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KOLKATA | NEW DELHI | SILIGURI | BHUBANESWAR



RANSOMWARE ATTACK
FROM RUSSIA: BIDEN
WARNS PUTIN

P10



PM CALLS FOR
RULES-BASED
INDIAN OCEAN

P4



EFFECTUAL DIRIGISME

SLC GETS BCCI
SUPPORT FOR
ODI SERIES

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky with light rain/thundershowers towards afternoon/evening. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 35 and 28 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 77% Min: 46%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 39.8°C (+4) Min: 28.6°C (+1)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

05:32 hrs 19:22 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

07:22 hrs 20:39 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Chariots of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra ahead of the annual Rath Yatra festival, at Grand Road in Puri on Saturday. IANS

Barty beats Pliskova at Wimbledon final:
Ash Barty got off to a perfect start in the Wimbledon final by collecting the first 14 points, then needed to hold off a comeback bid before beating Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 6-7 (4), 6-3 on Saturday for her second Grand Slam title. The top-seeded adds this championship to the one she won at the French Open in 2019.

P12

Salahudin's two sons sacked from J&K govt:
Two sons of the Pakistan-based designated global terrorist and founder of terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen, Syed Salahudin are among eleven employees of the J&K government who have been sacked on the charges of terror links and terror funding.

P5

Doyen of Ayurveda Dr P K Warrier dies:
Doyen of Ayurveda and managing trustee of Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala (KAS) Dr P K Warrier passed away in Malappuram, Kerala on Saturday, family sources said. He was 100. In his lifetime, he treated thousands of patients from across the globe and his patients included former presidents and PMs of India and abroad.

P5

Indian-origin woman to head to space

HOUSTON, 10 JULY

Sirisha Bandla, a 34-year-old aeronautical engineer, is set to become the third Indian-origin woman to head to space when she flies as part of Virgin Galactic's first fully crewed flight test on Sunday.

Bandla, who was born in Guntur in Andhra Pradesh and brought up in Houston, Texas, will join Sir Richard Branson, the company's billionaire founder, and five others on board Virgin Galactic's SpaceShip Two Unity to make a journey to the edge of space from New Mexico.

She will become the third Indian-origin woman to fly to space after Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams.

PTI

Biden nominates LA mayor as US ambassador to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 10 JULY



Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, nominated by US President Joe Biden as the country's ambassador to India, has said that he is honoured to accept the nomination and will bring the same energy, commitment and love with which he served the sprawling city to his new role in the world's largest democracy.

If confirmed by the Senate, Garcetti, 50, would replace Kenneth Juster, who served as the US Ambassador to India during the Trump administration. "I am honoured to accept President Biden's nomination to serve in this role," Garcetti, a Democrat, said in a statement on Friday.

We can't get our climate goals without India hitting its climate goals, he said.

Garcetti has travelled several times to India, most recently as a councilman. In college, he spent a year studying Hindi and Urdu. It's the largest democracy in the world, soon to be the most populous country in the world, one of the top handful of superpowers in the world, Garcetti said.

The UPSLC website says, "The State Law Commission, UP is working on control, stabilisation and welfare of the population of the state and

Uttar Pradesh formulates draft Bill on two-child norm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW, 10 JULY

IN CASE OF VIOLATION	INCENTIVES INCLUDE
Contesting in Uttar Pradesh local bodies elections	Two additional increments during entire service
Applying for or getting promotion in govt jobs	Maternity/paternity leave of 12 months with salary
Receiving any kind of government subsidy	3 pc increase in employer's contribution fund

has prepared a draft Bill."

Suggestions have been invited from the public to improve the draft Bill and 19 July is the last date for it.

Listing incentives for public servants who adopt the two-child norm, the draft Bill says, "Public servants who adopt the two-child norm will get two additional increments during the entire service, maternity or as the case

may be, paternity leave of 12 months, with full salary and allowances and three percent increase in the employer's contribution fund under national pension scheme."

A State Population Fund will be constituted for the purpose of implementation of the act. Listing the government's duties, the draft Bill says that maternity centres will be established at all primary

health centres. The centres and NGOs will distribute contraceptive pills, condoms, spread awareness about family planning methods through health workers and ensure mandatory registration of pregnancies, deliveries, births and deaths across the state.

The draft Bill also says that it shall be the duty of the government to introduce a compulsory subject relating to population control in all secondary schools.

The draft Bill reads, "In Uttar Pradesh, there are the limited ecological and economic resources at hand. It is necessary and urgent that the provision of basic necessities of human life including affordable food, safe drinking water, decent housing, access to quality education, economic/livelihood opportunities, power/electricity for domestic consumption, and a secure living is accessible to all citizens."

It is necessary to ensure healthy birth spacing through steps related to augmenting the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality reproductive health services to achieve the goal of population control, draft Bill reads.

Messi, England, Djokovic eye history on blockbuster Sunday

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Sports fans will find it exceedingly difficult to tear themselves away from their television screens this Sunday, 11 July, with sporting history set to be made across two continents.

Argentina's Lionel Messi, who has earned honours at Barcelona to become one of the two best footballers of this era alongside Cristiano Ronaldo, is yet to win a major trophy in national colours.

On Sunday morning, he will lead the "Albiceleste" in the Copa America final against arch-rivals Brazil in Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana Stadium.

The two teams have an iconic rivalry; the last Copa America game between the two countries went in favour of

nis, there are cricket matches as well.

The Indian women's cricket team, on tour in England, will be playing the second T20 International on Sunday night. They lost the first game on Friday night. The match will begin at 7 p.m. India time, 5.30 p.m. UAE time and 2.30 p.m. British Summer Time.

Australian men's team, on tour in the Caribbean, will play West Indies in the second T20 International after losing the first. The match will begin at 3.30 p.m. India time, 5.30 p.m. UAE time and 11 a.m. British Summer Time.

In the third international cricket game of the day, South Africa will play Ireland in the first ODI in Dublin. The match will begin at 3.30 p.m. India time, 2 p.m. UAE time and 11 a.m. British Summer Time.



Portugal as well as club trophies to stay a step ahead of him. The match will begin 5.30 a.m. India time, 4.00 a.m. United Arab Emirates time and 1 a.m. British Summer Time.

With the Copa final to start with, sports fans get to round off this Blockbuster Sunday with the Euro 2020 final between England and Italy at the iconic Wembley Stadium in London in front of their home

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

COPA AMERICA FINAL
Argentina vs Brazil
5.30 a.m. IST

EURO 2020 FINAL
Italy vs England
12.30 a.m. (Monday) IST

WIMBLEDON FINAL
Djokovic vs Berrettini
Time: EVENING

2ND WOMEN'S T20I
India vs England
7 p.m. IST

three years. They were in the running to win the 2018 World Cup. But they lost in the semi-final to Croatia. Their opponents, Italy have won the Euro in 1968 and finished runner-up twice, in 2000 and 2012. They've also been world champions as recently as 2006.

The Euro final will begin late on Sunday night at 12.30 a.m. (Monday) India time, 11.00 p.m. UAE time and 8 p.m. British Summer Time.

In between these two foot-

ball continental finals, Novak Djokovic will be playing in the Wimbledon final against Matteo Berrettini, eyeing his 10th Grand Slam title to draw level with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal as players to have won most Grand Slam men's singles titles.

Djokovic, the world No 1, has won 19 so far and starts favourite against Berrettini, who is into his first Grand Slam final. The Wimbledon final will be played in the evening. Apart from football and ten-

Delhi Police seizes record 354 kg heroin worth ₹2,500 cr, nabs 4

PTI
NEW DELHI, JUL 10

The Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested four men, including an Afghan national, and recovered a record 354 kilograms of heroin worth over Rs 2,500 crore in the international market from them, officials said on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Rizwan Kashmiri, a resident of Ghitoria here and native of Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir, Gurpreet Singh and Gurjot Singh, both residents of Jalandhar in Punjab and Hazrat Ali, a native of Kandahar in Afghanistan, they said.

Police recovered 166 kg and 115 kg of heroin from two cars which were parked in a society based on the duo's information. Later, 70 kg heroin was also recovered from the rented accommodation of both the accused, police said.

Gurpreet and Gurjot revealed that they were operating the drug racket on the instructions of a man named Navpreet Singh, presently based in Portugal, police said.

Gurpreet met Navpreet in Punjab's Kapurthala Jail when they were in judicial custody in separate cases, the DCP said.

"On Monday, police received information that Kashmiri was going to deliver contraband in south Delhi and other states like Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana."

"The accused have been identified as Rizwan Kashmiri, a resident of Ghitoria here and native of Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir, Gurpreet Singh and Gurjot Singh, both residents of Jalandhar in Punjab and Hazrat Ali, a native of Kandahar in Afghanistan, they said.

Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said.

Kashmiri, Ali was also arrested from Gurgaon and two kg heroin was recovered from his possession. Around 100 kg of different chemicals used in the preparation of heroin was also recovered, Kushwah said.

Elaborating about the operation, the police said opium grown in various parts of Afghanistan is concealed in different legitimate exports -- talc stone, gypsum powder, basil seeds and in packaging material like gunny bags, cartons etc.

It is then transported in containers to Chabahar Port in Iran from where the consignments are shipped to Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai, they said.

Thereafter, the material is separated from the legitimate exports and sent to makeshift factories based in Shiv Puri in Madhya Pradesh for further extraction and processing to get the final product, police said.

The locals with the help of Afghan experts process the heroin and the chemicals required for the process are procured from various shops located in MP and Delhi, police said.

The BJP has been accusing the Kejriwal government

of being allegedly involved in a scam in the annual maintenance contract (AMC) of 1,000 low-floor buses to be procured by its agency - the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC).

Sisodia said the panel analysed 3,000 documents and raised several queries after which they concluded that the Kejriwal government was not involved in any scam in the matter.

"The investigation com-

The Coronation Bridge... is vital from the perspective of our national security

RAJU BISTA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, DARJEELING

ON THE CENTRE'S MOVE TO WORK FOR AN ALTERNATE BRIDGE TO THE OLD ONE OVER THE TEESTA

Kejri govt given clean chit in buses procurement: Sisodia

LG-appointed panel's report proves AAP govt's 'honest work', says deputy CM; BJP however claims it has instead 'established there was a scam' in the DTC buses procurement process

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

A committee constituted by Lt Governor Anil Baijal has given a "clean chit" to the Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government in the DTC buses procurement process, which proves the Kejriwal government's "honest politics," said deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia today.

The three-member panel, which included transport and vigilance commissioners of the Delhi government, was set up by the LG last month. It submitted its report to Baijal on 8 July, officials said.

Due to this panel's probe, the bus procurement process has been put on hold by the Delhi government's transport department.

The BJP has been accus-



of being allegedly involved in a scam in the annual main-

tenance contract (AMC) of 1,000 low-floor buses to be

procured by its agency - the

Delhi Transport Corporation

(DTC).

Sisodia said the panel analysed 3,000 documents and raised several queries after which they concluded that the Kejriwal government was not involved in any scam in the matter.

"The investigation com-

mittee of the BJP-led central government has not been able to find any flaws or irregularities in the purchase of buses. The report of the inquiry committee has made it clear that the government led by Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi is honest and the Delhi

BJP leaders in opposition are trying to malign the image of the government," he said in a media briefing.

Sisodia charged that the

BJP leaders had previously made "false allegations" against the AAP-led Delhi government.

"The inquiry committee had summoned 400 files from the Delhi government. It did not find any error even then. This makes it clear that the Delhi government is working

honestly for the interest of the people of Delhi," he said.

Sisodia also asserted that CM Kejriwal's model of "politics of good governance, honesty and work is being discussed all over the country."

"The Delhi Government is working day and night for the people. But instead of learning from it, the BJP leaders are spreading hatred and lies. They are stopping the works which are in the public interest. The BJP leaders should be ashamed and they should come in front of the public to apologise," the deputy CM said.

He said no public buses were procured in Delhi from 2008 to 2015. "After forming the government in 2015, whenever C M Kejriwal has taken out a tender for the purchase of buses to improve public transport service, BJP leaders have tried to create hurdles. Despite all their lies and hindrances, the Delhi government is committed to working for the interests of the people of Delhi. Now buses will come to Delhi and public transport service will be further improved," he said.

Delhi transport minister

has dismissed Sisodia's claims and charged that the panel's report instead "established that there was a scam" in the buses procurement process. "The ruling AAP is misguiding (people) by claiming that the committee has inquired into the procurement process of the DTC buses and has given it a clean chit," it said.

The committee focused on the AMC of 1,000 buses being procured by DTC which it has clearly stated in its report, Delhi BJP leader Vijender Gupta said in a press conference.

"After finding the AMC process and contract faulty, the committee has suggested scrapping of the deal entirely," he claimed.

JOBS & CLASSIFIEDS QUEST

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN on the instructions of our client, who intends to enter into a transaction in relation to land admeasuring 8 Bigha 7/8 Biswa comprising in various Gata/ Khasra Nos. 43/9/2 min (0-14%), 10 min (2-8), 44/6 min (0-9%), 7 min (2-8), 14/1/2 min (0-09), situated in the area and revenue estate of Village- Bawana, Tehsil- Narela, District- North Delhi, NCT of Delhi (hereinafter referred to as "Land") the details of which have been captured in the Schedule hereinafter.

Any entity / person having or claiming any right, claim, benefit, demand or interest with respect to the Land or having any objection to the intended transaction or if any entity / person has any knowledge of or is party to any sale, agreement, exchange, assignment, charge, gift, license, tenancy, inheritance, lien, mortgage, hypothecation, encumbrance, pending litigation, possession, contract/agreement, development rights, partnership, family arrangement/ settlement, decree or order of any Court, acquisition by Government or any other entity, prohibition or any other impediment with respect to the Land, then such entity / person should inform us in writing with documentary proof on the address mentioned below within a period of 5 (Five) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be presumed that no adverse right, title, interest, share, claim or demand of any nature whatsoever exists or is upon or in respect of the Land and the Land Owners(s) (as mentioned below) is in unencumbered possession of and is vested with absolute, clear and marketable right, title and interest to her respective land parcels.

Particulars of land:
Land admeasuring 8 Bigha 7/8 Biswa comprising in various Gata/ Khasra Nos. 43/9/2 min (0-14%), 10 min (2-8), 44/6 min (0-9%), 7 min (2-8), 14/1/2 min (0-09), situated in the area and revenue estate of Village- Bawana, Tehsil- Narela, District- North Delhi, NCT of Delhi, India.

Land Owner(s):
Smt. Azad Kaur, wife of Late Shri Jile alias Zile Singh, alias Zile Singh, TOTAL LAND : 8 Bigha 7/8 Biswa

SRGR Law Offices
Advocates & Solicitors
A-3, 3rd Floor, Sector-4
Noida - 201301, UP
Tel: +91 9555737304
Email: info@srgrlaw.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF AJAY GOEL
Addl. District Judge-04
South West District, Dwarka Courts, New Delhi, PC No. 19/2021

Master Rajat Kumar Jha, through his Naurla Guardian Sh. Sharvan Kumar Jha (Father)

Versus

State of NCT of Delhi & Ors.
CITATION UNDER INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT 1925

We hereby give notice under Section 264 and 264 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for Grant of Probate/Letter of Administration to the estate of Late Smt. Pushpa Mathur, w/o Late Sh. R.B. Mathur, who died on 12-10-2020 has been made by Master Rajat Kumar Jha Through His Natural Guardian Sh. Sharvan Kumar Jha (Father) R/o S/o Late Sh. Suresh Jha, j/ Flat No. 101, Sector 158, Vikas Puri, Noida-110091, 10 min (0-14%), 10 min (2-8), 44/6 min (0-9%), 7 min (2-8), 14/1/2 min (0-09), situated in the area and revenue estate of Village- Bawana, Tehsil- Narela, District- North Delhi, NCT of Delhi, executed by Shri Nafe Singh and Shri Zile Singh, sons of Shri Net Ram in my favour which is duly registered on 11.01.1988 in the office of the Sub-Registrar, S.D. No. I, Kishan Gate, Delhi, entered in Book No. I, Volume No. 5486 on pages from 98 to 101 at document serial no. 581.

Finder may send/contact to the below mentioned address;

Smt. Azad Kaur
W/o Late Shri Jile alias Zile Singh
Address: 287, Village- Bawana, North West Delhi, Delhi-110039

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my clients, Smt. Alka Jhawar (Wife), Sh. Puklit Jhawar (Son), R/o. 215, Sukhdev Vihar, New Delhi, 110025 and Sh. Harshit Jhawar (Son)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said.

Kashmiri, Ali was also arrested from Gurgaon and two kg heroin was recovered from his possession. Around 100 kg of different chemicals used in the preparation of heroin was also recovered, Kushwah said.

Elaborating about the operation, the police said opium grown in various parts of Afghanistan is concealed in different legitimate exports -- talc stone, gypsum powder, basil seeds and in packaging material like gunny bags, cartons etc.

It is then transported in

containers to Chabahar Port in Iran from where the consignments are shipped to Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai, they said.

Thereafter, the material is

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The Delhi BJP, however, dis-

missed Sisodia's claims and

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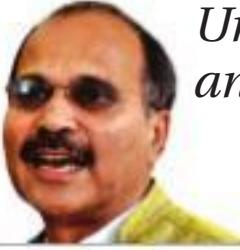
there was a scam" in the

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"The ruling AAP is misguid-

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</div



Unmindful of the sufferings of the people, govt has effected 69 hikes in petrol and diesel prices since 1 January and earned Rs 4.91 lakh crore revenue...

URGING THE WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT TO DO AWAY WITH VAT TO REDUCE FUEL PRICES

Chadha accuses Haryana of causing Delhi's water crisis

Delhi Jal Board vice-chairman charges that Haryana has been supplying about 100 million gallons less water per day, which has led to a crisis in NDMC and central, south & west Delhi areas

PTI
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Delhi Jal Board (DJB) vice-chairman Raghav Chadha on Saturday accused the Haryana government of reducing the water supply to the national capital and causing a severe crisis in the city.

Addressing a press conference here, the Aam Aadmi Party legislator said Haryana has been supplying around 100 million gallons less water per day, which has led to a crisis in NDMC areas and central, south, and west Delhi.

"The Haryana government has stopped the legal right of the people of Delhi as directed by the Supreme Court.



Because they have reduced the water supply in Yamuna, the three major water treatment plants are producing less water per day," Chadha said.

He further said that Haryana was providing 120 mgd (million gallons daily) water less, which has decreased the production of water in Delhi by

over 100 mgd.

The water supply problem may soon affect major regions, including VIP areas of the Supreme Court, the prime minister's residence, the Rashtrapati Bhawan, the Delhi High Court and various international embassies, Chadha added.

He said the Chandrawal treatment plant's production capacity has reduced to 55 mgd from its earlier 90 mgd.

Wazirabad is producing 80 mgd compared to 135 mgd before and the Okhla water treatment plant is supplying 15 mgd instead of its earlier 20 mgd.

"Since Haryana has deprived Delhiites of their rights, the daily water pro-

duction in Delhi has come down from 245 mgd to 150-145 mgd. Haryana was directed by the Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB) upon the Supreme Court's direction to supply 150 cusecs above Delhi's requirement. But Haryana is not even supplying the requirement, leave alone additional water," Chadha said.

He claimed to have sent 12 formal letters to the Haryana government and related officials, and said "there has been no response".

The AAP MLA said that in summers, Delhi's water production used to be between 900 and 920 mgd. This year, the DJB did "a record production and took this to 945 mgd", he said.

In terms of existing pro-

grammes at the national and state level, she said there is a need for increased monitoring and tracking of critical growth parameters, weight and height of children under the age of two.

"It is at the time of complementary feeding after the age of about 8 to 9 months where the malnutrition slope starts. This is due to unsatisfactory complementary feeding. Further, when monitoring does happen, there is no system where alerts are generated. The system isn't dynamic enough to target children who are slipping on the growth parameters," Varghese said.

Dr Archana Chowdhury, Lead-Maternal New-Born Child Health, Nutrition International India said while the onus is on the government to address malnutrition and policies and programmes are in place, community participation can play an important role in the implementation of these.

"Encouraging community monitoring, tracking and assessing of services through capacity building of the local governance authorities and frontline workers can help generate data on the outcomes of the programme, she said.

Haryana govt aims to reduce groundwater depletion by 50%

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 10 JULY

The Haryana government aims to reduce the groundwater depletion by at least 50 per cent through the Union Jal Shakti ministry's flagship scheme Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) related to recharge of groundwater and improving its quality.

In a presentation to the Union Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, chief engineer and project director Atal Bhujal Yojana (Haryana, Satbir Singh Kadian) said as a part of the program, community mobilisation and awareness activities as well as capacity building of stakeholders will take place.

Initially, the water security plan of each village will be prepared and the same will be implemented over the next four years. Under Atal Jal a total of 14 districts of Haryana will



be covered. That includes 36 groundwater stressed blocks with a total 1669 village councils. At the compilation of the program, the state has a target to reduce the groundwater depletion by minimum 50 per cent, Kadian said.

He said Atal Bhujal Yojana is a participatory groundwater management scheme sup-

ported by the Central government and World Bank and implemented by the Haryana government. The major objective of this scheme is to create the Hydrogeological data network of groundwater resources in Haryana. Also, to build community institutions to manage the ground water resources in the state.

In an inter-state operation, Punjab Police on Saturday busted a Madhya Pradesh-based illicit weapon supply network with the arrest of its main supplier, identified as Baljit Singh alias Sweety Singh of MP's Barwani district.

Sweety Singh, a resident of village Umarti in Barwani, has been found indulging in manufacturing and supply of high-quality illicit weapons to Punjab and other states of northern India, said Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Dinkar Gupta. Kapurthala Police have also recovered three .32 bore pistols, along with 3 magazines from his possession, he added.

This is the third such MP-based illegal weapon manufacturing and supply module busted by the Punjab Police in the last eight months.

Earlier, Amritsar Rural Police

had unearthed two such modules, including one illicit Small Arms Manufacturing unit in MP with the arrest of weapon smugglers, who were supplying weapons to gangsters, criminals and radicals in Punjab.

Sharing details, Gupta said that the development came 10 days after the Kapurthala Police in the vigorous follow-up operations had arrested

four robbers after recovering 10 Pistols and one Rifle, along with ammunition, from their possession.

He said that the arrested robbers revealed they were getting the supply of weapons from MP based smuggler Sweety Singh and were hatching a conspiracy to carry our robberies and dacoities, snatch money from petrol pumps as well as farmers.

The DGP said following these inputs, the Kapurthala police procured arrest warrants of Sweety Singh and a special police team from Kapurthala was despatched to district Barwani to arrest him after coordinating the operations with MP Police.

"After vigorous efforts, the Punjab Police team, while working closely with MP Police, managed to arrest Sweety Singh, who unsuccessfully attempted to evade arrest by crossing the Narmada river to

enter the Maharashtra border," he said.

The police said Sweety had disclosed that he and his elder brother, Sumer Singh were into this weapons manufacturing and supply trade from many years and they used to upload videos of Pistols on various social media platforms to lure their customers and this is how the present robber module of Punjab established contact with them.

Sweety was running a YouTube channel on name of 'Azad Group Munger' on which he used to flourish his illegal weapons business and when buyers ask about price, the group used to share their WhatsApp number.

Sweety also revealed that of around 40-45 houses in their village Umarti, more than 20 were involved in the business of manufacturing and sale of illicit weapons, especially .30 bore and .32 bore Pistols.

Virbhadra cremated with full state honours

PTI
SHIMLA, 10 JULY

Former Himachal Pradesh chief minister Virbhadra Singh was cremated with full state honours at a royal crematorium in Jogni Bagh near Shimla's Rampur on Saturday afternoon.

His son Vikramaditya Singh performed the last rites around 4.30 pm.

A police contingent gave the guard of honour and gun

salute to the former chief minister.

Thousands of his well-wishers gathered at the crematorium to bid adieu to the leader.

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur and his cabinet colleagues also attended the last rites.

A delegation of Congress leaders represented party president Sonia Gandhi at his cremation on Saturday. The delegation comprised

Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel and Congress treasurer Pawan Kumar Bansal.

The body was kept at Rampur's Padam Palace from 8 am to 2 pm before the funeral. His body was taken to the crematorium at 2.45 pm.

The 87-year-old veteran Congress leader breathed his last after prolonged illness at Shimla's Indira Gandhi Medical College (IGMC) on Thursday.

it intervention to secure justice for a 'son of Haryana' in Australia, Sh. Manohar Lal has written that he has received representations from various quarters including his family who have conveyed to him, Vishal got into a tussle with a group that was raising anti-Indian slogans and even descending the Indian national flag and these groups have subsequently framed him on false charges.

In the letter, the CM has further highlighted that he had also held a virtual meeting with some representatives of the Indian diaspora in Australia, who are backing Vishal and have started a campaign there, to get him released from jail, as early as possible.

There have been protests and demonstrations in various parts of Haryana and North India in support of Vishal and there is strong public sentiment for his early release, he added.

Uttarakhand CM Dhami calls on PM Modi

PTI
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Pushkar Singh Dhami, who was recently sworn in as Uttarakhand chief minister, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday and sought his directions on the possible third wave of coronavirus, the proposed Kanwad Yatra and the Chardham Yatra against the backdrop of the pandemic.

He also sought establishment of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Kumaon region of the state on the lines of AIIMS, Rishikesh.

In a tweet, Dhami said he sought the blessings of the prime minister.

"Sought his directions on the state's development, the possible third wave of Covid-19, Char Dham Yatra and Kanwad Yatra. The prime minister assured all possible help for the state's development," Dhami tweeted.

The Prime Minister's Office also tweeted pictures of the meeting.

On Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's comments asking why people of the hill state, which generates electricity, cannot get free power like consumers in the national capital, Dhami said the AAP leader may have his agenda but the only agenda for the BJP is the



state's development and offering the best to people.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor will visit Dehradun on Sunday. The party has decided to contest the assembly polls in the state due next year.

Uttarakhand on Thursday decided to review its decision to stop all Kanwad yatra devotees from entering the state this year.

The yatra sees lakhs of devotees travel through several states by foot to the holy town of Hardiwar in Uttarakhand.

According to an official release in Dehradun, Dhami said an AIIMS in Kumaon will give access to the people of the region to world class medical

facilities, adding the state government will give land for it.

Describing AIIMS, Rishikesh as a big gift to the people of the state from the Centre, Dhami said it is playing a significant role in the battle against Covid.

Dhami also sought speedy implementation of the 300 mw Lakhwar multi-purpose project from which six states including Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh will benefit.

The project has all the clearances and work on it can begin after a cabinet committee on economic affairs by the Union Government gives its go-ahead to the project, Dhami said.

The applicant has been accused of serious in nature, where the applicant in those unprecedented times attempted to play with the lives of patients, who needed urgent relief, the judge said. Furthermore, the Additional Sessions Judge said that the offences committed by the accused not only attract punishment under the Indian Penal Code or the Epidemic Act but also the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

The accused is currently facing charges under sections 420 (cheating), 188 (disobedience to order by public servant), and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code and various sections of the Essential Commodities Act and Epidemic Diseases Act.

During the course of proceedings, the counsel for the accused claimed before the court that the alleged "recovery" shown from Garg was "planted by the police officials" and that there is nothing to indicate his involvement in the commission of the crime.

Remdesivir injection, which is used in the treatment of COVID-19, was in high demand during the second wave of the pandemic.

The offences with which

During a raid on April 30, seven vials of Remdesivir injections were recovered from the car in which accused Kartik Garg was travelling. The injections were later found to be spurious.

PTI
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

A Delhi court on Saturday denied bail to a man arrested for allegedly possessing fake Remdesivir injections, saying that he attempted to play with the lives of patients who urgently needed the medicine during the unprecedented COVID-19 times.

During a raid on April 30, seven vials of Remdesivir injections were recovered from the car in which accused Kartik Garg was travelling. The injections were later found to be spurious.

While denying relief to him, Additional Sessions Judge Ravinder Bedi said that the offences are grave in nature and entail severe punishment.

The offences with which

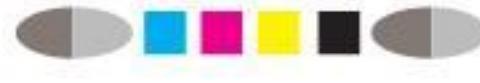
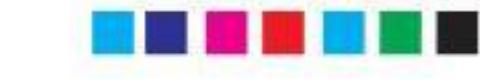
the court denies bail to accused in fake Remdesivir case

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- PUNCHKUAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
- WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
- JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543
- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing





The report of the inquiry committee has made it clear that the government led by Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi is honest.

DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER MANISH SISODA

THUMBNAILS



A girl plays amid heavy downpour, in Jammu on Saturday.
AGENCIES

Tamil Nadu restrictions:

Effective July 12, bus services to neighbouring Puducherry would be operational and retail outlets would be permitted to be open till 9 PM, the Tamil Nadu government said on Saturday. Announcing fresh relaxations under the ongoing 'unlock' exercise, the government said restaurants, shops and a variety of other retail stores that were previously allowed to function till 8 p.m. "with 50 percent occupancy rider," would get an additional hour from Monday.

Carcade to replace chariots of ISKCON's 50th year Rath Yatra celebrations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, 10 JULY

In a departure from tradition, Lord Jagannath and his divine siblings, amid the Covid-19 restrictions, will give the hand-pulled chariot a miss this time and instead travel in a cavalcade of 15 cars, covering a distance of three kilometres, as part of the ISKCON Kolkata's 50th year Rath Yatra celebrations.

At the organisation's global headquarters in Mayapur, too, the annual festival will be a low-key affair, as just one tableau will be taken out on the premises with around 50 people pulling it in turns.

The city chapter of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), which was supposed to mark its golden jubilee this year with gala celebrations on the occasion of Rath Yatra, had to scrap its plans due to Covid-related curbs, its spokesperson Radharaman Das said on Saturday.

The organisation, nevertheless, has made arrangements to ensure that the festival is observed with great fervour, he maintained. "On the day of Rath Yatra (July 12), around 12 noon, deities Sri Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra Devi will be travelling from our Albert Road office to another cen-

Diary doldrums grip Chhattisgarh again

IPS officer booked on sedition charges; diary with 'explosive revelations' found

AJAYBHAN SINGH
RAIPUR, 10 JULY



After the erstwhile Raman Singh government suffered considerable embarrassment following the recovery of diaries that purportedly implicated the chief minister's close associates and family members in the infamous PDS scam, another diary is doing the rounds in Chhattisgarh, prompting the government to book a senior IPS officer on sedition charges.

The diary, said to have been recovered from the premises of GP Singh during Anti Corruption Bureau and Economic Offence Wing raids recently, purportedly contains explosive revelations.

Police are burning midnight oil to substantiate their claim that the secret diary recovered from the now suspended IPS officer reveals his repeated efforts to overthrow the current Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress regime.

The diary, police claim,

revealed many surprising secret activities against the government, including efforts aimed at inflaming the Naxal hotbed of Bastar again.

Singh has reportedly made serious remarks against many top babus of the state government, ministers, leaders and people associated with opposition parties. Not only that, the police probe claims, Singh also used to provide documents against the government to the opposition parties.

One of the most peculiar claims police have made pertaining to the diary is that it contains details of Tantrik acts performed to dislodge his adversaries in politics and administration at the famous Pitambara Shrine at Datia in Madhya Pradesh. The ACB

also claims to have recovered horoscopes of several top leaders.

Singh was said to be instrumental in efforts by several quarters to bring former Chhattisgarh CM Ajit Jogi back into Congress fold; the endeavours, however, did not bring desired results.

ACB sources say that Singh mentioned a top BJP woman leader in derogatory terms claiming that she has lost her political standing with the party top brass.

It is being said that the diary contains comments about the governor claiming that the tribal woman was sent to rein in the Baghel government but she could do nothing resulting in the ire of Home Minister Amit Shah.

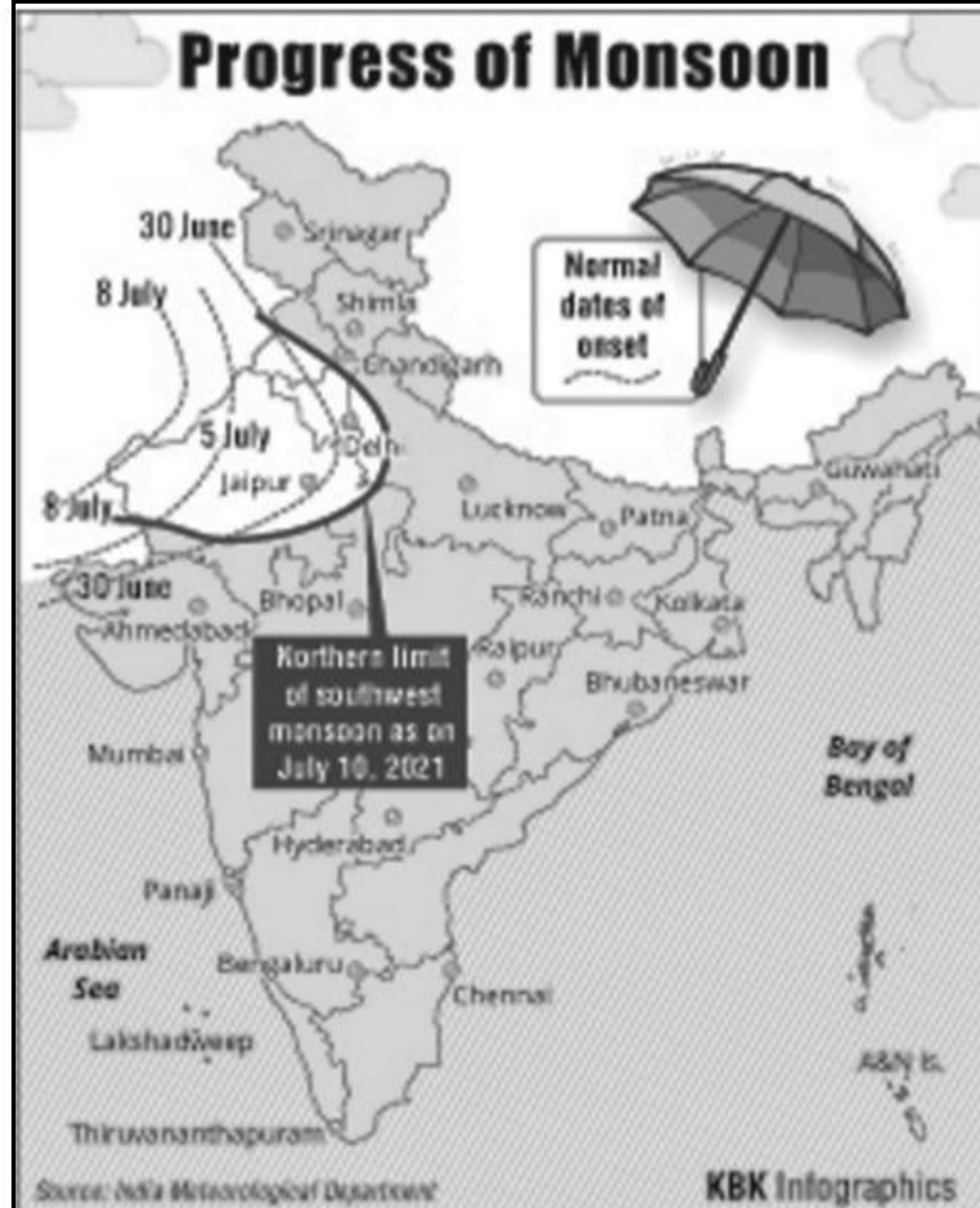
Chhattisgarh police lodged a case of sedition against the suspended IPS officer for conspiring against the government. An FIR against Singh under IPC Sections 124 A (sedition) and 153 A (hate speech) was registered on ACB and EOW's complaint at

Kotwali police station in Raipur late Thursday night. This is the first case of sedition against a senior All India Service official in the state.

Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) and Economic Investigation Wing (EOW) filed the complaint on the basis of documents recovered during raids on the controversial officer's premises recently.

Singh's premises were raided on July 1 after a series of complaints of misconduct against him. ACB claimed unaccounted money worth several crores were recovered in about 75 hours of raids.

The officer, however, took refuge in the High Court challenging the police narrative against him. Demanding a CBI inquiry into his case senior counsel Kishore Bhaduri said that Singh in his petition has accused the state government of resorting to malicious action. He alleged that he is being implicated for not giving in to pressure from senior government officials to do wrong activities.



Draft regulation proposes AYUSH internships for MBBS students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The training in Indian systems of medicine are among three possible electives, the draft regulation said

that interns can choose any elective from Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy and Sowa Rigpa for a week.

There will be 17 postings which MBBS students have to complete over a period of 12 months after graduation. Of the 17 postings, 14 are mandatory and three are electives. The training in Indian systems of medicine are among the

electives. The draft further says that the minimum duration of the Compulsory Rotating Internship may be extended appropriately depending upon insufficient period of attendance, unsatisfactory acquisition of required competence, unsuccessful qualification on assessment and any exigency. The draft also said the duration of the Internship may be curtailed or temporarily suspended or withdrawn or cancelled at any time by the institution or the university according to prevailing rules/regulations.

Adhir slams Centre over petrol, diesel prices hike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BAHARAMPUR, 10 JULY

Congress leader in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, on Saturday claimed that the Centre has earned Rs 4.91 lakh crore revenue as petrol and diesel prices have been hiked 69 times since January this year.

He said that the petrol price dipped by Rs 12 per litre after the Congress government in the state to follow the footprints of the Chhattisgarh administration and do away with Value Added Taxes (VAT) to reduce fuel prices.

The BJP government is not showing any concern for the plight of the common man. We urge the Centre to roll back fuel price hike, as petrol

came to power with such a huge mandate shouldn't be found wanting in undertaking people steps," Chowdhury said. Responding to a query, he said that the main opposition party is given the post of the Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) both in the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabha.

However, Chowdhury did not directly comment on the controversy over the appointment of TMC leader Mukul Roy, who recently crossed over from the BJP, as the PAC chairman of West Bengal assembly by the speaker on Friday, which had sparked a walkout by saffron party members who are demanding his disqualification under the anti-defection law.

"We know that the TMC government in West Bengal will have to forego a revenue of Rs 1,300-Rs 1,400 crore yielded from VAT, but a party that has

breached the Rs 100-per-litre mark, diesel neared century and LPG rate touched Rs 850 per cylinder," the senior Congress leader told reporters.

Chowdhury also claimed that the BJP-led government at the Centre has earned a total of Rs 25 lakh crore through repeated fuel price hikes since coming to power in 2014.

He said that the petrol price

PM calls for rules-based Indian Ocean

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today spoke with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Minh Chinh and expressed confidence that the Indo-Vietnam comprehensive strategic partnership would continue to become stronger under his guidance, an official statement said.

He also noted that both India and Vietnam were presently members of the UN Security Council. He thanked the Vietnamese leader for the support provided by the government and people of Vietnam during the second wave of Covid-19 in India. The leaders agreed that their countries should continue consulta-

tions and cooperation to support each other's continuing efforts against the pandemic.

Both the leaders reviewed the state of bilateral relations and shared their views on different areas of cooperation.

Noting that the year 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations, the leaders agreed to celebrate this milestone in a befitting manner through various commemorative activities. Modi also invited Pham to undertake an official visit to India at an early suitable date.

UP gears up to conduct Kanwar Yatra

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MEERUT, 10 JULY

With the official announcement of Kanwar Yatra from July 15 after a gap of a year in view of the Covid 19 pandemic, preparations have been started by the officials for this mega religious congregation in which crores of pilgrims participate annually.

The Kanwar Yatra that commences every year with the start of the Hindu month of Sawan will this year begin

from July 15 and conclude on August 6, on the day of Shivratri.

Last year the Kanwar Yatra was cancelled by the governments in UP and Uttarakhand in the wake of Covid 19 pandemic but this year the decision to organise it has been taken.

An estimated 3-4 crores Kanwaris participate in this Kanwar Mela, which is known as one of the world's largest religious congregations.

On Friday evening Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath held a meeting via video conferencing with Divisional Commissioner of Meerut Surendra Singh, ADG of Meerut Zone Rajeev Sabharwal and IG of Meerut range Praveen Kumar. In the meeting the CM discussed at length arrangements that have to be made for the Yatra particularly in view of threat of a possible third wave of Covid 19.

Commissioner Singh said that the decision to give a green signal for the Kanwar Yatra this year has been taken by the state government but with all possible precautions in view of Covid 19. The Kanwar Yatra would be organised this year in a majestic way.

Though initially the Uttarakhand government was not ready to hold Kanwar Yatra this year but now it has agreed to it, said the commissioner adding that we will ensure that the Yatra is conducted safely and Kanwaris would be expected to follow Covid protocol.

He informed that Covid hospital with at least 10 beds would be created in each district falling in the Yatra route. Help desks would be set up at temples, camps of Kanwaris with facility of Covid 19 testing, he added.

The Statesman had earlier reported that Prashant Kishor and his I-PAC will work with Mamata Banerjee and the party's all India general secretary Abhishek Banerjee till 2026.

Mr Kishor will also work for the party in the 2024 Lok Sabha poll.

Though the Trinamul Congress won the 2021 Assembly polls with a landslide victory, its results in a few districts of North Bengal are not satisfactory.

Party insiders also said that a decision was taken in the party that the one-man-one-post

Dilip Ghosh summoned to Delhi by BJP leadership

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 10 JULY

BJP state president and MP Dilip Ghosh has been asked by the central party leadership to join a meeting tomorrow in Delhi.

It has been learnt that the party's national president JP Nadda and national general secretary BL Santhosh both will meet him tomorrow to discuss "urgent and important" organisational matters.

The West Bengal BJP state leadership is facing huge embarrassment following several party leaders making harsh remarks against the party's state president Dilip Ghosh and Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari.

The BJP central leadership could decide the next course of action against those leaders during the meeting, party sources said.

Former Union minister Babul Supriyo, BJYM state president Saumitra Khan, Rajib Banerjee and Sabyasachi Dutta have all attacked the party leadership through social media recently on several issues.

The party leadership considered this as breaking of party's discipline. However, the disciplinary committee of

the party is yet to send them show-cause notices.

Meanwhile, BJP state president Dilip Ghosh said that the state government is trying to stop the mouth of the Opposition party, so gave Mukul Roy appointment as the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee instead of offering it to the BJP.

"It is nothing but the government showing how to capture everything by bestowing power. The state government is scared that its malpractice could be leaked though PAC data so Opposition party was not given the post of PAC chairman. We sent the names of BJP MLAs for the PAC chairman's post, but it was rejected. It is a clear attempt by the state government without Opposition," said Mr Ghosh.

Yesterday Mr Roy was appointed the PAC chairman. BJP MLAs staged a walk out of the Assembly to protest against it.

Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari alleged that in the appointment of Mukul Roy as PAC chairman, the Assembly broke a long-standing tradition and contended that the decision was taken to hide the state government's malpractices.

Mamata holds three-hour meeting with Prashant Kishor

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 10 JULY

Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee held a meeting with poll strategist Prashant Kishor for three hours on Saturday to discuss about the organisational changes in the party at state level and district levels.

The Statesman had earlier reported that Prashant Kishor and his I-PAC will work with Mamata Banerjee and the party's all India general secretary Abhishek Banerjee till 2026.

Mr Kishor will also work for the party in the 2024 Lok Sabha poll.

Though the Trinamul Congress won the 2021 Assembly polls with a landslide victory, its results in a few districts of North Bengal are not satisfactory.

The reshuffle is on the anvil and by next week Trinamul Congress is likely to announce the changes in core committee, state committee and district committee.

Earlier, Trinamul Congress at the advice of Prashant Kishor has abolished the post of party observer in 2020 as there were reports that party observers are conniving with BJP leaders and trying to weaken the party.

TENDER			
NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE			
E-Tender for and on behalf of the President of India, Pr. CE, Northern Railway, Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001 invites the following tenders through E-Procurement System:			Due on 02.08.2021
Tender no. 211-2674-2020-21-NR	Tender Document Cost	₹NL	Earliest Money
Description of Item			
Item (i) Fabrication & Supply of 1 in 8.5 Diamond Crossing (without slip) B.G. (1673 min) for 60 kg (UIC) to RDSO Drg. No. T-6492 (as amended upto date) and IRS Specification T-10-2000 and T-29-2015 (as amended upto date) - with CMS acute crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-4967 (as amended upto date) - with OR Switches (curved) - with all parts listed in the sub-assembly drawings but excluding standard Fish Plate, Fish Bolts, ERC & Insulating Liners/Metal Liners.	₹28,95,87,395.1	₹NL	₹20,00,000/-
Item (ii) Manufacturing & Supply of 1 in 8.5 Diamond Crossing with Single Slip (Curved Switch) B.G. (1673 mm) for 60 kg (UIC) to RDSO Drg. No. T-6493 (as amended upto date) and IRS Specification T-10-2000 and T-29-2015 (as amended upto date) - with CMS acute crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-4967 (as amended upto date) - with OR Switches (curved) - with all parts listed in the sub-assembly drawings but excluding standard Fish Plate, Fish Bolts, ERC & Insulating Liners/Metal Liners.	₹28,95,87,395.1	₹NL	₹20,00,000/-
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In the current reign of the BJP in UP, there is no rule of law, but a 'jungle raj' is prevailing under which there has been widespread violence in the panchayat polls.

BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY CHIEF MAYAWATI

LASHING OUT AT THE UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT OVER LAW AND ORDER

The Sunday Statesman

NEW DELHI, 11 JULY 2021

05

THUMBNAILS



A Delhi police personnel stands guard as the Caffar Market closed for 48 hours for flouting Covid norms in New Delhi.

AGENCIES

UP ex-CM Kalyan Singh stable, says hospital: The health condition of former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh, who is admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) of Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences here, is stable, the hospital said on Saturday.

PTI

Farmers clash with police in Yamunagar: A group of farmers on Saturday clashed with police when they tried to force their way through barricades to head towards a venue where Haryana minister Mool Chand Sharma was to come. Many received minor injuries in the incident.

PTI

Delhi court directs police to check on M S Sirsa: A court has directed Delhi Police to ensure that Shrimati Akali Dal leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa does not flee from justice as he is facing probe in a case of alleged misappropriation of funds during his tenure as secretary-general of Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee.

PTI

Gujarat: Love for non-veg lands youth in jail under 'terror' charges

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, 10 JULY

A Kashmiri youth, who was acquitted of terror charges last month after spending eleven years in a Gujarat jail, often used to go out of his training camp in search of non-vegetarian food. This was one of the 'terror' charges the Gujarat Police had listed in its long list of allegations against Bashir Ahmed Baba who came here in February 2011 for training with the Cleft and Craniofacial Research Institute (CCRI) but languished in jail for next eleven years till last month.

The then 31-year-old computer professional worked with a Srinagar-based NGO which works for children with cleft lips. Going out in search of non-vegetarian food and for sight-seeing were the 'terror link' charges the Gujarat Police made against Bashir on the basis of testimony of one Manish Jain, who was the project development executive at the CCRI where the Kashmiri youth had come for training. Acquitting him all charges of terror, the Additional Sessions Judge at Anand ruled that there is nothing inappropriate in having non-vegetarian food.

Vote counting for 476 posts of block panchayat begins in UP

Yogi Adityanath directed officials to keep tight security at blocks where counting is taking place

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LUCKNOW, 10 JULY

Counting of votes polled for the 476 posts of block panchayat chiefs has begun in Uttar Pradesh, the State Election Commission said.

The counting of votes commenced after the voting concluded at 3 pm, it said. Voting was held from 11 am to 3 pm on Saturday.

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath directed officials that tight security arrangements should be made at each block where counting is taking place.

In a statement issued, Adityanath said there should be a system in place where in the winning and losing candidates be escorted to their homes under police protection. "The police force should remain extra alert and sensitive. Stringent action should be initiated against people who indulge in initiating the atmosphere," he said.

A total of 349 candidates for the block panchayat chief posts were elected unopposed on Friday, the last day for the withdrawal of nomi-



nation papers.

In a statement issued here on Friday, State Election Commissioner Manoj Kumar had said 1,778 nomination papers were received for 825 posts of the block panchayat chief, of which 68 were cancelled and 187 withdrawn.

As a result, now 1,710 candidates will go into the elections on Saturday, he had said. As the State Election Commission announced that candidates on 349 posts have been elected unopposed, an office-bearer of the BJP claimed that 334 among the winning candidates belonged to the ruling party.

UP BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh said a state of development and good gov-

ernance has been established by eradicating casteism and corruption in Uttar Pradesh after the formation of the government under the leadership of chief minister Adityanath.

"This is the reason that even in the three-tier panchayat elections, the BJP is continuously achieving victories, which is the stamp of people's approval on the policies of the BJP," he said earlier in a statement.

Opposition parties, including the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Congress, have accused the ruling BJP of damaging democracy in the elections of kshetra panchayat chiefs and attacked it for allegedly showing "utter

Two cops suspended in BDC member kin murder case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CHENNAI, 14 NOVEMBER

Two policemen, including a station in-charge, were suspended on Sunday in connection with the killing of a Block Development Committee (BDC) member's relative in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district, an official said.

Mayaram (60), the brother-in-law of BDC member Yaduraj Devi, was killed on Thursday, ahead of the polls for the block panchayat head, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP), Rural, Ashok Kumar said.

He died while prevent-

ing an alleged attempt by a poll candidate's husband and supporters to abduct Devi, he said. Sudhir Yagyasaini is the main accused in the case and he is the husband of Sarita Yagyasaini, who was backed by the BJP for the polls. She won in the elections which were held on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the National Commission for Women (NCW) has asked the UP police to immediately take action against two men who misbehaved with a woman, pulling her sari, during the filing of nominations for the block chairman polls in Lakhimpur Kheri.

disrespect" to women during the election process. They accused the government of misusing power and official machinery in the panchayat elections.

Hitting out at the BJP government, BSP chief Mayawati alleged that there is jungle raj in the state.

In a tweet in Hindi on Saturday, she said, "In the reign of the present BJP government in UP, there is no rule of law, but a jungle raj is prevailing there, under which there has been widespread violence in the panchayat polls, and there was indecent behaviour with a woman in Lakhimpur Kheri.

Maha govt sets up panel to probe phone-tapping allegation



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

months, the order said.

The terms and references for the committee are to scrutinise the cases of phone-tapping between 2015 and 2019 and find out whether there was any political motive.

"If the phone surveillance was politically motivated, action will be taken," the order said.

When Patole raised the issue in the House, several members supported the need for a high-level probe.

Patole represents the Sakoli Assembly segment in the Bhandara district of the Vidarbha region. He had earlier quit the Congress and won the 2014 Lok Sabha election on the BJP's ticket. However, he left the saffron party in 2017 citing differences with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Fadnavis, and returned to the Congress.

On Saturday, BJP MLA and former minister Ashish Shelar questioned Patole's 'silence' for two years before raising the phone-tapping allegation against the erstwhile Fadnavis government, even as the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) dispensation in November 2019.

The Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress and NCP are the constituents of the MVA government.

Shelar said, Patole has levelled the allegation that his phone calls were tapped by the previous Fadnavis government. However, he has made the allegation two years after the formation of the MVA government. What was he doing in the last two years?

The BJP leader quipped that Patole keeps passing amusing comments.

Hizbul chief Salahuddin's two sons, 9 officials sacked for terror links

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 10 JULY

Two sons of the Pakistan-based designated global terrorist and founder of terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen, Syed Salahuddin are among eleven employees of the J&K government who have been sacked on the charges of terror links.

Syed Ahmad Shakeel and Shahid Yousuf were also accused of terror funding.

The previous governments adopted a soft approach towards the sons of Salahuddin who has been declared the most wanted terrorist by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). He has been steering terror activities in India while sitting in Pakistan.

Acting tough against anti-

national activities in Jammu and Kashmir, these government employees have been sacked under the Article 311 (2) (C) of the Constitution.

After abrogation of the Article 370 two years ago, the government is taking tough action against its employees who were either supporting terrorists or indulging in anti-national activities. Those posting anti-India material on social media were also facing strict action.

Others recommended for dismissal include a peon of the ITI Kupwara who has been accused of being over ground worker of terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

He was allegedly providing information to terrorists about movement of security forces, abetting and harbouring terrorists to carry out activities in a clandestine manner.

Two teachers from Anantnag District have also been found involved in anti-national

LeT terrorist involved in Army Havaldar's killing case

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 10 JULY

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Arif Hazam, who was among the three terrorists killed on Saturday in Anantnag, was involved in the killing of Army Havaldar Manzoor Beigh of 162 TA on 6 June 2019, when he had come home on leave.

al activities including participating, supporting and propagating the secessionist ideology of Jamat-e-Islami and Dukhtaran-e-Millat.

The 8 government employees recommended for dismissal in the fourth meeting

of the Committee include two constables of Jammu Kashmari Police who supported terrorism from within the police department and provided inside information to the terrorists and also logistic support.

upon the Delhi High Court order until a meeting with my legal team in the national capital. But I am not going to give up," he asserted.

The former Bollywood actor has in the past been accused of condescension towards them.

"I am not a legal expert. So I will not comment much

stepmother in his native district of Khagaria, in a charm offensive to win over his close relatives.

Chirag taunts Paras upon landing cabinet berth; declares he won't give up



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

PATNA, 10 JULY

Lok Janshakti Party leader Chirag Paswan on Saturday paid a backhanded compliment to estranged uncle Pushpati Kumar Paras, by congratulating him on joining the union cabinet, which he said was a goal he achieved by breaking up his own family.

The beleaguered LJP leader,

who has suffered a setback with the Delhi High Court rejecting his petition challenging the election of Paras as the party leader in the Lok Sabha, made it clear "I am not going to give up my right to reclaim the party nurtured by my late father Ram Vilas Paswan's blood and sweat."

In an oblique reference to Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar who he suspects of engineering the putsch in the

LJP, Chirag said "I cannot allow the party to be taken over by those, who because of personal ambitions, are sitting in the lap of people who did not deign to come out with even a tweet on my father's birth anniversary recently."

When asked whether he still considered himself a Hanuman to Modi, Paswan cryptically replied this is a question you need to ask when elections are round the corner.

The 38 years old, who has been reaching out to the family of his late father from the first marriage, also said "I feel overwhelmed by emotions. After the death of my father and the betrayal of my family members many other dear relatives have come out with support."

In the state since Monday as part of his ashirwad yatra, Chirag has paid visits to his step-sisters here besides his

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that six girls namely (1) Ragini D/o Mangale Age 20 Years R/o Gaunkharka, Nuwakot, Nepal Height 156cm, Complexion-Fair Face Round Weight 65 Kg, (2) Jenisha D/o Buddiman Age 19 Years, R/o Gairigaun, Basantpur-06, Rehthram, Nepal, Height 154cm, Complexion-Fair Face Round Weight 48 Kg (3) Anju D/o Bail Bahadur Age 21 Years R/o Namobuddha-2, Kabre, Nepal Height 138cm, Complexion-Fair Face Round Weight 59 Kg (4) Poonam D/o Late Shyam Mandal Age 16 Years R/o Bholi Nath Pur, Distt Bhagalpur, Bihar, Height 152 Cm, Complexion-Fair Face Round Weight 50 Kg (5) Monika D/o Dil Bahadur Age 20 Years, R/o Gorshyang, Kavre, Nepal Height 143cm, Complexion-Fair Face Round Weight 47 Kg (6) Kopila D/o Somal Ghalan Age 18 Years R/o Hadikhola, Meldada, Makwanpur, Nepal, Height 148cm, Complexion-Fair Face Round Weight 55 Kg have been missing since 02.12.2018 from Sanskar Ashram, Dilshad Garden, New Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 388/18, U/s 363 IPC, Dated 02.12.2018, has been lodged at P.S. G.T.B. Enclave, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girls but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about these missing girls please inform the undersigned.

Web-site : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-Mail ID : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
DP/100/CRIME/2021

Anti-Human Trafficking Unit,
Crime Branch, Rohini, Delhi.
Phone : 011-27892844 &
Mobile : 9810556406

Govt keen to make cooperatives more empowered: Amit Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY



Bijendra Singh.

"Today met @ncuicoop Chairman Shri Dileep Sanghani, @IFFCO_PR Chairman Shri B S Nakai ji, Managing Director Shri U S Awasthi and @nafedindia Chairman Dr Bijendra Singh ji.

In the meeting, the minister asked cooperatives like IFFCO and KRIBHCO to work in the field of seed production using vacant land of 38,000 hectares as well as in organic farming, the NCUI said in a separate statement.

The minister also assured that the government is committed to strengthening the cooperative movement in the country, the benefits of which would go to the grass-root level cooperatives, it said.

Shah also assured the delegation that the same benefits and concessions given to Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) will be provided to primary agriculture cooperatives in the country for strengthening them, it added.

In the meeting, the minister desired that a conference with representatives of state-level cooperatives should be organized by NCUI, IFFCO and other cooperatives for discussing pertinent issues confronting the cooperative movement.

The delegation apprised the minister about the problems and challenges confronting the cooperative movement. The government has recently carved out a new ministry for cooperation, which earlier was a small department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Meanwhile, Newly sworn-in Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Saturday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the National Capital.

It is important to mention here that this was the first meeting of the newly Uttarakhand chief minister and the Prime Minister.

Following his meeting with PM Modi, Pushkar Singh Dhami is scheduled to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other prominent BJP leaders today evening in Delhi.

Earlier

Cauldron bubble

The irony is cruel. A factory that till Friday produced food in Narayanganj district on the outskirts of Dhaka was devastated by a fire, killing no fewer than 52 people trapped by the flames. This has compounded the crisis that confronts the country on account of the deadly pandemic and the dearth of vaccines. Many workers, several believed to be teenagers, leapt for their lives from the upper floors, recalling a not dissimilar tragedy in Kolkata's Stephen Court some years ago.

The blaze was noticed at the factory in Rupganj, an industrial town 25 km east of Dhaka, on Thursday afternoon and was still burning nearly 24 hours later. Albeit in a very different way it is reminiscent of the collapse of Rana Plaza a few years ago. Reaffirmed in the process must be the fact that Bangladesh has become direly vulnerable to man-made disasters. This is the strand that binds the Hashem Food and Beverage factory fire to Rana Plaza, where allegedly expectant and overworked mothers perished in the catastrophe.

Arguably, there will be many more casualties than reported till Friday afternoon. Visuals suggest that the building has been gutted and the eventual death-count and the number of injured may seem too horrendous at the time of calibration. About 30 people were injured and hundreds of distraught relatives and other workers waited anxiously as emergency services brought out bodies from the burning building. Police initially gave a toll of three dead but the toll rose dramatically as firefighters reached the upper floors and started bringing out dozens of bodies of trapped workers.

While the cause of the fire must await a thorough investigation, Dinu Moni Sharma, head of Dhaka's fire department, said the disaster occurred because highly flammable chemicals and plastics had been stockpiled inside. The storage procedure thus ran counter to the certitudes of safety. To that must be added the fact that on the third floor, gates on both stairwells were closed.

As it turned out, every rule in the book on fire precaution had ignorantly been flouted. There were said to be 48 people trapped inside and Bangladesh shudders at the thought of whatever may have happened to them. Many of those injured leapt for their lives from the upper floors. It is cause for alarm that Mohammad Saiful, a factory worker who escaped the fire, said there were dozens of people inside when the blaze began.

Fires are common in Bangladesh due to the lax enforcement of safety rules. In February 2019, 70 people perished when an inferno ripped through several apartment blocks in Dhaka. Bangladesh's economic growth in recent years has seemingly not been matched by concern for its poor. They continue to be victims, just like their counterparts in India.

Spectacular swing

When, early in May, India announced their squad for the Test matches this English summer - and nearly a month was to pass before their departure for Blighty - no one, expert or layabout, detected in the selections a suitability for ludo or bagatelle. On the contrary, a certain buoyant optimism marked the build-up, with some august personages, responding to an inquisitive media, going to the extent of forecasting India's victory margin against the hosts.

But now, some way into July, very little of the robust, or even jaunty, self-confidence can be discerned in the way the team seem to be going about their business. They sound like Scooby alerted to another ordeal. Anonymous quotations in large segments of the Press fuel suspicions of an ideological confrontation between the team management, which wants Prithvi Shaw and Devdutt Padikkal now that opener Shubman Gill is injured, and the selectors, who recommend stand-by Abhimanyu Easwaran, of Bengal, for the top-order slot. "There're as many as 23 players currently in England for them to choose from and they want two more yet," one in the selecting quintet is reported to have fumed. "Easwaran will be out of his depth at this level," the team's high-ups are said to feel. Which could mean captain Virat Kohli doesn't think the world of him. But Shaw had been dropped after failing in Australia and the in-demand duo's subsequent runs were made in white-ball matches. But the cold war drags on and those who loudly wonder why seem inclined not to point at the loss of self-belief within the touring contingent in England in the wake of India's abject capitulation in the World Test Championship. The walloping India found themselves at the receiving end of was the direct outcome of their failure, twice, with the bat in the match. They had been expected to wring New Zealand's neck but they ended up wringing their own hands. Their middle-order soild pillar, Cheteshwar Pujara, stands condemned by their own captain, who has threatened an overhauling of the team.

And if the moving ball probed and exposed quite a few Indian players' vulnerabilities in the high-altitude exchanges, well might the visitors now be feeling rather low anticipating more of the same hostile treatment from England's seasoned purveyors of pace and swing.

Having taken it on the chin when losing a Test series 1-3 in India when they felt they'd been done in by means of wicket-doctoring, England are now quite unlikely to pass up an opportunity to make the most of the advantage when they hold it. England, in that series, had pulled ahead 1 - 0 before the Indians had the cricket board's own curator given the bum's rush, taking the pitch-making over at Chepauk. Eden Gardens and Motera knew it all. Since things going round have been known to come around as well, India's batting stalwarts are now obliged to set an example for rookies like Easwaran in coping with the trident of pace, bounce and swing.

Effectual Dirigisme

Quite the most striking feature of Wednesday's presentation was that cash would be transferred directly to as many people as feasible. This is easier announced than accomplished not the least because the number of potential beneficiaries has been indeterminate even on budget day, let alone the formalities that will have to be observed. The economic condition of the people, most particularly in rural Bengal, has to improve if the state is to be rescued from the cusp of poverty. Dirigisme must of necessity be beneficial



Short of the customary carping at the Centre and the legalitarians cant, the West Bengal budget for 2021-22

is seemingly riveted to the poor and marginalised segment in a robust enunciation of public policy. In a budget that was read out by the industries minister, Partha Chatterjee, in the absence of finance minister Amit Mitra, now under the weather, Mamata Banerjee has sought to fulfil her electoral pledge of Universal Basic Income (UBI), as often demanded by economists who owe allegiance to the Communist Party of India (Marxist), pre-eminently Prabhat Patnaik. It is hard not to wonder whether the CPI-M and Trinamul Congress are on the same page as regards UBI.

Quite the most striking feature of Wednesday's presentation was that cash would be transferred directly to as many people as feasible. This is easier announced than accomplished not the least because the number of potential beneficiaries has been indeterminate even on budget day, let alone the formalities that will have to be observed.

The plan of action will, it is hoped, enhance the spending power of the people; but the bout of macro-management ought to have taken care of the economic matrices. The four new schemes - revised Krishak Bandhu, Students' Credit Card, Lakhshmi Bhitar and Dware Ration - had been promised in the election manifesto of the Trinamul Congress.

It may be just a coincidence that the state government's sig-

nal of intent was advanced on a day when markets in Kolkata registered ballooning food inflation, notably the price of vegetables. To that must be added the steep rise in the cost of transportation - a thoroughly arbitrary exercise by bus and minibus operators and without the concurrence of the government. The latter was engaged in masterly inactivity. There appears to be little or no governmental involvement in the economics of this segment of public transportation, save in the ballooning cost of fuel for which the Union government is more responsible. The problem becomes still more acute with the overwhelming presence of private buses... with the government's public conveyance network dwindling to almost a skeletal service.

Of course, the waiver of the road tax is bound to benefit the owners of buses, minibuses and taxis, albeit at the cost of a fair amount of revenue to the state exchequer. It is utterly preposterous, therefore, to demand Rs 20 from a passenger even for travelling from one stoppage to another. The Chief Minister may be spot on in terms of theory - "Our effort is to hand out cash to the people so that they can spend. This will result in creation of demand, trigger economic activity and spur growth". Admittedly, demonetisation had

hampered hoi-poloi's spending power; but the economic blight, such as it was, had happened close to five years ago (November 2016). Post-demonetisation, inflation has been pronounced in West Bengal.

The booming real estate sector in Kolkata and the districts is expected to get an impetus with the reduction in stamp duty and what they call the "circle rate". The budget envisages a two per cent rebate on stamp duty for registration of property deeds and a ten per cent reduction in circle rates - the minimum value at which property in a certain area can be bought and sold. One can almost hear a collective sigh of relief from middle Bengal, the segment that is ever so keen on buying flats and on which the real estate operators are increasingly thriving. Aside from the economics of real estate, the fact remains that from the Left dispensation to the Trinamul, Bengal has been plagued by its attendant red herrings, primarily inter-party and personal rivalry, as often as not mortal, among promoters over the distribution of spoils. To that must be added the dire environmental fallout, exemplified by the rampant filling of waterbodies that skirt the eastern periphery of the city. The budget takes a bow in the direction of women and child development and social welfare. The outlay is more than 2.7 times

of the sum in the previous budget. A monthly sum of Rs 500 (Rs 6000 a year) will be advanced to "general category households" and Rs 1,000 (Rs 12,000 a year) to families in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes category. This will envisage a remarkable expansion of banking operations as the amount will be credited directly to the bank accounts of the female heads of Bengal's 1.6 crore families. Fairly sweeping is the anticipated impact of public policy, both in terms of education and school education. A neat sum of Rs 10,000 will be given to every farmer each year; an equal sum will be transferred to 10 lakh students in Classes 11 and 12 to enable them to buy tablets to facilitate online studies. Unwittingly or otherwise, this is intended to address the discord over conventional classroom teaching and online instruction. Other direct cash transfer schemes include pensions for widows and artists and monthly doles for farmers. Well might the Chief Minister claim that "no other state has had such a wide range of direct transfer schemes".

The success of the schemes announced - but bereft of the customary fanfare and romantic euphoria - will hinge on implementation, the reining in of the occasionally violent real estate operatives from Baguiati to Behala and further afield, and to make the people acquainted with the certitudes of banking. The economic condition of the people, most particularly in rural Bengal, has to improve if the state is to be rescued from the cusp of poverty. Dirigisme must of necessity be effectual.



ARINDAM GHOSH-DASTIDAR
The writer is Senior Editor, The Statesman

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR editor@thestatesman.com

The PM means business

SIR, The reconstitution of the Union cabinet on Wednesday was guided by both political and administrative considerations.

As many as 36 new faces were inducted and 12 dropped from the council of 78 members, just three short of the upper limit of 81.

The first major reshuffle of the second term of this BJP-led government has shown that PM Modi means business and that non-performers would not be tolerated even if they belong to senior ranks of the party.

Governance issues might have been a factor in the axing of some of the Ministers. Harsh Vardhan, Ravi

Shankar Prasad and Prakash Javadekar were among those who were shown the door for mishandling the pandemic, relations with IT giants and governmental communication, respectively.

New faces such as Ashwini Vaishnaw and Jyotiraditya Scindia have administrative skills that could prove valuable in crucial ministries that they now head.

The Ministers must be empowered to plan and take decisions in their respective areas. The collective responsibility of the cabinet must be infused.

Discussions in the cabinet must be open. Proposals

that come for the cabinet's consideration must go through rigorous technical vetting and wide political consultations.

The revamping was intended to enhance governance, ramp up the economy and fuel the BJP's political march ahead of crucial State elections and the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

All these would be possible only if all hands are on the deck. Forming a team is indeed a crucial task of a captain; allowing them to flourish as individuals while playing as a team is equally important.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra, Mohali, 9 July.

**TRAGIC**

SIR, The passing away of Star Swamy in the harshest of conditions is not only a very tragic day for the "anti-national" Indians who are still left with traits such as humanity and compassion in their hearts; also it is an unfathomable loss for the poorest of poor and marginalised souls whose human rights, honour and dignity are ruthlessly trampled.

So, despite such cruelty upon the octogenarian suffering from Parkinson's disease, barring a few exceptional individuals, activists and groups - the "mainstream" or overwhelming section of the population preferred to look the other way and remained immersed in consumerism, sports and films.

With each passing day, society is perhaps turning more and more cruel and selfish. Surely, we didn't deserve this Swamy.

Yours, etc., Kajal Chatterjee, Sodepur, 9 July.

RECKLESS

SIR, This refers to today's headline, "Maha, Kerala report 53 p.c. of Covid cases" in *The Statesman*.

The second wave of Covid-19 has not yet ended in India, the virus is still lurking around and experts are repeatedly warning that the third wave may strike later this year.

However, people have already started throwing

caution to the winds - as if we have seen the back of this devastating pandemic that has claimed over 4 lakh lives across the country so far. As lockdowns are eased out, people are oblivious of the risk to their own lives and those of others. The crowding of public places has heightened the risk of infection. The visuals of jostling crowds in public places and tourist destinations across the country is an open invitation to the virus. It is shocking how quickly we have forgotten the havoc wrought by the second wave just a couple of months ago. The country had lulled itself into self-congratulatory complacency in January, when the first wave had petered out and the nationwide vaccination drive was rolled out with fanfare. With the vaccination rate continuing to be sluggish, a repeat of such irresponsible conduct can hasten the onset of the next wave. We need to comprehend the fact that there is no alternate to Covid-appropriate behaviour to safeguard ourselves and others from the scourge of the virus.

Yours, etc., N Sudhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru, 10 July.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

Double trouble for the poor

Hundreds of people are being arrested every day for violating lockdown rules, and as this newspaper reported on July 8, most of these arrestees are the poor going out to earn their daily bread.

The on-again, off-again lockdown induced by the Covid-19 pandemic has decimated the financial stability of hundreds of thousands of households. Poverty in the country has gone up, and every time we have a fresh round of lockdown, the struggles of the poor only get worse. Therefore, even though we understand the need for strict lockdown with the number of cases and deaths reaching record highs every day now, the poor cannot be expected to just stay at home and starve to death.

In order to ensure that enforcing a strict lockdown is possible - as it is necessary given the current Covid situation - and also humane, the government needs to urgently provide support to the poor who are being hit the hardest by the ongoing lockdown, as many of them have to live hand to mouth. This support can be in the form of cash assistance or the delivery of essential items (for free or for cheap) or both. Moreover, due to the poor getting arrested, they are having to pay fines - which is making life even more difficult for them financially - and their family members are gathering outside of court premises, increasing the risk of the virus spreading.

According to a report, family members of the poor, in their desperation, are also falling victim to fraudsters who are promising the release of their loved ones in exchange for cash and then disappearing - whereas those

The Daily Star

being arrested are having to pay Tk 100-200 in fines for their release. These fraudsters are asking for much more and robbing people blind. The authorities must stop this from happening.

Here we must point out the lack of planning by the authorities when it comes to implementing and enforcing lockdowns. How can people comply with the directive to stay at home if they are on the verge of starving? The authorities should have planned to deliver sufficient relief for the poor alongside (or before) implementing the lockdown.

And having done that, they should have made people aware of the penalties for going outside without an emergency, so that there would be no confusion as to how much they or their family members would have to pay for getting them released. Nevertheless, there is still time for the authorities to enforce the lockdown correctly. Given the current Covid trends, it is highly likely that the lockdown will have to continue for a while still. The authorities need to immediately start providing relief to people who are financially struggling. Law enforcers must be more understanding when it comes to arresting people and trying to get them to follow the health guidelines and government directives.

FIRST ROLE

SIR, Apropos "Did you know" in *The Statesman* dated of 9 July, I would like to point out that Dilip Kumar's first role in a Bengali film was in *Paari*, albeit as a guest actor where he played the role of a jailor of Andamans. The film also featured Dharmendra, Pranati Ghosh and Abhi Bhattacharya and was released in 1966, four years before he played the role of *Sagina Mahato* in 1970.

Yours, etc., Dhruba Jyoti Ghosh Dastidar, Kolkata, 9 July.



North American heatwave a warning to the world

GOVIND SINGH AND ARMIN ROSENCRANZ

The recent heat wave in the Vancouver area of Canada killed scores of people. The thermometers in Canada hit almost 50°C, breaking all past temperature records. This abnormal increase in temperature is accompanied with an increase in the number of heat days. Exposure to excessive heat for days together has been fatal for many individuals and disastrous for the affected communities.

The situation is not very different in the adjoining United States. The US northwest is experiencing record high temperatures to the extent that state authorities are setting up emergency "cooling shelters." The temperature in the city of Portland reached a record high of 44.5°C. The unprecedented heat wave resulted in mass purchase of air conditioners and other cooling devices until stores exhausted their stock.

The intense heat wave in northwest US and Canada is attributed to a heat dome-like condition created by atmospheric high pressure. The heat dome keeps hot air trapped: The intensity of heat depends on local factors as well as any background warming. The US and Canada are reeling under an extreme and rare heat dome which is threatening the lives of many people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Climate projections in the last three decades have consistently warned of extreme weather conditions and freak weather events. The US-Canadian heat wave must therefore be seen as a warning for all nations. The heat wave has already created new temperature records in the US and Canada. This was preceded by a record decline of the water level in the Hoover Dam, which is the US's largest reservoir. The US-Canadian heat wave is an extreme weather event; the world must prepare to face more such extreme events in the near future.

Climate change continues to be the greatest challenge faced by humanity today. Unfortunately,



measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change do not correspond to the pace with which change is happening. The warming of the planet is directly related to the increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The global carbon dioxide concentration crossed the 400 ppm mark in 2013 for the first time since measurements began in 1958. The global carbon dioxide concentration is consistently rising and reached 416 ppm by May 2021.

2020 was the warmest year on record; 2021 will most likely replace it. Each passing year is breaking the record of the previous year. The last seven years are the warmest seven years on record and their impact on

the global environment is now clear. In May 2021, a larger chunk of ice calved from the Antarctic ice sheet and became the world's largest floating iceberg. Named A-76, this iceberg is three times the size of Delhi. A-76 may not directly contribute to sea level rise, but it is certainly a hazard to maritime trade.

The 2021 US-Canadian heat wave may not be a milestone event for anthropogenic climate change.

However, it should be seen as a global warning for all nations: To begin with, the US-Canadian heat wave makes it clear that all nations are vulnerable and must work together to mitigate climate change. This message should resonate loud and clear now, and should alarm the del-

egates at the climate conference in Glasgow later this year.

More than 1,500 people lost their lives across Europe in the intense heat wave of 2003. If we don't realize the importance of collective global cooperation in mitigating and adapting to climate change, it will cost many more lives in the future.

The world needs to be united if we are serious about tackling climate change.

Within each nation, the US-Canadian heat wave should serve as a warning to prepare, improve and adequately implement national and local actions plans for climate change. This must take centre-stage in the functioning of all governments. Climate change adaptation

measures must immediately be put in place. The US-Canadian heat wave has made it clear that the deleterious impacts of climate change will not announce themselves before appearing. Preparation is the key and time is of the essence.

With climate change now becoming a climate emergency, the corporate sector must also play its part. The transition to a green economy is not possible without the active involvement of big oil and gas companies. Inaction is no longer an option. The fate of the present and future generations is at stake.

The writers are, respectively, Associate Professor and Dean at Jindal School of Environment and Sustainability, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana.

POLITICAL DIARY | KALYANI SHANKAR

Congress struggles to contain dissent

The Congress high command faces a Hobson's choice with the growing political crises in the states ruled by the party - Punjab, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. Internal quarrels have surfaced again in the three States. The dissidents are up in arms against the incumbent chief ministers. Senior Congress leaders are testing the patience of the high command.

Part of the crisis is created by the Gandhi family itself. Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi, who is the general secretary, prefer to have younger leaders as chief ministers and have zeroed in on Sachin Pilot (Rajasthan) and Navjot Singh Sidhu (Punjab).

The Congress has always believed in propping up dissidents against chief ministers to keep them in check. A strong leader like Indira Gandhi could get away with these tactics. But the weakened Congress is unable to steamroll its will.

While Rahul Gandhi is functioning as the de facto Congress president taking decisions in the party, Priyanka Gandhi has become a crisis manager. It was she who intervened last year to mollify dissident leader Sachin Pilot. The party worked out a formula that saved the situation temporarily. But the chief minister has not implemented the formula. It is no surprise that Pilot is losing patience.

In Punjab, the three-member a



committee set up to resolve the crisis had summoned Captain Amarinder Singh to Delhi recently. The dissident legislators led by former cricketer Navjot Singh Sidhu were also called to Delhi. A peace formula was thrashed out. The captain is a strong man and could stand up to the high command. It is Priyanka and Rahul who back Sidhu.

Seeing all these, Rajasthan chief minister Gehlot does not want to face the humiliation of being summoned to Delhi. He has found a convenient way of keeping himself iso-

lated for a month after being infected by Covid.

Gehlot has been the most vocal supporter of the family and remained steadfast in his devotion. Leaders like the late Ahmed Patel also backed him to the hilt.

The Captain is said to have told the Gandhis that it is up to the family to decide whether they want him or Sidhu. Allowing Sidhu and the chief minister to continue their bickering in public would only harm the party. Appointing Sidhu as the state party chief would further

muddy the waters for the party in Punjab. The Chief Minister suggests that the party's state chief should be a Hindu, as he and Sidhu are both Jat Sikhs.

The opposition in Punjab is weak. Akali Dal, the long-term ally of the BJP has severed its alliance last year on the farmer's agitation and is planning to go it alone. In a multi-cornered contest, the Congress is in a position to return if it tackles the crisis.

TS Singh Deo, health minister from Chhattisgarh, is another dissident

leader. Deo was promised that the chief ministership would be on rotation when Bhupesh Baghel was chosen as the Chief Minister. Now, in the absence of any such possibility, Deo refuses to come to Delhi.

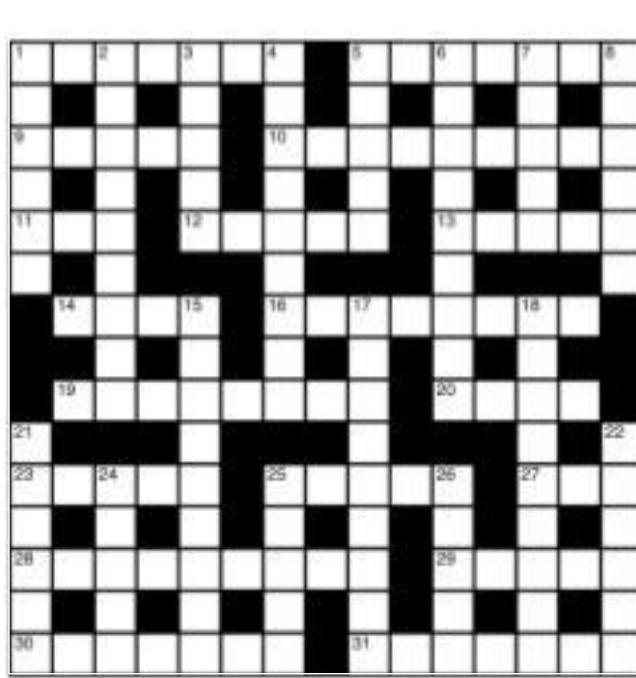
The options before the Gandhis are few. The Congress' strategy in the past of having two warring leaders in top positions in a state has not worked lately. Rajasthan is the only big state in the Congress kitty. Today the party is ruling in Punjab, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, and is a coalition partner in Jharkhand and Maharashtra.

First of all, the family should stop creating confusion in the rank and file and stop working at cross purposes. Secondly, unless the party goes to the polls showing a united face, it would be hard to retain the state in the upcoming elections. So the first thing is to address this issue.

Thirdly, even otherwise, the Congress has committees to coordinate with the chief minister and the state unit where it is in power. These committees were used to keep the CMs under check.

Fourthly, of the five poll-bound states - UP, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur - the Congress stands the best chance in Punjab. Singh has handled the farmers' agitation skilfully, supporting their demand but, at the same time, coordinating with the Centre. But above all unless the top leadership issue is not settled at the national level, the party will face trouble in key states. The Congressmen are clueless about who is running the party - the mother or the Gandhi siblings.

NO 28969



SOLUTION FOR 04 JULY

ACROSS

- 1 State proponents of aggressive action styles (7)
- 5 Murderer kidnaps prompt officer (7)
- 9 Falsify papers for firm (5)
- 10 Organised Sue tours a bridal store (9)
- 11 Stan maybe rejected slippery character (3)
- 12 Deserving world leader and king in hot mess (5)
- 13 With urge to fascinate (5)
- 14 Nasty bug lying concealed (4)
- 16 Cringe at sloppy serving (8)
- 19 Incentive from drug carriers trading ecstasy for uranium - it's back to Front (8)
- 20 Dispatched team leader after three
- 23 Carrying American, unfinished boat possibly rolls (5)
- 25 Bishop on a weekend getaway (5)
- 27 Not a fan of short hill-dweller (3)
- 28 Type of craft pint, way behind bar (9)
- 29 Gun man (5)
- 30 President of Aruba corrupted in Milton Keynes (7)
- 31 Cherry pit allowed (7)
- 23 Carrying American, unfinished boat possibly rolls (5)
- 25 Bishop on a weekend getaway (5)
- 27 Not a fan of short hill-dweller (3)
- 28 Type of craft pint, way behind bar (9)
- 29 Gun man (5)
- 30 President of Aruba corrupted in Milton Keynes (7)
- 31 Cherry pit allowed (7)
- 1 Miracle realm built around Midhaven (6)
- 2 Emphasise the extent of tall tale as told by Spooner? (9)
- 3 Opportunity to ditch name for surviving woman (5)
- 4 Like The Onion, CIA trials collapsed (9)
- 5 The clergy's destiny lies in the church (5)
- 6 Old man's weapons - they are needed for access (9)
- 7 A section expert (5)
- 8 Newton should love (6)
- 15 OK, rip up my comic fast! (3,6)
- 17 Does Covid make you this crass? (9)
- 18 Ideal open air frolic in Holland (9)
- 21 Crowded and comparatively friendly (6)
- 22 Verify a dry zone in Georgia (6)
- 24 Cancel loser (5)
- 25 British capital deficit creates this sort of market? (5)
- 26 Character in Greek apparel (5)

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

NOW AND AGAIN

Hush after a storm

TIRTHANKAR MITRA

I never did like to study. Small wonder, I never let go any distraction that came my way using it as an excuse to leave my books behind.

So when a heated altercation broke out beneath our window, I was all ears.

It was that time of my life when the stoop below our window was a site where debates broke out, sometimes to end in fistfights. It was a time which the city had never gone through earlier; nor had such times followed when parents worried whether their young son who had gone to college would return home.

And it was under such a street light, recently wrapped with red transparent paper marking the electoral triumph of an ideology, that the debate was raging. But the subject apparently had little to do with any ideas or ideology.

The topic of hot debate were the merits and shortcomings of a film released recently, Sagina Mahato.

I heard the names of Dilip Kumar, the film's principal protagonist and its director, Tapan Sinha being loudly discussed. While one group was all praise for both men, the other was denouncing them for not portraying reality.

As the supporters of Kumar pointed out that it had indeed earned the people's acceptance, opponents were quick to say it was an escapist film.

But I remained glued to the spot as the increasing decibel levels down below was the perfect distraction from studies. But my interest started to wane as accusations of being opponents of the class struggle were hurled at Kumar and Sinha.

I did not immediately discern a hush that descended on the slanging match. Just then a quiet voice broke in.

"I have not seen the film; but you seem to have overlooked that both the hero and the director have portrayed their empathy for the common man," the voice said. I saw the man in crumpled dhoti kurta before whom many in the locality genuflected.

His verdict pronounced about a thespian and an ace director, Ganesh Ghosh, the hero of the Chittagong armoury raid walked away. All was quiet once more.

100 YEARS AGO

GOVERNMENT SECURITIES

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - I read with a ray of hope the suggestive letter Now or Never in The Statesman on Government securities. As your correspondent rightly points out, most of the holders of these securities are poor people, widows and orphans, whose only income comes in the shape of interest on these securities. I know it from personal experience, as well as otherwise, that most Indians who want to provide for their helpless relatives generally go to these securities as the safest possible investment. The people in general till quite recently put implicit faith in them, and this popular faith was a great asset to the credit side of the Government. I know of people who have sold their houses with decent rentals and invested their money, sometimes all they had, in these securities as affording the safest possible custody. The best thing for the Government would have been to allow the holders to convert them into securities with higher interest.

SUNIT KUMAR TAGORE.

Banaras Cantonment.

SMOKING IN TRAMS

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - The Calcutta Tramway Company have a notice board fixed in all tram cars in which it is stated that "passengers are respectfully requested to refrain from smoking in the two front rows of seats," but from the number of people frequently found smoking in these seats, it is clear that the practice is allowed to continue unchecked. Practically every morning for the last six months I have happened to occupy a front seat at the starting point of the Wellesley tram-car. Invariably I find before the car proceeds a hundred yards that a gentleman enters and in quite an unconcerned manner lights up a cigarette, a cigar or a pipe which he continues to smoke although he has this notice staring him in the face all the way he travels. If the tramway company put up a notice prohibiting smoking it is up to them to enforce it.

A LADY NON-SMOKER.
Calcutta.

RAILWAYS AND COAL SUPPLIES

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - I notice from the Eastern Bengal Railway Notice dated April 12 appearing in The Statesman of date that, in consequence of the short supply of coal by certain collieries, the running of one mail train, and 8 passenger trains are to be cancelled on and from the 18th instant. The reduction of so large a number of trains cannot help but seriously inconvenience the travelling public. If supplies of coal contracted for from certain collieries are not obtainable it ought to be possible to purchase odd lots from collieries that have stocks, in order to maintain these services. If supplies of coal were not obtainable at all, but to curtail train services because supplies of coal cannot be obtained from certain collieries seems to indicate that the authorities responsible for the maintenance they may cause the travelling public, by reason of their not purchasing other coal to keep the trains running.

SUFFERER.
Calcutta.



The Securities and Exchange Board of India needs to act rationally in insider trading judgements.

BIOCON CHIEF KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW

AFTER SEBI BARRED ONE OF ITS SENIOR EXECUTIVES AND ALLEGRO CAPITAL FROM MARKET

THUMBNAILS

Equitas SFB gets RBI nod for amalgamation: Equitas Holdings, the promoter of Equitas Small Finance Bank (SFB), on Saturday said the bank has received Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) nod to apply for amalgamation of the promoted into itself. As per the SFB licensing guidelines of RBI, a promoter of SFB can exit or cease to be a promoter after the mandatory initial lock-in period of five years (initial promoter lock-in) depending on RBI's regulatory and supervisory comfort and Sebi regulations at that time. PTI

Cipla arm's products: Ciphands, the hand and surface hygiene brand of Cipla Health Ltd, has launched a number of products like Ciphands Total Germ Protection Hand Wash, Ciphands Plus Mist Spray Hand Sanitizer and Ciphands Smart Germ Protection Soap to cater to the widespread demand for hand hygiene, said a Press release. SNS

Federal Bank MD: Bank shareholders have approved the resolution to re-appoint Shyam Srinivasan as the managing director and chief executive officer for a period of three years. The decision was taken in the 90th annual general meeting of shareholders of Federal Bank which was conducted through video conferencing on Friday. The bank streamed it live on four social media platforms ~ Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Clubhouse. PTI

Volvo sales: Swedish luxury car maker Volvo Car India announced that it has recorded a 52 per cent growth in its retail sales at 713 units in the first six months of 2021. The company had sold 469 cars during the same period last year. Volvo's dynamic mid-size luxury SUV XC60 contributed the most, being the highest selling model in H1 2021, said a Press release. SNS

Fuel demand rebounds on easing restrictions

Consumption rises by 1.5 per cent to 16.33 million tons in June from a year earlier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

India's fuel demand rebounded in June after slumping to a nine-month low in the previous month as restrictions to curb the spread of the pandemic were eased, helping economic activity and mobility to pick up.

Fuel consumption rose by 1.5 per cent to 16.33 million tons in June from a year earlier and by 8 per cent over May 2021, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of ministry of petroleum and natural gas showed.

Petrol sales rose by 5.6 per cent year-on-year to 2.4 million tons in June. It was up 21 per cent from May sales of 1.99 million tons.

► Fuel consumption rose by 1.5 per cent to 16.33 million tons in June from a year earlier and by 8 per cent over May 2021.
► Petrol sales rose by 5.6 per cent year-on-year to 2.4 million tons in June. It was up 21 per cent from May sales of 1.99 million tons.
► Diesel sales rose by 12 per cent from May to 6.2 million tons, but was down by 1.5 per cent from June 2020.



before the onset of the second wave of Covid-19 infections led to the re-imposition of lockdowns in different states, stalling mobility and muting economic activity.

Consumption in May slumped to its lowest since August last year amid lockdowns and restrictions in several states.

Fuel demand had recovered to near-normal levels in March

Fuel demand showed signs

of resurgence in June after restrictions began to be eased and the economy gathered pace.

With Covid case addition continuing to decline and vaccination pace picking up, state governments have continued to reopen, though some exceptions such as Maharashtra exist.

The then oil minister Dhar-

mendra Pradhan had last month stated that India's fuel demand would recover to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2021.

"We are confident by the end of this calendar year, we will be in a position to restore our original (pre-Covid) consumption behaviour," Pradhan said.

Consumption of LPG, the only fuel which showed growth even during the first lockdown because of free supplies by the government to the poor, rose by 9.7 per cent year-on-year to 2.26 million tons. It was up by 26.3 per cent over June 2019.

With airlines yet to resume full-scale operations because of travel restrictions around the globe, jet fuel sales at 2,58,000 tons were up by 16.2 per cent year-on-year but 61.7 per cent lower than June of 2021.

Naphtha sales dropped by about 3.1 per cent to 1.19 million tons while sale of bitumen ~ used for making roads, were down by 32 per cent at 5,09,000 tons. Fuel oil consumption rose by 1.9 per cent to 5,33,000 tons.

PTI

GI-certified Fazil mango from Bengal exported to Bahrain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

A consignment of GI-certified Fazil mango variety sourced from Malda district of West Bengal was exported to Bahrain, the commerce ministry said today.

The GI tag helps growers get premium price for the product as no other producer can misuse the name to market similar goods.

A geographical indication (GI) tag is used for an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory. Typically, such a name conveys an

assurance of quality and distinctiveness, which is essentially attributable to the place of its origin.

Darjeeling tea, Tirupathi laddu, Kangra paintings, Nagpur orange and Kashmiri pashmina are among the registered GIs in India.

It said that in June 2021, a week-long Indian mango promotion programme was organised in Bahrain where 16 varieties of the fruit, including three GI-certified Khirsapatin and Lakshmanbhog (West Bengal), Zardalu (Bihar) were displayed.

While most of the states in India have mango plantations, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana

and Karnataka have a major share in total production of the fruit.

In a separate statement, the ministry said to promote agricultural crops exports and adherence to global practices, Apeda in collaboration with Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), traders, exporters, agricultural scientists, Uttar Pradesh government and other institutions organised a meet at Varanasi.

More than 200 farmers from the Varanasi region participated in the meet where agricultural scientists and officials from the leading institutes provided valuable inputs for promoting agricultural products.

IT capital comes eighth, according to London & Partners and Dealroom.co.

Bengaluru has attracted VC investment worth \$800 million in the fintech sector in the first half of this year, helping India rank fourth globally behind the US, UK and Germany.

Indian-based fintech companies received \$2.3 billion between January-June this year, against \$1.5 billion in the corresponding period in 2020. The US ranked first with \$26.3 billion, followed by the UK at \$5.7 billion and Germany at \$2.4 billion.

This is not all. In terms of total fintech VC investment between 2016 and 2021, the

Petrol crosses ₹100-mark in UP, C'garh and Nagaland

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Petrol price today crossed the Rs 100-per-litre mark in some places in Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Nagaland after fuel prices were hiked yet again.

Petrol price was hiked by 35 paise per litre and diesel by 26 paise, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

This took fuel prices across the country to a fresh high.

In Delhi, petrol price rose to Rs 100.91 a litre and diesel to Rs 89.88 per litre.

The increase led to petrol price surge above Rs 100-per-litre mark in Rampur district of Uttar Pradesh, Kanker, Jashpur and Narayanpur districts of Chhattisgarh and Kohima in Nagaland.

The three states are in a growing list of places where the fuel is at over Rs 100-a-litre mark.

States where petrol had reached that levels over the past few weeks are Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Bihar, Punjab, Ladakh, Sikkim and Puducherry. PTI

Mother Dairy ups milk prices by ₹2 per litre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

It sells around 30 lakh litres of milk per day in Delhi-NCR, while the total sale is 35 lakh litres per day.

"The company has been experiencing inflationary pressure on the overall input costs which has increased multi-fold in last one year, accompanied by the distress in milk production due to the ongoing pandemic," the statement said.

In the last one year, the farm prices have increased to the tune of 8-10 per cent coupled with mounting operational costs of processing, packaging and logistics.

It is pertinent to note that the farm prices of milk alone have firmed up by about 4 per cent in the last 3-4 weeks. Despite paying higher prices towards milk procurement in the last one year, the consumer prices were kept intact. With this revision, the milk prices are undergoing a revision of 4 per cent." Mother Dairy said. The company said it has always attempted to strike the right balance between the consumers and the milk producers.

Bengaluru attracts \$800 million VC investment in fintech sector



ing to expand into the India market."

Fintech VC investment this year, incidentally, reached a record high with \$54.1 billion pumped into companies around the world. San Francisco closed the worldwide list with \$7.2 billion, while London stood second at \$5.3 billion and New York third with \$5.2 billion.

London was at the heart of this growth, with its fintech firms accounting for over a third of all European funding, with the bumper start to the year for VC funding saw the UK capital cement its position as a global fintech hub, with investors pumping in \$5.3 billion.

DMart Q1 profit rises over 2-fold to ₹95 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates retail chain DMart, today reported over two-fold jump in consolidated net profit at Rs 95.36 crore for June quarter of financial year 2021-22.

The company had posted a net profit of Rs 40.08 crore in April-June period a year ago, when the markets were under strict lockdown.

Revenue from operations was up at Rs 5,183.12 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 3,883.18 crore in the year-ago period, said

Godrej Properties to invest over \$1 billion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Total expenses in the quarter were Rs 5,077.22 crore as against Rs 3,875.01 crore in April-June 2020-21.

On a standalone basis, revenue from operations during the quarter was at Rs 5,031.75 crore as compared to Rs 3,833.23 crore in the year-ago period.

Revenues have grown by 31 per cent over the corresponding quarter of last year. This is because the lockdown periods were at different times in different regions during the quarter," the company said.

The company's sales bookings grew by 14 per cent to a

record Rs 6,725 crore last fiscal despite adverse impact of the Covid pandemic, surpassing nearly Rs 6,000 crore clocked by Macrotech Developers (erstwhile Lodha Developers). "We sold 9,345 homes at an average of over 25 homes per day," said Pirojsha.

The executive chairman highlighted that the company in March raised Rs 3,750 crore through qualified institutional placement (QIP) process.

"Our QIP in March raised Rs 3,750 crore, and allowed your company to end the year with a net cash balance sheet," he said.

Pirojsha pointed out that



the business development in 2020-21 fiscal year was moderate, as the company adopted a wait-and-watch approach in the first half because of the

pandemic.

However, he expects FY 2021-22 to be a strong year for business development.

"The equity we have raised

and the flexibility this provides our balance sheet will allow us to invest over one billion USD into new projects over the next couple of years," said Pirojsha.

This will be substantially more than what the company has invested at any time in its past, he said, adding that the investment will allow the company to significantly accelerate its growth ambitions.

"We expect to see this play a role both in ensuring we scale our revenues rapidly and also continue to improve the margin profile of our business by improving GPL's economic interest in each project," Pirojsha said.

To expand its business, GPL buys land outright from the market and also partners with land owners to add more projects to its portfolio for future development.

Pirojsha said the company remains committed to two medium-term goals of consistently being among the leading developers by the value of housing sales in each of its focus markets and achieving a return on equity (RoE) in excess of 20 per cent.

GPL focuses majorly on four markets ~ Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru and Delhi-NCR. It sold properties of more than Rs 1,300 crore in each of the four focus markets last fiscal.

NEWSFEED

Indian Institute of Packaging



Indian Institute of Packaging (IIP), An Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India in collaboration with Department of Food Technology (NBA Accredited), Haldia Institute of Technology (An Autonomous Institute, NAAC Accredited 'A' Grade Institute) has launched a Four Weeks Internship program on 'Emerging Trends and Innovative Food Packaging Technologies in Food Industrial Practices'. The Internship Program has started from June 19, 2021 and will continue till July 11th 2021 (every Saturday & Sunday). More than 45 University Students have taken part in this event and on the inaugural day Keynote address was given by Col. Pramod Dahitule, Director, Eastern & North Eastern Region, FSSAI on the topic "Flagship activities of FSSAI in Food Packaging", followed by Opening remarks and welcome address by Dr. Tanveer Alam, Director, IIP. Mr. Bidhan Das, Deputy Director & Regional Head, IIP, Kolkata had taken an insightful Technical Session and the event was coordinated by Prof. Gourab Chatterjee, Head, Dept. of Food Technology, HIT.

DMRCCVO authors book on vigilance

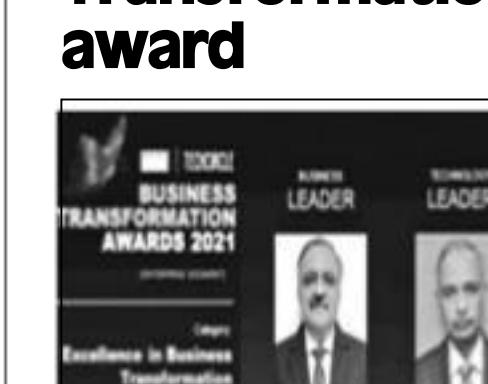


Sh. Ghansham Bansal, Chief Vigilance Officer, DMRC has written a book titled 'Public Servants Companion', which is a detailed account of the various rules and regulations. These must be known to every public servant during their service life. Written in a very lucid, easy to understand manner, the book sheds light on various aspects of a public servant's service life such as review of service, promotions, disciplinary proceedings, departmental enquiries etc. Sh. Bansal, an IRSE officer of the 1990 batch has over 30 years of experience in handling various aspects of project construction and monitoring in the Indian Railways. Prior to this publication, he has authored three technical books on Civil Engineering. For a technical book in Raj Bhawan, he was also honoured with the 'Rajiv Gandhi Award' by the Hon'ble President of India in 2008.

Royal Heritage of Odisha

After India's independence in the year 1947, more than 500 princely states of the country including 26 of Odisha acceded to the Union of India. These 26 princely states or "Garhjat" states throughout their history have formed an integral part of modern Odisha. In fact, the integration of these Garhjat states was the most significant event in the history of modern Odisha as it gave a new identity i.e. Greater Odisha in the Union of India. Unfortunately, the history of these Garhjat states from their origin to their merger with the Union of India has not been properly documented till date. Similarly, the royal palaces and buildings which still stand as mute testimony to the glorious history of erstwhile princely states of Odisha have also not

HPCL Bags Mint-Tech circle's Excellence in Business Transformation award



HPCL has been awarded with prestigious Mint-Tech Circle's Excellence in Business Transformation Award 2021 for its innovative approach to Digitize & Automate Supply Chain and unique initiative of Smart Terminals. HPCL's Executive Director - SOD, Shri Subodh Batra & Executive Director - ERP, Shri Shyam Mustyalwar have been conferred with Business Leader & Technology Leader respectively by Hindustan Times Group & Mosaic Digital, after an elaborate evaluation by esteemed Jury.

PSPCL purchased 400 MW power from Energy Exchange @12.40 per unit to meet the rising peak power demand



CMD PSPCL Shri Venu Prasad said that Punjab is witnessing all time high demand in the ongoing paddy season due to delayed monsoon arrival. He said that the power availability is also on the lower side this season due to low reservoir levels in dams resulting into less hydro power by about 600 MW. He informed that one unit of Talwandi Sabo Power Ltd. (TSP) has been on forced outage due to turbine breakdown, another unit has developed a technical snag on 07.07.2021 and the third one is operating at half capacity due to some technical issue. This has resulted into a shortage of nearly 2200 MW.

Vaccine shortage hits Odisha, inoculation halts in 10 districts

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, 10 July

Depleting stock of Covid-19 vaccine has led to the suspension of inoculation in as many as 10 out of 30 districts in Odisha on Saturday.

Odisha had been able to vaccinate over four lakh people per day when the campaign sustained a setback.

Till date 1,32,72,638 people have received either the single dose or both doses. The state is currently reeling under vaccine shortage with a meager stock of 59,920 doses of Covishield and 3,93,010 doses of Covaxin doses. The vaccination programme is likely to be further disrupted in a day or two unless fresh stocks are dispatched by the centre, said senior officials of health and family welfare department on Saturday adding that "we are

expecting 3.15 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine on July 15.

The districts, where the vaccination was suspended today due to vaccine shortage, are Balasore, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Kalahandi, Kendrapara, Koraput, Malkangiri,

District Medical Officers and Public Health Officers to monitor and ensure vaccination of persons housed in the mental health institutions.

"Near to Home Covid Vaccination Centre (NHCVC) shall be set up in the premises of mental health establishments for vaccinating inmates. Further, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) earlier issued for Covid-19 vaccination of vulnerable persons who do not have prescribed

Nayagarh, Nuapada and Sonepur on Saturday.

It is pertinent to note that the central government has flagged Odisha among the top four in the list of 15 states which continue to contribute heavily to the new Covid cases

Identity Card for registration in Co-WIN shall be followed for vaccinating inmates of mental health establishment through facilitated cohort registration", an official letter issued by additional chief secretary (health) stated.

Besides, any pregnant woman and lactating woman in such mental health establishments can also be vaccinated by following the instructions issued earlier this month, the letter added.

Meanwhile on Saturday, the state reported 58 COVID-19 deaths and 2,334 more cases. The state's COVID-19

toll climbed to 4,543 with the latest deaths while the test positivity rate dropped below 3 percent for the first time in the last three months.

This list does not reflect deaths occurring on a particular day. It gives details of past deaths for which the death audit process has been duly completed and the cause of death has been identified as due to Covid-19", the state Health Department tweeted.

The number of active cases have come down to 26,364 with daily recoveries breaching the virus infections. As many as 3,341 patients who were either home isolated or hospitalized recuperated from the disease in the past 24 hours. Of the cumulative death toll, almost 39 percent of fatalities have been reported in the last 39 days. The state has tested 78,560 samples on Friday. The recovery rate currently stands at 96.69 percent.

Puri sealed ahead of Rath Yatra

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

PURI, 10 JULY

The Puri district administration has imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 CrPC and a 48 hour curfew in certain parts of the town from Sunday. It has asked tourists to vacate the town ahead of the Jagannath Rath Yatra scheduled for 12 July.

The chariots of the three deities will be pulled by servitors. For the second successive year the Rath Yatra will be sans devotees due to the pandemic.

Entry points to the town sealed. ADG R K Sharma reviewed the security arrangements. Sixty five platoon police force has been deployed along with rapid action force.

A chopper of Indian Air Force was also requisitioned but could not make it to Padelpada because of bad weather en route, said senior police officials. The injured commandos with the help of CRPF were on

the road from the operational area by Central Reserve Police Force when the DGP Abhay received the information and diverted the chopper he was using to successful take another route and land at a small school ground to airlift the injured jawans to Bhubaneswar.

The DGP praised the pilots of the chopper pilot and BSF for the maneuver and successful landing. The ambush occurred when the security forces were carrying out an anti-insurgency combing operation. The jawans were caught in an exchange of fire all of a sudden. The combing operation of the forest area where the ambush took place is going on and IG Operations, Mr Amitabh Thakur is present.

Security force reinforcements have rushed to the site of the Naxal violence, police said.

Two SOG jawans injured in Naxal attack in Odisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

PHULBANI, 10 JULY

In the latest Naxal violence in Odisha, at least two commandos of the Special Operation Group (SOG), an elite paramilitary unit of the state police, sustained bullet injuries on Saturday when the ultras opened fire in Gochapada forest of Boudh district.

The Director General of Police, Odisha, Abhay who was on tour to Malkangiri and Koraput districts to review the naxal situation canceled his programme and flew to Padelpada in Boudh to airlift the injured commandos to Bhubaneswar.

A chopper of Indian Air Force was also requisitioned but could not make it to Padelpada because of bad weather en route, said senior police officials. The injured commandos with the help of CRPF were on

Inter-state leopard skin smuggling racket unearthed in Kalahandi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, 10 July

The Central Wildlife Crime Control Bureau in joint operation with the Odisha and Chhattisgarh forest department have made a seizure of seven leopard skin, besides the skin of a Royal Bengal tiger and arrested seven persons in operations over the last two days.

Disguising themselves as customers, the joint investigating agencies nabbed them from Sagada area in Kalahandi (South) Forest Division. The arrested persons are active members of the racket active in Odisha, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, said officials.

During the last six months five leopard skins had been



seized from Gariabundh of Chhattisgarh and all the accused persons belonged to Odisha's Kalahandi district.

Working on the link, the wildlife crime control bureau along with forest officials of Kalahandi and Chhattisgarh laid a trap and posed as traders from Chhattisgarh.

DFO North, Kalahandi,

Nitish Kumar said it is yet to be ascertained from where the wild animals were poached while ACF Kalahandi, Siba Prasad Rath said that Raipur of Chhattisgarh is a market for wildlife trophies.

It is a well-orchestrated wildlife crime syndicate adopting a multi-pronged strategy for running the racket with the

supply chain involving tribal dwellers for killing the wild animals to transporters, smugglers and the buyers, said investigating officials.

The seized skin will be sent to the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, for a chemical examination and manhunt is on to nab several others allegedly involved in the gang.

The poaching of these protected animals has shot up in Odisha with the seizure of over a dozen leopard skins in the one year.

The hides and body parts of these protected animals are much in demand in the international market. That is the reason why around 160 leopards have been killed in Odisha during the past one decade, according to wildlife activists.



A painting exhibition on Lord Jagannath Puri organised by Lalit Kala Academy, Bhubaneswar

SNS

Mangrove Genome decoded by researchers of IIS, SRM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, 10 July

In a significant research outcome, Director Dr. Ajay Parida's team at the Institute of Life Sciences, Bhubaneswar and Dr. M. Parani's group at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Tamil Nadu has sequenced the genome of one of the highly salt tolerant mangrove species Avicennia marina.

This is the first report of a reference grade genome assembly for any mangrove species reported so far.

Mangroves are a unique group of species found in marshy intertidal estuarine regions and survive a high degree of salinity through several adaptive mechanism. They form a link between marine and terrestrial ecosystems, protect shorelines, pro-



vide habitat for a diverse array of terrestrial organisms. Many marine fish species rely exclusively on mangroves as their breeding, spawning, and hatching grounds, noted the team members.

Avicennia marina (Gray mangrove) is one of the most prominent mangroves species found in all mangrove for-

mations in India. It is a salt-secreting and extraordinarily salt-tolerant species that grows optimally in 75 percent seawater and tolerates >250% seawater, they said.

It is among the rare plant species, which can excrete 40 percent of the salt through the salt glands in the leaves, besides its extraordinary capac-

ity to exclude salt entry to the roots. Understanding genetic basis of salt tolerance in this species therefore is significant for identification of salinity tolerant genes.

The research group have sequenced nearly 99 percent of the genome of the species aligned them to 31 chromosomes.

The study has been published in the recent issue of the Communications Biology (a nature group of journal).

The study employing the latest genome sequencing and assembling technologies have identified 31,477 protein-coding genes and a "salinome" consisting of 3246 salinity-responsive genes and homologs of 614 experimentally validated salinity tolerance genes.

Dr Parida said that "availability of the genome sequence

of mangrove species will trigger a wide range of molecular studies not only in India but throughout the world".

This study assumes significance as agriculture productivity globally is affected due to abiotic stress factors such as limited water availability and salinization of soil and water. Availability of water is a significant challenge to crop production in dryland areas, accounting for 40 percent of the world's total land area.

The genomic resources generated in the study will pave the way for researchers to study the potential of the identified genes for developing drought and salinity tolerant varieties of important crop species of the coastal region that is significant for India with 7,500 km of coastline and two major island systems" said Dr. Parida.

Laying and re-laying foundation stone for Koel barrage

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

ROURKELA, 10 JULY

The re-laying of foundation stone of the proposed Koel barrage on river Koel here has turned out to be a matter of riddle.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had laid the foundation stone for the first time in July 2013, prior to the general elections. The plaque was put up near the Baikuntha Ghat on the banks of the river.

The project is designed to solve the water crisis and multiple surveys had been conducted. The project is to irrigate 4500 hectares of land.

That was the end of it till it resurfaced in the election year of 2019 and a foundation stone was laid at a place two km downstream at Hamir-

pur for the Rs 354 crore project.

Recently, last week, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik once again re-laid the foundation stone for the project via teleconference. MLA Subrat Tarai and several other BJD leaders were present at the function.

People in Koel Nagar and nearby areas were astounded and wondered whether it

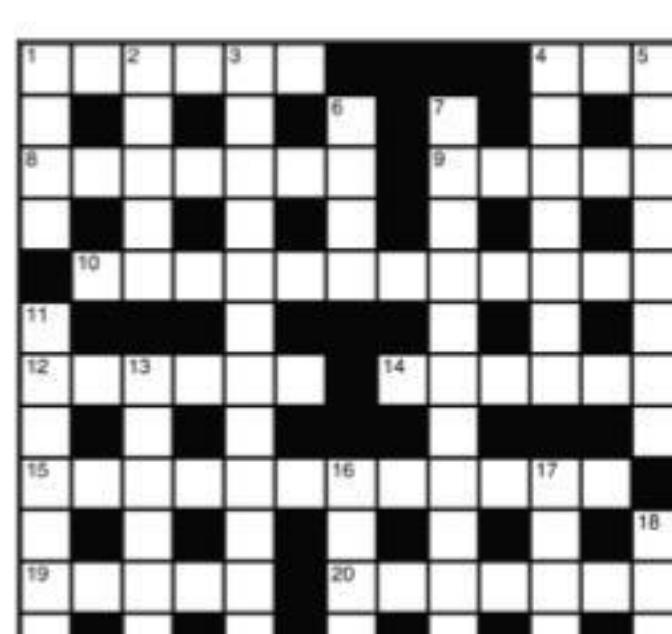
is another gimmick prior to the panchayat elections in the state. Even a BJD supporter like Satyabrata Pradhan sounded apologetic while saying he fails to understand the show.

BJP spokesperson Dhiren Senapati said, "this is another hogwash. We have seen such drama earlier." He raised questions with regards to the detailed project report, tender etc.

Raghunathpalli MLA Subrat Tarai, however, put up a brave front saying "I am grateful to our CM. This project is going to become a reality this time, no matter who says what. Technicalities are over and would be opened soon." The barrage would come up between Baikuntha Ghat and Hmipur.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD
ACROSS 1. Unit of time (6); 2. Reverence (3); 8. Fetter (3,4); 9. Pending (2,3); 10. Church window material (7,5); 12. Infuriate (6); 14. Division of the year (6); 15. Very large mammal (12); 19. French sculptor (5); 20. Diminish (7); 21. Lair (3); 22. Water-proof jacket (6); 23. Riser (4); 24. Honey-suckle; 25. Notice; 26. Sea snails; 27. Frailty; 28. Ruler; 29. Tulip; 30. Haywire; 31. Side. DOWN 1. Safety; 2. in all; 3. Ellipse; 4. Nervy; 5. Will; 6. Serve; 7. By the side.

NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

22586262, 22585007

RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

Toll Free Nos. 1800112511

SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

ISBT (General Inquiry): 2386836, 23865181

INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Cen- tre 0910383838,

Haryana Roadways 23861262, 18001803838;

Himachal Roadways 43513186, Indigo Airlines Air-

port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671576, Palam Road 25671579, 18001803838

JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111
EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 33773377
AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407
INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Centre 0910383838, Haryana Roadways 23861262 (City 2565294 Airport)

Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 25656421/25656431 Reservation 41528181
Air France Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City 2565294 Airport)

Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION BY JUDD

PACK 1 = 36

PACK 2 = 57

PACK 3 = 86

PACK 4 = 187

PACK 5 = 200

PAR SCORE 170-180

by JUDD

FIVE RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

SCRABBLE[®] BRAND

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Instructions Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of 100 for each word, using scoring table. If a word contains 7 or more letters, add 50 bonus points. If a word contains 10 or more letters, add 100 bonus points. If a word contains 12 or more letters, add 150 bonus points. If a word contains 14 or more letters, add 200 bonus points. If a word contains



US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

AFTER SIGNING EXECUTIVE ORDER PROMOTING COMPETITION AMONG COMPANIES TO LOWER PRICES, INCREASE WAGES

WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C
TOKYO	18°C	12°C
LONDON	17°C	9°C
DUBAI	30°C	25°C
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	04°C
NEW YORK	10°C	07°C
MOSCOW	16°C	09°C

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

THUMBNAILS



A group of people stands with flowers and signs in support of Pope Francis, in front of the Agostino Gemelli hospital, where he was hospitalised in Rome.

AP

Mexico enters 3rd wave of Covid-19: Mexico is entering its third wave of the coronavirus pandemic, as infections rose by 29 per cent compared to the previous week. But the country's health department said Friday the growth is largely coming from infections among younger, less vulnerable people.

AP

Pope's recovery: Pope Francis celebrated Mass, worked and dined with aides as his recovery from intestinal surgery continued with satisfactory results, the Vatican said. Francis is up walking in the apartment of Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic, from where he is expected to deliver his weekly noon-time prayer on Sunday.

AP

Death toll in Florida condo collapse now 79:

SURFSIDE (US), 10 JULY

The death toll in the collapse of a Miami-area condo building rose to 79 on Friday, a number the mayor called heartbreaking as recovery workers toiled for a 16th day to find victims in the rubble. Another 61 people remain unaccounted for.

Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava said the work to recover victims was moving forward with great urgency in order to bring closure to the families of victims who have spent an agonizing two weeks waiting for news. This is a staggering and heartbreaking number that affects all of us very deeply, Levine Cava said of the latest death toll.

All those who have passed ... are leaving behind loved ones. They're leaving behind devastated families. The magnitude of this tragedy is growing each and every day, she said.

Rescue workers and emergency support teams from Florida and several other states have labored in 12-hour shifts, 24 hours a day at the site of the devastated beachfront condominium in Surfside physically and emotionally taxing work performed amid oppressive heat and in dangerous conditions.

AP

We need help: Haiti's interim leader requests US troops

Biden administration so far has given no indication that it will provide military assistance

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PORT-AU-PRINCE, 10 JULY



Haitians wave their passports shouting "Help, refugee," as they gather outside the US Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Friday.

shares Hispaniola Island with Haiti.

The sister of one of the dead suspects, Duberney Capador, told that she last spoke to her brother late Wednesday - hours after Moïse's murder - when the men, holed up in a home and surrounded, were desperately trying to negotiate their way out of a shootout.

"He told me not to tell our mother, so she wouldn't worry," said Yenny Capador, fighting back tears.

It's not known who masterminded the attack. And numerous questions remain about how the perpetrators were able to penetrate the president's residence posing as US Drug Enforcement Administration agents, meeting little resistance from those charged with protecting the President.

Capador said her brother, who retired from the Colombian army in 2019 with the rank of sergeant, was hired by a private security firm with the understanding he would be providing protection for powerful individuals in Haiti.

Colombian officials said the men were recruited by four companies and traveled to the Caribbean nation in two groups via the Dominican Republic. US-trained Colombian soldiers are heavily sought after by private security firms and mercenary armies in global conflict zones because of their experience in a decades-long war against leftist rebels and powerful drug cartels.

In an unexplainable twist, would've surely outed any highly sensitive mission, some of the men posted on Facebook photos of themselves visiting the presidential palace and other tourist spots in the Dominican Republic, which

Capador said she knew almost nothing about the employer but shared a picture of her brother in a uniform emblazoned with the logo of CTU Security - a previously unknown company based in Doral, a Miami suburb popular with Colombian migrants.

The wife of Francisco Uribe,

who was among those arrested, told Colombia's W Radio that CTU offered to pay the men about \$2,700 a month — a paltry sum for a dangerous international mission but far more than what most of the men, non-commissioned officers and professional soldiers, earned from their retirement pensions.

NATIVE TRADITIONS



First Nations elders ride during the Calgary Stampede parade in Calgary, Alta. on Friday.

Lee statue removal underway in Charlottesville

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CHARLOTTESVILLE, 10 JULY

Work is underway to take down a Confederate monument that helped spark a violent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, nearly four years ago.

The removal of the statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee follows years of contention, community anguish and litigation.

Workers were preparing to hoist away the statue early Saturday morning. Charlottesville Mayor Nikuyah Walker was giving a speech.

After a push to remove the statue bubbled up in 2016, the monument became a rallying cry for white supremacists and other racist groups, culminating in the violent Unite the Right rally in 2017. The rally left peaceful counterprotester Heather Heyer dead and dozens of people injured.

The park where the Lee statue stands was quiet early Saturday, with protective fencing in place.

Only the statues, not their stone pedestals, will be removed Saturday.

They will be taken down and stored in a secure location until the City Council makes a final decision about what should be done with

them. Under state law, the city was required to solicit parties interested in taking the statues during an offer period that ended Thursday. It received 10 responses to its solicitation.

A coalition of activists commanded the city for moving quickly to take the statues down after the offer period ended. As long as the statues remain standing in our downtown public spaces, they signal that our community tolerated white supremacy and the Lost Cause these generals fought for, the coalition called Take 'Em Down Civile said.

The most recent removal push focused on the Lee monument began in 2016, thanks in part to a petition started by a Black high school student, Zahra Bryant.

Lawsuit was quickly filed, putting the city's plans on hold, and white supremacists seized on the issue.

This is a crucial first step in the right direction to tell a more historically accurate and complete story of this place and the people who call this place home.

The work did not start here and it will not end here, Bryant, now a student at the University of Virginia, said in a statement.

White House calling out critics of door-to-door vaccine push

WASHINGTON, 10 JULY

"A disservice to the country." "Inaccurate disinformation." "Literally killing people."

For months, the Biden White House refrained from criticising Republican officials who played down the importance of coronavirus vaccinations or sought to make political hay of the federal government's effort to drive shots into arms. Not any longer. With the Covid-19 vaccination rate plateauing across the country, the White House is returning fire at those they see as spreading harmful misinformation.

When South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster tried this week to block door-to-door efforts to drive up the vaccination rate in his state, White House Press secretary Jen Psaki did not mince words in her reaction.

"The failure to provide accurate public health information, including the efficacy of vaccines and the accessibility of them to people across the country, including South Carolina, is literally killing people, so maybe they should consider that," she said. While 67 per cent of American adults have gotten at least one dose, officials are increasingly worried about vast geographic disparity in vaccination rates.

For Joe Biden, politics are often framed by the personal

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WILMINGTON, 10 JULY

more than his recent predecessors, the president publicly draws on his own experiences when he makes connections with voters and considers his decisions. Many politicians make their background a central component of their political identity, but Biden is particularly prone to draw links between his own life story and the day-to-day workings of his presidency. And the strongest connection is often the saddest one.

Few public figures speak as powerfully on grief as Biden, who lost his first wife and baby daughter in a car crash and later his adult son Beau to brain cancer. In the first months of his term, he has drawn on that empathy to console those who have lost loved ones, including the

more than 6,000 who have died in the pandemic.

And it was on vivid display recently when he spent more than three hours in private with people mourning the loss of loved ones in the building collapse in Surfside, Florida, going from family to family to hear the stories of those still missing in the debris. Biden spoke of wanting to switch places with a lost or missing loved one and lamented that "the waiting, the waiting, is unbearable."

"The people you may have lost - they're going to be with you your whole life," he told the families. "A part of your soul, a part of who you are."

Biden carries with him an index card that lists the total number of Americans who have died from Covid-19 and

more than 6,000,000 who have died in the pandemic.

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"The people you may have lost - they're going to be with you your whole life," he told the families. "A part of your soul, a part of who you are."

Biden carries with him an index card that lists the total number of Americans who have died from Covid-19 and

he recovered after a week in intensive care.

After a brief respite that brought medical activity back to pre-pandemic routines, managers at the Hospital del Mar in this northeastern city are facing a sharp surge in infections by, once again, rearranging staff shifts and moving patients around in their sprawling facilities.

The increase comes amid the advance of the delta vari-

ant of the coronavirus that spreads more easily.

And it's being driven mostly by younger, unvaccinated patients who require less ICU care but are turning in droves to health centers and emergency wards. At this facility, the number of Covid-19 patients has gone from 8 to 35 in just two weeks. That is far from the hundreds that the hospital nursed at the height of previous surges.

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And it's being driven mostly by younger, unvaccinated patients who require less ICU care but are turning in droves to health centers and emergency wards. At this facility, the number of Covid-19 patients has gone from 8 to 35 in just two

We recognise the difficult situation Indonesia currently finds itself in with a surge of Covid cases, and our thoughts are with all those in Indonesia who are affected



ASSERTING THAT US COVID-19 VACCINE DONATIONS AROUND THE WORLD ARE WITHOUT ANY STRINGS ATTACHED

The Sunday Statesman
NEW DELHI, 11 JULY 2021

11

THUMBNAILS



Afghan security personnel inspect the site of a bomb explosion in Kabul, Afghanistan on Saturday.

Malta visitor vaccination proof: The Mediterranean island nation of Malta is requiring proof of vaccination for visitors 13 and up, the first European Union nation to do so. Starting Wednesday, visitors to Malta must present a Covid-19 vaccination certificate that is recognised by Maltese health authorities, meaning certificates issued by Malta, the EU or the UK.

AP

Lanka reopens: Sri Lanka has reopened places of worship, restaurants and cinemas with certain restrictions, after being closed for nearly two months. Health Ministry says theaters, cinemas and museums can operate at half capacity.

AP

Tokyo records virus cases: Tokyo has reported 950 new coronavirus cases, the highest daily number in two months, as infections steadily spread less than two weeks before the city hosts the Summer Olympics. Saturday's tally compared to 822 confirmed cases reported Friday. PM Yoshihide Suga on Thursday declared a state of emergency in Tokyo starting Monday.

AP

S. Korea virus cases: Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency said on Saturday that more than 1,000 of the 1,378 new cases were from Seoul and nearby Gyeonggi Province and Incheon, where officials from Monday will clamp down on gatherings.

AP

Extremist attack in Somalia's capital kills at least nine



A large explosion in Somalia's capital killed at least nine people and injured eight others, a health official said Saturday.

Dr. Mohamed Nur at the Medina Hospital told reporters that the toll reflected only the dead and wounded who were taken to the facility in Mogadishu where he works.

"I am sure the number is bigger as some of the victims were rushed to other hospitals, such as the privately owned ones," he said.

The al-Shabab extremist group claimed responsibility.

A Somali police spokesman said Mogadishu's police commissioner, Col. Farhan Mohamud Qaroleh, was the target of the attack but he was safe.

"A suicide car bomber with heavy explosives plotted by the terrorist group al-Shabab has targeted the Mogadishu police commissioner," police spokesman Sadiq Adam Ali said. "They hit the vehicle of the Mogadishu police commissioner."

It was the second such large explosion in the city this month. A blast targeting a teashop killed at least 10 people last week.

Last month, a suicide bomb attack at a military base in Mogadishu killed at least 15 people.

AP

Taliban say they see China as a 'friend': Report

Taliban assured Beijing that they would not host Uyghur Islamic militants from Xinjiang province

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING, JUL 10

The Taliban has said it sees China as a "friend" of Afghanistan and assured Beijing that it would not host Uyghur Islamic militants from the volatile Xinjiang province, which is a major worry for the Chinese government, according to a media report.

The Taliban would also prevent al-Qaeda or any other terrorist group from operating there, he said.

We have been to China many times and we have good relations with them, Suhail told Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post, recalling the few meetings hosted by China in the past for Taliban delegations.

China is a friendly country and we welcome it for reconstruction and developing Afghanistan, he said adding that "if (the Chinese) have investments, of course, we will ensure their safety," Shahnawaz said.

Sharply critical of the US move to pull out its troops without stabilising the peace process in Afghanistan, China this week has asked its close ally Pakistan to step up cooperation to contain the security risks in the war-torn country following the withdrawal of the foreign forces.

"(China and Pakistan) need to defend regional peace together. Problems in

Afghanistan are practical challenges that China and Pakistan both face," especially the expansion of both international and regional terrorism, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Tuesday addressing a meeting of the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Pakistan.

While the American troops' withdrawal and resurgence of the Taliban should strategically benefit China as the Taliban shares close ties with Pakistan, both Islamabad and Beijing are concerned as they faced threats from the Islamic militant groups which were part of Al-Qaeda and Taliban.

China has been eyeing big scale investments in Afghanistan as the country has



the world's largest unexploited reserves of copper, coal, iron, gas, cobalt, mercury, gold, lithium and thorium, valued at over USD one trillion.

In 2011, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) won a USD 400 million bid to drill three oil fields for 25 years, containing roughly 87 million barrels of oil.

Chinese firms have also gained rights to mine copper at Mes Aynak in Logar province, according to the Post report.

But observers say China will remain very cautious and concerned about the Taliban delivering on its promises.

Whatever benign language the Taliban use, China remains highly concerned about the security situation there,

Andrew Small, a senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshall Fund's Asia Programme told the Post.

He said China's biggest concern in its dealings with the Taliban had always been whether it was sheltering Uyghur separatists.

China's crackdown in Xinjiang, observers say, has exacerbated the resentment among native Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang.

The US, the EU and international human rights organisations have accused Beijing of committing genocide in the province.

The 12th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the UN last month confirmed the presence of ETIM militants in Afghanistan.

The Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) consists of several hundred members, located primarily in Badakhshan and neighbouring Afghan provinces," the report submitted to the UN Security Council said.

The report said that large numbers of Al-Qaeda fighters and other foreign extremist elements aligned with the Taliban are located in various parts of Afghanistan.

Chinese govt orders takedown of 25 apps of ride service Didi

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING, 10 JULY

China's regulator ordered the removal from app stores of 25 apps owned by Didi Global Inc., the country's largest ride-hailing service, citing severe violations of rules against collecting personal data.

The Cyberspace Administration of China had already taken down the main Didi app last Sunday, pending a cyber-security review, after it debuted on the US stock market last week.

The 25 additional apps include Didi Enterprises, as well as ones designed for Didi drivers.

As spokesperson for Didi did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The move comes after Chinese authorities said earlier this week they would step up supervision of companies listed overseas.

Under the new measures, regulation of data security and cross-border data flows, as well as the management of confidential data, will be improved.

Didi is the latest company facing the scrutiny from the Chinese government. An investigation found serious violations in how Didi collected and used personal information, the internet regulator said earlier in the week.

On Saturday, China's market regulator blocked Tencent-backed video game live-streaming platforms Huya and Douyu from merging following an anti-monopoly investigation.



said Didi was barred from accepting new customers until the investigations were completed.

Didi was founded in 2012 as a taxi-hailing app and has expanded into other ride-hailing options including private cars and buses. It says it also is investing in electric cars, artificial intelligence and other technology development.

Didi raised \$4 billion from investors in its New York stock offering.

The ruling Communist Party began tightening control over China's fast-changing internet industries last year, launching anti-monopoly and other investigations.

Earlier this year, authorities fined Alibaba a record \$2.8 billion over antitrust violations and launched an investigation into food delivery platform Meituan over suspected monopolistic behaviour.

On Saturday, China's market regulator blocked Tencent-backed video game live-streaming platforms Huya and Douyu from merging following an anti-monopoly investigation.

Indonesia short on oxygen, seeks help as virus cases soar

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JAKARTA, 10 JULY

Just two months ago, Indonesia was coming to a gasping India's aid with thousands tanks of oxygen.

Today, the Southeast Asia country is running out of oxygen as it endures a devastating wave of coronavirus cases and the government is seeking emergency supplies from other countries, including Singapore and China.

A shipment of more than 1,000 oxygen cylinders, concentrators, ventilators and other health devices arrived

from Singapore on Friday, followed by another 1,000 ventilators from Australia, said Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, the government minister in charge of Indonesia's pandemic response.

Beside those donations, Indonesia plans to buy 36,000 tons of oxygen and 10,000 concentrators devices that generate oxygen from neighbouring Singapore, Pandjaitan said. He said he is in touch with China and other potential oxygen sources. The US and the United Arab Emirates also have offered help.

"We recognize the difficult

situation Indonesia currently finds itself in with a surge of Covid cases, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said. In addition to sending vaccines, the US is working to increase assistance for Indonesia's broader Covid-19 response efforts", she said, without elaborating.

Overall, Indonesia, the world's fourth-most populous country, has reported more than 2.4 million infections and 63,760 fatalities from Covid-19. Those figures are widely believed to be a vast undercount due to low testing and poor tracing measures.

HK's pro-democracy group downsizes amid crackdown

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONG KONG, 10 JULY

One of Hong Kong's most established pro-democracy civic organizations said Saturday it is letting go its paid staff and halving the size of its steering committee amid Beijing's crackdown on opposition activity in the semi-autonomous Chinese city.

The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China is best known for organising an annual rally and candlelight vigil remembering those killed in the bloody 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

The group said in a statement that seven of its 14 remaining steering committee members had decided to step down in the face of growing political and legal risks.

Of the seven members remaining, three are currently in jail facing national security charges chairman Lee Cheuk-yan as well as vice chairmen Albert Ho Chun-yan and Chow Hang-tung.

Letting go of staff was to ensure their safety" and would take effect at the end of the month, the statement said.

While the 32-year-old group said the changes would affect its operations, it vowed that regardless of whatever difficulties or challenges we face, the alliance will continue to grit our teeth and move onwards one step at a time."

Following months of anti-government protests in 2019, Beijing imposed a sweeping national security law on Hong Kong last year. The criteria for elected officials has been narrowed to those who meet a

loosely defined standard of patriotism and the Legislative Council has been reorganised to ensure an overwhelming majority for pro-Beijing delegates, while most of the city's leading opposition voices have been jailed, intimidated into silence or have moved abroad to seek asylum.

The city's last remaining pro-democracy newspaper, Apple Daily, was forced to close after authorities arrested staff and froze its assets.

While the city is still a major business and financial hub, many Hong Kongers are

China pulls out citizens from Afghanistan as first step of a long game

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

province. But it can be further extended into Afghanistan, the gateway to Uzbekistan and the heart of Central Asia.

"We can vouch that China fund the rebuilding of Afghanistan through the Taliban via Pakistan," the Financial Times quoted an Indian official as saying. "China is Pakistan's wallet." FT quoted another diplomat in the region as saying: "China at the request of Pakistan will support the Taliban."

China is no stranger to the Taliban. Taliban delegations have been making regular visits to Beijing, and China has feted them across the country with lavish excursions. "China wants to extend the BRI network in Afghanistan and has been in contact with the Taliban since 2014. It recently pledged a road network and various energy projects for Taliban in exchange for peace but nothing concrete has been heard from the Taliban," geopolitical analyst Mark Kinra told.

Second, by drawing Afghanistan in new structural networks, the Chinese want to wean away Kabul's dependence on India and the West, thus, geopolitically positioning the country firmly into Eurasian multilateral structures, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

Third, once Afghanistan enters the "new era," China is expected to gun for Afghanistan's vast natural resources. Gwadar and Karachi would become natural gateways for transporting this raw material to industrial hubs, from where they are marketed and sold across the world at high profits.

Fourth, China wants to stop the use of Afghan territory as the launchpad for ethnic Uyghur fighters who are part of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM).

"China's lure for investment is also to restrict Islamic militants from crossing into China. The ETIM aligned with Taliban has been active in Badakhshan province bordering China, right now, CPEC starts from the Arabian sea port of Gwadar in Pakistan and the heads to Kashgar in China's Xinjiang

leaving and some multinational companies have begun relocating their operations and staff due to legal concerns.

The annual June 4 commemoration of the 1989 crackdown had been attended by tens of thousands, along with a July 1 pro-democracy march and rally marking Hong Kong's handover from British to Chinese rule. Both have been banned for the past two years because of Covid-19 restrictions, and there is no indication whether authorities will allow them to be held in future.

While China says the new restrictions are targeted measures aiming to restore order and ensure Hong Kong's future prosperity, critics at home and abroad say they are a betrayal of Beijing's commitment to maintain Hong Kong's civil liberties for 50 years after the handover.

Iranian police said a reported explosion early Saturday at a public park near state TV headquarters in the capital Tehran caused no casualties or damage, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Teheran deputy police chief Gen. Hamid Hadavand said the case was under investigation. He accused foreign media outlets of exaggerating the reported blast.

At 12:52 a.m. Iranian media reported an explosion in northern Teheran followed by dozens of posts from individuals on social media. State TV showed Teheran Gov. Ali Reza Goudarzi in front of Mellat Park saying rescue teams, firefighters and police found no sign of explosion.

Iran officials: No casualties from Teheran explosion

TEHRAN, 10 JULY

Iranian police said a reported explosion early Saturday at a public park near state TV headquarters in the capital Tehran caused no casualties or damage, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Teheran deputy police chief Gen. Hamid Hadavand said the case was under investigation. He accused foreign media outlets of exaggerating the reported blast.

No one will be spared if their negligence is found over the incident," the minister warned. Police are seeking a 10-day remand order from a court to question Hashem and others over the deadly blaze, according to Rupganj Police Inspector Humayun Kabir Molla.

Hashem Food Ltd were among those taken into custody by police, the Dhaka Tribune reported.

"No one will be spared if their negligence is found over the incident," the minister warned. Police are seeking a 10-day remand order from a court to question Hashem and others over the deadly blaze, according to Rupganj Police Inspector Humayun Kabir Molla.

Begum, Sujan Mia had desperately been looking around the site since Friday morning to try to find his daughter.

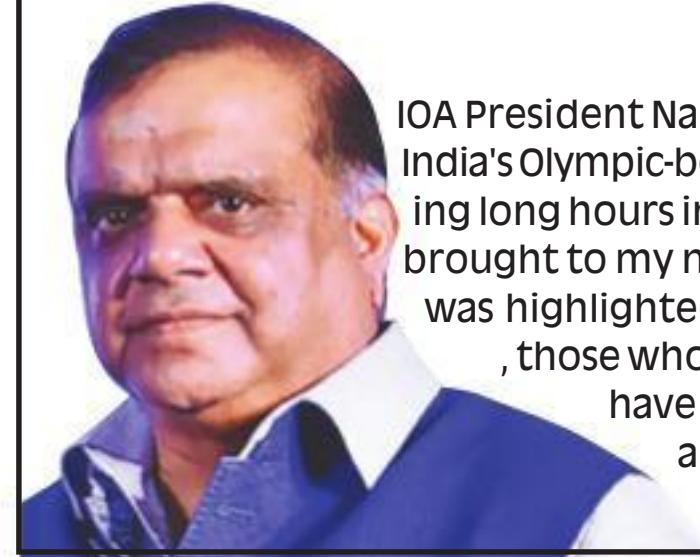
Witnesses said around 500 workers were working in the factory when the fire broke out and most were women and minors. Holding a photograph of his daughter Fatema

Thursday. The authorities have put the death toll at 52 from the bodies recovered so far. Forty-nine workers died after being trapped on the third floor with its only exit locked. Three others also died after jumping off the six-story factory.

Home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said the owner, several directors and managers of the Sajeeb Group and its sister concern

ond floors jumped from the windows to save their lives when the fire broke out.

According to local residents, the supervisor of the factory used to lock the factory from outside so that child labourers couldn't sneak out during working hours, Dh



'NEW CONCERN'

IOA President Narinder Batra on Saturday highlighted fresh concerns that India's Olympic-bound athletes may face on arrival in Tokyo, including spending long hours in immigration without food and water. "Important issues brought to my notice from Chef De Mission meeting on 9 July. Same issue was highlighted in the meeting by different countries including Czech, those who arrived at Narita airport," Batra said in a statement. "They have to wait for 4 HRS, before the immigration process to begin and they waited for three hours to board the transport. No food and no water was provided."

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Pankaj Singh retires: Pacer Pankaj Singh, who contributed in Rajasthan's two Ranji Trophy triumphs and briefly played for India, on Saturday announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. The 36-year-old Singh, who now runs a cricket academy at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium here, made the announcement through a letter to the Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA).

Anti-Olympic protest:

About 40 protestors gathered in Tokyo on Saturday calling for the Tokyo 2020 Games to be canceled, as the Olympics open in just two weeks. Participants in the demonstration gathered in front of a five-star hotel in the capital, where the International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach stays, chanting 'no more Olympics'.

Tokyo records most virus cases in 2 months: Tokyo has reported 950 new coronavirus cases, the highest daily number in two months, as infections steadily spread less than two weeks before the city hosts the Summer Olympics. Saturday's tally compared to 822 confirmed cases reported Friday. Experts warned that caseloads could surge to thousands within weeks as people traveled around the country on summer vacations.

Barty wins Wimbledon title

AGENCIES
LONDON, 10 JULY

Ash Barty (*in photo*) got off to a perfect start in the Wimbledon final by collecting the first 14 points, then needed to hold off a comeback bid before beating Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 6-7 (4), 6-3 on Saturday for her second Grand Slam title.

The top-seeded Barty adds this championship to the one she won at the French Open in 2019. She is the first Australian woman to win the singles trophy at the All England Club since Evonne Goolagong in 1980.

decade ago, then left the tennis tour for nearly two years in 2014 because of burnout. She played professional cricket back home, then eventually decided to return to her other sport.

She was at her best at the beginning of each set against the eighth-seeded Pliskova, a 29-year-old from the Czech Republic with a big serve.

Pliskova dropped to 0-2 in major finals; she was the runner-up at the 2016 U.S. Open, too. Barty's most significant wobble came late in the second set. She served for the victory ahead 6-5 but sailed consecutive forehands long to get bro-

Wimbledon final: Djokovic to face Italy's Berrettini

AGENCIES
WIMBLEDON, 10 JULY

The victories keep adding up for Novak Djokovic (*in photo*): 20 in a row at Wimbledon since the start of the 2018 tournament, 20 in a row in all Grand Slam matches since the start of this season. Get both streaks up to 21 on Sunday by beating Matteo Berrettini in the final at the All England Club, and Djokovic will tie rivals Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal with a 20th major championship, the most for a man in tennis history.

It would mean everything, the No.1-ranked Djokovic said.

That's why I'm here. That's why I'm playing. He worked his way in and out of trouble against a much younger, much-less-experienced opponent Friday until eliminating No.10 Denisa Shapovalov 7-6 (3), 7-5, 7-5 in the semifinals at Centre Court. Each set was tight and intense. Each appeared to be within Shapovalov's grasp until it was in Djokovic's.

He was serving for first set. He was better for most of the second set; had a lot of opportunities and just didn't manage to close it out when he needed to, said Djokovic, who at 34 is 12 years older than Shapo-



valov. In important moments, I think I probably held my nerves better than he did and just (made) him play an extra shot, (made) him do an unforced error. Djokovic made just 15 unforced errors, Shapovalov 36. The other key stats: Djokovic saved 5 of 5 break points in the second set, then 3 of 3 in the third. What hurt so much this time was just that I felt like the game is there and it's possible to go and play for the trophy, said Shapovalov, who walked off in tears after falling to 0-7 against Djokovic.

"It's a feeling I've never had before, so that's why it just hurt so much. I felt like I was outplaying Novak in parts of the match. If you're outplaying Novak, you can beat anyone. So true. Now another

ken, then was shaky in the ensuing tiebreaker, which she ceded with a double-fault.

In the third, though, Barty went up an early break, led 3-

0 and stayed the course in the first Wimbledon women's final to go three sets since 2012. It also was the first since 1977 between two participants who never

new-to-these-stages foe, No. 7 seed Berrettini, will give it a shot.

Cries of Vai! (Go!), Forza! (Let's go!) and even Andiamo, amore mio! (Let's go, my love!) rang through the All England Club's main stadium earlier, supporting Berrettini in his native tongue on his way to becoming Italy's first Grand Slam male finalist in 45 years.

With boomerang serves delivering 22 aces, and powerful forehands helping compile a total of 60 winners, Berrettini used an 11-game run to grab a big lead and held on to beat No. 14 Hubert Hurkacz 6-3, 6-0, 6-7 (3), 6-4. Djokovic is trying to collect a sixth championship at Wimbledon and third straight to go along with nine from the Australian Open, three from the U.S. Open and two from the French Open.

And then there's this: After collecting trophies on the hard courts of Melbourne Park in February, and the red clay of Roland Garros in June defeating Berrettini in the quarterfinals there, Djokovic seeks a triumph on the grass of the All England Club to get three-quarters of the way to a calendar-year Grand Slam, with only the U.S. Open remaining.

It's a feeling I've never had before, so that's why it just hurt so much. I felt like I was outplaying Novak in parts of the match. If you're outplaying Novak, you can beat anyone. So true. Now another

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Mahmudullah takes sudden decision to retire from Test cricket

DHAKA, 10 JULY

Senior Bangladesh all-rounder Mahmudullah has made a sudden decision to stop playing Test cricket, a day after recording a career-best 150 in the ongoing one-off test against Zimbabwe in Harare. According to a report in Cricbuzz, Mahmudullah informed his colleagues that he is not willing to continue his Test career anymore, leaving the team management shocked.

"Yes, he (Mahmudullah) had informed that he does not want to prolong his Test career after this game. But he did not inform us anything officially and we have to see whether it's an emotional outburst or not," the website quoted a top Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as saying.

Mahmudullah has played 49 Tests with 2764 runs at an average of 31 plus and four half-centuries. PTI

Harleen's 'catch of the year' turns into a rage

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NORTHAMPTON, 10 JULY

Harleen Deol's (*in photo*) stunning catch at the boundary that provided a rare moment of joy for the Indian women's team in the first T20I against England, which it lost by 18 runs under DLS method, has earned accolades from a cross section of the society including ex-cricketers Sachin Tendulkar and VVS Laxman, corporate honcho Anand Mahindra and politicians Smriti Irani and Jyoti Randhawa Scindia.

The catch, which saw Harleen cupping it, throwing it in the air after losing balance and going out of the boundary and then diving inside the field to take it, was good enough to become a rage on social media.

"That was a brilliant catch @imharleenDeol. Definitely the catch of the year for me!" tweeted former India batsman and captain Tendulkar, who holds the record for most runs and centuries in Tests and ODIs.

Tendulkar's long-time India teammate VVS Laxman also tweeted his admiration.

"As good a catch one will ever see on a cricket field, from Harleen Deol. Absolutely top class," said former India batsman Dawn of Justice.

Mahindra tweeted, "None. Not possible. Couldn't have happened. Must be some special effects trick? What? It was real? Ok, move over Gal Gadot; the real Wonder Woman is here..."

England wicketkeeper Amy Jones was looking ominous, battoning on 43 off 26 deliveries. On the fifth ball of the 19th over, she went for a heave off pacer Shikha Pandey. It seemed that the ball would go for six. But Harleen summoned all her athletic ability to pouch it.

Harleen's foundations began quivering. They were sent home, presumably by the earliest available flight, and we got to know of vindictive talk about a one-year ban on them.

The swift retribution may or may not have had anything to do with their being part of the set that, feeling dealt unjustly with, refused the central contracts Sri Lanka Cricket had offered it, but the moral of the story can hardly be said to have been lost on the hoary pollio of the world: cricket can cock a snook at the coronavirus but cricketers

must be obedient conformists. We're required to believe it's okay if they're required to travel - from Colombo to London and beyond - when stasis is being enjoined on people at large across the world, though no one would dispute the very serious ele-

SHORT POINT

ment of risk involved in any movement.

And the Sri Lankan cricketers had found themselves in a country which was reeling in Euro 2020, which had the World Health Organisation shrieking of the regrettably alarming fillip it had given to Covid-19 virtually all

AGENCIES
LONDON, 10 JULY

To hear the England players giddily singing along with the Wembley Stadium crowd to "Sweet Caroline" so good, so good" encapsulates the youthful exuberance and carefree spirit of a group unburdened by trying to end the team's 55-year trophy drought on Sunday.

To hear Italy defender Giorgio Chiellini talk about going all the way shows how pressure to win a trophy for your country can be an enduring motivation for yourself and the squad, especially in the twilight of a career.

"Maybe at 36 you feel it more," Chiellini said, "because you understand more how hard it is and the work that goes into it."

The European Championship final on Sunday pits England, which hasn't even reached a final since winning the 1966 World Cup, against one of the continent's most decorated teams.

The last of Italy's four World Cup victories came in 2006, when Chiellini had already made his international debut but didn't play at the tournament. But the team is a comparative under-achiever in the European Championship with its only title in 1968.

Italy, however, has already reached the final twice in recent years in 2000 and 2012 whereas England hasn't got close until now.

With the pandemic restricting travel to London, the permitted crowd of 66,000 at

Wembley Stadium will be largely packed with England fans for the national team's greatest soccer moment since 1966, when coach Gareth Southgate wasn't even born.

Winning Euro 2020 would be a form or redemption for Southgate, whose penalty miss against Germany at Euro '96 denied England a chance of making the final.

"I know it won't be enough for me and for the rest of the staff and for the players if we don't win it now," Southgate said. "You get lovely messages that say 'whatever happens now,' but that won't be how it will be on Monday. We've got to get it right."

"We can win it, but we've got to get it spot on to win it. I said to the players ... people are respecting how they've been and that they've represented the country in the right way but now they have a choice of what color medal."

Italy didn't even qualify for the 2018 World Cup but has excelled with a 33-match

unbeaten run since then under coach Roberto Mancini.

"At the beginning, when he told us to have in our minds the idea of winning the Euro, we thought he was crazy," Chiellini said.

"Instead, during these years he has created a team which is now on the brink of doing that. And as he has repeated to us after every match, One centimeter at a time, and now there is only the last centimeter left."

They have to find a way past an opponent that has conceded only one goal in its six games at Euro 2020 and coped with Harry Kane not even scoring in the group stage.

"England are clearly not just Kans because they have amazing players on both wings," Chiellini said, "and their substitutes could all be in the starting 11 of a team that wins this competition."

Tournaments can define, reshape perceptions and elevate players.

Just look at Federico Chiesa, who wasn't even starting for Italy initially at Euro 2020 but went on to score key goals in the knockout phase.

Take Raheem Sterling, whose place in the England lineup was questioned because of his failure to score at any previous tournament and his struggles with Manchester City.

He responded by netting the team's only goals in the group stage, the opener in the round of 16, and his attacking threat won the penalty that led to England's semifinal winner against Denmark.

"What he's done for us and the unselfish part of his game goes unsung," said John Stones, Sterling's teammate with both England and City.

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Brazil, Argentina both have keys to win Copa America

AGENCIES
RIO DE JANEIRO, 10 JULY

Brazil and Argentina have several keys that could see either team win the Copa America title on Saturday at the Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

Led by a Barcelona-style Lionel Messi (*in photo*), Argentine players appear convinced they will put an end to a 28-year title drought. Its opponent Brazil looks even better than two years ago when it lifted the Copa America without Neymar and with fans on the stands.

Brazil seeks its 10th South American title, while Argentina is going for its 15th, which would put it level with record winners Uruguay.

There are some reasons why both teams have what it takes to win the title.

The team captain is playing his best tournament with Argentina since his debut in 2005. He's scored four goals and has five assists so far. Beyond his playmaking virtues, the 34-year-old is looking comfortable as a leader on the pitch in a contrast with the shy Messi of past tournaments.

he is the first goalkeeper to stop three penalties in a shootout in Argentina's history. Against Colombia, he trashed his opponents before each shot, which apparently worked. He looks safe in the position, has a good

footwork and blocks crosses with precision.

The young coach took over as an intern in 2018 to leave behind Argentina's meltdown in the 2018 World Cup when the team lost to France in the round of 16. Now he is responsible for a renewal to team players like defender Cristian Romero, winger Nicolas Gonzalez and goalkeeper Martinez.

The striker nearly lost his position to veteran Sergio Agüero after a slow start in the tournament, but he has now scored in the last three matches. He tires opponents with his runs, opens gaps for Messi and still scores some goals. Rodrigo de Paul and Giovani Lo Celso are not the most creative midfielders in the world. But they are still high-level passers who will sacrifice defending so Messi can shine in the final third. Leandro Paredes and Guido Rodriguez also take that responsibility in the center, no matter who is playing.

Rule of bio bubble a reign of terror

PULAKESH MUKHOPADHYAY

I t would have been a balmy night in Durham when Sri Lanka vice-captain Kusal Mendis, opener Danushka Gunathilake and wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella decided to step out of the bio-bubble of the team, there for a series against England which wouldn't really inspire any epics.

The trio, since given pejorative epithets in the media, mightn't have been up to anything more than taking in the sights and sounds and smoking a few curious cigarettes but someone would have scented in this an adventure an opportunity for instant, if transitory, fame. Photographic evidence went viral

and hell's foundations began quivering. They were sent home, presumably by the earliest available flight, and we got to know of vindictive talk about a one-year ban on them.

The swift retribution may or may not have had anything to do with their being part of the set that, feeling dealt unjustly with, refused the central contracts Sri Lanka Cricket had offered it, but the moral of the story can hardly be said to have been lost on the hoary pollio of the world: cricket can cock a snook at the coronavirus but cricketers

India-Sri Lanka series to now start from July 18: BCCI secretary Jay Shah

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Indian team's six-match limited-overs series in Sri Lanka will now start from July 18, BCCI secretary Jay Shah told PTI on Saturday, a day after a COVID-19 outbreak in home team camp. Shah told PTI.

The series, which was originally scheduled to start with the three OD