pressure on the Delhi government officials to advertise this BJP toolkit. It is abso-

Delhi needs 2.3 crore doses to vaccinate the entire Capital. However, under the free vaccination drive, the Centre will provide only 15 lakh doses in July

MANISH SISODIA
Deputy Chief Minister

residents of the city.
Whether the Central government-led vaccination drive is the world's largest or not, it is definitely India's longest vaccination drive, the most mismanaged, derailed and messed-up drive. It has completely botched the whole vaccination drive in the nation," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

Mr. Sisodia said that vaccination is the only way to defeat the COVID-19 crisis in India and many countries across the world had prioritised vaccinating their citizens. They have also taken pride in announcing that their citizens can roam about mask-free as most of them are vaccinated.

"Whether it was purchasing vaccines from other nations or investing funds in vaccine manufacturing, several nations proved that inoculating their citizens on a priority basis is significant in defeating the virus. These countries are examples of how if Union governments decide, they can vaccinate their citizens and emerge as a nation with zero COVID cases. All it takes is intention and action," said the senior AAP leader.

Capital records lowest daily COVID-19 cases in over a year

Centralised inoculation policy has had no effect on Delhi's stock'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

New COVID-19 cases reported in 24 hours in the city dropped to 89 – the lowest in more than a year – taking the total cases to 14,32,381, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

The number of daily new cases was lower than this on April 30 last year, when 76 cases were reported in 24 hours.

The number of daily cases had peaked to 28,395 on April 20 this year and has been dropping after it.

Also, 11 deaths were reported in the past 24 hours and the total number of deaths stood at 24,925, the bulletin said and a total of 57,128 tests were done in a day. Of the total cases, 14,05,460 people have recovered and there are 1,996 active cases. About 94.6% of the total 23,638 beds for COVID-19 treatment in the city were vacant on Monday.

AAP leader Atishi, presenting a daily bulletin on vaccination, said that Del-



A woman undergoes a COVID-19 testing in north Delhi. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

hi's stock of Covaxin for 18-44 age group would last only for a day.

Vaccine stock

"Delhi has 8,27,000 lakh vaccines for 45+ and for 18-44, Delhi has 2,68,000 vaccines. For 45+, we have a 5 days stock of Covaxin and 57 days stock of Covishield available. For 18-44, we have one day stock of Covaxin and 13 days stock of Covishield available," Ms. Atishi said.

"From June 21, when the nationwide universal vaccination campaign has started, it has had no effect on Delhi's stock position. Delhi has not received even a single extra dose of vaccine. Delhi has been extremely vulnerable and its population density is very high," she added.

Toiling away



Daily wage labourers on their way to a construction site in west Delhi on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

'Govt. schools not reopening anytime soon'

Classrooms will be equipped with best facilities when students return, says Sisodia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday said that the Delhi government was not calling students back to school anytime soon but was ensuring that when they do return, they will enter colourful classes designed to motivate them to learn and engage.

Safety of children

"Keeping in mind the security and safety of children, we are not calling students back to school anytime soon. We are, however, ensuring that the construction work for new and improved class-



Manish Sisodia

rooms is done at a faster pace so that when children return to school, they are welcomed with new and colourful classrooms with the best facilities," Mr. Sisodia said.

Construction work

The Delhi government in a statement said 97% construction work in SKV Kondli School is complete and will be fully finished by June 2021. About 84% of classroom construction work is complete at Government Co-ed, IP Extension, is complete and the school construction will be fully finished by July 2021. About 84% of classroom construction work is complete at Government Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Preet Vihar. It will be fully finished by August 2021 and will host 48 new classrooms.

He was speaking after visiting four newly built Delhi government schools and check on construction of classrooms and academic blocks. Mr. Sisodia directed officials to ensure that classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and that schools and classrooms should be designed keeping in mind the psyche of children.

2021. At present, 20 new classrooms are being constructed in SKV Kondli. Similarly, 97% construction work is complete in GGSS Kalyanpur Suri School, with 20 new classrooms in the process of being constructed. Over 90% of work to build 84 new classrooms at Government Co-ed, IP Extension, is complete and the school construction will be fully finished by July 2021. About 84% of classroom construction work is complete at Government Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Preet Vihar. It will be fully finished by August 2021 and will host 48 new classrooms.

PCRA executive director Niranjan Kumar Singh said the new gas stove is available now on e-commerce platforms as well as in the local market.

There are about 74,20 lakh PNG connections across

the country, including 23,62 lakh in Gujarat, 18,94 lakh in Maharashtra, 10,21 lakh in Delhi, 9,21 lakh in Mumbai and Greater Mumbai, 1,21 lakh in Hyderabad and 61,000 in Lucknow.

"The new PNG gas stove has been designed by Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun. The new gas stove looks like the conventional LPG stoves meant to be used with the LPG cylinders but reduce the wastage of gas due to the design changes in the mixing tube, nozzle, burner and pan support," the PCRA stated.

"IIP-Dehradun has transferred the technology of the new gas stove to 40 manufacturing companies of which 10 have already started the commercial production," the PCRA also stated.

'Civic bodies pressuring people to pay house tax'

They should be giving relief: Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Monday alleged that the municipal corporations were pressuring people to pay house tax, instead of giving them relaxations after the COVID-19 pandemic and extended lockdown.

Delhi Congress vice-president and leader of the Congress party in the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Abhishek Dutt, said the civic bodies have also issued notices to shopkeepers and traders, without the consent of the House.

"Most people did not come out of their homes due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns last year and this year, and without any source of income as shops and business establishments were shut for long periods, they could not pay the taxes. It is inhumane on the part of the civic bodies to demand double the tax amount from defaulters, instead of finding some method to offer them relief," Mr. Dutt said.

He added that in addition to collecting house tax online, the municipal corporations should also start ma-

NGT modifies order on Najafgarh lake

17 new cases in G.B. Nagar

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Monday modified an earlier order pertaining to the Najafgarh lake and raised the need for a field survey to ascertain the status of the water quality.

Remove encroachment
A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel further directed the Chief Secretaries of Delhi and Haryana to coordinate with departments concerned and ensure removal of encroachment, prevent entry of untreated sewage into the lake and take remedial action.

"Needless to say, the water quality of the lake is the index of pollution level. There is need for field survey to find out ground status of the water quality. Information available on the flora fauna of water body including a study of CPCB [Central Pollution Control Board] carried out in 2003 can also be utilised. Peri-urban areas of Delhi, Haryana towns and settlements around are the possible cause of endangering the lake," the Bench said.

THE HINDU

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THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

Dushyant Chautala faces ire of farmers

Haryana Deputy CM was in Sirsa to unveil a statue; protest at Education Minister's meeting venue too

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

The leaders of the ruling BJP-JJP regime, including Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, faced the farmers ire during their official programmes in at least three places across the State on Monday.

Haryana Education Minister Kanwar Pal did not turn up for a scheduled grievances redressal meeting in Ambala apparently due to the farmers protest.

Mr. Chautala was in Sirsa to unveil an 18-foot tall statue of former Deputy Prime Minister Chaudhary Devi Lal when a large number of farmers led by Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charun) Sirsa president Sikander Rori



Deputy CM Chautala



Minister Kanwar Pal

trolled by the farmers, but was motivated by politics. He said that Chaudhary Devi Lal worked for the welfare of the farming community all his life and those protesting against the unveiling of his statue could not be farmers.

Black flags shown

In Charkhi Dadri, a large number of farmers led by Raju Maan, a farmer leader, showed black flags to BJP leader and Haryana Women Development Corporation chairperson Babita Phogat at International Yoga Day programme in Janata College Sports Stadium.

Mr. Maan said the leaders of the ruling regime had lost the confidence of the common man and this is the reason why people were protesting against them on the roads.

Motivated by politics

Mr. Chautala, in an interaction with the journalists, said the movement against the farm laws was no more con-

cerned outside the gates of Chaudhary Devi Lal University and raised slogans against the Deputy Chief Minister.

Mr. Rori claimed that he along with three more farmers managed to scale the

boundary wall of the university to reach the venue.

'Motivated by politics'

Mr. Chautala, in an interaction with the journalists, said the movement against the farm laws was no more con-

cerned outside the gates of Chaudhary Devi Lal University and raised slogans against the Deputy Chief Minister.

Delta strain predominant in Chandigarh: PGIMER

'61% of samples contain the variant'

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

A man was given two doses of COVID-19 vaccine within minutes in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district.

Though Prasanna Kumar Sahu, 50, of Bachhuripada village under the Betanoti block of Mayurbhanj did not complain of any adverse reaction, a health department team on Monday visited his home to assess his condition.

The incident occurred on Saturday when Mr. Sahu along with six fellow villagers visited the vaccination centre at Khuntapur.

Both jabs on same hand

"I was given the first dose on my left hand. While I was collecting my paper and two paracetamol tablets from a nurse following the vaccination, another nurse came from behind and administered another dose just three inch below the first vaccination spot," Mr. Sahu told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Sahu said by the time he raised an alarm, the nurse had already administered the second dose to him.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered under the name of "BHARTIYA PANCHNAD". The proposed party is located at Residential Plot No.121, Block-S, Residential Colony, known as Uppal's Southend, Sector-40 & 49, in and around village Tanda, Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, India. The address is Gurgaon, Haryana-12208. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Name of the office bearers of the party are as follows:-

President : Surender Kumar Makkar S/o Sh. Amrit Chand R/o H.No.234, Ward-10, Hindaun Tehsil, Hanst, District- Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

General Secretary : Amit Kumar Girdhar S/o Sh. Arjun Das R/o H.No.373, Sector-38, Gurgaon Tehsil-Gurgaon, Haryana. President S/o Kumar S/o Ram Das R/o H.No.32, Ward No.1, Toor District-Gurgaon, Haryana.

If anyone has any objection to the registration of "BHARTIYA PANCHNAD" party they may send their objection with reasons thereof to the Secretary (Political Party), Election Commission of India, Niravchan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

EDUCATIONAL

PAVAN KUMAR'S IAS
(An Academy of General Studies & Public Administration)

1 AIR-Pradeep Singh
I immensely benefited from Pavan Sir's classes, discussions & guidance in my Civil Services Examination preparation for both General Studies and Public Administration." Pradeep Singh (AIR-1)

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
LIVE ONLINE BATCH
From: 26th June
8447532310, 8447412868, 9911366520

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to inform the General Public that following share certificate of Piramal Enterprises Ltd having its Registered office at Piramal Agrocity Corporate Park, Opposite Fire Brigade, Kamani Junction, LBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai-400078 Maharashtra, India registered in the name of the following Shareholders have been lost by them.

Sr. No. Name of the Share holder/s Folio No / Certificate No./s Distinctive Number/s No. of Shares

1	ANEETA MADDAN	A014012	3841	19005441 - 19005515	75
			37232	190121325 - 190121332	8

The share are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificates.

Any person who has any claim in respect of the said share certificate should lodge such claim with the Company or its Register and Transfer Agents Link Intime India Private Limited, 247 Park C-101, L.B.S Marg, Vikhroli (West) Mumbai-400083 within 15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entertained and the Company shall proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificates.

Place: Delhi Date: 22 - 06 - 2021

CMYK

26 - 06 - 2021

ANEETA MADDAN

26 - 06 - 2021

As barricades go, shoppers, tourists hit the road

Restaurants open in Karnataka, Telangana; Irani tea shops draw Hyderabidis; Kerala reports first Delta plus variant case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The end of lockdown witnessed patrons returning to hotels and a variety of shops in Karnataka and Telangana.

Karnataka on Monday relaxed norms in six more districts as the COVID-19 test positivity rate (TPR) fell to less than 5%. Udupi, Bengaluru Rural, Shivamogga, Ballari, Chitradurga, and Vijayapura districts were brought under relaxations in lockdown.

Eight districts continued to report a positivity rate above 5%, including Mysuru, with above 10%. As many as 4,867 new cases were reported in the State on Monday.

As Bengaluru city opened up traffic snarls were back on

Monday. BBMP Civic Commissioner Gaurav Gupta said the response was good in Bengaluru. Most people wore masks and followed COVID-19-appropriate behaviour.

Yediyurappa's appeal
Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa urged people on Twitter to wear masks, ensure hygiene and sanitation, maintain social distance and get vaccinated.

Chandrashekhar Hebbar, president, Karnataka Regional Hotels and Restaurants' Federation, said footfalls were very low and business had not improved. Footfalls were low in jewellery, garments, books and home appliances segments.



Back to business: Traffic clogs Hudson circle in Bengaluru on Monday, as the city unlocked after two months. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Hyderabidis were back to relishing *Irani chai* at their favourite roadside joints.

City residents stepped out from home and caught up

with friends at the bustling cafes and restaurants.

Other business establishments, including private travels, transport, electrical,

clothing, steel industry and wholesale markets at Abids, Begum Bazaar and Secunderabad were buzzing with customers. Religious places were also thrown open.

The TPR in Telangana was down to 1% as 1,197 new cases and nine deaths were reported on Monday.

Andhra Pradesh reported 44 deaths and 2,620 new infections on Monday. While relaxation hours of 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. came into force on Monday, parts of Chittoor were under complete lockdown or following 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. schedule.

Visitors thronged the waterfalls at Kailasanatha Kona in Narayanavanam mandal on the Puttur-Chennai national highway. Tourists from

Tamil Nadu arrived at the spot in private vehicles.

Kerala on Monday reported its first case of a COVID-19 patient with the Delta plus variant of SARS-CoV-2. Officials said a four-year-old boy from ward 14 of the Kadpara Panchayat in Pathanamathitta was detected with the variant, with a positive test on May 24, and he had reportedly recovered.

Genome sequencing at CSIR-IGIB in New Delhi confirmed the variant. Kerala reported 7,499 new cases on Monday. The TPR was 9.63%. The State added 94 deaths, including recent ones.

(With inputs from Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Thiruvananthapuram bureaus)

IN BRIEF



Tanzanian national held with three kg heroin

HYDERABAD
A Tanzanian national was held at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport with three kg of heroin on Monday. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence seized the heroin worth ₹19.5 crore from the checked-in baggage of the passenger who flew in from Johannesburg via Doha.

Four new MLCS take charge in Andhra Pradesh

VIJAYAWADA
Four new Members of Legislative Council (MLCs) were sworn in on Monday in Andhra Pradesh. The ruling YSR Congress Partynominated L. Appi Reddy, Thota Trimurthulu, R.V. Ramesh Yadav and K. Moshen Raju to the Council in the Governor's quota.

Mystery shrouds death of 5 in Kozhikode road accident

Police probing links with gold smuggling rackets

STAFF REPORTER
KOZHIKODE

A comprehensive investigation is under way into the suspicious circumstances that led to a road accident here in Kerala that claimed the lives of five natives of Palakkad district on Monday.

They were reportedly on their way back home from the Kozhikode International Airport when their car hit a cement-laden truck around 5 a.m. The deceased, all residents of Cherpalassery village, had gone to the airport to see off their friend.

The Feroke police have impounded a multi-purpose vehicle, which reportedly escorted the car before it



The car that collided with a truck near Ramanattukara in Kozhikode on Monday morning. ■ PTI

met with the accident near Ramanattukara.

The investigation team said it would check whether the victims and those who reportedly escorted them to the airport had links with gold smuggling rackets.

According to the truck driver, the car was moving erratically, violating the speed limit, as if chased by another vehicle.

"It is suspicious that 15 persons came to the airport

in three separate vehicles amidst lockdown regulations," said District Police Chief (Kozhikode city) A.V. George.

According to the truck driver, the car was moving erratically, violating the speed limit, as if chased by another vehicle.

Nobel laureate Esther Duflo in T.N. panel

Raghuram Rajan too in Council

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

mendations of the council, the government will revitalise the State's economy and ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach all segments of society," Mr. Purohit said in his address to the Assembly.

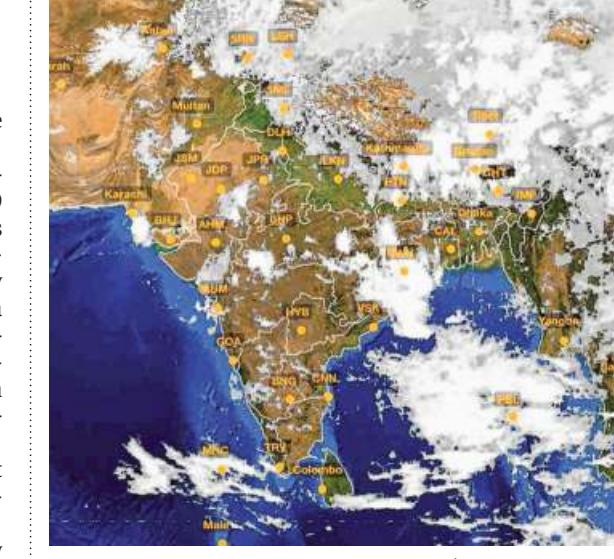
Explaining the reason for the decision, a government order said the State was in the midst of a serious economic crisis induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The fiscal situation was also precarious, with persistently high revenue and fiscal deficits and a large overhang of debt.

"In this context, the government requires expert advice from the best economists available globally, who are familiar with Tamil Nadu, its economy, society and polity, and also the trends in the Indian and the global economy," the G.O. said.

"Based on the recom-

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA (°C), POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Muzaffarabad, east Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Chattisgarh, coastal Karnataka, Puducherry, Karaikal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	5...	31.8...	25.9...	Kozhikode	10...	31.0...	23.8...
Ahmedabad	3...	31.3...	25.1...	Kurnool	...	37.4...	25.7...
Aizawl	2.6...	26.0...	19.0...	Lucknow	...	34.4...	25.8...
Allahabad	...	35.2...	26.3...	Madurai	...	39.4...	25.4...
Bengaluru	...	30.6...	20.4...	Mangaluru	45.7...	29.2...	23.0...
Bhopal	...	33.5...	23.0...	Mumbai	23...	33.4...	24.6...
Bhubaneswar	30...	35.0...	25.2...	Mysuru	...	30.8...	21.7...
Chandigarh	...	36.5...	24.0...	New Delhi	...	37.4...	25.5...
Chennai	...	39.9...	29.4...	Patna	20...	32.0...	24.3...
Coimbatore	...	33.0...	23.4...	Port Blair	...	31.6...	26.2...
Dehradun	4...	32.6...	23.0...	Puducherry	...	38.8...	25.8...
Gangtok	0.8...	21.0...	17.3...	Pune	0.7...	29.8...	21.0...
Goa	7...	31.8...	24.4...	Raipur	...	35.2...	25.2...
Guwahati	0.5...	34.6...	26.4...	Ranchi	24...	33.2...	21.7...
Hubballi	...	37.0...	22.0...	Shillong	...	25.1...	18.0...
Hyderabad	...	34.4...	24.0...	Shimla	...	27.0...	18.6...
Imphal	0.1...	30.2...	21.3...	Srinagar	...	27.6...	14.6...
Jaipur	1...	37.8...	25.5...	Thiruvananthapuram	0.5...	32.9...	25.2...
Kochi	28...	31.4...	24.4...	Tiruchi	...	39.9...	26.4...
Kohima	48...	27.6...	18.8...	Vijayawada	...	38.2...	28.2...
Kolkata	9...	32.5...	24.4...	Visakhapatnam	...	38.4...	27.2...

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	.3	10	95	.123	.113	■
Bengaluru	11	37	165	.97	.76	■
Chennai	92	10	34	.71	.85	■
Delhi	.8	20	49	.87	.188	■
Hyderabad	46	.27	14	.66	.133	■
Kolkata	10	32	29	.86	.79	■
Lucknow	.2	8	118	.29	.51	■
Mumbai	..	.13	.6	.91	.170	■
Pune	..	.7	.51	.226	.103	■
Visakhapatnam	11	.47	36	.71	.119	■

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 215 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 12.

AQI Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

NORTH & WEST

Central leadership will decide next CM in U.P., says Minister

We will accept whoever comes: Swami Prasad Maurya

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

A Cabinet Minister in the Yogi Adityanath-led government in Uttar Pradesh has said that the Chief Minister would be decided by the party's central leadership if the BJP wins again in the 2022 Assembly polls.

The comment by State Labour Minister Swami Prasad Maurya on Sunday reflects the reported difference of opinion within the State BJP regarding the leadership of Yogi Adityanath, who was chosen as Chief Minister by the central leadership in 2017.

The BJP had contested the 2017 polls without a CM face and largely on the image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The question now is if the party would enter the polls with the promise of a second term for the head

of the Gorakhpur temple in Gorakhpur or

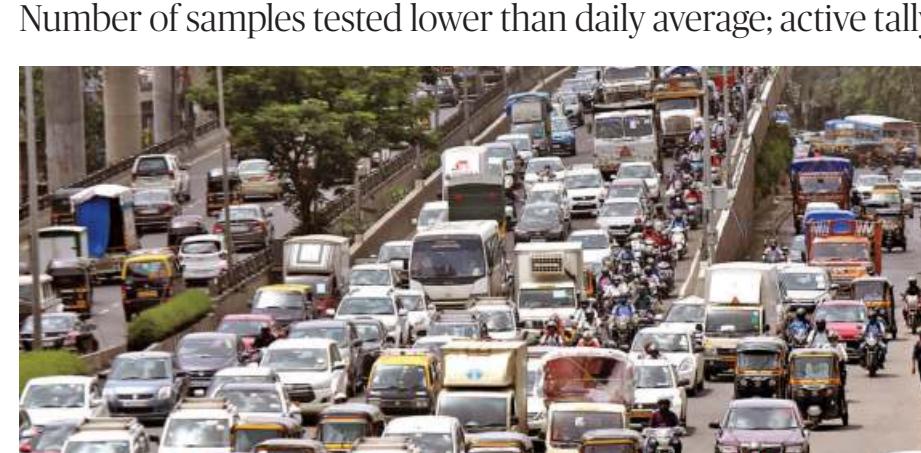
keep the option open.

The reluctance of first Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya, and now Mr. Swami Prasad Maurya, to name Mr. Adityanath as the face of the campaign indicates disquiet within the ruling party.

Responding to questions by journalists, Mr. Swami Prasad Maurya said the central leadership would choose the Chief Minister. "We will accept whoever comes," he said.

Maharashtra adds 6,270 new cases

Number of samples tested lower than daily average; active tally goes below 1.25 lakh



At a snail's pace: Heavy traffic on the Western Express Highway in Mumbai on Monday even as the city continues to be in level 3 of restrictions. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

SPECIAL CORRESP



A time to give

Families who lost breadwinners in COVID-19 need supportive policies and a safety net

The Centre's stated position before the Supreme Court on paying a standard ex gratia compensation to families of those who died of COVID-19 shows poor appreciation of the fallout of an unprecedented disaster. After initially asserting that such payments were beyond the Government's fiscal affordability, although there is a provision in the Disaster Management Act for compensation, and externalising the pandemic as a global, ongoing event, the Home Ministry has now averred that the issue was the manner in which funds were to be put to use. Clearly, lack of resources would be a legless argument when the Centre is pursuing expensive redevelopment projects such as the Central Vista. What the Government says it wants to do is to deploy funds in health care, enhance social protection and support economic recovery of affected communities, rather than give one-time compensation payments (₹4 lakh) or notified ex gratia sought by the petitioners. There is nothing wrong in keeping the focus on provision of essential supplies and additional health infrastructure. In fact, the second wave peak was made considerably worse by poor health infrastructure and low public health expenditure, and a policy failure recorded by the Economic Survey which called for higher public spending of 2.5%-3% of GDP on health. But lending a helping hand to families now impoverished should also be a priority. The Centre, after tying itself in knots on free vaccines, should now spell out its road map for a universal public health system.

The annual Budget included a raft of schemes under COVID-19 initiatives and claimed credit for Atmanirbhar Bharat packages, which, together with the RBI's ameliorative steps, officially amounted to 13% of GDP. But the "above-the-line" relief in terms of health care and social protection, including cash transfers, are a small share of other spending such as credit provision to several sectors, as per some estimates. The IMF analysis of policy responses says that early in the pandemic, food, fuel and cash transfers to lower-income households came to 1.2% of GDP. With the second wave marked by many deaths and nationwide closures, a review of direct benefits is urgently called for. In court, the Home Ministry has said that confining solutions to compensation would be narrow. It is no one's case that large direct cash benefits are the only good interventions. Families who have lost breadwinners need help while orphaned children need support. It also does not help that India's pension system is weakening, bank deposits have low yields and official policy expects people to essentially fend for themselves. The Centre should not hesitate to review its tax basket to rely more on the wealthiest to compensate those who have been hit the hardest.

A perpetual war

U.S. should have backed Afghan govt. more instead of pushing hard to engage the Taliban

The dilemmas of ending the U.S.'s "forever war" appeared to fall heavily upon the shoulders of President Joe Biden, who is now helming his country's rush for the exit before the self-imposed deadline of September 11, 2021, the 20-year anniversary of the WTC terror attacks. While he clearly signalled his intention to remain engaged with the war-torn country by meeting, in the first instance, Afghanistan's President, Ashraf Ghani, and Chairman of its High Council for National Reconciliation, Abdullah Abdullah, at the White House this week, the U.S.'s troop withdrawal since May 1, 2021, in a sense signals the opposite intention. There is no mistaking the Taliban's reaction, especially to Washington's plan to wind down its Afghan military presence. Ever since February 29, 2020, when the U.S. and the Taliban signed the Doha "agreement for bringing peace" to Afghanistan, Taliban-linked violence has risen steadily. U.S. intelligence reports have assessed that al-Qaeda still has a presence in Afghanistan and the terrorist outfit's decades-long ties with the Taliban have been undiminished. Meanwhile the situation on the ground is far from inspiring for anyone who hopes for peace in the region. Facing tepid resistance from the ANDSF, now with ever-reducing access to U.S. air support, the Taliban have managed to fight, hold on to and even take back the territories from the government.

This reality begs the question of what new vortexes of violence, terrorist havens and other sources of regional instability Afghanistan might play host to now, and whether the U.S. and western powers will retain enough influence to prevent events in this regard from spiralling out of control. Closer to home, a sense of concern must be pervading South Block as the last U.S. troop carriers lift off from Bagram, potentially allowing agents linked to Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment a freer hand to engage with extremist elements in Afghanistan with possible blowback for India. What will become of New Delhi's long-sighted, soft-power investments into education, training and infrastructure and civil society development? Had the U.S. played a consistently strong hand supporting the Afghan government instead of pushing as hard as it did to engage the Taliban, that might have delayed Washington's exit plans but provided more leeway for the ANDSF to push harder and take enough territory to weaken the Taliban's overall strategic grip. Given the prospect of the ANDSF's fragmentation – already occurring in some areas – it now appears more likely that a deal may be forged between the Taliban and power-brokers once associated with the Afghan government. This could lead to a Taliban-centric religious council that sets an overall tenor of governance based on Islamic law yet permits a semi-autonomous executive governmental power to operate within that framework.

The state of India's poor must be acknowledged

This is 'abject poverty', and if the economy is to be repaired, the number of the poor has to be meticulously counted



SEEMA CHISHTI

The son of a corn merchant-turned sociologist, Charles Booth had little patience for Charles Dickens and others in his time, who used lyrical prose to describe the desperation of the poor in working class London. Booth was also angry, in 1885, over the claims made by F.D. Hyndman, the leader of the Social Democratic Federation, which after an enquiry into the working classes of London had concluded that a quarter of the population of London lived in abject poverty (<https://bit.ly/3gKVNi8>). Confident of showing up the claims as sensational, he set about drawing his poverty map of the city and getting people to do door-to-door surveys. Much to his horror, his own landmark 'Life and Labour of the People in London' survey concluded that the numbers were much higher and a third of London lived in abject poverty. He had, unintentionally, nailed the importance of getting the numbers right, which settled the question of which class needed maximum attention.

An imperative

In India, there is now, rightly, a consensus difficult for the Government to beat down that to be able to battle COVID-19 and secure India from successive waves, the exact numbers of the dead must be carefully documented. Something else that needs equal attention, if the state of the decrepit Indian economy is to be repaired, is to be able to meticulously count the number of the poor and to prioritise them. The World Bank \$2-a-day (poverty line) might be inadequate but it would be a start and higher than the last line proposed by the C. Rangarajan committee.

There has been hesitation for a

variety of reasons to wrestle with the rising numbers of the poor in India. Not least, the pursuit of becoming 'Vishwaguru', has hampered this as that pitch works only if the leadership is able to mask the dramatic rise in poverty. Coming to terms with how low India's median income is would disrupt the carefully constructed ride about being the biggest/largest in the world. A survey in 2013 had said India stood at 99 among 131 countries, and with a median income of ₹616 per annum, it was the lowest among BRICS and fell in the lower middle-income country bracket.

There has been a slide

Since then – and we are still not talking of the novel coronavirus pandemic – three important data points have made it clear that the state of India's poor needs to be acknowledged if India is to be lifted. The first being, the fall in the monthly per capita consumption expenditure of 2017-18 for the first time since 1972-73, which the Government withheld citing concerns with the quality of data collected, then the fall of India in the Global Hunger Index to 'serious hunger' category and India's own health census data or the recently concluded National Family Health Survey or NFHS-5, which had worrying markers of increased malnutrition, infant mortality and maternal health. A fourth statistic earlier this year, of Bangladesh bettering India's average income statistics, must also be a reason for Indians to introspect. What kind of growth path has led to India sliding in the sustainable development goals index (by at least two ranks last month) as well as in the per capita income rankings? If we do not bother to know of the increased numbers sliding into poverty, there would be little possibility of moving toward a solution.

The precarious situation after the demonetisation in 2016 was rendered calamitous with the novel coronavirus pandemic and the shrinking of the economy. In 2019, the global Multidimensional Po-



verty Index reported that India lifted 271 million citizens out of poverty between 2006 and 2016. Since then, the International Monetary Fund, Hunger Watch, SWAN and several other surveys show decided slide. In March, the Pew Research Center with the World Bank data estimated that 'the number of poor in India, on the basis of an income of ₹2 per day or less in purchasing power parity, has more than doubled to 134 million from 60 million in just a year due to the pandemic-induced recession'. In 2020, India contributed 57.3% of the growth of the global poor. India contributed to 59.3% of the global middle class that slid into poverty. The last time that India reported an increase in poverty was in the first 25 years after Independence, when from 1951 to 1974, the population of the poor increased from 47% to 56%. So, India is again a "country of mass poverty" after 45 years. This has thrown a spanner in the so far uninterrupted battle against poverty since the 1970s. Urgent solutions are needed within, and the starting point of that would be only when we know how many are poor.

Poverty line debate

In India, the poverty line debate became very fraught in 2011, as the Suresh Tendulkar Committee report at a 'line' of ₹816 per capita per month for rural India and ₹1,000 per capita per month for urban India, calculated the poor at 25.7% of the population. The anger over the 2011 conclusions, led to the setting up of the C. Rangarajan Committee, which in 2014 estimated that the number of poor were 29.6%, based on persons spending

below ₹47 a day in cities and ₹32 in villages.

Reasons why numbers count

Numbers matter for many reasons. The first is because knowing the numbers and making them public makes it possible to get public opinion to support massive and urgent cash transfers. The world outside India has moved onto propose high fiscal support, as economic rationale and not charity; it is debating a higher level of minimum wages than it has in the past. Spain has accorded security to its gig workers by giving delivery boys the status of workers. In India too, a dramatic reorientation would get support only once numbers are honestly laid out.

The second argument for recording the data is so that all policies can be honestly evaluated on the basis of whether they meet the needs of the majority. Is a policy such as bank write-offs of loans amounting to ₹1.53-lakh crore last year, which helped corporates overwhelmingly, beneficial to the vast majority? Or has it been just beneficial to a thin sliver of the super rich? This would be possible to transparently evaluate only when the numbers of the poor are known and established.

Third, if government data were to honestly account for the exact numbers of the poor, it may be more realistic to expect the public debate to be conducted on the concerns of the real majority and create a climate that demands accountability from public representatives.

Fourth, India has clocked a massive rise in the market capitalisation and the fortunes of the richest Indian corporates, whose wealth has grown manifold in the past few years, even as millions of Indians have experienced a massive tumble into poverty. The stories of billionaires get reported regularly and prominently. To say that the stock market and the Indian economy are 'not related' is ingenuous. Indians must have the right to question whether there is a connection and if the massive

rise in riches is not coincidental, but at the back of the misery of millions of the poor, whose ranks are swelling. If billionaire lists are evaluated in detail and reported upon, the country cannot shy away from counting its poor.

See the 'bread line'

The late Arjun Sengupta, as Chairman of the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector in 2004, had concluded that 836 million Indians still remained marginalised. He spoke of the poorest of poor and the commission's recommendations on social security resulted in the enactment of the Unorganised Sector Workers Social Security Act (<https://bit.ly/3vELOEL>). At the time his conclusion was ignored – that 77% of India was marginalised – emphasising that it was a problem of a much bigger magnitude, than the figure of 25.7% conveyed.

The 'bread line' ostensibly owes its origins to the economic depression in the United States in the 1890s and charity by New York restaurants which organised soup kitchens. The queue or line of bread seekers would be distressingly long. A physical queue on the roads needed a policy response. It could not be wished away by simply looking away. The massive slide into poverty in India that is clear in domestic and international surveys and anecdotal evidence must meet with an institutional response. The Government must girdle up and unflinchingly quantify the slide from the 'fastest growing economy' to the country with the largest rise in the number of poor people. It must be accepted, to go back to the debate Charles Booth had with the Social Democratic Federation that it is "abject poverty" we are talking about; almost a sub-human level of existence of the majority of fellow Indians we cannot continue to be blasé about. Counting them would be a much-needed start to convey that each life matters.

Seema Chishti is a journalist based in New Delhi

With Raisi in the saddle, the road ahead for Iran

The ultra-conservative leader may be quite ambitious even as many Iranians are pessimistic about better days ahead



RAMIN JAHANBEGLOO

The head of Iran's judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi, won the presidential election in Iran on Saturday, June 19 with 61.95% of the vote. His victory has come as no surprise, especially as he was considered the main choice of the Iranian hardliners. Mr. Raisi was among seven contenders – including five conservatives – allowed by Iran's election monitoring body to run in the presidential election of June 18. Unsurprisingly, out of the estimated 592 people who registered to take part in the presidential election, only seven candidates were approved by Iran's Guardian Council. Among those barred from running were former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and former Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani.

A deeper reading

From the point of view of experts and observers of Iranian politics, this election was carefully engineered and controlled by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) who have been influencing all decision-making concerning Iranian domestic and foreign policies. Ayatollah Khamenei is 82 and there are already rumours that the

best candidate to replace him in the long run, as the Supreme Leader of the Iranian Revolution, is Mr. Raisi. This is a decision which will certainly be desired and approved by the hardline members of the IRGC which is the most powerful support base for exporting the Islamic Revolution to other countries and breaking all resistance from social and political groups in the country.

A weakening of the reformists
Mr. Raisi's election comes at a critical time for the Iranian reformists. Unlike the previous presidential elections, where the hardliners fought against pro-reform figures, the June 18 election was the final nail in the coffin of the reform movement; the idea supported by many within and outside Iran during the past three decades was that gradual political change in the Islamic Republic was possible. Mr. Raisi's victory is an important opportunity for Iranian hardliners to win control over the most important branches of government after being out of office for many years.

As a reaction to the hardline report, the reformists even tried to pressure Hassan Khomeini, the grandson of the founder of the Islamic republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to run as a candidate, but even he had no chance to encounter the dynamics of an election fully controlled by the Supreme Leader and his gathering. As a result, none of the close collaborators of Hassan Rouhani could pass the vetting by the Guar-

dian Council. But, anyhow, the reformists were to be blamed for having failed to bring in meaningful change in easing political and social restrictions in the country and helping the expected rise of the hard-liners. This is one of the main reasons why many Iranians have become increasingly disillusioned with the reformist camp of the establishment, which has been increasingly marginalised. Let us not forget that the voter turnout in last week's presidential election was 48.8%, the lowest turnout recorded for a presidential election since the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979.

The ground realities

Though unified in their support of Mr. Raisi, the Iranian hardline factions did not succeed in energising Iran's disaffected public. As a matter of fact, there was a minimal interest in the presidential election among many young Iranians who continue to struggle on a daily basis to make both ends meet amid a continually deteriorating economy that has been crushed by sanctions by the United States. Unsur-

prisingly, a high percentage of the Iranian population does not find in the new President a possibility of a better economic situation and improved ties with the West. But this is not the only reason why Iranian civil society does not trust the new President.

Many Iranians, even those born after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, are quite aware of Mr. Raisi's long career in Iran's judiciary and his participation in a four-member committee which ordered the execution of thousands of Leftist and the People's Mujahedin Organization of Iran (MKO) political prisoners in 1988. These executions were never acknowledged by the Iranian government, but in August 2016, the family of the late Ayatollah Ali Montazeri, the former Deputy Supreme Leader, published an audio file in which he harshly criticised the executions in a conversation with the committee that included Mr. Raisi.

Looking ahead

On a different note, as being defiant to the normalisation of ties with the West, Mr. Raisi will certainly not plead for an immediate opening of the Iranian economy to foreign investors. Therefore, he will have great difficulty in revitalising the Iranian economy, especially because he has continuously minimised the impact of U.S. economic sanctions and even that the COVID-19 pandemic on the difficult social and economic situation in Iran. As in foreign policy, the new President will continue good relations with Russia and

China, while he will persist in reinforcing Iran's strategic relations with Syria and Iraq. Last, but not least, although challenging the West, he will not openly and clearly oppose the Iranian nuclear agreement which is currently being negotiated with the Americans and the Europeans. After all, the Iranian President is a political player with very little power in the Islamic regime, since the final decision on major issues such as the nuclear agreement, comes back to the Supreme Leader of the Revolution.

But there is more to Ebrahim Raisi than what he seems to appear. Actually, as everybody knows inside Iran, he has ambitions to replace Ayatollah Khamenei as the next Supreme Leader of the Revolution.

Therefore, while he continues to be faithful to Ali Khamenei, he could be trying to consolidate his alliances with different conservative groups in Iran. Mr. Raisi's deep ties with the IRGC can be interpreted as his support for the Iranian military hegemony in the region, with a clear priority being given to the ideological interests of the Islamic regime over regional security and stability. As an ultra-conservative, Mr. Raisi will certainly continue to collaborate with the IRGC decision-makers in order to play a significant role within Iran's hegemonic enterprise in West Asia.

Ramin Jahanbegloo is Director, Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Peace, Jindal Global University, Sonipat



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Centre on ex gratia

The central government's stand on the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be an excuse to abdicate its responsibility to grant ex gratia to the families of COVID-19 victims. Its thesis that limiting relief to a monetary pay-off is a 'narrow and pedantic approach' is rendered spurious by the simple fact that money does matter to alleviate suffering and to survive. The contention that there is no precedent of giving ex gratia payments for a disease or a disaster

spread over a long period of time does not hold good as everything in life is not done on the basis of precedent. True, there is no certainty of an end to the pandemic. But the Government cannot cite it as a reason for refusing to consider granting ex gratia compensation. Many families are staring at a bleak future and only the Government can help them pick up the threads of life. If the Government has no qualms about spending many crores on the Central Vista, a vanity project, why

not provide relief for lakhs of families in distress?

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

A changing world

International politics and diplomacy have become complicated in recent decades (Editorial page, "The comrades and their divergent perspectives", June 21). Up to 1991, it was quite simple to divide the world in terms of groupings and understand their rivalry and cooperation, but with the emergence of globalisation, this has

become complex. The issue of interdependence casts its own shadow. The

emergence of the Quad, and outside its tent, China,

will be a deciding factor in India's engagement with the major powers.

DWANG GANESH THOSAR,
Nandgaon, Raigad, Maharashtra

Milkha Singh

That Milkha Singh managed to shape his life amid very difficult circumstances, including Partition, and go down in history as one of the greatest ever performers to have ever set

foot on the track is truly inspiring. It is a matter of pride that Milkha Singh's wax statue shares space along with other luminaries at Madame Tussauds. He will be remembered for his poignant quote, "Hard work, dedication and will power... for a person with these qualities, [the] sky is the limit."

R. SIVAKUMAR,
Chennai

FROM PAGE ONE

SC seeks govt. decision on ex gratia payment

The Centre cannot cite financial constraints to elude its statutory duty to pay compensation now, Mr. Upadhyay contended.

Justice Shah, highlighting the petitioners' argument for framing uniform guidelines on disaster compensation, reasoned that disasters and pandemics varied in impact. One relief cannot fit all tragedies.

But Mr. Upadhyay persisted that "financial constraints" or the excuse that payment of compensation would dry up the Central government's and the States' resources could not be made a ground by the government to avoid its obligation under a statute to pay ex gratia.

Section 12

Mr. Mehta said Section 12 was only "recommendatory" in nature. He argued that the Disaster Management Act had moved away from one-time cash reliefs to larger issues of wider impact such as preparedness, risk management, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. "Instead of giving one-time relief, we have

Record 82 lakh shots administered in a day

The daily rate of vaccination improved to 34 lakh doses between June 11 and June 20. However, if India is aiming to fully vaccinate all adults by 2021, 82.4 lakh daily doses are needed daily.

Around 24.9% of adults in India, 44.7% of people above 45, and 47.8% of those above 60, have been administered at least one dose of

a COVID-19 vaccine, until 8 p.m. on Monday. While 17.1% of the country's population has received at least one dose, only 3.7% are fully vaccinated. The figures are based on the estimated population in 2021.

India recorded 41,207 new COVID-19 cases and 1,126 new deaths till 9.30 p.m. on Monday.

Optional exams from Aug. 15 to Sept. 15: CBSE

"Their results shall be declared in accordance with the said Assessment Policy. Their examinations shall also be conducted anytime between 15.08.2021 to 15.09.2021, subject to conducive situation," it added.

The CBSE affidavit said it had issued a 'Policy for Tabulation of Marks for Class XII Board Examination 2021' to ensure standardisation of marks.

In a hearing on Monday before a Bench led by Justice

A.M. Khanwilkar, senior advocate Vikas Singh, who is arguing for the conduct of physical exams, said there should be uniform criteria for assessment for CBSE and ICSE marks. But Justice Khanwilkar said apples and oranges cannot be mixed.

He referred to how school performance in past years would also influence marks, saying students' performances should be based on their own work and not of past batches.

Indian delegation met Taliban: Qatari official

Qatar's Special Envoy of the State of Qatar for Counter-terrorism and Mediation of Conflict Resolution Muttlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani was speaking at a web conference on Monday.

The statement comes after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar stopped over in Doha to meet the Qatari leadership twice in the past two weeks. The MEA declined to comment on Mr. Qahtani's statement, and did not respond to questions about what level, if any, contacts with the political leadership of the Taliban based in Doha would have been at.

In response to a question from *The Hindu* during the discussion, Mr. Qahtani said the reasoning behind the meeting was that the Taliban will have a "key" role in Afghanistan's future.

"Not that everybody thinks the Taliban is going to dominate, but because it is a key component of the future of Afghanistan," he added.

"So, I see this as the reason behind having a dialogue or talks and reaching out to all parties in Afghanistan," he added.

Dr. Qahtani was speaking at a conference organised by the Arab Centre in Washington and Centre for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies in Doha, on "Looking towards Peace in Afghanistan after the US-NATO Withdrawal".

Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani, who is set to meet U.S. President Joseph Biden this Friday in Washington, to discuss the situation developing ahead of the US-NATO troops pull-out, will also address the 3-day conference.

To a question about whether any talks between India and Pakistan are linked to the Afghan reconciliation process, Mr. Qahtani said, "Afghanistan as a country should not become a place for a proxy [fight] for other countries."

Afghan peace
"It is in the interest of Pakistan and India to have a stable Afghanistan. Pakistan is a neighbouring country. India is a country that we know has assisted a lot economically in Afghanistan and they want it to be peaceful and stable," he added.

In response to previous media reports that had pointed to a new, direct reach out by the Modi government to the Taliban, after years of refusing to recognise the militant group accused of terror attacks in Afghanistan, the MEA spokesperson had said that New Delhi is "in touch with various stakeholders in pursuance of its long-term commitment towards development and reconstruction in Afghanistan."

3 LeT militants gunned down

Police say they were commanders of the militant group and one was a foreigner

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Three Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militants, one of them a "foreigner", were killed in an overnight operation in Sopore of north Kashmir on Monday.

All the three slain militants were commanders. Among them, Mudasir Pandit [a local] was the top-most commander, who was known by different names. He has been the LeT commander since June 2019. He was involved in several killings, including four civilians, nine security forces, two ex-militants, three sarpanches and two belonging to the Hurriyat and separatist cadres," Director-General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, Dilbag Singh said.

Mr. Mehta replied, "We will have to go back to Parliament. It will have to be ratified by Parliament."

Justice Shah stated, "Remember, a Finance Commission report cannot override statutory provision [Section 12]. You just need to keep in mind the broad aspects of the Finance Commission report while framing further guidelines [for COVID-related funding]."

The court reserved the petitions for judgment.

Transit anticipatory bail for Ayyub

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday granted four weeks transit anticipatory bail to journalist Rana Ayyub in a case filed by the Uttar Pradesh police for allegedly spreading fake news and creating communal tensions. The bail period will not be extended.

The FIR relates to a video that went viral on social media of an elderly man in Ghaziabad being beaten up and his beard cut. He was also allegedly told to chant 'Jai Shri Ram.'

Senior advocate Mihir Desai, representing Ms. Ayyub, appeared before a single bench of Justice P.D. Naik seeking interim protection from arrest. The court said it was learnt that there was a transaction between the assailant and the victim. Mr. Desai said the FIR was registered on June 15 and Ms. Ayyub deleted the tweet on June 16 after she knew of the FIR.

Police send another notice to Twitter

FIR for sharing video of U.P. assault

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Ghaziabad police on Monday sent another notice to Twitter India's head to appear before it in the case of a video of an elderly Muslim man who claimed he was beaten up and made to chant "Jai Shri Ram".

The notice to Twitter India managing director Manish Maheshwari asked him to appear by 10.30 a.m. on Thursday or face appropriate action under law.

Superintendent of Police (Rural) Iraj Raja said Twitter's response to the first notice sent on June 17 to appear at the Loni Border police station had been to offer a video call instead.

The police had lodged an FIR against Twitter and several journalists for sharing the video and allegedly trying to spread discord between



On the ground: Security personnel during an encounter at Sopore in Baramulla district on Monday. • PTI

as Asrar aka Abdullah, a foreigner.

Mr. Singh said, "The trio was involved in the Sopore attack on June 12, which left two policemen and two civilians dead. Earlier, they attacked a municipality building in Sopore on March 29 and killed two councillors and one policeman."

The police said they recovered two AK-47s, one AK-56, a pistol and ammunition from the slain militants.

The security forces have killed two foreign militants in Kashmir this year, which is comparatively lower than in the previous years.

"After the abrogation of Article 370, Pandit was

among the militants who tried to suppress the voice of people," Mr. Singh stated. There was a good number of foreign militants present in Kashmir and they were lying low, he noted.

The fresh ceasefire pact between India and Pakistan last February had helped check infiltration to a large extent.

"We welcome that," he added.

General Officer Commanding, Kilo Force, Maj. Gen. H.S. Sahi, appealed to the local youngsters who have picked up guns to shun the gun culture and return to national mainstream.

"If they do not wish to return to the mainstream, I assure that they will meet the same fate as was in the store for the three militants killed in the encounter," he said.

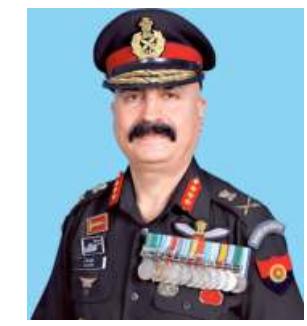
Army to get indigenous LUHs in December 2022

A.K. Suri to head Army Aviation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Army, which is facing a huge shortage of light utility helicopters with the ageing fleet of Cheetah and Chetak helicopters, will receive the first batch of six indigenous Light Utility helicopter (LUH) by the end of 2022, a defence source said.

The helicopter was designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL).



Lt. Gen. A.K. Suri

the source stated.

The LUH is meant to replace the ageing Cheetah and Chetak helicopters along with the Russian Ka-226T helicopters.

Since November 2019, Lt. Gen. Suri, then as a Major General, had been the Additional Director-General officiating as the Director-General of Army Aviation.

IN BRIEF

'50% of workers at Parliament site got jobs'

NEW DELHI
More than 50% of the workers involved in the construction of the new Parliament building had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra said on Monday. Many had got their second dose as well. A total of 2,180 workers, on and off site, were contributing to the project, he said.

Procure wheat in U.P. till July 15, says Priyanka

NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in a letter to U.P. CM Yogi Adityanath on Monday, demanded that the State government guarantee wheat procurement while flagging several problems faced by farmers. She said there should be a guarantee that wheat would be procured till July 15. "The procurement started from April 1, but as the wheat started reaching the centres, procurement was reduced to half."

ED seizes assets of Pune-based businessman

NEW DELHI
The Enforcement Directorate has seized assets worth ₹40.34 crore of Pune-based businessman Avinash Bhosale and his family members under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The attached assets include equity shares and preference shares held in Classic City Investment Private Limited (Pune), which owns Hotel Westin (Pune), Hotel Le Meridian (Nagpur) and Hotel W Retreat & Spa (Goa), it said.

Get vaccinated as soon as possible, says Shah

AHMEDABAD
Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday visited vaccination centres in his parliamentary constituency Gandhinagar and urged the citizens to get their jabs as soon as possible as the country has stepped up efforts to vaccinate all eligible citizens by the end of this year. He also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for launching the world's largest inoculation drive.



Up above: Himveers of the ITBP practising yoga on the banks of Pangong Tso in Ladakh on the International Day of Yoga on Monday. • PTI

half, the enthusiasm for Yoga Day has not diminished," he noted.

Enthusiasm up

For most of the countries of the world, Yoga Day is not their age-old cultural festival and in this difficult time, people could have forgotten about it and ignored it, but

on the contrary, people's enthusiasm for yoga had increased, he said.

"When the unseen coronavirus knocked on the doors of the world, no country was prepared for it in terms of resources, capability and mental state. We all have seen that in such difficult times, yoga has become

a great source of inner strength," he said.

Yoga shows us the way from stress to strength and from negativity to creativity, he asserted.

He expressed confidence that yoga would continue playing its preventive as well as promotive role in health-care of masses.

Delhi HC reserves order on WhatsApp, Facebook plea

CCI had asked them to submit certain documents

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday reserved its order on a fresh plea by Facebook and WhatsApp seeking to put on hold a notice issued by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) asking them to submit certain documents in relation to the probe being conducted on WhatsApp's new privacy policy.

A Vacation Bench of Justices Anup Jairam Bhambhani and Jasmeet Singh said, "We will pass an order. The matter will be listed on July 9."

The court said it was sitting on a Vacation Bench, and hence did not want to go into the merits of the case.

The fresh application was made in a pending case filed



by Facebook and WhatsApp challenging the CCI's March 24 direction ordering a probe into WhatsApp's controversial new privacy policy.

Facebook and WhatsApp,

in the fresh application, sought the intervention of the court to stay the CCI's June 4 notice asking them to furnish certain information for the purpose of inquiry conducted by it.

Counsel for the social media giants submitted that the last date to respond to the notice was June 21.

The CCI, represented by Additional Solicitor-General (ASG) Aman Lekhi, opposed the application on the ground that furnishing of information would not lead to any order by the CCI at this stage of inquiry.

The ASG said no threat was looming over the head of WhatsApp till the report on the inquiry was submitted with the competition watchdog. WhatsApp had said its new privacy policy came into effect from May 15. It also clarified that it would not start deleting accounts of those users who have not accepted it and would try to encourage them to get on board.

Left, Congress wary of Sinha's 'Rashtra Manch'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Despite being invited along with a host of prominent civil society leaders and politicians, leaders of the Congress and Left parties are unlikely to attend the Rashtriya Manch meeting, convened by former finance minister and Trinamool Congress member Yashwant Sinha, at the Delhi residence of NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Tuesday.

The Manch is a front founded by Mr. Sinha, to discuss the "national scenario".

CDS to chair meet on theatre commands

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Extensive studies have been undertaken and discussed over the last two years before arriving at a broad plan to create four integrated tri-service commands, an official said on Monday. However, the IAF still has major reservations on the issue, said the official.

Air defence and maritime theatre commands, integrated eastern theatre and integrated western theatre commands are being planned, the official said.

As part of the ongoing deliberations, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Bipin Rawat

is scheduled to chair a meeting on Tuesday with the Vice-Chiefs of the three services, the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff and the representatives from the Ministries of Defence, Home and Finance.

"After studying Indian and western models of war fighting for over two years, table top exercises and war games were conducted and operational discussions were held to come up with the best model suited for us," the official said. The commands will have Indian characteristics, ethos and way of fighting, the official stated.

Detailed parleys have also been held with the veteran community and think-tanks to brainstorm on the far-reaching decisions, the official said.

The IAF insecurity that it will lose control over its assets and operations is unfounded, the official said. "All air bases, squadrons and air assets will continue to function under IAF officials."

A committee was recently set up comprising the Vice-Chiefs of the three services, the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff, the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee, and representatives from the Ministries concerned after issues like bringing in para-military forces under the Air headquarters and the Air Chief goes against the very essence of integration and

jointmanship."

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IN BRIEF



'Sarnaike letter exposes harassment of MLAs'

MUMBAI A day after a letter from Shiv Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaike to Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray requesting him to patch up with the BJP to avoid harassment by Central investigative agencies, his party said the missive has raised a serious issue. Mr. Sarnaike is being probed by the ED for alleged corruption. Responding to the letter, Sena's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut said, "An MLA has written to the Chief Minister. What should I say about this? However, he has, if the letter is authentic, raised a very important issue that MLAs of MVA are being harassed."

2 from Delhi held under anti-conversion law

LUCKNOW Two men from New Delhi have been arrested by the Uttar Pradesh police's Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) on the charges of mass conversion of people into Islam through inducements such as marriage, job and money and mental pressure. The two were identified as Mohammad Umar Gautam and Mufti Qazi Jahangir Alam Qasmi. The arrests were announced in Lucknow by Prashant Kumar, ADG Law and Order.

BJP MP demands separate State for Jangalmahal

KOLKATA Days after a BJP MP from north Bengal raised the demand for a separate State or Union Territory for north Bengal, another BJP MP on Monday demanded that a separate State be carved out of the Jangalmahal region. BJP MP from Alipurduar John Barla had last week raised the demand of separate state for north Bengal while Saumitra Khan on Monday said that Jangalmahal could well be a separate State.

Cash prize announced for number of children

AIZAWL Mizoram Sports Minister Robert Romawia Royte has announced a cash incentive of ₹1 lakh to a living parent with the highest number of children in his constituency to encourage population growth among the demographically small Mizo communities. His declaration comes at a time when several States are advocating a population control policy. On the occasion of Father's Day on Sunday, Mr. Royte announced that he would reward such a person with a cash incentive, a certificate and a trophy. PTI

J&K parties seek durable steps

People's Conference and Apni Party say dialogue is the way forward

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir regional parties which are not part of the Gupkar alliance held deliberations on Monday to discuss the upcoming meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and called for "durable and democratic solutions" to the challenges in Kashmir.

The J&K People's Conference, whose chief Sajjad Lone chaired a meeting in Srinagar, said there was a need for the political class to play a constructive role in ending the prevalent logjam and finding durable and democratic solutions to all the challenges facing the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The participants expressed their appreciation

We welcome the initiative of the PM. Political parties of J&K have also realised now that dialogue is the only way to resolve any issue

ALTAF BUKHARI
HEAD, J&K APNI PARTY



for the initiative of the Prime Minister and hoped that this engagement would evolve into something much bigger and facilitate a return to democracy and empowerment of the people of J&K. There is a need for creative thinking to address the pain and suffering of the people of J&K and hope that the engagement will be positive, decisive and result-oriented," PC spokesman Adnan Ashraf Mir said.

The participants, according to Mr. Mir, unanimously emphasised the scripting of a new social contract between Delhi and the people of J&K to address the aspirations of the people of J&K.

"It is imperative to restore the credibility and sanctity of the institution of dialogue. There are many harsh ground realities that the Prime Minister should be aware of. Post August 5, there is a dire need for

scripting a new social contract between Delhi and the people of J&K," the PC spokesman said.

Altaf Bukhari, who heads the J&K Apni Party, also chaired a meeting of the party leaders. "We welcome the initiative of the PM. Political parties of J&K have also realised now that dialogue is the only way to resolve any issue," he said.

Both Mr. Lone and Mr. Bukhari have been invited by the PM for the meeting to be held in Delhi on June 24.

Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Saif-ud-din Soz on Monday said the Centre's intention to restore the statehood "will not yield any advantage".

"The real issue is the J&K special status," Mr. Soz said.

INTERVIEW | CHIRAG PASWAN

BJP abandoned me when I needed them'

Beleaguered LJP leader says he will not concede the party symbol or name

SOBHANA K. NAIR

Days after the coup spearheaded by his uncle Pashupati Kumar Paras, beleaguered leader of the Lok Janshakti Party Chirag Paswan speaks on role of the JD (U) and the BJP and betrayal by loved ones, insisting that most of the party is still with him.

Do you regret your decision to go it alone in the Bihar Assembly election in 2020 and campaign against JD(U)?

■ It is an ironical question. How can I blame anyone when my own family members deserted me? They stabbed my back – my uncle (Pashupati Kumar Paras), my brother (Prince Raj)... my brother was like a son to me. But as I said, JD(U) has always been inclined to break parties. And especially, the JD(U) has always been after dividing the Dalit leadership. They were after my father and now against me. They divided Dalits and Mahadals, making a sub-division among Scheduled Castes. They cannot accept that a Dalit is in such a strong position. I got 25 lakh votes and 6% vote share. This when I only contested on 135 seats.

But didn't your calculations go awry? Your campaign affected the NDA's tally and benefited RJD. Don't you think the BJP has abandoned you just for this reason?

■ Yes, I do feel that they have abandoned me. No one from BJP has contacted me. This



I will not leave the party that my father built with his sweat and blood

hurts, because me and my father Ram Vilas Paswan wholeheartedly supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior leadership of the BJP. Nobody was ready to join hands with Narendra Modi ji. My father was the first one to cross over and hold Mr Modi's hand. Nitish Kumar, one must remember, left him. We stood by him whether it was Ram Mandir, Article 370, CAA, Triple Talaq. I doubt that JD(U) has stood with them on all these issues. Today, when I need them, I expected them to at least reach out to me. So far I haven't heard from them.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla recognised Pashupati Nath Paras' claim as parliamentary leader without any delay. Doesn't this clearly indicate BJP's hand in the coup?

■ I would not want to read between the lines. I met Mr. Birla on Saturday and I explained the LJP's process of

selecting the parliamentary leader. I did tell him that he should have at least spoken to me before making this decision. Even the rule book of the Parliament defines this very clearly, that the parliamentary party leader has to be decided by the party, not by the members.

The charge against you by the Paras group is that you are autocratic and you were impervious to advice. Your reaction?

■ Had I been autocratic I wouldn't have had the support of 66 members of LJP's National Executive. Only nine members of the national executive, including the five MPs, left the party. Out of 135 candidates, 114 have submitted an open letter of support to me. Only four district presidents in Bihar have gone with them. If I was autocratic, then why did so many of them decide to stay back with me.

What is the way forward for you?

■ I will go back to the people of Bihar. I need their blessings now that my own elders have betrayed me. I am ready to fight this battle to the end. I will not concede my party symbol or name. I have all legal evidence to support my claim. I will not leave the party that my father built with his sweat and blood. These people have not betrayed me, they have betrayed my father.

Surveys on learning losses by month-end, panel told

House panel on education discusses COVID-19 impact

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

The Centre is assessing how badly school students have been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and will collect States' surveys on digital education access and learning losses by the end of this month, the School Education Department told a parliamentary panel on education on Monday.

The panel asked the Centre to also assess the impact of its own guidelines and interventions, as well as the impact of schools which were reopened in some States during the lull between the two waves of the pandemic.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, chaired by Rajya Sabha MP Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, also held its last round of consultations on textbook reforms, hearing from right-wing think tank Public Policy Research Centre (PPRC), which was previously headed by Dr. Sahasrabuddhe himself when

he was BJP vice-president. According to a member of the committee, the PPRC presentation complained that Mughal history is glorified in Indian textbooks, while there is an insufficient understanding of ancient Indian history. It compared history textbooks from Gujarat, Kerala and the National Council of Educational Research and Training, arguing that the latter two give too much importance to the Mughal era. The Committee has heard from 8-10 such groups – including at least four others with similar views – and is likely to submit its report in a month's time, another member said.

School Education Department Secretary Anita Karwal briefed the committee on the learning gap caused by the pandemic and efforts to bridge it. A survey of Classes 8-12 in centrally run schools last August showed that 80-90% of students were dependent on mobiles rather than laptops for digital schooling, while 30% were affected by electricity supply disruptions. States were then asked to do a similar mapping of access.

The panel also asked the Centre to assess the impact of its own guidelines and interventions ■ PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION

views – and is likely to submit its report in a month's time, another member said.

School Education Department Secretary Anita Karwal briefed the committee on the learning gap caused by the pandemic and efforts to bridge it. A survey of Classes 8-12 in centrally run schools last August showed that 80-90% of students were dependent on mobiles rather than laptops for digital schooling, while 30% were affected by electricity supply disruptions. States were then asked to do a similar mapping of access.

Amarinder talks to AICC panel again

Committee set up after HC order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

West Bengal State Human Rights Commission registrar Pradip Kumar Panja, West Bengal State Legal Services Authority member secretary Raju Mukherjee and NHRC DIG (Investigation) Manzil Saini would be the other members of the committee.

NHRC chairperson Justice Arun Kumar Mishra constituted the committee headed by NHRC member Rajeev Jain, a statement said. National Commission for Minorities vice-chairperson Atif Rasheed, National Commission for Women member Dr. Rajulben L. Desai, NHRC Director General (Investigation) Santosh Mehra,

West Bengal State Human Rights Commission registrar Pradip Kumar Panja, West Bengal State Legal Services Authority member secretary Raju Mukherjee and NHRC DIG (Investigation) Manzil Saini would be the other members of the committee.

He will hold talks with the panel comprising Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, AICC general secretary (Punjab) Harish Rawat and J.P. Aggarwal on Tuesday morning for the second time in two weeks. Insiders say party workers are worried that the squabble between the CM Navjot Singh Sidhu will dent the party's electoral prospects in 2022.

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NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER DOCUMENT FOR PROVISION OF CT SCAN SERVICES AT DISTRICT HEADQUARTER HOSPITALS

Online Bids through e-Tender portal (<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>) are invited from eligible bidders for Provision of CT Scan Services At District Headquarter Hospitals as per the particulars mentioned below:

Sl. No.	Bid Reference No.	Item Name	Bid Document Cost inclusive of GST (Rs.)
1.	OSMCL/2021-22/CT SCAN SERVICES / 05	"PROVISION OF CT SCAN SERVICES AT DISTRICT HEADQUARTER HOSPITALS"	5,600/-

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date and time
1.	Date & time of release of bid	19.06.2021, 6 PM
2.	Date & time of Pre-bid meeting	26.06.2021, 11 AM
3.	Date & time of Online bid submission	Start Date & Time _____ End Date & Time _____
4.	Date & time of online Technical Bid Opening	28.06.2021, 11 AM
5.	Date of opening of Price Bid	16.07.2021, 5 PM

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: www.osmc.nic.in and <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. OSMCL reserves the right to reject or modify any conditions of the tender or cancel the issued purchase order at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

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DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW)-III SECTOR-VII, R.K. PURAM, NEW DELHI-110022

Simplify COVID-19 death certification process: SC

Court asks Centre to explain how errors can be rectified

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Union government what it plans to do in cases of COVID-19 patients whose death certificates cited some other reason for the cause of death.



cluding the certifying doctor, shall be responsible for penal consequences."

The government stated that deaths with the diagnosis of COVID-19, irrespective of comorbidities, have to be certified as pandemic deaths. The only exception to the rule was when there was a clear alternative cause of death, for example, accidental trauma, poisoning, etc.

The Supreme Court recently told the Centre that the death certificates of those who died of COVID-19 often did not reveal that fact.

"The death certificates of persons who die from COVID-19 in hospitals show the reason as lung or heart problem or something else," Justice Shah had told Mr. Mehta.

"All deaths with the diagnosis of COVID-19, irrespective of co-morbidities, are to be classified as deaths due to COVID-19," the Centre had clarified in the affidavit.

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

The dumping of bodies in the Ganga, allegedly of those who died of COVID-19, did not increase pollution in the river, the Jal Shakti Ministry has said.

The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) had solicited reports in May from the Centre, the State Pollution Control Boards of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and the Central Water Commission on whether the disposal of corpses in the river had affected water quality.

Data for April-June suggested that the water quality in terms of pH, DO (dissolved oxygen), BOD (biological oxygen demand)

conformed with the bathing water quality criteria except "marginal deviations at few locations" and these were not dissimilar from the water quality observed in previous years. They may not be attributed to incidents of floating bodies, the NMCG said in a report based on responses from these departments. *The Hindu* has viewed this report.

Corpses did not add to Ganga pollution: Centre

Jal Shakti Ministry report on water quality based on responses from PCBs of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar



Revered rivers: Pilgrims at the Sangam, the confluence of rivers Ganga and Yamuna, during Ganga Dussehra festival in Prayagraj on Sunday. ■ AP

now been entrusted with the project.

Results awaited

They have collected samples from burial sites (Kannauj, Unnao, Kanpur, Prayagraj and Ghazipur districts) in Uttar Pradesh and Buxor and Saran districts in Bihar though results of the analysis are not yet public.

Previous studies from the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad have shown that the coronavirus can be found in sewage and wastewater, and these have been used to estimate the prevalence of the infection in other urban locations.

The NMCG, a Jal Shakti Ministry body, is the nodal agency tasked with coordinating the over ₹20,000 crore initiative to clean the Ganga, a flagship programme of the government. One of the measures employed is to discourage a practice of disposing bodies in the river. To this end, the NMCG had funded projects to improve crematoria along the banks of the river in riparian States.

Amarnath Yatra not to be held this year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR
The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Monday decided to cancel Amarnath Yatra, the annual pilgrimage in the Valley, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 56-day yatra was scheduled to start on June 28.

"Shri Amarnathji Yatra has been cancelled in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision was taken after a discussion with the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board members. The yatra will be symbolic only. However, all the traditional religious rituals shall be performed at the holy cave shrine as per past practice," Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said.

Mr. Sinha, who is also the chairman of the Board, had detailed deliberations with Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta, Director General of Police Dilbag Singh, Principal Secretary Home Shaheen Kabra, and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lt. Governor, on Monday.

"It's important to save people's lives. So, it is not advisable to conduct this year's pilgrimage in the larger public interest. The Board shall continue live telecast of the morning and evening *aarti* from the holy cave shrine," the Lt. Governor said.

No dissent on Covishield doses interval: Ministry

RTI application had sought documents on scientific studies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
The Union Health Ministry has said there is no document available in the COVID vaccination cell about "data concerning the effects of a gap beyond 12 weeks" for Covishield vaccine.

The Ministry, in response to a Right to Information appeal by Shivangi Malhotra, said the decision on increasing the interval is based on the fundamental scientific reason regarding behaviour of adenovector vaccines, and refuted any claims that there was dissent by any member of the COVID-19 Working Group and Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation in India (NTAGI).

Releasing minutes of the meeting, it said that records clearly show that the recommended 12-16 weeks dosing interval for Covishield was a unanimous decision.

The RTI response said that "in view of the emerging scientific evidence the interval between two doses of Covishield was revisited by the COVID working group of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization and subsequently by National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 (NEGVAC) in its



Quick jab: A health worker administering a dose of Covishield in Srinagar. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

meeting held on May 12. NEGVAC recommended revision in the schedule of Covishield to administer a second dose at intervals of 12-16 weeks after the first dose. This recommendation was admitted by the Central Government."

Working group

The Health Ministry said, "It may be noted that the decision of increasing the gap is based on the scientific reason regarding behaviour of adenovector vaccines and has been discussed thoroughly in meetings of COVID-19 Working Group and Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of NTAGI which was held under the joint chairpersonship of Secretary, Department of Biotechnology Renu Swarup and Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Balram Bhargava.

ing Group considered a proposal for a change in dose interval for Covishield used under the National Vaccination Policy. It recommended that based on the real-life evidence, particularly from the United Kingdom, the COVID-19 Working Group agreed for increasing the dosing interval to 12-16 weeks between two doses of Covishield Vaccine," noted the Health Ministry.

It added that this recommendation of COVID-19 Working Group was further taken up for discussion in the 31st meeting of Standing Technical Sub-Committee (STSC) of NTAGI which was held under the joint chairpersonship of Secretary, Department of Biotechnology Renu Swarup and Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Balram Bhargava.

PF trusts await clarity on advance

Firms say there is no official notification or circular from the EPFO on the issue

VIKAS DHOOT

NEW DELHI

Three weeks after the government announced that Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) members can take a second COVID-19 advance from their retirement savings accounts, companies managing their own EPF trusts are reluctant to process requests from employees who have sought the advance.

Over 76 lakh COVID-19 advance claims worth ₹18,698 crore were cleared since March 2020.

On May 31, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said a second such advance was being allowed due to the second COVID-19 wave, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said

Dipping into savings



- 76 lakh COVID-19 advance claims worth ₹18,698 crore were cleared since March 2020
- EPF members were permitted to make non-refundable withdrawals to the extent of basic wages and dearness allowances for three months, or up to 75% of their EPF balance
- A second such advance is being allowed due to the second COVID-19 wave, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said

three months, or up to 75% of their EPF balance, whichever is less.

On May 31, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said a second such advance was being allowed due to the second COVID-19 wave, the Union Labour and Employment Ministry said

times', referring to the second COVID-19 wave as well as the emergence of the 'mucormycosis' or 'black fungus' epidemic.

"Several employees have been asking us for this advance to cope with the second wave's medical costs and fresh income losses in

their households. But there is no official notification or circular from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation that is hindering establishments with their own PF trusts from implementing the fresh COVID-19 advance," said the finance head of a leading employer with over 5,000 employees that manages their EPF accounts in-house. While EPFO's regional offices have made a modification in their software to allow the advance, companies managing EPF accounts on their own cannot proceed simply on the basis of a press release, said an industry compliance adviser. "We are hoping that the EPFO will resolve this soon with a clear communiqué," he added.

'Use electronic machines to weigh rations'

Centre asks States to buy them with dealers' margin

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre wants States to start linking the electronic Point of Sale devices (ePos) used at ration shops to electronic weighing machines to promote transparency and reduce foodgrain leakages. It wants States to pay for these machines by using the ₹17 per quintal margin already

provided for Fair Price Shops (FPS) for installing and using ePos machines, according to an amendment of the National Food Security Act rules last week.

According to the rules, ₹17 per quintal of foodgrain sold through ePos is provided as "Fair Price Shop dealers margin" and is meant to go towards the cost of purchase, operation and maintenance of the point of sale device, its running expenses and incentive for its use."

The amendment, notified

integration with the Point of Sale device".

When asked how savings could accrue from money paid as an incentive to FPS dealers, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey clarified that the additional margin is only being paid to States according to actual expenditure. As technology is evolving fast, it is now cheaper to operate ePos than it was earlier, and States which are able to cut operating costs can now use the extra money to integrate weighing machines, he said.

on June 18, adds the words "and any savings if accrued could be utilised for purchase, operations and maintenance of electronic weighing scales and their

SUDOKU

7			1	2	5			
4		9						
1			6	2				
3	9				8			
4		8	9		7			
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★

FAITH

A devotee is rewarded

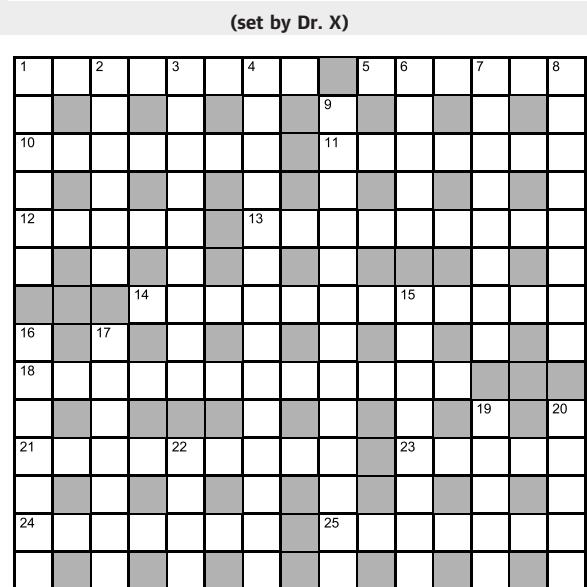
The life and works of Appaya Dikshitar reflect his multi-faceted personality. He had authored many spiritual texts of great value and carried on the tradition of Advaita Vedanta established by Adi Sankara. He chose to live in Chidambaram and prayed to Siva to grant him the boon of just meditating on Him with no other desire. That is, he only longed to attain Siva Pada. This strong yearning was already expressed in his powerful hymn Atmarpalana Stuti, said Sri Mani David Sastrigal in a discourse. Herein he had pointed out that it is possible for a jivatma to be blessed to remember God at the last moments and attain liberation if only God chooses to grace him.

This wish is granted to him when God makes true his prayer and takes him in His fold in the presence of a host of devotees on one Chitra Pournami day in Chidambaram. It happened when the early morning 'deepa aradhana' was being performed for the deity Nataraja. Overwhelmed by the experience of the vision of the effulgence of the Lord's feet which appeared to him as bright and shining like the young rising sun, Appaya Dikshitar began to compose a verse. At that instant all present were wonderstruck by the extraordinary spectacle that unfolded. Appaya Dikshitar had merged with the Lord's jyoti. What better reward for such devotion than being thus embraced and enveloped in the divine grace and compassion of the Lord? It is said his eldest son completed the verse his father had begun. He compares the jivatma's tryst with samsara to dark night where old age and death are pisachas that take the hold on people. The jivatma who continues in this dreadful state in every birth is released from this situation when the grace of Lord like the suryodaya puts an end to the dark night of samsara.

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(set by Dr. X)

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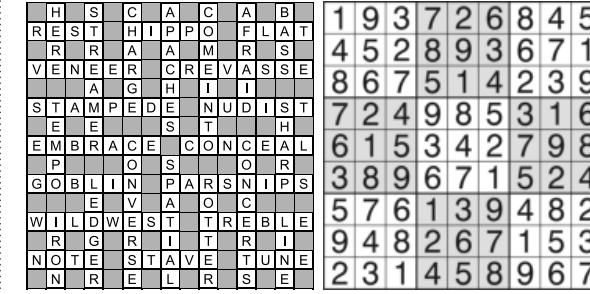


ACROSS

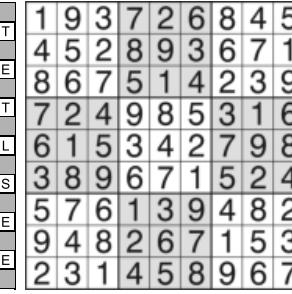
- Turning excited on cocaine, gets into fight in bar tour (3,5)
- Leds volcanic rock aboard steamer (6)
- Musical instrument in case picked up by versatile ace (7)
- Sea cucumber's flavour enthrals agent (7)
- Puzzle's fine, can decipher at last (5)
- Trouble all round after associate faces depression temporarily (2,7)
- On beer and pot, let loose – it's what drinker needs (6-6)

- 18 Knocking back liquor on the house, boors go berserk in American city (12)
- 21 Furnace and boiler boiling over! Run away (3,6)
- 23 Asian city overwhelmed by outbreak as overcrowding returns (5)
- 24 Naive young woman and boy killed in bungee jumping (7)
- 25 How a Conservative MP might describe self as romantic (7)
- 26 Body found in restroom at terminus (6)
- 27 Suspicious cartons contain drug precursor (8)
- DOWN
- Quick to embrace single female and soothe (6)
 - Cry of pain after charges surge (6)
 - River or sea perhaps, not a lake (9)
 - Overcome by strong emotion, like a person with osteoarthritis might be? (4,2,3,5)
 - Greek character almost catches fellow shoplifting (5)
 - Notorious ex-convict managed to enter empty flat (8)
 - Native American chief upset about reactionary slogan used by Trump (8)
 - Make a deal with effort, acquiring a furniture company by take-over (6,1,7)
 - Speak at length about early sign of femoral rupture (9)
 - Unusually mobile, small mass causes obstruction of blood vessel (8)
 - Amateur correctly grips both sides of coil in device providing illumination (8)
 - Sozzled actor popping bit of Viagra in romp (6)
 - Brief film about onset of war (6)
 - Bones in middle of trunk alongside seedy lane (5)

Solution to puzzle 13279



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



Raisi for nuclear talks, rules out Biden meet

Iran's President says 'no obstacles' to resuming diplomatic relations with Riyadh, after 5 years of tensions

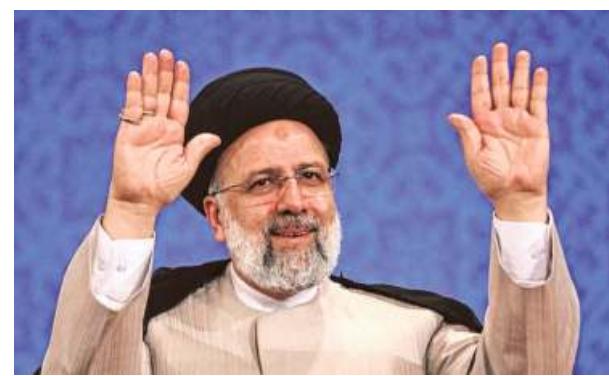
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TEHRAN

Iran's President-elect Ebrahim Raisi said on Monday he will not allow nuclear negotiations for the sake of negotiations, in his first news conference since winning election last week.

Mr. Raisi also ruled out meeting U.S. President Joe Biden but said there were "no obstacles" to resuming diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, the Sunni-ruled regional rival of Shiite Iran, which have been severed for five years.

Mr. Raisi, 60, won Friday's election in which more than half the voters stayed away after many political heavyweights had been barred from running and as an economic crisis driven by U.S. sanctions has battered the country.

Mr. Raisi, an ultraconservative cleric who heads Iran's judiciary, will replace moderate President Hassan Rouhani - whose landmark achievement was a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers - in August.



In control: Ebrahim Raisi ahead of his first news conference following victory in the presidential election in Tehran. • AP

vative cleric who heads Iran's judiciary, will replace moderate President Hassan Rouhani - whose landmark achievement was a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers - in August.

Vienna talks
"Any negotiations that guarantee national interests will

easing of sanctions, but former U.S. president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew three years later and ramped up sanctions, prompting the Islamic republic to pull back from its nuclear commitments.

Mr. Trump's successor Mr. Biden has signalled his readiness to return to the deal and state parties - also including Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia - have lately been negotiating its revival in Vienna.

EU negotiator Enrique Mora said on Sunday that those involved in the talks were "closer" to saving the Iran nuclear deal but that sticking points remain.

An austere figure from the Shia Muslim clerical establishment, Mr. Raisi smiled and raised his hands as he arrived for Monday's press conference.

Mr. Raisi said he has no intentions of meeting Mr. Biden.

"No," was his flat response to a question from an American media outlet on whether he they would meet in the event the talks lead to the U.S. lifting sanctions on Iran, and to try and "fix" the issues between the two arch enemies.

Mr. Raisi also said his administration would be open to restoring ties with Iran's regional foe Saudi Arabia.

"There are no obstacles from Iran's side to re-opening Embassies... there are no obstacles to ties with Saudi Arabia," he said.

Ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia were cut in 2016 after Iranian protesters attacked Saudi diplomatic missions following the Kingdom's execution of a revered Shia cleric.

The government called the election to try to end a political crisis that began when ethnic Armenian forces ceded territory to Azerbaijan in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in six weeks of fighting last year.



Nikol Pashinyan

of territory it had lost during a war in the early 1990s.

He described the deal as a disaster but said he had been compelled to sign it in order to prevent greater human and territorial losses.

He wrote on Twitter on Monday that his party would have a constitutional majority - at least 71 deputies out of 105 - and "will form a government led by me."

Mr. Pashinyan said Armenia would strengthen ties with Russia-led regional groups, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAU).

"We are determined to work on improving, deepening and developing relations (with CSTO and EAEU countries), and we will definitely move in this direction," Russia's RIA news agency quoted Mr. Pashinyan as saying in an address broadcast on Facebook.

Armenia PM wins majority in polls despite anger over war

He was widely blamed for ceding territory to Azerbaijan

REUTERS
YEREVAN

Armenia's acting prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan, kept power in parliamentary election that boosted his authority despite being widely blamed for a military defeat last year in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, results showed on Monday.

Mr. Pashinyan's Civil Contract party won 53.92% of votes cast in Sunday's snap election, according to preliminary results on Monday.

Former President Robert Kocharyan's Armenia Alliance trailed on 21.04%, and questioned the credibility of the result, the Interfax news agency reported.

The government called the election to try to end a political crisis that began when ethnic Armenian forces ceded territory to Azerbaijan in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in six weeks of fighting last year.

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MARKET WATCH

	21-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,574	-0.44
US Dollar	74.10	-0.32
Gold	46,277	-0.39
Brent oil	74.58	-1.40

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	731.05	36.70
Asian Paints	3068.55	21.35
Axis Bank	739.55	3.25
Bajaj Auto	4182.65	15.55
Bajaj Finserv	12156.40	157.05
Bajaj Finance	6116.00	28.95
Bharti Airtel	539.60	0.85
BPLC	475.05	2.70
Britannia Ind	3648.85	29.65
Cipla	960.15	-0.75
Coal India	147.50	1.10
Divis Lab	4229.10	31.80
D Dr Reddys Lab	5282.00	-1.90
Eicher Motors	2698.45	-9.10
Grasim Ind	1496.65	15.90
HCL Tech	982.00	6.75
HDPC	2516.40	28.30
HDPC Bank	1488.70	8.90
HDPC Life	718.75	9.55
Hero MotoCorp	2894.85	3.50
Hindustan	367.60	-3.75
Hind Unilever	2514.35	31.45
ICICI Bank	631.25	0.85
IndusInd Bank	1007.55	12.15
Infosys	1500.30	-3.00
Indian Oil Corp	112.65	0.35
ITC	204.45	-0.10
JSW Steel	672.95	2.35
Kotak Bank	1772.05	11.60
L&T	1467.05	-8.95
M&M	776.85	-4.70
Maruti Suzuki	6899.90	-59.45
Nestle India Ltd.	17649.15	-21.50
NTPC	118.00	4.45
ONGC	120.95	0.70
PowerGrid Corp	234.85	1.85
Reliance Ind	2237.25	11.60
SBI Life	981.55	-1.00
State Bank	419.75	6.85
Shree Cement	28225.35	179.55
Sun Pharma	671.35	2.85
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	742.55	2.75
Tata Motors	334.30	-3.10
Tata Steel	1106.15	13.85
TCS	3273.10	24.20
Tech Mahindra	1062.90	-7.80
Titan	1742.85	31.55
UltraTech Cement	6775.50	81.60
UPL	772.20	-35.80
Wipro	542.15	-7.65

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on June 21

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.90	74.22
Euro	87.90	88.31
British Pound	102.57	103.02
Japanese Yen (100)	67.11	67.40
Chinese Yuan	11.43	11.48
Swiss Franc	80.23	80.58
Singapore Dollar	54.96	55.22
Canadian Dollar	59.50	59.76
Malaysian Ringgit	17.82	17.91

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Nissan starts exporting Magnite SUVs

CHENNAI
Nissan Motor India has commenced exports of sub-compact sport utility vehicle (SUV) Magnite to Indonesia, South Africa and Nepal. Nissan said it had so far produced 15,010 Magnite SUVs of which 13,790 were for India and 1,220 for exports. Following the overwhelming response for Magnite, it plans to explore new export markets, said Sinan Ozkok, president.

Honeywell tech to aid fight against fake drugs

BENGALURU
Tech firm Honeywell said it would develop a digital authentication technology to battle counterfeit pharmaceutical products in India. According to Honeywell, the solution would comprise a digital code that is embedded in the packaging of pharmaceutical products. The user can verify product authenticity by scanning the digital code using a smartphone.

IP Rings turns ₹4.09-cr. profit in fourth quarter

CHENNAI
IP Rings Ltd. reported a standalone net profit of ₹4.09 crore for Q4 FY21 on account of a substantial rise in revenue. It had incurred a loss of ₹1.09 crore in Q4FY20. Revenue from operations rose 69% to ₹76 crore. The board declared a dividend of ₹1.50 per share. FY22 looks promising with new orders from European and North American clients, said Ram Venkataramani, MD.

Grofers to raise tech team pay by 33%

NEW DELHI
Grofers on Monday said it will offer a 33% hike in salary to its tech team effective July, along with a "heavy ESOP allocation" as the online grocery delivery platform looks to retain staff and woo more tech talent. The SoftBank-backed company, which plans to launch an initial public offering (IPO), also hinted that it has secured a new funding round.

PTI

'Need to support households, SMEs on brink'

CII's Narendran urges relaxing FCRA norms, expanding GST relief on COVID-19 imports to prepare for future waves

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

and Services Tax (GST) rates for the worst-affected contact-intensive sectors and on consumer durables so as to spur demand.

To be better prepared for future COVID-19 waves, the government must relax the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) norms that were holding up global aid flows and ground level relief efforts of well-meaning NGOs, he suggested. Critical COVID-19 supplies imported by industry and others at the peak of the second wave, should also be exempted from GST levies.

"Most families have spent more on medical expenditure than they planned, and many families are impacted by job losses or salary freezes or cuts," Mr. Narendran said in an interview. "So there would be a tendency to postpone expenditure, just to deal with the current situation," he added, urging temporary cuts in the Goods

Not a ball bowled on fourth day

Rain and wet conditions continue to play spoilsport in summit clash

WTC FINAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SOUTHAMPTON

The fickle English weather played spoilsport yet again as day four of the inaugural World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand was washed out due to rain.

For the second time in the summit clash, a whole day was lost. No play was possible on the opening day too.

With the weather not improving since morning at the Ageas Bowl, the umpires took a call almost four hours and 30 minutes after the scheduled start time of 3 p.m. IST.

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

Disappointed fans

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

Rain is not forecast for the remaining two days of the big final but it is likely to remain overcast, the way it has been so far in the contest. On

days two and three, bad light had stopped play.

The final was well-poised at stumps on day three with New Zealand reaching 101 for two in reply to India's 217 all out.

Maximum of 196 overs

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

The match, the culmination of the inaugural World Test Championship that has spanned two years with contests between leading Test nations, is worth \$1.6 million to the winner and \$800,000 to the runner-up.

SCOREBOARD

India – 1st innings: 217 in 92.1 overs.

New Zealand – 1st innings:

Tom Latham c Kohli b Ashwin 30 (104b, 3x4), Devon Conway c Shami b Ishant 54 (153b, 6x4), Kane Williamson (batting) 12 (37b, 1x4), Ross Taylor (batting) 0 (2b); Extras (lb-3, nb-2); 5; Total (for two wkts, in 49 overs): 101.

Fall of wickets: 1-70 (Latham, 34.2), 2-101 (Conway, 48.4).

India bowling: Ishant 12-4-19-1,

Bumrah 11-3-34-0, Shami 11-4-

19-0, Ashwin 12-5-20-1, Jadeja 3-1-6-0.



Killing time: Rahane and Pujara take a stroll across the Ageas Bowl outfield on a rained-out Monday. ■ GETTY IMAGES

BCCI gesture irks some State units

They point out that the 'previous experience' with the Sports Ministry was far from pleasant

AMOL KARHADKAR

MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI's) decision to release ₹10 crore for assisting India's Olympic campaign in Tokyo has not gone down too well with some of its members.

While none of the State association representatives voiced their concern over the proposal during zonal videoconferencing meets on Sunday before the apex council stamped the decision, some units pointed out that the "previous experience" with the Sports Ministry was far from pleasant.

In 2008, the BCCI had set aside a corpus of ₹50 crore for a joint venture along with the ministry for what was to be called the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF). But according to Ratnakar Shetty, BCCI's chief administrative officer then, the ministry never provided details of how the fund was utilised.

The NSDF was to be formed with a corpus of ₹80 crore – with the Sports Ministry to contribute ₹30 crore. After the 2010 Commonwealth Games, there was no detailed report about utilisation of funds," Shetty told *The Hindu* on Monday. "I filed an RTI in personal capacity and the reply was

shocking. Only ₹8 crore was spent. It is obviously nice that the BCCI wants to support other sports but it should first ask what happened to the money that was already donated. What was it utilised for?"

Shetty also pointed out that it was the contribution of ₹50 crore to the NSDF that resulted in the Income Tax authorities revoking tax exemption for the BCCI.

"It was remarked that supporting other sports was not an object of the BCCI as defined in the memorandum of association, and the BCCI's appeal is still pending in the Bombay High Court."

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Maharaj hat-trick sends Windies hurtling to defeat

South Africa wins second Test by 158 runs, clinches series 2-0

SA IN WI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GROS ISLET

Keshav Maharaj became just the second South African to take a hat-trick in Test cricket and the team registered a 2-0 series victory as West Indies was shot out for 165 in the second session on day four of the second Test on Monday.

West Indies had been set a target of 324.

Maharaj's hat-trick came in the penultimate over of the first session.

He claimed a big break-through when Kieran Powell was caught near the square-leg boundary for 51. But the spinner added the wickets of

Jason Holder and Joshua Da Silva off his next two balls.

Wiaan Mulder took a one-handed catch low down to his right at leg-slip to seal the hat-trick and send Maharaj running and sliding, soccer-style, on his chest on the grass in celebration. Maharaj finished with five for 36 off 17.3 overs.

The only previous South African to take a hat-trick in Tests was Geoff Griffin against England at Lord's in 1960.

Rabada shines

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada took the first three wickets of the session as West Indies, which started the day on 15/0 in its second innings,

fell away quickly.

Rabada sent West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite (6) and Shai Hope (2) back quickly before picking up the key wicket of Kyle Mayers for 34, ending his stand of 64 with Powell.

On Sunday, South Africa made 174 in its second innings after dismissing the West Indies for 149. Rassie van der Dussen top-scored with an unbeaten 75.

The scores: South Africa 298 & 174 in 53 overs (Rassie van der Dussen 75 n.o., Kagiso Rabada 40, Kemar Roach 4/52, Kyle Mayers 3/24) bt West Indies 149 & 165 in 58.3 overs (Kieran Powell 51, Kyle Mayers 34, Kagiso Rabada 3/44, Keshav Maharaj 5/36, incl. a hat-trick).



Royal show: Maharaj, right, is gung-ho after dismissing Holder, the second of his three victims. ■ AFP

Jeev's emotional tribute to father Milkha

Says it will need a lifetime of resilience to deal with the loss



Rest in peace, dad! Jeev offers prayers in front of the funeral pyre of Milkha Singh. ■ AFP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

Ace golfer Jeev Milkha Singh paid tribute to his father Milkha Singh, who died of COVID-19 complications last week, saying he would need a lifetime of resilience to deal with the loss of his best friend, guide, and mentor.

The 49-year-old Jeev said Father's Day on Sunday was "another sad reminder of what I've lost".

"Dad was much more than my father – he was my best friend, my guide, my mentor," Jeev said in a tweet.

"I hope I've the same resilience and inner strength to overcome all odds. I really need it now. And I will need it for the rest of my life," he added.

Milkha was cremated here on Saturday evening with full State honours, with Jeev lighting the pyre. Milkha also had three

daughters.

"Somehow, I don't remember much of Dad's funeral procession, but one sight I will never forget. A military van coming to a stop and these soldiers getting out and giving dad the salute."

"The Milkha family has always been grateful of the Indian Army, and I want to thank them again," said Jeev.

Jeev had had earlier described his mother's death as the "loss of family's backbone." The seasoned golfer thanked people for the outpouring of support.

"I lost my mom and dad. But what has been even more emotional is the thousands of messages we have been getting from people as if they have lost someone of their own," he said. "Thank you to all dad's fans and well-wishers for supporting us at this time."

The Dutch are in cruise mode

Austria to make knockout debut after defeating Ukraine

EURO 2020

REUTERS
AMSTERDAM

Georginio Wijnaldum scored a second-half double as the Netherlands defeated North Macedonia 3-0 to keep its perfect record on way to the European Championship knockout stages on Monday.

The Netherlands had already sealed top spot in Group C after beating Ukraine and Austria, and it will play its last-16 game in Budapest on Sunday against one of the best third-placed finishers from Groups D, E or F.

Much improved

North Macedonia, which was out of contention for the last 16 after back-to-back defeats, made a much-improved start as Ivan Trifkovski's early strike was ruled out for offside before Alek-

sandar Trajkovski smacked the post from 20 yards.

But Igor Angelovski's side was soon caught out by a stunning Dutch counterattack when PSV Eindhoven forward Donyell Malen charged upfield to set up Memphis Depay, who slotted it home for his second goal of the tournament.

Wijnaldum doubled the Dutch advantage with a tap in from close range and added a third just before the hour mark to put the result beyond doubt in front of a partisan crowd at the Johan Cruyff Arena.

Guard of honour

North Macedonia's Goran Pandev received a guard of honour from his team mates when he was substituted off about 10 minutes later, in what he has said would be his final appearance for his country.

In Bucharest, Austria ad-

vanced to the knockouts for the first time beating Ukraine 1-0 in their final group match to finish second and set up a last 16 clash with Italy.

The Netherlands finished with nine points while Austria has six from two wins.

Christoph Baumgartner, who looked shaken after a clash of heads with Illia Barnyj minutes earlier, scored in the 21st minute from a corner when he beat the Ukrainian defender to prod home from a teasing David Alaba delivery.

Ukraine, which was sloppy in possession and rarely threatened in the final third, has three points and must wait to see if it advances as one of the four best third-placed teams.

The results: Group C: North Macedonia 0 lost to the Netherlands 3 (Depay 24, Wijnaldum 51, 58); Ukraine 0 lost to Austria 1 (Baumgartner 21).

The Czech Republic 0 lost to

England unlikely to take risks against Czech Republic

Croatia and Scotland need a win to boost their chances

AGENCIES MANCHESTER

England manager Gareth Southgate looks likely to resist the clamour for a major change in approach for Tuesday's final Euro 2020 Group D match against the Czech Republic at Wembley.

The disappointing performance in Friday's goalless draw with Scotland has led to calls from pundits and fans for Southgate to adopt a more positive style.

But while some personnel changes could be on the cards, it is not expected that the England manager will switch to the kind of attacking line-up some of his critics have been demanding.

The Czechs are top of the

TODAY'S MATCHES GROUP D

Croatia vs Scotland
12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

Czech Republic vs England
12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

Live on Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD)

table on four points, ahead of England on goal difference, and a draw would see both teams advance.

On Sunday, Southgate took the unusual step of announcing that captain Harry Kane, whose sluggish displays have worried England fans, will definitely start against the Czechs.

The players wants to set things right on Tuesday, and Croatia defender Josko Gvardiol was apologetic about the performances so far.

"We have to give everything we can to 'die' on the pitch, and hope we can go through," said Gvardiol.



Leading from the front: Dutch skipper Georginio Wijnaldum's brace was the highlight of the win over North Macedonia. ■ AFP

government of metropolitan Tokyo.

Local organising committee president Seiko Hashimoto said it was important to acknowledge the uncertainty around the pandemic during the Games.

"If there is any abrupt change in the situation, we will hold five-party meetings again to make other decisions," Hashimoto said. "If there is an announcement of a state of emergency during the Games, no-spectator Games will be examined."



Seiko Hashimoto. ■ AFP

organisers, IOC, International Paralympic Committee, Japanese government and

government of metropolitan Tokyo.

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TV PICKS

WTC 2021 final: India vs New Zealand; Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3 p.m.
Euro 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

IN BRIEF



Usain Bolt has twin boys

KINGSTON (JAMAICA) All-time Olympic great sprinter Usain Bolt and his partner Kasi Bennett announced on Sunday the birth of twin boys, who have been named Thunder Bolt and Saint Lee Bolt. Bolt revealed the news on Instagram with a Father's Day family photo, showing a lightning bolt emoji next to each of his children's names in the caption, without stating when the twins were born. AFP

Increased prize money for 2022 & 23 athletics Worlds

EUGENE World Athletics will use ₹2 million in doping fines it has received from Russia to increase the prize pool at the next two World championships. WA chief Seb Coe said on Sunday that prize money would increase by ₹1 million at the Worlds in 2022 (Eugene) and 2023 (Budapest). AP



Super League project still alive, insists Laporta

BARCELONA Barcelona president Joan Laporta insisted on Sunday that the controversial Super League project "is still alive" despite it being widely condemned as a crude land grab. "The project is alive," Laporta said at a meeting of club members where he claimed the competition would be worth "a minimum of €700 million (\$830.3 million) per season for Barcelona". AFP

Only vaccinated fans at WC 2022: Qatar

DUBAI Qatar will only allow people fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to attend next year's World Cup and is in talks to secure one million doses in case global immunisation efforts lag, the prime minister said. The Gulf Arab state hosts the four-week tournament in November 2022 and the president of global soccer body FIFA has said the matches would be held in full stadiums. REUTERS

Sajan's new personal best in 100m butterfly



Sajan Prakash. ■ FILE PHOTO

SPORTS BUREAU BELGRADE

India's Sajan Prakash came up with a new personal best timing in 100m butterfly to win gold at the Belgrade Trophy swimming competition on Sunday.

The timing of 53.27 helped Sajan breach the B-mark Olympic Qualification Time (53.52), but he will need to secure the A-mark (51.96) for automatic qualification for Tokyo.

Also at the competition, Maana Patel and Kenisha Gupta came up with new Best Indian Performances in 100m backstroke (1:03.77) and 100m freestyle (57.39) events respectively, bettering their own previous records.

Toor finally books Tokyo ticket, in style

Shot-putter heaves to a National record; Kamalpreet and Dutee also set new marks

INDIAN GRAND PRIX

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

Shot-putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor made the long wait count, finally booking a Tokyo Olympics ticket in style with a new National record of 21.49m at the fourth Indian Grand Prix at Patiala on Monday and bettering the Olympic qualifying mark by some distance.

The Olympic mark is set at 21.10m.

It had been a frustrating wait for the athlete who kept insisting he was in fine form during training and had the confidence of his coach M.S. Dhillion to make the cut.

During the Federation Cup in April, Dhillion had said it was not a question of if but when Toor would do it. A series of cancelled foreign trips for training and competition did not make things easier.

In fact, every one of his four valid throws went past the Olympic mark – a series of 21.28m and a couple of 21.13m throws.

"My target was close to 21.50m and I got it on my first throw. Still, there is a



Commanding show: Every one of Tajinderpal Singh Toor's four valid throws went past the Olympic qualification mark. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

long way to go for me and my target is at least 22m. I hope to do even better at the inter-State championships," Toor said after the event.

Discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur, meanwhile, improved her own three-month old National record by more than a metre, managing a 66.59m throw that, if replicated, would make her a serious medal contender at Tokyo going by the last two

editions. That she was the only competitor in her event did not affect her performance.

Also setting a new National record was Dutee Chand in the 100m with a timing of 11.17 seconds, agonisingly missing the Olympic mark of 11.15s.

Hima wins in style

Dutee, who was expected to be in a showdown with Hima

Das in the 200m, did not start that race even as Hima won in 22.88s, the fastest by an Indian woman over the distance since Saraswati Sahai's national record of 22.82s in 2002. The Olympic mark is 22.80s.

The results:

Men, 400m: 1. Sarthak Bhambri (47.45); 2. Amit Balayan (47.52); 3. A. Alex (47.55); **1,500m:** 1. Ajay Kumar Saroj (3:43.46); 2. Ishu Solanki (3:53.55); 3. Suk-

han Preet Singh (3:56.31); **400m hurdles:** M.P. Jabir (50.51s); **4x400m:** 1. India-A (3:02.61); 2. India-B (3:11.77); 3. Maldives-C (3:37.38); **3,000m steeplechase:** 1. Shankar Lal Swami (8:34.40); 2. Mohd. Nur Hasan (9:19.18); 3. Parveen Dhandha (9:24.86); **Long jump:** 1. M. Srivishwanth (7.74); 2. Yu-gant Shekhar Singh (7.67); 3. Mohd. Anees Yahiya (7.60); **Triple jump:** 1. Eldhoose Paul (16.62); 2. U. Karthik (16.21); 3. Abdulla Abobacker (15.90); **Shot put:** 1. Tajinderpal Singh Toor (21.49); 2. Karanveer Singh (20); 3. Vanam Sharma (19.93); **Javelin:** 1. Rohit Yadav (75.83); 2. Arshdeep Singh (75.58); 3. Rajender Singh (74.28).

Women, 100m: 1. Dutee Chand (11.17); 2. A.T. Dhaneswari (11.48); 3. Himashri Roy (11.71); **200m:** 1. Hima Das (22.88); 2. Dhanalakshmi (23.14); 3. Archana Suseendran (23.26); **400m:** 1. M.R. Poovamma (53.78); 2. V. Revathi Veeramani (54.28); 3. Kiran Pahal (54.48); **1,500m:** 1. Harmilani Bains (4:08.27); 2. P.U. Chitra (4:25.31).

5,000m: 1. Parul Chaudhary (16:01.37); 2. Pooja Harjani (16:51.84); **4x100m:** 1. India-A (43.37); 2. India-B (48.02); 3. Maldives-C (50.74); **Discus:** Kamalpreet Kaur (66.59); **Javelin:** 1. Annu Rani (60.58); 2. Sanjana Choudhary (53.54); 3. Shilpa Rani (48.74).

Allyson Felix set for her fifth Olympics

Makes it by finishing second in 400m at the U.S. trials

REUTERS

EUGENE (USA)

U.S. track star Allyson Felix is going to the Olympics – for a fifth time.



Allyson Felix, seen with her daughter Camryn. ■ AP

into the final 50m, but she fought to the finish line, before rolling onto her back and kicking her legs in the air in celebration.

Felix, who picked up a record 13th gold at the 2019 Worlds, will be joined in Tokyo by Quanera Hayes, who won in 49.78, and Wallace Jonathas, who finished third in 50.03.

Rudy Winkler set an American record of 82.71 metres in the hammer throw, winning the U.S. trials for a second time in a row.

Hubbard is first trans athlete at Olympics



Creating history: At 43, Hubbard will also be the oldest weightlifter at the Games. ■ FILE PHOTO

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WELLINGTON

the competition on Aug. 2 for women 87 kilograms (192 pounds) and over.

Hubbard won a silver medal at the 2017 World Championships and gold in the 2019 Pacific Games in Samoa. She competed at the 2018 Commonwealth Games but sustained a serious injury that set back her career.

"I am grateful and humbled by the kindness and support that has been given to me by so many New Zealanders," Hubbard said in a statement.

Under Rani's captaincy

Rani to lead women's hockey team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India on Monday named striker Rani Rampal as skipper and Deep Grace Ekka and Savita as two vice-captains of the national women's hockey team for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics.

India announced a 16-member team for the Tokyo Games last week, but refrained from naming the captain.

"It is a huge honour to lead the Indian team at the Olympic Games. In these past years my role as a captain was made easy with teammates who have shared the responsibilities as senior players," Rani said in a statement issued by Hockey India.

Under Rani's captaincy India won the Asia Cup in 2017, a silver medal at the Asian Games in 2018, silver at the 2018 Asian Champions Trophy as well as winning the FIH Series Final in 2019.

Mina own goal sinks Colombia

Peru the beneficiary; Venezuela & Ecuador game drawn

COPA AMERICA

REUTERS
GOIANIA (BRAZIL)

Yerry Mina's own goal in the second half saw Colombia crash to a 2-1 defeat by Peru in an absorbing Copa America clash on Sunday.

Peru, which reached the final of the last Copa America but had won just two of its 12 games since, took the lead after 17 minutes when Sergio Pena hammered home a Yoshimar Yotun shot that had come back off the post.

The goal ended Colombia's run of seven Copa America games without conceding but it grabbed deserved equaliser eight minutes into the second half when Miguel Borja was brought down in the box as he tried to go round keeper Pedro Galles.

The referee pointed to the spot and Borja coolly sent the keeper the wrong way.

Colombia had not lost any of its last 10 matches against Peru but was undone by an own goal from Everton defender Mina.

The result lifts Peru into third place in the five-team Group B with three points from two games, one behind Colombia which has played a game more.

In Rio De Janeiro, Ronald Hernandez scored his first international goal in stoppage time to give Venezuela a dramatic 2-2 draw against Ecuador.

The result means Ecuador has one point from two games and Venezuela two from three.

The result means Ecuador has one point from two games and Venezuela two from three.

With four of five teams going through to the quarterfinals it promises a nail-biting finale in the group.

The results: Group B: Venezuela 2 (Castillo 51, Hernandez 90+1) drew with Ecuador 2 (Peciado 39, Plata 71).

Colombia 1 (Borja 53+pen) lost to Peru 2 (Pena 17, Mina 64+og).

Tejaswini wins title in style

G. Tejaswini. ■ FILE PHOTO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Winning 10 successive rounds, Tamil Nadu's G. Tejaswini ensured the National girls' (under-14) online rapid chess title with a round to spare on Monday.

In the 11th and final round, seventh seed Tejaswini drew with Stuti Aishwary to tally 10.5 points.

Stuti took the second spot after topping a four-way tie, involving Saparya Ghosh, Shubhi Gupta and Elakshi Srivastava, at nine points.

Sara Bangla Daba Sangsta comes into being

CHESS

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

function as the apex body of West Bengal chess," said a press release.

Haider Ali and Ashit Chatgerjee are the interim-president and secretary of the new body respectively.

A 15-member interim committee has been formed to run the chess affairs in the State and conduct elections within three months.

The SBDS website was inaugurated here on Monday in the presence of AICF president Sanjay Kapoor, secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan and Grandmasters Surya

Sekhar Ganguly and Dibyen-
du Barua.

Three tournaments

"Dr. Kapoor announced that three major tournaments would be allocated to SBDS to be conducted within March 2022," said the release.

According to an announcement made by Chauhan, the AICF disaffiliated the previous body, Bengal Chess Association, in the state for 'not complying' with its norms and National Sports Code.

"Why does no one listen to me when I say it's going to be a two-stopper?," Bottas said in a radio outburst featuring several expletives.

"I think the winning strategy today was two stop. Easy to say afterwards but that's how it is," he said. "I think as a team we're too focused on just completing the one stop. I had no front tyres left for the last 10-15 laps so it was really just trying to get the car home."

Spaniard Jon Rahm birdies his way to maiden Major glory

Becomes World No. 1; heartbreak for Louis Oosthuizen as he finishes runner-up again

U.S. OPEN GOLF

REUTERS
SAN DIEGO



Happy family: Jon Rahm celebrates his U.S. Open triumph with wife Kelley and son Kepa. ■ AFP

helped the third-ranked Spaniard to become the new World No. 1 displacing Dustin Johnson. The win also

"I'm a big believer in karma," Rahm said. "After what happened a couple of weeks ago, I stayed really positive

knowing big things were coming."

Two weekends ago, Rahm dealt with devastation when a positive COVID-19 test meant he was forced to withdraw from the Memorial despite holding a six-shot lead after three rounds.

Rahm's four-round total of 6-under 278 was good for a one-shot victory on South African Louis Oosthuizen.

Rahm had birdies on the final two holes – both with putts of more than 18 feet – to move to the front.

Oosthuizen secured five

consecutive pars after a bogey on the par-3 11th, but a bogey on No. 17 pretty much ended his chances unless he could produce an eagle on the last hole. He settled for birdie and a final-round 71.

Harris English finished third at 3-under, while Brooks Koepka, Collin Morikawa, and Italy's Guido Migliozzi shared fourth place.

Final standings: 278: Jon Rahm (Esp) 69-70-72-67.