



FACEBOOK TO END
RULE EXEMPTIONS
FOR POLITICIANS

P10



JAPAN STANDS
WITH INDIA'

P7



₹20K CRORE COVID
REVIVAL PACKAGE
IN LDF'S BUDGET

P4



STORY OF SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT
IN SOUTHAMPTON

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky with possibility of very light rain/thundershower. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 39 and 24 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 84% Min: 39%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 39.5°C (-1) Min: 26.1°C (-1)

SUN RISES

05:23 hrs

MOON RISES

02:51 hrs

SUN SETS

19:17 hrs

MOON SETS

14:53 hrs

THUMBNAILS



'Oxygen on Wheels', a bus and a small car, parked outside a shopping mall after its launch, in Kolkata on Friday.

IANS

Delhi man calls PCR, threatens to kill PM Modi: A 22-year-old man was arrested from northeast Delhi's Khajuri Khas area after he called the Police Control Room (PCR) and allegedly threatened to kill Prime Minister Narendra Modi, officials said on Friday. The accused, who has been identified as Salman alias Arman, told police that he made the call as he "wanted" to go to jail. He is addicted to drugs and was released from a juvenile correction home in 2018. P2

Visas of stranded foreigners extended: The Indian visa or 'stay stipulation period' of foreign nationals stranded in India since March, 2020 due to Covid-19 has been made valid till 31 August, 2021 on gratis basis without levy of any overstay penalty, an order issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs said on Friday.

India team heads home without Choksi: India's multi-agency team that had gone to Dominica to bring back Mehul Choksi is headed back home on a Qatar Airways private jet after the island nation's high court adjourned the hearing on the fugitive diamantaire's habeas corpus petition, sources said.

68 pc decline in Covid cases since May peak

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

India has seen a nearly 68 per cent decline in Covid-19 cases since the highest reported peak of cases on 7 May, the government said on Friday, even as the country reported 1.32 lakh new cases and 3,207 deaths in the previous 24 hours.

There has also been a fall in active cases by more than 21 lakh since the peak of active cases on 10 May. Registering a decline of 56 per cent after around 50 days, there were 16,35,993 active cases as of Friday.

While the weekly positivity rate currently stands at 7.27 per cent, the daily positivity rate stands at 6.38 per cent, less than 10 per cent for

SII gets Sputnik V nod: The DCGI has granted permission to the Serum Institute of India to manufacture the Sputnik Covid-19 vaccine in India for examination, test and analysis with certain conditions, official sources said. The Pune-based firm has collaborated with Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, Moscow in Russia for developing Sputnik V at its licensed Hadapsar facility. PTI

11 consecutive days, according to data updated by the Union ministry of health.

India has also overtaken the USA in terms of number of people who have received at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine, the government

said.

Addressing a press conference, NITI Aayog member (Health) VK Paul said 43 per cent of the 60-plus population has been covered with at least one dose and over 45 years, 37 per cent of the population has been covered.

India, in terms of number of people who received at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine, has administered 17.2 crore doses and the USA has administered 16.9 crore doses, he said.

PM Modi on Friday evening reviewed the progress of the country's Covid-19 vaccination drive. He is reported to have said that the vaccine wastage numbers are still on the higher side and that steps need to be taken to bring them down.



CBSE panel to set assessment norms in 10 days

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Friday constituted a 13-member committee to work out an objective criteria for assessment of class 12 students after their board exams were cancelled in view of the pandemic. The panel will submit its report within 10 days.

The panel will also have one representative each from UGC and NCERT and two representatives from schools.

The government on Tuesday cancelled the CBSE class 12 board exams amidst the continuing Covid-19 pandemic across the country with Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserting that the decision was taken in the interest of students. PTI

Govt approves project to build six submarines

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

The government today cleared one of the largest 'Make in India' projects to indigenously build six new conventional submarines under the strategic partnership model for the Indian Navy at a cost of about Rs 43,000 crore.

At its meeting chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) also approved proposals concerning capital acquisition of various equipment, including air defence guns and ammunition, for modernisation and operational needs of the Indian armed forces amounting to about Rs 6,800 crore.

The decision to build six submarines is significant as it will go a long way in reducing the gap in strength between the Indian Navy and the Chinese Navy," the defence min-



ister's office tweeted.

The approval of the project will enable India to achieve its 30-year submarine construction programme envisioned by the government to acquire national competence in this field and for the Indian industry to independently design and construct submarines in India.

"The availability of new technologies and advanced manufacturing capabilities to Indian Industry will be an important step towards enhancing the nation's quest for self-reliance in modern

The decision to build six submarines is significant as it will go a long way in reducing the gap in strength between the Indian Navy and the Chinese Navy

conventional submarine construction and create direct and indirect job opportunities in India," the Ministry of Defence said.

The six submarines to be built will be conventional, diesel-electric vessels and are expected to be larger than the Scorpene-class subs currently under construction at Mazagon Dockyards Ltd in Mumbai. The submarines are likely to be equipped with land attack missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles.

After Oppjibe, Punjab govt orders return of vaccines from pvt hospitals

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 4 JUNE

Facing criticism over alleged diversion of Covid vaccines to private hospitals at hefty margins, the Punjab government on Friday issued an order for taking back the vaccines from private hospitals with immediate effect.

The health minister, Balbir Singh Sidhu, said that instructions for providing one-time limited vaccine doses to private hospitals have been withdrawn and these vaccines will be administered free of cost to 18-44 age group

been allotted to the private hospitals, from which only 600 doses have been administered to people.

He said that instructions have been issued to all civil surgeons that no fresh allotment will be made to any private hospital and these vaccines will be administered free of cost to the age group of 18 to 44 years at government job centres. Sidhu stated that as per information provided by the state in-charge for Covid vaccination, Vikas Garg, about 42,000 doses have

Lioness dies of Covid-19 at Chennai zoo



CHENNAI, 4 JUNE

A lioness has died of coronavirus infection at Chennai's Vandalur zoo, while eight other lions have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2. A month ago eight Asiatic lions tested positive for the coronavirus at the Nehru Zoological Park in Hyderabad.

The zoo authorities conducted Covid tests on the lions after the lioness died with symptoms of Covid-19. In a press release, the Arignar Anna Zoological Park said that on 26 May, five lions started showing loss of appetite and occasional coughing.

A team of experts was formed and samples collected and sent for testing. The tests of nine lions returned positive. The release added that one of the nine, a 9-year-old female, called Neela, died on 3 June at around 6.15 pm.

The feline had been asymptomatic and showed some nasal discharge only the day before her death and had been treated immediately.

In order to ascertain whether or not the reported findings are in the nature of false positives or the animal could have died of comorbidities, samples have also been sent on 4.6.2021 to the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Bareilly and the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad.

All the lions that have tested positive are under close observation, on prescribed treatment by the zoo's veterinary and expert teams. SNS



It is the right of the people to expect good work

ANIT THAPA, LEADER, GORKHA JAN MUKTI MORCHA (BINOY TAMANG CAMP)

ON THE REMOVAL OF KURSEONG MUNICIPALITY CHAIRMAN FOR ALLEGEDLY NOT PERFORMING WELL

Delhi govt panel to look into deaths due to O2 shortage

Many Covid patients died in April-May when Capital reeled under oxygen crisis

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE



Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia today announced the Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government's decision to constitute a four-member committee of medical experts to look into the deaths of Covid-19 patients reportedly caused by the oxygen shortage when the ferocious second wave of the pandemic was ravaging the national capital a few weeks ago.

Many such deaths reportedly occurred in April-May when Delhi's hospitals struggled to save the lives of critical Covid patients because of an acute oxygen shortage, with the city's health infrastructure buckling under a massive surge in the number of coronavirus cases requiring hospitalisation.

3rd-party audit of Delhi forest dept's plantation work from 2016 to 2019 completed; report expected in July: Rai

PTI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 4

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Friday said the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, has completed an audit of plantation work conducted by the Delhi Forest Department from 2016 to 2019 and a report will be submitted by July.

"I have ordered a strict independent third-party audit of the plantation work across Delhi. Various organisations and institutions are working on it," a statement quoted the minister as saying.

The Forest Research Institute, Dehradun has completed the survey work for 2016-17,

The government had been then flooded with SOS messages from many hospitals, both government-run and privately owned, seeking medical oxygen supplies needed to save the lives of patients battling for survival in ICUs.

It is widely believed that many lives could have been saved in Delhi then if the city hospitals had got the required oxygen supplies in time.

Addressing an online press conference today, Sisodia

2017-18 and 2018-19 of the Department of Forests and Wildlife and will submit the report by the end of July, the statement read.

Other green agencies, including DMRC, NDMC, DUSIB, DDA, Delhi Cantonment, DJB, EDCM, PWD, North DMC and South DMC, are conducting independent audits of the plantation through Indian Agricultural Research Institute in New Delhi, Forest Research Institute in Dehradun and Certification Engineers International Limited.

"The Department of Forest and Wildlife has been pursuing this issue with all the green agencies in the state. A few agencies have conducted third-

party audits for the survival of plantations in the earlier years.

For instance, NDMC (2016-17 and 2017-18), DDA (2018-19), PWD (2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19) and Department of Forest (2009-10 to 2015-16)," the statement said.

Of the 18 green agencies involved in yearly plantation drives, the forest department and the Delhi Development Authority plant the maximum number of saplings and shrubs.

Rai had last year said the government would get an audit conducted by FRI, which will help ascertain which species of plants, trees and shrubs have the best survival rate in Delhi and which regions in the city are best suited for their growth.

Lt-Governor Anil Baijal for his approval. The committee would commence its work once the file was back with the LG's approval.

Sisodia said the committee would hold meetings twice a week and would look closely into every case to come to a conclusion.

The committee will decide whether the death of the Covid patient happened due to the shortage of the life-saving gas, the deputy CM said.

If the panel ascertains that the death of a patient had occurred due to shortage of oxygen, then the Delhi government will give a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the families of the deceased, he reportedly said.

The panel of four members will inspect claims of all those families who have lost their loved ones due to oxygen scarcity, and thereafter if validated, the process to disburse Rs 5 lakh financial assistance to each family will begin, he said.

A senior official reportedly said that people who died at a hospital or in transit in Delhi would be covered under it.

The count of fresh coronavirus cases in the city thus slightly increased from yesterday's 487. The number of Covid cases logged on Wednesday was 576.

The positivity rate today remained below 1 per cent for the fifth consecutive day.

This figure was 0.61 per cent yesterday.

Today's fatalities count pushed the city's Covid toll to 24,497, the health bul-

letin stated. The number of Covid deaths reported in the national capital yesterday was 45.

Currently, there were 8,060 active cases in Delhi and 3,813 patients were under home isolation, the bulletin said. A total of 1,161 patients recovered during the past 24 hours in the city.

Delhi's hospitals had 20,943 beds vacant out of 24,412 beds reserved for Covid patients, the bulletin said.

The number of containment zones in the city stood at 14,324, it added.

Meanwhile, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's office said in a series of tweets that he called an Expert Committee meeting in view of the

possibility of a third wave of the Covid pandemic hitting the national capital. After this he also held a meeting with the Preparation Committee.

The CM tweeted in Hindi to say, "Whether it is oxygen management or arrangements for ICU beds, the government has already begun preparations on many such fronts." It added that "The experience of other countries tells us that while remaining alert about the possible third

wave of the coronavirus, we will have to make preparations in advance (to face it). In view of this, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal called a meeting of the Expert Committee where discussions were held on many important issues."

Delhi logs 523 new Covid cases, 50 deaths; positivity rate .68 pc

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

Delhi today reported 523 fresh Covid cases and 50 fatalities while the positivity rate stood at 0.68 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The count of fresh coronavirus cases in the city thus slightly increased from yesterday's 487. The number of Covid cases logged on Wednesday was 576.

The positivity rate today remained below 1 per cent for the fifth consecutive day.

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Meanwhile, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal called a meeting of the Expert Committee where discussions were held on many important issues."

Delhi man calls PCR, threatens to kill PM Modi; arrested

PTI
NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

a murder case, in 2018, they said.

The accused called the PCR on 112 around Thursday midnight and threatened to kill PM Modi, the police said.

The number from which the call was received was immediately traced and shared with the district police unit, which then located him to Khajuri Khas, a senior police officer said.

The accused, who has been identified as Salman alias Arman, told police that he made the call as he "wanted" to go to jail. He is addicted to drugs and was released from a juvenile correction home, where he was sent in

During interrogation, the senior officer said, the man told police that he made the call as he "wanted" to go to jail. When asked why he wanted to go to jail, he said, "Wahin main lagta hai mera (I like being there)."

Salman also told police that he is addicted to drugs and that he took some smack around 7 pm on Thursday, he said.

Senior officers of the Delhi Police will further interrogate him with Intelligence Bureau officials in accordance with the protocol before taking any legal action, the police said.

Jain reviews status of projects at two state-run hospitals

PTI
NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

existing hospitals to increase the number of beds as well as building new hospitals, the statement said.

Jain visited the Aruna Asaf Ali Hospital which is being remodelled by the Delhi government with advanced facilities. This remodelling will boost the existing bed capacity of the hospital, it said.

Jain visited two different under-construction sites in Delhi hospitals to inspect and review the status of the work on Friday, it said.

In a bid to develop a better health infrastructure in the national capital, the Delhi government is working on revamping several

19. The current developments are an effort of the Delhi government to strengthen Delhi's healthcare infrastructure with state-of-the-art facilities so that it could serve the people in the city not just in the present time but for several decades, the statement said.

The Delhi government is building two new hospitals at Madipur and Jwalaipur.

The bed capacity of Acharya Shree Bhikshu Hospital, Shri Dada Dev Mati Avum Shishu Chikitsalaya and Guru Gobind Singh Hospital is being augmented to around 500, 300 and 572 beds, respectively, it said.

No Covaxin stock in Delhi for any age group from Sunday: Atishi

PTI
NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

The national capital weather witnessed sudden change as dusty winds and rains hit several parts of Delhi-NCR, causing uprooting of trees and inconvenience to farmers who have been protesting at Delhi's borders for over six months now.

The rains though brought much-needed relief to Delhiites reeling under hot and humid conditions. Netizens took to Twitter to share pictures of a rainbow that formed after the showers.

Strong winds up to a speed of 60 km/hr swept through the national capital, the MeT office said.

It is likely to be the first time since 2014 that the city may not witness a heatwave in summers.

No heatwave has been recorded at Safdarjung observatory, considered the official marker for the city, till now.

Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 39.5 degrees Celsius on Friday, a notch below the season's average. The minimum temperature was recorded at 26.1 degrees Celsius, a notch below normal.

Palam recorded a maximum temperature of 38.4 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 26.2 degrees Celsius along with 9.4 mm of rainfall. A hailstorm was also reported at Palam at 5 pm.

Lodhi Road received 1.6 mm of rainfall and recorded a maximum temperature of 39 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 25.3 degrees Celsius.

The strong winds added to the woes of farmers protesting at the Delhi borders against the Centre's three new farm laws.

"Around 100 tents have been affected and damaged due to the strong winds and rains. The protesters will spend the night inside trolleys and the tents will be erected tomorrow morning," farmer leader Gurmeet Mehra said.

"The Covishield stock for the 45-plus age group will last us 28 days," Atishi said.

She added that those who were administered the first dose of Covaxin a month ago will need the second dose in two weeks.

FORM NO.3 [See Regulation-15(1)(a)] / 16(3)
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL DELHI (DRT -III)
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001
Case No.: OA/1031/2019

Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993.
Exh. No.2314

LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD.
VERSUS
JASPREET SINGH DHEER AND ORS DHEER

To,
(1)JASPREET SINGH DHEER AND ORS DHEER
S/O. CHARANJEET DHEER, Flat No. F-42, Hari Nagar, Delhi, Central Delhi-110064.

Also to: M/s. Shri Lakshmi Cotsyn Ltd., Employee Code D.G.M. 10318, C-40, Sector-57, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301.

(2) The Director M/s. AVJ Developers Pvt. Ltd. D-237, 1st Floor, Vivek Vihar Phase I, Delhi, East Delhi-110095.

SUMMONS

Whereas, OA/1031/2019 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer / Registrar on 23.04.2021.

Whereas this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons / notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs.3996369.98 (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:-

(i) To show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted. (ii) To disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application.

(iii) You are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties. (iv) You shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal. (v) You shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets.

You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on 29.06.2021 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Due to ongoing Pandemic situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the Cisco Webex application/software (ii) Meeting ID and Password for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar / Recovery Officer-II and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. drt.gov.in under the Public Notice Head (iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No.23748469.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date 26.04.2021.

Signature of the Officer Authorized to issue Summons

Note: Strike out whichever is not Applicable.

The Statesman

KOLKATA

Statesman House,
4, Chowringhee Square
Kolkata-700 001
Tel: (033) 22127070-76,
(033) 41071700
Fax: (033) 2212-6181 / 7107-1780

In the matter of Test Case
No. 29/2021
Col. Virender Singh
Chaudhry
Petitioner
Versus
The State & Anr.
Respondents

To,
All Concerned

In the matter of estate of Late Ms. Asha Chaudhry, d/o Smt. Maya Chaudhry and Late Sh. Nihal Singh Chaudhry, r/o C-2/2038, Vasani Kunji, New Delhi.

Whereas Col. Virender Singh Chaudhry (Retd.), s/o Late Col. Nihal Singh Chaudhry, r/o A-4, Ring Road, Naraina Vihar, New Delhi-110028, has filed a petition under Section 276/278 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for the grant of Letters of

PRAMOD SAWANT
GOA CHIEF MINISTER

Pb govt withdraws order to provide vax to pvt hospitals

The rollback came after it drew fire from Opp for 'selling' Covid shots to pvt hospitals at hefty margins

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 4 JUNE

Facing severe criticism over alleged diversion of Covid vaccines to private hospitals in the state at "hefty margins", the Punjab government on Friday withdrew its order reportedly providing "one-time limited vaccine doses to 18-44 age group population through private hospitals".

The Capt Amarinder Singh-led Punjab government Friday issued an order for taking back such Covid vaccines from private hospitals with immediate effect.

Punjab health minister Balbir Singh Sidhu said that the instruction of providing one-time limited vaccine doses to private hospitals has been withdrawn by the state and that all these vaccines will be



administered free of cost to a group of 18 to 44 years at government vaccination centres now.

Sidhu stated that as per information provided by Punjab in-charge for Covid Vaccination, Vikas Garg, about 42,000 doses have been allotted to the private hospitals from which only 600 doses have been

administered to people.

He said that the instruction has been issued to all civil surgeons that no fresh allotment be made to any private hospitals and that the private hospitals should return forthwith all the vaccine doses available with them.

The Amarinder Singh-led Congress government faced

sharp criticism from the Opposition parties over selling Covid vaccines to private hospitals. Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief Sukhbir Badal said it had re-sold 40,000 doses of Covaxin at "hefty margins".

Badal charged that these vaccines had been purchased at Rs 400 per dose and sold to private hospitals for Rs 1,060 per dose, thereby making a "profit" of Rs 660 per dose. The hospitals sold it at Rs 1,560 per dose, he alleged.

Criticising the Punjab government for selling the government quota vaccines to private hospitals, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)'s Punjab affairs co-incharge and legislator from Delhi, Raghav Chadha, alleged that it had committed another major vaccine scam, thus robbing the people of Punjab of crores of rupees.

The minister said private hospitals will now get direct supplies of vaccines from the manufacturers. He said that the amount deposited by the private hospitals in the state's vaccine fund will be refunded shortly.

The Punjab health minister, however, said that since the Congress government is committed to provide all treatment services to Covid patients without any discrimination at the government hospitals, vaccination will also be administered free of cost to all beneficiaries.

The Amarinder Singh government had already declared in the Budget 2021-22 that the vaccination will be provided free of cost to every eligible beneficiary and that the state would bear all expenses for the welfare of the general public, Sidhu said.

The minister said private hospitals will now get direct supplies of vaccines from the manufacturers. He said that the amount deposited by the private hospitals in the state's vaccine fund will be refunded shortly.

Amarinder govt indulged in scam by selling vax to pvt hosps: AAP

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 4 JUNE

Criticising the Captain Amarinder Singh-led Congress government in Punjab for selling government quota vaccines to private hospitals, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)'s Punjab affairs co-incharge and legislator from Delhi, Raghav Chadha, on Friday said the Amarinder government had allegedly committed another major vaccine scam, thus robbing the people of Punjab of crores of rupees.

Chadha further said that the Captain government of Punjab had purchased the state government quota vaccine at a rate of Rs 400 per dose; but the Captain government had further embezzled crores of rupees by selling these vaccines to private hospitals at a rate of Rs 1,060 per dose and had allowed private hospitals to plunder the people of Punjab financially.

Chadha asked when Delhi's Arvind Kejriwal government could provide free vaccines to the people of Delhi, then why the Congress government in Punjab could not get it done for the people. He questioned the logic of the Captain government to close down government vaccination centers

and allow private hospitals to charge Rs 3,100 for vaccines.

Chadha said Amarinder should tell the people of Punjab that to which Congress leader did he give crores of rupees collected through black marketing of free medicine.

"Has the money for the vaccine scam been given to the Congress party high command? Will the Kharje Committee, set up to end the Punjab Congress internal feud, also ask Captain Amarinder Singh about the vaccine scam?", the AAP leader asked.

Chadha said that the Captain government had made a big fuss about vaccinating the people of Punjab against Covid, free of cost, but by closing down the government vaccination centers, the people were being forced to get vaccinated from private hospitals at a cost of Rs 3,100.

Modi govt criminally liable for Covid mismanagement: Jakhar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 4 JUNE

Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Central government is liable for criminal mismanagement of Covid pandemic.

The Centre has totally left people on their own, Jakhar said targeting the Union government for failing to do its responsibility in this gravest hour and failing to provide medicines, vaccines and other necessary supplies to citizens.

In a statement, Jakhar said Congress party has today submitted memorandum to the President of India to give

voice to the demand of each and every citizen of the country for urgent availability of vaccines to safeguard lives.

He said that the memorandum has been forwarded to the President through the Governor.

The memorandum was submitted to the Punjab Governor Office as the Governor himself was not available. Besides this, district bodies of the party also submitted these memorandums to the respective deputy commissioners.

The state Congress chief said the Centre's vaccine pricing, Jakhar castigated centre and said that after procuring one Covishield dose at Rs

150, Centre is selling the same to states at double the price, and even further to private hospitals at Rs 600. At the same time, the price of Covaxin for Centre is Rs 150, while the Modi government is giving it to states at 600 and for Rs 1200 to private hospitals.

Congress demanded a minimum of one crore citizens must be vaccinated daily and Centre must provide vaccines free to states.

This is the only way to come out of this dire situation, he said adding the Modi government must now think about our citizens and not be worried about the interest of private companies.

On arbitrary vaccine pricing, Jakhar castigated centre and said that after procuring one Covishield dose at Rs

150, Centre is selling the same to states at double the price, and even further to private hospitals at Rs 600. At the same time, the price of Covaxin for Centre is Rs 150, while the Modi government is giving it to states at 600 and for Rs 1200 to private hospitals.

The state government was endeavouring to set up Oxygen plants in all the major hospitals, he added.

Meanwhile, Union minister of state for finance and corporate affairs Anurag Singh Thakur lauded the HPCM for effective management of Covid pandemic and said the state has effectively succeeded in increasing the health infrastructure.

Addressing the inauguration event virtually, he said the makeshift hospital will provide better treatment facilities to the Covid-19 patients of the area.

"The bed capacity in the state has been increased from about 1200 to over 5000," he said, while urging the CM to expedite work on PSA oxygen plants in the state.

Earlier there was only one oxygen plant in the state at GMC Shimla whereas today the state

was almost self-sufficient in medical oxygen supply.

He also thanked Union minister of state for finance and corporate affairs Anurag Singh Thakur for providing two PSA plants at Ghumariwain in Bilaspur district and Hamirpur having capacity of 140 PSA each.

The state government was

endeavouring to set up Oxygen plants in all the major hospitals, he added.

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"The bed capacity in the state has been increased from about 1200 to over 5000," he said, while urging the CM to expedite work on PSA oxygen plants in the state.

in providing best treatment to the Covid patients nearer to their homes.

The hospital had been constructed in a record time of one month and the hospital will provide uninterrupted oxygen supply to the Covid patients for better care, the CM said.

He further stated that after the second wave of this pandemic, the government gave special focus on increasing and strengthening the health infrastructure in the state.

The state government has increased the storage capacity of oxygen by over 26MT and as many as 8 PSA oxygen plants have been made functional in various medical colleges and

hospitals.

Apart from this, 12 new PSA oxygen plants are being set up in different parts of the state.

Three oxygen plants are also coming up at Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Government Medical College Ner Chowk, Mandi, Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru Government Medical College Chamba and Dr Rajendra Prasad Government Medical College Tanda under CSR," he added.

The chief minister said another 500 LPM capacity PSA oxygen plant was being set up at Civil Hospital Palkhawa by Nestle India Ltd.

Earlier there was only one oxygen plant in the state at GMC Shimla whereas today the state

was almost self-sufficient in medical oxygen supply.

He also thanked Union minister of state for finance and corporate affairs Anurag Singh Thakur for providing two PSA plants at Ghumariwain in Bilaspur district and Hamirpur having capacity of 140 PSA each.

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Meanwhile, Union minister of state for finance and corporate affairs Anurag Singh Thakur lauded the HPCM for effective management of Covid pandemic and said the state has effectively succeeded in increasing the health infrastructure.

Addressing the inauguration event virtually, he said the makeshift hospital will provide better treatment facilities to the Covid-19 patients of the area.

"The bed capacity in the state has been increased from about 1200 to over 5000," he said, while urging the CM to expedite work on PSA oxygen plants in the state.

in providing best treatment to the Covid patients nearer to their homes.

The hospital had been constructed in a record time of one month and the hospital will provide uninterrupted oxygen supply to the Covid patients for better care, the CM said.

He further stated that after the second wave of this pandemic, the government gave special focus on increasing and strengthening the health infrastructure in the state.

The state government has increased the storage capacity of oxygen by over 26MT and as many as 8 PSA oxygen plants have been made functional in various medical colleges and

hospitals.

Apart from this, 12 new PSA oxygen plants are being set up in different parts of the state.

Three oxygen plants are also coming up at Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Government Medical College Ner Chowk, Mandi, Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru Government Medical College Chamba and Dr Rajendra Prasad Government Medical College Tanda under CSR," he added.

The chief minister said another 500 LPM capacity PSA oxygen plant was being set up at Civil Hospital Palkhawa by Nestle India Ltd.

Earlier there was only one oxygen plant in the state at GMC Shimla whereas today the state

was almost self-sufficient in medical oxygen supply.

He also thanked Union minister of state for finance and corporate affairs Anurag Singh Thakur for providing two PSA plants at Ghumariwain in Bilaspur district and Hamirpur having capacity of 140 PSA each.

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Family members perform last rites of a Covid-19 victim at a cremation ground in Guwahati.

AGENCIES

Assam doctor assault case: The National Human Rights Commission has taken cognisance of the alleged assault on a doctor at a medical facility in Hojai district of Assam and sought an action-taken report from the state government within four weeks, officials said on Friday.

PTI

4 Assam tiger reserves get CATS accreditation: All four tiger reserves of Assam have received accreditation by the National Committee of Conservation Assured Tiger Standards for maintaining a high standard of conservation, an official release said.

PTI

Covid revival package of ₹20,000 cr in LDF's budget

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 4JUN

In the maiden Budget of the second Pinarayi Vijayan government in Kerala, state finance minister K.N. Balagopal announced a Rs 20,000 crore package to tide over the crisis brought about by the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic and also set aside Rs 1,000 crore to provide free Covid-19 vaccination to all above 18 years of age and Rs 500 crore for the purchase of allied equipment.

"During economic slowdown and natural disasters, the government could have stepped aside by reducing the expenditure. But, this is not the approach of the Left Front. During a crisis, the Left approach is to stand upfront and save the society even through borrowings," Balagopal said.

Balagopal further announced in the revised budget for 2021-2022, that Isolation wards for contagious diseases, with 10 beds each, would be set up in all community health centres, taluk, district and General Hospitals at a cost of Rs. 636.5 crore.

The finance minister said Rs.50 crore has been earmarked to set up isolation blocks in Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode Medical Colleges and Rs 25 crore will be spent to set up pediatric ICU wards in selected District Hospitals and Medical Colleges.



A second Covid package of Rs 20,000 crore is announced now to address the health, social and economic challenges that are emerging in the backdrop of the second wave,

K N BALAGOPAL
FINANCE MINISTER

Palakkad, engineering colleges and other institutions will be utilised.

While Rs. 10 crore has been allotted for preliminary expenditure in reviving agriculture and allied sectors, an equal amount has also

been allocated for information technology service network for marketing of agriculture products.

He said that Rs.1,000 crore credit will be provided to Kudumbashree self-help groups through bank loans

during the financial year 2021-22. The finance minister further said that two lakh laptops will be given to students in a time-bound manner. For strengthening facilities for online learning Rs 10 crore has been apportioned in the budget.

Opposition leader V D Satheesan termed the first budget of the second Pinarayi government as a political speech. "We are of the opinion that the sanctity was lost when the minister included

political statements in his speech," Satheesan said. BJP state chief K Surendran termed the budget as a disappointing one and said the state government was remaking and implementing the central projects

TENDER



**HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**
Office of the Executive Engineer, Outer Seraj Division, HP.PWD. Nirmand
Web: www.hppwd.gov.in, Email: ee-nir-hp@nic.in
Phone No.-01904-255140, Fax No. 01904-255740



NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed item rate tender on form 6 & 8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer Outer Seraj Division HP. PWD. Nirmand on behalf of Governor of HP. from the approved eligible contractors enlisted in HP.PWD. for the following works, so as to reach this office on 21.05.2021 up to 10.30 A.M. and same will be opened on the same day at 11.00 a.m. in presence of the interested contractors or their authorized representative. The tender form can be had from the office of Executive Engineer Outer Seraj Division HP.PWD. Nirmand on cash payment (Non-refundable) or on before 19.05.2021 during office hours till 1.00 p.m. The application must be accompanied with earnest money in shape of NSD/FDR/Time deposit etc. of any post office of HP or Nationalized Bank duly pledged in the name of Executive Engineer Outer Seraj Division HP.PWD. Nirmand cash order will not be entertained, it may be ensured that the earnest money shall have to be prepared work wise otherwise forms will not be issued. The tender shall be kept open for 90 days. The conditional tender or tender received by post will also be rejected. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason. All the approved eligible contractors should bring copy of their valid enlistment/renewal/exemption from earnest money with them. The tender documents will be issued only to those who fulfill the eligibility conditions. The contractor should be registered as dealer under GST Act, Valid Copy of Registration as required, Copy of PAN Card, EPF failing which no tender form will be issued to him.

Work No.:1 Restoration of rain damages on Wazir Bowali to Mohali road Km. 0/00 to 6/250. Estimated cost: Rs. 2,91,552/- Earnest money Rs. - 5900/- time three month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:2 Construction of Play ground in GSSS Neethar.(SH:- Widening of play ground and C/o R/wall and B/wall for ground. Estimated cost: Rs. 4,64,576/- Earnest money Rs. - 10000/- time three month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:3 BASP/2020-389 Construction of Dhanbari to Pujari road Km. 0/00 to 3/750 under BASP.(SH:- C/o R/wall at Rd 1/342 to 1/352, 2/255 to 2/275 and wire crate B/wall at Rd 0/560 to 0/600). Estimated cost: Rs. 4,41,093/- Earnest money Rs.:- 10000/- time three months Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:4 M/T on approach road to Rest House Sarahan Km. 0/00 to 0/125. (SH:- Providing and laying M/T works in Km. 0/00 to 0/125). Estimated cost: Rs. 1,53,367/- Earnest money Rs. - 10000/- time two month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:5 BSP/2019/230 P/L M/T works on Wazir Bowali Jhakri Bye Pass road Km. 0/00 to 15/00. (SH:- P/L Kharanja stone soling in between Km.0/00 to 3/500). Estimated cost: Rs. 2,93,352/- Earnest money Rs.:- 6000/- time two month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:6 Metalling and tarring of link road from Badhara to Sagot Km. 0/00 to 3/120. (SH:- P/L WBM G-II in Km. 2/450 to 3/120). Estimated cost: Rs. 4,51,522/- Earnest money Rs.:- 10000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:7 Construction of link road from Oddithal to GPS Chililage Km. 0/00 to 1/500 under MMGGS .(SH:- F/C 5/7 wide road in km. 0/390 to 0/585). Estimated cost: Rs. 4,78,638/- Earnest money Rs.:- 9600/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:8 A/R & M/o road front jn. of Luhri Dalash Chowai Kanag road to jn. of Nirmand Arsu Sarahan road Km. 0/00 to 32/00. (SH:- Providing re-surfacing in Km. 22/470 to 22/825). Estimated cost: Rs. 2,60,833/- Earnest money Rs.:- 6000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:9 Restoration of rain damages on Bakhnoum to Dugha Shigan road Km. 0/00 to 7/210. (SH:- Construction of R/wall at RD 3/390 to 3/405). Estimated cost: Rs. 1,74,719/- Earnest money Rs.:- 4000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:10 Restoration of rain damages on Chaklot to Chunagai road Km. 0/00 to 2/585. (SH:- Construction of R/wall at RD 2/570 to 2/585). Estimated cost: Rs. 4,56,740/- Earnest money Rs.:- 10000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:11 Restoration of rain damages on Chaklot to Chunagai road Km. 0/00 to 2/585. (SH:- Construction of R/wall at RD 2/585 to 2/600). Estimated cost: Rs. 4,56,740/- Earnest money Rs.:- 10000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:12 Restoration of rain damages on Chaklot to Chunagai road Km. 0/00 to 2/585. (SH:- Construction of R/wall at RD 2/545 to 2/565). Estimated cost: Rs. 3,87,464/- Earnest money Rs.:- 8000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:13 Restoration of rain damages on Chaklot to Chunagai road Km. 0/00 to 2/585. (SH:- Providing and laying kharanja stone soling in essential reaches between Km. 0/00 to 5/450). Estimated cost: Rs. 2,65,124/- Earnest money Rs.:- 6000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:14 BASP/2020/138 Restoration of rain damages on Dalash Gungi road Km. 0/00 to 3/120 under BASP. (SH:- Construction of breast Wall at RD 1/375 to 1/402). Estimated cost: Rs. 2,22,826/- Earnest money Rs.:- 5000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:15 Construction of road from Guhatan to Balerni Km. 0/00 to 2/470 actual length 2/480 under BASP. (SH:- F/C 5/7 mtrs wide road in Km. 2/435 to 2/480). Estimated cost: Rs. 1,23,905/- Earnest money Rs.:- 4000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:16 BASP/2019/228 P/L Metalling and tarring works on Bagipali to Bagi road Km. 0/00 to 1/00 under BASP. (SH:- P/L Kharanja stone soling and WBM G-II in Km Bus Stand Bagi). Estimated cost: Rs. 68,807/- Earnest money Rs.:- 2000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Work No.:17 Construction of link road from Kandagai to Sour Km. 0/00 to 4/810 under SCCP. (SH:- C/o breast Wall at RD 3/345 to 3/365). Estimated cost: Rs. 2,31,407/- Earnest money Rs.:- 5000/- time one month Cost of form:-350/-

Executive Engineer
Outer Seraj Division
H.P PWD, Nirmand
on behalf of Governor of Himachal Prades

No room for Sasikala in AIADMK: Palaniswami

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 4 JUN

A day after another set of audio clips in which V K Sasikala talking about her imminent return to politics came out, the Leader of the Opposition in the Tamil Nadu Assembly and AIADMK joint coordinator Edappadi K Palaniswami categorically said that there would be no room for Sasikala in the party. He also denied any differ-

ence of opinion with AIADMK coordinator O Panneerselvam.

But Panneerselvam's absence was conspicuous when EPS met the press after a meeting with party leaders from nine districts.

Sasikala is not with the AIADMK. Already, Sasikala had declared that she had moved away from politics. She has been talking to the AMMK cadre but to create confusion, some elements spread

wrong information. But these attempts will not succeed. All office-bearers of the AIADMK are firm that there is no place for her family in the party. We won many seats in the Assembly elections only after declaring this stand."

Asked why Panneerselvam was absent during the discussions, Palaniswami said that today OPS is engaged in his house warming ceremony and hence, he could not take part.

38 Jharkhand tribal women reach home

RANCHI, JUN 4

Thirty-eight tribal women from Jharkhand, who were stranded in Tamil Nadu due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown in the southern state, returned to their home district of Dumka on Friday with the help of the state government, a senior official said. The women, hailing from remote areas of the Dumka district like Maslia, Shikarpada and Rameshwar, used to work in textile firms in Tamil Nadu.

FORM NO.3 (See Regulation-15(1)(a)) / 16(3)
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL DELHI (DRT -III)
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001
Case No.: OA/903/2019

Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993.

**LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD.
VERSUS
VISHAL ANTAL AND ORS. ANTAL**

To,
(1) M/s. PIYUSH COLONIZERS LTD., A 16 / B 1 Cooperative Industrial Estate, Main Mathura Road, South Delhi-110044.

SUMMONS

Whereas, OA/903/2019 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer on 27.04.2021.

Whereas this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons / notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of **Rs.602,1269.27** (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:-

(i) To show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted. (ii) To disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application. (iii) You are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties. (iv) You shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal. (v) You shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets. You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on **29.06.2021 at 10:30 A.M.** failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Due to ongoing Pandemic situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the Cisco Webex application/software. (ii) Meeting ID and Password for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar / Recovery Officer-I and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. drt.gov.in under the Public Notice Head. (iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph.No.23748469.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date 28.04.2021. Signature of the Officer Authorized to issue Summons

Note: Strike out whichever is not applicable.

Ambubachi festival at Kamakhya temple cancelled again



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, 4 JUNE

Annual Ambubachi festival of Kamakhya temple atop Nilachal Hill in the city has been cancelled again for the second consecutive year because of Covid-19 pandemic.

The management committee of Maa Kamakhya Deviaya informed that no assembling of saint, devotee or tourists would be entertained at the temple premises till 30 June.

The four-day Ambubachi festival, which is recognised as a biggest religious congregation in eastern India. Rather a sculptured image of Yoni of the Goddess in a cave is seen inside the main temple. A natural spring believes to keep the stone always moist. Devotees with all purity touch the silk cloth draped stone and offer Bilwa Patra and flowers on it.

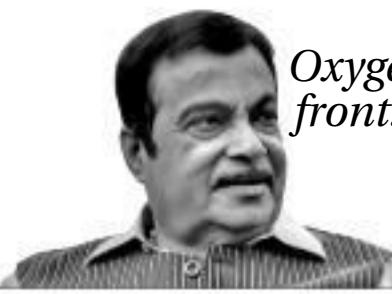
Besides Ambubachi, many other annual festivals are organised in the sacrosanct temple premises. Visitors are allowed to have Darshan and worship Devi Kamakhya during the daytime. The temple has over 150 recognised priests, whereas more than 500 Pandas stay on the campus to help the devotees in different rituals.

Sealed item rate tenders are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, Hamirpur Division HPPWD., Hamirpur in form No. 6 & 8 on behalf of Governor of H.P. for the following works from the contractors of appropriate class enlisted with HP.PWD.. The tender shall be opened in the presence of the contractors / firms or their representative who wish to be present.

TIME SCHEDULE OF TENDER:-

1. Date and time of receipt of application for tender form:- 19.06.2021 up to 4:00 PM.
2. Date and time of issue of tender form :- 22.06.2021 up to 3:00 PM.
3. Date and time of receipt of tenders:- 23.06.2021 up to 10:30 A.M.
4. Date and time of opening of tenders:- 23.06.2021 at 11:30 A.M.

The request for issue of tenders should be on the PRESCRIBED APPLICATION FORM which can be obtained from the office of undersigned and tenders will be issued to only those



Oxygen supply is a crucial issue and we need to become self-sufficient on that front...Hospitals with more than 50 beds should become self-sufficient in oxygen supply

UNION MINISTER NITIN GADKARI

IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE THIRD WAVE OF COVID-19.

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 05 JUNE 2021

Delhi hospital deaths: Court seeks response on probe plea

Plea has alleged that deaths took place due to 'deliberate inaction' of Centre, Delhi govt & the hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

The Delhi High Court on Friday sought the stand of the Centre and the city government on a plea seeking a CBI probe into the death of 21 Covid patients at the Jaipur Golden Hospital here in April allegedly due to oxygen shortage.

Justice Rekha Palli issued a notice to the Union ministries of home and health and the Delhi government seeking their response by August 20 on the plea filed by the families of some patients who died on the intervening night of April 23 and 24.

The plea, filed through advocate Utsav Bains, has contended that the cause of death of the patients was respiratory failure due to insufficient supply of oxygen and not comorbidities, as stated by a Delhi government committee in its report.

The petitioners have claimed that the committee came out with an "erroneous" report that those who died did not suffer suffocation due to lack of oxygen supply.

The petition has sought quashing of the commit-



tee's report and a direction for a probe by CBI or an independent agency into the deaths "so that the truth can be brought to light and justice be given to the deceased persons and their families" and they be provided compensation.

The plea has alleged that the incident took place "due to deliberate inaction and failure of the respondents (Centre, Delhi government and the hospital) to provide adequate oxygen to the patients despite knowing that any shortage of oxygen supply would lead to their immediate death.

As a result, "the respondents herein have rendered

themselves not only liable to pay compensation to the families of the deceased victims but also for criminal prosecution" for culpable homicide, the plea has said.

Referring to the report of the committee, the petition has claimed that it was prepared to favour the Delhi government and that the finding in it, that the deceased were receiving some form of oxygen therapy was made to mislead the court. "The committee did not examine the issue of demand and supply of oxygen to the Hospital and also has not taken statements by families of victims on record," it has said.

The petitioners have also contended that the hospital did not even inform the family members about the shortage otherwise they would have arranged for at least high flow oxygen cylinders and this would have saved the life of their loved ones who died as the pressure in the cylinders was low. "It is submitted that most of the patients (now deceased) were recovering in as much as they were regularly informing their family members about improvements in their health. The deceased victims were in constant touch with their family members and were stable," the petition has said.

The petition has sought quashing of the committee's report and a direction for a probe by CBI or an independent agency into the deaths "so that the truth can be brought to light and justice be given to the deceased persons and their families" and they be provided compensation

It has contended that the Centre, Delhi government and the hospital "were under a legal and moral obligation to ensure no-one dies due to non-supply of oxygen". "Therefore, the State is also under legal and moral obligation to provide compensation and sustenance to the families who have lost their family member due to inaction of the respondents and also ensure that those who are responsible for the deaths of patients due to the failure to provide oxygen to patients are brought to justice, no matter, how high, powerful or mighty they are," the petition has said.

PM hails Indian scientists for Covid vaccine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday lauded Indian scientists for developing a Made in India vaccine against Covid and boosting other measures to fight the pandemic within a year of its outbreak.

Addressing a meeting of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Society via video conference, the prime minister, who is also the president of the scientific body, cited India's experience in the previous century.

They are working at the same quick pace, he said.

He said the pandemic is the

bigger challenge of the century but history has witnessed that whenever humanity has faced any major issues, science has paved the way for a better path in the future. This work was done by scientists across the world and in India, the prime minister said.

"Our scientists, within a

year, developed 'Made in India' vaccine and made it available to the countrymen," he said.

He said within a year, scientists made the country self-reliant by making Covid testing kits. In a short span, they discovered many drugs to treat coronavirus and developed ways to speed up oxygen production. Lauding the work done by the CSIR, he said the organisation has produced several talented scientists and it was led by ones like Shantiswarup Bhatnagar.

HC acting CJ to hear chit fund cases daily

KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

Acting Chief Justice, Calcutta High Court Rajesh Bindal said today that he will hear all the cases of a chit fund company. Such hearing will be daily held.

Some of the counsels feel that this will lead to speedy disposal of matters. This is a positive indication for the investors of chit fund companies if matters are disposed off under a single umbrella, it was felt.

The acting Chief Justice's initiative will go a long way in clearing a backlog of chit fund related cases. Names of several politicians and other public figures came up during the hearing of the chit fund matters.

In 2015, the then Chief Justice of this court, Manjula Chellur had formed a special bench for disposal of chit fund defalcation cases.

May 28 in a drug case linked to the latter's death last year. He was produced before additional chief metropolitan magistrate A H Kashikar, and was remanded in jail custody after the NCB did not ask for further custody, special public prosecutor Advait Sethna said.

Rajput was found dead in

his home in Bandra on June 14 last year. Following the actor's death, the NCB began a probe into alleged drug links in the film industry based on WhatsApp chats, and several people were arrested under the NDPS Act in this connection, most of whom are out on bail currently.

Shots fired to 'kill' BJP leader, TMC-backed goons blamed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

In another incidence of unimpeded post-poll violence, a gang of miscreants allegedly by TMC-backed goons, fired a few rounds at a BJP leader's residence and ransacked his home at Bhatpara in North 24 Parganas last night.

Following the incident, BJP state vice-president and MP Arjun Singh and party workers staged a demonstration in the morning demanding arrest of the perpetrators immediately.

Police are yet to make an arrest in connection with the incident. A gang of miscreants came on motorbikes and in cars,

porters was involved in this crime. A team from Jagaddal police station visited the spot and has started an investigation.

Meanwhile, BJP IT cell worker Chayan Midda was released on bail today. BJP state leader and zonal observer Abhijit Das said that Midda belonging to a tribal community and a third year college student was falsely implicated in a robbery case following the instruction of a senior TMC leader.

"Even officers of the Diamond Harbour police station to implicate Chayan falsely accused him of carrying dagger and committing robbery. His only crime is his association with our IT cell," said Das.

DVM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, BALUDA

(B.Ed. College) I (Recognized by NCTE & Affiliated to MDU Rohtak)

Village Baluda, Sohna, Gurgaon (Haryana), E-Mail: dvmeducation.com I Mob: 9315156574

Staff Required on Regular Basis

Teaching Staff:

Principal - 01, Assistant Professor (Perspective in Education of Foundation Courses) - 04, Assistant Professor (Curriculum & Pedagogy Courses) - 13; Math 02, Physical Science - 01, Life Science - 01, S. St. 02, Economics - 01, Commerce - 01, Sanskrit - 01, Computer Science - 01, English - 01, Hindi - 01, Health and Physical Education - 01, Biological science - 01, Fine Arts - 01, Music - 01.

Qualification, Experience & Salary as per norms of NCTE/Haryana Govt./MDU, Rohtak. Apply & give full particulars within 21 days from the date of publication of advertisement to the Secretary of the College & one copy of the application must, be sent to Dean College Development Council, MDU, Rohtak, Haryana.

President, Governing Body

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one male namely Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, Age 40 years, Height 5'5", Complexion Shallow, Face Long, Built Thin, Wearing Red colour shirt and black colour lower was found dead at Jain Mandir Chandni Chowk, Delhi on 31.05.21. In this regard a DD No. 88-A dated 31.05.21 U/S 174 Cr.PC has been lodged at PS Kotwali, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this male deceased may be kindly inform to the undersigned.

SHO
PS: Kotwali, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23977100, 23953442,
8743934160, 8750870121

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that one male person was found in unconscious condition at Rajan Babu TB Hospital Kingsway Camp, Delhi dated 22.05.2021. He was admitted in Rajan Babu TB Hospital for treatment after treatment declared dead by doctor. In this regard a DD No. 54A, dated 31.05.2021 has been registered at P.S. Timarpur, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as Under Name: Suraj, S/o: Lt. Ram Singh, R/o: Footpath Sri Sohba Singh Polo Clinic, Lahori Gate, Age: About 50 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Red & Grey Colour Check Shirt and Grey Colour Lower. Identification Mark: Tattoo Mark OM and Jai Bangra written on right hand. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO
P.S. Timarpur, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23812734, 23814421,
8750870130

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, DELHI

4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001

O.A. NO.1058 / 2018
UCO BANK

Applicant

VISHAL SRIVASTAVA & ORS. Defendants

To,

1. VISHAL SRIVASTAVA S/O. DEVI SHARAN, Resident of A-154, First Floor, A Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092.

2. PUSHPA LATA SRIVASTAVA W/O. DEVI SHARAN SRIVASTAVA, Resident of A-154, First Floor, A Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092.

3. MRS. JYOTI SRIVASTAVA W/O. MR. VISHAL SRIVASTAVA, Resident of A-154, First Floor A Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092.

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of Rs.13,10,067/- (Rupee Thirteen Lakhs Ten Thousand Sixty Seven Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Lt. Registrar on 26.07.2021 at 10:30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website: www.tribunal.gov.in Phone Number 011-23748473).

Please note that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application / Software.

(ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar / Recovery Officer/Iand Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. "drt.gov.in" under the Public Notice Head.

(iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates / Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No.23748473.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 19th May of 2021. Respondent may contact under mention Phone number for further enquiry. Mr. Amit K. Dar, Lt. Registrar, DRT-I, New Delhi. Phone No.: 011-23748473, E-mail: drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in.

By Order of this Tribunal,
For Registrar

World Environment Day 2021: Covid detritus adds to waste crisis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

The crisis of plastic and biomedical waste is deepening with each Covid case as millions of people use and throw face shields, surgical masks, gloves and PPE suits, once used primarily in hospitals and now an indispensable part of everyday life.

The movement against plastic has taken a battering in the pandemic with dependency on single-use plastic surging and households contributing to the tonnes of biomedical waste being generated, worried experts said ahead of World Environment Day on Saturday. The detritus of the pandemic can be seen everywhere PPE suits lying discarded behind hos-



Health workers plant saplings on the eve of 'World Environment Day' at Sapthagiri Institute of Medical Science and Research Centre in Bengaluru, on Friday.

pitals and crematoriums, surgical masks and shields being thrown as part of household waste and, of course, sanitiser bottles, gloves and the like found in street corners garbage dumps. With waste disposal

mechanisms less than perfect in India and the plastic footprint becoming larger by the day, concerns on plastic waste choking the planet and worries about safety are mounting. There has been a general increase and since it is a crisis situation, we are not thinking of plastic but general prevention. The focus is no longer plastic, so that is a problem, Ravi Agarwal, founder director of the environmental NGO Toxics Link, said.

A lot of biomedical waste like masks and PPE kits are also being generated in general homes now. So that is becoming a big problem. These things are finding their way across ecosystems. A lot of these things like masks can be seen on beaches, in coral reefs etc, he added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also taken the trouble of ringing up to enquire about Roy's wife's health.

Another top TMC leader said on conditions of anonymity "these issues of induction are not generally discussed at any extended meeting of the party where a large number of participants are present."

"Our is not a regimented party like the CPI-M, we are a party with liberal democratic principles we will certainly consider what they (turncoats) had said or not said against us," the TMC leader added.

"Inducting those who had left the party at a crucial hour and joined the brigade of falsehood led by Modi and Shah is not slated to figure tomorrow's organisational meeting," TMC leaders however said.

They downplayed Abhishek's visit to a private hospital to see Roy's wife as a courtesy call.

Another top TMC leader said on conditions of anonymity "these issues of induction are not generally discussed at any extended meeting of the party where a large number of participants are present."

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 19th May of 2021.

Respondent may contact under mention Phone number for further enquiry. Mr. Amit K. Dar, Lt. Registrar, DRT-I, New Delhi. Phone No.: 011-23748473, E-mail: drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in.

By Order of this Tribunal,
For Registrar

War in peace

How ought countries to wage war in an era of peace? After all, only the naïve would believe that enmity between adversaries ceases in times of peace, pandemics, or platitudes. The issue thus framed is an important one for India's strategic thinkers to get their head around, with the obvious proviso that war does not refer only to military combat, irregular or conventional, though it does not preclude it. Russia and China are both believed to have "grand strategies" – detailed sets of national security goals backed by means, and plans, to pursue them. In India, much like in the United States of America, policy makers have tried to articulate similar concepts but have failed to reach widespread consensus; in the case of the former since 1947 and in that of the latter at least since the Cold War ended. As Michael O'Hanlon, author of the recently released book *The Art of War In An Age of Peace* (Yale University Press, 2021) puts it, the USA has been the world's prominent superpower for over a generation but much of American thinking has oscillated between the extremes of isolationist agendas versus interventionist and overly assertive ones. A comparable well-researched, ethically sound, and politically viable vision for Indian national security policy is conspicuous by its absence.

This is not merely an academic lament but a matter of some urgency for India's policy establishment. The Pentagon, for example, has a well-established set of "4+1" pre-existing threats – Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and transnational violent extremism/terrorism. Hanlon and others have been arguing for a new 4+1: Biological, nuclear, digital, climatic, and internal dangers. These new threats have been identified as addenda and not necessarily to replace the original threats and are aimed to ensure America is ready to face the challenges of the 21st century in war and in peacetime with a comprehensive national security and strategic plan in place. It is not that India does not have some of the finest strategic thinkers or they have not made significant interventions in the public if rarefied domains of geostrategy and security. The problem is more that of a lack of strategic culture which emanates from the overemphasis of the political executive on domestic, mainly electoral, issues, and the stranglehold of career bureaucrats on policy formulation which has proven to be a death-grip for original strategic thinking. It needs underlining that bureaucrats, generalists by training, are meant only to implement policy and the best of them focus on operationalising administratively the directions of the executive. It is the latter, therefore, which must listen to, and learn from, domain specialists before instructing public servants rather than let babus carry on climbing up the mountain of mediocrity, as it were. To help get them started, an Indian version of 4+1 could be China, Pakistan, energy security, water self-sufficiency, and violence by non-state actors. Plus, the Hanlon 4+1. Any takers?

Maritime disaster

There is much that is fogbound about Wednesday's fire that devastated the Iranian navy's largest warship, which later sank in the Gulf of Oman under circumstances as yet unclear. Contextualised with the tensions with the West over matters nuclear, this must rank as a terrible setback that the country's defences have suffered in recent years. The ship sank near the Iranian port of Jask, some 1,270 kilometers south-east of Tehran on the Gulf of Oman near the Strait of Hormuz – the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf. Satellite photos from Planet Labs Inc. analysed by Associated Press showed the *Kharg* off Jask with no sign of a fire as late as 11 a.m. on Tuesday. Photos circulated on Iranian social media showed sailors wearing life jackets evacuating the vessel as a fire burned behind them. Videos of thick, black smoke rising from the ship were published early on Wednesday morning. Satellites from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, that track fires from space, detected a blaze near Jask that started just before the time of the fire reported by Iran's Fars news agency. Twenty-four hours after the disaster, Iranian officials offered no cause for the fire aboard the *Kharg*, though they said an investigation had begun. While this is a standard explanation, crisis piles on crisis. In parallel to the maritime disaster, a massive fire broke out on Wednesday night at the oil refinery serving Tehran, sending thick plumes of black smoke over the Iranian capital. It wasn't immediately clear if there were injuries or what caused the blaze at the Tondgooyan Petrochemical Co., though temperatures in the capital reached nearly 40 degrees Celsius. Hot summers in Iran have caused fires in the past. Nonetheless, the crisis has deepened with two fires in the span of a day – the maritime blaze that destroyed a warship off the Gulf of Oman and the fire in the oil refinery.

The sinking of the *Kharg* marks the latest naval disaster for Iran. In 2020, during an Iranian military training exercise, a missile mistakenly struck a naval vessel near Jask, killing 19 sailors and wounding 15. Also in 2018, an Iranian navy destroyer sank in the Caspian Sea. Wednesday's fire aboard the *Kharg* warship follows a series of mysterious explosions that began in 2019 targeting commercial ships in the Gulf of Oman. The US Navy accused Iran of targeting the ships with limpet mines, timed explosives typically attached by divers to a vessel's hull. Iran has greeted the charge with a stout denial, though US Navy footage showed members of the Revolutionary Guard removing one unexploded limpet mine from a ship. The attacks came amid heightened tensions between the US and Iran after Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers. Negotiations on saving the accord continue in Vienna. Meanwhile, the mystery over Iran's vulnerable defences persists. From the Gulf of Oman to the oil refinery, the twin fires are puzzling.

Pandemic impacts ~ I

As long as viruses co-evolve with us, they don't become a nuisance. This is what scientists call the 'old friends' hypothesis. The virus does not infect humans directly. But when we break the integrity of natural ecosystems, we create conditions that invite pandemics. A different animal is the intermediary. It is estimated that around 60 per cent of the world's diseases come from animals (zoonoses), 72 per cent of which come from wild animals



We all live in the virosphere. The world of viruses is dense and vast. Viruses are omnipotent, found in air, land, sea to every species. An estimated 10 nonillion (10 to the 31st power) individual viruses exist on our planet – enough to assign one to every star in the universe 100 million times over," writes National Geographic. On an average, there are about 10 million viruses per litre of sea water or freshwater. If all viruses found in the oceans are arranged end-to-end, it will be the length of 10 million light years. As long as these viruses co-evolve with us, they don't become a nuisance. This is what scientists call the 'old friends' hypothesis. The virus does not infect humans directly. But when we break the integrity of natural ecosystems, we create conditions that invite pandemics. A different animal is the intermediary. It is estimated that around 60 per cent of the world's diseases come from animals (zoonoses), 72 per cent of which come from wild animals.

The virus, as a complete parasite, is incapable of multiplying anywhere except inside a living cell. They lack independent metabolism. Once inside the host cell, the virus releases its genetic materials to hijack the host cell's mechanism, and by usurping the host's metabolic capacity, it swiftly produces a new generation of viruses which go through the next cycle of reproduction. Mutation is like an error in creating new copies of the virus. The new viruses then burst out of the host cell by a process called lysis, which kills the host cell. Most of the time the body's immune system is capable enough to get rid of viruses. Problems arise when the virus

cheats or attacks our immune system to gain access to a cell and takes control over it. All RNA viruses, including Covid-19 ('CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, 'D' for disease and '19' for 2019) virus, have mutation rates up to a million times higher than their hosts. The high rates of mutation are correlated with enhanced virulence and evolvability.

A virus usually prefers limiting itself to the population of a species. The first human virus identified was the yellow fever virus. In 1881, Carlos Finlay, a Cuban physician, first conducted and published research work indicating that mosquitoes transmitted the disease as they were carrying yellow fever

Rodents, natural carriers of several viruses, become a part of immediate ecosystems of primitive tribes. Somewhere during their frequent interaction with rodents, one pox virus crossed the species barrier and jumped to humans. It was a landmark event, but with lethal consequences. The pox virus caused smallpox, one of the deadliest viral infections. Smallpox pandemic is estimated to have killed more than 300 million people since 1900.

The other such notorious virus is HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). HIV appears to have jumped to humans early in the 20th century from a type of chimpanzee in West Africa – most likely when humans hunted

these animals for meat and came into contact with their infected blood. The virus slowly spread across Africa and later to other parts of the world. Till date close to 39 million people worldwide have been infected with HIV; a total of 32 million have died since its outbreak.

The 1918 influenza (Spanish Flu), the most severe pandemic, was believed to have been caused by an H1N1 virus with genes of avian origin. It triggered a cytokine storm in which younger adults faced higher mortality rates. The number of deaths due to this pandemic (1918-1920) was estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide with about 675,000 occurring in the

US. The fourth pandemic, caused by the H1N1 virus, hit the world in 2009 and is known as the Swine Flu. It killed more than 300,000 people worldwide before morphing into a seasonal flu. In India, this pandemic killed 1,833 while affecting 36,240 at its peak in 2009-2010. It continues to infect and kill Indians.

All four pandemics in history as mentioned above have been caused by viruses, but Covid-19 is the first to be caused by a coronavirus. Since its outbreak, many 'firsts' associated with Covid-19 could explain why it is so devastating. This is the fastest that a disease became a pandemic - within just 71 days of its outbreak. In barely one year, it has infected over 67 million people and killed over 1.5 million in 200 countries and territories. India has had 9.6 million

cases, making it the second worst-impacted country after the US. After first wave, the country is currently reeling under the second wave.

By the end of the first wave, it was apparent that in this vast and diverse country, different states were at different stages of the pandemic, their state of preparedness, and their balance between lives and livelihood. Lockdown became the preventing medicine against the pandemic worldwide. The Great Lockdown helped contain the virus and save lives, but it has triggered mounting impacts on economy to health. According to the Ministry of Statistics, India's growth in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2020 went down to 3.2 per cent due to the pandemic effect on the economy. Notably India was also witnessing a pre-pandemic slowdown, and according to the World Bank, the current pandemic has 'magnified pre-existing risks to India's economic outlook.' The country's GDP estimates were downgraded even more to negative figures, signaling a deep recession. As developing countries like India have a more fragile economic and social fabric, the present situation will create more suffering for the unorganized sectors and migrant laborers.

Keeping the grave situation in view the former RBI governor, C Rangarajan, prescribed some steps to be taken for amelioration of hardships and said: 'Government of India must provide lifelines to business – extend loans and tax waivers to small businesses and the self-employed to retain staff... give direct support to severely affected industries and provide more funds to states, tax waivers to households etc.'

(To Be Concluded)

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

ASIAN VOICES
Suspicious error

A satellite image of Pyongyang, North Korea, was mistakenly used in the opening video for the 2021 P4G Seoul Summit, which got underway Sunday. The error was discovered belatedly when local media reported on it.

P4G stands for Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030, and the video preceded President Moon Jae-in's opening address.

The video's purpose was to promote the host city, and it featured panoramic views of Namsan, an ancient palace and the Han River, one by one. Then an aerial photograph of an island filled the screen. But the island was not Yeouido on the Han River – it was Rungnado on the Taedong River in Pyongyang.

The camera then zoomed out for successive views of the Taedong River, Pyongyang and South Pyongan Province. The image in question was abruptly replaced in the afternoon on the presidential office's YouTube channel. The correct image shows the Han River, with the camera zooming out to show Seoul and South Korea.

People posted critical comments below related news articles, such as "Does P in the P4G stand for Pyongyang?" Others asked, "I wonder if this is intentional" and "If a private company prepared the presentation, members of the team in charge would have checked it many times before

H The Korea Herald
hand. What were Cheong Wa Dae's officials doing?"

The two-day event was a major global summit on climate and sustainable growth. The presidential office and the government prepared for the summit with close interest.

Cheong Wa Dae promoted the summit aggressively. On Thursday, Moon appeared in a special promotional video.

On Friday, when he went back to his official residence after work, he personally drove a hydrogen-fueled car with P4G slogans all over it.

Tak Hyun-min, Moon's protocol secretary, also played up the event. Appearing on a TBS radio program on Friday, he said no other international conference hosted by South Korea had attracted as many countries as this one.

Until the news reports came out, the presidential office did not know an image of Pyongyang had been used in the video. It was not involved in producing the video, it explained later. A Cheong Wa Dae official told a local newspaper that the P4G planning group, under the Foreign Ministry, had outsourced the project to a private company.

Foreign leaders and heads of international organizations participated in the summit online and offline. Showing an image of Pyongyang for such a big event is a protocol disaster and a source of humiliation for South Korea. Yet Cheong Wa Dae tried to deflect criticism by blaming a contractor. This was an irresponsible response from the presidential office.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Fearing loss of heritage

SIR, This refers to the editorial, "Central question" (3 June). Although the Supreme Court has upheld the legality of the Central Vista project, there has been a lot of heat and dust over the scheme that proposes to build a new Parliament building and new residences for the prime minister and the vice-president. In fact, implementation of the project will likely lead to demolition of the Annexe building of the National Archives of India along with the National Museum and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. The demolition of these buildings entails a serious risk involving the transfer of historical records

from old repositories to new, temporary storehouses.

The NAI, the largest repository of historical documents, has been serving the scholarly and intellectual needs of the country for the last 130 years. Its cartography section houses more than one lakh maps, including some rare and confidential maps related to various parts of India and 30 other countries, such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Tibet and China, from as early as 1600 AD. Since Independence, the NAI has been expanding and preserving public records of the post-1947 period as well, covering major episodes in the formative

years of independent India.

Hence, the demolition of this building would put innumerable such documents at the risk of getting lost or damaged because of being mishandled by inexperienced hands. A sense of urgency has emerged because officials working in the NAI are yet to receive any plan of action for the safe transfer of records to a place that fulfills the pre-requisite environmental conditions for storage, even though digging for the project has begun on Rajpath despite the pandemic.

An arbitrary or hasty transfer can lead to loss and mismanagement of records. It has invoked great resent-

ment among various sections of society in India and abroad as archives are not only central to the scholarly enterprise but also markers of active civic endeavour in a democratic society. That is why 4,311 historians and researchers – in our country and the world – have jointly appealed to the Central government to abstain from demolishing or shifting these heritage buildings.

Yours, etc, Narayan Chandra Ghosh, Madanpur, 3 June.

SA CHEETAH

SIR, The report 'Kuno Palpur sanctuary to welcome cheetahs from SA after 74 years' (*The Statesman*, 22 May) indicates that the long journey of the Cheetah project has reached its final leg.

The picturesque Kuno National Park (formerly Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary) in Sheopur-Morena districts of Madhya Pradesh is the selected site for the introduction of fabulous cheetahs, an exciting development for wildlife enthusiasts. Preparations were initiated much earlier as the same area had also been selected as relocation site for the Gir lions of Gujarat.

Much debate has gone into the Cheetah project. It has been argued that many endangered species of India require immediate and sustained efforts of conserva-

COUNTER FEAR

SIR, It has been observed that currently India is lacking in two things. The first is the lack of coronavirus vaccines and the second is the lack of confidence in the vaccine. People in many states are afraid to get the vaccine even though it is available. Currently, the vaccine is being administered to all people above 18 years of age in the country. The fear gripping the people is that the vaccine will cause the disease and even death. This, in particular, is affecting vaccination drives in rural areas. It is high time the government created awareness and confidence among the people about the vaccine.

Yours, etc., Bhagwan Thadani, Mumbai, 3 June.

tion and this project would be an additional burden. On

the other hand, supporters of the project assert, among other reasons, the importance of savannah-grassland ecology restoration in Central India. It is obvious that a deep-rooted fascination for the fastest running land animal persists. Nevertheless I note here a few relevant points to put the topic in proper perspective. The Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) has four extant subspecies recognised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The range of the subspecies *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus* aka Asiatic Cheetah in the past extended from the Arabian Peninsula, Caspian Region to Near East and the Indian sub-continent. Declared extinct in India in 1952, it is now considered a critically endangered animal (red listed by IUCN) surviving today

only in Iran with about 50 animals. Attempts at bringing some of these for reintroduction in India didn't find favour with the Iranian authorities. The plan finally settled with the South African subspecies *Acinonyx jubatus*. However these two subspecies vary in their physical aspects and are reportedly distinct in genetic structures as well, which means they represent different adaptive traits arising from their geographical separation. We would have to contend with two consequences. It will strike a discordant note as a member within the naturally evolved Indian mammalian community. It will create the impression of an artificial biogeographic extension of the South African Cheetah.

Yours, etc., Tapes Chandra Lahiri, Kolkata, 3 June.





Inflationary trends in commodity prices and the second wave of Covid-19 would impact consumer sentiment in the short term.

ANIL RAI GUPTA

CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, HAVELLS INDIA

THUMBNAILS

Govt caps trade margin on oxygen concentrators:

The government has capped the trade margin on oxygen concentrators at 70 per cent in order to keep in check the price of the much-in-demand critical life-saving component amid the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic. The trade margin has been capped at 70 per cent on price to distributor level on oxygen concentrators. In an official release, the chemicals and fertilisers ministry said the decision has been taken in view of the extraordinary circumstances arising due to the pandemic which has resulted in volatility in maximum retail prices (MRP) of oxygen concentrators. The government has thus decided to step in to regulate the price of oxygen concentrators, the release issued on Friday noted. As per information collected by the government, margin on the oxygen concentrators at the distributor level currently ranges up to 198 per cent, it added. PTI

SLOTS FOR JET AIR: Defunct Jet Airways, which is undergoing insolvency resolution for nearly two years, cannot claim "historicity" for slots at airports, and allocation of slots will be based on existing guidelines, according to an affidavit. The civil aviation ministry and aviation regulator DGCA have also informed the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) that for claiming historicity, the criteria cannot be based on contention that airline was in operation for 25 years. PTI

TCPL foray: Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL) has made a foray into the premium roast and ground coffee segment with the launch of brand "Sonnets By Tata Coffee". Through "Sonnets By Tata Coffee", TCPL is targeting the customers seeking a special coffee experience, TCPL said in a statement. These are microlot coffee beans that are limited edition offerings and are processed on the estates in a distinctive manner, it added. PTI

Reliance General offer: Reliance General Insurance (RGI) has launched an initiative where the company aims to provide additional ease to its customers who are in the process of either buying or renewing their Health Infinity insurance policy with RCI, by offering an additional one-time five per cent discount to customers who have taken the Covid-19 vaccination, according to a Press release. SNS

Bharat Forge profit: Auto components major Bharat Forge on Friday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 212.12 crore in the fourth quarter ended 31 March 2021 riding on robust sales. The company had posted a consolidated net loss of Rs 68.59 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal. PTI

Liquidity for sectors hit by Covid

Reserve Bank of India to open a separate liquidity window of ₹15,000 crore for certain contact-intensive sectors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

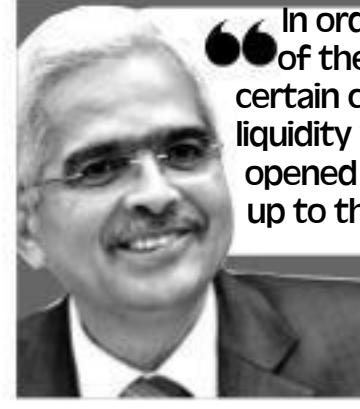
MUMBAI, 4 JUNE

In a bid to support revival of sectors hit most by the Covid-19 pandemic, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) today decided to open a separate liquidity window of Rs 15,000 crore for certain contact-intensive sectors like hotels and restaurants, tourism and aviation ancillary services.

This is in addition to on-tap liquidity window of Rs 50,000 crore with tenors of up to three years at the repo rate till 31 March 2022 to boost provision of immediate liquidity for ramping up Covid-related healthcare infrastructure and services in the country. This was announced on 5 May.

"In order to mitigate the adverse impact of the second wave of the pandemic on certain contact-intensive sectors, a separate liquidity window of Rs 15,000 crore is being opened till 31 March 2022, with tenors of up to three years at the repo rate," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the bi-monthly monetary policy.

Under the scheme, banks can provide fresh lending


SHAKTIKANTA DAS
 RBI GOVERNOR

In order to mitigate the adverse impact of the second wave of the pandemic on certain contact-intensive sectors, a separate liquidity window of Rs 15,000 crore is being opened till 31 March 2022, with tenors of up to three years at the repo rate.

support to hotels and restaurants; tourism, travel agents, tour operators and adventure/heritage facilities; aviation ancillary services, ground handling and supply chain; and other services that include private bus operators, car repair services, rent-a-car service providers, event/conference organisers, spa clinics, and beauty parlours/saloons, he said.

"By way of an incentive, banks will be permitted to park their surplus liquidity up to the size of the loan book created under this scheme with the Reserve Bank under the reverse repo window at a rate which is 25 bps lower than the repo rate or, termed in a different way, 40 bps higher than the reverse repo rate," he said.

In order to help, the finance ministry earlier this week

pitality, travel and tourism, leisure and sporting sectors, which had as of 29 February 2020, total credit outstanding not exceeding Rs 500 crore and overdue, if any, was for 60 days or less, on that date.

To nurture the still nascent growth impulses and ensure continued flow of credit to the real economy, he said, the Reserve Bank had extended fresh support of Rs 50,000 crore on 7 April 2021, to All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs) for new lending in 2021-22. This included Rs 15,000 crore to the Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi).

Besides, the validity of the scheme has been extended by three months to 30 September and/or till guarantees for setting up on-site oxygen generation plants.

To further support the funding requirements of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly smaller MSMEs and other businesses including those in credit deficient and aspirational districts, it has been decided to extend a special liquidity facility of Rs 16,000 crore to Sidbi for on-lending/refinancing through novel models and structures," he said.

This facility will be available within the projections made in its Financial Stability Report (FSR) in January this year.

Loans to the civil aviation sector have been made eligible under ECLGS 3.0. The ECLGS 3.0 earlier covered business enterprises in hos-

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Banks, NBFCs need to augment capital: Das

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, 4 JUNE

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das today said banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) need to strengthen their capital position as there could be stress due to the second wave of Covid-19.

Das also said he was confident that the non-performing loans of banks will be within the projections made in its Financial Stability Report (FSR) in January this year.

"Banks and NBFCs need to augment their capital because there could be stress arising out of the second wave," Das told reporters post the monetary policy announcement.

He, however, added that in response to the RBI's call and based on their own assessment, private and public sector banks raised capital from the market throughout last year and so their overall capital position is at a very stable level currently.

"They are all hitting our regulatory requirements. Some of them are even much higher," Das said.

The Financial Stability Report in January had projected the banks' gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) rising to 13.5 per cent by September 2021, under a baseline stress scenario.

And if the macroeconomic environment worsens to a severe stress scenario, the GNPAs ratio may escalate to 14.8 per cent, the report had said.

Asked whether the NPAs would remain within the range indicated in the FSR, Das said, "Our expectation is that whatever projection we have given earlier in the last FSR, it will be within that." The next FSR is due at the end of the current month.

NACH to be available on all days from Aug

MUMBAI, 4 JUNE

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) today said National Automated Clearing House (NACH) will be available on all days of the week, effective 1 August 2021.

NACH, a bulk payment system operated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), facilitates one-to-many credit transfers such as payment of dividend, interest, salary and pension.

It also facilitates collection of payments pertaining to electricity, gas, telephone, water, periodic installments towards loans, investments in mutual funds and insurance premium.

In order to further enhance customer convenience, and to leverage the 24x7 availability of real-time gross settlement (RTGS), NACH which is currently available on bank working days, is proposed to be made available on all days of the week effective from 1 August 2021, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the bi-monthly monetary policy review.

NACH has emerged as a popular and prominent mode of direct benefit transfer (DBT) to a large number of beneficiaries. PTI

Look forward to repo rate cut by apex bank: Industry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

igate impact of Covid-19 and keep inflation within the target.

"We look forward to possible repo rate cut in future as cost of funds has to come down in coming times. We expect continuation of accommodative policy stance as depressed demand has to be rejuvenated with enhanced liquidity for businesses and people," Aggarwal said. He added that due to the current pace of vaccination and demand recovery, the normal growth curve would take time.

Assocham said that the RBI's decision sends an important message from the central bank to be reaching out to those affected the most by Covid-19 pandemic, through increased and wider windows for soft lendings.

"While keeping the bench-

mark repo rates unchanged at 4 per cent was on the expected lines, extension of Rs 15,000 crore special liquidity window for contact-intensive sectors would help job-oriented sectors, particularly amongst micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)," it said.

It added that another window of Rs 16,000 crore for MSMEs through Sidbi would enable financial institutions to reach out to the smaller business entities in this hour of difficulty.

CII said that while keeping the policy rates unchanged, Reserve Bank's move to continue to use its unconventional tools to keep yields stable amid a large government borrowing programme provides succour to keep the borrowing costs contained for the private sector.

Bayer launches consumer health division in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

Global life-sciences firm Bayer today said it has launched its consumer health division in India comprising 10 brands across the categories of allergy, dermatology, nutrition and analgesics.

These brands include Saridon, Supradyn, Becozym C Forte, Benadon, Alaspan, Canesten and Bayer's Tonic. These products will be manufactured locally in India, Bayer said in a statement.

"The brands Saridon and Supradyn licensed to Piramal consumer products division in the past, have been transitioned back to Bayer's new consumer health business at the end of the licensing agreement term. Piramal will continue to distribute these brands for Bayer consumer health in India," it added.

The Bayer consumer health division aims to expand access to everyday health solutions and reach over a 100 million consumers across all communities in India over the next five years, the statement said.

The division will strengthen Bayer's presence in India, complementing its existing crop science and pharmaceuticals divisions, and leverage digital opportunities across the entire value chain to scale access to healthcare and personalised self-care solutions, as well as reliable health information, it added.

"Bayer's consumer health division in India aims to make self-care a reality for 1.4 billion Indians so that they can keep pursuing all their dreams without any health hiccups," Bayer consumer health division, India, country head Sandeep Verma said.

SoftBank Group is in discussions with Flipkart to pump in about \$500-600 million into the Walmart-owned e-tailer, according to sources.

If the deal goes through, SoftBank will re-enter Flipkart's cap table three years after it sold its entire stake in the e-commerce major to Walmart.

Sources said Flipkart is in talks with various investors to raise funding, including SoftBank that is expected to invest about \$500-600 million (Rs 3,652 crore - Rs 4,382 crore).

The transaction - which may also see participation from Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC and Canadian pension fund CPPIB -

could value Flipkart between \$30 and \$32 billion, they added.

SoftBank declined to comment, while Flipkart did not respond to emailed queries. GIC and CPPIB could not be immediately reached for comments.

After its \$16 billion investment in Flipkart in 2018, Walmart had led a \$1.2 billion funding round in 2020 that valued the e-commerce company at \$24.9 billion post-money. Flipkart is also said to be working on launching an initial public offering (IPO) next year.

One of the persons close to the development said that Flipkart, and the e-commerce segment as a whole, has seen significant growth during the pandemic and investors are keen on tapping into this opportunity.

E-commerce has seen strong growth in the country amid the pandemic as containment measures introduced millions to the convenience of online shopping, and prompted the speed of sanctioning of claims under the PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and the PM Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).

"This expanded banking network has been leveraged by the PMJJBY and PMSBY to provide life and accident insurance cover of Rs 2 lakh each at nominal annual premiums of Rs 330 and Rs 12, respectively, to the marginalised and the poor," reads the tweet of the ministry.

"Discussions are also likely to be held on simplifying the procedures and documentation needed to settle the claims."

A fresh infusion of capital will also provide Flipkart with more ammunition to compete against rivals like Amazon and Reliance's JioMart.

FM to meet heads of insurers today

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman will chair a meeting with the heads of public and private insurance companies to further enhance the speed of sanctioning of claims under the PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and the PM Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).

The meeting is scheduled for tomorrow (5 June 2021), in which the minister will discuss simplifying the procedures and documentation needed to settle the claims.

"Discussions are also likely to be held on simplifying the procedures and documentation needed to settle the claims under the schemes in a seamless and time-bound manner during the pandemic," reads the tweet of the finance ministry.

Currently, the enrollment under the PMJJBY stands at 10.3 crore subscribers and under PMSBY at 23.40 crore subscribers. The meeting on Saturday is expected to further ease and speed up processes for them.

Since 2014, as per the ministry, the Modi government has taken various financial inclusion initiatives to empower the people. For instance, under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, the banking network has been expanded and over 42 crore bank accounts have been opened.

"This expanded banking network has been leveraged by the PMJJBY and PMSBY to provide life and accident insurance cover of Rs 2 lakh each at nominal annual premiums of Rs 330 and Rs 12, respectively, to the marginalised and the poor," reads the tweet of the ministry.

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Petrol crosses ₹100/litre mark in many places

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

registered at Rs 2,160.30 crore against a net loss of Rs 2,956.89 crore in the previous year.

Income came down marginally to Rs 48,040.93 crore in 2020-21 from Rs 49,066.33 crore a year ago.

The asset quality of the bank showed an improvement with the gross non-performing assets (NPAs) standing at 13.77 per cent of the gross advances by the end of March 2021 as against 14.78 per cent in the year-ago period.

The hike - 18th in the last one month - took fuel prices across the country to a historic high.

In Delhi, petrol hit an all-time high of Rs 94.76 a litre, while diesel is now priced at Rs 85.66 per litre.

Fuel prices differ from state

to state depending on the incidence of local taxes such as VAT and freight charges.

Petrol price is well above the Rs 100-per-litre mark in all districts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra - the states which levy the highest value-added tax (VAT) in the country.

Retail prices have risen after an increase in international oil prices on investors' optimism that improving demand and a dwindling supply glut may mean the market can absorb any additional production from OPEC and its allies.

Brent crude

Odisha sees dip in Covid cases and TPR

Hopes of further improvement by second week

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 JUNE

Odisha registered 7,729 fresh cases of COVID-19 at 11.26 per cent Test Positivity Rate leading state Covid managers to see a clear downward trend which is likely to further come down during the second week of the month.

The peak is over, they said before quickly adding that one is on the guard.

While 7,729 more people tested positive for the infection, 39 fresh fatalities pushed the coastal state's coronavirus death toll to 2,912 in the past 24 hours.

The virus infection and test positivity rate has declined with the number of fresh infections dropping below 10,000 for the 9th consecutive day.

The TPR, which was between 15 to 22 percent last month, dipped substantially in June in a comforting turn of events in State's fight against the pandemic.

Meanwhile the number of

active cases has also come down to below the one lakh mark.

As many as 7,690 patients who were either home isolated or hospitalized recuperated from the disease in the past 24 hours.

As many as 3,43,092 COVID-19 positive cases were reported in the last 35 days at a daily average of 9,802 cases in the state while 871 have succumbed to the infections during the period with daily average death of 25.

As per the information posted at the COVID dashboard of Odisha government, 77 percent of the 30 districts are currently in the Red Zone category as the active cases in 23 districts have surpassed 1,000-case load.

While the Chhattisgarh bordering Nuapada district has turned green with less than 500 cases, six districts—Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Kandhamal, Gajapati and Malkangiri—come under Yellow Zone with less than 1,000 active cases.

Khordha district reported highest daily infections at

1,062 new cases followed by Cuttack district with 720 cases and Angul district with 449 new COVID cases while Mayurbhanj and Balasore reported 442 and 426 cases respectively.

As many as 39 fatalities were reported from 18 districts in the last 24 hours. While Khordha registered 6 deaths, 3 each died of the virus in Angul, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Rayagada and Sundargarh districts in the last 24 hours.

Odisha has 82,679 active cases. The state conducted tests of 68,604 people on Thursday.

Health department officials said the bed occupancy both general as well as ICU has reduced to 39 and 60 per cent respectively.

The government is now focused on creation of additional capacity, particularly, in terms of child care in view of the apprehensions of a third wave which is likely to affect children, said the officers. Training, special pediatric wards, ICUs etc are being created, they added.

Odisha COVID vaccine global e-tender receives two bids

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 JUNE

The global e-tender floated by Odisha government for procurement of 3.8 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines has elicited a response from two manufacturers on the day of closure of the bidding deadline.

Odisha was among the first few States to contemplate procuring vaccines from the international market through global tenders.

Confirming the receipt of online bidding applications, the Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Pradip Mohapatra said "The applications are being processed and evaluated".

The global tender the deadline was to end on 28 May had earlier been extended by seven days because of non-participation vaccine manufacturing companies.

"Manufacturers or their importers approved by USFDA (the United States Food and Drug Administration), EMA (the European Medicines Agency), MHRA (Medicines



and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, UK) or PMDA (Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency, Japan) or listed by WHO (World Health Organization) for emergency use are eligible to bid for the global tender or listed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for emergency use now eligible to bid," the State-run Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd (OSMCL)'s notification dated 1 June maintained.

A couple of days ago, Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik wrote to all the chief ministers in the country, urging them to build a consensus over procurement of the COVID vaccines by the Centre for distribution among the states. The poor participation of manufacturers and the indemnity related issues had hampered the process of global tender by states.

Odisha scraps Class XII CHSE board exams

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 JUNE

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday ordered the cancellation of the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) conducted 12th Board Examination by saying "life holds priority over examination".

Patnaik's announcement comes close on the heels of the cancellation of 12th standard examinations by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE).

"The safety of students is a matter of priority for the State government. All the stakeholders including students would have undergone a lot of trouble if the board examinations were conducted amid the second wave of the pandemic," Patnaik stated.

Every life is precious, students are the future of the nation and it is the duty of the state to protect and ensure the safety of the students, said the

CM. He also noted the risks involved. Students, parents, teachers need to be safe and protected.

The CHSE has been directed to work out well-defined objective criteria to evaluate the students after thorough consultations with experts within a stipulated time frame, the release added.

It may be recalled here that the annual high school certificate (HSC) or the matriculation examination which was scheduled to be held on 3 May were earlier canceled by the State government with the unabated COVID-19 surge.



Screening and testing of passengers by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation at the Biju Patnaik International Airport. SNS

Odisha launches website for ponzi scheme fraud victims

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 JUNE

It will help the field verification team for the identification of genuine depositors and their actual claim amount.

hani System and Estate Pvt. Ltd, who have invested money in the plotted schemes of the companies to get land (plots) and defrauded by them, which neither returned their deposits nor provided them with any land/ plot.

Hereafter, online claim applications will be invited from the duped depositors of different fraudulent financial establishments where the interim attachment orders passed by the government have been made absolute by the Designated Court.

It will help the field verification team for the identification of genuine depositors and their actual claim amount.

To start with the online claim applications are invited from the depositors of Hi-Tech Estates and Promoters Private Limited and M/s Rajd-

Seva Kendra's.

The deceased was identified as Baras Tudu son of Bira Tudu of Rugudu (Bhagalasahi).

Divisional Forest Officer of Baripada Santosh Joshi said the deceased was on way to his house with some bullocks from Bhandar forest in late evening. The forest personnel spotted the body on Friday morning while they were returning to office after conducting night patrolling.

Joshi said the forest department provided Rs. 40,000 as compensation to kin of the deceased and further ex gratia will be provided after due documentation.

The foundation stone of the stadium was laid in January by CM Naveen Patnaik.

It is being built by L.T.

Drug bust: ₹2 crore brown sugar seized by STF

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BALASORE, 4 JUNE

In one of the biggest drug haul, the Special Task Force (STF) wing of the crime branch on Friday has made a seizure of brown sugar valued at more than Rs two crore in the international drug market.

Three drug peddlers possessing 2,066 kilogram of brown sugar were intercepted at Jaleswar marketplace in Balasore district. The inter-

ception of a huge cache of the banned substances is the third biggest seizure since 2020.

On 19 June, 2020, STF in the State's biggest ever drug bust had made a seizure of 4,486 kilo grams of brown sugar (valued at around Rs 5 crore) by arresting three drug peddlers in Bhubaneswar. A drug peddler possessing 3,285-kilo grams of brown sugar was intercepted in Mayurbhanj district on 20 July last year.

In the past 18 months, the

STF has seized 32 kilo grams of brown sugar. The seized narcotics would have fetched the drug peddlers nearly Rs 32 crore in the international market, said Deputy Inspector General of Police, STF Jay Narayan Pankaj.

The increased crackdown on drug peddlers could be gauged from the fact that the cumulative seizure of brown sugar in the past 18 months is more than three-fold than of drug haul of the past eight years.

Man trampled to death by wild elephant

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BARIPADA, 4 JUNE

A 45-year-old man was trampled to death by a wild elephant in Mayurbhanj district.

The deceased was identified as Baras Tudu son of Bira Tudu of Rugudu (Bhagalasahi).

The stadium is being constructed on a 20 acres of land inside BPUT campus here. The total cost of the project is Rs 130 crore. With the best of facilities at par with international standards, the stadium will have a capacity of 20,000.

The foundation stone of the stadium was laid in January by CM Naveen Patnaik.

It is being built by L.T.

Lockdown, loss of livelihood trigger mental health issues

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAGATSINGHPUR, 4 JUNE

The pandemic related lockdown and shutdown has triggered mental health issues among certain sections of people with instances of depression, fear of loss of livelihood etc cropping up.

A suicide by a retired railway employee Pravakar Behera here yesterday has brought such mental health issues to the forefront.

Local doctors here said a number of people are suffering from fear, anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder since last year.

Even the young students are getting disturbed due to the uncertainty of their future.

Behera was on home isolation and five members of his family had also contracted the virus.

Chinamya Rout, a trader of Naugaon died of cardiac arrest after going into depre-

sion while Sudarsan Sahoo of Tirtol, another businessman, committed suicide.

Social worker and counselor Tapas Mallik working at the district headquarter hospital said several people are suffering depression. We counseling at least 50 persons daily over phone to cope with the situation. Fear and anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder, loss of income are at the top of the list of issues afflicting the people, he said.

Last year, the health department and municipality authorities had conducted 'Yoga' camps at the temporary medical centers to relieve mental stress but such measures have not been taken this year.

District Programme Manager, National Health Mission Chakradhar Jena said the department has pressed psychiatric social workers, community nurses, counselors to tackle the situation.

Urban homeless vaccinated under BMC's initiative

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 4 JUNE

"Ashok Nagar were covered during today's vaccination drive", said BMC Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Singh.

"We have been adhering to an inclusive strategy to implement emergency initiatives. During the pandemic situation vaccination and testing for special groups has become the priority for BMC. In order to encourage their healthy living and guide them to COVID appropriate behavior", added the BMC Commissioner Singh.

Three killed in road mishap

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BARIPADA, 4 JUNE

Three persons were killed in a road mishap in Tiring area of Mayurbhanj district when a iron ore laden lorry rammed in to a two wheeler.

Two of the deceased were identified as Tarani Bihari (34) and Sipu Bihari (25) while the third is yet to be named by the police.

The driver and helper of the truck fled. Police seized the ill fated truck.



Bhubaneswar Youth Congress members distributed cooked food to the needy. SNS

Construction of biggest hockey stadium begins

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
ROURKELA, 4 JUNE:

district's status as the cradle of Indian Hockey, he said.

ADM Rourkela Narvane said, "we will ensure that the project would be over in due time. This will be over in one year."

The stadium is being constructed on a 20 acres of land inside BPUT campus here. The total cost of the project is Rs 130 crore. With the best of facilities at par with international standards, the stadium will have a capacity of 20,000.

Narvane described it as a huge moment in the ongoing preparations to host the Mens Hockey World Cup.

Presently 17 astro-turfs have been laid across the

district to reaffirm Sundargarh

to the presence of local mla SP Nayak, ADM AS Narvane.

The puja before the commencement of work was done in the presence of local mla SP Nayak, ADM AS Narvane.

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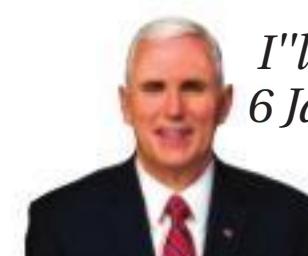
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I'll likely never see eye to eye with Trump on 6 January (Capitol riot)

FORMER US VICE PRESIDENT MIKE PENCE

MARKING 6 JANUARY AS A DARK DAY IN HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

WEATHER

CTY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	30°C	28°C H
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C H
LONDON	17°C	9°C CL
DUBAI	31°C	27°C S
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	04°C H
NEW YORK	16°C	08°C H
MOSCOW	15°C	05°C H

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

THUMBNAILS



US Secretary of defense Lloyd Austin welcomes Israeli defense minister Benny Gantz to the Pentagon in Washington on Thursday.

AP

Man dead in Minneapolis: A man was killed on Thursday when authorities who were part of a task force that included US Marshals fired their weapons after he allegedly displayed a handgun in Minneapolis' Uptown neighbourhood, the US Marshals said. The shooting happened around 2 p.m. on Thursday.

AP

France welcome back tourists: France is putting itself back on the menu as a destination for international tourists who have had coronavirus jabs. The government announced on Friday that it is removing the need for Covid-19 tests for vaccinated Europeans and allowing all vaccinated tourists. The relaxed rules will kick in from Wednesday.

AP

Opp: Belarusian dissident forced to confess on TV

WARSAW, 4 JUNE

The Belarusian Opposition said on Friday that a dissident journalist was coerced to appear in a video on state TV in which he wept and praised the country's authoritarian ruler.

In the 90-minute video aired on Thursday night, a 26-year-old Raman Pratasevich repented for his Opposition activities and said he respects Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko as "a man with balls of steel."

His associates reacted with outrage, accusing the Belarusian authorities of forcing Pratasevich to smear himself and disavow the opposition.

Speaking on a visit to Poland, Svetlana Tsikhanouskaya, the main Opposition candidate in Belarus' presidential election last August, said that Pratasevich and other inmates speaking in videos from custody are for sure being tortured and violated. Tsikhanouskaya's spokeswoman, Anna Krasulina, described Pratasevich as a hostage.

He made his statements under tough physical and psychological pressure and, possibly, under drugs, Krasulina told The Associated Press. We demand the immediate release of Raman, who is used by Lukashenko's regime as a toy and instrument to blackmail Belarus' democratic forces.

AP

UK approves Pfizer for 12-15 year olds

MHRA says Pfizer approval followed a rigorous review of safety and effectiveness in the lower age groups, vaccine outweighed any risks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, 4 JUNE



A healthcare worker carries a blanket to place over a Covid-19 patient in a tent set up on the soccer field of the Samaritana Hospital, in Bogota, Colombia on Thursday.

AP

The UK's medicines regulator on Friday approved the Pfizer/BioNTech coronavirus vaccine for 12 to 15 year olds, saying it is "safe and effective" in this age group and the benefits outweigh any risks.

Until now, Covid-19 vaccines being administered in the UK have been approved for adults aged 16 and over.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said the decision followed a "rigorous review" of safety and effectiveness in the lower age groups and its conclusion is that the benefits of the vaccine far outweigh any risks.

"We have carefully reviewed clinical trial data in children aged 12 to 15 years and have concluded that the Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine is safe and effective in this age group and that the benefits of this vaccine outweigh any risk," said Dr June Raine, MHRA Chief Executive.

"We have in place a comprehensive safety surveillance strategy for monitoring the safety of all UK-approved vaccines and this surveillance will include the 12- to 15-year age group. No extension to an authorisation would be approved unless the expected standards of safety, quality and effectiveness have been met," she said.

"It will now be for the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to advise on whether this age group will be vaccinated as part of the deployment programme," the MHRA said.

The regulator said no new side effects were identified and the safety data in children was comparable with that seen in young adults. As in young adults, the majority of adverse events were mild to moderate and relating to reactogenicity, such as a sore arm or tiredness.

"We have been very careful to take into consideration the younger age group and the benefits of this population being vaccinated against any potential risk of side effects," said Professor Sir Munir Pirmohamed, Chair of the UK's Commission on Human Medicines (CHM). He said a thorough assessment and review of the data was also looked at specifically by the CHM's Paediatric Medicines Expert Advisory Group, who are scientific experts within this age group, as well as the CHM's Covid-19 Vaccines Benefit Risk Expert Working Group.

We have concluded that based on the data we have seen on the quality, effectiveness and safety of the vaccine, its benefits do outweigh any risk.

Over 2,000 children aged 12-15 years were studied as part of the randomised, placebo-

controlled clinical trials. There were no cases of Covid-19 from seven days after the second dose in the vaccinated group, compared with 16 cases in the placebo group. In addition, data on neutralising antibodies showed the vaccine working at the same level as seen in adults aged 16-25 years. These are extremely positive results, he added.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said the next step was for the JCVI to advise whether routine vaccination should be offered to those aged 12 to 17.

The Pfizer vaccine was approved for use in the UK for 16 and 17 year olds in December 2020. The JCVI's current advice is that those aged 16 to 18 should be offered vaccination if they fall within the high risk Covid-19 group.

The European Union (EU) recently approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for 12-15 year olds, and the US and Canada started vaccinating children in this age group earlier this month.

Germany has indicated it will start vaccinating children over 12 from 7 June. The European Union (EU) recently approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for 12-15 year olds, and the US and Canada started vaccinating children in this age group earlier this month.

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The European Union (EU) recently approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for 12-15 year olds, and the US and Canada started vaccinating children in this age group earlier this month.

Germany has indicated it will start vaccinating children over 12 from 7 June.

The regulator said no new side effects were identified and the safety data in children was comparable with that seen in young adults. As in young adults, the majority of adverse events were mild to moderate and relating to reactogenicity, such as a sore arm or tiredness.

"We have been very careful to take into consideration the younger age group and the benefits of this population being vaccinated against any potential risk of side effects," said Professor Sir Munir Pirmohamed, Chair of the UK's Commission on Human Medicines (CHM). He said a thorough assessment and review of the data was also looked at specifically by the CHM's Paediatric Medicines Expert Advisory Group, who are scientific experts within this age group, as well as the CHM's Covid-19 Vaccines Benefit Risk Expert Working Group.

We have concluded that based on the data we have seen on the quality, effectiveness and safety of the vaccine, its benefits do outweigh any risk.

Over 2,000 children aged 12-15 years were studied as part of the randomised, placebo-

controlled clinical trials. There were no cases of Covid-19 from seven days after the second dose in the vaccinated group, compared with 16 cases in the placebo group. In addition, data on neutralising antibodies showed the vaccine working at the same level as seen in adults aged 16-25 years. These are extremely positive results, he added.

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In 'black is white' world, the UN deprived Iran of its voting rights in the UNGA as we're in arrears.



IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMMAD JAVAD ZARIF

POSTING ON TWITTER

THUMBNAILS



A man and a woman wearing face masks walk across an open area situated across from the Tokyo train station in the rain in Tokyo, on Friday.

Gunmen kill two Pakistani policemen: Gunmen shot and killed two policemen patrolling a residential area in the Pakistani capital Islamabad, the interior minister and police said Friday. No one claimed responsibility for the Thursday night attack in the Shams Colony neighbourhood.

AP

Fire at juvenile detention in Egypt kills 6 children: A massive fire broke out on Thursday at a juvenile detention centre in Egypt's capital of Cairo, killing at least six children. The fire followed a fist-fight between two children in one ward at the facility, located in the city's Marj district. Over two dozen other children were injured, they said.

AP

Boat carrying 81 Rohingya found stranded: Villagers in Indonesia's Aceh province on Friday discovered a stranded boat carrying 81 Rohingya Muslims, including children, who had left a refugee camp in Bangladesh. At least 90 people were on board the boat when it left on 11 February, but nine died during the trip.

AP

Colombia eases lockdown measures: Colombia moved Thursday to reactivate its economy by easing several lockdown measures even though it is still fighting a third peak in the pandemic, which has been aggravated by a month.

AP

Jerusalem evictions could still happen: Rights group

Intervention by Israel's attorney general had put the most imminent evictions on hold

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM, 4 JUNE

A long-running campaign by Jewish settlers to evict dozens of Palestinian families in east Jerusalem is still underway, even after it fuelled weeks of unrest and helped ignite an 11-day Gaza war.

An intervention by Israel's attorney general at the height of the unrest has put the most imminent evictions on hold. But rights groups say evictions could still proceed in the coming months as international attention wanes, potentially igniting another round of bloodshed.

The settlers have been waging a decades-long campaign to evict the families from densely populated Palestinian neighborhoods in the so-called Holy Basin just outside the walls of the Old City, in one of the most sensitive parts of east Jerusalem.

Israel captured east Jerusalem, home to holy sites sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, in the 1967 war and annexed it in a move not recognised internationally.

Israel views the entire city as its capital, while the Pales-



tinians want east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state. The settlers are using a 1970 law that allows Jews to reclaim properties lost during the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation, a right denied to Palestinians who lost property in the same conflict, including Palestinian citizens of Israel.

The Israeli rights group Ir Amim, which closely follows the various court cases, estimates that at least 150 households in the neighborhoods of Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan

have been served with eviction notices and are at various stages in a long legal process.

The plight of four extended families comprising six households in Sheikh Jarrah, who were at risk of imminent eviction, triggered protests that eventually merged with demonstrations over the policing of a flashpoint holy site.

After warning Israel to halt the evictions and withdraw from the site, Hamas fired long-range rockets at Jerusalem on 10 May, triggering heavy

UN agency withdraws Gaza director after threats

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM, 4 JUNE

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees says it has recalled its Gaza director after he faced threats over remarks in which he appeared to praise Israel's huge sophistication in carrying out precision strikes during last month's Gaza war.

UNRWA, which provides essential health, education and other services in the territory, said late on Thursday that it was seriously concerned about the threats,

including a very large protest outside its Gaza headquarters on Monday.

It said Gaza director Matthias Schmale and his deputy have been recalled to UNRWA's headquarters in east Jerusalem for consultations. The agency said that Palestinian factions had declared Schmale and his deputy persona non grata in Gaza but said it received no formal notification to that effect.

Many people were killed or have been severely injured by direct strikes or collateral damage from strikes.

fighting between Israel and the Islamic militant group that rules Gaza.

As tensions rose, Israel's Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit secured the postponement of the final hearing in the case of the four families. Another group of families requested that the attorney general also intervene in

their cases, securing a delay. Israelis are currently trying to form a new government, adding more uncertainty to the process. That has bought time for the families, but nothing has been resolved.

"Everything is very much hanging in the balance," said Amy Cohen, a spokeswoman for Ir Amim.

Taiwan, feuding with China, gets vaccines from Japan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAIPEI, 4 JUNE



A flight carrying 1.24 million doses of AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine from Japan touched down in Taiwan on Friday to help the vaccine-starved island fight its largest outbreak since the pandemic began.

The donation underscores how geopolitics has come to impact the global vaccine rollout, as countries scramble to secure enough doses for their populations.

Taiwan, a self-governing island struggling to get enough doses, has blamed China for interfering in a potential deal

for another vaccine. Now it is more than doubling its vaccine supply thanks to Japan, which is trying to play a greater role in global vaccination distribution and accelerate its own slow rollout ahead of the Tokyo Olympics in July. Japanese Foreign Minister

Toshimitsu Motegi told reporters on Friday that Japan was responding to a Taiwanese request, and that the donation reflects Japan's important partnership and friendship with Taiwan.

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen echoed those comments, saying after the Japan Airlines flight landed that "we are witnessing once again the true friendship between Taiwan and Japan, built upon shared values and mutual help. Neither side mentioned an ongoing feud between Taiwan and China over the island's efforts to get the vaccine developed by Pfizer and BioNTech.

shopkeeper Malik Mohammad Hussain and Gojra tehsil's former president Anwar Mansoor Gorya.

The complainants had alleged that the couple committed blasphemy in the text messages.

However, Shagufta could not even read and write as she is illiterate. Her name was not initially mentioned in the FIR.

Additional district and sessions (Toba Tek Singh) judge Amer Habib in 2014 sentenced the Christian couple to death for blasphemy and fined them Rs 100,000 each in the light of testimony of the complainants and confession of the couple.

Pak court sets aside Christian couple's blasphemy conviction

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LAHORE, 4 JUNE

A top Pakistani court here has set aside a death sentence handed down to a Christian couple by a lower court seven years ago and acquitted them of blasphemy charges, citing lack of evidence.

Shafqat Emanuel Masih and his wife Shagufta Kausar are expected to be freed after languishing in jail for seven years awaiting execution.

Masih, a watchman of Gojra's Saint Cathedral School in Toba Tek Singh district, and Kausar were arrested in July, 2013 on the charges of "sending blasphemous text messages to complainants --

shopkeeper Malik Mohammad Hussain and Gojra tehsil's former president Anwar Mansoor Gorya.

The complainants had

alleged that the couple committed blasphemy in the text messages.

They called for an order

ly withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan to prevent the deterioration of the security situation there and the return of terrorist forces.

The three countries stressed that the solution to the Afghan issue should fully reflect the principle of "Afghan-led and Afghan-owned", support Afghanistan in becoming an "independent, sovereign and neutral country,

pursue a moderate Muslim policy, firmly fight against borders with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), Afghanistan besides Central Asian States, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

There are currently 2,500 American troops left in Afghanistan, the lowest level of American forces in the war-torn country since 2001.

Hundreds show up around Hong Kong park despite vigil ban



ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONG KONG, 4 JUNE

Hundreds of people gathered near a Hong Kong park on Friday despite a ban on an annual candlelight vigil remembering China's deadly crackdown in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, and the arrest earlier in the day of an organizer of previous vigils.

Hong Kong police banned the vigil for a second straight year, citing coronavirus social distancing restrictions, although there have been no local cases in the semi-autonomous Chinese city for more than six weeks.

Police closed off large parts of Victoria Park, the venue of past vigils in the city's popular Causeway Bay shopping district and warned people not to participate in unauthorized assemblies, which carry a penalty of up to five years in jail.

Despite the ban and a heavy police presence, hundreds of people still turned up Friday night to walk along the perimeter of the park.

At 8 p.m., many turned on the flashlights on their smartphones while others lit candles in remembrance of those who lost their lives when China's military put down student-led pro-democracy protests at Tiananmen Square on 4 June, 1989.

Hundreds, if not thousands, were killed in the crackdown.

In past years, tens of thousands of people have gathered in Victoria Park to honor the dead. Last year, thousands

New Zealand's top court allows pathway for China extradition

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WELLINGTON, 4 JUNE

New Zealand's top court on Friday left open the possibility that a man could be extradited to China to face murder charges in a landmark case that has big diplomatic implications.

It remains uncertain whether the extradition of Kyung Yup Kim will proceed in a case that has already dragged on for more than a decade.

The dispute hinges on whether New Zealand can be assured that Kim will get a fair trial if he's sent to China and won't be tortured. New Zealand doesn't have an extradition treaty with China.

But times have changed since a previous justice min-

ister from a conservative government backed extradition. Fafoi is from a liberal government and will decide how to proceed at a time when relations with China have deteriorated.

The court acknowledged Fafoi might see things differently, saying he would be entitled to depart from the previous minister's decision.

Fafoi said on Friday he wouldn't comment while the case was still being litigated.

Kim's lead lawyer Tony Ellis said they were surprised and disappointed by the Supreme Court's partial decision. Ellis said that under the Communist Party, China remains a rogue state.

PILLAR OF SHAME



University students clean the "Pillar of Shame" statue, a memorial for those killed in the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, at the University of Hong Kong, on Friday.

AP

China's three-child policy is unlikely to be welcomed by working women

JIYEU LIU

LONDON, 4 JUNE

China's new policy of allowing couples to have three children (replacing the previous limit of two) is an attempt to respond to ageing population concerns and a slowing birth rate.

But the policy's implications for working women and their families mean few will welcome the change with open arms.

Population ageing is a significant concern in China. According to the latest national census in November 2020, the number of people in the country aged 60 and above has reached 260 million - or 18.7 per cent of the population. By 2050, this number is expected to increase to 500 million.

Though societies are ageing around the world, the challenges are more acute in China due to the number of people involved (nearly 20 per cent of the global population), their relatively low income level, and the country's stage of economic development.

While improved living standards have increased life expectancy, the state's family planning policy - the one-child policy - has contributed most to the ageing trend. This policy was formally introduced in 1979 in response to concerns that uncontrolled population growth would jeopardise economic development and modernisation, and was strictly and effectively implemented in urban areas through workplace fines and other punitive measures.

But almost four decades on, the first generation of one-child policy children have now become parents themselves, placing on their shoulders the responsibility of potentially each having to support two parents and four grandparents.

To address this inverse population pyramid, the state ended the one-child policy in 2015, introducing a national two-child policy in its place. Since the state had already allowed rural couples to have a second child if their first was a girl, this new policy targeted the urban population.

But few couples - just 5 per cent or 6 per cent - opted for a second child, given the inadequate childcare and increased family living costs in big cities like Beijing and Shanghai.

The new three-child policy has sparked a wave of online discussion among Chinese citizens, with many expressing shock and resentment about the state's renewed efforts to manipulate citizens' childbearing decisions.

Some posted online pic-

ture of previous state slogans dating from the period of the one-child policy.

Urban areas also showed no strong preference for sons. By contrast, my study found that in rural areas many of the married cohorts of the 1980s and 1990s already had a second child.

Younger couples in urban areas responded positively to the new three-child policy.

Whether or not rural couples respond positively to the new three-child policy will depend on the genders of their existing two children.

Despite the increased investment in girls' education in rural China, I found consistent son preference across three generations. If a couple's two children are both girls, it is therefore highly likely that they will try to have a third child.

(PTI/The Conversation)

China, Pak, Afghan FMs call for 'moderate Muslim policy' after US troops withdrawal



ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING, 4 JUNE

terrorism, and maintain friendly ties with other countries, especially neighbouring countries.

They also stressed the need to reject the "double standards" of anti-terrorism, to forbid any terrorist organisations or individuals from using their territories to engage in criminal activities against other countries.

They also urged strengthened efforts to combat the separatist East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) and other terrorist forces, so as to safeguard regional security and stability. The trilateral meeting took place as China has stepped up its diplomacy with both Pakistan and Afghanistan to deal with the fallout of the US and NATO troops withdrawal which is already resulting in increasing incidents of violence in Afghanistan.

The US is preparing to wrap up its longest war by withdrawing the last of its 2,500-3,500 troops along with 7,000 allied NATO forces by September 11 at the latest.

Beijing seeks to carve out its Afghanistan policy, to safeguard its interests, especially the security of its Xinjiang region that shares a narrow border with Afghanistan.

Observers say China's worries stem from Uyghur Muslim militants from Xinjiang belonging to the separatist East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) who joined the Islamic State (IS) and fought in Syria's civil war returning to the volatile province which shares borders with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), Afghanistan besides Central Asian States, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

There are currently 2,500 American troops left in Afghanistan, the lowest level of American forces in the war-torn country since 2001.



'TOKYO TRAPPED'

Kaori Yamaguchi (*in photo, left*), one of Japan's best-known Olympians, says that Tokyo has been cornered into holding the Games during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to her, Japan finds itself in a situation "where we cannot even stop now" even though most people do not want them to go ahead.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Tuchel gets 2-year extension: Chelsea manager Thomas Tuchel was given a two-year contract extension Friday after leading the club to the Champions League title. The German's deal will keep him in charge of the Premier League club through June 2024, after being hired in late January on an 18-month contract to replace the fired Frank Lampard. The 47-year-old Tuchel, fired in December by Paris Saint-Germain, led Chelsea to a 1-0 victory over Manchester City last Saturday in the Champions League final.

Olympic champ Rollins-McNeal banned 5 years in doping case: Olympic hurdles champion Brianna Rollins-McNeal was banned for five years on Friday in a doping case, ruling her out of this year's Tokyo Games and the 2024 Paris Games. The Athletics Integrity Unit said the American's second career ban was for "tampering within the results management process" of doping control samples. The 29-year-old hurdler's ban runs to August 2024, days after the Paris Olympics finish.

Koeman continues: Barcelona's doubts about Ronald Koeman are gone. After taking some time to analyze Koeman's performance last season, Barcelona announced on Thursday that it will keep the Dutch coach in charge for another year. The decision was announced after a meeting of the club's board of directors.

New role: Sri Lankan great Sanath Jayasuriya is set to make his cricketing comeback after serving a two-year ICC ban with a coaching stint at Melbourne club Mulgrave. Jayasuriya was banned in February 2019 for breaching the ICC anti-corruption code.

Verstappen fastest in 1st practice: Formula One leader Max Verstappen set the fastest time in the first practice session Friday for the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. Verstappen set a time of 1 minute, 43.184 seconds in his Red Bull to beat Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc by .04 seconds. The second Ferrari of Carlos Sainz was third, .337 seconds off the pace. Mercedes didn't challenge for the top positions, with Lewis Hamilton seventh and Valtteri Bottas 10th.

Sandhu says scoring chances must be made the most of

AGENCIES

DOHA, 4JUNE

India must learn to capitalise on scoring chances when up against big teams, said Gurpreet Singh Sandhu (*in photo*), whose goalkeeping heroics could not prevent a 0-1 defeat by Qatar in their Fifa World Cup qualifier here last night.

Just 33 minutes into the joint 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup qualifier, Asian champions Qatar were a goal and a man up in their own den, but India fought valiantly till the end to avoid losing by a bigger margin. "I think we were very unfortunate with the result. Everybody on the pitch did his best and that's what we need. Very, very unfortunate not to get something out of this game," he said, adding: "I think everyone is gutted because the way we played, we deserved something out of it. But things happen in football and we now move onto the next game."

India were down to 10 players very early after Rahil Bheke had been given his marching orders for handing the ball outside the box. "Going a man down in the first half is hard against a very good opposition like Qatar. I think we had our chances, we just should learn how to take them because against a good opposition such chances come very rarely," Sandhu said. India may have suffered a bigger defeat had it not been for Sandhu, who pulled off as many as nine

Indians in hard Southampton quarantine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SOUTHAMPTON, 4JUNE

India spinner Axar Patel has revealed that the team will undergo a three-day hard quarantine before they are allowed to train at the Ageas Bowl here ahead of the World Test Championship final against New Zealand.

The final begins on 18 June and India have limited time to prepare, having arrived here on Wednesday. New Zealand have already got into a two-match series against England. The Indian squad were in quarantine for 14 days in Mumbai prior to their departure and are in the middle of another quarantine.

"I had a good sleep...the plan is to quarantine. We have been told that we can't meet each other for three days so we will be quarantining for that much time," said Patel in a video posted by the Board of Control for Cricket in India, recording the team's journey to England by a chartered flight, when the women's were there too.

After landing in London, the contingent made two-hour bus journeys to Southampton. India play five Tests against England after the WTC final while the women play a one-off Test, three One-Day Internationals and as many Twenty20 Internationals against the home team starting on 16 June.



In another development, former Australian paceman Brett Lee has said that he believes that New Zealand might have an advantage over India in the WTC final

as the Black Caps are more accustomed to conditions that favour swing bowling.

"I think it is pretty evenly matched there. I am thinking though with the experience of New Zealand because they have bowled in conditions which are similar back home..." Lee told the International Cricket Council's official website, adding: "It may be conducive to fast bowling, to swing bowling. So that is where I think that the Kiwis might have an advantage purely from that fact. Now, from a batting point of view, both sides have got batsmen that can play against swing bowling. But I think it comes down to bowling. I think whichever team bowl

best will win the final."

An interesting subplot of the clash will be the different styles of captaincy that Virat Kohli (*in photo*) and Kane Williamson will bring to the table.

Lee said it would be an interesting battle.

"Kane is a lot more conservative without being boring. He has got a great cricket brain. I admire his level of calmness. He is a conservative captain, but attacks when he needs to. Because he is patient, and it works for him and his team. And you look at Kohli, he is more of an aggressive captain. There is no right or wrong answer to any of these because I have played under captains who

are conservative and captains who are too aggressive. But this is going to be a great opportunity to see which one comes out on top because they are different. So yeah, it is going to be exciting to see who comes out on top!" he said. The players know each other very well thanks to the Indian Premier League.

Asked if friendships forged during the IPL, like the one between Mumbai Indians teammates Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah, might have a bearing on the intensity of the contest, Lee rejected the suggestion. "When you get out there, it is war. It is a battle, and you are playing for your country. That will not change."

Malik fails dope test

NEW DELHI, 4JUNE

Sizikova is detained

PARIS, 4JUNE

Olympic-bound Indian wrestler Sumit Malik has been provisionally suspended after failing a dope test during the recent qualifiers in Bulgaria, a major embarrassment for the country with just weeks left for the Games in Tokyo.

It marks the second consecutive instance of a wrestler being caught in dope net before the Olympics -- the previous being ahead of the 2016 Rio Olympics when Narsingh Pancham Yadav had failed and was slapped with a four-year ban.

Malik, the 2018 Commonwealth Games gold medallist, had qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in the 125kg category at the World Olympic Qualifier event in Sofia, Bulgaria, which was the last chance for wrestlers to earn quotas. The 28-year-old's participation at the main event starting July 23 seems uncertain now.

"We got a mail from the UWW (United World Wrestling) on Thursday that Sumit has failed the dope test and he has been suspended provisionally. The substance found in his sample is said to be 5-methylhexan-2-amine (1,4-dimethylpentylamine)," Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) secretary Vinod Tomar told PTI. "We are surprised by this. He must have taken it unknowingly, he has a clean track record. Let's wait for the result of his B sample," Tomar added.

French Open: Nadal reaches 3rd round on empty court

AGENCIES

PARIS, 4JUNE

Amid an unusual silence on an empty center court at the French Open, defending champion Rafael Nadal (*in photo*) celebrated his 35th birthday with something very familiar: another victory against Richard Gasquet. Nadal won 6-0, 7-5, 6-2 against Gasquet to improve to 7-0 for his career against the Frenchman since they first met in 2004. Gasquet hasn't even won a set in the past 12 losses to Nadal and not since 2008.

There were no fans on Court Philippe Chatrier to witness Nadal's 102nd victory at Roland Garros, with all leaving by 9 p.m. because of coronavirus rules.

The 13-time champion won the first set in 24 minutes.

"I think I played an amazing first set," Nadal said.

"I don't feel that Richard was playing that bad to have that score, but I didn't miss that much," Gasquet rallied from 5-2 in the next set to reach 5-5, but missed an easy volley at the net in the 12th game. Nadal broke him again to take the second set. Nadal won on his second match point, joining Bjorn Borg, Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and Ivan Lendl in owning 17-0 records against an opponent in the Open era. The top-ranked Djokovic and Federer who even has two 17-0 records



earlier reached the third round.

Nadal wasn't too bothered by finishing at nearly 11:30 p.m. in humid conditions.

"The main thing is to feel myself playing well," he said.

The third-seeded Nadal seeks a record 21st major to move one clear of Federer, and next faces unseeded Cameron Norrie.

Federer beat Marin Cilic 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (4), 6-2 for his ninth win in 10 meetings against the big-serving Croat and fifth in majors.

"I think I played a really

good match, I surprised myself a bit. I didn't think I could play at this level for 2 hours against Marin," Federer said.

The eighth-seeded Federer next faces unseeded Dominik Koepfer, who beat No. 30 Taylor Fritz 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 6-4. Fritz left the court in a wheelchair after appearing to hurt his knee.

Federer argued with chair umpire Emmanuel Joseph after being given a time warning for slow play during the second set on Court Philippe Chatrier. Federer, whose 40th birthday is Aug. 8, hadn't appeared

on the Grand Slam stage since Jan. 30, 2020, when he lost to Djokovic in the Australian Open semifinals.

Djokovic made brief work of beating clay-court specialist Pablo Cuevas 6-3, 6-2, 6-4, saving eight of the nine break points he faced. The 18-time Grand Slam champion next plays unseeded Lithuanian Ricardas Berankis.

Elsewhere, 18-year-old qualifier Carlos Alcaraz of Spain beat No. 28 Nikoloz Basilashvili 6-4, 6-2, 6-4. Alcaraz became the youngest man to reach the

third round at Roland Garros since 1992 and youngest to make a Grand Slam third round since Nadal at Australian Open in 2004. Nadal also reached the Wimbledon third round in 2003. This is only the third time at any Grand Slam tournament in the professional era, which began in 1968, that the top two women's seeds are gone before the third round. It also happened at the French Open in 2014 (No. 1 Serena Williams and No. 2 Li Na) and the U.S. Open in 2018 (No. 1 Simona Halep and No. 2 Caroline Wozniacki).

In women's play, defending champion Iga Swiatek breezed through to the third round, however, beating Rebecca Peterson 6-1, 6-1 on Court Simonne-Mathieu. The No. 8-seeded Polenex faces No. 30 Anett Kontaveit. Swiatek, who turned 20 Monday, is looking to become the first woman to win consecutive Roland Garros titles since Justine Henin won her third straight in 2007.

In addition to Barty's departure, No. 2 Naomi Osaka withdrew after the first round, saying she is going to take a break from competition for mental health reasons. The third-ranked Halep pulled out before the tournament because of a leg injury. Last year's runner-up Sofia Kenin advanced with a 7-5, 6-3 win over Hailey Baptiste, while fifth-seeded Elina Svitolina beat Ann Li 6-0, 6-4.

Sandhu says scoring chances must be made the most of

AGENCIES

DOHA, 4JUNE



In Kuwait City, the Socceroos previewed their first match in 567 days with a simple message: We're back. It took just 55 seconds for the Australians to start proving it. After the coronavirus pandemic forced a 19-month delay in their World Cup Asian qualifying campaign, it took less than a minute for Mathew Leckie to head in the opening goal of a 3-0 win over Kuwait on a sweltering Thursday evening in Kuwait City.

Nations League

In Denver, Honduras held the USA even for nearly an entire match, giving most of the young Americans their first flavour of the even harsher rough-and-tumble that awaits in World Cup qualifying. Shortly before the game would have gone to penalty kicks, Jordan Siebatcheu scored his first international goal in the 89th minute, and the USA beat Honduras 1-0 last night to reach the final of the first Concacaf Nations League.

Argentina held

In Buenos Aires, Argentina and Chile drew 1-1 in their first World Cup qualifying game since November. The game was played in an empty stadium because of the surging Covid-19 infections in the region. The result will keep Lionel Messi's Argentine team in second spot in South America if leaders Brazil do not lose to Ecuador in Porto Alegre on Friday. In other games yesterday, Uruguay and Paraguay drew 0-0 and Bolivia moved from last spot to seventh in the 10-team round-robin with a 3-1 win over Venezuela. The top four teams will automatically qualify for Qatar 2022.

Pre-Euro friendly

In Brussels, injury-depleted Belgium were held to a 1-1 draw by Greece in a friendly ahead of the European Championship, a disappointing result for the Belgians against a team who have not qualified for the tournament.

'Social media history could be a selection criterion'

AGENCIES

LONDON, 4JUNE

Batting coach Graham Thorpe said England could start reviewing the social media history of players before they are selected for the national team after paceman Ollie Robinson's (*in photo*) old sexist and racist posts surfaced this week.

The 27-year-old Robinson, who made his Test debut against New Zealand on Wednesday, was embroiled in a controversy as a string of sexist and racist messages that he had posted on Twitter around 2012-13 emerged over social media. Thorpe said that more effort would be made to inspect a player's social media history in the future.

"It's clearly something that might need to be looked at so that a day like yesterday doesn't happen," Thorpe was quoted as saying by the BBC. Robinson has since apologised for the posts he made while he was a teenager. "I am embarrassed by the racist and sexist tweets that I posted over eight years ago which have today become public. I want to make it clear that I'm not racist and I'm not sexist. I deeply regret my actions and I am ashamed of making such remarks," Robinson said.

Thorpe added that the speedster was aware of his mistake and had also apologised. "In our dressing room we had to support him. It was a tough



day for him yesterday. He had to say sorry to the dressing room and sorry to the world. From that perspective it was very hard for him, but he knows he's made a mistake," Thorpe said. Robinson picked up four wickets in the first innings against New Zealand, giving away 75 runs in 28 overs.

Khan's decision

Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan has declined to captain the Twenty20 side fearing it might affect his performance as a player which he thinks is more important to the team. Afghanistan have been changing captains frequently and earlier this week named Hashmatullah Shahidi as their Test and One-Day Internationals skipper.

Son also rises

Pakistan yesterday named uncapped Azam Khan, son of former captain Moin Khan, in their Twenty20 squad for the tours of England and the West Indies.

10,000 volunteers drop out with Oly to open in 50 days

TOKYO, 4JUNE

The countdown clock for the Tokyo Olympics hit 50-days-to-go yesterday, and the day also brought another problem for the delayed Games. About 10,000 unpaid volunteers for the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics have told organisers they will not participate when the Games open on 23 July. Organisers said some dropped out because of worries about Covid-19.

Few volunteers are expected to be vaccinated since most will have no contact with athletes or other key personnel. Only about two per cent or three per cent of Japan's general population has been fully vaccinated in a very slow rollout that is just now speeding up. Conversely, the International Olympic Committee expects at least 80 per cent of athletes and residents of the Olympic village to be fully vaccinated.

"We have not confirmed the individual reasons," organisers said in a statement. In addition to concerns about the coronavirus infection, some dropped out because they found it would be difficult actually to work after checking their work shift, or due to changes in their own environment. Organisers said the loss would not affect the operations of the postponed Olympics.

Milkha Singh stable in ICU, gets call from PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CHANDIGARH, 4 JUNE

Legendary Indian sprinter Milkha Singh is "better and more stable" as he battles COVID-19 in the ICU of the PGIMER hospital here and also received a phone call from Prime Minister Narendra Modi enquiring about his health on Friday.

In a statement, Post-graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) said that Milkha is better than Thursday when he was brought to the hospital with dipping levels of oxygen.

"On the basis of his medical parameters today, his condition has been observed better and more stable than yesterday," PGIMER's official spokesperson, Prof Ashok Kumar, said.

Kumar said that Milkha is being closely monitored by a team of three doctors at PGIMER.

Earlier in the day, Milkha's son Jeevtoo said that his father was stable and thanked the PM for calling his father.

"Many thanks to Prime Minister @narendramodi for taking time out of his busy schedule and call dad to find out about his health," Jeev