THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI SUNDAY 13 JUNE 2021



WORLD 6

BJP slams Diggy's Art 370 remark, seeks NIA probe into his activities



SPORT | 8

Barbora Krejcikova wins French Open, defeats Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova TABLOID 16

Amitabh Bachchan to play an Army officer again in his upcoming film, Goodbye



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Serbia's Novak Djokovic cele-

brates a winning point as he

during their semifinal match

Roland Garros stadium Friday

5 showrooms burnt.

no casualty in Lajpat

Nagar market blaze

New Delhi: Five showrooms

were damaged in a fire that

broke out in a market area

here on Saturday morning,

injuries were reported. The

incident took place in south

Only 60K vaccinated

Saudis okayed for Haj

would allow 60,000 vaccinat-

ed residents of the kingdom

to perform the annual Haj.

year's pilgrimage would be "open for nationals and resi-

dents of the kingdom, limited

Coast Guard gets 3

state-of-art copters

Light Helicopters Mk-III, built

Kolkata: Three Advanced

by Hindustan Aeronautics

Limited, were inducted to

the Indian Coast Guard on Saturday in a major boost to

choppers are equipped with

like surveillance radar, elec-

COUNTERPOINT

Want to join our party?

Sign a bond that you

will stay for at least

three years...

Max: 36°C

Min: 26°C

Rain: 50%

RH: 57%

Forecast: Thunderstorm

ASTROGUIDE

Tithi: Jyeshta Shuddha

Star: Punarvasu till 6.57 pm

Varjyam: 5.55 am to 7.39

Durmuhurtam: 5.03 pm to

SUNRISE TOMORROW 7.20 AM

MOONRISE TOMORROW 8.28 PM

SUNSET TODAY 5.22 PM

MOONSET TODAY 9.56 AM

Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm

am; 3.28 am to 5.11 am

Plava: Dakshinayana

Tadiya till 9.37 pm

(Monday)

state of the art equipment

tro optic pod and medical

its aviation fleet. These

intensive care unit.

■ More on Page 3

The Haj ministry said this

to 60,000 pilgrims.

■ More on Page 6

Riyadh: Saudi Arabia

announced on Saturday it

officials said, adding no

Report on Page 8

plays Spain's Rafael Nadal

of the French Open at the

RNI No. 57290/94, Regd No: DL-SW-05/4189/15-17

■\$40 tn 'Build Back Better World' to meet infrastructure needs of developing nations

G-7 to counter China's BRI with global infra projects

Carbis Bay, United Kingdom, June 12: G7 leaders on Saturday adopted a rival plan to oppose China's Belt and Road Initiative by helping build infrastructure in poorer nations in a "values-driven, high-standard and

transparent" partnership. The adoption of the US-inspired "Build Back Better World" (B3W) project came after President Joe Biden and leaders met to address "strategic competition with China and commit to concrete actions to help meet the tremendous infrastructure need in low- and middle-income countries", House said. the White

China has been widely criticised for saddling small countries with unmanageable debt as part of its trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative, which has seen money lent for projects stretching across Africa, America and even Europe.

stitch alliance

for Assembly

polls in Punjab

Chandigarh, June 12: The

Shiromani Akali Dal and

the Bahujan Samaj Party

formed an alliance on Saturday for the 2022 Punjab Assembly elec-

tions, coming together

Assembly seats while the

rest will be contested by

the SAD, said Akali Dal

chief Sukhbir Singh Badal

while announcing the

The SAD-BSP alliance

had contested the 1996 Lok

Sabha polls together and

won 11 out of 13 seats in

Punjab. While three seats

were won by the BSP and

the rest were won by the SAD. BSP chief Mayawati

the

dubbed the alliance between the SAD and her

party as a "new political

and social initiative" which

will usher in progress and

Punjab has 31.94 per cent
Dalit population. — PTI

More on Page 3

alliance

in Punjab.

alliance here

dubbed

prosperity

after a gap of 25 years. Under the tie-up, the BSP will fight 20 of the 117

Delhi's Lajpat Nagar Central Market area, they said. According to the fire department, a call about the blaze was received around President Xi Jinping launched the BRI in 2013 to significantly expand China's economic and 10.20 am, following which 16 fire tenders were rushed to the spot.

More on Page 2 **Akalis & BSP**



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II with (from left) President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, France's President Emmanuel Macron, Canada's PM Justin Trudeau, Britain's PM Boris Johnson during an evening reception at The Eden Project in south west England on Friday.

political influence, with many of the infrastructure plans seen as helping deliver its goods globally.

China denies any ulteri-

or motives to the vast nvestment project. But critics argue it uses the financial leverage arising from the scheme to boost its clout, in what they dub "debt-trap diplo-

The White House said the G-7 initiative would be similarly global in scope, esti-mating that the developing world needs more than \$40 trillion in infrastructure, a gap "which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic"

"B3W will collectively catalyse hundreds of billions of dollars of infracountries in the coming years," it said. Funding will emphasise

the environment and climate, labour safeguards, transparency, and anti-corruption, it added, in implicit contrast to China's opaque funding. Further details would

come in the G-7 summit's final communique on Sunday, the White House added. The issue is close to home for the elite club of wealthy democracies.

Italy was the first member nation to sign on to BRI, infuriating Washington as well as much of the European Union. President Xi visited the country on a 2019 tour of Europe, with Italy's formal signing of Belt and Road deals the centrepiece of the trip. EU member Greece is another backer of the scheme. A notable 2008 deal by its then conservative government ceded container terminals at the main port of Piraeus to Chinese shipping giant Cosco.

leadership came to know

of 10 BJP MLAs, 1 MP? BJP: Not bothered about who will stay or leave

Roy plotting 'ghar wapsi'

AT LEAST 10 MLAs and 1

RAJIB CHOWDHURI

Within hours of returning to Trinamul Congress, the newly elected MLA of Krishnanagar North in Nadia, Mukul Roy, is back in the business of poaching which has left the BJP worried about its future in West Bengal. According to sources, at

least 10 MLAs and one Lok Sabha MP of the BJP received phone calls from their party's former national vice-president between Friday night and Saturday morning inviting them to follow in his footsteps. Among the 10 MLAs, three are from North Bengal, specifically from Coochbehar, Jalpaiguri and South Dinajpur, BJP insiders revealed. The rest seven are from South Bengal. Among them, two are from Purulia and one each is from Nadia, North 24 Parganas and Hooghly, sources added.

The Lok Sabha MP who received a call from Mr Roy call is also from North Bengal. The state BJP

Lok Sabha MP of the BJP received phone calls from Mukul Roy, inviting them to follow in his footsteps.

STATE BJP leadership came to know of Roy's moves after two of the 10 MLAs informed them. Surprisingly, the rest remained silent, an ominous sign for the BJP.

Mukul Roy

the rest

of Mr Roy's moves after

two of the 10 MLAs informed them.

remained silent, an omi-

Flagging his concerns,

BJP veteran Tathagata Roy tweeted, "Clearly

Mukul Roy was a Trojan

Horse. After having been

welcomed into the BJP,

gained access to its all-

India leaders and hob-nobbed with state BJP's

gullible leaders and learnt

all about the party and its

innermost detail, he went

back and leaked every-

thing to Mamata. But what's done is done. Now

the big question is, did

Mukul leave back Trojan

Horses within this Trojan

nous sign for the BJP.

Surprisingly,

Horse?'

The BJP legislature party chief whip Manoj Tigga said that Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari was apprised of the overnight development. The party, which won 77 seats in the recently concluded Assembly election, is now reduced to

brave front on Saturday despite the threat of "ghar wapsi" of more legislators. Its state president Dilip Ghosh said, "Many are known to Mr Roy for a long time. In that sense, he

74 MLAs in barely a

month. But it put up a

can call them up. I am not bothered about who will stay or leave. Politicians

Turn to Page 4

Militant strike

kills 2 cops &

2 civilians in

J&K's Sopore

YUSUF JAMEEL

SRINAGAR, JUNE 12

Party panel must address grievances' **Disgruntled Pilot** parked in Delhi to

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, JUNE 12**

Congress leader Sachin Pilot is once again in Delhi in a bid to have dialogue with the party

Sachin

high com-mand. In the last couple of days politi-cal activity has heated up in Rajasthan with Mr Pilot demanding that the high-powered committee set up by the high command take a stand on his and his supporters' demands. In July last, Mr Pilot rushed to Delhi when he was served notice in an investigation into an alleged attempt by BJP MLAs to topple the Congress government in

Rajasthan. Mr Pilot

weeks along with MLAs close to him while chief minister Ashok Gehlot sequestered MLAs loyal to him at a hotel in Jaipur. The standoff ended with Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra stepping in and persuading Mr Pilot to drop his rebellion.

Pilot, former Rajasthan deputy chief minister, has been pressing for his MLAs and supporters to be accommodated in the state's Cabinet and party posts. So far the chief minister has resisted it. Mr Gehlot has nine Cabinet vacancies to fill, and Mr Pilot has reportedly asked for most of them. Putting an end to specu-

lation, general secretary ■ Turn to Page 4

get Cabinet dues Two policemen and two camped near Delhi for civilian passersby were killed and three others wounded in a sneak militant attack in Sopore, a town 48 km northwest of Congress Srinagar, on Saturday. J&K's police chief Dilbag Singh, blamed proscribed Lashkar-e-

Tayyaba (LeT) for the attack and said, "The perpetrators of this crime will soon be brought to justice." He claimed that the militants who carried out the attack have been identified but refused to divulge their names and other details for "operational reasons. Officials said that a

police party enforcing the weekend lockdown in Sopore's Arampora area came under attack from gunmen rising from a dark alley at around noon. Four policemen including an assistant sub-inspector and three civilians received grievous gunshot wounds and policemen and two civilians — succumbed at the hospital soon after being taken there, they said.

The slain policemen have been identified as Showkat Ahmed and Waseem Ahmed and as Manzoor Shalla and civilians Ahmed Bashir Ahmed, both local residents. Injured ASI Mukesh Kumar has been brought to Srinagar for specialised treatment at a local hospital, the officials said.

Soon after the attack, reinforcements from J&K police and Central armed police forces laid siege to the area to conduct searches. However, no arrests had been made till reports last came in.

The attack has been widely condemned by J&K's mainstream political parties with former chief minister and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti saying, "We con-demn such attacks. These attacks cannot solve the issue of J&K."

Former minister and Peoples' Conference Peoples' Conference chairman Sajad Lone asked, "When will this madness end?"

Mumbai water-logged after heavy rain; **Monsoon to hit Delhi 12 days early**



An LPG cylinder supplier wades through waterlogged S.V. Road after heavy rain at Khar West in Mumbai on Saturday. Heavy rains, coupled with thunderstorms and strong winds, lashed Mumbai and its suburbs on Saturday, leading to disruption of

train and bus services as tracks and roads got waterlogged at several locations. Meanwhile, the southwest monsoon is likely to reach Delhi by June 15, 12 days before its usual date of June 27. an India Meteorological Department official said. "Conditions

onset. It (monsoon) may reach Delhi by June 15 this time," he said. A low pressure area lies over north-

west Bay of Bengal. It is likely to move across Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh over the next three to four days. ■ War records will be declassified within 25 years Govt approves declassification

PAWAN BALI NEW DELHI, JUNE 12

Defence ministry

Saturday announced a

new policy to compile, publish, archive and declassify all war histo-

ries and ȟistories of opera-

tions, under which every-

thing will be officially

recorded within five years, and will be handed

over to the National

As per the new policy,

war and operations histo-

ry will be compiled within

five years after the event

and most war records will "ordinarily" be declassi-fied within 25 years to

"provide authentic mater-

ial for academic research

and counter the unfound-

ed rumours". However, the government will con-

tinue to have discre-

tionary powers over with-

holding any records it

It's unlikely that the

Henderson Brooks-Bhagat report, which looked at

finds sensitive.

Archives.

Copenhagen, June 12: The between

Championship restarted late on Saturday.

utes after Christian Eriksen collapsed and was taken to a hospital. UEFA said Eriksen had been stabilised and the Danish soccer federation said that he was

teams had decided to complete the game even Christian Eriksen was taken to a hospital after collapsing on the field near the end

Denmark-Finland

Denmark and Finland European

the C. Eriksen

UEFA said that both

Inter Milan team physician Piero Volpi tells the Associated Press that the Italian club was in contact with Danish federation regarding the health of Christian Eriksen.



and publication of war records

defeat in the 1962 Sino-Indian war, will be declassified anytime soon even though it's been 60 years. The Defence ministry mentioned in a statement

on Saturday that defence minister Rajnath Singh "has approved the policy on archiving, declassification and compilation/publication of war/operations histories by the ministry of defence" under which 'each organisation under the ministry of defence such as Services, Integrated Defence Staff,

Assam Rifles and Indian Coast Guard, will transfer the records, including war diaries, letters of proceedings & operational record books, etc., to the History Division" of the ministry for "proper upkeep, archival and writing the

Defence ministry on Saturday announced a new

policy on archiving, declas-

sification and compilation

of war history and records

under which war records

will be declassified within

25 years to 'provide

rumours'.

authentic material for

academic research and

counter the unfounded

"Timely publication of war histories would give an accurate account of the events, provide authentic material for academic research and counter the unfounded rumours,"



GST cut on Covid, black fungus drugs, no relief for vaccine

GST Council on Saturday slashed tax rate on Coviddrugs such Remdesivir Tocilizumab as well as on medical oxygen and oxygen concentrators but demands for reduction in taxes on vaccines.
The Council, acting on

New Delhi, June 12: The

the recommendation of a group of ministers from different states, cut to nil GST on Covid-19 drug Tocilizumab and black $\begin{array}{ll} \text{fungus} & \text{medicine} \\ \text{Amphotericin} & \text{B, from} \end{array}$ existing 5 per cent. Besides, hand sanitiser, pulse oximeter, BiPAP machine, testing kit, ambulance and temperature check equipment were among the 18 items on which GST rates were

lowered. A 5 per cent GST levy on vaccines will continue which will allow manufacturers to get benefit of settling taxes paid on inputs.



Sitharaman explained that the 5 per cent Nirmala levy will not Sitharaman put any additional burden on common man as the government was procur-

Minister

Nirmala

ing all vaccines and giving them to citizens for free.
The reduced tax rates were based on a recommendation of a group of ministers, headed Meghalaya deputy chief minister Conrad Sangma. and would remain effective till September 30,

GoM's recommendations has brought in a lot of substantial change. Many items, that were at 18 per cent and 12 per cent, brought down to 5 per cent. So there was a lot of substance in the recommendation made by GoM. Turn to Page 4

"It was felt that the

Euro 2020 match halts briefly as **Eriksen collapses**

The match was suspended for about 90 min-

though of the first half.

More report on Page 8

the reasons behind India's

histories". people

Turn to Page 4

5 injured after 2 groups clash in N-E Delhi

New Delhi: Five people were injured after a fight broke out between two groups in northeast Delhi's Bhajanpura area, police said on Saturday. The incident took place late on Friday night. they said. An argument took place between a man named Vipin and the security guard over opening the entrance gate of the society, police said. The altercation escalated further when Mohd Yasin (38), whose house was near the entrance gate of the block, came out with some of his family members and assaulted Vipin, police said. Vipin, who is a resident of the area and a contractual

Transport Corporation, later returned to the spot with his relatives and both the groups clashed. During the scuffle, some of them received injuries, a senior police officer said. Legal action has been initiated against both the parties police said and denied any communal angle to the incident. However, to avert any untoward incident, a meeting with the respectable citizens of the area and con-

employee of the Delhi

Over 1,200 people fined for flouting **Covid guidelines**

cerned 'Bhaichara' commit-

tee members has been held.

New Delhi: More than 1,200 people have been fined in Delhi for violating Covid-19 guidelines, police said on Saturday. Of the 1,260 challans issued on Friday, 1,068 were for face mask violations and 192 for not adhering to social distancing norms. As many as 1,29,590 challans have been issued by police from April 19 to June 11, the data showed. Police said, 1.09,075 challans were issued for mask violations, 18,790 for flouting social distancing norms, 1,532 for holding large public gatherings and congregations, 72 for spitting and 121 for consumption of liquor, pan and tobacco, it stated. The

hood shops to function, including liquor vends. However, establishments like cinemas, theatres, restaurants (except home delivery and take away) remain closed till further orders. - PTI

Delhi government has allowed

all standalone and neighbour-

3 men drown in outer Delhi's Bawana canal

New Delhi: Three men drowned while taking a bath in the Bawana canal in outer Delhi's Shahbad dairy area, police said on Saturday. The deceased have been identified as Tara (40), Raiu (32) and Sukhdev (23), they said. The incident took place on Friday when the three men had gone to take a bath in the canal, police said. All emergency help, including the fire brigade, were called on the spot and the bodies were fished out of the canal. They were taken to a nearby hospital where they were declared brought dead, a senior police officer said. No foul play has been suspected and the bod-

ies have been handed over to

respective families after post-

mortem, the police said. — PTI

■ Indications of a 3rd wave coming from UK where corona cases are rising again, says CM

Chances of 3rd Covid wave quite real, preparation on war-footing: Kejriwal

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA

chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday cautioned that Kejriwal the chances of a third Covid wave were quite real, and asserted his government was preparing on a "war-footing" to combat it. He said that the indications of a third wave are coming from the UK where coronavirus cases are rising again despite "45 per cent of its population" being vaccinated.

"So, we cannot afford to sit idle," he told an online event to inaugurate 22 new PSA oxygen plants at nine hospitals across Delhi. He said these plants have a total production capacity of 17.3 MT, and they will strengthen the preparations to fight Covid. As many as 17 more oxygen plants will be started by

July, he said. The Delhi government is also procuring oxygen tankers to aid the fight against a third wave, he said, adding that the previous wave, which in on the wane, was "very danger-



We cannot afford to sit idle and our government is preparing on a war-footing to combat the third **Covid wave**

> Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi CM



ous". Expressing gratitude towards industries for their help in fighting the second wave, he also said the people of Delhi came together to combat it with struggle and discipline, and have "succeeded in controlling it". He prayed that a third

3 02 plants inaugurated at Rajiv HCL provides 17 **Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital**

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 12

Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel inaugurated three oxygen plants at Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital on Saturday and said the national capital will no longer have to depend on anyone for the life-saving

gas.
"With the installation of these oxygen plants, the shortage of oxygen in the hospital will be met to a great extent. Delhi hospitals will no longer have to depend on anyone for oxygen," he said.

Delhi social welfare min-

wave of Covid doesn't arrive. However, he cautioned that the chances of a third wave are "quite real", and "if it happens, Delhi has to again fight togeth-"We cannot afford to sit idle and our government is preparing on a war-footing to combat it," he

oxygen plants to Delhi govt Rajendra Pal Gautam AGE CORRESPONDENT

IT firm HCL Technologies on Saturday announced that it has provided 17 'With the Ram Niwas installation ready-to-use imported oxygen plants to the Delhi government.

was

said. Doctors, nurses, para-

medic staff, sanitation workers, and others played

a huge role in the fight

against the virus, he said,

adding, "I know many doc-

tors who did not go home

for days. I want to thank them on behalf of the peo-

present on

plants in
Rajiv Gandhi Super
Specialty Hospital
(RGSSH), 80 per cent of the
oxygen requirement will The oxygen plants have been imported from France and are now deployed across seven be met," Goel said. "It will hospitals in the city, the company said in a statebe reviewed again later." Goel said the RGSSH is

The total combined capacity of the 17 plants is 7,300 litres per minute the biggest hospital in east Delhi and patients also come here from nearby

> The national capital recorded 213 Covid-19 cases, the lowest in over three months, and 28 fatalities on Saturday. According to the latest health bulletin, the new fatalities pushed the death toll to 24,800. The positivity rate dipped to

Delhi govt urges Centre to remove **GST** on sanitisers

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 12

The Delhi government on Saturday suggested to the Centre to remove the GST on face masks, sanitisers, oximeters and thermometers, saying these items have become a part of regular expenditure of the people during Covid-19 pandemic.

Deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia was speaking during a meet-ing of the GST Council. He said the central government and BJP-ruled states opposed the idea of making these items tax-free and stressed that the decision to not do away with the tax was against the interest of citizens.

"The GST Council did not listen to any of us and did not accept the suggestions to exempt Covid medical equipment from the Goods and Services Tax. I appeal to the central government to open their heart, to think about the suffering of the people and make this equipment tax-free.'

"Masks, sanitisers, oximeters and thermome-

The central government should make them taxfree instead of making money out of them,

Sisodia said. During the meeting, Sisodia said, he recom-mended some changes for making the equipment tax-free. "People want the government to provide elief to them," he said.

Referring to the coronavirus situation in the UK, the deputy chief minister said that "as cases peak in the UK, we can say that India will also see another peak".

The central and state

governments already starting amping up medical facilities in the anticipation of a third Covid wave, he said, adding that the private sector has also been asked to invest in public healthcare.

"If a state government asks a private company to invest Rs 10 lakh in a hospital to increase its ICU capacity, does it mean that the hospital will get the full amount or that the hospital will receive a deducted amount after ters have become a part of tax," he asked.

Fire damages 5 showrooms; no casualties

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 12

showrooms were damaged in a fire that broke out in a market area here on Saturday morning, officials said, adding no injuries were reported. The incident took place in south Delhi's Lajpat Nagar Central Market area, they said.

According to the fire department, a call about the blaze was received around 10.20 am, following which 16 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. "When fire tenders

reached the spot, four showrooms were on fire and later (the blaze) spread to the fifth shop. It must have started early morning in one of the shops and then spread to rest, Delĥi Fire Service Director Atul Garg said, adding its ori-



A firefighter attempts to douse a blaze in a showroom at Lajpat Nagar's Central Market area in New Delhi on Saturday.

unknown

He said the firemen were from spreading further with a timely response to

great presence of mind between the rear gates of and saved the fire from spreading to the residential areas behind the showrooms, Garg said the the call. operation to douse the "Our firemen showed blaze began from a lane

the showrooms to residenfire tenders and over 100 firefighters were on the spot to bring the fire under control, he said.

Fake cop held for confiscating mobiles, wallets from people THE ACCUSED disclosed

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, JUNE 12**

A 26-year-old man was arrested for allegedly impersonating himself as a police officer and taking away the mobile phones and wallet from another man in Southeast Delhi's Lajpat Nagar area, the police said on Saturday.

The accused, Mahender Pal alias Sandeep, works as a private guard at an outlet near the Udyog Vihar Metro Station and was found to be previously involved in a case of cheating, it said. According to the police,

the incident took place on June 9 when Rajender Kumar Tiwari, along with his friends, was going to his residence from the market. At about 10.40 am,

that he is addicted to alcohol and drugs. To fulfil his drug requirements, he started to cheat passersby with the identity of a

police officer near Moolchand flyover, one person on motorcycle wearing khaki pants, khaki shocks, and black

shoes overtook and stopped them. He took their mobile phones and wallet to check their identity and fled from the spot. A case under Sections 419 (punishment for cheating by personation) and 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property) of the Indian Penal

DCP

constituted and CCTV footages were installed in the nearby vicinity of the

"With the help of ownership details of the offending motorcycle, the suspect was identified as Mahender Pal, a resident of Mundka in Outer Delhi. The team raided the location and nabbed him. Three mobile phones, one wallet, the offending motorcycle, and clothes worn at the time of the incident were recovered from his possession," the DCP said.

During sustained interrogation, the accused disclosed that he is addicted to alcohol and drugs. To fulfil his drug requirements, he started to cheat passers-by with the identity of a

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI. JUNE 12**

AAP leader and Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia on Saturday alleged a "secret" friendbetween Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Punjab CM Amarinder Singh, after Punjab was ranked number one in the Performance Grading Index

(PGI) 2019-20 by the Centre. "Captain (Amarinder Singh) has got the blessings of Modiji. Delhi"s schools have been ranked much below. Nearly 800 government schools in Punjab have been shut down in the last five years and many schools have been handed over to private entities but Punjab has been ranked on the top," he said.

alleged that Sisodia government schools have poor educational facilities for students and parents prefer to send their children to private schools.

'Maybe later, the government might release a report saying Punjab's hospitals are best. There is a secret friendship between Modiji and Captain," he said.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Khurana and Praveen Shankar Kapoor on Friday said that all through his press conference the Delhi deputy chief minister sounded a frustrated leader.

"The problem with Aam Aadmi Party leadership is that they are Delhi's local leaders but wish to speak on every state's politics including that of Punjab whose people have repeatedly rejected AAP in every election after 2017," Kapoor

Sisodia: PM, Punjab CM 2 cops assaulted at farmers' have 'secret' friendship protest site on Singhu border

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA **NEW DELHI. JUNE 12**

Two Delhi Policemen on duty were assaulted allegedly by a group of people at Singhu Border where farmers have been protesting against the centre's farm laws for over six months now, police said on Saturday.

The two policemen on duty in civil clothes are Assistant Inspectors (ASI) posted with the Special Branch of Delhi Police,

they said. The incident took place on June 10, when the two policemen in civil clothes deployed at the Singhu Border to oversee the security arrangements

allegedly beaten up by the group of people present at the spot, police said.

It is alleged that the two policemen were allegedly found clicking pictures at the protest site when they were allegedly assualted by the group.

During the incident, one of policemen got a fracture in his wrist while the other ASI sustained severe injuries on his leg. Both of them have been discharged after treatment, a senior police officer said.

"They were beaten up by people present at the Some of them involved in the incident have been identified but we are yet to find

out who they were," the officer said.

Police said the nature of job of the policemen Branch is different.

"They are regularly deployed to keep an eye on the situation and security arrangements in place. To report on the appropriate action taken by the local police," the officer said.

A case has been registered under IPC sections of assaulting public servant while on duty, voluntarily causing grievous hurt and other relevant sections including Delhi Disaster Management Act at Narela police station, police officer

Covid: IWPC organises counselling session

NEW DELHI, JUNE 12

uniformity about what the Covid-19 ȟas taught us or what lesson we had learnt from the traumatic experience during the pandemic. It varies individual to individual", said Adithy, a counselling psychologist.

Corps (IWPC) organised an interaction online with Adithy on Saturday. The psychologist said that there are various means of coping with personal suffering or loss of lives of friends or relatives. One can deal with this trauma by coming to terms with sufferings or loss of lives.

thereby adjust to the trauma of pandemic. We all have emotions inside us like anger, sadness, or guilt and every such emotion is a call for help, the psycholo-

ADITHY, A Pune-based counselling psychologist said said that there are various means of coping with personal suffering or loss of lives of friends or relatives

gist said while interacting online.

She also shared different human behaviors in different circumstances and suggested ways and means to deal with it.

She also further suggested that one can deal with anxiety and trauma through physical activities and breathing exercises like 'sighing or straw breathing'. Small physical exercises help a lot in such situa-

Adithy is a Pune-based counselling psychologist involved in education, prevention and intervention in the field of mental health for 20 years. She takes the approach of trauma healing

Code was registered, said (Southeast) R.P. He said that teams were police officer, he said.

For the convenience of passengers, Railways have decided to run the following Fully Reserved Specia Trains as per the schedule given below:-

02583/02584 Hatia-Anand Vihar Terminal-Hatia Special (Tri-Weekly) (Via Barkakana)					
Train No. 02583		STATIONS	Train No. 02584		
ARR.	DEP.	SIMITONS	ARR.	DEP.	
	13:40	HATIA	19:40		
13:10		ANAND VIHAR (T)		20:45	
Days of Run: 02583 Ex. Hatia from 15.06.2021 to 29.06.2021 on					

every Mon, Tue & Thu and 02584 Ex. Anand Vihar Terminal from 16.06.2021 to 30.06.2021 on every Tue, Wed & Fri. Stoppage: Ranchi, Muri, Ramgarh, Barkakana, Patratu, Tori Daltongani, Garwa Road, Garhwa, Nagar Untari, Renukut, Chopan

Sonbhadra, Chunar, Prayagraj & Kanpur Stations. **Accommodation**: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper and 2nd Seating.

		Santragachi-Anand Vil achi Superfast Special			
Train No	. 02585	STATIONS	Train No. 02586		
ARR.	DEP.	SIMITUNO	ARR.	DEP.	
	10:00	SANTRAGACHI	16:15		
08:40		ANAND VIHAR (T)		13:25	
Days of Run: 02585 Ex. Santragachi from 14.06.2021 to					

28.06.2021 on every Monday and 02586 Ex. Anand Vihar Terminal from 15.06.2021 to 29.06.2021 on every Tuesday Stoppage: Kharagpur, Tatanagar, Purulia, Netaji Subhash Chandra

Bose Gomoh, Gaya, Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Prayagraj, Kanpur Accommodation: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper and 2nd Seating.

02579/02580 Hatia-Anand Vihar Terminal-Hatia Superfast Special (Tri-Weekly) (Via NSCB Gomoh)						
Train No. 02579		STATIONS	Train No. 02580			
ARR.	DEP.	SIAIIUNS	ARR.	DEP.		
	14:35	HATIA	16:45			
13:10		ANAND VIHAR (T)		20:45		

Days of Run: 02579 Ex. Hatia from 16.06.2021 to 27.06.2021 on every Wed, Fri & Sun and 02580 Ex. Anand Vihar Terminal from 17.06.2021 to 28.06 on every Thu, Sat & Mon.

Stoppage: Ranchi Muri, Bokaro Steel City, Chandrapura, Netaj Subhash Chandra Bose Gomoh, Koderma, Gaya, Guraru, Rafiganj, Anugraha Narayan Road, Dehri On Sone, Sasaram, Bhabua Road Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Prayagraj & Kanpur Stations. Accommodation: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper and 2nd Seating

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

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

RailMadad Helpline No.: 139 Visit RailMadad website Please join us on 100 110





"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

Delhi court denies bail to 'kingpin of Kasana gang' in MCOCA case

court has denied bail to an alleged kingpin of an organised crime syndicate, who is facing charges under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), saying the nature of allegations against him are serious.

Bhupender Kasana was slapped with MCOCA in 2017 after being found involved in several cases of attempt to murder, attempt to culpable homicide, riots and those registered under the Arms Act and Uttar Pradesh Gangsters Act. Additional sessions judge

Vinod Yadav junked his bail plea after relying on the statement of the prosecution that his role in conspiring, assisting and managing the organised crime syndicate has prima facie been established.

The nature of allegations

3 nabbed for robbing Pizza Hut on gunpoint at Dwarka AGE CORRESPONDENT robbed ₹28,000 cash, laptop

NEW DELHI, JUNE 12

With the arrest of three persons, the Delhi Police has claimed to bust a gang of dacoits who on gunpoint allegedly robbed a Pizza Hut outlet near Mod area. According to the police, manager of the outlet complained that on June 3 five unknown persons entered forcefully and allegedly

against the applicant is

very serious. If released on

bail at this stage, the possibility of the applicant

threatening or intimidating

them (witnesses) cannot be

ruled out. The bail applica-

bag and purse at gunpoint. A case was registered at Mohan Garden police station and investigation was taken up. Following this a trap was laid and the accused were arrested from Uttam Nagar area,

the police said. The accused have been identified as Santosh Kumar Sahni (25) Sajan Kumar (23) and Mohd. Rashid (22).

tion accordingly stands dis-

missed, the judge said,

Additional public prose-

cutor S.K. Tripathi, repre-

senting the Delhi Police,

told the court that Kasana

denying him the relief.

accused brothers, was engaged in committing unlawful activities continuously for gaining pecuniary benefits. The prosecutor further

argued that Kasana is the main kingpin of Kasana gang and his two brothers duly assist him in the operation of the syndicate and have now enlarged the gang by including several persons from their native village. He pointed out that 19 cases have been registered against Kasana and sought dismissal of the bail application on the ground that

he is a flight risk.

Advocate J. P. Bansal, counsel of Kasana, told the court that his client is being falsely implicated and the case was registered against him and his brothers by the police out of vengeance.

AGE CORRESPONDENT "There could not be any

The Indian Women's Press

The victim can also talk to relatives and friends and

in her psychotherapy.

65 kids test +ve for

Covid in Osmanabad

Osmanabad: At least 65 children have tested positive for coronavirus in Ösmanabad district of Maharashtra over the last four days, as per the data shared by the district civil hospital. As per the data, the Covid-19 positivity rate and fatality rate are falling in the Osmanabad district but Covid-19 patients in the age group of 0 to 18 years are found in the district for the first time. Out of the 119 patients found in the district on June 9, 25 were children between the age group of 0 and 18. Of the 109 patients found on June 10, 19 were children. On June 11, 123 infections were detected, of whom 21 were children. This shows that on an average 18% of children tested positive. However, no child suffering from coronavirus in the district has died, as per the data shared by authorities. - PTI

'Corona mata'

temple in UP razed

Pratapgarh, UP: People at Juhi Shukulpur village here built a "corona mata" temple, seeking divine grace to stay clear of the infection. However, the temple built on June 7 was demolished on Friday night. Villagers alleged that it was demolished by police, which denied the charge, saying it was constructed on a disputed site and one of the par-ties involved in the dispute razed it. Villagers said the temple was constructed five days ago by Lokesh Kumar Srivastava with the help of donations from local residents. He installed the idol of the "corona mata". Radhey Shyam Verma of the village was appointed its priest, after which people started offering prayers there. Lokesh, who lives in Noida, jointly owns the land

Ex-BSP MLC held for

Srivastava and Jai Prakash

with Nagesh Kumar

Srivastava. — PTI

attempt to murder Deoria, UP: The police has arrested a former BSP MLC and three others in a decade-old attempt to murder case, an official said on Saturday. The former Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) in the state. Sanieev Dwivedi, is accused of a murderous attack on a liquor trader, identified as Sanjay Kedia. Deoria SP Sripati Mishra told reporters that the others arrested in the case are Manish Mishra, Kamai Mali and Ashwini Mani. Sanjeev Dwivedi, also called Ramu Dwivedi, was arrested from Lucknow on Friday and produced in a

Deoria court, from where he

was taken to the district jail.

Sanjay Kedia had filed a case

Deoria Sadar Kotwali police

station about a decade ago.

against the MLC in the

■ Bus, train services hit after waterlogging at many places **Rain brings Mumbai to a halt**

MUMBAI, JUNE 12

Mumbai and its surrounding districts are likely to get extremely heavy rainfall on June 13 Brihanmumai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has issued a high alert asking Mumbaikars not to move out from their homes on these days.

According to Mumbai's regional meteorological centre, the metropolis will receive thunder-storm with lightning, gusty winds and extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places for the next couple of days. In addition to this, a "red alert" has been issued for Raigad and Ratnagiri districts,

Varsity scraps

plan after flak

Pune, June 12: A day

after the Savitribai Phule

Pune University (SPPU)

issued a circular propos-

ing a monthly fee for jog-

gers using its green cam-

Saturday suspended the

The suspension of the

Oxy

scheme was announced

by Maharashtra minister Uday Samant on Twitter.

On Friday, the varsity's

registrar Praful Pawar

issued a notification for

the scheme which was to

be launched on the International Yoga Day

The varsity proposed to charge fees of ₹1,000 per

month, ₹5,500 for six

annually as a member

for the SPPU Oxy Park

for those who wish to

visit the campus regular-

ly for morning jogs and

RAJIB CHOWDHURI

KOLKATA, JUNE 12

Aeronautics

and ₹10,000

on June 21.

months,

scheme following flak.

authorities

Park'

jogging fee



Children play on flodded road after heavy rain in Mumbai on Saturday.

whereas Thane, Palghar and Sindhudurg districts will also receive heavy to

very heavy rains. Mumbai mayor Kishori Pednekar has issued a high alert in the city appealing to people to venture out only if it is absolutely necessary. The

BMC has asked people not to visit the beaches

and its nearby places. She also said that strict action would be taken against those who are found dumping garbage in the drains and gutters. due to which clogging of ing to waterlogging. Mumbai has been witsince Wednesday.

Man lynched

on suspicion

of being cow

thief in Assam

Tinsukia (Assam), June

12: A 28-year-old man was beaten to death at a

village in Tinsukia dis-

trict of Assam by a mob

that suspected him as a

cow thief, while his com-

panion managed to

escape on Saturday, the

The incident took place

at Korjonga Borpathar

village under Baghjan

police station during the

wee hours when the two

were allegedly found

inside the cowshed of a

house, Tinsukia super-

intendent of police

The police has formed a special investigation

team (SIT), headed by additional SP (head-

quarters), to probe the

case and have already

picked up 12 suspects from the village, he said.

The victim has been

identified as Sarat Moran

(28), who hails from No. 1

Kordoiguri village. The

man who escaped has not been traced yet, Mr Deuri

According to villagers

the owner of the house spotted the duo at his

cowshed at around 1.30

am and raised an alarm.

at the spot and started

police was informed of

the incident at around

4.30 am. They took the

man to Doomdooma Civil

Hospital, where he was

declared brought dead.
"When we handed over

the body to the family

after post-mortem exam-

ination, some people

from his village tried to

create a law and order

issue. However, when

they came to know that

already picked up 12 peo-

ple, the cremation hap-

pened peacefully," he added. — PTI

took action and

beating them up. The SP said that the

People then gathered

Debojit Deuri said.

police said.

The train services between Dadar and Kurla stations on Central Railway were suspended in the afternoon after the water rose above the track level. The Central Railway official said, "Due to more than 61.21 mm rainfall in the last one hour, coupled with a high tide of 4.34 metres at 1.32 pm and closing of Mithi river floodgates, the water level has been rising on track between Kurla and Sion.

A BEST official said that several of its buses had to be diverted at 17 locations due to waterlog

SAD, BSP stitch alliance for Punjab Assembly polls

Chandigarh, June 12: The Shiromani Akali Dal and the Bahujan Samaj Party formed an alliance on Saturday for the 2022 Punjab Assembly elections, coming together after a gap of 25 years.

Under the tie-up, the BSP will fight 20 of the 117 Assembly seats while the rest will be contested by the SAD, said Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal while announcing the alliance here. The SAD-BSP alliance

had contested the 1996 Lok Sabha polls together and won 11 out of 13 seats in Punjab. While three seats were won by the BSP and the rest

were won by the SAD. BSP chief Mayawati dubbed the alliance between the SAD and her party as a "new political and social ini-tiative" which will usher

in progress and prosperity in Punjab.

SAD stalwart and former CM Parkash Singh Badal described the formation of the SAD-BSP alliance as "the beginning of a secular, federal democratic revolution in the state and the country for a total socio-economic and political revamp of polity

Punjab has 31.94 per cent Dalit population, mainly concentration in Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Nawanshahr Kapurthala districts.

The border state has the highest percentage of Scheduled Castes population in the country. At a joint press conference with BSP's general

secretary Satish Mishra, Chandra Sukhbir Badal said, Today is a new day in Punjab's politics, a historic day...a day of big turn in Punjab's politics." The BSP will contest seven seats in Malwa, five in Majha and eight in Doaba regions of Punjab, said Badal, adding that the two parties will soon form a coordination committee to jointly chalk out various programmes

ahead of the polls The leaders of the two outfits claimed that the alliance will "sweep" the 2022 polls and oust the "non-performing Congress from power.

The SAD earlier had a tie-up with the BJP and Badal-led party walked out of the NDA over the farm laws issue last year.

About the Mr Mishra alliance, said, "Today is a historic day. The BSP, which is a national party, has entered into an alliance with Punjab's strongest

time performance-based

logistics (PBL) is being

introduced in the Indian

aviation sector which is a

PUBLIC NOTICE

PROPERTY No. E-128, Terace rights of th Second floor (Third floor) & there above situated at Kalkaji, New Delhi-19.

Be it known to the general Public at large that We, (1). Dr Ajay Kumar Singh & (2). Dr Rajeev Singh both sons of Late Shri Kanchhi Singh the owners of the aforesaid Property, do hereby represent ourselves to be the absolute owner of the same by virtue of the last Will 8 Testament left by our father vide Will dated 09.05.2014 duly Registered as Doc No. 561 Book No. III Volume No. 2043 pages 60 to 61 dated 17.05.2014 in the office of Sub-Registrar, New Delhi. The Original Sale Deed of the said Property favouring our father is misplaced and is not traceable despite of our best efforts.

Any other person(s) having any claim against nto or upon the said property by virtue of Sa inheritance, Agreement (of any kind), Contract Mortgage, Liens, Charges or otherwise i hereby required to notify the same in writing along with supporting documentary evidence to the undersigned within 7 (Seven) days from the date of publication of this notice failing which it will be presumed that no valid claim or objections subsists therein and we shall Conclude the transaction of the said property and any claim or any objection of any nature any shall not be binding upon us for future. (A.K.Singh)(Rajeev Singh) 011-23016279

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is notified for the information of Rail Passengers that Railways have decided to divert the route of Train no. 09805/09806 Kota -Udhampur - Kota Special Express with revised timings and stoppages. 00005/00006 Vata Ildhamanur Vata

Special Express (Weekly)								
	Train No. 09805			STATIONS 1	•	Train No. 09806		
	ARR.	DEP.		SIATIONS		ARR.	DEP.	
		16.40	1	KOTA JN		12.40		
	12:10			UDHAMPUR			18.40	

Days of Run: 09805 Ex. Kota on Every Wednesday from 16.06.2021 to till further advice & 09806 Ex. Udhampur on Every Thursday from 17.06.2021 to till further advice.

Accommodation: AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.

Stoppages: Indargarh, Sawai Madhopur, Gangapur City, Hindaun City, Bayana Jn., Bharatpur Jn., Mathura Jn. Faridabad, Hazrat Nizamuddin Jn., New Delhi, Rohtak Jn. Jakhal Jn., Dhuri Jn., Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Kathua and Jammu Tawi Stations.

For any kind information such as timings and stoppages enroute passengers are advised to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

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



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Save Energy for the benefit of self and nation HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LTD. BEAS VALLEY POWER CORPORATION LIMITED CORRIGENDUM

The key dates, as published on 21-05-2021 & 23-05-2021 for inviting online (through) rates bids for the works "Dismantling of existing Surface Penstock fabricated from SAILMA 550 HI Steel, Complete Detailed Design & Fabrication Drawings for its replacement, Supply of steel plates, Storage, Fabrication Testing, Painting, Transportation to Project site, Erection and commissioning of Surface, Steel In-Liners, Cladding work of Penstock and its specials, complete in all respect including execution of allied civil works (Design/Construction Drawings) for Uhl-Stage-III-(100MW) HEP, Joginder Nagar, Distt-Mandi Himachal Pradesh". (Tender No. -BVPCL/MD/Uhl Stage-III /Penstock / 2021-01) are extended on the request of bidders in the Pre-bid meeting a

1. Last date & time of submission of online bids = 29.06.2021 (5.00 PM) 2. Date of opening of Techno-commercial bids = 03.07.2021 (10.30 AM) Other terms & condition of NIB shall remain the same/unchanged **Managing Director**

BVPCL, Uhl Stage-III, (100MW), Joginder Nagar, Distt. Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, Ph.: 01908-224412 Email: mdbvpcl_jnr@yahoo.com

SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one girl, (depicted in the photo), Namely: Shikha, D/o: Dharmender, R/o: H.No. 1/4650/10C, Gali No. 11, New Modern Shahdara, Delhi. Aged: 19 years has been missing since 01.06.2021 from her house. In this Regard DD No. 68A, Dated 02.06.2021, has been registered at P.S. Mansarover Park, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:



Shikha

Height: 4'6" Feet., Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Medium, ID Mark: A tattoo of "ऊँ" on left hand, Clothing: Blue Colour Shirt, Printed Salwar and Red Colour Plastic Chapple in her feet. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing girl, may

inform SHO, Mansarover Park, Delhi at E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.nic.in or website: http://cbi.nic.in Tele No.: 011-24368638 or 24368641

DP/464/SHD/2021.

P.S. Mansarover Park, Delhi Ph. 011-22599374, 22599375, 7065036029

(HAL), were inducted into the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on Saturday. These choppers, equipped with state-ofthe-art equipment like surveillance radar, electro-optic pod, medical intensive care unit, highintensity searchlight, SAR Homer, Loud Hailer and machine gun, can



■3 indigenously-built advanced light copters inducted

Coast Guard adds teeth to aviation arm

Based in Bhubaneswar, Porbandar, Chennai and Kochi they will be part of different ICG aviation squadrons. The induction took place in the presence defence secretary Dr Ajay Kumar at a virtual programme held simultaneously at the perform other key roles

ICG headquarters in New Delhi and at the helicopter MRO division of HAL in Bengaluru. Dr Kumar said, "The

state of the art helicopters with advanced sensors will enable ICG to take up challenging tasks. This is for the first

management and increase operational and maintenance efficiency.' ICG director-general K. Natarajan, who also attended the induction ceremony said that these choppers would usher a paradigm shift in the

capability in ship-borne operations and enhance coastal surveillance. ICG is also the first service to have PBL management system introduced in aviation to ensure helicopter availability at four bases, he added.

BJP slams Diggy's remark on Art 370, seeks NIA probe

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, JUNE 12

The BJP took a serious exception to the purported remarks by Congress veteran Digvijay Singh on the abrogation of Article 370 in J&K and demanded a probe by National Investigation Agency (NIA) into his "activities" in the wake of stands taken by him on several sen-

sitive issues in the past. State BJP president and Lok Sabha member Vishnu Dutt Sharma shot a letter to Union home minister Amit Shah demanding a probe into Mr Singh's "activities" by NIA "urgently" while drawing his attention to the former chief minister's clubhouse conversation in which a Pakistanbased journalist was reportedly present, criticising abrogation of Article 370.

"Mr Singh's stand on several sensitive issues have not only proved detrimental to the interest of India, but also helped Pakistan strengthen its anti-India campaign. It was high time the Centre initiated a probe into all his activities 'before it is too late'," Mr Sharma said in his letter.

He cited how Mr Singh had made a shocking statement in the aftermath of the 26/11 terror attack in Mumbai, seeking to portray it as a conspiracy by the RSS and how



Digvijay Singh

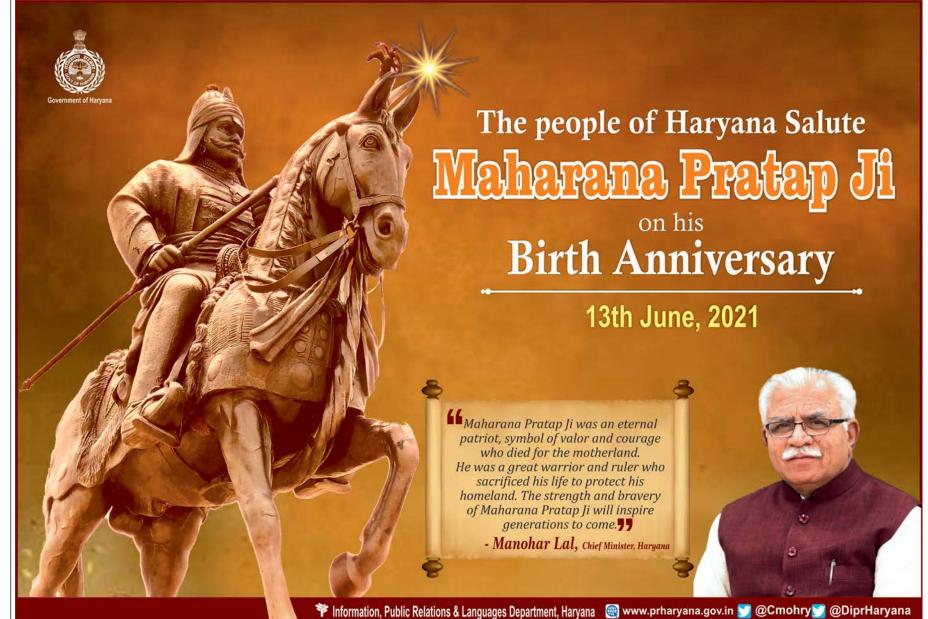
he defended the accused in the Batla encounter who were later convicted by the court.

"Mr Singh's stands on many sensitive issues were found to be similar to those of Pakistan. This is a matter of serious concern for the coun-

try," Mr Sharma said. Mr Singh has made a "fashion" of attacking the sovereignty of India for appeasement and votebank politics, he added.

Chief minister Shivraj Singh also lambasted Mr Singh for describing abrogation of Article 370 as a "sad' decision by the Centre. "Kashmir is an integral part of the country. It was Congress which committed a sin by imposing article 370 in

J&K," Mr Chouhan said. He called upon Congress chief Sonia Gandhi to come out with a clarification on the issue. "If Sonia Gandhi keeps mum on the issue, then it will be assumed that she is in agreement with Mr Singh on it." he added.



Fake Favipiravir

seized in Cuttack

Bhubaneswar: In a major crackdown on unscrupulous fake Covid drug peddlers, the special squad of drug controller (DC) of Odisha on Friday evening seized a huge quantity of counterfeit medicines, including Favipiravir, during a raid on a wholesale medicine store in Cuttack, the state DC Annada Sankar Das said on Saturday. Acting on an intelligence input from Haryana, the special squad raided the medicine store and seized 170 boxes containing around 17.000 fake Favipiravir tablets and seven other varieties of medicines used for treating diseases like cough, cold and fever. The Favipiravir drug is prescribed for the treatment of Covid-19 patients. The DC Mr Das said the counterfeit medicine stocks were seized just before they were supposed to be released in the open market in Odisha

Assam forms 2,000

Guwahati: Assam health min-

ister Keshab Mahanta on

teams to jab 3L daily

Saturday said that the state government has formed 2,000 teams to vaccinate three lakh people every day provided an adequate number of doses are available. He said the administration has an adequate stock of Covaxin for administering the second dose to people in the 18-44 years age group. "We have kept ready 2,000 teams who could vaccinate 4 lakh people every day. But, for now, we are targeting to inoculate 3 lakh people daily if we get the vaccines. We hope that the availability of vaccines will increase in the coming days,' he said. Mahanta had said that the state has a total stock of 3.80,900 vaccines. including 2,43,460 for those above 45 years of age and 1,37,440 for the 18-44 years. CM Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier said that the state had a capacity to inoculate 1 lakh people every day but it had to vaccinate less than half its capacity on most days since the beginning of the vaccination drive due to a shortage of supply. — PTI

YouTuber gets bail

in racial slur case

Itanagar: A court in Itanagar granted bail to social media influencer Paras Singh who was arrested last month for making a racial comment, targetting an Arunachal Pradesh lawmaker. The chief judicial magistrate (CJM) court here granted bail to Singh on Friday. The court allowed Singh's plea for bail on the execution of a personal bond of ₹10,000 and a set of other conditions, including not permitting him to leave the country. The YouTuber was also asked to stay away from interfering into the investigation process. Public prosecutor Rotom Vijay said. 'The bail was granted to Singh as the investigation was almost over and all necessary statements were recorded by the state police during his time in judicial custody here." - PTI

ODISHA MAN ATTEMPTS TO KILL 4 KIDS, WIFE

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 12

A man hailing from Odisha's Sambalpur district on Saturday attempted to kill his four little daughters and wife by slitting their throats. While his threeyear-old baby succumbed to her injuries, others are battling for life at Sundargarh District Headquarters Hospital. According to reports, the incident occurred at Joutukbahal village under Govindpur police limits. The accused was identified as Suku Oram. The victims are all aged between 2 and 15 years. The reports said, Suku, the father of four daughters attempted to kill his children by slitting their necks with a sharp knife. While a 3-year-old baby died on the spot, three others sustained critical injuries. Source said that the accused also attacked his wife Atebari Oram with the knife. After attacking the children and wife, Suku also attempted to kill self. He has also been seriously injured. "The exact cause behind the incident is yet to be ascertained. However. we have started investigation into the case," Pratap

Rana, inspector of cleared

Govindpur Police said, said.

1 earth, 1 health, says PM at G7 K'taka cops bust

Calls for global unity, leadership and solidarity to prevent future pandemics

Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday called for adopting a "one earth, one health" approach to effectively deal with the coronavirus pandemic globally during a virtual address at a session of the G7 sum-

Calling for global unity, leadership and solidarity to prevent future pandemics, Modi emphasised the special responsibility of democratic and transparent societies to deal with the challenge.

The Prime Minister also sought support of the G7 for a proposal moved at the WTO by India and South Africa for patent waiver on Covid related technolo-



PRIME MINISTER also sought support of the G7 for a proposal moved at the WTO by India and South Africa for patent waiver on Covid related tech-

THE GROUP of Seven (G7) comprises the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States

"The Prime Minister committed India's support for collective endeavours to improve global health governance. He sought the G7's support for the proposal moved at the WTO by India and South Africa, for a TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) waiver

on Covid related technologies," an official statement

said. "Prime Minister Modi said that today's meeting should send out a message of 'One Earth, One Health' for the whole world," it said about his address at the outreach session. The Group of Seven (G7)

comprises the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United

Australia, South Korea and South Africa to the summit as guest countries. India first participated in the Outreach Session of the G7 Summit in 2003. This is the second time the Indian Prime Minister will be participating in the G7 meet. India had been invited by the G7 French presidency in 2019 to the summit as a goodwill partner and the PM participated in these sessions on climate, biodiversity on oceans as well as on digital transforma-

₹290 crore scam

Bengaluru, June on arrested. The scam, aided by shell companies, is linked to money laundering and the suspected kingpin is a Kerala based

ing two Chinese nationals.

the companies involved, and a search is on for the rest. A complaint from Razor pay Software Limited said Private accused persons availed 'payment solutions' from them, claiming that they are in gaming, social and e-commerce businesses

They, however, defrauded the company by using computer resources and by deviating from their original, registered line of business, the plaint said. They started routing

their transactions to collect payments from a different business named "Powerbank", an app listed in Google Playstore, cyber police said in a

in this regard on June 10. "All the ministries/ departments are requested to take steps to curtail all avoidable non-scheme expenditure and aim for

However, expenditure related to containment of

The memorandum said,

Besides, expenditures related to publications, other administrative

accrue to the government due to this move cannot be exactly ascertained. This is the second year in a row that the govern-ment has come out with measures to rationalise

Saturday said they have busted a ₹290 crore plus scam that involved duping As chair of the G7, the UK invited India, people through a mobile app after promising attractive interest on investment and two Chinese nationals were among the nine

business man with proximity to Chinese 'hawala' operators, they said. Cyber crime division of CID said it has arrested accused persons, includ-

two Tibetans and five others acting as directors of

Fake docs employed in MP Covid hospitals, says police

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, JUNE 12

The special task force (STF) of Madhya Pradesh police, on Saturday, launched a drive to identify imposters serving as doctors in private Covid hospitals in the state.

The move comes in the wake of the arrest of two 'fake' doctors employed by two private Covid hospitals in Jabalpur in the

The two imposters, identified as Neeraj Sahu (26) and Jatindra Singh Thakur (26), were arrested on charges of involvement in black marketing of life saving drug Remdesivir

recently.

They were serving as doctors in two private Covid hospitals, Life Medicity Hospital and Ashish Hospital, in

THE TWO imposters, identified as Neeraj Sahu (26) and Jatindra Singh Thakur (26), were arrested on charges of involvement in black marketing of life saving drug Remdesivir recently

THEY WERE serving as doctors in two private Covid hospitals, Life Medicity Hospital and Ashish Hospital, in Jabalpur.

uine medical degree cer-tificates. We have ordered the district chief medical health officers to verify the medical degrees of doctors serving in private Covid hospitals following the development," STF superintendent of police Neeraj Soni said.

Investigation by the police has led to disclosure that while Sahu was never balpur.
'We have found that the o' doctors' have no genout after his fourth year in with a nurse of a private hospital in Jabalpur, were

allegedly involved in the racket of stealing the antiviral drug from the hospitals and selling them in the black market when the demand for the lifesaving drug was at its peak in April-May this year.
Meanwhile, the probe into the 'disappearance' of Remdesivir injections from the store room of a

The two imposters, along

government hospital here in April this year has hardly progressed, raising many eyebrows in the official circle here. Around 850 vials of the antiviral drug had disappeared and later surfaced in the store room when the

state government ordered a probe into it. The 'undue' delay in the investigation has given birth to suspicion that efforts were being made to culprits,

FinMin tells govt depts, ministries to cut expenses New Delhi, June 12: The

government has asked all ministries and government departments to target 20 per cent reduction in expenditures like domestic and foreign travel, overtime allowance, rent and office expenses, in the current fiscal year as it tightens its purse strings amid the second wave of the pandemic. The department of expenditure under the finance ministry issued an office memorandum

controllable expendi-ture... Expenditure in 2019-20 may be taken as the baseline for this purpose, the memorandum

the pandemic is excluded from the scope of this order.

ministries should aim to control expenditures like overtime allowance. rewards, domestic and foreign travel, office expenses, rents, rates and taxes, royalty.

expenses, supplies and materials, cost of ration, clothing and tentage, advertising and publicity, minor works and maintenance, service or commitment charges, grantsin-aid general, contribution and other charges,

should also be cut.
The savings that would

Hazardous waste-generating units in India increase by 3.5%

AKSHAYA KUMAR **SAHOO** BHUBANESWAR/NEW **DELHI. JUNE 12**

Even as biomedical waste (BMW) generation in India grew from 559 tonnes per day to 619 tonnes per day between 2017 and 2019, the per-centage of treated BMW dropped from 92.8 per cent to 88 per cent, CSE director general Sunita Narain said on Saturday.

With 69 per cent untreated BMW, Bihar remained the worst offender. Similarly, with 47 per cent untreated Karnataka emerged as the second offender,

Narain said "During the same period, the number of authorised healthcare facilities in the country almost doubled to 1,53,885 from 84,805. But the number of unauthorised healthcare facilities also rose from 57,010 to 66.713. "On the other hand. while the number of hazardous waste generating units in the country increased by 3.5 per cent,

hazardous waste generation has gone down by almost 7 per cent," she said, quoting statistics brought to light in CSE's (Centre for Science and Environment) e-publica-

Cadets participate in the Passing out Parade of Indian Armys Technical Entry Scheme (TES) course at Secunderabad in Hyderabad on Saturday.

The publication highlights the challenges posed by improper dis-posal of dangerous wastes—in particular biomedical waste-in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. India's 'State

Environment in Figures

2021,' as the e-publication is titled, is an annual compendium of data and statistics on key issues of environment and development. The report also snows related biomedical waste generation during the second wave. It says, produced 139 "India tonnes per day of Covidrelated biomedical waste in April 2021 as the country braced against the second wave. In May 2021, the figure escalated to 203 tonnes per day, an increase of 46 per cent."

Suspected China spy sent to jail for 6 days

RAJIB CHOWDHURI

The Chinese national,

Han Junwe, arrested by the BSF for sneaking through the India-Bangladesh border in Malda on June 10, was sent to 6 days custody by a district court on Saturday. The 36-vear-old man from Hubei was handed over to the district police following his marathon interrogation by various central agencies. He was under Foreigners Act, said St

(Malda) Alok Rajoria. On Saturday when Han was produced at the Malda district court, the police sought a seven-day remand for Gyanendra Dewang, lawyer of the accused, however, opposed the plea submitting that his client failed to find the border between two countries in

■ New Delhi seeks to be impleaded as party in Choksi case

India approaches Dominica HC

has approached the Dominica High Court seeking to be impleaded as a party in the case filed by lawyers of absconding businessman Mehul Choksi whose bail was rejected by the High Court after a five hour long hearing, sources said here.

The CBI and external affairs ministry sought to implead in the Habeas Corpus matter, which seeks return of Choksi to Antigua and Barbuda, by filing two affidavits in Dominica High Court, officials said here.

The central agency is likely to focus on establishing criminal culpability of

New Delhi. June 12: India Choksi, his fugitive status. pending warrants against him, Red Notice and charge sheets while the external affairs ministry will argue that Choksi continues to be an Indian citizen, they said. The affi-davits, if admitted by the HC, will pave way for noted lawyer Harish Salve to plead India's case

Dominica, they said. On Friday, Dominica High Court, in a separate matter, had denied bail to Choksi calling him a flight risk after a five-hour-long court proceeding through

video conferencing.

Justice Wynante Adrien-Roberts ruled that "the court cannot impose any



Mehul Choksi

condition that will assure Choksi will not abscond," Dominica News online reported from the island country.

Choksi's lawyers vehemently sought bail arguing that allegations of "illegal entry" should be discarded because as "a Caribbean Community (CARICOM) citizen, he is entitled to

such benefits since his allege offense is not of a serious nature", the report said. The team was ready for stringent bail conditions to be imposed by the High Court besides offering "any amount' for bail set by the Court, it said.

The counsels also cited poor health condition to argue that he was not a flight risk. Dominica government's legal team led by the acting Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) Sherma Dalrymple cited pending Interpol Red Notice, extradition proceedings in the Antiguan court as reasons which could see Choksi fleeing the island nation.

GST reduced on Covid, black fungus medicines

■ Continued from Page 1 for them," Bajaj said Council largely agreed to go with GoM's recommendation...," Ms Sitharaman said while briefing reporters after the 44th GST Council meeting here.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate on Covid vachowever, retained at 5 per cent as the Council felt that majority of the vaccine procurement was being done by the Centre and given free to people.

"Central government is purchasing 75 per cent and is paying GST also. But the impact of this GST on people will be nil since people would be getting vaccines free of cost at government hospitals. Centre is purchasing and it is given free to people,' Ms Sitharaman said.

Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said vaccines would continue to attract 5 per cent rate and the GST Council discussed that the Centre is purchasing all the vaccines -at least 75 per cent is being purchased by the Centre. "The GST will also be borne by the Centre. But out of the income from GST, 70 per cent will be shared with the states... As far as people are concerned who are coming to get their inoculation done, it is tax free. It is not an issue with the people, they are not paying any tax, cost of

the vaccine. So it is free

He said the notification of lower GST rates would be issued "tomorrow or day after". While GST on

Tocilizumab and Amphotericin B is slashed to nil from 5 per cent, the rate on Remdesivir and anticoagulants like Heparin is lowered from 12 per cent to 5 per cent. GST rate on ambulance has been cut to 12 per cent from 28 per cent. Tax on medical grade oxygen, oxygen concentrator (including personal imports), ventilators, BiPAP machines and high flow nasal cannula (HFNC) devices has been cut to 5 per cent from 12 percent.

Also, tax on Covid testing kits, pulse oximeters (including personal has been imports) brought down to 5 per cent from 12 percent. Hand sanitisers, temperature check equipment, gas/electric furnaces for crematoriums too will attract a lower 5 per cent tax, compared to 18 per cent earlier.

In the previous meeting of the GST Council on May 28, taxes on Covid-19 vaccines and medical were supplies unchanged after the BJP-Opposition-ruled states sparred over whether the tax cut benefits will reach the common man. An 8-member GoM, under Sangma, was set up to recommend a

GOODS AND Services Tax (GST) rate on Covid vaccines was, however, retained at 5 per cent as the Council felt that majority of the vaccine procurement was being done by the Centre and given free to people GST rate on Covid essen-

The other members of the GoM are Gujarat Deputy chief minister Nitinbhai Maharashtra deputy minister Goa transport Pawar. minister Mauvin Godinho, finance minis-Kerala (K.N. Balagopal), Odisha (Niranjan Pujari), (T. Harish Telangana Rao) and UP (Suresh Kr Khanna). To a query on Congress saying that they were not made part of the GoM, Sitharaman said, "... I don't want to com-ment on what was said outside. In the Council, the three Congress ministers said that in the future at least you should consider having us in GoM. The selection into a GoM is never made on party basis, neither is the exclusion. There are several GoMs and several ministers are made members of the GoM. All states are given representation in one or the other

GoM. Neither the inclu-

sion, nor the exclusions

happen on political party

affiliations." Industry chamber PHDCCI said the calibrated reduction in the rates of GST on Covid relief essentials will go a long way in treating Covid cases and to provide required relief for treatment of infec-

"PHDCCI looks forward to the continued reform measures by the government to mitigate the daunting impact of Covid on people and to make India free from the pandemic," it said in a statement. EY Tax Partner Abhishek Jain said the majority population will not be affected on account of no GST rate cut on Covid vaccines as most people are opting for free of cost vaccinations from the government.

'For the limited few considering getting vaccinated at the private hospitals, the 5 per cent GST will continue to be a cost," Jain added.

Deloitte India Partner Mahesh Jaising said with a growing demand for vaccines, while a deemed export option could have resulted in zero taxes for domestic vaccines, the GoM seems to have taken a balanced approach of retaining it at 5 per cent. "This is particularly as the GST credit chain is not broken and in any case, a significant portion vaccine procurements is by the government itself," he said.

Govt approves declassification, publication of war records

■ Continued from Page 1

The requirement of hav-

ing war histories written with a clear-cut policv on declassification of war records was recommended by Committee headed by Subrahmanyam as well as the N.N. Vohra Committee in order to analyse lessons learnt and prevent future mistakes. After the Kargil War. GoM recommendations on national security also mentioned the desirability of authoritative war history.

The new policy mandates the constitution of a committee headed by a joint secretary in the defence ministry that will comprise representatives of the Services, external affairs, home affairs and other organisations and prominent military historians (if required) for compilation of war and operations histories. The committee should be formed within two years of completion of a war or operations.

"The committee will consider, and take a view on earlier wars and operations," said a senior official on the Henderson Brooks-Bhagat report.

Roy plotting 'ghar wapsi' of 10 BJP MLAs, 1 MP? ■ Continued from Page 1

are very clever. They make moves judging the wind. But the BJP does not move on Ayaram-Gayaram. Time has come for the dust to go. We are now standing by those party workers who are facing attacks."

Meanwhile, Mr Mukul Roy and his son Shubhrangshu said that they have written to the Union home ministry to withdraw the Central forces' security cover offered to them. While Mr Roy was given Z-category protection by 22 CRPF commandos, his son was given Y-category cover.

They have been provided the same security cover by Mamata Banerjee's government after their return to the Trinamul Congress. However, the Central forces' cover was vet to be withdrawn from Mr Roy till afternoon.

In the evening, BJP leader Rajib Banerjee, who has been wanting to return to the Trinamul Congress and has slammed his present party for attacking chief minister Banerjee, met TMC general secretary Kunal Ghosh at his residence. He called the meeting a "courtesy" call.

Disgruntled Pilot parked in Delhi to get Cabinet dues

■ Continued from Page 1 incharge of Rajasthan Ajay Maken said, "Vacant

positions in the Cabinet, boards and commissions would be filled soon and we are in talks with all. I am speaking to Pilotji on a regular basis. Had he been angry, he would not be speaking to me."

The three-member highpowered committee included Ajay Maken, K.C. Venugopal and the late Ahmed Patel. The Pilot camp is upset that it is going to be a year and

yet no visible change has taken place in the state. The Congress found itself pushed into a corner last year when Jyotiraditya Scindhia left the party and toppled the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh. This week another young turk the party, Prasada, also quit the Congress to join the BJP. At this point the high command wants no more desertions, especially somebody of the level of Mr Pilot.



THE ASIAN AGE

13 JUNE 2021



Sanjeev Ahluwalia

Off the beaten track

The morality of stock markets

ndian stock markets look like "mushroom rocks", top-heavy and delicately balanced, just waiting to be tipped over by bad news, of which there is plenty. Investors, whose stocks are part of the on-going bull-run starting February 2021, could not care less having gained ₹11 trillion, since May 24.

This bonanza of wealth accretion, for the less than 15 per cent of households who own stocks, contrasts with increasing penury for most others from the economic and health depredations of the second wave of Covid-

It is hypocritical, however, to wring our hands in anguish because a few have become richer whilst the majority, particularly those in the bottom three quintiles are struggling. Gunnar Myrdal "hash tagged" India as a 'dual economy" in 1968, in his seminal work *Asian Drama*.

Admittedly, much has changed since then. The urban, modern part of the economy has expanded significantly but so has inequity. Rapid wealth accretion at the pinnacle — an outcome of the 1992 liberalisation which unleashed entrepreneurship and economic growth — remains unmatched by enhanced living standards for the middle class, though, till the pandemic struck, poverty in the bottom two quintile had reduced significant-

ly.

The stock market is not a useful proxy for economic welfare. It tracks the well-being of an elitist minority in the formal sector, albeit with trick-le down benefits. But it is a real-time, high visibility metric of govern-ment's performance in partially liberalised economies like India, where government continues to be an intrusive economic agent via state owned companies and financial institutions, administered pricing and capital

India's exchange rate regulator — the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) strives to keep the exchange rate stable, except for adjustments reflecting the difference across currencies in the rate of inflation, which, RBI is mandated to keep within a float of two percentage points below or above the norm of four per cent per year. Presently we are scraping the underside of the upper bound.

Sound inflation management and eco
Savvy youngsters, with

Savvy youngsters, with

this. They try and build capital through the

volatile cryptocurrency

exchanges worth \$750

million — an extra-legal play. Retail 'crypto

spending ₹0.4 million.

mining' requires

cash to spare, know

nomic growth attracts foreign investors, who have invested ₹Rs 25 trillion in India or 13 per cent of the market capitalisation. These funds are important. They help us plug the foreign exchange gap because we

chronically export less than we import.
The eco-system within which stocks are traded and fortunes won or lost, is regulated by the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) since April 1992. On the demand side are 41 million registered investors — individuals and entities — of

which 9,823 are foreign portfolio investors and 45,000 domestic companies. On the supply side 5,600 companies supply the bonds and equity traded publicly through 1,343 stockbrokers. Over 400 portfolio management entities and mutual funds, intermediate the

The market capitalisation of ₹212 trillion was 107 per cent of the GDP in 2019-20 at current prices and around 2.4 per cent of the global market capitalisation (SEBI 2019-20).

The Bombay Stock Exchange was the first. It has operated from 1875. Since then, 20 other exchanges were established but have shut shop voluntarily or like the Calcutta Stock Exchange are under litigation to do so.

Back then primary goods like opium, indigo and cotton were traded. Today, Bombay is Mumbai, and the renamed BSE, no longer deals with commodities, for which there are specialised exchanges. 84 per cent of the capital raised in 2019-20, was by telecom, finance and electronics related firms. In 1992 the National Stock Exchange (NSE) became a competitor

exchange for domestic trading. Stock markets however remains a fairly "clubby" business. Of the ₹0.8 trillion of equity raised in 2019-20 just per cent while 64 others accounted for the residual 4.3 per cent.

Consider also, the constricted geographic spread from where the funds are sourced. BSE raises 51 per cent of funds from Mumbai, 17 per cent from the National Capital Region, 15 per cent from 18 other cities and the residual 17 per cent from the rest of the country. The newer National Stock Exchange is even more exclusive, relying on the twenty largest cities for 87 per cent for the funds.

Stock trading as an urban phenomenon is not unique to India. Happily, digital trading, allows anyone in remote areas with a smart phone, to link into licensed trading platforms. It already accounts for 12 per cent of the transactions and is the hope for democratising market access.

But democratising capital gains is tougher than democratising access.

Capital intensive competitive "games" have a funneling effect where the biggest players benefit disproportionately. Savvy youngsters, with cash to spare, know this. They try and build capital through the volatile cryptocurrency exchanges worth \$750 million — an extra-legal play. Retail "crypto mining" requires spending ₹0.4 million. One computer — a tireless digital slave — can meet household expenses, in a throwback to the leisurely late 19th century, prior to slavery abolition.

Stock markets are as amoral as shopping malls. They make affordable money available for implementing business plans, make companies accountable and spread business gains widely, though transparency should be enhanced, and indiscretions sanctioned better. The trick is to keep regulation light-handed to attract more companies to the exchanges. The compulsory spend from profits on corporate social responsibility is bad regulation whilst taxing capital gains, to fund income redistribution to the have-nots, is good.

The writer is adviser, Observer Research Foundation

Subhani



Curb your enthusiasm, someone tell Dhankhar



Pavan K. Varma

Chanakya's View

body please tell His Excellency, Mahamahi m, the governor of West Bengal, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, that he is crossing all the lines of Constitutional propriety? Dhankhar Saheb is under the mistaken impression, it would seem, that he is ensconced in the palatial Raj Bhavan as a repre-sentative of the BJP to which he belonged prior to being plucked out and made the Mahamahim. It is a lethal misapprehen-sion, although to be fair to him, it has possessed other governors too in the past cutting across party lines. But, the degree to which degree to which Dhankharji appears to have become partisan, and the blatancy of his partisanship, sets a new benchmark of gubernato-

Articles 155 and 156 of the Constitution lay down clearly where the loyalties of a governor should lie. Article 155 says: "The governor of a state shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal." Article 156 declares: "The governor shall hold office during the pleasure of the President." The position therefore, crystal clear. A governor is the representative of the President of India. He has to then be, like the President, above all party politics, and independent of any political loyalties that may have guided him in the past. Dhankhar was an active member of the BJP for decades, and had represented the party both in the Rajasthan legislature and the Lok Sabha. It is understandable then that his fidelity to his politi-cal alma mater is deep and abiding. However, once he assumed the office of the governor, he is bound, under the express provisions of the Constitution, to tran-scend such old loyalties and play his role with impartiality and dignity.

I have worked in Rashtrapati Bhavan as the press secretary to two

Presidents of India, Shri R. Venkataraman and Shankar Dayal Sharma. I still remember that in very first meeting with President Venkataraman, his first instruction to me was that the President of India does not comment on the day-to-day functioning of government. "I do not want publicity," he said to me, especially that which brings into question my political impartiality." Shankar Dayal Sharma also did not give — with one exception perhaps a single interview to the media. These were stellar precedents. They reinforced the fact that the President remained resolutely above the political fray, and intervened only during a genuine Constitutional crisis, when — as Venkatraman used to say — the power of the presidency comes alive but only like an

emergency lamp. Governors, appointed by the President, and holding office only at his pleasure, must model themselves on this kind of principled restraint. However, Mr Dhankhar has almost become a continuous voice in the political discourse. He tweets much too frequently. He gives media interviews. And, he is

forever ready to go public demned. It is true also that the governor can legitimately be conon every issue, instead of resorting to the discreet cerned about a deterioraback channel ways in which a Constitutional head should communi-cate with a duly elected tion in the law and order situation. But there is a sustainable perception that Governor saheb is democratic government. As per the conventions of only exercised on those the high office he holds, issues which fit into the his actions border on the BJP agenda. His interventions, therefore, become a kind of parti-san hectoring where it almost seems that he is adventurous. In an unprecedented manner, at the time of the swearing in of Mamata Banerjee, the newly electbatting for the BJP ed chief minister of the state, he launched into a speech, delivering a pub-lic homily — bordering on a reprimand — on the rather than following the impartiality code befitting his position.
Frankly, I am a little surprised that the need for her to control law and order. This very message could have been

conveyed — if he was so keen that it should — to

the chief minister in a

private conversation. Similarly, in spite of the

express advice to the contrary of the elected gov-

ernment, he broke con-

vention by going off on a

tour of the areas where

alleged violence had taken place against BJP workers. Dhankharji has

also made it a habit to

summon senior officers

of the state government

to brief him. Technically,

he may be within his rights to do so, but doing

so on every occasion, and

then publicly berating

the officers and the state

government if they don't

satisfy his exacting and peremptory fiats, hardly appears to be becoming

True, violence and law-

lessness of any kind,

including against BJP

workers, needs to be

actions, to my mind.

constitute a fit case

Kovind to take suo

motu initiative to

counterpart. The

from the past...

endeavour should

always be to learn

for the Raj Bhavan.

unequivocally

Dhankharji's

for President

counsel his

state-level

President of India has not as yet taken cognisance of the unconventional, undesirable and unprecedented behaviour of his appointee. Dhankharji's actions, to my mind, constitute a fit case for President Kovind to take suo motu initiative to counsel his state-level counterpart. It is not as if governors in the past have not acted in a partial manner. But the endeavour should be to learn from the past, and ensure that in our maturing democracy such mistakes are not repeated in the future. has already done great damage to several of our

institutions. It should seriously ponder on the advisability of justifying the behaviour of Mr Dhankhar. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Tomorrow, if they are on the other side of the fence, would they like a governor who in terms of both optics and substance has thrown all constitutional reticence to the winds, and is openly partial to those who rule at Delhi? The fire of wrong precedents must be doused. Otherwise, in the future, it can burn your house and mine, and the Constitution of

The writer, an author and a former diplomat, is in politics

LETTERS

SAIKIA DREAMING

Congrats to Shubho Paul, barefoot teenage footballer from Saikia, West Bengal, whose brother, Raja Paul, gave up his own soccer dream to support his talent. Shubho, who would go to training grounds on a borrowed cycle, is now set to travel to Bayern Munich to play against U-19 teams in the Bundesliga. It was his coach Tapan Karmakar who first took Shubho's talent seriously. Shubho counts among his fans Kolkata legend Chima

Priyanka Mathur

INCREDIBLE DJOKER

Okorie who gifted him

his first boots and none

other than West Bengal

CM Mamata Banerjee.

Go, Shubho!

IN THEIR 58TH career clash. Djokovic triumphed 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 against 13-time French Open champion Rafael Nadal and stayed on course to capture a 19th major and become the first man in over 50 years to win all four Slams twice. It is Nadal's third defeat in 16 years and 108 matches at Roland Garros. Will the Djoker make good? However, the real find of the tournament has been the Italian teenager, Lorenzo Musetti, who took two sets off the world no. 1 in the pre-quarters before forfeiting on a whim.

Sankar Paul Chakdaha, West Bengal

DIDI TAKES A BOW

IT IS NO SURPRISE THAT those who defected to the BJP from the Trinamul Congress party are returning to the fold, the latest being BJP MLA Mukul Roy, national vice-president. Rumours are rife that BJP MP Shantanu Thakur and three more BJP MLA s, namely, Biswajit Das, Ashok Kitania and Subrata Thakur who stayed away from state BJP president Dilip Ghosh's district organisational meeting are rejoining the TMC. With this, Ms Banerjee has roundly snubbed the PM's ambitions to conquer her state and is now thumbing her nose at him. **Tharcius S. Fernando**

TRAITORS WILL PAY

THOSE TRAITORS who left the grand old Congress Party and joined the BJP should not be taken back if after the soon-to-be-held reshuffle they remain empty-handed. The rultion of not favouring turncoats. The Congress, on the other hand, should hold inner-party elections to restore democracy in its ranks and redeem its faltering image before the people of the land.

Bhagwan Thadani

DILIP KUMAR HOME

IT IS WONDERFUL to know that Bollywood actor Dilip Kumar is back home after spending close to a week hospital in Mumbai. Undoubtedly, it's a great relief for all movie lovers as they were spending their days anxiously after the living legend of Indian cinema was admitted in the hospital with breathing issues. One hopes that the 98-yearold actor will be completely fit within a few days.

Sourish Misra Kolkata

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

Katyal **Political Gup-Shup**



UP rumblings: Yogi's men bank on Modi to allay 2022 ticket fears

hen the BJP dispatched senior leaders B.L. Sant-osh and Radha Mohan Singh to Lucknow earlier this month to get feedback about the handling of the coronavirus pandemic by the Yogi Adityanath government, it was expected that they would meet with all legislators. But Mr Santosh and Mr Singh met only a section of ministers and state party leaders after which CM Yogi Adityanath was given a clean chit for successfully tackling the second wave of Covid infections. Already upset with Yogi Adityanath's style of functioning, this led to further resentment among the BJP legislators who hoped to get an audience with the leaders so that they could apprise them of their grievances. The party's MLAs are unhappy as they feel neglected by the chief minister who, they maintain, depends solely on the bureaucracy. The MLAs have reason to worry as many of them were imported from other political parties before the last Assembly polls and with the next election coming up in early 2022, they are not sure if they will have to make way for fresh entrants. They were,

therefore, keen to apprise the BJP leadership about the hurdles they face in addressing the demands of their constituents, before they are axed for their non-performance. They are hoping Yogi's meetings with the Prime Minister and home minister Amit Shah will yield positive results.

mage management has been on top of the Modi government's agenda. The Centre first came in for severe criticism from the domestic and international media for not anticipating the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic. Even as the government's spin doctors were in the midst of handling this negative commentary, the government was pulled up by the Supreme Court which described its vaccine policy as "arbitrary and irrational". Going into damage control mode, Prime Minister Modi announced a centralised procurement of vaccines and free doses to all in his address to the nation on June 7. Following this announcement, the government's spin doctors were again on the job. Friendly" media-persons were informally told that the Prime Minister

had actually given in-principle approval for centralised free vaccine on June 1, two days before the Supreme Court's observations. Subsequently, the chosen journalists put out identical tweets giving the

t is no secret that Gandhi loyalist Jitin Prasada was set to join the BJP two years ago but was dissuaded from leaving the Congress by Rahul Gandhi and other senior party leaders. According to the political grapevine, Mr Prasada decided to switch sides now as he had fallen out with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress general secretary in charge of Uttar Pradesh, who did not include him in the state unit's activities. With Assembly elections coming up early next year, Mr Prasada apparently thought this was the most opportune moment to leave. When the young leader was given charge of poll-bound West Bengal earlier this year, everyone believed Mr Prasada was back in favour even though he was among the signatories to the letter seeking radical changes in the Congress organisation. But, it appe-

ars this appointment was meant to ensure Mr Prasada's absence from UP, Plus, he was deliberately given this "punishment" assignment in which he was bound to fail.

India.

Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh looks set to emerge victorious in the ongoing battle with his bete noire Navjot Singh Sidhu, he will have to thank his wife and Patiala MP Preneet Kaur for the final outcome. The chief minister or Captain, as he is called, deputed Preneet Kaur to speak with the dissident leaders. Unlike the Captain, Preneet Kaur is considered more approachable and consequently it was easier for her to talk to the rebels. If reports are to be believed, her efforts have paid off as the majority of state leaders who were summoned by the three-member panel set up by Congress president Sonia Gandhi to resolve the Punjab imbroglio, were not in favour of replacing Amarinder Singh. The rebels basically want their concerns to be addressed. The truth is that this rebellion was never about a change in leadership but it was to ensure

that those perceived to be in the anti-Captain camp were not ignored during ticket distribution in next year's Assembly polls.

nable to travel due to the coronavirus pandemic, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has stepped up her presence on social media. She has, however, changed trajectory in recent months. Instead of focussing on issues pertaining to Uttar Pradesh, she has also started attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the Centre's vaccine policy, the shortage of oxygen and general handling of the coronavirus pandemic. But her numerous tweets, video messages and Facebook posts taking on Mr Modi have been ignored by the BJP which is usually quick to respond sharply to Rahul Gandhi's tweets. The BJP obviously does not wish to take the focus away from Rahul Gandhi considering its campaign to project the Nehru-Gandhi scion as an immature leader has met with resounding success.

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JAN. 6 CAPITOL ATTACK: CHICAGO COP CHARGED

Chicago, June 12: A Chicago with breaching the US Capitol and entering a senator's office during the January 6 insurrection. Karol Chwiesiuk, 29, was arrested on Friday and faces five misdemeanour counts, including entering a restricted building, disrupting govern-ment business and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds with the intent to impede a congressional proceeding.

Prosecutors allege in a criminal complaint that Chwiesiuk was among a mob of people who broke into and damaged the office of Sen. Jeff Merkley, an Oregon Democrat. They say that days before he travelled to Washington to attend a rally of ex-President Donald Trump.

BOMBS HIT 2 MINIVANS IN KABUL, 7 DEAD

Kabul, June 12: Separate bombs hit two minivans in a mostly Shiite neighbourhood in the Afghan capital Saturday, killing at least seven people and wounding six others, the Interior Ministry said.

The attacks targeted minivans on the same road about 2 kilometres apart in a neighbo-urhood in western Kabul, Interior Ministry deputy spokesman Ahmad Zia Zia, said.

It wasn't immediately clear what type of bombs were used and no one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks. The Islamic State group has carried out similar bombings in the area, including four attacks on four minivans earlier this month that killed at least 18 people.

13 HURT IN DOWNTOWN AUSTIN SHOOTING

Austin (US), June 12: A shooting in a busy entertainment district in downtown Austin, Texas injured 13 people early Saturday, and police said the suspected shooter was not in

Two of the injured people were in critical condition but as of the news conference at 4am local time, no one had died, interim Austin Police Chief Joseph Chacon said. Gunfire erupted just before 1:30 am along 6th Street, a popular area filled with bars and restaurants. The street was barricaded to keep out vehicle traffic at the time of the shooting, Chacon said. Eleven of the injured people were taken to one local hospital, another person was taken to a different hospital, and the other person went to an urgent care facility with

SAUDI CAPS HAJ TO 60K, BARS **FOREIGNERS**

Riyadh, June 12: Saudi Arabia announced Saturday it will allow 60,000 residents vaccinated against Covid to perform this year's haj, but Muslims from abroad will be barred for a second straight year.

The haj — a must for ablebodied Muslims at least once in their lives — typically packs millions of pilgrims into congested religious sites and could be a major source of contagion amid the Coronavirus pandemic. This year it would be "open for nationals and residents of the kingdom, limited to 60,000 pilgrims", the haj ministry said, quoted by the official Saudi Press Agency.

The pilgrimage, scheduled to be held in July, would be limited to those who have been vaccinated and are aged 18-65 with

no chronic illnesses, it said.
Only up to 10,000 Muslims took part in the haj in July last year, a far cry from the 2.5 million who participated in the five-day annual pilgrimage in 2019 before the pandemic.

"In light of what the whole world is witnessing with the Coronavirus pandemic... and the emergence of new variants, the relevant authorities have continued to monitor the global health situation," the health ministry said.

"Considering the large crowds that perform haj, spending long periods of time in multiple and specific places... requires the highest levels of health precautions." Saudi Arabia said those wishing to perform the haj would have to apply online, without specifying how many foreign residents would be among the 60,000 pilgrims.

In 2020, foreigners were 70 percent of the pilgrims, while Saudis made up the rest.

The kingdom said later that it had informed other countries of the decision not to allow pilgrims from abroad. "There was great understanding," its deputy hajj minister, Abdulfattah bin Sulaiman Mashat, said.



Activists from the climate change protest group Extinction Rebellion, dressed in red robes and known as the Red Brigade, demonstrate in Falmouth, Cornwall during the G7 summit on Saturday.

G7 gives a taste of Nov. **Glasgow climate meet**

UK mobilising allies amid environmental groups' pressure

Brexit spat between UK, EU ahead of the COP26 conference in November in Glasgow amid pressure over N. Ireland clouds meet

ps to make the meeting London, June 12: British The climate emergency, with the Covid-19 pandem-Prime Minister Boris Johnson held meetings with ic, is high on the agenda at German Chancellor Angethe summit for wealthy la Merkel and French Prenations in bucolic Cornsident Emmanuel Macron wall in southwest England on Saturday on the sidethis weekend.
On Friday, British Prime
Minister Boris Johnson
restated his aim of a "grlines of a G-7 summit, as post-Brexit turbulence strains relations between Britain and the EU.

Carbis Bay, June 12: Britain is using its G7 summit to mobilise allies

from environmental grou-

een industrial revolution'

to meet environmental ch-

allenges and create jobs af-

ter the global health crisis.

Both the optics of the summit as well as its politics

are important for Britain,

which hosts the UN cli-

mate change conference in

Scotland in November. "The UK has a serious mo-ral responsibility to lead

the way on climate and

nature both as a big histor-

ical emitter of carbon but

also as the host of those

enpeace UK's head of poli-

tics Repecca Newsom said.

action, otherwise our world leaders are failing us,"

she said. Greenpeace rele-

ased a striking video for

the occasion, deploying

300 drones to form animal

"We need to see proper

Gre-

big conferences.

After Britain's top diplomat accused the EU of taking a bloody-minded approach to relations, Johnson also met the bloc's leaders, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel, at the Carbis Bay resort where G-7 leaders are

gathering. The two sides are locked

action on biodiversity as

well as the climate.
The summit also played

nost to a series of demon-

strations with protesters

vying for attention. Oxfam

activists wore masks showing the faces of the summit's leaders while

others, urging Japan to

stop burning coal, dressed

shapes in the sky and urge as giant Pokemon charac- President Biden has cha-

ic feud over Northern Ireland, the only part of the UK that has a land border with the bloc.

The EU is angry at British delay in implementing new checks on some goods coming into Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK required under the terms of Britain's divorce from the bloc.

Britain says the checks are imposing a big burden on businesses and desta-bilising Northern Ireland's hard-won peace.

The spat has drawn in US President Joe Biden, who is concerned about the potential threat to Northern Ireland's peace accord. Von der Leyen tweet-

the demonstrators awav

from the leaders' meetings

in the seaside resort of

Carbis Bay. Only Extinction Rebellion protesters

briefly breached one

"We're hopeful that (US)

ter Pikachu.

police cordon.

in an escalating diplomat- ed after meeting Johnson that Northern Ireland peace was paramount, and the binding Brexit agreement protected it.

We want the best possible relations with the UK. Both sides must implement what we agreed on. There is complete EU unity on this, she said.

The EU is threatening legal action if the UK does not fully bring in the checks, which include a ban on chilled meats such as sausages from England, Scotland and Wales going to Northern Ireland starting next month.

It says Britain must fully implement the agreement, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol.

nged the dynamic on cli-Overwhelmingly, strict mate change and that we security measures kept will see the ambitious targets that we need from the G7," said Oxfam campaigner Max Lawson. Johnson is pushing for G7 countries to halve their

carbon emissions by 2030 to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Delta variant may delay Britain's unlock process

London, June 12: The UK government is considering a delay of up to four weeks from the scheduled June 21 end to all lockdown restrictions amid a continuing rise in cases of the Delta variant of Covid-19, according to a media report on Saturday. It comes as the Saturday, It comes as the country reported 8,125 new Covid-19 cases in a 24-hour period, another record daily high since the end of February, and Public Health England (PHE) found that infections from the Delta vari tions from the Delta variant — the B1.617.2 variant of concern (VOC) first identified in India – rose by nearly 30,000 in a week

Downing Street sources said that no final decision has been made yet and that several options are being evaluated as the lat-est data is studied before UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson makes a scheduled announcement regarding lockdown on Monday. The British Medical Association (BMA) is among some of the leading public healthcare groups and officials calling for a delay to the planned easing of all lockdown restrictions on June 21, dubb-ed "Freedom Day" as it would see all legal limits on social contact removed. Pushing the date back by a few weeks is intended to allow the country's vaccination programme to take greater effect, as the rollout moves through to younger age groups and the older age groups get covered with their

Italy limits AZ vax to over-60s

Rome, June 12: Italy said Saturday it would restrict the AstraZeneca vaccine ger people who have already received one dose to complete the cycle with an

The change follows an improvement in Coronavirus infection rates in Italy, which has been devastated by the pandemic but will next week lift restrictions in much of the country following a sharp dec-

The EU's medicine agency in April drew a link between rare blood clots and AstraZeneca jabs but stressed that the benefits of the vaccines outweighed the risks.

The changed epidemiological situation has led to reassessment of the risk-benefit ratio for age groups less at risk of severe forms of Covid-19," the Italian government's Technical and Scientific Committee (CTS) said.

Pandemic origin: China, US clash

Beijing, June 12: Top US and Chinese diplomats appear to have had another sharply worded exchange, with Beijing saying it told the US to cease interfering in its internal affairs and accusing Washington of politicising the search for the origin of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi and Secretary of State Antony Blinken held a phone call Friday that revealed

and the mass detention of Muslims in the northwestern Xinjiang region.

Calls for a more thorough investigation into the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19 are particularly sensitive for China because of suggestions that it might have have escaped from a laboratory in the central city of Wuhan.

In Russia, 47% spike in a week

Moscow, June 12: Russia's national Coronavirus taskforce on Saturday reported that the country's tally of daily new infec-tions has risen by nearly 50 per cent over the past week and more than doubled in Moscow.

It said there were 13,510 infections recorded in the previous day, sharply higher than the 9,163 reported on June 6. Nearly half the new cases were in Moscow — 6.701 compared with 2,936 a week ago.

Faced with the spiking ngures, Moscow autnorities said enforcement of mask- and glove-wearing on mass transit, in stores and in other public places would be strengthened and that violators could face fines of up to 5,000 rubles (\$70).

For the entire pandemic period, the task force has reported nearly 5.2 million infections in the country of about 146 million people, and 126,000 deat-

However, a report from the state statistics agency Rosstat on Friday found more than 144,000 virusrelated deaths last year alone.

The statistics agency, unlike the taskforce, counts fatalities in which Coronavirus infection was present or suspected but is not the main cause of death.

The agency's report found about 340,000 more people died in 2020 than in 2019; it did not give details of the causes of the higher year-on-year death toll.

The higher death toll and a lower number of births combined to make an overall population decline of 702,000, about twice the decline in 2019. Rosstat said.

INDIA OVER WAIVING TRIPS United Nations, June 12:

UN CHIEF BACKS

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has extended support to India and South Africa's initiative at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to waive intellectual property protection for Covid-19 vaccines and products, though he cautioned that "technology transfer" must be backed up by "technical support". India has worked with South Africa and other partners at the WTO to seek a relaxation in the norms of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Prope rty Rights (TRIPS) agreement to ensure quick and affordable access to vaccines and medicines for developing countries during the Covid-19 pandemic. "I support the initiative that was taken by South Africa and by India in relation to TRI-PS, waving TRIPS regulations," he said. -PTI

INDIA SAYS IT

WANTS NORMAL

United Nations, June 12:

India has said it desires "normal" neighbourly

relations with all co-

untries, including Pakis-

tan, and asserted that

the onus is on Islamabad

to create a "conducive atmosphere" and not all-

ow its territory to be

used for cross-border te-

rrorism against India in

any manner.

TIES WITH PAK

PIO wins Pulitzer for exposing Muslims' detention in China

New York, June 12: Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, along with two contributors has won the Pulitzer Prize for innovative investigative reports that exposed a vast infrastructure of prisons and mass internment camps secretly built by China for detaining hundreds of thousands of Muslims in its restive Xinjiang region. Rajagopalan from *Buzz*-

Feed News is among two Indian-origin journalists who won the US' top journalism award on Friday. Tampa Bay Times' Neil Bedi won for local reporting. Bedi along with Kathleen McGrory has been awarded the prize for the series exposing a Sheriff's Office initiative that used computer modelling to identify people believed to be future crime suspects.

About 1,000 people were monitored under the programme, including children. Bedi is an investigative reporter for the Tampa Bay Times. "What Kathleen and Neil

unearthed in Pasco County has had a profound impact on the community," said Mark Katches, *Times* executive editor. "This is what the best investigative



Megha Rajagopalan

journalism can do and why it is so essential. Rajagopalan's Xinjiang series won the Pulitzer Prize in the International Reporting category. In 2017, not long after China

began to detain thousands of Muslims in Xinjiang, Rajagopalan was the first to visit an internment camp — at a time when China denied that such places existed, BuzzFeed News said.

"In response, the government tried to silence her, revoking her visa and ejecting her from the country," BuzzFeed News wrote in its entry for the prize. "It would go on to cut off access to the entire Westerners and stymie journalists. The release of basic facts about detainees slowed to a

Keep Brexit word, France urges UK

Carbis Bay, June 12: France on Saturday told United Kingdom Prime Minister Boris Johnson to stick to the terms of the Brexit deal he signed with Europe, amid a standoff over new trading arrangements in Northern Ireland.

Johnson met French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the G7 summit in southwest England, with Brussels angered by Britain's failure to implement border checks on goods.

Johnson in no uncertain terms that the UK should "keep its word" and abide by the terms of the deal he signed with the European Union just last Dece-

Other European leaders attending the summit, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel and EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen, are expected to deliver the same message.

The remarks by Counsellor in India's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, R. Madhu Sudan came at the United Nations General Assembly meeting on 'Report of the Security Council for 2020' on Friday.

"India desires normal neighbourly relations with all countries, including Pakistan. Our consistent position is that issues, if any, between India and Pakistan shou-ld be resolved bilaterally and peacefully, in an atmosphere free of terror, hostility and violence,' Sudan said in the General Assembly.

"The onus is on Pakistan to create such a con-

ducive atmosphere, including by taking credible, verifiable action to not allow any territory under its control to be used for cross-border terrorism against India in any manner," he added.

--PTI

SPACE | PUPS |

Researchers wanted to know if radiation damages reproductive cell DNA

Mouse sperm on ISS produces 168 offspring

Washington, June 12: Turns out the comic books were wrong.

Japanese researchers found mouse sperm exposed to high levels of cosmic radiation for nearly six years produced a large brood of healthy, unre-markable "space pups." Their study was published Friday in Science Advances — which noted no signs so far of Mousezillas or rodent

The sperm was stored in the International Space

Station in freeze-dried form. Once brought back to Earth and rehydrated, it resulted in the birth of 168 young, free of genetic defects. Developmental biologist and lead author Teruhiko Wakayama said on Thursday that there was little difference between mice fertilised by space sperm and sperm that had remained confined to our planet. "All pups had normal

appearance," he said, and when researchers examined their genes "no abnormalities were found." In 2013, Wakayama and colleagues at the University of Yamanashi in Japan launched three boxes, each containing 48 ampoules of freeze-dried sperm, to the ISS for the long-term study. They wanted to determine whether long term exposure to radiation in space would damage DNA in reproductive cells or pass mutations along to off-

That could be a problem for our own species in future space exploration and

colonization missions. Batches were returned to Earth for fertilisation after the first nine months, then after two years, and finally after six years, leading to hundreds of births. Freeze-dried sperm was selected for the experiment because it can be preserved at room temperature, rather than needing a freezer. The ampoules were also

small and very light, about the size of a small pencil, further cutting launch costs. When the space mice reached adulthood, they

were randomly mated and other planets, we will need the next generation to mantain the diversity of the next generation appeared normal as well. Wakayama, now director for Advanced Biotechnology Center at the University of Yamanashi, said he had been inspired by the science fiction of Heinlein and Asimov and once

wanted to be an astronaut. Though he settled on becoming a scientist, the sense of wonder and whimsy about space exploration

"In the future, when the time comes to migrate to

genetic resources, not only for humans but also for pets and domestic animals," Wakayama and colleagues wrote in their paper. "For cost and safety rea-

sons, it is likely that stored germ cells will be transported by spaceships rather than by living animals." Getting to other planets means leaving the safety of Earth's protective atmosphere and magnetic field which also extends to the

British Medal for RKFC coach

New Delhi: David Alexander Robertson, coach of Kashmir's famous football club Real Kashmir FC, has been honoured with **British Empire Medal** (BEM) for his services to the community in the valley and strengthening UK-India relations, a feat he dedicated to the people of Kashmir and the team he has been engaged

According to the list released on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth II's birthday on Friday evening, "Manager, Real Kashmir Football Club, India, receives a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to the community in Kashmir and UK-India relations.

The awards were announced on Saturday by the British government to mark the monarch's official birthday. - PTI

Sterling in Queen's B'day Honours list

London: Manchester City and **England forward Raheem** Sterling was on Friday named in Queen Elizabeth II's Birthday Honours list in recognition of his work to promote racial

equality in sport. The 26-year-old, who has been heavily involved in anti-racism and anti-discrimination campaigns, has been made an MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire). Sterling, a Premier League and League Cup winner with City this season, has been subjected to racial slurs in stadiums and

online during his career. In 2019, he took part in an antiracism campaign, "No Room For Racism" and spoke out last year as the Black Lives Matter movement gained traction following the murder of George Floyd in the United States.

Ace marathoner Mathur no more

New Delhi: India's 1951 Asian Games marathon bronze medal winner and 1952 Olympian Surat Singh Mathur has died of Covid-19 here. He was 90. "My uncle passed away on Friday due to Covid-19. He was an Olympian and also a medal

winner in the first Asian Games," his nephew Anil Mathur said. "He is our Hall of Fame athlete. Rest in peace sir. Thank you for

making #India proud," the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) said in a tweet. Mathur is the first athlete from independent India to complete

an Olympic marathon race, at the 1952 Helsinki Games. inough Chhota Singh was the first runner from independent India to take part in an Olympic marathon event in the 1948 London Games, he could not finish the race. - PTI

Lahiri makes cut at Palmetto golf

Ridgeland, US: Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri managed to make the cut despite carding a disappointing 2-over 73 in the second round of the Palmetto

Championship here. Lahiri, who shot 69 in the opening round, had three bogeys in the last four holes on day two to total an even par 142 and make the cut, which fell at 1-

The Indian, who was tied-31st after the first round, dropped to

Lahiri despite his erratic form has missed more cuts than he deserves to, but this time around, he would heaved a sigh of relief after being inside Top-20 at one point.

Chesson Hadley shot 5-under 66 to take a two-stroke lead over World No. 1 Dustin Johnson. - PTI

Embiid scores as Sixers pin Hawks

Los Angeles: Joel Embiid finished with 27 points, nine rebounds and eight assists as the Philadelphia 76ers snapped the Atlanta Hawks' run of good fortune at home with a 127-111 win in game three of their NBA

Eastern Conference playoff series. The teams split the first two games in Philadelphia, but the Sixers dominated Friday to grab a 2-1 series lead and halt the Hawks' 13-game winning

streak at home. Tobias Harris scored 22 points, Ben Simmons tallied 18 points and seven assists, and Furkan Korkmaz drained three of six from beyond the arc for the 76ers in front of a crowd of 16,400 at State Farm Arena in Atlanta, Embiid had a couple of hard falls during the contest but nothing serious. "I'm OK," said Embiid, who is playing

with a cartilage tear in his right

knee. – AFP

NO DJOKE KREJCIKUVA LIFTS MAIDEN SLAM CROWN

Djokovic stuns 13-time champ Nadal in French Open epic

Djokovic handed 13-time champion Rafael Nadal only his third defeat in 16 years and 108 matches at the French Open on Friday to reach ĥis sixth Roland Garros final after an epic showdown which even beat the country's

Covid-19 curfew. In their 58th career clash, Djokovic triumphed 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 and stays on course to capture a 19th major and become the first man in over 50 years to win all four Slams twice.

Djokovic, the 2016 champion in Paris who had also beaten Nadal at the 2015 tournament, will face Stefanos Tsitsipas in Sunday's final in what will be his 29th championship match at the Slams.

Tsitsipas had earlier become the first Greek to reach a Grand Slam final with a 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 4-6, 6-3 victory over Germany's

Alexander Zverev. Nadal, 35, remains tied on 20 majors with Roger

"It was a privilege to face Rafa in such an incredible match," said Djokovic after four hours and 11 minutes of intense He now leads Nadal 30-

28 in their career rivalry. "It's hard to find words for Rafa's achievements at Roland Garros. The amount of wins on this court is incredible," he

added. "You have to climb Mount Everest when you meet him here."

It was Djokovic's second win in eight meetings in Paris with Nadal, a sequence which also included three losses in finals.

It was Nadal's first defeat in 14 semi-finals in the French capital. 'Probably it was not my

best day today, even if I fought," said Nadal.

"Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. I had a big chance. There were some crazy points but there was fatigue there."

Djokovic finished with 50 winners; Nadal committed 55 unforced errors under the relentless assault

Diokovic had two break points in the opening of the first set which stretched to 10 minutes but was unable to convert. Nadal made him pay, sprinting away for a 5-0 lead before the top seed got on the board.

Djokovic clung on, retrieving one break to get to 2-5 but Nadal eventually prevailed after one hour on court even if he required seven set points to edge ahead.



Novak Djokovic of Serbia celebrates his victory over Rafael Nadal of Spain in the French Open semifinal at Roland Garros in Paris on Friday.

KREJCIKOVA

Paris, June 12: Barbora Krejcikova won her maid-en Grand Slam singles title at the French Open on Saturday, beating Russia's Anastasia Russia's Pavlyuchenkova to become the first Czech woman in 40 years to conquer Roland Garros.

Krejcikova, ranked 33 in the world and playing just her fifth main draw in a Slams singles event, tri-umphed 6-1, 2-6, 6-4 for a second career title.

The 25-year-old lates compatriot Hana Mandlikova who claimed the trophy in Paris in

The 25-year-old Krejcikova dedicated her victory to her mentor, the former Wimbledon champion Jana Novotna who died of cancer at the age of 49 in 2017.

"It's hard to put into words. I cannot believe I have just won a Grand Slam," said Krejcikova who was still outside the top 100 when the 2020 French Open took place last October.

"I spent a lot of time with Jana before she died. Her last words to me were 'enjoy tennis and try and win a Grand Slam'.

"I know she's looking after me. All this is pretty much because she is looking after me.

'It was amazing that I got the chance to meet her. She was such an inspiration. I miss her and I hope she's really happy.'

In a nervy start to the final, Krejcikova was broken in the first game, serving up two double

NATIONAL | FOOTBALL

Brazil women team protest harassment

Sao Paulo, June 12: Players from Brazil's women's team protested against sexual harassment on Friday, days after the president of the national federation was suspended for allegations of the same thing. Rogério Caboclo was for-

mally accused a week ago before the ethics committee of the Brazilian Football Confederation. A former staffer provided recordings of conversations and text messages. Caboclo denies any wrongdoing. Brazil players including superstar Marta used their social media channels to protest, but didn't name Caboclo, who is not expected to return to his position after the 30day suspension.

"Every day thousands of people are affected and disrespected by moral and sexual harassment, especially us women," the text

says.
"Saying no to harassment goes beyond words, it is about action. We stimulate women and men to call it

The women carried a banner reading "No to harassment" before their friendly against Russia on

Friday. Brazil won 3-0.
Marta said after the friendly in Spain that all players and members of the coaching staff made the decision to speak out.

"We are not prejudging (Caboclo), but the facts are there to be investigated,

Rogério Caboclo was formally accused a week ago before the ethics committee of the **Brazilian Football** Confederation. A former staffer provided recordings of conversations and text messages.

35-year-old said. "We needed to show our

position." Their coach Sundhage described the accusation against Caboclo as very serious. She spoke on Thursday amid the Brazil women's team's preparations in Spain for the Tokyo Olympics.

"We spoke with the athletes, informed them of what was going on, and all had the opportunity to speak about it. Each one of us must have responsibility in what we answer,'

Sundhage said. "We were a bit over-whelmed by all of that situation, but now it is important to turn our focus to the pitch again.'

Brazil's men's national team players did not talk about Caboclo's suspension. Coach Tite said Tuesday it is not for him to discuss what happened to the soccer executive. He spoke after the team's 2-0 win at Paraguay in a match of World Cup qualifiers.

One of my greatest wins: Novak

Paris, June 12: Novak Djokovic compared defeating Rafael Nadal at the French Open to scaling Mount Everest as he hailed Friday's epic semifinal triumph over the 13time champion as "one of my greatest victories".

Ďjokovic condemned Nadal to only his third loss in 16 years and 108 matches at Roland Garros to reach his sixth Paris final after a classic showdown which even beat the country's Covid-19 cur-

> few. Tonight it was my greatest ever match in Paris," Djokovic said Paris," Djokovic said after the epic match.

It was his second win in nine meetings at Roland Garros with Nadal, a sequence which also included devastating losses in the 2012, 2014 and

2020 finals "Definitely one of the top three matches that I ever played in my entire

IT'S JUST ANOTHER

DEFEAT FOR NADAI Paris, June 12: Rafael Nadal shrugged off his epic loss to Novak Djokovic at the French Open insisting "life goes on" as the 13-time champion suffered

just his third ever defeat in 108 matches in Paris

Nadal, the defending champion and chasing a record-setting 21st Grand Slam title, refused to dwell on the consequences of his 4-hour 11-minute

"I am sad to have lost in the most important tournament of the year for me, but life goes on, it is nothing more than a defeat on a tennis court," said 35-year-old Nadal.

If everything goes well, tomorrow I will be at home with my family and friends, and then we will see what is next.

career," said Djokovic. "Considering the quality of tennis, playing my biggest rival on the court where he has had so much success and has

been the dominant force

over 16 years.

in the last 15-plus years, and the atmosphere which was completely electric. Just amazing. "It's hard to find words bigger than all the

superlatives you can

think of for Rafa's achievements in Roland Garros," added 34-yearold Djokovic who now leads their series 30-28. "Each time you step on

the court with him, you know that you have to kind of climb Mount Everest to win against this guy here. Nadal bemoaned the

humid conditions which became heavier and slower as the evening progressed. We had been playing

with very warm and high bounces. During night the situation goes a little bit the other way,' he said.
"So the bounce is a little

less. The ball gets less topfavourable for him."

Djokovic had two break points in the opening game of the first set which stretched to 10 minutes but was unable

IWF CONFIRMS CHANU'S OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

New Delhi, June 12: The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) on Saturday conformed that star Indian lifter Mirabai Chanu has qualified for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics in the women's 49kg category. Chanu, the 2017 world

champion in weightlifting, had secured her place in Tokyo by winning a bronze medal in the Asian Championship in Tashkent in April with a world record in clean and

The 26-year-old from Manipur has qualified on the basis of her standings TWF"S Absolute Ranking list. The Indian lifter is ranked second in the 49kg category with 4133,6172 points in her

"Many congratulations #TOPSAthlete weightlifter @mirabai_chanu who has qualified for #Tokyo2020 after @iwfnet published its Absolute Ranking list where she is placed 2nd in the women's 49 kg," Sports Authority of India (ŜAI) tweeted.

Chanu was earlier ranked fourth but North Korea's withdrawal from the Olympics lifted the Indian to the second place. This will be Chanu's second appearance of the control of th ance in the Olympics, five years after a disappointing outing in Rio, where she failed to lift any of the weights in clean and jerk to bow out of the event.

In the men's 67 kg category, India's Jeremy Lalrinnunga is ranked 12th and lost the continental quota to Korea's Hak Myeongmok, but the 18-year-old still has a chance to qualify.

The final list will be

released on June 25. As per IWF rules, the top eight lifters in each of the 14 weight categories, including seven in the women's group, are eligible to compete in the

ODI SERIES | VS LANKA

Indian team to isolate, train

New Delhi, June 12: India's white ball squad, led by Shikhar Dhawan, will quarantine in Mumbai from June 14 to 28 and undergo six RT-PCR tests on alternate days before flying off to Colombo for the sixmatch series against Sri Lanka, starting on July 13.

It is understood that all the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that will be followed by the Lankabound squad will be same as those of the first team currently in the United Kingdom for the World Test Championship final and five-match

against England. "All the rules will be same like we followed in England. The outstation players will come by charter flight and some fly business class of commercial airline," a BCCI source privy to development said.

'They will do seven days of room quarantine and then can meet in common areas inside the bio-bubble. The players will do gym sessions in staggered manner.

While the threematch ODI series starts on July 13, it is expected that Indian team will have match simulation practice (situational training) after individual sessions.

While the three-match ODI series starts on July 13, the Indian team will have match simulation practice after individual sessions, following three days of room quarantine at the team hotel

in Colombo. "It will be just like what's happening in England. Match situations will be created and that's how the intra-squad training will be held.

"You can't have your main players get out off the first ball and not bat again or bat for the innings. Everyone needs training so it won't be practice games as such.'

The Indian teams over the years have always stayed at the Taj Samudra Hotel Colombo.

Henry strikes to boost Kiwis

Birmingham, June 12: Matt Henry removed both England openers before tea on the third day to leave New Zealand in command of the second and final Test at Edgbaston on Saturday.

England had slumped to 18-2 in off just six overs in their second innings at theinterval, still 67 runs behind New Zealand's first innings 388.

Henry, one of an exceptional six New Zealand changes to the side that drew the first Test at Lord's, had superb interval figures of 2-7 in three overs. He struck with just the

second ball of England's

innings when he had in-

form opener Rory Burns

well caught in the slips by stand-in skipper Latham for a duck. New Zealand's closecatching, far superior to that of England this series, also accounted for Dom Sibley, who fell to Henry for 10 after being

well-taken in the cordon by Daryl Mitchell. England have not lost a home Test series in seven years. Earlier, Stuart Broad took an impressive 4-48 in 23.1 overs but New Zealand still led by 85 runs on first innings.

Brief scores (Day 3, at Tea): England 303 & 18/2 (Crawley 10 batting; Henry 2/7) vs New 388 (Conway 80. Young 82, Taylor 80; Broad



New Zealand's Matt Henry (third from right) celebrates with teammates the dismissal of Dom Sibley of England on the third day of their second Test on Saturday.

HOLDING SLAMS ENGLAND'S 'MOMENT OF UNITY' GESTURE

Birmingham, June 12: West great Michael has criticised great England cricket team's "moment of unity" gesture England in the ongoing Test series against New Zealand, saying it was not supporting Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement but giving sub-tle meaning of "all lives

England players wore T-

shirts sporting messages against any racism, religious intolerance, sexism and other anti-discrimination slogans, having decided to not take the knee after the series against West Indies last year.

Holding, who is a passionate advocate for equality in cricket and the wider community, feels the gesture is akin to saying "all lives

matter" rather than supporting BLM movement. "What this England (cricket) team are doing now with this 'moment of

Holding told 'Sky Sports'. "What you are doing there is, when I say, 'black lives matter', you are telling me 'all lives matter'," the 67year-old added.

unity', that is not support-

ing Black Lives Matter,"

PROTEAS PACE ATTACK TOO HOT FOR WINDIES

Gros-Islet (Saint Lucia), **June 12:** South Africa's relentless pace attack left the West Indies facing the prospect of an innings defeat inside three days as they limped to 82 for four, still needing 143 runs to make the tourists bat again, at stumps on the second day of the first Test in St Lucia on Friday.

routed for 97 — their lowest-ever total in a Test innings against the Proteas — after choosing to bat first on day one. In their second innings on Friday, the home side

The West Indies were

again laboured to come to terms with the consistent quality and intensity of the visitors' pacers and seamers. Quinton de Earlier,

Kock had flailed a flagging West Indies bowling attack on the way to an unbeaten 141 to lift South Africa to a first-innings total of 322 and a commanding first-innings lead of 225 runs.

He reached the century landmark with a six, one of seven in an innings embellished further with 12 fours off 170 deliveries.

-AFP Brief scores (Day 2): West Indies 97 & 82/4 (Chase 21 batting, Blackwood 10 batting) vs South Africa 322 (de Kock 141 n.o,, Holder

Quick passes



A fan celebrates Italy's goal against Turkey as she watches the Euro opening Group 'A' match on a giant screen at the official fan zone at the Roman Forum in Rome on Friday. -AFP

Covid chaos will make Spain strong

Spanish defender Diego Llorente believes the team's Covid-19 chaos has pulled the players closer together ahead of their Euro 2020 opener against Sweden on Monday.

Llorente tested positive for the virus on Tuesday but has been allowed to rejoin the squad after giving a fourth consecutive negative test on Friday. Sergio Busquets is still self-isolating at home after testing positive last weekend, which meant the team had to train individually this week and sit out a final warm-up game against Lithuania.

"All of us here see the glass half-full, not half-empty," said Llorente in a press conference

on Saturday.

"All these things have made us stronger as a group. We see the light at the end of the tunnel now. Even on a mental level, this sort of thing can help you face these games and trust your teammates. If we all row in the same direction, everything can go well and that is the message we believe in," he added. -AFF

Austria brace for North Macedonia

Although scoring goals has been a major issue for Austria at previous European Championships, scoring goals against North Macedonia has been a non-issue in recent

The Austrians will open play at Euro 2020 in Group 'C' gainst North Macedonia on Sunday in Bucharest. The two teams met twice in qualifying for the tournament, with Austria winning 4-1 and 2-1. But goals haven't come easy on the big stage. In six games played in the 2008 and 2016 editions of the continental tournament, the Austrian team managed only a single goal in open play — in a 2-1 loss to Iceland five years ago.

Heading into Euro, Austria lost to England 1-0 on June 2 and was held to a scoreless draw by Slovakia. -AP

Venezuelans hit by virus ahead of Copa

Adozen Venezuela players tested positive for Covid-19 a day before their Copa America opener against the host in Brasilia, Brazilian health authorities said on Saturday.

The health secretariat of the Federal District, which includes Brasilia, said in a statement that all of the infected people were isolated in a hotel. None of the Venezuelans were named.

Live on

Group Stage: England vs Croatia from 6.30 pm; Austria vs North Macedonia from 9.30 pm; Netherlands vs Ukraine from 12.30 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

COPA AMERICA

Group Stage: Brazil vs Venezuela from 2.30 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 1, 2; Columbia vs Ecuador from 5.30 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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ITALIAN JOB!

Mancini's men shoot Turkey as they begin with a bang

Rome, June 12: Italy got their Euro 2020 campaign off the mark with an impressive 3-0 win over Turkey in the curtain-raiser for the postponed continental tournament in front of their home fans in

Rome on Friday.
Playing their first major tournament in five years after failing to qualify for the 2018 World Cup, all the goals came in the second half in front of a Stadio Olimpico that was filled to a quarter of its capacity.

Merih Demiral's own goal put Italy ahead before Lorenzo Insigne netted for Roberto Manaira Roberto Mancini's side in the Group 'A' opener.

The win capped an emotional night in the Italian capital which saw 16,000 fans return to the Stadio Olimpico.

There was a party atmosphere, with a spectacular sound and light show and firework display before kick-off for the opening of the month-long 24-team event, which will be played across 11 countries.

There was a performance by the Italian National Police or chestra, a parade of huge inflatable balloons on the pitch, tenor Andrea Bocelli sang Nessun Dorma' before a virtual performance from Martin Garrix, Bono and The Edge.

Former Italy World Cup winners Alessandro Nesta and Francesco Totti, who played for Lazio and Roma during their careers at the Stadio Olimpico, carried the ball to the centre of the pitch before kick-off.

On the pitch, Italy dominated early on with a three-man attack led by Immobile, who plays for

The 31-year-old had several near misses in the first half, coming up against a solid Turkey defence who held their own.

Turkey could also thank goalkeeper Ugurcan Cakir for pulling off a big save on 23 minutes, tipping over Italy captain Giorgio Chiellini's powerful goalbound neader Insigne corner.

Italy finally got on the scoreboard eight minutes after the break when the



Italy forward Lorenzo Insigne (top) and teammates celebrate a goal against Turkey in their Euro Group 'A' match at the Olympic Stadium in Rome on Friday.

unfortunate Demiral found himself in the path of a Federico Berardi cross for Immobile, the Juventus defender bundling the ball into his

own net. Leonardo Spinazzola had a chance for a second min utes later, with Immobile sending the rebound wide. Immobile finally got his

goal, his 14th for Italy, and

Above: An Italian fan holds a placard reading "If Bernardeschi scores, I get vaccinat-

Below: Entertainers perform during the Euro opening ceremony ahead of the match

ed" as fans watch the Euro opening match between Italy and Turkey on a giant

screen from the official fan zone at Piazza del Popolo in Rome on Friday.

between Turkey and Italy at the Olympic Stadium in Rome on Friday.

first in a major tournament, in the 66th minute, scoring from a rebound after Cakir had saved from

Spinazzola. And Insigne curled in the third with 11 minutes to Bonucci holding firm,

Sassuolo winger Berardi had a role in all three goals, with Italy scoring three for the first time in a European Championship

match. All three Italy forwards proved efficient on the night with a defence organised around veterans Chiellini and Leonardo

securing a ninth straight ciean sneet.

"We struggled at the start, we tried to accelerate but we hit a wall," said Immobile.

Amsterdam, June 12: Seven years is a long, long wait. It's been that many

since Netherlands last played at

a major football tourna-

ment, dating back to the

orange-clad team's run to

the World Cup semifinals

in 2014. On Sunday in

Amsterdam, the Dutch will finally be back on the

field to take on Ukraine at

"We know that we missed

two final tournaments, but

now we're finally here and

so we want to show what

we can do, not just for fun

but really for the prizes,'

said Memphis Depay, the

striker who is the undis-

puted focal point of the Dutch attack at Euro 2020.

The team's captain and defensive anchor, Virgil

van Dijk, will have to wait

even longer. He pulled out

of the tournament to reha-

Championship.

European

Italy

(Merih Demiral 53-own goal, Ciro Immobile 66, Lorenzo Insigne 79)

Turkey

ITALY'S COACH TERMS VICTORY IMPORTANT

Rome, June 12: Roberto Mancini hailed Italy's 3-0 Euro 2020 opening victory over Turkey as "an impor-tant win" but warned there is still a long way to go until a possible Wembley final.

"It was important to start well in Rome and I think it's a satisfaction for the public and for Italians," said Mancini of the match played at a Stadio Olimpico that was filled to a quarter of its capacity.

"It was a beautiful evening, I hope there are many others, but there are still six more for Wembley," he added. Italy failed to qualify for

the 2018 World Cup but are now on a 28-match unbeaten run under Mancini.

"We played a good match, even in the first half with-out being able to score. A great team. There was a lot of help from the crowd,' Mancini said.

"We were hoping for another result, but Italy was dominant," said Turkey coach Senol

Gunes. "The first goal changed things in the second half and we lost control of the game," he added.

"There was an incredible emotion before the match, it was spine-chilling," said Roma midfielder Leonardo Spinazzola. UEFA's man-

of-the-match after his performance in his club stadi-'Then it was a perfect match, zero goals conceded and we played great football. We have a strong team, an incredible mix of strength and technique,'

bilitate his surgically repaired knee. With Van Dijk sidelined, 21-year-old

center back Matthijs de Ligt will be a key defender

for the Netherlands, but he is trying to recover from a

groin injury and will miss

qualified for the last two

Éuropean Championships,

but have never progressed past the group stage. The

country's main player is

Oleksandr Zinchenko, who

plays at left back for Manchester City but is

expected to switch to a central midfield role for his

tality doesn't seem to have changed much from his

playing days with the

national team and clubs

Ükrainians are coached by Andriy Shevchenko, whose men-

the opener.

country.

Meanwhile,

smile, added.

Netherlands look

to test Ukrainians

Spinazzola, wearing a big

after collapsing during the Euro Group 'B' match against Finland at the Parken Stadium in Copenhagen as one of his teammates calls for medical help on Saturday. -AFPPlayer collapses, Dane game off meeting and more information would be provided Copenhagen, June 12:

Denmark midfielder Christian Eriksen lays on the ground

Christian Eriksen was taken to a hospital on Saturday after collapsing on the field during a Group 'B' match against Finland

at the European Championship. UEFA, the governing body of European football said Eriksen has been stabilised and the Danish football federation said he was awake. "Christian Eriksen is awake and is undergoing further examinations at Rigshospitalet," the Danish federation wrote on

"The player has been transferred to the hospital and has been stabilised," UEFA tweeted.

The Euro 2020 match between Denmark and Finland was suspended after Eriksen was given urgent medical attention on the field near the end of the first half.

He was treated for about 10 minutes after collapsing. He was then carried off on a stretcher. UEFA then announced the game had been suspended "due to a medical emergency."

UEFA said the teams were having an emergency

at 7.45 pm local time. A stadium announcer asked fans to stay in their seats and stay calm.

Eriksen had just played a short pass when he fell face-forward onto the ground. His teammates immediately gestured for help and medics rushed onto the field. Eriksen was given chest compressions as his Denmark teammates stood around him in a shielding wall for privacy.

The Finland players huddled by their bench and eventually walked off the field while Eriksen was still getting treatment, as did the referees.

Eriksen was eventually carried off to a loud ovation, with his teammates walking next to the stretcher. The game had been halt-ed in the 43rd minute with the score 0-0.

Eriksen is one of Denmark's biggest stars and the incident brought an instant sense of shock to the Parken Stadium, where about 15,000 fans fell into hushed silence. Some supporters could be seen crying and hugging in the



Connor Roberts (left) of Wales and Switzerland's Ricardo Rodriguez vie for the ball during their Euro Group 'A' match at the Baku Olympic stadium in Baku, Azerbaijan,

Welsh catch Swiss

in the nick of time including AC Milan and Baku, June 12: A header towering Kieffer from

Moore claimed a point for Wales in a 1-1 draw with Switzerland in Baku on Saturday to start both teams' Euro 2020 campaigns.

Moore responded to Breel Embolo's second-half opener with a quarter of an hour remaining. Both sides trail Group 'A' leaders Italy, who beat Turkey 3-0 in Friday's tournament curtain-raiser.

After a quarter of an hour played, Dan James broke free down the left before finding 1.95 metre-tall Moore who forced Swiss goalkeeper Yann Sommer to tip the ball over

Switzerland (Breel Embolo 49) Wales

(Kieffer Moore 74)

the bar. From the resulting corner, Moore rose highest again and clashed in the air with Manuel Akanji, which left the Cardiff forward playing the remainder of the game with red

tape around his head. With Moore bandaged, the momentum swung towards Wales and they dominated the remainder

-AFP

England to challenge Croatia in opener London, June 12: There's Cup final three years ago. the exciting attacking

an indicator of why England has never won European Championship. In nine attempts, they have never won an opening match at

the tournament. Not even when its first match was at Wembley in 1996. A quarter-century on, England opens another continental campaign at its national stadium against the team that prevented Gareth Southgate's side reaching the World

Croatia on Sunday will face a team refreshed since losing 2-1 and denied a shot at adding to its only major title at the 1966 World Cup. Led by 2018 World Cup Golden Boot winner Harry Kane, only nine members of that squad made the cut for the expanded 26-man group for a cross-continental European Championship that could see England play six games at Wembley if they reach the final.

ter back Harry Maguire and midfielder Jordan Henderson might not be fit enough to start. There's also fatigue to consider given the heat forecast for Sunday and the fact seven players were involved in the Champions League final two weeks ago when Chelsea beat Manchester

On the injury front, cen-

What Southgate won't be doing is trying to overload the starting XI against Croatia with too many of options and leave it unbalanced. Perhaps Kane is the only certain starter, with Raheem Sterling, Jadon Sancho, Jack Grealish and Phil Foden vying for roles. England is planning to

make the most of being allowed five substitutes for the first time at a tournament. But in assessing the starting lineup England's coaching staff have been recalling the fate of Argentina at the 2018 World Cup. Since the

World Cup, when Croatia lost the final to France, Zlatko Dalic's side has lost and drawn with England in the UEFA Nations League. Unlike England, Croatia have won opening matches at the European Championship four times, in fact, and drawn another.

England have drawn five and lost four of them. including at its championship debut in 1968 against Yugoslavia, which Croatia used to be a part