

DECCAN Chronicle

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KARIMNAGAR | TUESDAY | 15 JUNE 2021



Biden ready to talk to China and Russia



Brazil begin Copa campaign in style



TABLOID

Huma makes a splash again

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WEATHER



Max: 31.5°C
Min: 22.0°C
RH: 61%
Rain: 0.4 mm

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Moderate rain. Max/Min temp. 32/22°C

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana
Tithi: Jyeshtha Shuddha Panchami till 10.53 pm
Star: Ashlesha till 9.38 pm
Varjyam: 9.55 am to 11.35 am
Durmuhurtam: 8.21 am to 9.14 am; 11.10 pm to 11.54 am
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm
HUIJI CALENDAR
Zeeqad 3,1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.32 am
Zohar: 12.26 pm
Asar: 4.53 pm
Maghrib: 6.57 pm
Isha: 8.14 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.51 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.41 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 9.42 AM
MOONSET TODAY 10.57 PM

COUNTER POINT



This is the record of undercounted Covid deaths...

SHORT TAKES

ACTIVE COVID CASES DECLINE BELOW 10 LAKH

New Delhi: Daily cases of Covid-19 in India saw a big dip on Monday with 70,421 new detections. This was the lowest after 74 days. Though such low numbers are often due to reduced testing on Sundays, the Union health ministry said a total of 14.92 lakh tests were conducted in the last 24 hours in the country. Officials said India's active caseload has dropped below the 10 lakh-mark after 66 days and daily recoveries continue to outnumber the daily new Covid cases for more than a month now. India's Recovery Rate is 95.43 per cent at present while daily Positivity Rate stands at 4.72 per cent. However, the death toll still remains a cause of concerns as nearly 4,000 deaths were reported in one day. Since cases have started coming down, many States and Union Territories have started easing Covid-19 restrictions. However, West Bengal has extended curbs till July 1 but is opening up restaurants and manufacturing units.

43% Indians skip China products

New Delhi: A half of Indian consumers surveyed said they did not buy made-in-China products in the past 12 months as an aftermath of the border tensions with China, a report by online firm LocalCircles on Monday said. The report is based on a survey, which was conducted during June 1-10 and covered 17,800 citizens. Imports from China, however, increased 42 per cent during January-May 2021, due to Covid cases.

RBI to regulate microfinance

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank on Monday proposed a uniform regulatory framework for the microfinance sector, wherein MFIs can provide collateral-free loans to households at board-determined interest rates. Microfinance is a form of financial service which provides small loans and other financial services to poor and low-income households.

India to restore 26m acres of degraded land, says PM

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 14

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday evening told the United Nations that India is "on track to achieve its national commitment of land degradation neutrality and ... working towards restoring 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030".

This, he said, would "contribute to India's commitment to achieve an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent".

He was delivering his keynote address in virtual format at the UN "High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land degradation and Drought".

"Land is the fundamental building block for supporting all lives and livelihoods. All of us understand the web of life functions as an inter-connected system. Sadly, land degradation affects over two-thirds of the world today," Mr Modi said, adding: "If left unchecked, it will erode the very foundations of our societies, economies, food security, health, safety and quality of life. Therefore, we have to reduce the tremendous pressure on land and its resources. Clearly, a lot of work lies ahead of us. But



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the UN 'High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land degradation and Drought', through video conferencing, in New Delhi on Monday.

— PTI

we can do it. We can do it together."

Said Mr Modi: "It is mankind's collective responsibility to reverse the damage to land caused by human activity. It is our sacred duty to leave a healthy planet for our future generations."

The Prime Minister added: "Land degradation poses a special challenge to the developing world. In the spirit of South-South cooperation, India is assisting fellow developing countries to develop land restoration strategies. A centre of excellence is being set up in India to promote a scientific approach towards

land degradation issues."

He further said: "In India, we have always given importance to land and considered the sacred Earth as our mother. India has taken the lead to highlight land degradation issues at international forums. The Delhi Declaration of 2019 called for better access and stewardship over land, and emphasised gender-sensitive transformative projects. In India, over the last 10 years, around three million hectares of forest cover has been added. This has enhanced the combined forest cover to almost one-fourth of the country's total area."

Hyderabadis for first time pay 3-digit price for petrol

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

The price of a litre of petrol crossed the ₹100-a-litre mark for the first time in the city. On Monday, the price of a litre of petrol was ₹100.20, while diesel was priced at ₹95.14.

Most petrol pumps in the city on Monday wore a deserted look, as motorists were cautious about buying fuel for their vehicles. "When I moved to the city, back in 1990, the price of one litre petrol was under ₹20. Now, the price has increased by five times. The government must understand that the abnormal rise in the prices is uncalled for at this point of time," said Manikanta Yellam, a resident of Dr AS Rao Nagar.

It was not just the consumers who were irked by the rise in prices, even petrol pump owners rued that the rise in price was just to line the pockets of oil companies.

"They call it a market escalation, but the oil companies are deciding the price on their own. They are doing this to ensure that they do not face any loss in their profit margin. Even the governments — both the Central and the state — have made it viable for them to reach



A motorist sees ₹100 fetching less than a litre of petrol at fuel bunk in Hyderabad on Monday.

— DC

It was not just the consumers, even petrol pump owners rued that the rise in price was just to line the pockets of oil firms

their targets, by putting the motorist in trouble," Rajiv Amamram, of the Consortium of Indian Petroleum Dealers said, adding that three parames were vital in deciding the price of fuel.

■ Page 2: Motorists seek Centre's intervention

RETAIL INFLATION CROSSES RBI'S COMFORT LEVEL

New Delhi: Rising prices of edible oils and protein rich items pushed the retail inflation to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, breaching the comfort level of Reserve Bank of India.

■ REPORT ON PAGE 7

LOVE | ALL

Tennis ace gifts his historic French title winning racquet to court-side kid 'coach'

Djokovic's gesture to young fan wins hearts

Paris: Novak Djokovic said he gave away his French Open winning racquet to a young boy watching court-side for "giving me the right tactics".

The world number one claimed a 19th Grand Slam title and became the first man in 52 years to win all four majors twice when he came from two sets down to beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-7 (6/8), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

At the end of the four-hour and 11-minute final, the 34-year-old Djokovic handed his racquet to the youngster who was then pictured on TV jumping

for joy and in shock at the gesture.

"He was in my ear the entire match basically, especially when I was two sets to love down. He was encouraging me. He was actually giving me tactics, as well," said Djokovic.

"He was like, 'Hold your serve, get an easy first ball, then dictate, go to his backhand.' He was coaching me literally. 'I found that very cute, very nice. So I felt like giving the racquet to the best person was him after the match. That was kind of my gratitude for him sticking with me and



Tennis world No.1 Novak Djokovic gives away his racquet to a young boy after winning the French Open on Sunday.

He was in my ear the entire match, especially when I was two sets to love down. He was encouraging me. He was actually giving me tactics, as well. He was like, 'Hold your serve, get an easy first ball, then dictate, go to his backhand.' He was coaching me literally. I found that very cute, very nice.

— NOVAK DJOKOVIC
on why he gave his racquet to the boy after winning a historic French Open title

supporting me," said Djokovic, who is now just one Grand Slam title away from equalling the all-time record of 20, jointly held by Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

It was a second French crown for Djokovic after

his 2016 victory and adds to his nine Australian Opens, five Wimbledon titles and three at the US Open. The 34-year-old is the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to win all four Slams on multiple occasions and just the third in history. — AFP

Etala joins BJP, predicts more leaders will follow

Sanjay recalls Etala's contribution to Telangana stir

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

Former minister Etala Rajendar joined the BJP on Monday in the presence of Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan, minister of state G. Kishan Reddy, state party affairs in-charge Tarun Chugh, party state president Bandi Sanjay, and vice-president D.K. Aruna in Delhi.

Rajendar left for Delhi with his followers in a special flight from Shamshabad along with former legislator Enugu Ravinder Reddy, former Karimnagar zilla parishad chairperson Tula Uma, former MP Ramesh Rathod,

TSRTC union leader Aswathama Reddy, TRS senior leader Gandra Nalini and several Osmania University student leaders.

The leaders first met BJP president J.P. Nadda and later reached the party office where Pradhan welcomed them into the BJP with the party kanduva.

Addressing the media on the occasion, Pradhan said the BJP has become stronger in Telangana state with the joining of Rajendar. Rajendar has a good image in politics, he said, adding that he was confident that the BJP would come to power in the 2023 Assembly elections.

Former health minister Rajendar, who quit his TRS membership and his



BJP president J.P. Nadda receives a bouquet from former minister Etala Rajender, who formally joined the party in New Delhi on Monday.

— DC

● **ETALA RAJENDAR** was confident that the BJP would be strengthened in Telangana and expected that several important leaders would join the BJP soon.

MLA post recently, said that to realise the BJP's expectation, he would work with commitment and in a dedicated manner.

He was confident that the BJP would be strengthened in Telangana state

and expected that several important leaders would join the BJP soon. The former minister said his followers and associates would work hard to strengthen the party and defeat the TRS.

Sanjay said the BJP was the only party to challenge Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu and it would end his dictatorship in Telangana state.

Sanjay said Rajendar was a leader who played a key role in the fight for Telangana statehood. The BJP would win the

Huzurabad bypoll even if the TRS and Chief Minister Rao spent hundreds of crores of rupees, he said and appealed to the leaders who were dissatisfied but were continuing in the TRS to join the BJP and fight against Chandrababu Naidu to relieve Telangana state from his despotic rule.

BJP MPs Dharmapuri Arvind, Soyam Bapu Rao, Dubbak MLA M. Raghunandan Rao and other important leaders also participated in the programme.

Coup in LJP; Chirag gets ejected, uncle in saddle

New Delhi, June 14: Five of the six Lok Janshakti Party MPs in Lok Sabha have joined hands against their leader Chirag Paswan and elected Pashupati Kumar Paras, the youngest brother of Paswan's late father and the party founder Ram Vilas Paswan, in his place, causing a big churn in Bihar politics.

The Lok Sabha Secretariat on Monday evening recognised Paras as the leader of the LJP in the House, a day after the five MPs informed Speaker Om Birla about their decision.

Paras lauded Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar as a good leader and "vikas purush" (development-oriented man), highlighting the deep fault lines within the party as his nephew has been a strong critic of the supreme JD(U) leader.

"I have not broken the party but saved it," Paras, the MP from Hajipur, told reporters.

There has been no com-

ment from Paswan on the development in his party.

Soon after Paras spoke to reporters, Paswan drove to his uncle's residence in the national capital to meet him.

Paswan, who has not been keeping well for some time, waited for over 20 minutes in his car before he was let into the house and then left after spending more than an hour inside. He left without saying a word to waiting media persons.

It is believed that neither of the two rebel MPs met him. A household help said the two were not at home when the LJP chief arrived.

Paras had long been unhappy with Paswan's style of functioning and was joined by other MPs, including Chandan Singh, Veena Devi and Mehboob Ali Kaiser, as they believed that his campaign against Nitish Kumar had left them at a disadvantage in the state. — PTI



STATE HEADING FAST TO FRBM DEBT CEILING

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

The state government seems to be exhausting its borrowing limit much faster in the current fiscal 2021-22 over previous fiscal 2020-21. The government is looking to raise ₹3,000 crore more on Tuesday to meet Rythu Bandhu expenditure. It needs to credit ₹7,508 crore as Rythu Bandhu assistance in the bank accounts of 63.25 lakh farmers from June 15 to 25.

The government's earnings have taken a severe beating in both the fiscals due to the outbreak of the first and second waves of the Corona-virus.

With this, the government is heavily depending on loans to meet expenditure on welfare schemes, development programmes and administrative affairs.

The government has already borrowed ₹3,500 crore this month. The government pinned its hopes on raising funds through sale of lands from July in addition to loans that were recently put up for e-auction.

■ Page 2: TS raised ₹4,500cr in April, May

The government is looking to raise ₹3,000 crore more to meet Rythu Bandhu expenditure.

SHORT TAKES

Raju denies allegations

Hyderabad: YSRC rebel MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju filed a rejoinder petition on Monday to deny the allegations made against him by AP Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in the special court for CBI cases. The Chief Minister had filed a counter-affidavit to Raju's original petition seeking cancellation of bail in the quid pro quo cases. In his turn, Raju levelled a series of allegations against the Chief Minister.

GOVERNOR URGES YOUTH TO DONATE BLOOD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

Governor Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan on Monday said there is a scarcity of blood because of the Covid-19 pandemic and urged youth to come forward to donate blood and save lives.

Become lifesavers by donating blood, the Governor said.

HEAVY RAINS FOR NEXT FOUR DAYS LIKELY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

Parts of the state including its capital city witnessed light spells of rain on Monday. According to the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS), the highest rainfall in the state was witnessed at Utlugunda in Suryapet district, which received 34.8 mm of rainfall till 8 pm.

Similarly, in the city the highest rainfall was registered at Jeedimetla, with 13 mm of rainfall.

Owing to the low intensity of rainfall, no incident of inundation or road blockages was reported with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation's (GHMC) disaster management wing.

However, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast heavy rains for the next four days. In its warning, the IMD stated, "Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are very likely to occur at isolated places in many districts of Telangana state."

According to a report by Skymet (a private weather forecasting agency), "A low-pressure area earlier formed over the Bay of Bengal on June 11 now lies over coastal Odisha and adjoining parts of West Bengal and Jharkhand. The weather system also has its reach over several parts of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and East Uttar Pradesh. Wind pattern in association with the low pressure is influencing weather as far as East Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Telangana state. Southwest monsoon has made an early advance to all these states and is in the process of covering the remaining parts."

BHATTI SLAMS GOVT POOR FOR COVID SHOW

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday stated that both the Union and state governments had failed to make a scientific analysis of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

He was participating in a webinar along with other leaders and medical experts on "Covid effect and the economic situation in India".

The CLP leader stated that the negligence of the governments had led to sufferings and the country into a debt-crisis, which was rightly pointed out by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He said it was unfortunate that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was criticising Rahul Gandhi's warnings.

He said that the Centre did not take any emergency measures until March when the Covid pandemic became rampant. He slammed the Centre for its biased distribution of oxygen and ventilators to states.

Former Union health secretary Sujatha Rao recalled that the first Coronavirus death happened on January 30 of last year and two more deaths in February. These were reasons enough to take up preventive measures but the Union government did not take any action.

Miyapur bus terminal plan being dusted off

5 locations to get ICBT for inter-city transportation

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) has revived the Inter City Bus Terminal (ICBT) project at Miyapur, three years after shelving it.

Once the ICBT is constructed, the authorities have also hinted that the HMDA would either lease the Imliban land where the Mahatma Gandhi Bus Station is located, or auction it for development of the city.

There exist problems, though. KRR Infra, the agency that bagged the project, did not submit the bank guarantee for ₹14.8 crore in the stipulated time. It approached court when HMDA decided to re-invite tenders.

Even though the tenders were finalised in May 2015, the private agency

● **HMDA OFFICIALS** said the municipal authority has been negotiating with the private agency either to withdraw the pending case or go ahead with the proposed project to meet the transportation needs of the city.

that took up the project did not submit bank guarantee in order to execute the project until 2017. The case has been hanging since then.

Citing this, the HMDA had decided to construct the ICBT at five different locations to cater to the inter-city transportation needs. It has zeroed in on five sites to construct bus terminals alongside National Highways.

Out of five locations the HMDA had identified, one is spread over 108 acres in

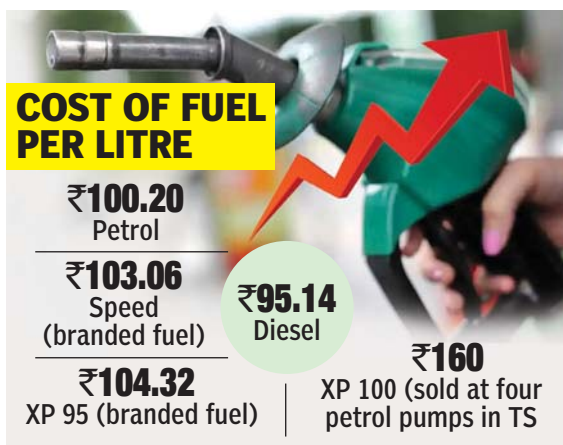
Manoharabad on the Hyderabad-Nagpur Highway, another of 20 acres in Pedda Amberpet and another being the 60 acres in Shamshabad, while the idea is to pool land in other two locations. Surprisingly, the proposals did not move an inch forward since 2018.

An HMDA official said the municipal authority has been negotiating with the private agency either to withdraw the pending case or go ahead with the proposed project to meet the transportation needs of the city.

The MGBS at Imlibun has reached its saturation point. Meetings would be held with the private agency to either take up the project or withdraw the pending case so that the HMDA could re-invite tenders and go ahead with the project under public-private partnership (PPP) mode.

As per the old proposal, ICBT was to be constructed over a 1-lakh sq ft built up area for the passenger terminal, with 200 bus bays and platform for out-station buses, bus parking for 1,000 buses, 30 bus bays for city buses, two fuel filling stations including CNG, four vehicle service centres, office space for administrative purposes and office space for bus operators.

However, keeping the ever-growing needs of the city, the proposal would be revised to have sophisticated facilities that cater to the transportation needs for at least 30 years. "We have already re-inspected the proposed site and HMDA would use about 50 acres of land in Miyapur for ICBT and other related projects," the official said.



City motorists seek Centre's intervention

From Page 1

"The first was the oil company's refusal to lose any profits, the second and third were the state and the Central governments' reluctance to forgo their profits," said Amamram.

"Petrol or any fuel is a compound tax collecting mechanism and it is a money-spinner for the government. Everyone is looking after their own wallets and are ultimately calling the rise a business

modality," he said.

However, motorists were unrelenting as they took to Twitter to ask the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his intervention.

One user, M. Harish, in his Tweet, asked if there was any discount for youth below 24-28 years. "We are depending on our parents, no notification on govt jobs by state and central govt no money in lockdown no work... kindly reduce tax (sic)," he said on Twitter.

LEOPARD NOT ABLE TO STAND, FACES X-RAY

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

The leopard rescued from Mahbubnagar district and brought to the Nehru Zoological Park on June 10 would be put through a physical examination to determine what is wrong with it as the animal is unable to get up.

"We need to get some X-rays of its back done to check if there are injuries to the spine," an official said. "It is being fed well and it appears to be quite active and attentive."

The official said the zoo will see if it is possible to call in a mobile X-ray unit on Tuesday. Or else, the animal would have to be tranquilized and taken to the Biological and Veterinary Research Institute at Shantinagar in the city for the X-ray. The zoo does have an old x-ray machine, bought in the 1990s but it is no longer in working condition.

If it is found that the leopard cannot be cured and will remain a paraplegic, then there may be no alternative other than to 'put it down', a department official said.

COPS HONOUR 'CHEYUTA' VOLUNTEERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

The Rachakonda police felicitated representatives of 'Cheyuta', an isolation centre to treat police personnel who tested positive for Covid-19. It was started by the Rachakonda police in association with Keats Engineering College, Kakinada, and Rajha Convention Centre, Yapral.

Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh M. Bhagwat said that the isolation centre would come as a great help for personnel who test positive to keep themselves away from their family members for the period of quarantine. Cheyuta was inaugurated on May 27 and has 30 beds.

As per the complaint copy, the accused Paruchuri Mallik had participated in a television talk show and reportedly passed comments which were highly objectionable in nature in terms of medical ethics.

"As his comments regarding the third wave might lead to panic among the general public and the man is not an expert to say that 'every house will see a death and the virus will destroy the body'. No institution/individual (globally) has any experience/scientific prediction regarding the impending third wave, its effects on families and children," he said in his complaint.

Sultan Bazaar police booked Mallik under Section 54 of Disaster Management Act and 505 (B) of the IPC.

MANY AP BORDER FUEL OUTLETS SHUT SHOP

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, JUNE 14

Abnormal difference in diesel prices between AP and Karnataka/Pondicherry is jolting fuel outlets in border areas as hundreds of outlets in AP are incurring huge losses.

Varied spectrums



Above: GHMC authorities cut down a huge tree at Al Jubail Colony in Falaknuma to pave way for constructing a new bridge, on Monday.
— P. SURENDRA

Left: A broken manhole remains unattended posing serious threats to commuters near Musheerabad Metro Station in Secunderabad, on Monday.
— S. SURENDER REDDY

Don't politicise land sales: Harish

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

Finance minister T. Harish Rao came down heavily on the Congress and the BJP for 'politicising' sale of lands by the state government. He said sale of lands by governments was nothing new and was being witnessed in all the states irrespective of whichever party was in power.

Harish Rao reminded that even the Narendra

Modi government at the Centre was selling public sector units (PSUs) in the name of divestment and encouraging states to sell their PSUs by offering incentives.

He said that selling government lands and assets was the tradition that was started by the Congress and the BJP governments in the country.

He said that the TRS government was selling land parcels for the benefit of people, to fund welfare

schemes for the poor and for other development programmes. Revenue earnings of the state government took a drastic hit due to Covid since March 2020 and the Centre was not extending any financial assistance to states to overcome the Covid crisis.

"In these conditions, we are left with no option but to sell off lands to raise funds for welfare schemes and development programmes. This is the only way out for the govern-

ment to overcome the Covid financial crisis. The Congress and the BJP want the government to stop welfare schemes for poor and development programmes. That's why they are opposing land sale. We want welfare and development to continue as usual. The poor should not suffer and development of Telangana state should not be hit due to financial crunch. For this reason, the TRS government has decided to sell

lands," Harish remarked while addressing a press conference in Sangareddy on Monday.

He reminded that the previous Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, K. Rosaiah and Kiran Kumar Reddy governments of the Congress in undivided AP had sold 85,000 acres between 2004 and 2014, mostly located in and around Hyderabad which commanded huge real estate value for cheaper rates and even diverted funds.

the queue, but I was scared since my business requires me to move around a lot and meet people every day." "Now I am finding it difficult to get the vaccination for the second dose, as the first was not entered in the online database," he added.

Hariwana, (name changed), and his wife, along with his brother and sister-in-law, all under 40 years, got vaccinated at Government Health Centre at Vijayanagar Colony on May 10. "A friend of mine who works here helped us to get the

job unregistered. My brother and I work in a multinational company. Since we did not register for our first dose, we are worried we will never get our vaccinated certificate."

M.S.N. Reddy, director in an IT firm, used his 'influence' to get the job on May 5 at the Government Hospital at Patancheru, before his age permitted him to get vaccinated. "The main tension is about the certificate. I was not enrolled and my vaccination details were not entered in the portal. I can manage to get

the second dose but the certificate is the main concern as I travel frequently."

While in some of the state-run vaccination centres, those who got their first jabs clandestinely are reported to be managing to get their second dose, after the health department somewhat relaxed the rules to allow the staff to enter details of the first jab on the pretext that the information was left out mistakenly, most people who got their first jabs through some known contact and the like, the going remains tough, it is learnt.

1st jab through backdoor, 2nd shot an uphill task

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 14

Around 15,000 people who received the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine without proper registration process, are now struggling to figure out how to get the second dose of the vaccine in the city.

Worried over catching Covid-19, and finding themselves not included in the initial categories of those eligible to receive the vaccines, many people, who found ways to get their shots despite not

being eligible as per the criteria laid down for getting vaccinated, are now facing hurdles in getting their second shot. These backdoor vaccine takers could not get registered and with no record of their first shot being taken, hopes of having the second shot now seem to be a tad difficult.

Covid-19 vaccination which began on March 1 in the state, was first opened for those above 60 years of age with comorbidities, then opened up for those between 45 and 59 years, and subsequent-

ly, on May 26, for everyone aged between 18 and 44 years. But for those who got their shots 'illegally' with connivance of staff at government hospitals, primary health centres and other vaccination centres, it has now become an uphill task to get their second jab.

R.K. Rao, a 39-year-old businessman, took his first shot at ENT Hospital in Koti on March 1. "Through a known contact, I was able to get the vaccine shot at this hospital, I know I was breaking

SHORT TAKES

RYTHU VEDIKA:
COMPENSATE
JOWAR FARMERSDC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, JUNE 14

Rythu Swarajya Vedika on Monday appealed to the state government to pay compensation to the jowar farmers who were exploited by the private traders to compensate the loss incurred with less price before the state government started buying jowar from the farmers at the MSP ₹2,660.

A team of farmers representatives and Vedika leaders met the collector Sikta Patnaik and requested to give compensation to the farmers who were exploited at the hands of the private traders.

The team told the collector that as many as 15,403 farmers cultivated white jowar in 34,161 acres in the Adilabad district and there was a 4.5 lakh quintals of yield.

The team comprising Lokari Poshetti and Pusam Sachin and Vedika district president Sangepu Boranna said farmers already sold nearly 30,000 to 40,000 quintals of white jowar at ₹1,100 to ₹1,250 against the MSP ₹2,660 per quintal in the Adilabad district.

KCR TO VISIT
KAMAREDDY
ON JUNE 20DC CORRESPONDENT
KAMAREDDY, JUNE 14

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will visit Kamareddy district on June 20. He will inaugurate the newly constructed integrated complex of collectorate and district police office besides National Highway 44. The district administration is making arrangements for the Chief Minister's visit. Ahead of CM's visit, state level officials including DGP M. Mahender Reddy visited the newly constructed buildings. Government whip Gampa Govardhan, district collector A. Sharath supervised the arrangements for the Chief Minister's tour.

Telangana state police housing corporation supervised the construction of the district police office. Reportedly, police office building works are yet to be completed. Due to the CM's schedule, the officials are making arrangements for inauguration of the collectorate.

'ENUGU RAVINDER
WILL PLAY STRONG
OPPOSITION ROLE'DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, JUNE 14:

Followers of former MLA Enugu Ravinder Reddy are in jubilant mood as he finally joined BJP on Monday in New Delhi along with former minister Etala Rajendar. Ravinder Reddy is four times MLA from Yellareddy Assembly constituency and TRS founder member.

In presence of Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Telangana state BJP in-charge Tarun Chugh, Enugu Ravinder Reddy joined saffron party.

Yellareddy Assembly constituency in Kamareddy district has a strong base of BJP cadre. Earlier, BJP candidate Banala Laxma Reddy got sizeable votes in Assembly elections. However, former MLA Enugu Ravinder Reddy also has a strong cadre base in Yellareddy, Nagireddypet, Lingampet, Tadwai, Gandhari, Sadashivanagar, Ramareddy and Rajampet mandals.

KALYANA LAKSHMI
BOON FOR POOR
FAMILIES: GANGULADC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, JUNE 14

There have been many prime ministers and chief ministers since India got Independence, but no one wiped away tears of a girl child like Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao, underlined backward class welfare minister Gangula Kamalakara on Monday.

Kamalakar was distributing Kalyana Laskhmi cheques to around 260 beneficiaries at a programme organised in Huzurabad town of Karimnagar district. The minister said like an elder brother, Mr Rao has understood the problems of poor parents who have daughters.

It is to help them that he introduced the unique Kalyana Lakshmi scheme unlike in any other state. Rs. 1,01,116 is being extended under the scheme to parents for performing the wedding of their daughter.

Rain pain



A road and an open plot has been waterlogged at Road No. 5 in Sri Venkateshwara Colony following heavy rains in Karimnagar, on Monday.
— YELABAKA RADHAKRISHNA

Ramana is in two minds as
BJP, TRS woo TD strongman

Ramana said several unexpected changes were taking place in state

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, JUNE 14

It looks like a tug-of-war is in the offing between the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as Telangana Telugu Desam (T-TD) president L. Ramana is dilly-dallying over whether to join the pink party or the saffron one. Both the national and regional parties are understandably vying with each other to rope in the BC strongman in the district.

"Both the BJP and the TRS invited me to join their parties, but will

announce my decision after discussing with local leaders of the respective parties and the TD," said Ramana while addressing the press persons here at the party office in Jagtial district on Monday.

Ramana said several unexpected changes were taking place in the state politics. The parties were assessing the situations time-to-time to strengthen themselves from grassroot levels and were taking decisions accordingly, he said.

Belonging to the Backward Class community, Ramana strove hard right from the beginning

● Ramana strove hard right from the beginning to strengthen the TD. Late N. T. Rama Rao and N. Chandrababu Naidu gave him much needed encouragement.

to strengthen the TD. Chief Ministers of united Andhra Pradesh, late N. T. Rama Rao and N. Chandrababu Naidu gave him much needed encouragement.

Ramana was made a minister in the TD Cabinet and also the party provided him an opportunity to serve as an MP.

Adhering to the princi-



ples of the party, he worked hard to increase the respect among the people for the TD, he said.

Decrying the propaganda on social media that he had sought some lucrative posts from the BJP and the TRS, he said he never sent any such proposals to other parties. Both the TRS and the BJP invited him to join their respective parties, but

they did not assure him of any higher posts, he pointed out.

Ramana said he never ran after posts. When he was working for the TD, the party, identifying his services, had given him some responsibilities which he handled perfectly.

He said his well-wishers asked him to make wise decisions so that he could serve the people better. So, after discussing not only with the TD workers, but also with the local leaders of both the TRS and the BJP, along with his followers, he may announce his decision later, he informed.

SEED DEALERS
COMPLAIN OF
HARASSMENTDC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, JUNE 14

Dealers of seeds in Khammam district are complaining of harassment by police and other authorities even though they are carrying out a legitimate business. They say different interpretation of a memo issued on May 9, 2017 on "inclusion of seed varieties" has caused confusion, leading to needless raids on shops selling seeds in Khammam district.

According to dealers, Telangana High Court had directed state agriculture department not to insist on seed companies to include varieties or hybrids in the seed licence whenever a new variety of seed is released into the market by a licenced company. It pointed out that Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 makes no specific mention of registering varieties of seeds before marketing them in the state.

Basing on the court's order, agriculture department directed mandal agricultural officers not stop marketing of seeds on grounds that the specific variety of the seed has not been included in the seed licence. This implies seeds produced by one licence holder can be marketed by another licence holder.

Dealers of seeds in Khammam district are complaining of harassment by police and other authorities even though they are carrying out a legitimate business. They say different interpretation of a memo issued on May 9, 2017 on "inclusion of seed varieties" has caused confusion, leading to needless raids on shops selling seeds in Khammam district.



Farmers busy in paddy cultivation at Alugunur Thimmapur in Karimnagar on Monday.
— DC

Mother sells her third
newborn in NarsampetDC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, JUNE 14

Child welfare department officials rescued a newborn boy from an illegal sale after his mother sold him for ₹1 lakh in Ramulu Naik Thanda in Narsampet mandal of Warangal Rural district.

According to the district Child Welfare Officer G. Mahender Reddy, the boy was born on June 10 in home delivery.

His mother who was separated from his father is already taking care of two children. As her financial condition does not support her to

take care of a third child, she decided to sell the child.

Her relatives found a childless couple who were willing to purchase the child and paid ₹1 lakh and took possession on June 11. The officials who came to know about the matter through the villagers started an investigation and confirmed that the child was, infact, sold.

"First the biological mother's family misled us when questioned about the whereabouts of the boy. We filed a complaint regarding this with the local police station and then we were able to trace the boy to a

couple in Hasanparty of Waragal Urban district. They denied knowledge of the law against illegal adoption of children. We took possession of the child after the biological mother surrendered him to us and handed him over to the Shishu Greh, run by the women and child development department," he said.

Mr Mahender Reddy warned that any one who is involved in illegal adoption of children would be punished according to the juvenile justice Act.

He said that if anyone wants to surrender their children, they can call 1098.

Dealers of seeds in Khammam district are complaining of harassment by police and other authorities even though they are carrying out a legitimate business. They say different interpretation of a memo issued on May 9, 2017 on "inclusion of seed varieties" has caused confusion, leading to needless raids on shops selling seeds in Khammam district.

Blood donation camp held at IRCS

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, JUNE 14

World Blood Donor Day was observed at the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Warangal on Monday. Austrian biologist Karl Landsteiner, who classified the main blood groups, was remembered on the occasion. A blood donation

camp was organised where people from different walks of life donated blood.

IRCS district chairperson Dr P. Vijaychander Reddy appreciated the donors who came forward for blood donation.

E.V. Srinivas Rao, state managing committee member said in view of the blood unit shortage

● A meeting would be held with all the NGOs and a plan would be chalked out to organise more blood donation camps

due to the Coronavirus pandemic, a meeting would be held with all the NGOs across the state and a plan would be

chalked out to organise more blood donation camps.

TSPS Fourth Battalion police officer Raj Kumar, who donated blood said lives can be saved by donating blood. He promised that a large scale blood donation camp would be held at the battalion to collect blood.

IRCS district represen-

tatives Dr T. Vijaya Lakshmi, Peddi Venkat Narayana Goud, Chennamani Jayashree, Battalion police Nanda Kishore, IRCS permanent members Billa Ramana Reddy, Ravinder, Nagesh, Ravula Dhanuja, Nageshwar Rao, Mandala Parushuramuluwere present among others.

RIMS injections
with expired date
lands it in rowDC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, JUNE 14

A scam in medical procurement came to light when medical staff administered expired ceftriaxone antibiotic injections in the male ward of Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) here. It is found that January 2021 was printed as the expiry date on the bottle that was manufactured in February 2019.

RIMS Director Dr Bhanoth Balram Naik said that they had purchased 5,000 doses of ceftriaxone injections under the 'buy and supply method' since there was a shortage of the medicine and there was no supply from the government during the second wave of Covid-19.

However, the Director said that they were not aware about how those injections were delivered and from where the staff had collected them.

RIMS authorities said that they have purchased ceftriaxone injection from Kerala.

The question that remains unanswered is on how many expired injections and medicines were supplied to RIMS by medical agencies, which indulged in the fraud by taking advantage of the pandemic.

Dr Naik admitted that there were lapses and deplored that such injections were given to patients, some of whom complained of side-effects.

There are strong allegations that RIMS authorities had colluded with medical

agencies in this scam.

It is also suspected that these expired antibiotic injections might have failed to cure Covid-19 patients even as there is fear that some of those given the injection may succumb as they would have failed to create antibodies in Covid patients at RIMS.

Congress state general secretary Gandrath Sujatha visited RIMS and interacted with patients who were administered such ceftriaxone injections and also their kin late Sunday night. She said that it was an insider job.

A Congress delegation, led by Sujatha, met collector Sikta Patnaik and asked her to order a thorough inquiry into the incident and take action against the officials responsible for playing with the lives of people.

Kailash, an attendant of patient Gouri Shankar of Kholipura, found that the ceftriaxone injection administered to his relative, and some others had expired. He said there was no response from the authorities when he tried to inform the matter. He brought this to the notice of the nurse on duty, who in turn dropped those injection bottles in the dustbin.

It is said that such dubious injections were given to nearly 40 patients from 10 vials on June 13.

BJP leader Payal Sharath held the medical staff and Dr Naik responsible for the incident and demanded the state government to remove the medical staff and director from duties.

KTR helps out 3
Covid-orphanedDC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, JUNE 14

IT minister K.T. Rama Rao has come to the rescue of three children who have turned orphans during this second wave of Coronavirus pandemic at Oglapur village in Mallialla mandal of Jagtial district.

Busi Sattaiah, a resident of Oglapur had returned from the Gulf two months ago. He got infected with Covid-19 after his return and died while undergoing treatment on June 4. Sattaiah's wife had died several years ago. As a result, their three children – Akshara, Sahitya and Harshavardhan had turned into orphans.

A resident of the village Nallala Sai Kiran tweeted to the IT minister about the plight of these children. Responding immediately to that post, Rama Rao directed district collector G. Ravi to help the children. He also asked

Choppadandi MLA Sunke Ravi Shankar to follow up on the matter.

Following this, the MLA visited the house where the orphaned kids have been staying and handed over ₹1 lakh to them. He said arrangements will be made to enrol the three kids into a government residential school, so that they could continue their studies.

SAD DEMISE



Sri Seshanna Chennawar
Founder of Seshanna Chennawar Eye Institute, Adilabad. Advisor - Arya Vysya Abhudheya Sangam, Sec'bad.

Your words & deeds continue to inspire us!
Inserted by: Belde Maya (Daughter)
W/o. Late Belde Harish Chandra.
Ramini Priyanka W/o. Ramini Sumanth,
Uppala Vishwa Bharathi W/o. Uppala Vijay (Grand children).
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SHORT TAKES

ASSAM STUDENTS
MOVE SC OVER
BOARD EXAMSMANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, JUNE 14

Students of Assam have moved the Supreme Court pleading cancellation of Class 10 and Class 12 board examination on the lines of Central Board of School Examination.

The plea filed by a group of students stated that they are being compelled to appear in the HSLC and HS exams amid a threat to their life. The petition says, "In the interest of the safety of lakhs of students and their parents it is better to cancel the exams."

The move came after Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on June 10 announced that the exams will be conducted only if the Covid-19 positivity rate drops below 2 per cent. "The two education boards — Board of Secondary Education Assam (SEBA) and the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC) — will try to hold the exams in mid-July," Sarma stated.

Class 10, 12 board exams would be held between July 15 and 20 for two to three papers. Male and female students would be writing the exams on separate dates to ensure social distancing, Sarma said.

The students in their plea before the apex court said that the Chief Minister's announcement to hold exams between July 15 and July 20 has created panic among students and parents. "The government's statement that Covid positivity rate below 2 per cent has no relevance," the students said in its plea.

STALIN: LIQUOR
SALES RESUMED
TO PREVENT HOCHG. BABU JAYAKUMAR
& D. SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, JUNE 14

The Tasmac shops were opened again as part of the relaxations to the lockdown on Monday only with a view to preventing the flow of hooch. Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said and warned that the liquor outlets would be closed again if the Covid-19 protocols were not followed.

Illicit liquor would ruin the state and the government wanted to avoid that, Stalin said in his address to the people, even as the new set of relaxations were brought in, and urged the people to show responsibility in stopping the spread of Coronavirus.

Since schools and colleges would have to be opened soon and public transport had to be resumed, he sought the people's cooperation and help, which alone can bring down the numbers further.

The government's efforts had so far yielded results in bringing the pandemic under control, he said, recalling that the daily infections at one point were at 36,000 with the doctors fearing that it could touch 50,000. But today the numbers had not only come down to 15,000 but were also declining by the day due to the various steps taken by the government, he pointed out.

STATES TO GET
MORE VACCINE
DOSES SOONDC CORRESPONDENT
with agencies input
NEW DELHI, JUNE 14

The daily cases of Covid-19 in India saw a big dip on Monday with 70,421 new detections. This was the lowest after 74 days. Though such low numbers are often due to fewer testing on Sundays, the Union health ministry said a total of 14.92 lakh tests were conducted in the last 24 hours in the country.

Officials said India's active caseload has come below 10 lakh mark after 66 days and daily recoveries continue to outnumber the daily new cases for more than a month now. India's Recovery Rate is 95.43 per cent at present while daily Positivity Rate stands at 4.72 per cent. However, the death toll still remains a cause of concerns as nearly 4,000 deaths were reported in one day.

Meanwhile, the Centre has said it is making available more vaccines to the states and UTs.

The Union health ministry said more than 96,490 vaccine doses are in the pipeline and will be delivered to the states/UTs within the next three days.

Union Health Ministry officials said more than 1.40 crore vaccine doses are still available with the states/UTs to be administered.



Crowd at Sadar Bazar market in New Delhi after authorities eased lockdown restrictions on Monday.

— PTI

India, China, Pak
N-arsenal grows

India adds 6, Pak 5 and China 30 warheads

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, JUNE 14

India, China and Pakistan continued to grow their nuclear arsenal in the region in 2020, a report by Stockholm-based think tank SIPRI has claimed.

Among the three countries, China saw the highest addition of 30 nuclear warheads in 2020, taking its total nuclear stockpile to 350. India added six and Pakistan five nuclear warheads. However, China and Pakistan continue to have more nuclear weapons than India.

Pakistan has 165 nuclear warheads against 156 with India, according to the SIPRI report.

"China is in the middle of a significant modernisation and expansion of its nuclear arsenal, and India and Pakistan also appear to be increasing the size of their nuclear weapon inventories," said the report.

Overall, Russia leads the pack with 6,225 nuclear warheads followed by the US with 5,550.

There was a decrease in the number of nuclear weapons in the world from 13,400 in 2019 to 13,080 in 2020 as the USA and Russia continued to reduce their overall nuclear weapon inventories by dismantling retired warheads.

However, despite this overall decrease, the estimated number of nuclear weapons currently deployed with operational forces increased to 3,825 from 3,720 last year. Around 2,000 of these —

● **OVERALL, RUSSIA LEADS** the pack with 6,225 nuclear warheads followed by the US with 5,550.

nearly all of which belonged to Russia or the USA — were kept in a state of high operational alert, said SIPRI.

The report said that while initially India's nuclear systems were focused on Pakistan, the country now appears to place increased emphasis on China, with the development of longer-range missiles capable of targeting all of China.

It said that India has assigned its nuclear weapons to a maturing nuclear triad of aircraft, land-based missiles and ballistic missile submarines.

The report said that the remarks in recent years by Indian defence ministers have created doubts about India's commitment to the no-first-use policy.

"Recent scholarship and government statements have called that policy into further question, with some analysts suggesting that 'India's NFU' [no-first-use] policy is neither a stable nor a reliable predictor of how the Indian military and political leadership might actually use nuclear weapons," said SIPRI. It said that there are suggestions that some portions of India's arsenal, particularly those weapons and capabilities designed for retaliation against Pakistan, "are now kept at a much

higher state of readiness, capable of being operationalised and released within seconds or minutes — not hours, as has been previously assumed".

The report said that aircraft are the most mature component of India's nuclear strike capabilities. "It is estimated here that approximately 48 nuclear bombs are assigned to aircraft. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has reportedly certified its Mirage 2000H fighter-bombers for delivery of nuclear gravity bombs. It is widely speculated that the IAF's Jaguar IS fighter-bombers may also have a nuclear delivery role," said the report.

It said that the Indian Army's Strategic Forces Command operates four types of mobile nuclear-capable ballistic missile: the short-range Prithvi-II (250 kilometres) and Agni-I (700 km); the medium-range Agni-II (>2,000 km); and the intermediate-range Agni-III (>3,200 km). Two new and longer-range land-based ballistic missiles are in development: the Agni-IV (>3,500 km) and the Agni-V (>5,000 km). A variant with an even longer range, the Agni-VI (6,000 km), is in the design stage of development.

Unlike the other Agni missiles, the Agni-V is designed to be stored in and launched from a new mobile canister system, which will reduce the time required to place the missiles on alert in a crisis.

L'dweep observes
black day as Khoda
returns to islandGILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JUNE 14

Lakshadweep administrator Praful Khoda Patel skipped Kochi airport to reach Lakshadweep on Monday to avoid protests from people in Kerala.

Congress MPs, MLA and other elected representatives had gathered at the Kochi airport to submit memorandum to Khoda against the controversial decisions taken by him in island. However, Patel went to Kavaratti straight from from Goa.

Meanwhile, people in Lakshadweep observed black day against Patel's arrival. People hoisted black flags atop their houses and raised slogans against the administrator. The Lakshadweep police asked people to remove the black flags. The cops also photographed and took pictures of houses that displayed black flags.

"He may have evaded us but Khoda will face strong protests from people of Lakshadweep," said Congress MP T.N. Prathapan in Kochi.

Khoda who is a former minister of state for home Gujarat and a close confidante of Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to the island almost a month after the protests began over his controversial decisions.

Reacting to the ongoing protests he told media

that the campaign against him was being organised by people based in Kerala.

Most political parties in the island including CPM, Congress, prominent people have termed many of the decisions as part of the BJP led Central government's agenda to seafonise the island. A section of BJP leaders of Lakshadweep have also opposed these decisions.

The administrator, however, claimed that he aimed at the fast paced development of the island. There is plan to increase the length of airstrip, open coconut processing units, increase tuna fish catch to 25,000 metric tonne. He said the people are being misled by vested interests.

Meanwhile, filmmaker Aisha Sultana against whom a sedition case has been registered following her "bio weapon" remark against the central government, moved Kerala High Court challenging the stringent sections invoked against her.

During a recent television prime time debate she had alleged that the government had unleashed bio weapon against people of island by lifting the Covid restrictions.

She said that her remark was taken out of context. The filmmaker stated that she had even expressed regret on social media.

Kerala says will ease restrictions

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JUNE 14

Kerala which has been under lockdown since May 8, will witness major relaxation in the curbs from this week.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the government would formally announce the relaxation in lockdown in specific sectors on Tuesday. The decision to relax restrictions has been taken in view of the decline in number of Covid cases from 30,000 last month to less than 10,000. On Monday the state reported 7,719 new cases of Covid 19. Even the TRP rate which was hovering around 28 in May has now dropped to less than 12 and is expected to go down further.

The number of active cases too has come down from over 3 lakh to 1.15 lakh. With lockdown creating serious livelihood problems for the daily wagers and economically weaker sections besides adversely affecting small and medium businesses, pressure has been mounting on government to lift the restrictions. The Opposition Congress-led UDF also demanded lifting of curbs on Monday.

Transport buses, autorickshaws, taxi and other public carriers have been allowed to operate partially. Automobile workshops, salons, shops and business establishments selling raw materials and essential materials for construction sector including plumbing, paint and electrical shops have been allowed to function.



Teacher takes online class of 1st standard students after schools reopened on Monday, in Mumbai.

— Rajesh Jadhav

Bengal eases curbs,
extends lockdownRAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, JUNE 14

Retaining the suspension of the state-run transport network and academic activities, the Mamata Banerjee government on Monday extended the lockdown in West Bengal for another two weeks till June 30.

It, however, eased curbs at various levels in many sectors due a drop in daily cases and deaths in the last two weeks.

The Chief Minister informed that the schools, colleges and educational institutes, intra-state bus services, local train services, metro services and ferry services would remain closed in addition to beauty parlours and swimming pools for the public.

She said that private

vehicles, cabs can only function for emergency or essential services. Among the relaxations, the government and private offices have been allowed to be open with 25% strength from June 16. Private and corporate offices can operate from 10 am to 4 pm.

The markets and haats related to fruits, vegetables, meat and eggs can be run from 7 am to 11 am while small and medium enterprises can be open from 11 am to 6 pm to help the public and trade. The restaurants and bars can be open between 12pm and 8pm with 50% seating capacity. Besides, parks will be allowed to open from 6 am till 9 am for morning walks and physical exercise but access will be restricted to only those who are vaccinated.

AGE-OLD | PROBLEM

Most elderly have to depend on family care, which makes them vulnerable

73% elderly face increased abuse during lockdown

New Delhi, June 14: About 73 per cent of the elderly population experienced increased abuse during the lockdown imposed amid the second wave of Covid-19, according to a new report.

The report by the Agewell Foundation, based on responses from 5,000 elderly, released ahead of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day said 82 per cent of the respondents claimed that their life has been affected adversely due to the current Covid-19 situation.

● **IT WAS** found that 65 per cent elderly respondents were facing neglect in their life while approximately 58 per cent of the respondents said they are suffering abuse in their families and society.

rent Covid-19 situation.

The report found that 73 per cent of the respondents reportedly said cases of abuse against them increased during and after the lockdown period, and among them 61

per cent claimed that interpersonal relationships was the main factor responsible for fast increasing incidences of elder abuse in families.

During the survey, it was found that 65 per cent elderly respondents were facing neglect in their life while approximately 58 per cent of the respondents said they are suffering abuse in their families and society.

The report also found that approximately every third elderly (35.1 per cent)

claimed that older people face domestic violence (physical or verbal) in old age.

Himanshu Rath, Chairman, Agewell Foundation said though the Covid-19 situation and related lockdown rules and restrictions have affected almost every human being, older persons are the most vulnerable so far as the coronavirus threat and its impact is concerned.

"There is an urgent need to sensitise the entire com-

munity about the growing incidences of elder abuse. Older persons also need to be educated about support systems, legal provisions and non-formal support network, accessible and available to them," he said.

The report said most elderly have to depend on family care, which makes them vulnerable and incidences of elder abuse, mistreatment, and harassment of elderly occur primarily within their respective families are on

rise due to vulnerability of older people.

Elderly women are worst affected due to their poor financial status, increased level of dependency, and even due to longer lifespan comparatively to elderly men.

Elderly hardly report incidences of abuse to concerned stakeholders due to various factors like lack of awareness about their rights, poor physical health and lack of social support system, the report said.

— PTI

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

MAN, 25, DIES AFTER DOWNTOWN AUSTIN SHOOTING

Austin (US), June 14: A man has died from his injuries following a mass shooting on a crowded downtown Austin street that left more than a dozen people injured, police said Sunday.

Douglas John Kantor, 25, who was hospitalised with critical gunshot wounds following the early Saturday morning shooting, died Sunday at 12:01 pm, the Austin Police Department said in a news release that also was confirmed by Lt Brian Moon. Interim Police Chief Joseph Chacon said the shooting happened around 1:30 am Saturday on a street packed with bars and barricaded off from vehicle traffic. He said investigators believe the shooting began as a dispute between two parties.

PAK COPS DENIED FREE BURGERS. DETAIN 19 STAFF

Lahore, June 14: A group of police officers in Pakistan flipped out when a takeaway joint refused to hand over free burgers, detaining all 19 staff at the branch.

Workers at the trendy chain Johnny & Jugnu in the eastern city of Lahore were rounded up and held for seven hours overnight on Saturday, leaving behind unattended kitchens and hungry customers.

"This is not the first time something like this has happened with our kitchen teams at our restaurant, but we want to make sure this is the last," the fast food chain said in a statement published on social media. It started when staff at the restaurant refused a "request from a very high profile special guest".

Restaurant staff said that most of those arrested were young people.

B'DESH ACTRESS CRIES RAPE, ASKS PM FOR JUSTICE

Dhaka, June 14: Prominent Bangladeshi film actress Shamsunnahar Smriti, popularly known as Pori Moni, has sought justice from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a Facebook post alleging that a businessman attempted to rape and murder her at a club here.

After making the allegations in a Facebook post without naming the suspect on Sunday, she held a media briefing later in the night and accused businessmen Nasir U. Mahmood, entertainment and cultural affairs secretary of Dhaka Boat Club, of assaulting her, *bdnews24* reported.

The 28-year-old actress alleged that Nasir assaulted her at the club in Dhaka's Uttara four days ago. The businessman could not be reached immediately for comments, the news website said. A founding member of the Dhaka Boat Club, Nasir is involved with real estate business.

TWO AMERICANS STAND TRIAL IN GHOSN'S ESCAPE

Tokyo, June 14: Two Americans suspected of helping former Nissan chairman Carlos Ghosn flee Japan while he was out on bail go on trial Monday in Tokyo.

Michael Taylor, a former Green Beret, and his son Peter Taylor are suspected in the Houdini-like operation where Ghosn hid in a box for music equipment that was loaded onto a private jet that flew him to Lebanon, via Turkey in December 2019. Unlike the US, Lebanon has no extradition treaty with Japan.

Ghosn has French, Lebanese and Brazilian citizenship. The Taylors were arrested in Massachusetts in May last year and extradited in March on charges of helping a criminal. The authorities say Ghosn hired the Taylors for at least \$1.3 million. Ghosn led Japanese automaker Nissan Motor Co. for two decades before his arrest in November 2018. He was charged with falsifying securities reports in under-reporting his compensation and of breach of trust in using Nissan money for personal gain.

Ghosn says he is innocent. At Monday's court session, the Tokyo District Prosecutors will outline the allegations against the Taylors before Presiding Judge Hideo Nirei and two other judges. The Taylors will also likely make statements. They have been held in a Tokyo detention centre since arriving in Japan and were not available for comment.

Peter Taylor said in a statement to a Massachusetts court in January that he met Ghosn in 2019 in Japan to pitch his digital marketing company to repair Ghosn's tarnished reputation.

Will better India ties, says Bennett

Israeli foreign minister Yair Lapid says he hopes to welcome PM Modi to Israel soon



Naftali Bennett

Jerusalem, June 14: Israel's newly elected Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Monday that he was looking forward to working with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi to further develop the "unique and warm relations" between the two democracies. Bennett, the 49-year-old leader of the right-wing Yamina party who on Sunday became the new premier ending Benjamin Netanyahu's 12-year hold on power, said this while responding to Prime Minister Modi's congratulatory tweet.

Prime Minister Modi earlier congratulated Bennett on being sworn in as Israel's new prime minister, and said he looked forward to meeting him and deepening the strategic partnership between the two countries as they celebrate 30 years of the

upgradation of diplomatic ties next year.

"Thank you Mr. Prime Minister @narendramodi, I look forward to working with you to further develop the unique and warm relations between our two democracies," Bennett tweeted from his official handle. Bennett took oath of office on Sunday after the Knesset (Parliament) elected him as the 13th Prime Minister of Israel.

Alternate Prime Minister and foreign minister Yair Lapid also said that Israel's new government will work to "advance strategic relations" with India. "I look forward to working together to advance the strategic relations between our countries and hope to welcome you to Israel soon," Lapid tweeted on Monday in response to a congratulatory message from External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

Jaishankar earlier in a tweet congratulated his new Israeli counterpart. "Congratulate APM & FM @yairlapid of Israel on his appointment. Look forward to working closely together to further advance our multifaceted strategic partnership," Jaishankar wrote. Lapid, the head of the Yesh Atid party, would take over premiership in September 2023 under a

power-sharing deal with Bennett, serving for two years till the end of the term. In his tweets, Modi also conveyed his "profound gratitude" to Netanyahu, whose long tenure as Israeli prime minister ended on Sunday.

Modi thanked Netanyahu for his "personal attention" to India-Israel strategic partnership. "As you complete your successful tenure as the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, I convey my profound gratitude for your leadership and personal attention to India-Israel strategic partnership @netanyahu," Modi tweeted.

The personal chemistry between the two leaders has often been talked about in the Israeli media and Prime Minister Modi got a royal welcome during his historic trip to the Jewish state in July 2017. — PTI

Bibi ouster ends worst conflict, says Palestine

Ramallah, June 14: Benjamin Netanyahu's ousting as prime minister of Israel closes the chapter on one of the "worst periods" of Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Palestinian prime minister Mohammed Shtayyeh said on Monday.

"The departure of the Israeli ex-prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu after 12 years in power marks the end of one of the worst periods in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," Shtayyeh said ahead of the Palestinian Authority's weekly cabinet meeting.

But Shtayyeh also said he was under no illusions about the new government

or its likelihood of advancing a peace agreement with the Palestinians.

"We do not see this new government as any less bad than the previous one, and we condemn the announcements of the new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett in support of Israeli settlements," the Palestinian premier said, referring to Israeli construction activity in the occupied West Bank.

"The new government has no future if it does not take into consideration the future of the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights," Shtayyeh added.

— AFP

Suu Kyi on trial but critics say charges bogus

Bangkok, June 14: Myanmar's ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi was set to go on trial Monday on charges that many observers have criticised as attempt by the military junta that deposed her to delegitimise her democratic election and cripple her political future.

Suu Kyi's prosecution poses the greatest challenge for the 75-year-old and her National League for Democracy party since February's military coup, which prevented them from taking office for a second five-year term following last year's landslide election victory.

Human Rights Watch charged that the allegations being heard in a special court in the capital, Naypyitaw, are "bogus and politically motivated" with the intention of nullifying the victory and preventing Suu Kyi from running for office again.

"This trial is clearly the opening salvo in an overall strategy to neuter Suu Kyi and the National

League for Democracy party as a force that can challenge military rule in the future," said Phil Robertson, the organisation's deputy Asia director.

The army seized power on Feb. 1 before the new lawmakers could be seated, and arrested Suu Kyi, who held the post of special counsellor, and President Win Myint, along with other members of her government and ruling party. The coup reversed years of slow progress toward more democracy for Myanmar.

The army cited the government's failure to properly investigate alleged voting irregularities as its reason for seizing power — an assertion contested by the independent Asian Network for Free Elections and many others. Junta officials have threatened to dissolve the National League for Democracy for alleged involvement in election fraud and any conviction for Suu Kyi could bar her from politics. — AP

US checking leak at China N-plant

Beijing, June 14: The US government is assessing a report of a leak at a Chinese nuclear power plant, after a French company that partly owns and helps to operate it warned of an "imminent radiological threat", a media report said on Monday.

The warning included an accusation that the Chinese safety authority was raising the acceptable limits for radiation detection outside the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant in Guangdong province in order to avoid having to shut it down, the *CNN* quoted a letter from the French company to the US Department of Energy. There is no reaction yet in Beijing by the Chinese government or officials on this report, it said. The media report said despite the alarming notification from Framatome, the French company, the Biden administration believes the facility is not yet at a "crisis level".

While US officials have deemed the situation does not currently pose a severe safety threat to workers at the plant or Chinese public, it is unusual that a foreign company would unilaterally reach out to the American government for help when its Chinese state-owned partner is yet to acknowledge a problem exists.

The scenario could put the US in a complicated situation should the leak continue or become more severe without being fixed, the report said.

However, concern was significant enough that the US National Security Council held multiple meetings to discuss the situation, it said. The Biden administration has discussed the situation with the French government and their own experts at the Department of Energy, the report said, adding that the US has also been in contact with the Chinese government. — PTI



Luxury yachts are moored at the Dubai Marina Beach in the Gulf emirate. Charter companies said they have seen an increased interest in yachting after Coronavirus measures eased, especially among those who want to spend time with friends and family. — AFP

UK curbs may lift by July 19 over Delta variant case spike

London, June 14: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is expected to announce a four-week delay to an end to all legal lockdown restrictions in the country when he makes a statement later on Monday in relation to so-called "Freedom Day", which was set for June 21.

The last and fourth stage of the lockdown roadmap is now expected around July 19 instead amid a worrying spike in cases of the Delta variant, which experts fear will result in greater hospitalisations in the coming weeks. On Sunday, the UK recorded 7,490 new cases of Covid-19 and eight deaths, with the seven-day average for cases up 49 per cent compared with the seven days before. Scientists and health officials have called for a delay in lifting all social distance norms in order to allow the vaccination programme to gain further ground, with second doses for the older age groups and first doses for the younger population cohorts of over-25s now eligible for jabs.

"It is one last leave. It is a straight race between the vaccine and the virus," a senior government source was quoted as saying after Johnson met his Cabinet ministers and scientific advisers to assess the latest data. Johnson is expected to blame the delay on the third wave of Covid-19 infections and say it will allow millions of more people to be vaccinated and more to receive a second jab by the end of July. As well as a delay in lifting restrictions to allow scientists more time to monitor the Delta variant,

Novavax shot 90% effective

Washington, June 14: Vaccine maker Novavax said Monday its shot was highly effective against Covid-19 and also protected against variants in a large, late-stage study in the US and Mexico.

The vaccine was about 90 per cent effective overall and preliminary data showed it was safe, the company said. While demand for Covid-19 shots in the US has dropped off dramatically, the need for more vaccines around the world remains critical.

The Novavax vaccine, which is easy to store and transport, is expected to play an important role in boosting vaccine supplies in the developing world. That help is still months

away, however.

The company says it plans to seek authorisation for the shots in the US, Europe and elsewhere by the end of September and be able to produce up to 100 million doses a month by then. "Many of our first doses will go to ... low- and middle-income countries, and that was the goal to begin with," Novavax Chief Executive Stanley Erck told *The Associated Press*. While more than half of the US population has had at least one Covid-19 vaccine dose, less than one per cent of people in the developing world have had one shot, according to Our World In Data. — AP

NEPAL PLANT TO CUT DOWN INDIA OXYGEN IMPORT

Kathmandu, June 14: Nepal's Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli on Monday virtually laid the foundation stone of Nepal's first-ever liquefied oxygen plant in the Lumbini Province which will help cater to growing domestic demand and reduce oxygen imported from India, amidst the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic.

The plant is being set up at Simarhawa of Rupandehi district in the province. The country has been facing a shortage of oxygen and oxygen cylinders as the second wave of Covid-19 hit Nepal, Prime Minister Oli noted while laying the foundation stone from his official residence Baluwatar. It was an unprecedented event of happiness at a time when the country had been reeling under an acute crisis of oxygen, he noted.

The government was compelled to import oxygen and other essential medical equipment, he said. "Later, the government thought that it would be appropriate to set up an oxygen plant on its own," he added. — PTI

PAK SC STOPS DEMOLITION OF DHARAMSHALA

Islamabad, June 14: Pakistan's Supreme Court has ordered the Karachi administration to stop the demolition of a Hindu dharamshala and leasing out the heritage property located in the heart of the city.

A three-judge bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed issued the order on Friday while hearing a case regarding the implementation of a 2014 judgment on minorities' rights. During the hearing, Dr Ramesh Kumar a co-opted member of a one-man commission on minorities stated that the property at Saddar Town-I in Karachi measuring about 716 square yards was a dharamshala, *The Express Tribune* reported on Sunday.

Kumar also placed before the court photographs of the building. He said the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) leased out the property to some private person, who was demolishing the dharamshala to construct a commercial plaza. Kumar said the ETPB chairman contended that the Sindh High Court (SHC) has allowed the ETPB to lease the place out, have it demolished and raise a new building there. — PTI

BIDEN-PUTIN MEET UNNERVE SOME US ALLIES

Kyiv, June 14: Central and Eastern European nations are anxious about the coming summit meeting between US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin, wary of what they see as hostile intentions from the Kremlin.

Some in the countries that once were part of the Soviet Union or the Moscow-led Warsaw Pact during the Cold War worry that Washington could scale down support for its allies in the region in a bid to secure a more stable and predictable relationship with Russia.

"I think there have been doubts as to the resoluteness of the present administration to face Russian aggressive actions in a decisive manner," said Witold Rodkiewicz, chief specialist on Russian politics at Warsaw's Center of Eastern Studies, a state-funded think tank that advises the Polish government. Both Russia and the US have sought to moderate expectations about Wednesday's summit in Geneva, ruling out any breakthroughs amid the worst tensions between the two powers. — AP



Joe Biden

AT NATO, BIDEN READY TO TALK CHINA, RUSSIA

Brussels, June 14: President Joe Biden makes his entrance at a Nato summit aiming to consult European allies on efforts to counter provocative actions by China and Russia while highlighting the US commitment to the 30-country alliance that was frequently maligned by predecessor Donald Trump.

The summit Monday comes as Biden tries to rally allies for greater coordination in checking China and Russia, two adversaries whose actions on economic and national security fronts have become the chief foreign policy concerns in the early going of the Biden presidency.

Biden will use his time at the summit to underscore the US commitment to Article 5 of the alliance charter, which spells out that an attack on one member is an attack on all. — AP

US MILITARY | DOCUMENTS Ultra-nationalists were looking to glorify ex-PM, 6 more as martyrs

Mystery of war criminal Tojo's remains solved

Tokyo, June 14: Until recently, the location of executed wartime Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo's remains was one of World War II's biggest mysteries in the nation he once led. Now, a Japanese university professor has revealed declassified US military documents that appear to hold the answer.

The documents show the cremated ashes of Tojo, one of the masterminds of the Pearl Harbor attack, were scattered from a US Army aircraft over the

Pacific Ocean about 30 miles (50 kilometres) east of Yokohama, Japan's second-largest city, south of Tokyo. It was a tension-filled, highly secretive mission, with American officials apparently taking extreme steps meant to keep Tojo's remains, and those of six others executed with him, away from ultra-nationalists looking to glorify them as martyrs.

The seven were hanged for war crimes just before Christmas in 1948, three years after Japan's defeat.

The discovery brings partial closure to a painful chapter of Japanese history that still plays out today, as conservative Japanese politicians attempt to whitewash history, leading to friction with wartime victims, especially China and South Korea.

After years spent verifying and checking details and evaluating the significance of what he'd found, Nihon University Professor Hiroaki Takazawa publicly released the clues to

the remains' location last week. He came across the declassified documents in 2018 at the US National Archives in Washington.

It's believed to be the first time official documents showing the handling of the seven war criminals' remains were made public, according to Japan's National Institute for Defence Studies and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records.

Hideotoshi Tojo, the leader's great-grandson, told *The Associated Press* that

the absence of the remains has long been a humiliation for the bereaved families, but he's relieved the information has come to light. "If his remains were at least scattered in Japanese territorial waters ... I think he was still somewhat fortunate," Tojo said.

"I want to invite my friends and lay flowers to pay tribute to him" if further details about the remains' location becomes available. Hideki Tojo, prime minister during much of World War II, is a complicated

figure, revered by some conservatives as a patriot but loathed by many in the West for prolonging the war, which ended only after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States.

About a month after Aug. 15, 1945, when then-Empress Hirohito announced Japan's defeat to a stunned nation, Tojo shot himself in a failed suicide attempt as he was about to be arrested at his modest Tokyo home. — AP

DECCAN Chronicle

15 JUNE 2021

A year after Galwan, a lot of questions still remain

Exactly a year ago, on June 15-16, 2020, in eastern Ladakh's Galwan Valley area, soldiers of China's People's Liberation Army attacked a body of Indian soldiers of 16 Bihar Regiment and other units which had gone there to ensure the Chinese had adhered to the agreement reached on June 6 at a meeting of corps commanders from the two sides to facilitate the disengagement of forces at friction points.

The Chinese had to dismantle their camp in parts of the Galwan riverbed near the point where this river meets the Shyok. In an ambush late at night, the Chinese soldiers used iron rods and heavy clubs with steel spikes embedded in them. Twenty Indians, including their commanding officer, a Colonel, were killed. They fought back with bare hands but pushed the Chinese back that night, although the PLA would return later with China claiming it always had "sovereignty" over the Galwan area, which is an outlandish distortion of the facts.

June 15 is an anniversary of bravery and betrayal. To this may be added national humiliation, for Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Opposition parties on June 19 last year that the Chinese "had not intruded, were not intruding, and were not in occupation" of Indian territory." This is at variance with the ground situation.

The Indian troops were carrying firearms as per protocol, but did not use them at Galwan, again as per border stabilisation protocols in force since 1987 and aimed to be confidence-building measures on the Line of Actual Control, the perceived boundary line. Such protocols were created to ensure "peace and tranquility" on the border so that bi-lateral relations could continue unmolested in other areas. It is this process which has received a jolt from which it is yet to recover.

Acknowledging this at a public platform last month, external affairs minister S. Jaishankar noted that India-China relations were at a "crossroads". He also observed that the ongoing relationship had been violated. The Chinese military is yet to vacate the areas where it intruded April 2020 onward. These add up to thousands of square kilometres in strategic regions, including areas where Chinese and Pakistani troops can potentially come together against India.

Numerous rounds of technical meetings between military officials, in some of which diplomats were included, have only produced homilies from China's side. Repeated Indian requests to the Chinese government to disengage, de-escalate and normalise ties have fallen on deaf ears. Beijing seeks a return to normal without first vacating the encroached Indian territories. How matters go from here is not clear.

Strangely enough, the country's military brass has not been above parroting the damaging narrative that no encroachments have occurred, and that India will "not give away an inch". Evidently, they feel protected by the PM's on-record June 19, 2020, observation, of which Beijing has taken full advantage. Baffled Indians naturally ask what the boundary negotiations are then all about. They also wonder about the relevance of the external affairs minister's observations. Is the government speaking to its own people in different voices?

In all areas where China has violated the LAC, its troops are in Ladakh well to the west of the 1960 Chinese claim line, whose map coordinates were given to India by the Chinese four decades ago. But the government seems afraid to point this out to Beijing. India did not accept the claim line and adhered to its historical claim to Aksai Chin.

Undisputed champ of Grand Slams

No one in 52 years has won the four tennis Grand Slams multiple times since Rod Laver did it just after tennis was thrown open, and Roy Emerson. He was down two sets and seemingly out of the contest when Novak Djokovic returned from a toilet break re-energised like a cellphone coming to life after a recharge and wore down his young opponent, Stefanos Tsitsipas, the most talented of the emerging brigade, to win his 19th Grand Slam.

The Serb was in another fluctuating four-hour battle within 48 hours of having jousting with Rafael Nadal in the greatest duel of the era that contained more shades of art than the raw power of modern tennis. He emerged winner against a player with an unsurpassable record on the red shale of Roland Garros. So fiercely locked in their gladiatorial contest were they that the tennis authorities, prompted by President Emmanuel Macron, overruled curfew rules to allow the crowd to stay to the end on the night of the semi-final.

Djokovic may not win popularity contests against contemporary greats Roger Federer and Nadal, both of whom have just one more Grand Slam title than his 19. But, when it comes to tennis on the varied surfaces of the four Grand Slams, he has a record — nine Australian, two French, five Wimbledon and three US Opens — that is superior to that of the legends, of whom Federer has only one French Open win and Nadal a solitary Australian Open title among 20 Grand Slams.

Djokovic's athleticism is backed up by an array of strokes, including laser-like crosscourt backhands. Such weapons from his armoury come with uncanny anticipation and decisiveness in volleys and drop shots at extreme angles played with amazingly deft touch. Power and subtlety flow from his racket in equal measure and to metronomic accuracy in trading shots from the baseline. Tennis has been known to lament the seeming inability of the younger generation to take over from the three musketeers who are in their 30s but Tsitsipas appears ready to challenge the kings.

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Subhani



Ladakh standoff: Can Galwan occur again?



Syed Ata Hasnain

What happened in the Galwan Valley on June 15 last year cannot be easily forgotten. Twenty Indian soldiers led by the valiant Col. Santosh Babu, MVC (Posthumous), commanding officer of 16 Bihar, were killed in action. A deceptive enemy who hid behind the veil of 45 years of trust turned upon these unsuspecting soldiers who were on a mission to verify what had been agreed by their senior commanders just 10 days ago.

Perhaps nowhere in the world has occurred an incident in such bad taste and against all ethics of soldiering. You can take counteraction against adversary soldiers who threaten you or deceive you but targeting those on a verification mission after an agreement was something new in the world of military ethics. The PLA had transgressed to ostensibly dominate the Shyok-DBO Road. Not known to be followers of any rule-based order, the PLA took its time in disengaging from the transgression. When pressured to do so, it chose to get aggressive and turned upon those who were verifying the vacation, with weapons which were straight from the Stone Age, to pulverise, shred and tear human flesh. The PLA came prepared with these weapons and perceived that their employment could be projected as non-lethal in today's age.

What was clear from the incident was the fact that the Indian Army worked on a principle of trust. Forty-five years without loss of life at the Sino-Indian border, 22 meetings to resolve the border through a civilised format, dignified campaign at the highest political level to progress economic and people-to-people relations and regular delegation visits to each other's

military establishments, should count for a justifiable level of trust. Professional armies do not work on assumptions, but yet an element of human compulsion exists, forcing all implausible contingencies out of the consideration and settling for those within the realm of perceptual reason. Even more important, Galwan exemplified camaraderie and team spirit of an extreme kind when soldiers of different units, arms and services all joined the fight for the sake of their comrades, their countrymen and the honour of their nation.

Much water has already flown down the Shyok River through 2020-21, since Galwan, with a lot happening at the Line of Actual Control. From partial mobilisation to staying put in freezing winter conditions with rustic habitats, lifting and transporting stocks of an unimaginable quantum and the virtual conversion of the LAC to a LoC, we have also witnessed the professional Indian riposte via the quid pro quo operation at the seven heights of the Kailash Range in south Pangong Tso. Through negotiations stretching into the eleventh round, a partial de-escalation and disengagement has been executed but restricted to north and south Pangong Tso. It can safely be assumed that the occupation of the Kailash Range heights caused much consternation in PLA ranks as its major war centre in Ladakh was under direct threat. We could force the PLA vacation of north Pangong Tso transgression because of this. However, some other key transgressions, including the one at Depsang, continue and await the outcome of further talks which could be indefinitely delayed.

So is a Galwan likely to be repeated, and for that

matter should one expect a deterioration of the situation in Ladakh anytime soon. It is easy to dismiss Galwan as a one-off event brought on by cascading out of control circumstances. Situations in an environment with troops at close quarters to each other (although a separation exists here larger than at the LoC) can always be unpredictable and response to awkward situations may find escalation. The feasibility of China deliberately triggering tension appears less likely as it should be viewing its actions in Ladakh as a misadventure which failed to deliver. China had reasonable clarity in the politico-strategic domain of aiming to make India realise that it was alone in the high Himalayas even as it may be among future partners in strategic arrangements that it is seeking under the American umbrella in the Indo-Pacific region. The misadventure in Ladakh, effectively thwarted by India, had a flawed military strategy. The occupation of some pressure points, transgressions across some of them and the refusal to vacate, awaiting more negotiations, are being perceived by some as a victory for China. Victories are measured against the attainment of the politico-strategic aim and not bits and pieces of occupation of territory which was vacant. What we in India have failed to capitalise upon is the ethical aspects of functioning between nations. China may have aspirations for superpower status, but it lacks the ability to build a larger perception of itself beyond that ambition; powerful nations show better ethics in international functioning. President Xi Jinping's recent

directions to remove "wolf warrior" diplomacy from China's ways of international dealings and build a more positive external perception about China is proof enough of its failure in pursuance of effective international relations. Notwithstanding what success it may perceive for itself through the Belt and Road Initiative outreach and attempts at cultivating influence in India's near abroad, the world's image of China remains one of a predatory nation which refuses to be bound by rules and agreements and therefore untrustworthy. The outlay of China's external aid remains at a quarter of what the US dishes out although the Chinese economy is just over half the US economy and growing at a much faster speed.

Given all these circumstances and the ongoing transition in the global order, what one should reasonably expect is some change in China's approach. How much this will impact Sino-Indian relations and the Ladakh standoff is difficult to say, being already a theatre of recent and ongoing tension. The fact that China couldn't attain its aims in coercing India even under pandemic conditions and its decision to negotiate at the field level are pointers to a possible change in strategy. The PLA will play hard to get, it will display reluctance to negotiate and for the foreseeable future will effect no change in the LAC's status. A campaign-like operation appears remote but even coercion operations which China experienced as having potential to go out of control may not take place. However, cyber threats should be expected to escalate, also campaigns in the information domain. Yet a Galwan could always happen as a spinoff from other circumstances, given the unpredictability of the LAC. It is something we should be prepared for even as the tone and tenor of the relationship at the highest levels improves to far greater levels.

The writer, a retired lieutenant-general, is a former GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps

The fact that China couldn't attain its aims in coercing India even under pandemic conditions and its decision to negotiate at the field level are pointers to a possible change in strategy.

LETTERS

FUEL TAX

It is astonishing that the oil minister is advising the Congress governments to cut the high tax rates to reduce the burden on common man, but they are very few (*Pradhan tells Cong. govts to cut fuel tax, DC, June 14*). He is not bothered about the Central government which also imposes high taxes. It will be no wonder that if this government continues the price of a litre of petrol touches ₹200.

Manik Sathe
Hyderabad

NATIONALISE HOSPS

After seeing thousands dying of Covid-19, hope our leaders will at least now realise that health of the citizens is the wealth of the nation but not construction of statues and buildings. All hospitals should be taken over by government or nationalised as it is proved during pandemic times they had sucked the blood of dying patients in the name of inflated bills.

T. Kailash Ditya
Hyderabad

ANJANI KUMAR

It's indeed a great news that Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar has been bestowed with the certificate of commitment from the *World Book of Records* for serving society. Anjani Kumar and his team of policemen have indeed done a fabulous job in educating the people on the importance of lockdown and are trying very hard to control the pandemic.

Shahbaz Husain
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

Price-rise on soaps to be checked

NEW DELHI, JUNE 14.

Finance Minister Y.B. Chavan in the House today said his statement that the prices of Lux, Rexona and Lifebuoy had not been increased by the manufacturers and that the manufacturers had absorbed the incidence of duty of Rs. 2.54 a gross was "based on incorrect information supplied to me".

The Finance Minister said, he had not been informed that the prices have been raised by the manufacturers by two paise.

"We are taking up this matter with the manufacturers," he added.—UNI.

Aakar Patel



Civil society & NGOs: Why they matter in run-up to 2024

We have entered the third year of the Narendra Modi government and in the months to come the discussion will inevitably turn to the general election of 2024. Some of the recent political activity around Uttar Pradesh is being seen in this light. In India what the government does is left generally to the political parties, especially by the middle class which, once it has voted, does not engage with the State. But there is a part of our country which does engage and does not remain aloof.

The term "civil society" refers, according to the World Health Organisation, to a wide array of organisations: community groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), labour unions, indigenous groups, charitable organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, and foundations".

In India we usually use the term "civil society" almost exclusively for the NGOs and activists, because professional associations are quite afraid of confronting the government. There are some exceptions, but these are very few. It is the NGOs, activists and

indigenous groups who represent the people and their interests outside the framework of politics. In India, when we say indigenous groups, we mean Adivasis. The model of development that India has adopted is to extract from Adivasi lands the resources that are used for the rest of the country. You and I do not get displaced by the government from our homes. It is the Adivasis who must leave the homes and settlements that their ancestors have lived in for thousands of years because we need to build a dam or because we have found coal underneath.

The Adivasis have protested against India's government and its policies for over a century. The rebellion of Birsa Munda, the man whose statue Amit Shah once wanted to garland (but he wrongly garlanded someone else's) forced the British to introduce the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, which banned the transfer of adivasi land to non-Adivasis. The BJP wanted to garland Birsa Munda's statue but it also passed a law to undo the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 2016. This produced such a backlash from the Adivasis that the BJP retreated from the law and

was defeated in the next state election. This is why Mr Shah was garlanding what he thought was Birsa Munda's statue in 2020.

Adivasi resistance to the Indian State is not understood and it is not very widely covered in the media. This month has seen at least two places where adivasis have been holding protests. In Gujarat 11 Adivasis were arrested for protesting against the proposed parking lot near the Statue of Unity. They said the land acquired by the Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam for the development project belonged to them and had been taken illegally.

The strength of the emotion can be understood by knowing that the women among them removed their clothes in public. An FIR was filed against 20 of them under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 143 (unlawful assembly) and 294 (singing obscene song, ballad or words near a public place). In Chhattisgarh, which has a Congress government, thousands of Adivasis have been on protest against a Central Reserve Police Force camp erected on their land without their permission. The government opened fire on them,

killing three, but the Adivasis are still there in the open in Bastar, demanding their rights and insisting that the camp be removed.

On the outskirts of Delhi, tens of thousands of farmers are continuing their protest, having gathered in November and spent the entire winter and now the summer in the open along the highways. The laws that they are protesting against were passed without a division vote in the Rajya Sabha. The laws have been suspended indefinitely by the Supreme Court and the Narendra Modi government itself has offered to suspend them for 18 months. There is extreme disaffection against the laws, including by groups supporting the BJP in Uttar Pradesh, and it is unlikely that the laws will ever be implemented. The Modi government itself has lost interest in them and does not speak about their implementation. But it has allowed the protests to continue because it does not want to be seen as retreating, though it appears to have already retreated.

Similarly, though the Citizenship Amendment Act was passed by Parliament more than a year and a half ago, it has not been implemented.

One reason is the widespread protests against it in India, the other is the widespread condemnation against it globally, including in the European Parliament.

Civil society action in Gujarat has resulted in the setting up of fast track courts to hear atrocities against dalits and adivasis. This came after the protest against the assault on dalits in Una over a cow's carcass. The civil society action was led by a former journalist, Jignesh Mewani, who was then elected to the Gujarat Assembly.

A lot of action has taken place in civil society since 2014. A weakening of the government, meaning a Central government with no party having an absolute majority, or a change in government, will give civil society groups additional leverage. Laws that are unacceptable to civil society groups will not be easy to pass and implement. And laws that are in outright violation of international human rights standards will come under pressure to be repealed. It is a most interesting time that is leading up to 2024.

The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52,551.53	0.15
Nifty 50	15,811.90	0.08
S&P 500*	4,237.13	-0.24
Dollar (₹)	73.27	0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.25	0.12
Euro (₹)	88.76	0.06
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,705	464 0.97
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	73.18	0.67
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.004	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.484	0.022

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Government clips powers of cashew council

The government suspended the power of the Cashew Export Promotion Council to issue or renew RCMCs (registration-cum-membership certificate) for cashew kernels, cashewnut shell liquid and kardanol and authorised the Apeda for the same. However, RCMCs already issued by the council would remain valid for the rest of their validity period, the DGFT said in a public notice.

IOB Q4 profit rises more than 2-fold to ₹350 cr



Indian Overseas Bank reported a more than two-fold jump in net profit at Rs 349.77 crore in Q4 against Rs 143.79 crore in the year-ago quarter. Total income in Q4FY21 rose to Rs 6,073.80 crore against Rs 5,484.06 crore in Q4FY20. Provisions for bad loans and contingencies rose to Rs 1,380.46 crore from Rs 1,060.38 crore. For the full year, IOB reported a net profit of Rs 831.47 crore against a net loss of Rs 8,527.40 crore in 2019-20.

Palm oil imports jump 48% at 7.69 LT in May

India's import of palm oils rose by 48 per cent to 7,69,602 tonne in May this year against 4,00,506 tonne a year ago on higher shipments of crude palm oil, industry body Solvent Extractors Association (SEA) said. Total vegetable oil imports rose by 68 per cent to Rs 12.49 lakh tonne in May this year compared to 7.43 lakh tonne in May 2020. The share of palm oil is over 60 per cent in India's vegetable oil imports.

CAI cuts cotton ouput estimate to 356 L bales

The Cotton Association of India (CAI) reduced its cotton crop estimate for 2020-21 by 4 lakh bales to 356 lakh bales, due to lower output expected in southern and central zones. The crop estimate for the southern zone has been reduced by 3 lakh bales to 91.50 lakh bales. In Telangana, the estimates are lower by 3 lakh bales based on the data provided by the Telangana Cotton Millers and Traders Welfare Association.



■ Shares tumble up to 25% intraday Hot Adani stocks turn freezing cold

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
with agency inputs
MUMBAI, JUNE 14

Adani Group companies shares fell between 5 per cent and 25 per cent intraday on news that the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) has frozen accounts of three foreign portfolio investors' (FPIs), which own over Rs 43,500 crore worth of shares in four of the group's firms.

According to reports, the market-cap of Adani Group Companies took a \$6-billion hit after media reports emerged about the suspension.

Group flagship Adani Enterprises lost 25 per cent as shares plunged to a low of Rs 1,201.10 on the BSE compared to the previous close at Rs 1,601.45. Later the stock recovered most of the day's losses to close at Rs 1,501.25, still down 6.26 per cent.

Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone ended the day with a loss of 8.3 per cent at Rs 768.70, after plunging 18.75 per cent to a low of Rs 681.50, compared to the previous close at Rs 838.80.

Adani Power and Adani Transmission closed 4.99 per cent and 5 per cent lower, respectively, as both stocks hit the 5 per cent lower circuit and remained locked till the close of the market.

Adani Green Energy, which has risen sharply since August last year and commands a higher market cap than even Adani



Enterprises at Rs 1,83,920 crore, fell 4.13 per cent.

Adani Total Gas fell 5 per cent and hit the lower circuit and was locked in the lower circuit till day's end.

It has also risen sharply since mid-October and commands a market cap of Rs 1,69,871.17 crore.

Reports said that NSDL has frozen the accounts of Albula Investment Fund, Cresta Fund and APMS Investment Fund due to insufficient disclosure of information regarding beneficial ownership.

The funds are based out of Mauritius and registered at the same address in Port Louis and the frozen accounts, as of May 31, won't be able to sell or buy new securities, reports said.

However, the Adani Group said it has written confirmation that accounts of three foreign funds that are among its top shareholders are not frozen and reports to the contrary are "blatantly erroneous and misleading". In identical filings to the stock exchange, some group companies said, "This is causing irrepara-

ble loss of economic value to the investors at large and reputation of the group."

A sharp rally in the shares of Adani Group companies had added over \$40 billion to the wealth of Gautam Adani this year.

The quick surge in these stocks, largely held by overseas funds and with very little public float, had also led some analysts to flag the risks involved.

The group's stocks, especially Adani Total Gas, Adani Enterprises and Adani Transmission, "look extended," Bloomberg Intelligence analysts Gaurav Patankar and Nitin Chanduka wrote in a June 10 note after analyzing technical indicators.

"Among the biggest foreign investors are a few Mauritius-based funds holding over 95% of assets in these companies," the analysts wrote. "Such concentrated positions, along with negligible onshore ownership, create asymmetric risk-reward as large investors conspicuously avoid Adani," they said.

SEBI SLAPS ₹15 CR FINES ON FRANKLIN BOSSES, TRUSTEE

New Delhi, June 14: The Sebi on Monday imposed a penalty totalling Rs 15 crore on senior officials of Franklin Templeton AMC and its trustee for violating regulatory norms in the case of winding up six debt schemes in 2020.

A fine of Rs 3 crore has been levied on Franklin Templeton Trustee Services Pvt Ltd and Rs 2 crore each on Franklin Asset Management (India) Pvt Ltd president Sanjay Sapre and its chief investment officer Santosh Kamat, according to a Sebi order.

In addition, the regulator imposed a penalty of Rs 1.5 crore each on Kunal Agarwal, Sumit Gupta, Pallab Roy, Sachin Padwal Desai and Umesh Sharma, who were the fund managers at the time of violation, and Rs 50 lakh on Saurabh Gangrade, who was the chief compliance officer at that time.

They have been directed to pay the penalty within 45 days.

Sebi noted that the trustees of Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund (MF) are thorough professionals and these officials are experts in their respective domain, and yet they failed to avert certain lapses in the functioning of a mutual fund.

"The acts and deeds committed by them while discharging their duties are not in the interest of the unitholders in specific and the investors in general," the Sebi said.

—PTI

RBI set to lift pricing cap on micro loans

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, JUNE 14

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday proposed to do away with pre-payment penalty, requirement of collateral and provide greater flexibility in repayment frequency for all microfinance loans. For the lenders, the central bank proposed removing the pricing caps on micro loans introduced after the 2010 microfinance crisis.

The proposals are part of a consultative document on uniform regulation for companies engaged in microfinance business released by the central bank. The proposed recommendations aim to ensure a level-playing field between banks, non-banks and microfinance firms, all of which do micro lending but have different regulations.

The suggestions include a common definition of

microfinance loans for all regulated entities, capping the outflow on account of repayment of loan obligations of a household to a percentage of the household income and a board approved policy for household income assessment.

The paper has proposed to align the pricing guidelines for NBFC-MFIs with guidelines for NBFCs, introduce a standard simplified fact sheet on pricing of microfinance loans for better transparency, besides displaying the minimum, maximum and average interest rates charged on microfinance loans on the websites of regulated entities.

At present the maximum interest charged by an NBFC-MFI has to be lower of (i) the cost of funds plus a margin cap of 10 per cent for MFIs with loan portfolio of Rs 100 crore or above and 12 per cent for others; (ii)

The average base rate of the five largest commercial banks by assets multiplied by 2.75. The average base rate of the five largest commercial banks is announced by RBI at the end of each quarter, which determines the interest rate for the ensuing quarter. These pricing restrictions were introduced in 2014 by the regulator in line with the Y.H. Malegam committee recommendations.

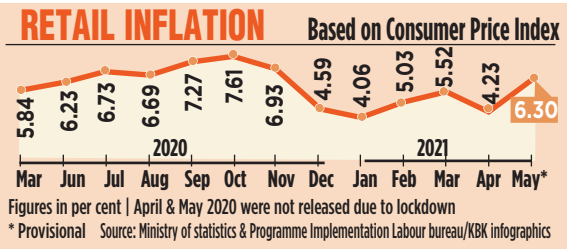
The current regulations are applicable only to 30 per cent of the microfinance loan portfolio NBFC-MFIs whereas other lenders, which comprise around 70 per cent share in the microfinance portfolio, are not subjected to similar regulatory conditions. The emerging dynamics in the microfinance sector as well as the concerns of customer protection call for a review of the regulations, it said.

Inflation spikes above comfort zone in May

New Delhi, June 14: Rising prices of edible oils and protein rich items pushed the retail inflation to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, breaching the RBI's comfort level and thus rendering reduction in interest rates a difficult proposition in the near-term.

The government has asked the Reserve Bank to keep the retail inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

CPI inflation has breached the upper band of



the inflation target about 10 times since the first meeting of the monetary policy committee in October 2016. Wholesale price-based inflation too accelerated to

a record 12.94 per cent in May on account of rising prices of crude oil, manufactured goods and the low base of last year due to the Covid-19 lockdown. —PTI

Amara Raja plans \$1 bn capex in new green tech

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, JUNE 14

Automotive and industrial battery manufacturer Amara Raja Batteries (ARBL) has a \$1 billion capex plan for investment in new green technologies, including lithium-ion batteries, to capitalise on the evolving trends in the energy and mobility sectors.

"It's a moving capex as EV (electric vehicle) batteries technologies are changing fast and we may need to keep revisiting our capex requirements," Jaydev Galla, vice chairman, ARBL, told *Financial Chronicle* after the company's board meeting.

"The technology in this space is emerging rapidly. The ACC (advanced chemistry cell) PLI scheme announced recently by Government of India for Rs 18,000 crore provides a significant impetus for building a domestic supply chain for lithium and other advanced cell chemistries to serve the fast-growing EV and



Jaydev Galla

renewable energy sectors.

"ARBL plans to invest in a bouquet of products and services to accelerate its transformation to an Energy and Mobility solutions provider," Galla said.

Jaydev Galla will be taking charge as the chairman of ARBL after the company's annual general meeting in August from his father and ARBL founder, Ramchandra Galla, who has been at the helm for 36 years.

ARBL will also be expanding the core business of lead acid batteries production as Galla feels they will be used for at least two more decades by commercial and heavy vehicles.

PE/VC EXITS MOVE UP AHEAD OF UNICORN IPOs

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JUNE 14

PE/VC-funded companies have entered a major exit phase with May being the second-best ever in terms of exit values. With some of the unicorns getting ready for IPOs, exit activity is expected to heat up in the coming months.

May 2021 recorded 18 exits worth \$12 billion, almost 42 times the value of exits in May 2020 at \$286 million and nearly four times the value in April 2021 at \$2.7 billion.

Till May this year, there have been \$19.3 billion worth exits and this is three times the total exit value of last year. Large well-funded corporations have been taking advantage of the current environment to consolidate businesses or acquire online capabilities to enhance the value proposition of their existing brick and mortar businesses, says a IVCA-EY report.

Going ahead, PE/VC funds will see a heightened activity. Several PE/VC-funded firms, including Paytm, Nykaa, and Policy Bazaar have announced IPO plans.

Rishi Sunak drawn into tax query on Murthy-funded Cloutail

London, June 14: Cloutail India Pvt Ltd—the online retailing joint venture of Infosys co-founder N. R. Narayana Murthy's firm and Amazon.com—faced a 5.5 million pounds demand, including interest and penalties, from tax authorities after it paid "meagre" taxes over the past four years, a media report said on Monday.

Amazon reportedly developed independent sellers such as Cloutail, as 'special merchant' which enjoyed over 35 per cent of total sales on the platform until 2019.

While Murthy's Catamaran Ventures indirectly holds 76 per cent in Cloutail and Amazon the remaining 24 per cent, the firm's two top posts—chief executive and finance director—were with the US retailer. Cloutail's holding company, Priore is also run by a former Amazon manager, the report in *The Guardian* newspaper said.

The report said it is not known precisely what the tax dispute is about and the company said that it was contesting the bill, adding that since the "matter is



Rishi Sunak

sub judice, we are unable to comment any further.

Following the report, the office of UK chancellor of the exchequer Rishi Sunak, who is son-in-law of Murthy, was forced to comment.

The revelations come just days after Sunak led the G7 finance ministers' charge to agree to a global deal designed to make tech companies pay more tax.

"Reaching an international agreement on how large digital companies are taxed has been a priority for the chancellor since he took office," said a spokesperson for his UK Treasury office.

"The chancellor's consistent position has been that it matters where tax is paid, and any agreement must ensure digital businesses pay tax in the UK

that reflects their economic activities. That is what our taxpayers would expect and is the right thing," the spokesperson said.

Sunak has been dubbed the UK's richest minister, largely as a result of his wife Akshata Murthy's family wealth. The latest *Guardian* report claims that an analysis of Cloutail's accounts and activities shows that it is one of the largest sellers on Amazon.in, as part of a 76-24 per cent joint venture with Amazon.

"The company has received a show cause notice in the current year from Directorate General of Goods and Service Tax Intelligence amounting to Rs 5,455 lakh (5.5 mn pound) along with interest and penalties for service tax-related matters, it quotes Cloutail's most recent accounts as saying.

It claims that the annual report further reveals that Cloutail which only sells via the Amazon platform paid Amazon fees of 95 million pounds last year, almost 10 times more than the Indian business reported in profit.

—PTI k

REGULATORS TO VET PNB HOUSING FINANCE PLAN TO RAISE ₹4K CR FROM CARLYLE



New Delhi, June 14: Reserve Bank of India and Sebi will look into various regulatory issues related to the proposed Rs 4,000-crore investment by US-based private equity firm Carlyle and others in PNB Housing Finance, sources said on Monday.

Last month, the board of PNB Housing Finance cleared a proposal to raise up to Rs 4,000 crore by issuing preference shares and convertible warrants to Carlyle Group firms and other entities.

According to the sources, concerns of minority shareholders, corporate governance and others regulatory aspects would be looked into by the RBI and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

Earlier this year, the RBI had shot down a Punjab National Bank (PNB) proposal to infuse capital into its subsidiary PNB Housing Finance through a rights issue on concerns of the lender's financial health.

About the proposed deal, PNB managing director and CEO S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao, earlier this month, said the bank will neither be investing nor divesting its stake but because of investment from other sources, its shareholding could come down to around 21 per cent.

Currently, PNB as a promoter holds 32.64 per cent stake in PNB Housing Finance.

PNB Housing Finance's extraordinary general meeting (EGM) is scheduled to be held on June 22 to seek shareholders' approval for the preferential allotment of shares on a private placement basis to Carlyle and other entities, besides other proposals. —PTI



SHORT TAKES

Malvika pockets Lithuanian crown

Kaunas (Lithuania): India's Malvika Bansod defeated Rachael Darragh of Ireland in straight games to clinch the women's singles crown at the RSL Lithuanian International badminton tournament here. The third seeded Indian got the better of fourth seed Darragh 21-14 21-11 in the summit clash on Sunday night that lasted just 29 minutes. Malvika, who reached the quarterfinals of the Austrian Open last month, had earlier defeated France's Anna Tatránova 21-13 21-10 to enter the singles final. En route to her title triumph here, the 19-year-old Malvika had defeated local player Vilte Paulauskaite 21-6 21-10 in the opening round, before crushing Heli Neiman of Israel 21-10, 21-11. — *PTI*

Mushfiqu, Bryce win ICC awards

Dubai: Former Bangladesh captain Mushfiquur Rahim and Scottish all-rounder Kathryn Bryce were on Monday adjudged the ICC Players of the Month for May in the men's and women's categories respectively. The winners were announced by the ICC in a press release. Diminutive wicket-keeper batsman Mushfiquur played one Test and three ODIs against Sri Lanka in the month of May, where he helped Bangladesh win their first ODI series against Sri Lanka by scoring 125 in the second game. Bryce, on the other hand, is the first player from Scotland, to make it to the top 10 of the batting or bowling lists in the rankings. — *PTI*

WTC winners to bag \$1.6 million

Dubai: The winner of the upcoming World Test Championship final between India and New Zealand will walk away with a prize money of USD 1.6 million along with the Test Championship Mace, the International Cricket Council said on Monday.India and New Zealand will battle it out for the prestigious title at Southampton on June 18. "The winners of the much-awaited ICC World Test Championship (WTC) Final between India and New Zealand will take home a purse of \$ 1.6 million along with the ICC Test Championship Mace," an ICC statement read. — *PTI*

Sporting pitch in store for big Test

Southampton: Head groundsman at Southampton Simon Lee is aiming to produce a pacy and bouncy pitch for the World Test Championship final with some assistance for spinners later on in the game. The final will be played between India and New Zealand from June 18. "Pitch preparation for this Test is a little simpler as we are a neutral venue, we are guided by the ICC, but we all want is a good pitch that offers an even contest between the teams," Lee said. "For me personally I just want to get something out that has some pace, bounce and carry in the pitch." — *PTI*

Federer eases into Halle 2nd round

Halle Westfalen: Roger Federer eased into the second round of the ATP grass court tournament in Halle on Monday with a straight sets win over qualifier Ilya Ivashka. Federer, who turns 40 in August, had few problems in his first match this season on grass to seal a 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 first-round win over Belarusian Ivashka, ranked 90th in the world. Federer, the fifth seed in Halle, will meet Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime or Hubert Hurkacz of Poland in the second round. "There is room for improvement, but I am happy with my first game here on grass. I feel good," said Federer, currently ranked eighth. — *AFP*

Live on TV

EURO

Group Stage: Hungary vs Portugal from 9.30 pm; France vs Germany from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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DUTCH DRAMA

Dumfries gives Netherlands a thrilling 3-2 win over Ukraine

Netherlands	3
(Wijnaldum 52, Weghorst 58, Dumfries 85)	
Ukraine	2
(Yarmolenko 75, Yaremchuk 79)	

Amsterdam, June 14: Denzel Dumfries scored a dramatic late winner as the Netherlands marked their long-awaited return to a major tournament with a 3-2 victory over Ukraine in a remarkable Euro 2020 game in Amsterdam on Sunday. Dumfries, the PSV Eindhoven full-back, headed in a cross from substitute Nathan Ake to complete a madcap second half after the home side eased into a two-goal lead and then threw it away. Captain Georginio Wijnaldum and Wout Weghorst both scored before the hour mark in front a raucous crowd at the Johan Cruyff Arena, only for Ukraine to silence the home supporters as Andriy Yarmolenko and Roman Yaremchuk netted to briefly restore parity. Frank de Boer's side got there in the end and the victory will provide a major lift to the Netherlands after what was their first game at a major competition in seven years. They will now hope to build on it on Thursday against Austria, who beat North Macedonia earlier in Bucharest in the same Group C.

It was a brilliant game, and a crowd of around 16,000 created an atmosphere fit for the occasion at the home of Ajax, where supporters held up banners with messages of support for Christian Eriksen following the Denmark star's cardiac arrest on Saturday. Eriksen made his name at Ajax before moving to Tottenham Hotspur in 2013. After failing to qualify for Euro 2016 or the 2018 World Cup in Russia, the Netherlands were playing their first game at a major competition since beating hosts Brazil 3-0 to claim third place at the 2014 World Cup. — *AFP*



Netherlands' Denzel Dumfries celebrates after scoring a goal against Ukraine in the Euro match at Amsterdam on Sunday. — AP

Austria	3
(Lainer 18, Gregoritsch 78, Arnautovic 89)	
N. Macedonia	1
(Pandev 28)	

AUSTRIA SEE OFF NEWBIES N. MACEDONIA

Bucharest, June 14: Substitutes Michael Gregoritsch and Marko Arnautovic scored late goals as Austria sealed a 3-1 victory over major tournament debutants North Macedonia in their Group C opener at Euro 2020 on Sunday. Stefan Lainer put the Austrians ahead early on in Bucharest, but 37-year-old captain Goran Pandev levelled before the half-hour mark to become the second-oldest scorer in Euro history and delight the vocal Macedonian fans. "Above all, the substitutions really paid off," said Austria coach Franco Foda. "Gregoritsch and Arnautovic gave the team a new impulse. Overall I think it was a deserved win." — *AFP*

Czechs grin Schick-to-Schick

Glasgow, June 14: Scotland's long-awaited return to a major international tournament was ruined by Patrik Schick's slick finishing as the Czech Republic won 2-0 at Hampden on Monday to move top of Euro 2020 Group D. Schick's header just before half-time opened the scoring, but it was his stunning strike from just inside the Scotland half after the break that will live in the memory as one of the all-time great European Championship goals. After a 23-year wait to qualify for a major tournament, Scotland's hopes of making more history by getting out of the group for the first time now look slim. Steve Clarke's men face England next on Friday at Wembley before hosting World Cup finalists Croatia at Hampden on June 22. Playing in front of fans at Hampden for the first time since November 2019 with 12,000 in attendance, Scotland made a nervous start.

David Marshall was the hero of penalty shootout wins over Israel and Serbia to qualify and was needed early on to turn Schick's powerful effort at the near post behind. The hosts were desperately missing the driving runs and poise on the ball normally provided by Kieran Tierney on the left side of a back three. Clarke has settled on a 3-5-2 to make way for two of the Premier League's best left-backs in the same team. Without the Arsenal defender, Liverpool's Andy Robertson was his side's biggest threat with a series of rampaging runs. His cross was turned narrowly wide by Lyndon Dykes at the near post before the Scotland captain was denied a moment to remember by Tomas Vaclik. Robertson burst onto Ryan Christie's pass but his shot that was headed for the top corner was tipped over by the Sevilla goalkeeper. A cagey game of few chances burst into life after Schick's towering leap put the visitors in front three minutes before half-time. Scotland were slow to react after initially clearing a corner and the Bayer Leverkusen forward rose highest to flick home Coufal's cross. — *AFP*

HEAD-TO-HEAD	
PORTUGAL-HUNGARY ● Matches: 13. Portugal: 9. Drawn: 4. ● EURO MEETINGS 1998: Portugal won 3-1 in Budapest. 1999: Portugal won 3-0 in Lisbon. 2016: 3-3 in Lyon.	FRANCE-GERMANY ● Matches: 31. France: 14. Germany: 10. Drawn: 7. ● EURO MEETINGS 2016: France won 2-0 in Marseille.
— S. PERVEZ KAISER	

DANISH PLAYERS CRITICISE DECISION TO RESUME GAME

Denmark, June 14: Denmark's goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel and striker Martin Braithwaite on Monday lamented that they had to choose whether to restart the Denmark-Finland Euro 2020 match while they were reeling from Christian Eriksen's mid-game collapse. "We were put in a position, that I personally feel that we shouldn't have been put in," Schmeichel told Danish media at a press event in Helsingor north of Copenhagen. "We had two options," Schmeichel explained. "Either come back the day after (Sunday) at noon or continue the game." The Leicester City goalkeeper said he wished someone more senior would've said "that it wasn't the time to take that decision, and that we should maybe wait until the day after to decide". "What has happened has happened, and hopefully they'll learn from this," Schmeichel said. — *AFP*

Germany host France in blockbuster group clash

Munich, June 14: France and Germany usually play each other in the latter stages of major football tournaments. Not this time. The teams will meet in the group stage of a European Championship or World Cup for the first time on Tuesday when they open their Euro 2020 campaigns in Munich. Their last match at a major tournament came in the Euro 2016 semifinals. Antoine Griezmann scored twice for France in the 2-0 victory over then-World Cup champion Germany in Marseille. Germany have never really recovered, and though the French lost to Portugal in the final five years ago, they went on to win the World Cup two years later. Remarkably, no player in Germany's current squad



Germany's Thomas Muller during a training session ahead of his team's Euro opener against France. — Twitter

has ever scored in a European Championship match. Thomas Muller,

who has played 11 tournament games, missed a penalty in the 2016 quarter-final shootout win over Italy.

HUNGARY RUN INTO CHAMPIONS PORTUGAL

Home advantage at the European Championship may not count for much when Hungary face a Portugal team with scoring talent and one particular player looking to make history. Cristiano Ronaldo needs six more goals to become the all-time leading scorer for a men's national team. If the defending champions go far, Ronaldo could indeed break Ali Daei's record of 109 goals. And he'll get his first chance to add to his total on Tuesday against the Hungarians at the Puskas Arena. — *AP*

COPA | AMERICA

Big guns Brazil begin with bang

Sao Paulo, June 14: Brazil kicked off a Copa America tournament that has been opposed by some members of their own team with a 3-0 win over Venezuela here. Marquinhos, Neymar and Gabriel Barbosa scored in the opener at Mane Garrincha stadium in Brasilia on Sunday, less than a day after several Venezuelan players tested positive for Covid-19. South American football's governing body, CONMEBOL, chose Brazil as host less than two weeks ago, despite their alarming Covid-19 figures, after Argentina and Colombia were dropped as co-hosts. Despite their opposition to staging the tournament in their home country, Brazil captain Casemiro said the defending champions intended to retain their trophy. "It could be a friendly, Copa America, World Cup qualifiers, we play it to win," he said. "Venezuela had the idea of defending, they wanted a draw. But we were focused and we were aggressive in the last third of the pitch," he added. Venezuela summoned 15 new players at short notice after eight squad members tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday, and the disruption showed on the field. Brazil opened the scoring in the 23rd minute after a corner kick ended with Marquinhos striking from close range. Brazil coach Tite, who

Brazil	3
(Marquinhos 23, Neymar 64, Gabriel Barbosa 89)	
Venezuela	0

also opposed holding the tournament, took Lucas Paquetot off at halftime, but kept Roberto Firmino on the bench. Instead, Everton Ribeiro went on and provided more dynamism on the right flank. Ribeiro found Danilo on the right edge of the box, and the Brazilian was pushed to the ground. Neymar calmly scored from the spot in the 63rd to make it 2-0. He looked to the right of Venezuelan goalkeeper Joel Graterol, but took his shot to the left. Neymar dribbled past Graterol and crossed for Barbosa to chest the ball into the empty net in the 89th. A flop at Inter Milan and Benfica, Barbosa is a hero at Brazilian club Flamengo, which want him on the national team more often. Tite said he's experimenting with combinations, thinking ahead to the World Cup in Qatar next year. Brazil and Venezuela are in Group 'B' with Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Brazil and Colombia lead with three points each, but the defending champions are ahead by goal difference after Colombia's 1-0 win against Ecuador. — *AP*



Brazil's Gabriel Barbosa (top) celebrates with teammate Neymar after scoring against Venezuela during their Copa America match at the Mane Garrincha Stadium in Brasilia on Sunday. — AFP

Cardona scores in Colombia victory

Cuiaba (Brazil), June 14: A surprising choreographed move gave Colombia a 1-0 win against Ecuador in their first match of Copa America. Edwin Cardona scored the winner at the Arena Pantanal in Cuiaba in the 42nd minute of a tense game on Sunday. The decisive moment started when midfielder Cardona took a free kick close to the edge of the Ecuadorian penalty box. Instead of shooting, he exchanged three short passes with Juan Guillermo Cuadrado, who moved the ball forward to where Miguel Borja was waiting. Borja headed the ball back to Cardona, who had run toward goalkeeper Pedro Ortiz and who scored with a right-foot shot as the Ecuadorian defenders watched on. The move had to be validated by video review. "The play of our goal has been worked on by our players since the ... World Cup qualifiers,"

Colombia	1
(Edwin Cardona 42)	
Ecuador	0

Colombia's coach Reinaldo Rueda said. The previous encounter between these teams ended 6-1 to Ecuador seven months ago in a World Cup qualifying game. Carlos Queiroz was fired as head coach after that heavy defeat. Sunday's win was the second in three matches for Rueda, who replaced Queiroz. The win against Ecuador was a further boost for Rueda, who has made some contention decisions early in his tenure, including the call to leave star midfielder James Rodriguez out of the Copa America squad. The result also eased some of the tension in the squad after Colombia's football federation on Sunday said two members of the coaching staff had tested positive for Coronavirus. — *AP*

Rahane offers tips to women's team

New Delhi, June 14: Playing close to the body, working on mindset and setting small targets are some of tips that Indian men's Test team vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane gave to Mithali Raj & Co ahead of their first red-ball game in seven years, against England. According to sources in the know of developments, Rahane, a Test specialist with 73 games and over 4500 runs under his belt, was requested by women's team head coach Ramesh Powar for a session, primarily with the batters before they left for England. "Ramesh and Ajinkya have been teammates.

Since our girls are playing Test match after seven years, the coach thought that it would be a good idea to have a session where one of the best in the business will talk about Test match batting. "It was a 50-minute zoom session that was arranged when both teams were in quarantine in Mumbai," a senior official privy to the development said on the condition of anonymity. The match is starting on Wednesday. It is learnt that skipper Mithali, her deputy Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana and all the batters, along with senior pacer Shikha Pandey, spoke to Rahane about the long-form bat-

ting. "Apparently, Ajinkya told them not to play the drive too much during the initial part of the innings as the ball moves around a lot in the UK. He told the batters to concentrate on playing as close to the body as possible. "He believes that with late swing, there would always be the lure to play the cover drive but its best to avoid the stroke initially with Dukes ball being-gused," the source said. Rahane believes that the foundation of a Test innings should be based on short targets. "He told the batters that it should be like first 15 runs and then another 25 and another 30 runs." — *PTI*



India's Jhulan Goswami trains ahead of their one-off Test against England.