





## SHORT TAKES

## 4 women among 5 held for credit card fraud

**New Delhi:** Five people, four of them women, were arrested for allegedly impersonating credit card service providers and duping people on the pretext of extending them attractive offers and gifts, police said on Tuesday. The accused were identified as Rahul Rathore (30), a resident of Saraswati Vihar, Muskan (21) and Kajal (22), residents of Burari, Sonam (26), a resident of Rohini, and Babita (22), a resident of Mukundpur, they said. On the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday, police received information regarding a fake call centre running at Sector-16 in Rohini, a senior police officer said. Police raided the place where Rathore, head of the call centre, and four women assistants were found present. When he was asked to show the authorized certificate to run the call centre, he could not produce any valid document," deputy commissioner of police (Rohini) Pranav Tayal said. One laptop, six mobile phones, one printer, bank documents of accused were among other items seized by police. Further investigation is in progress to identify more victims and arrest other accuse, police said.

## 22-yr-old woman arrested for mobile snatching

**New Delhi:** A 22-year-old woman has been arrested by the Delhi Police on Tuesday for allegedly snatching a mobile phone from a woman in Sultanpuri area. The accused has been identified as Jyoti who is a resident of Mangolpuri, the police said. According to the police, the incident was reported on Sunday wherein the complaint alleged that the accused forcibly robbed her mobile phone and fled away. A case was registered at Sultanpuri police station and investigation was taken up. After going through CCTV footage and examining several suspects the accused was arrested from Mangolpuri area, the police said. The accused has been booked under relevant sections and robbed mobile phone, clothes which she wore at the time of committing the crime have also been recovered, they added.

## Film 'Dhaai Peher' by Jamia students wins award

**New Delhi:** A film made by students of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) won the "Outstanding Achievement" award at the L'Age d'Or International Art-house Film Festival (LIAFF), the university announced on Tuesday. The student film, "Dhaai Peher" (Two and a Half Moments), is directed by M.A. Mass Communication students Amal Devasiya, Danish Qazi, Jamshad Ali, Kashif Shakeel and Pankaj Rawat. It is based on the set of events that unravel in Punjab in the 1990s. The film was made during the Covid-19 pandemic when access to outdoor locations was limited and Punjab had to be created in and around Delhi, it added. — PTI

## AAP leader claims his house 'attacked' by BJP supporters

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP Sanjay Singh alleged that his house, which is in Delhi's North Avenue locality, a high-security area, was attacked by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) supporters on Tuesday.

On Twitter Singh wrote: "My house has been attacked. Listen carefully BJP supporters, no matter how much hooliganism you indulge in, I will not allow the funds collected for constructing the Ram temple to be stolen even if I am killed."

However, Police said that two persons have been detained in connection with the incident. "An attempt was made to deface the nameplate at the residence of Sanjay Singh, MP. Two persons have been detained in this regard. No physical injury has been caused to anyone. Further investigation is on," Deepak Yadav, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), New Delhi district tweeted.

According to AAP



Sanjay Singh

sources, the nameplate of Singh's house was blackened by two persons and they tried to forcibly enter the premises.

Earlier, at a press conference on Sunday, Singh had alleged that Champat Rai, general secretary of Shriram Jammabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, purchased 1.208 hectares of land worth ₹2 crore in Ayodhya's Bag Bjaishi village for ₹18.5 crore with the help of trust member Anil Mishra.

The land, Singh claimed, was purchased from people who had brought it for Rs 2 crore just minutes before. The senior AAP leader also sought a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate into the matter.

The Ram temple trust, according to sources, sent its explanation over the land deal controversy to the Union government on Sunday night, saying it did not pay more than the going rate.

## L-G seeks report from DJB amid complaints of water shortage

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

Lt Governor Anil Bajjal has sought a detailed status report from the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) amid complaints of water shortage, specially in slum areas of the city, official sources said on Tuesday.

Bajjal has also talked to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath about supply of water to Delhi. The LG is also likely to speak to Haryana chief minister M.L. Khattar over the issue, the sources said.

"The L-G has been monitoring the situation of water supply in the capital and sought detailed reports from the DJB and the New Delhi Municipal Council after incidents of shortage, especially in Jhuggi colonies were reported," said an official. Water supply management in terms of "limiting leakage, wastage as well as unequal distribution per person per day" in different localities of the city needs to be addressed at the earliest, he said. The status report sought from the DJB will be followed by a detailed time bound action plan to address the issues, according to the sources.

At present, Delhi receives 479 million gallons water a day (MGD) against 609 MGD from Haryana. Besides, Delhi draws 90 MGD ground-water and receives 250 MGD from the Upper Ganga Canal, according to official figures. The daily requirement of water in Delhi is 1,150 MGD but the DJB supplies only around 950 MGD and there is a shortfall of 200 MGD.



People workout at a gym which reopened after authorities eased restrictions in the ongoing Covid-19 lockdown in Gurgaon on Tuesday. — PTI

## Half of vaccination centres for 18+ closed: Delhi govt

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

Less than a day's stock of Covid-19 vaccine is left for people in the 18-44 age group, due to which half of the vaccination centres for such beneficiaries closed down on Tuesday and the remaining half will shut the next day if the stock is not replenished, AAP MLA Atishi said.

In a vaccination bulletin issued online on Tuesday, she also said the position is "quite comfortable" for people aged 45 and above, and over 50 per cent of eligible people in this group have been vaccinated.

"As the unlock is slowly happening and offices and markets are reopening, the youth segment will venture out more, and therefore, it was important that they

■ 'Threat of third wave hitting quite real and not a hypothesis, we have to tread very cautiously'

## Doctors warn of 'worse than 2nd wave' if Covid norms not followed

## AIIMS-Delhi to resume OPD services from June 18

**New Delhi, June 15:** Almost two months after it closed down its OPD services, AIIMS-Delhi has decided to resume the operations latest by June 18 in a phased manner.

Heads of departments of all clinical departments have been requested to provide a proposed number of new and follow-up OPD patients per day who are to be given online/telephonic appointments, according to an order issued by the AIIMS medical superintendent on Tuesday.

As of now, OPD registration will be done only for

such patients who are having prior online/telephonic appointments and a decision to allow walk-in registrations will be taken later after reviewing Covid situation, it said.

"In view of considerable decrease in Covid-19 cases, it has been decided by the director AIIMS to re-start the OPD services in a phased manner at the earliest but latest by 18th June 2021 (Friday)," the order stated.

All HoDs have been requested to provide the requisite information within two days of issue of the order. — PTI

28,000 at its peak in April to 131 cases reported on Monday, it is such a dramatic fall in numbers. If lockdown is the primary reason for it, then we have to tread very cautiously now with the restrictions being slowly

eased," he told a news agency.

Medical experts in mid-May had concurred that it was majorly lockdown that had brought down the count of daily cases while cautioning that the severity of cases is still the same.

## Monsoon late by 7-10 days, likely to reach Delhi next week

**New Delhi, June 15:** A westerly trough has impeded the rapid progress of the monsoon in northwest India and it will take seven to 10 more days for the wind system to reach Delhi, the India Meteorological Department said on Tuesday.

"Due to the adverse influence of mid-latitude westerlies, a hiatus in further advance of Southwest monsoon into remaining parts of northwest India. The situation is being monitored continuously and will be updated on a daily basis," Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre said.

"The delay may be for 7-10 days. The situation will be more clear tomorrow," he added.

The weather department had earlier predicted that the wind system may reach Delhi by June 15 — 12 days early.

Normally, the monsoon reaches Delhi by June 27 and covers the entire country by July 8.

However, light rainfall is predicted in the capital on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Last year, the wind system had reached Delhi on June 25 and covered the entire country by June 29.

Mercury is forecast to dip to a maximum of 35 degrees Celsius on Wednesday and a minimum of 26 degrees.

Meanwhile, Delhi's air quality index (AQI) was in the satisfactory category on Tuesday morning with a reading of 97, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

— PTI

## Woman passenger, e-rickshaw driver killed in road accident

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

An e-rickshaw driver and a woman were killed while her three family members were injured after a speeding car hit the vehicle in Central Delhi's Daryaganj area, police said on Tuesday.

The accident took place near Delight Cinema at about 10:40 pm on Monday when the woman, her husband and their two children were travelling in the e-rickshaw, according to police.

They were rushed to a nearby hospital where the woman and the e-rickshaw driver were declared dead. Her husband and the two children are stated to be sta-

ble, a senior police officer said.

A motorcyclist chased the car, which was intercepted at a picket near Barshla Bulla Chowk, Jama Masjid, he said.

A case was registered and two people, including the car driver, were arrested in connection with the accident, police said, adding the accused were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the incident.



Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta and party MP Gautam Gambhir at a press conference in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

## Will have heart-to-heart talk about our father, says Natasha Narwal's brother

**New Delhi, June 15:** After Pinjra Tod activist Natasha Narwal was granted bail by the Delhi High Court in a northeast Delhi riots case, her brother Aakash on Tuesday said the news made him feel both sorrowful and relieved.

The siblings lost their father Mahavir Narwal to coronavirus last month. Natasha was granted interim bail for three weeks after her father's death and had surrendered in Tihar after the bail period ended.

"I came to know at 11 pm yesterday (Monday) that the bail order was listed for today. I couldn't react at that time. I was happy that the case was coming up for hearing but was not sure about the outcome," Aakash, who is five years younger to Natasha, told PTI.

After hearing that his elder sister has got bail, Aakash said he felt "relieved".

"The news of the bail order hit me both with relief and sorrow. In normal circumstances, it would have been a celebration, but I couldn't help but think every other minute how happy our father would have been to see his daughter," he said.

Recalling the time she was out on interim bail, her brother said even though he had tested negative for coronavirus, he was not in a state to talk to her.

"It was only when her bail period was about to end, I gathered the strength to talk to her in the last one or two days. Now we will be able to have a heart-to-heart talk about our dad," Aakash said.

— PTI

## Pan-India 'fraud-to-phone' gang busted; 8 held, 300 phones seized

**New Delhi, June 15:** A pan-India 'fraud-to-phone' network has been busted by security agencies, which have also arrested eight people and seized nearly 300 new mobile phones bought with stolen funds, officials said on Tuesday.

Moreover, 900 mobile phones, 1,000 bank accounts and hundreds of unified payment interface (UPI) and e-commerce IDs of this gang have been identified and are under investigation.

Nearly 100 bank accounts, and debit and credit cards have been frozen by the security agencies so far, officials said.

In all, eight 'fraud-to-phone' (F2P) gang masterminds, including four from Jharkhand, two each from Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, were arrested and nearly 300 new mobile phones bought with stolen funds seized, a home ministry official said.

The operation against the gang has covered 18 states, involving 350 people.

It was carried out by the Union home ministry's cyber safety wing FCORD, the Madhya Pradesh Police and police forces of several other states on specific information.

An official said that a case of cyber fraud of Rs 6.5 lakh was reported on June 11 by a 78-year-old Udaipur resident on the CyberSafe app run by the home ministry. The F2P caller was operating from Jharkhand.

During investigation, it came to light that funds were directly credited to three SBI cards, which were used to buy 33 China-made Xiaomi POCO M3 mobile phones from Flipkart.

Within minutes, the addresses of where these were delivered in Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh were identified, and the superintendent of police of

Balaghat was informed.

The Madhya Pradesh Police was most efficient in detaining the mastermind and all 33 new phones and several more were seized from him, another official said.

The Jharkhand Police has arrested the F2P caller.

The F2P gang bought these phones for about Rs 10,000 each and sold them in the black market at five to 10 per cent discount.

The F2P gang had several hundred operatives who ran different legs of a transaction which involved OTP fraud, credit card fraud, e-commerce fraud, fake IDs, fake mobile numbers, fake addresses, black marketing, tax evasion, money laundering and habitually dealing in stolen goods.

The accused are also being questioned about their preference for China-made phones, especially those made by Xiaomi. — PTI

## Blast near Israeli Embassy: ₹10L reward each for identifying 2 men

## ₹7L hawala money seized in Rajouri Garden, African held

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

**New Delhi, June 15:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday announced a reward of ₹10 lakh each for identification of two people captured on CCTV camera when explosive material was being planted outside the Israeli embassy here earlier this year, an official spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said that the NIA was seeking information to help identify two individuals, as seen on CCTV footage, in connection with the case related to the explosion near Israeli Embassy, New Delhi.

The spokesperson also shared the drive where one can access the pictures and videos of the two people. Those willing can visit https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18kmmCvrfXm8bXQov19bxye8qcr0zLqF?usp.

If someone recognises them, they can send an

email to 'do.nia@gov.in', 'info.nia@gov.in' or call phone numbers 011-24368800 and 9654447345.

A minor IED blast took place near the Israeli Embassy in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi on the evening of January 29. The case was handed over to the NIA on February 2. — PTI

that the amount was collected by donation and charity for treatment of patients of Nigerian community, but he could not produce any supportive evidence, the police alleged.

The police said that his passport and visa details were verified and were found valid. He has been booked under relevant sections and information has been sent to the Income Tax Department for further proceedings. The investigation is underway, they added.

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
Tender Notice	
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)	
NIT No.	221-S/4/2/W/RR/JHL-JHL(2020)/ML-4
Name of Work and its location	"Tender for "Washing of Linen i.e. Bed sheets, Quilt cover, Pillow covers and Woollen blankets at Running Room Jind & Jakhai under respective Sr. Crew Controller for the period of three years from date of execution."
Approx. Cost of work	₹17,60,375/- (Seventeen lakh Sixty thousand Three hundred seven five only) + GST as applicable
Earnest Money	₹35,200/-
Completion period of work	Three years i.e. 36 months from the date of execution of work
Cost of Tender Document	₹2360/- (including GST@ 18%)
Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 11:00 hrs. on 13.07.2021 Opening of tender at 11:00 hrs. on 13.07.2021
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender is available on IREPS site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>
No. 221-S/4/2/W/RR/JHL-JHL(2020)/ML-4 Dated: 15.06.2021	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	



## SHORT TAKES

## Assam schools to go online after holidays

**Guwahati:** Despite the failure of the state education department in facilitating online education to the students enrolled in government schools for various reasons during the first Covid lockdown in 2020, the Assam government on Tuesday decided to extend the closure of schools further after preponed summer vacation and directed the authorities to conduct online classes of students. In an official order issued on Monday evening the principal secretary of the secondary education department B. Kalyan Chakravarty directed officials of district administrations to arrange for online classes so that there is continuity in students' learning process. The summer vacation, which was postponed due to Covid lockdown, ended on June 14. In Assam the summer vacation in schools is usually held from July 1 to 31.

## HOSPITAL STAFF THRASHED AFTER PATIENT'S DEATH

PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI  
BERHAMPORE, JUNE 15

The family members of a Covid-19 patient went on a rampage at a private hospital in West Bengal's Murshidabad and thrashed three health workers following her death on Monday night. The family has alleged medical negligence even after a payment of ₹10 lakh for her treatment. The deceased, Santana Mondal (36), was from Bharatpur in Berhampore. She died of suffocation, according to her family members, who later erupted in protests and attacked the hospital staff. Her elder sister Rani claimed, "My sister was admitted to the hospital 28 days ago after she tested Covid positive. She was suffering from breathlessness and was on the ventilator. But we came to know that the ventilator was useless which led to her death." She added that though ₹10 lakh were paid to the hospital on demand for her sister's treatment, oxygen was not given to the patient. Hospital official Kallol Kundu, however, denied that the ventilator was "useless".

## BJP MPs demand separate N. Bengal UT, trigger uproar

Kolkata/Jalpaiguri, June 15:

A controversial demand for carving out a Union Territory comprising North Bengal districts out of Bengal, made by two BJP MPs from the region, has sparked off a sharp reaction with the ruling TMC and party supremo Mamata Banerjee stating she would not allow any part of Bengal to "lose its freedom and be dependant on New Delhi". At a closed-door meeting at the residence of BJP MP for Alipurdwar John Barla at Lakhipara Tea Garden, the demand for a separate Union Territory was raised and discussed on Sunday. John Barla told PTI in a telephonic conversation on Tuesday, "I made the demand... there have been movements here for a separate Kamtapuri, a greater Cooch Behar and for Gorkhaland." However, BJP's Bengal unit officially denied making any such demands.

"My belief is that North Bengal should be detached and made into a separate Union Territory," Mr Barla said.

The MP, who has earlier led an agitation for an autonomous tribal area in the last decade, said, "Small states perform better. North Bengal is neglected, it also faces security issues. Our economy is affected, tea gardens are being shut down. We will be better off as a Union Territory."

Mr Barla, said that he along with others from the region would be meeting both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah on this issue as well as would raise it in Parliament.

The BJP has four MPs from the region and at least one of them Jayanta Roy from Jalpaiguri said that though Mr Barla's comments were made in his personal capacity, he supported them. — PTI

## IB starts drive with cyber cell of states to check online fraud

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

With a sharp increase in usage of online medium for financial and business transactions following the outbreak of Covid-19, the cyber unit of the Intelligence Bureau has started a major drive along with cyber cell of various state police to further strengthen their mechanism to check online frauds. Sources said since he country went into the lockdown mode in March last year following Covid-19 on an average there has been

a 20 to 30 per cent increase in cases of financial cyber crime in different States across the country.

As a large number of people are still avoiding going to banks or other financial institutions there has been a sharp increase in usage of online banking and the financial transactions. This is in addition to increase in online shopping of essential commodities and other stuff also as most states have been imposing some form of lockdown since last March.

## Cops use force as protesters try to gherao CM's residence

First joint protest by Akali Dal, BSP workers against Amarinder govt

**Mohali, June 15:** (PTI) The police on Tuesday used water cannons to disperse Shiromani Akali Dal and BSP leaders and workers and prevent them from proceeding ahead to "gherao" Punjab chief minister Capt. Amarinder Singh's residence.

Protesters led by SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal shouted slogans against the Congress-led government over several issues, including irregularities in the purchase of 'Fateh' kits and the alleged diversion of Covid-19 vaccine doses to private hospitals.

It was the first joint protest of the SAD and BSP, days after both the parties stitched an alliance for the 2022



Police personnel try to stop the members of ETT TET Qualified Unemployed Teachers' Union protesting against the Punjab government near CM Amarinder Singh's residence in Patiala on Tuesday. — PTI

Punjab assembly polls.

BSP state president Jasbir Singh Garhi was also present at the protest.

Several Akali leaders, including Mr Badal,

Bikram Singh Majithia and Jasbir Singh Garhi and workers were detained by the police. They were taken to Kurali police station but were released later.

Police personnel were deployed in strength and multi-layered barricades were put up on the road leading to the chief minister's residence.

The SAD and BSP had planned to "gherao" the CM's private residence at Siwan in Mohali.

Initially, scores of Akali and BSP protesters forced their way through the first layer of barricades, the police used water cannons when protesters tried to cross the second layer of barricades.

In the melee, turbans of several protesters were tossed aside as police resorted to water cannons.

Mohali senior superintendent of police Satinder Singh was also present at the spot. — PTI

## TMC to renew deal with Kishor's I-PAC till 2026

RAJIB CHOWDHURI  
KOLKATA, JUNE 15

Impressed by the contribution of Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) to its victory in the West Bengal Assembly polls, the ruling Trinamul Congress is set to renew its contract with poll strategist Prashant Kishor's consulting firm for the next five years.

Though the financial details aren't known yet, the contract will cover the party's expansion plans in other states and preparations for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, TMC insiders said, adding that the formalities of the agreement are already underway.

One of the latest examples of I-PAC brainchild is *Duare Tran* (relief at doorstep) initiative of the state government for those affected due to Cyclone Yaas. The scheme is in line with *Duare Sarkar* (government at your doorstep) ahead of the Assembly



**KISHOR'S I-PAC** was earlier roped in by chief minister Mamata Banerjee on the suggestion of her MP nephew Abhishek for their party's survival after the BJP bagged 18 out of 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state in 2019

polls. The contract renewal of I-PAC comes after a month of the TMC returning to power in the state for the third consecutive time beating the BJP. But before the Lok Sabha polls, the state is expected to go to the municipal polls which have been put on hold by the TMC government due to the Covid-19 pandemic over the last one year.

According to sources, I-PAC will also work for the TMC in the state level polls. However, the involvement of Mr Kishor in the extension of the contract has been kept a secret, sources said, since he earlier

wished to leave the field of political consulting after May 2 but was found in his role later.

Only last week he had called on NCP president Sharad Pawar at his residence in Mumbai and held talks with him for around three hours. At present, Mr Kishor is working for Punjab chief minister Capt. Amrinder Singh as his chief adviser.

I-PAC was earlier roped in by chief minister Mamata Banerjee on the suggestion of her MP nephew Abhishek for their party's survival after the BJP bagged 18 out of 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state in 2019.

## BSP legislators meet Akhilesh, likely to join SP

**Lucknow, June 15:** At least five MLAs suspended by the BSP last year met Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday, triggering speculation that they may join his party.

The deputy leader of the BSP in the UP Legislative Assembly, Uma Shankar Singh, described the MLAs as "garbage".

"The meeting with Akhilesh Yadav, which lasted for 15-20 minutes, witnessed discussions on the upcoming UP Assembly polls," Mungra Badshahpur MLA Sushma Patel said.

When asked about the future course of action, Ms Patel said, "Personally, I have made up my mind to join the SP."

At present, there are 18 BSP MLAs in the 403-member UP Assembly.

Others who met the SP chief were Mohd Aslam Raini, Hakimlal Bind, Muftaba Siddiqui and Hargovind Bhargava

— PTI

**SPECIAL TRAINS**

For the convenience of passengers Railways have decided to run the following Special Trains as per details given below:-

04137/04138 Prayagraj - Anand Vihar (T) - Prayagraj Superfast Humsafar Special Express (Tri-Weekly)			
Train No. 04137		Train No. 04138	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
--	22:30	Prayagraj	06:20
00:35	00:40	Kanpur Central	03:25
06:05	--	Anand Vihar (T)	22:35

**Days of Run:** 04137 Ex Prayagraj from 23.06.2021 (on every Monday, Wednesday & Saturday) and 04138 Ex Anand Vihar (T) from 24.06.2021 (on every Tuesday, Thursday & Sunday) to till further advice.

**Accommodation:** AC 3 Tier & Sleeper.

08103/08104 Tatanagar Jn. - Amritsar - Tatanagar Jn. Jallianwala Bagh Special Express (Bi-Weekly)			
Train No. 08103		Train No. 08104	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
--	21:10	Tatanagar Jn.	21:10
06:30	--	Amritsar	12:45

**Days of Run:** 08103 Ex Tatanagar Jn. from 21.06.2021 to 28.06.2021 (on every Monday & Wednesday) and 08104 Ex Amritsar from 23.06.2021 to 30.06.2021 (on every Wednesday & Friday)

**Accommodation:** AC 3 Tier Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.

**Stoppages:** Purulia Jn, Bokaro Steel City, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Jn. Gomoh, Koderma, Gaya Jn., Rafiganj, Anugraha Narayan Road, Dehri On Sone, Sasaram, Bhahua Road, Pundit Deendayal Upadhyaya Jn., Varanasi Jn., Shahganj, Faizabad Jn., Lucknow, Bareilly, Moradabad, Laksar Jn., Roorkee, Saharanpur, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Ambala Cant Jn., Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar City and Beas stations

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

For any kind of Information such as detailed Time-Table and Stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

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Advt. No. 05/2021

Admission to M. Tech. Programmes under Sponsored Category for Academic Year 2021-22

Applications are invited for admission to M. Tech. Programmes of the Institute under Sponsored Category for the academic year 2021-22. For application form, fee and other details, please visit the Institute website: [www.nitkkr.ac.in](http://www.nitkkr.ac.in).

Duly completed application form to be submitted on or before 16.07.2021. Application submitted without fee, incomplete or late will not be considered. Please visit the Institute website regularly for any announcement and updates in this regard.

No.: Gen-I/Advt./3866/1943 dated 15/06/2021 Registrar I/c

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a lady Rani, W/o Kapil R/o VPO Nathpur, Sonipat, Haryana has been missing since 27.05.2021 near ITBP Camp, Saboli Road, Narela, Delhi at 12 PM. In this regard, DD No. 05-A dated 28.05.2021 has been registered at P.S. Narela, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing lady but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing lady is as under:

**Name:** Rani, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** 25 years, **Height:** 5'2", **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Blue colour suit-salwar and jutti on her feet. If anyone has any information regarding this missing lady, kindly inform SHO/Narela, Delhi.

E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax: 011-24368639

SHO P.S. Narela, Delhi.  
Ph. No. 011-27280435, 27282350  
DP/1070/ON/2021

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON**

**See Section 82 Cr. PC**

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Shubham, S/o Dhan Kumar, R/o H. No. 39/15, Om Vihar, Banker Narela, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 253/17 U/s 379/356/34 IPC, Police Station - Alipur, New Delhi which is punishable and a warrant of arrest issued thereupon has been returned unexecuted stating that the said accused Shubham could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Shubham has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Shubham is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 15.07.2021.

By Order  
Shri Satvir Singh Lamba  
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate,  
Room No. 115,  
DP/1082/ON/2021 (Court Matter) Rohini District Court, Delhi

**EXTENSION OF PERIODICITY OF SPECIAL TRAIN**

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that Railways have decided to extend the periodicity of the run of following Special Train as under:-

Train No. & Name	Frequency	Additional Dates of run
06077 Coimbatore - Hazrat Nizamuddin Special Express	Sunday	04.07.2021 to 07.11.2021
06078 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Coimbatore Special Express	Wednesday	07.07.2021 to 10.11.2021

**This Special Train will be having Fully Reserved Service.**

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

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

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

Visit RailMadad website: [www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in) & download RailMadad app.

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**RESTORATION / INCREASE IN FREQUENCY OF TRAINS**

It is notified for the information of passengers that Railways have decided to restore and increase in frequency of the following special trains as per the details given below:-

RESTORATION OF TRAINS		
Train No. & Name	Frequency	Restoration w.e.f. (JCO)
02994 Udaipur City-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
02993 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Udaipur City Express Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
02487 Bikaner Jn.-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Superfast Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
02488 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Bikaner Jn. Superfast Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
02481 Jodhpur Jn.-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
02482 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Jodhpur Jn. Express Special	Daily	20.06.21 to till further advice
04701 Bathinda Jn.-Lalgarh Jn. Express Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
04721 Jodhpur Jn.-Bathinda Jn. Express Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
04722 Abohar-Jodhpur Jn. Express Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
09749 Suratgarh Jn.-Bathinda Jn. Express Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
09750 Bathinda Jn.-Suratgarh Express Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
04734 Sri Ganga Nagar-Rewari Jn. Express Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
04733 Rewari Jn.-Sri Ganga Nagar Express Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
04735 Sri Ganga Nagar-Ambala Cantt. Express Special	Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
04736 Ambala Cantt.-Sri Ganga Nagar Express Special	Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
09579 Rajkot-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express Special	Thursday	24.06.21 to till further advice
09580 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Rajkot Express Special	Friday	25.06.21 to till further advice
09415 Ahmedabad Jn.-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Exp. Spl	Sunday	27.06.21 to till further advice
09416 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-Ahmedabad Jn. Exp. Spl	Tuesday	29.06.21 to till further advice

**INCREASE IN FREQUENCY / RESTORATION OF TRAINS**

Train No. & Name	Increase in Frequency	Restoration w.e.f. (JCO)
02065 Ajmer Jn.-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Jan Shatabdi Exp. Special	Tri-weekly to 5 day/week	19.06.21 to till further advice
02066 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Ajmer Jn. Jan Shatabdi Exp. Special	Tri-weekly to Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
02964 Udaipur City-H. Nizamuddin Express Special	Tri-weekly to Daily	20.06.21 to till further advice
02963 H. Nizamuddin-Udaipur City Express Special	Tri-weekly to Daily	18.06.21 to till further advice
04727 Sri Ganga Nagar-Delhi Jn. Express Special	Tri-weekly to Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice
04728 Delhi Jn.-Sri Ganga Nagar Express Special	Tri-weekly to Daily	19.06.21 to till further advice

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

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

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**NORTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**

Office of the Executive Engineer (Project) City - S.P. Zone  
Room No. 300, 3rd Floor, Old Hindu College Bldg.  
Kashmere Gate, Delhi - 110006  
Tel. No. 011-46170235 E-mail: [eeprcpsp@gmail.com](mailto:eeprcpsp@gmail.com)

**ALLOTMENT OF TOWN HALL PREMISES ON MONTHLY LICENSE FEE BASIS FOR 33 YEARS**

NIT No.EE(PROJECT)CSPZ/TC/2021-22/03 dated 14.06.2021

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Request of Tender document 17.06.2021 18:00 PM to 04.08.2021 18:00 PM  
Issue of Tender Document 17.06.2021 18:01 PM to 04.08.2021 18:10 PM  
Pre-bid Meeting in D-in-C 07.07.2021 14:00 PM  
Office, Civic Centre  
Tender closing Date and Time 05.08.2021 14:00 PM  
Opening of Technical Bid 05.08.2021 15:00 PM online

The Executive Engineer (Pr.) City-SPZ, on behalf of the Commissioner, North Delhi Municipal Corporation invites bids from experienced firms/organization for the following works:-

S. No.	Name of work:	Reserve Price / MLF per month	Earnest Money in Rs.	Cost of Bid Document
1	Allotment of Town Hall (as is where is basis) Premises on monthly Licensee Fee basis for 33 years	192.51 lakh	100.00 lakh	Rs.10,000/-

Complete offer documents are available on the website [www.tenderwizd.com/NORTHDMCETENDER](http://www.tenderwizd.com/NORTHDMCETENDER). Corrigendum/Clarification/Pre-bid reply, if any, would appear only on the website [www.tenderwizd.com/NORTHDMCETENDER](http://www.tenderwizd.com/NORTHDMCETENDER) and [www.mcdonline.nic.in](http://www.mcdonline.nic.in) of North DMC, and would not be published in any News Papers. SD/-  
R.O. No.12/DPI/North/2021-22 E. E. (Pr.) City-S. P. Zone

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.)  
Website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)

**E-TENDER NOTICE**

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

S. No	Job No.	Name of Work	Amount
1	09/SPE/PE (PH-01)/ 2021-22	S/o Water Tanker 5000 Ltr. Capacity for Sanitization Work in Various Location of Sector/Villages and Societies area for COVID in Noida.	2419200.00

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 29/06/2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 30/06/2021 at 11.00 AM.

(S.C. Mishra)  
Sr. Project Engineer  
(Public Health)  
Noida.

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**



## SHORT TAKES

## Youth holds 3 family members hostage

**Bhubaneswar:** A gun-wielding youth in Odisha's Bolangir town on Tuesday took three members of a family hostage for more than five hours before he was overpowered by the security personnel and taken into custody. All the hostages were freed safely from the captivity of the youth by the local police and fire services personnel. According to reports, the youth identified as one Bikram Panda unleashed terror in the area by holding the family members of Madanmohan Hota of Santipada captive at gun points over an alleged love affair. Upon being informed, the Bolangir Town Police inspector Priyanka Routraya and SDOPO Tophan Bag and fire service rushed to the spot. After the police came to know that the family members had taken shelter, they cautiously broke open the window and rescued them.

## Covid cases in Odisha continue to dip

**Bhubaneswar:** The daily cases of Covid-19 further on Tuesday dipped in Odisha as the state witnessed 3,405 new cases, 934 less than Monday's figure. With this, the positive tally in the state climbed to 8,59,526. However, despite the fall in the new cases, the fatalities due to Covid-19 continue to surge in the state. At least 42 patients undergoing treatment for Covid-19 have succumbed to the disease in the last 24 hours taking the death toll to 3,388. Khurda district with 500 fresh infections in the last 24 hours has the maximum cases among all districts followed by Jajpur (391), Balasore (296), Cuttack (230), Mayurbhanj (187), Angul (183), Bhadrak (179), Puri (141) and Jagatsinghpur (129). The active cases in the state now stood at 51,104 while 8,04,981 patients have recovered from the disease, state health department said.

## Ambani bomb scare case: 2 more held

**Mumbai:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested two more persons, Santosh Atmaram Shelar and Anand Pandurang Jadhav, both residents of Kurar Village in Malad, Mumbai, in connection with its probe into Antilia bomb scare and murder of businessman of Mansukh Hiran. They have been remanded both of them to NIA custody till June 21. An NIA officer on condition of anonymity said that the names of these two cropped up during the investigation. According to the NIA, Shelar and Jadhav were involved in the conspiracy to plant the explosives-laden SUV near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence 'Antilia' in South Mumbai. The NIA is questioning them to find out if they played any role in Hiran's death too.

## MAHA: FARMER GROWS APPLES IN NASHIK DISTRICT

**Nashik:** Apple in India is generally associated with Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, but an enterprising farmer in Maharashtra's Nashik district has successfully cultivated the popular fruit in his farm near here. Nashik is known for cultivating grapes and pomegranates, but thanks to the efforts of the farmer, Pandharinath Nevba Hyalji, the north Maharashtra district has added apple, otherwise associated with cold climate, to its list of horticultural crops. Hyalji, a resident of Akhatwade village in Satana taluka, wanted to do something different. On an experimental basis, he planted 25 to 30 apple plants in around 10 'gunthas' of land (0.25 acres) and his efforts bore fruit as he has successfully cultivated apples in his farm. I have a pomegranate orchard and grape vineyard also, but I wanted to do something different and therefore I opted for apple farming. I am satisfied with the success I have got, Hyalji was quoted as saying by the local media. Agro produce from Nashik district are exported across the globe. Satana and Baglan talukas of the district are known for producing export quality grapes and pomegranates. But due to 'mar' and 'telya' diseases on pomegranates, many farmers in the region opted for maze and onion crops. — PTI

## Govt must come clean on Galwan: Sonia

*No clarity is yet available on the Chinese transgressions at the border*

**New Delhi, June 15:** Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday asked the government to come clean on the Galwan Valley incident in which 20 Indian soldiers lost their lives a year ago and sought to know the progress made in restoring status quo ante at the border.

In a statement, she said no clarity is yet available on the Chinese transgressions at the border, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi has denied.

Gandhi said the Congress has patiently waited for the government to come clean and inform the nation about the circumstances in which the unprecedented incident happened and reassure the people that the sacrifice of our brave jawans was not



Municipal administration minister K.T. Rama Rao, along with family members, salutes the unveiled statue of Galwan hero Colonel B. Santhosh Babu at Court Centre at Suryapet in Telangana on Tuesday.

in vain. "The Congress party reiterates its concern that no clarity is yet available and the prime minister's last word on the subject a year

## Col Babu's statue unveiled in Suryapet

**Suryapet:** A statue of Galwan martyr Colonel Santosh Babu, who died in the Chinese army attack at Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh in June last year, was unveiled at Suryapet by Telangana minister K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday. Colonel Babu was native of Suryapet, about 140 Km from the state capital Hyderabad. — PTI

statement, as well as details of what progress has been made towards restoring the status quo ante prior to April 2020," she also said. — PTI

## ₹150/Covaxin dose to govt not sustainable in long run

**Hyderabad, June 15:** The supply price of Bharat Biotech's Covid vaccine Covaxin to the Central government at ₹150 per dose is not sustainable in the long run, the vaccine maker said on Tuesday.

Hence a higher price in private markets is required to offset part of the costs, it said in a statement. The Centre's supplying price is pushing the pricing structure for the private sector upward, the firm said.

Fundamental business reasons ranging from low procurement volumes, high distribution costs and retail margins, among few others, contribute to higher pricing of Covaxin to the private sector, Bharat Biotech said, justifying the higher price when compared to other Covid vaccines available for the private players.

Bharat Biotech is currently supplying Covaxin at ₹150 per dose to the Centre, ₹400 to the state government and ₹1,200 to private hospitals.

"The supply price of Covaxin to the government of India at ₹150/dose, is a non-competitive price and clearly not sustainable in the long run. Hence a higher price in private markets is required to offset part of the costs," it said in a statement. As directed by the Centre, less than 10 per cent of the total production of Covaxin to date has been supplied to private hospitals, while most of the remaining quantity was supplied to State and Central governments.

"In such a scenario the weighted average price of Covaxin for all supplies realized by Bharat Biotech

is less than ₹250/dose. Going forward, approximately 75 per cent of the capacity will be supplied to State and Central Governments with only 25 per cent going to private hospitals," Bharat Biotech said.

The firm has so far invested over ₹500 crore at risk from its own resources for product development, clinical trials and setting up of manufacturing facilities for Covaxin, it said.

The pricing of vaccines and other pharmaceutical products heavily relies on a series of factors such as the cost of goods and raw materials, product failures, at risk product development outlays and product overages, besides other regular business expenditures, the city-based company said. — PTI

## Victim says he contracted an infection, developed difficulty in breathing

## Man assaulted by Sena MLA, supporters

**BHAGWAN PARAB**  
MUMBAI, JUNE 15

A man working as a supervisor for a municipal contractor on Tuesday said that he has contracted an infection and developed difficulty in breathing after he was forced to sit in mud on a waterlogged road and garbage was thrown on him at the behest of a Shiv Sena MLA.

According to sources, Narpat Kumar (26) who worked as a supervisor for a civic contractor, was admitted to a private hospital in Borivali for the treatment of the infection and difficulty in breathing. Kumar is a native of

Uttar Pradesh. He was discharged on Monday night. "I have contracted some kind of infection. I am also facing difficulty in breathing after the incident," he said.

Kumar said he had filed a written complaint about the incident with the Ghakopar police station. In his complaint, he stated the concerned drain was cleaned just eight days before the incident, but somebody again dumped garbage into it.

Justifying his act, MLA Dilip Lande said he wanted the contractor, who did not clean nullah properly, to realise his responsibility.

▶ **In the viral video, Lande and his supporters were seen forcing a contractor to sit on a waterlogged street and asking workers to dump garbage on him.**

▶ **A VIDEO of Mr Lande forcing a contractor to sit in mud and asking party workers to throw garbage on him had gone viral a few days back.**

A video of Mr Lande forcing a contractor to sit in mud and asking party workers to throw garbage on him had gone viral a few days back. The incident took place after areas like Sanjay

## Army holds trial run of train on 'dedicated freight corridor'

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 15

The Indian Army moved its tanks, vehicles, and heavy equipment on a military train to test the recently developed "dedicated freight corridor" by the railways for faster mobilisation of the Armed Forces. This initiative would set in place the processes to ensure that military requirements are dovetailed in the national infrastructure development at the planning stage itself.

The recently developed DFC by the Indian Railways provides faster movement of freight across the country.

The intricate and synchronised coordination by the Indian Army with the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Ltd and Indian Railways will significantly enhance the mobilisation capability of the Armed Forces.

The Army conducted a successful trial by moving a military train loaded with vehicles and equipment from New Rewari to New Phulera validating the efficacy of the DFC.

These trials were part of the "Whole of the Nation Approach" for optimising national resources and achieving seamless synergy among various ministries and departments. Interactions by the Army with all stakeholders, including DFC-CIL and Indian Railways, will now assist in leveraging the DFC and allied infrastructure into the mobilisation matrix of Armed Forces.

## Twitter appoints chief compliance officer for India

**New Delhi, June 15:** Twitter on Tuesday said it has appointed an interim chief compliance officer and the details of the official will be shared directly with the IT ministry soon.

The move came after the government had given one last chance to Twitter to comply with the new IT rules, as the microblogging platform had not made immediate appointments of key personnel, mandated under the new guidelines that came into effect on May 26.

Following this, the US-based company had assured the Indian government last week that it is in advanced stages of finalising the appointment of chief compliance officer, and that it would submit additional details within a week.

A Twitter spokesperson on Tuesday said the company continues to make every effort to comply with the new guidelines, and is keeping the IT Ministry apprised of progress at every step of the process.

An interim chief compliance officer has been retained and details will be shared with the ministry directly soon, the spokesperson added.

Twitter has had several faceoffs with the Indian government over the past months, including during the farmers' protest and later when it tagged political posts of several leaders of the ruling party BJP as "manipulated media", triggering a sharp rebuke from the Centre.

▶ **FOLLOWING THIS,** the US-based company had assured the Indian government last week that it is in advanced stages of finalising the appointment of chief compliance officer, and that it would submit additional details within a week.

The last flashpoint was the delay in complying with the IT rules that mandate large digital platforms to undertake greater due diligence as well as appoint a grievance officer, a nodal officer and a chief compliance officer. These personnel have to be residents in India.

Twitter has an estimated 1.75 crore users in India, as per data cited by the government recently.

The micro-blogging platform has stated on its website that India is an important market for the company and is among the countries in which it is piloting a new approach of building an in-market team to locally tailor its global product to the needs of the region.

In its notice on June 5, IT Ministry had confronted Twitter for not providing information about the Chief Compliance Officer as required under the Rules. Also, resident grievance officer and the nodal contact person nominated by the company, is not an employee of Twitter Inc in India as prescribed in the rules, the ministry had said. — PTI

## Kangana: Denied passport because of sedition case

**SHAHAB ANSARI**  
MUMBAI, JUNE 15

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut has approached the Bombay High Court seeking direction to the Passport Authority of India to renew her passport. The court has refused to grant any relief to her saying the passport authority was not made party in the petition. The authorities refused to renew her passport due to a sedition case registered against her by Mumbai police. Her passport is expiring in September and according to her, she has to visit foreign country for shooting of a film commencing June 15.

A division bench of Justice P.B. Varale and Justice S.P. Tavade on Tuesday termed the application vague and



Kangana Ranaut said she also did not include the authorities as a party. The court allowed her to amend the application and posted the hearing in the matter on June 25.

The bench asked Ms Ranaut's lawyer Rizwan Siddiquee to tell the bench that the objection raised was not in writing as she was verbally asked to get orders from the high court regarding the quashing of the FIR against her. He also said that the authorities asked for direction from the HC, as she has mentioned about the case in her passport renewal application.

## HC warns govt: Protest is a basic right, can't equate it with terror

▶ **Continued from Page 1** Ms Narwal and Ms Kalita, both JNU Ph.D. scholars linked with women's rights group Pinjra Tod Collective, and Mr Tanha were arrested in May 2020. They were accused of being "masterminds" of the February 2020 violence in northeast Delhi and denied regular bail by the trial court.

Ms Narwal, Ms Kalita and Mr Tanha are accused in four, three and two cases respectively relating to communal riots that broke out on February 24 last year and will now be released from jail as they have already got bail in other matters.

Welcoming the high court order, student activists and bodies demanded that all political prisoners arrested under

the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act should also be released. JNU Students' Union president Aishe Ghosh said on Twitter: "Delhi HC grants bail to Asif Iqbal Tanha, Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal in UAPA case. Release All Political Prisoners."

The Left-affiliated All India Students' Association (AISA) said: "Delhi HC frees Asif, Devangana & Natasha! Using UAPA to silence pro-democracy student activists protesting against divisive #CAA\_NRC\_NPR law by Modi govt stands exposed." They also demanded the release of student activists Sharjeel Imam, Umar Khalid and others arrested under UAPA.

## Shah, Nadda meet Punjab unit

▶ **Continued from Page 1** an alliance with the BSP to woo Dalit voters, but AAP, which has a considerable presence in the state, also gets Dalit votes. Punjab has a sizable number of SC/ST voters. Sources disclosed that the main cause of concern for the BJP at this juncture is to find winnable candidates due to the narrative against the three laws, which the party leadership, including state leaders, are finding hard to counter assertive-

ly. During the meeting with Mr Nadda, party's national general secretary (organisation), B.L. Santhosh, state unit chief Ashwani Sharma, general secretary in-charge Dushyant Gautam and general secretary Tarun Chugh were also present. The BJP, it was learnt, is in touch with some prominent leaders from other parties who have been aggrieved with their party leadership. The BJP could also stitch alliances with small outfits.

## Dhankhar in Delhi to meet PM and Shah

▶ **Continued from Page 1**

Mamata Banerjee in a letter to deliberate on the post-poll violence in her Cabinet and sought to have a discussion with her.

He wrote: "With a heavy heart I am constrained to observe your continued silence and inaction over the post-poll retributive bloodshed, violation of human rights, outrageous assault on the dignity of women, wanton destruction of property, perpetuation of untold miseries on political opponents -- the worst since Independence -- and it ill augurs for democracy. In spite of your attention having

been drawn to the enormity of the situation, and the huge exodus of people in search of cover for life and destruction of property worth crores, there has only been stunning silence at your end and you did not deem it necessary to even deliberate this grave human tragedy in any of the Cabinet meetings so far."

Mr Dhankhar claimed: "The administration and the police in such an alarmingly grim situation are expected to act in a stern manner and according to the law. However, nothing of this kind has happened. Their role suffers from a partisan

stance as also abandonment of their lawful obligations. Suffering people are in fear of the police and administration, in turn is at the beck and call of ruling party people who like loose cannons are on the rampage with no fear of law -- 'a law unto themselves' ... I beseech you to reflect and ponder over the premise of ongoing violence -- 'punishing' and 'disciplining' those who 'dared' to vote out of volition and for the Opposition."

He added: "I obviously expected that you will brief me on the post-poll violence and Cyclone Yaas disaster. In this situation,

I urge you to deliberate the issue of post-poll retributive violence in the Cabinet, take all steps to restore law and order, provide much needed succour to the suffering people by engaging in compensation and rehabilitation and hold the police and the administration duly accountable in exemplary manner for its partisan stance and failure in containing violence. It will be greatly appreciated that keeping in view our respective constitutional positions, an interaction fructifies on these issues at the earliest. Am sure you will accord priority to this."



## THE ASIAN AGE

16 JUNE 2021

### G-7 endorses US plans to target China, Russia

The G-7 summit, the gathering of the leaders of the seven richest capitalist economies (the US, UK, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, Italy), in Cornwall (June 11-13) might have passed as another deliberative exercise to smoothen the pathways of the international market system, but it turned out to be a lot more, conceptually.

The practical aspects of the agenda of action outlined in the communiqué are for the future as it elaborates high-order political concerns. These ideas will necessarily have to be considered at the summit of the G-20 countries, the top 20 most consequential nations, which is not far away. In this group are China and Russia, which were at the receiving end in the G-7 deliberations. Fighting the pandemic, reviving the world economy, and climate change topped the agenda in Cornwall, but upholding democratic values seemed the real thing.

Leaders of the G-7 began to meet annually in the 1970s when the combined GDP of the member countries was around 80 per cent of the world GDP. The GDP of the G-7 is now only around 40 per cent of that of the world. The 47<sup>th</sup> summit due in 2020 had to be cancelled on account of the Covid pandemic, which has ravaged the international economy. Besides, the US, the driving force in G-7, had a close shave as a political system early this year when authoritarian forces associated with former President Trump nearly overturned the American system.

**India backed the summit on free expression, and the need for democracies to take responsibility that pandemics don't strike the world again. It is the company that will matter, not the substance.**

These key issues, seen through the prism of US foreign policy, appeared to hold primacy in Cornwall. Besides fighting the pandemic, working to arrest greenhouse gas emissions, imposing a minimum 15 per cent tax on international companies, and modernising the rules of the world trading system, the all-too-clear focus was building of an open society and its obverse — to check the authoritarian countries. In a loose sort of way, authoritarianism seems the new Communism, and fighting it is the new mantra. In this context, China and Russia, more so the former, were flagged as posing a danger to the world.

This was President Joe Biden's first international outing and he was keen to flag that he prioritised the re-building of ties with trans-Atlantic allies, which his predecessor had junked, and announce the return of America as leader. The G-7 communiqué had paragraphs on regions, countries, and issues of particular interest to US foreign policy, not all of which may be shared with the same intensity by other member countries.

At the Nato summit, held in Brussels just a day after the G-7 meet, Russia was characterised as a "threat" to Nato, but serious concern was raised about the rapid military rise of China, whose military expenditure is now surpassed only by the US. Held in sequence, the two events seemed like a twin-act, the first underlining politics, and the second security matters.

A key takeaway from G-7 was the concept of B3W (Building Back a Better World) to build infrastructure in poor and middle income countries. A counterpoint to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), this evidently seeks to limit China's geostrategic space.

India had been invited along with Australia, South Africa and South Korea as a G-7 "guest". PM Narendra Modi attended virtually. His slogan was "One Earth, One Health". India backed the summit on free expression, and the need for democracies to take responsibility that pandemics don't strike the world again. It is the company that will matter, not the substance.

### New era dawns in Israel

It is not so much a change of Prime Ministers in a country inured to being ruled amid fractious politics of a coalition of parties as a turn of a whole era with Benjamin Netanyahu, whose uninterrupted 12-year regime ended abruptly and reduced his role to that of a combative Opposition leader.

The new Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's reign began with an immediate challenge as a nationalist march commemorating the capture of Jerusalem in 1967 was to run through the historic city on Tuesday and air defences were put on alert in case Hamas launches retributive action from Gaza in the form of incendiary balloons, if not quite the explosive rockets that had triggered an 11-day war.

The tests to come will be many for the leaders of a wildly disparate and precarious collection of eight parties, including an Islamic party representing Palestinians of Israel and secular as well as religious parties, which assumed power on Monday. The longest serving Prime Minister Netanyahu's Likud party had led coalitions over the years even as Israel transformed economically into a modern country with a security apparatus to be envied in a region filled with uncertainties, conflicts and eternal religious tensions.

While checks and balances are not new to a country that once saw Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres share power, what is unique about the new arrangement is the veto power that rests with foreign minister Yair Lapid, who will replace Mr Bennett as PM in two years if the coalition lasts long enough. Mr Netanyahu, who recently achieved startling diplomatic success in setting right ties with four more Arab countries, has vowed to bring down Mr Bennett's government.

With the change in regime, years of tension with the Democratic Party led by US President Joe Biden may, however, be a thing of the past. But what will not change is the approach to the Palestinian statehood issue because the new rulers will continue to treat Palestinians as a security threat and will aim to perpetuate control over most of the occupied West Bank. It will be fraught with interest how Iran responds to changes in Israel.

#### THE ASIAN AGE

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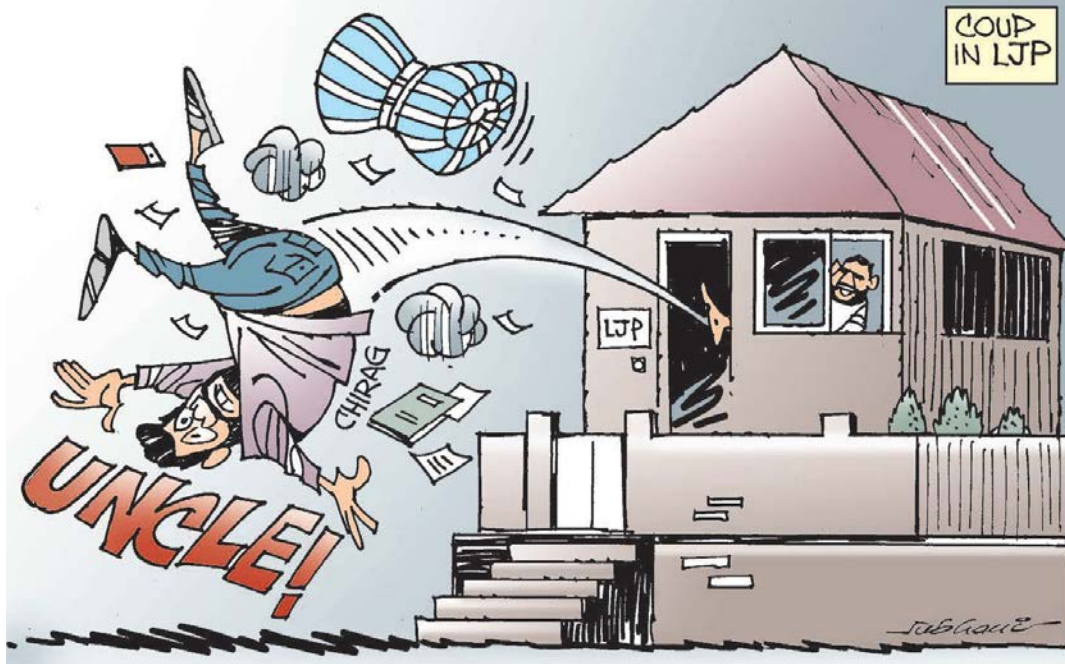
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Subhani



## India must back Dalai's choice on his successor



Claude Arpi

The issue of the Dalai Lama's succession has been in the news for quite some time, especially after the Tibetan diaspora elected Penpa Tsering as the new "Sikyong", or president; incidentally, this election must have irritated no end Communist China that always proclaims its "superior", though undemocratic, system of governance to the world, especially on the occasion of the centenary of the Communist Party of China in July.

During an interaction with the Tibetan media, the Sikyong, who heads the Tibetan government-in-exile based in Dharamsala, said after taking the oath on May 27 that he already had three video audiences with the Dalai Lama, who "expressed his wish to visit China and Tibet. He has this wish for a long time", Mr Tsering told Tibetan journalists.

Visiting China may not be a great idea now, but it's up to the Tibetan supreme leader and for his people to decide.

The question of succession was apparently not discussed though it is vital in the present context of China becoming more authoritarian and belligerent, using every occasion to reaffirm that it's the Communist leadership who will decide the present Dalai Lama's successor.

The recently published white paper "Tibet Since 1951: Liberation, Development and Prosperity" states: "In 1793, the Qing [Manchu] government restored order in Tibet and promulgated the Imperially Approved Ordinance for Better Governance of Tibet (the 29-article ordinance) ...[which] stipulated that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and other grand Living Buddhas had to follow the procedure of drawing lots from the golden urn."

Though the Golden Urn procedure was rarely used thereafter, the fact is the Manchus realised the weakness in Tibet's system of governance, that is rule by reincarnation, and were quick to exploit it.

In the eighteenth century, on three occasions, Manchu troops marched into Tibet, each time at the request of the Tibetan government — once to defend Tibet against the Gurkha invasion (1792), and twice to restore civil order after internal troubles (1728 and 1751).

Each time, the special relationship, known "Choe-yon" (priest-patron), was invoked by Lhasa: the Dalai Lamas and other lamas were the gurus (or priests) while the Manchus were the "patrons", or protectors of the Buddhist state.

The instability of the rule by incarnation can be attributed to the gap between the time a Dalai Lama passes away and when his successor is old enough and able to practically assume power. The 20 crucial years in between the two have always been used by incompetent regents or the Ambans (Chinese ambassadors in Lhasa) to influence Tibetan politics.

It was even murmured that the Chinese Ambans had found the trick: during the nineteenth century, four Dalai Lamas died before reaching majority: Luntok Gyatso, ninth Dalai Lama (1805-1815); Tsultrim Gyatso, tenth Dalai Lama (1816-1837); Khedup Gyaltsi, eleventh Dalai Lama (1838-1855); and Trinley Gyatso, twelfth Dalai Lama (1856-75). They never ruled.

Later, with the decline of the Manchus, there was no protector to look after the "priests", this until the thirteenth Dalai Lama assumed power and asserted Tibet's independence.

When one studies the history of modern Tibet,

one realises just how unstable what the British officials called the "minority" was; most of the time, no decision was taken by regents too cautious that they could be criticised at a later stage.

Many concrete examples can be given; it would show that it is probably the main reason why Tibet lost its independence.

After the thirteenth Dalai Lama passed away in 1933, two regents ruled over Tibet; but soon, a dispute between the Reting and Taktra Rinpoches ended in a near civil war, with the Tibetan Army supporting Taktra and bombarding Sera Monastery, Reting's alma mater. The least that could be said is that most of the regents were not up to the mark.

One solution to avoid the past situation after the present Dalai Lama's departure has been mentioned by the Tibetan leader himself in 2011, in an elaborate statement about his succession.

The Dalai Lama spoke of the origin of the custom of recognising "Emanation Bodies", or "tulkus"; and he elaborated: "The main purpose of the appearance of a reincarnation is to continue the predecessor's unfinished work to serve Dharma and beings. In the case of a lama who is an ordinary being, instead of having a reincarnation belonging to the same mind-stream, someone else with connections to that lama through pure karma and prayers, may be recognised as his or her emanation."

The Tibetan leader continued with his esoteric description: "Alternatively it is possible for the lama to appoint a successor who is either his disciple or someone young who is to be recognised as his emanation. Since these options are possible

in the case of an ordinary being, an emanation before death that is not of the same mind-stream, is feasible."

He cited great nineteenth century master Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who said: "Reincarnation is what happens when someone takes rebirth after the predecessor's passing away; emanation is when manifestations take place without the source's passing away."

Another problem linked to incarnations is finding a new reincarnation is a rather unscientific process which can be manipulated at will; for example, doubts have been raised about the authenticity of many "high tulkus" such as Gyaltsen Norbu, the Chinese-selected Panchen Lama, as well as other "high" lamas like Reting Rinpoche, the regent's incarnation during the Dalai Lama's minority, Samdang Dorjee Pagmo, the senior-most female "tulku", Tsemoling, reincarnation of another former regent, or Phagpala Delek Namgyal, head lama of Chamdo monastery; all of whom live in Tibet today and are actively collaborating with Communist China. Are they genuine tulkus?

Viewed from a political angle, many issues would be solved if the Dalai Lama decides to go for an "emanation". First, he himself would select the next Dalai Lama and the Chinese will have no say in the process; further, it would bring a far greater stability to the political scene in exile.

Ultimately, of course, it's the Dalai Lama's choice and India, a secular republic, cannot intervene in his decision. But New Delhi must officially declare that the Indian government will stand by the Dalai Lama's decision, while he should keep in mind the Indian population on the borders with Tibet.

In the meantime, one can only wish the new Sikyong good luck to keep the flock together in these tumultuous times.

*The writer is based in South India for the past 42 years. He writes on India, China, Tibet and Indo-French relations.*

**Viewed from a political angle, many issues would be solved if the Dalai Lama decides to go for an 'emanation'. First, the Chinese will have no say in the process...**

#### LETTERS

#### DJOKER GREATEST

This refers to the editorial, "Undisputed champs of Grand Slams" (June 15). The ability to dig oneself out of a trench is the mark of a true champion and Novak Djokovic demonstrated it in full measure at this year's French Open by winning even after being two sets down. Djokovic has shown that he has the mettle to deliver during crunch ties. He may lack the finesse of a Federer and the fire power of a Nadal, but with no visible chinks in his armour, he is sure to reign for a long time and eclipse all their records, establishing himself as the greatest of all time.

**Sankar Paul**  
Chakdaha, West Bengal

#### UNLUCKY CHIRAG

**REGIONAL DYNASTS** in India have had more than their fair share of political longevity. The Reddys of Andhra Pradesh, Thackerays of Maharashtra, Patnaiks of Odisha and the Scindias have all survived family and inner-party intrigues with success. Chirag Paswan of LJP seems to be about to miss that list. The elder Paswan despite a limited fiefdom could find a berth in every central Cabinet of entirely differing dispensations. Chirag's rebel streak was perhaps his undoing. While the dynastic chair can be readily passed on to the scion, political acumen, sixth sense and, above all, patience can only be cultivated.

**R. Narayanan**

Nav Mumbai

#### DOING RIGHT BY VIJAY

**THE GESTURE** of the family members of national award-winning Sandalwood actor Sanchari Vijay to donate his organs is laudable. A tragic bike accident on Saturday night cut short Vijay's promising career. The actor's generosity had warned the cockles during the Covid lockdown when he distributed food and helped the needy. Therefore, it only fits that his relatives have donated his organs to a needy recipient. The actor essaying the role of a transgender person in B.S. Lingadevaru's *Naanu Avanalla...Avalu* (2015) based on Living Smile Vidya's autobiography *I Am Vidya* brought him acclaim and the national award.

**N.J. Ravi Chander**

Bengaluru

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: [asianage.letters@gmail.com](mailto:asianage.letters@gmail.com).

Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



### EC & UP: All 3 commissioners from state; Arora yet to find a role

Senior about-to-retire babus of two BJP-ruled states are a miffed lot with the appointment of former Uttar Pradesh chief secretary Anup Chandra Pandey as the new Election Commissioner of India having been done and dusted in a surprise move. But it was clearly in the works in Delhi, long before the skirmishes between UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath and the Big Two split out into the open. Thanks to the need for surprise, even babus in his home cadre were left gasping.

Many see the appointment of Mr Pandey as the Centre's initial steps to focus on retaining Uttar Pradesh and remote central control on the coming Assembly polls.

But the incumbents will walk on eggs since the ghost of election commissioners past still lurks over Nirvachan Bhavan. This because an appropriate landing spot has not yet been found for former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora.

Mr Pandey has joined Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar at the poll panel. Not surprisingly, given Mr Pandey's background questions are being raised about his appointment. Some point out the significance of the fact that all three election commissioners are from UP! Current CEC Sushil Chandra did a long stint in the state's revenue department and EC Rajiv Kumar is a former finance secretary of the state. Besides his tenure as the state chief secretary under chief minister Yogi Adityanath until 2019, Mr Pandey was also the state's industrial development commissioner.

Prepare for more babu surprises to emerge in and around UP as the polls draw near.

#### A TWIST IN THE AIR INDIA TALE?

The Air India disinvestment has got stuck between a rock and a hard landing! The second wave of the Covid pandemic has now delayed it

further. It is beginning to seem that the government may have been a trifle too ambitious and optimistic about closing this chapter. While there is no dearth of suitors of the beleaguered carrier, the civil aviation ministry babus have come up against a new stumbling block — the potential seizure of Air India's assets by Cairn Energy, after India lost the tax dispute case against the company in an international arbitration tribunal.

Civil aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola actually now has a new headache to deal with, even as the government is still to finalize the timeline for completion of the stake sale or the valuation of the airline and its assets. Too many loose ends!

The loss to Cairn is a major blow and loss of face for the Modi sarkar. Of course, the Centre says that it will defend any attempt by Cairn to take over the airline's assets and has in fact challenged the arbitration award, but until the case is resolved and the award overturned

in India's favour, Kharola and his cohorts in the Civil Aviation Ministry cannot rest easy. In fact, as a result of this new threat, civil aviation babus are now scurrying between their ministry and the Law Ministry to deal with this legal threat. This saga may have a few more seasons left to go.

#### BABU CRISIS AT THE CENTRE

There is a crisis of babus in the Modi sarkar. The department of personnel and training (DOPT) secretary Deepak Khandekar has informed his multiple bosses that despite the government repeatedly requesting the states to depute more officers at the Centre nothing is moving, and nobody is willing. It has reportedly asked for more officers at the deputy secretary, director and joint secretary levels. Most states however say they are dealing with their own shortage of officers, leading to senior state officials holding several portfolios in many states. Though both Karnataka and Himachal have promised to help

recently, this to-ing and fro-ing has been going on for several months now, with the states' response to the Centre being seen as decidedly poor.

Sources say that the department of personnel and training (DoPT) has made a fresh request to the states last week stating that their lack of appropriate response to the Centre's request is creating a cadre management problem for the Centre. But sources say there is a veiled new warning in the Modi sarkar's latest missive to the states on the issue. Apparently, the letter from DoPT says that the cadres who have not sent adequate nominations for the central staffing scheme at various may find that they have to settle for fewer additional senior duty posts in the future. Will the states take note? Is this a babu pushback or due to political masters unwilling to allow their best to migrate to Delhi?

Share a babu experience! Follow [@dilipcherian](https://twitter.com/dilipcherian) on Twitter.com.



## SHORT TAKES

4 DEAD, 4 HURT  
IN CHICAGO  
SHOOTING: COPS

**Chicago, June 15:** An argument in a house on Chicago's South Side early Tuesday erupted into gunfire, leaving four women dead and four other people injured, police said.

The shooting happened at 5:42 a.m. in the city's Englewood neighbourhood, police said, and no arrests were immediately made. Police had few details about the victims, but it appeared that none of them were juveniles. Detectives were still trying to determine if there was more than one gunman and that they were still trying to find witnesses, police spokesman Tom Ahern said. A young child was removed safely from the house and placed in protective custody, he said.

FIVE KILLED AS  
AFGHAN POLIO  
TEAMS ATTACKED

**Kabul, June 15:** Gunmen on Tuesday targeted an anti-polio drive in eastern Afghanistan, killing at least five members of two vaccination teams in separate attacks, officials said. No militant group immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks that took place in the city of Jalalabad, as well as in the nearby districts of Khoyani and Surkhrod, according to Attaullah Khogyani, spokesman for the governor in Nangarhar province. Jalalabad is the provincial capital.

Along with the five killed, at least four members of the polio vaccination teams were wounded, said Dr. Jan Mohammad, who coordinates the anti-polio drive for the country's east.

Khogyani added that two of the wounded were in critical condition.

FIRE HYDRANT  
PLANT WORKER  
KILLS TWO, SELF

**Albertville, June 15:** A worker who killed two people and wounded two more at an Alabama fire hydrant plant early Tuesday has been found dead, apparently after killing himself in a car, a police chief said. "The person was deceased from what appears to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound," Police Chief Jamie Smith told AL.com. The gunfire — among the latest in a spate of shootings across the U.S. — broke out about 2:30 a.m. at a Mueller Co. plant in Albertville, Smith told reporters.

The gunman then got in a vehicle and left the factory. His body was found hours later inside a car in Guntersville, about 15 miles (24 kilometres) away, Smith said. Smith says it wasn't immediately clear what prompted the shooting.

SECOND ARREST  
MADE IN DEADLY  
AUSTIN SHOOTING

**Austin (US), June 15:** Police made a second arrest in a weekend shooting that killed a man and left more than a dozen more people wounded after gunfire rang out on a busy, downtown Austin entertainment district.

Officers arrested a 17-year-old boy at Harker Heights High School in Harker Heights on Monday, according to statements from Austin police and the Killeen Independent School District. He is facing a charge of aggravated assault.

Austin police are working closely with the Killeen Independent School District and its police department in the investigation.

A spokesman for Killeen school police confirmed the arrest of the 17-year-old and referred further questions to the school.

SUICIDE BOMBER  
KILLS AT LEAST  
15 IN SOMALIA

**Mogadishu, June 15:** Police in Somalia say at least 15 people were killed and more than 20 others wounded when a suicide bomber attacked a military training centre in the capital, Mogadishu, on Tuesday.

Police spokesman Sadiq Ali Aden said that the bomber, wearing an explosives-packed vest, impersonated a trainee to enter the camp in the city's Medina district.

The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group claimed responsibility.

The training centre is used by the Somali National Army for new recruits. All of the dead and wounded were rushed to the Medina hospital, where health officials said at least 14 were seriously wounded.

Hundreds of people gathered at the hospital to check whether loved ones were among the victims.

Lancet study says Pfizer, AZ  
vaccines protect against Delta

Researchers say 2 doses offer better shield against the strain than one dose

**London, June 15:** The Delta variant of Coronavirus, first identified in India, doubles the risk of hospitalisation compared with the Alpha variant first found in the UK, but Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines provide good protection against the strain, says a study published in The Lancet journal.

Researchers at Public Health Scotland and the University of Edinburgh, UK, found that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine offered better protection against the Delta variant compared to the Oxford-AstraZeneca preventive, known as Covishield in India.

The analysis covered the period from April 1 to June 6, 2021, for the demographic distribution of cases. The team analysed 19,543 confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infections over the period of interest, of whom 377 were admitted to hospital for Covid-19 in Scotland.

Around 7,723 community cases and 134 hospitalisations were found to have the Delta variant of Coronavirus. The study found that the Pfizer vaccine offered 92 per cent protection against the Alpha variant and 79 per cent against the Delta strain two weeks after the second dose.

For AstraZeneca's vaccine, there was 60 per cent protection against Delta compared with 73 per cent for Alpha variant, the researchers said.

They also found that two doses of vaccine provide much better protection against the Delta variant compared to a single dose.

"Risk of Covid-19 hospital admission was approximately doubled in those with the Delta variant of concern (VOC) when compared to the Alpha VOC, with risk of admission particularly increased in those with five or more relevant comorbidities," the authors of the study noted. "Both the Oxford-Ast-



Nearly 11,000 graduates, including more than 2,000 students who could not attend the graduation ceremony last year due to the Covid-19 outbreak, attend a graduation ceremony at Central China Normal University in Wuhan, in China's central Hubei province.

California reopens, bids  
adieu to most Covid curbs

**San Francisco, June 15:** California, the first state in America to put in place a Coronavirus lockdown, is now turning a page on the pandemic.

At the stroke of midnight, California is lifting most of its Covid-19 restrictions and ushering in what has been billed as the state's "Grand Reopening". Starting Tuesday, there will be no more state

rules on social distancing, and no more limits on capacity at restaurants, bars, supermarkets, gyms, stadiums or anywhere else. And masks — one of the most symbolic and fraught symbols of the pandemic — will no longer be mandated for vaccinated people in most settings, though businesses and counties can still require them.

Just in time for summer, California wants to send the message that life in the Golden State is getting much closer to normal. The economy is fully reopening for the first time in 15 months and people can largely return to pre-pandemic lifestyles. Fans can cheer mask-less at Dodgers and Giants games. Disneyland is throwing its doors open. — AP

raZeneca and Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccines were effective in reducing the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection and Covid-19 hospitalisation in people with the Delta VOC," they said. However, the researchers

noted that these effects on infection with Delta variant appeared to be diminished when compared to those with the Alpha VOC. The authors of the study warned that the vaccine comparison should be

interpreted with caution due to differences in the groups which received each type of vaccine, and also in how quickly immunity is developed with each shot. — PTI

China gas blast toll rises to 25  
Beijing says no radiation  
after N-power plant leak

**Beijing, June 15:** The death toll from a powerful gas explosion in central China's Hubei province has more than doubled to 25, according to the local authorities. The explosion ripped through a residential neighbourhood in Zhangwan district of Shiyan city on Sunday, killing at least 12 people and trapping a large number of people under the rubble of their homes.

The blast rocked a two-storey trade market building in a residential community. China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported on late Monday night that the death toll has risen to 25. Rescue and debris cleaning are still underway, the information office of the provincial government of Hubei told the media. A team has been set up to investigate the blast, and Hubei will launch a province-wide blanket inspection to root out potential work safety hazards, said Shi Zheng, the head of the provincial emergency management department.

The Chinese government has ordered an inspection of all commercial and domestic gas pipelines. Chinese President Xi Jinping had called for a thorough probe into the cause of the blast and ordered to

rescue the injured. "In light of numerous accidents at companies and on campuses, all must work together to shoulder their responsibilities, strengthen their political comprehension and root out the

causes of such hazards," Xi had said.

Gas explosions occur on various parts of China every year. The worst being the 2015 explosions in Tianjin port in which 173 people were killed and hund-

IN OMAN, FATAL  
FUNGAL INFECTION  
IN SOME PATIENTS

**Dubai, June 15:** Oman announced on Tuesday that its doctors have detected a potentially fatal fungal infection afflicting some Coronavirus patients, the first such known cases on the Arabian Peninsula as the sultanate faces a surge in Covid-19 infections that has swamped its hospitals.

The country's Health Ministry reported that three Covid-19 patients in Oman have become infected with mucormycosis, a life-threatening condition commonly known as "black fungus", which has spread quickly among virus patients in hard-hit India. Although relatively rare, the disease has raised alarm. — AP

LAM CONCERNED  
ABOUT CHINESE  
NUCLEAR PLANT

**Hong Kong, June 15:** Hong Kong's leader said Tuesday that her government is "highly concerned" about the situation at a nearby nuclear power plant in mainland China, following media reports that the plant could be experiencing a leak.

Still, data from the Hong Kong Observatory and other departments showed that as of Monday night the radiation levels in the city were normal, leader Carrie Lam said. — AP

reds injured. Sunday's explosion came a day after eight people died and three were injured when toxic methyl formate leaked from a vehicle at a chemical handling facility in Guiyang. — PTI

Sedition charge  
against Suu Kyi  
on day 2 of trial

**Bangkok, June 15:** The trial of Myanmar's deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi entered its second day Tuesday, with the prosecution presenting arguments that she incited public disorder and flouted Coronavirus restrictions, part of a package of charges the ruling junta is seen as using to discredit her and consolidate its control. Suu Kyi and other members of her government and party were arrested by the military after the February 1 coup, with criminal charges brought against some of the top figures on litany of charges that both their supporters and independent observers say are bogus.

The coup reversed years democratic reforms in Myanmar after decades of military rule and sparked widespread protests and international condemnation. Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy party had been due to start a second five-year term of office after winning a landslide victory in a general election last November. Suu Kyi has not been seen in public since her arrest and her lawyers say they don't know exactly where she is currently being held. — AP



Aung San Suu Kyi

She has also had only limited time to consult with her legal team. Tuesday's session was to cover a sedition charge brought against Suu Kyi, along with a second count of violating Covid-19 restrictions. The sedition charge, which is sometimes described as incitement, calls for up to two years' imprisonment for anyone found guilty of causing fear or alarm that could cause an offence against the state or public tranquility. The offence has been law since Myanmar was a British colony, and has been criticised as a catch-all statute that infringes on freedom of speech and is used for political repression. The trial, which is closed to the public and media, opened Monday in the capital Naypyitaw, with police outlining several of the cases against her. — AP

Taiwan reports  
China incursion

**Taipei, June 15:** Taiwan said a record 28 Chinese military aircraft including fighter jets and nuclear capable bombers flew into its defence zone on Tuesday, as Beijing hit out at international criticism of its military posturing. The incursion came a day after Nato said China's increasingly aggressive military goals threatened international order — and after G7 leaders issued a landmark statement urging peace in the Taiwan Strait.

Taiwan's defence ministry said it scrambled its own aircraft to broadcast warnings and deployed missile batteries to track the Chinese jets after they entered the island's southwest Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ).

The flights occurred the same day Beijing accused Nato of exaggerating the threat from China and "creating confrontation" after a vow from the

Western allies to work together to counter the "systemic challenges" posed by its policies.

Nato leaders made the commitment on Monday, as US President Joe Biden renewed Washington's trans-Atlantic ties at his first summit with the allies. In a broad statement of intent, the leaders said China's increasingly assertive actions in building a nuclear arsenal and space and cyber warfare capabilities threatened the international order.

Democratic and self-ruled Taiwan lives under the constant threat of invasion by China, which has vowed to one day seize the island, by force if needed.

The two sides are separated by the narrow Taiwan Strait and some Chinese jets had crossed over the de facto border or so-called "median line" of the strait in previous incursions. — AFP

Canadian faces  
terror charge

**Ottawa, June 15:** Canada is pressing terrorism charges against a man accused of mowing down a Muslim family with a pickup truck, killing four, prosecutors said Monday.

Five members of the Afzaal family were out for a walk in London, Ontario — around 125 miles (200 kilometres) southwest of Toronto — on June 6, when a truck driver struck them on purpose, according to authorities.

Salman Afzaal, 46, his wife Madiha, 44, their daughter Yumna, 15, and Salman's mother Talat, 74, were all killed. The couple's nine-year-old son Fayeze survived, but was seriously injured. — AFP

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau previously said the killings were "a terrorist attack, motivated by hatred." Prosecutors revealed in a brief hearing Monday that they were adding terrorism charges to the four counts of premeditated murder and one of attempted murder levelled last week against 20-year-old Nathaniel Veltman. "The federal and provincial attorneys general provided their consent to commence terrorism proceedings, alleging that the murders and the attempted murder also constitute terrorist activity," the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) said. — AFP

## PAST | DISPUTE

## Counter China's non-market practices, says US Trade Representative Tai

## Biden eases EU trade friction ahead of Putin meet

**Brussels, June 15:** President Joe Biden on Tuesday moved to end a long-running dispute with the European Union over subsidies for aircraft manufacturers, a major breakthrough in the US-EU trade relationship that comes on the eve of his highly anticipated meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The announcement that the two sides reached resolution in a 17-year dispute over how much of a government subsidy each can

provide for its aircraft manufacturing giant — Boeing in the United States and Airbus in the EU — came as Biden met with European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

With the move, Biden eases a major point of tension in the trans-Atlantic relationship at a moment he's seeking to marshal widespread European support for his efforts to counter Russia prior to his

Wednesday meeting in Geneva with Putin.

US Trade Representative Katherine Tai said that the agreement calls for a five-year suspension of the aircraft tariffs, and stressed that it was time to put aside the fight and focus on China's economic assertiveness.

"Today's announcement resolves a longstanding trade irritant in the US-Europe relationship. Instead of fighting with one of our closest allies, we are finally coming together

against a common threat," Tai said.

"We agreed to work together to challenge and counter China's non-market practices in this sector in specific ways that reflect our standards for fair competition."

She added that the tariffs could be reimplemented if the US determines US companies are not able to "compete fairly" with the EU's. The tariffs had been temporarily suspended on March 11 for four months, and the new agreement

will officially go into effect on July 11.

To be certain, the US-EU relationship faces other trade-related friction. The continent's leaders are becoming impatient that Biden has not yet addressed Donald Trump's 2018 decision to impose import taxes on foreign steel and aluminum. Even without resolving all trade disputes, White House officials expressed confidence that they can build more goodwill with Europe ahead of the face-to-face

meeting with Putin. The White House on Tuesday announced the creation of a joint US-EU trade and technology council.

The council will work on coordinating standards for artificial intelligence, quantum computing and biotechnologies, as well as coordinating efforts on bolstering supply chain resilience. Biden is appointing Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Tai to co-chair the US side of the effort. — AP



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52773.05	0.42
Nifty 50	15869.30	0.36
S&P 500*	4,245.70	-0.22
Dollar (₹)	73.31	-0.04
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.19	0.06
Euro (₹)	88.90	-0.15
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,853*303	0.63
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	73.97	1.52
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.040	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.504	0.003

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

Coal India to close down 23 unviable mines

Coal India Ltd will close down 23 unviable mines, which would help it save around Rs 500 crore, officials said. The world's largest miner has shut down 82 such mines in the last four years. Those 23 mines, comprising open cast and underground ones, to be closed were identified in the last fiscal. Some 158 underground mines employ 43 per cent of the workforce but contribute only 5 per cent of the total production, they said.

74% insurance FDI under auto route notified



The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has notified the government's decision to increase the foreign direct investment limit in the insurance sector under the automatic route to 75 per cent from 49 per cent. A press note said the decision will take effect from the date of FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) notification. The Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021, was passed in March.

HDFC Bank mobile app was down for 1 hour

The mobile banking app of the largest private sector lender HDFC Bank, which has been under the regulatory lens for network outages, was down for an hour on Tuesday due to unspecified issues. The bank said the issues were faced for an hour late in the morning on Tuesday and the same was resolved in an hour. It urged customers to use the net banking alternative to transact in the interim.

BMW Motorrad rides in S1000R naked superbike

BMW Motorrad India launched the all-new BMW S 1000 R naked sports bike in India with price starting at Rs 17.90 lakh. BMW S1000R is a rival to the recently launched Ducati Streetfighter V4 naked sports bike. The second-generation BMW S 1000 R is being imported as a completely built-up unit (CBU). The roadster is fitted with a newly developed water cooled 4-cylinder in-line engine with a displacement of 999 cc.

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Sharp dip in jobless rate in June 2nd week Job numbers signal economy on mend

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 15

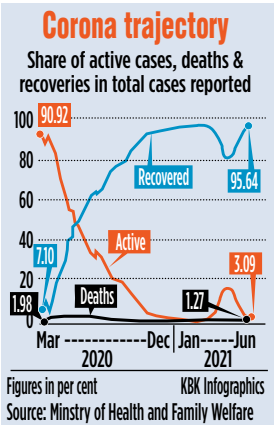
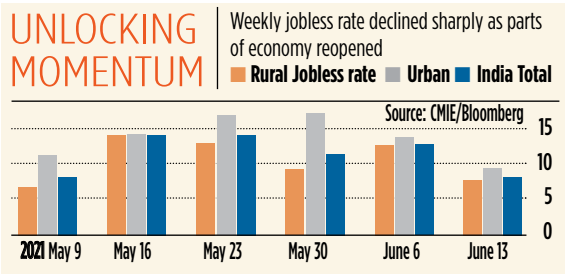
The unemployment rate dropped sharply last week from a week ago, in the first sign that the economy may be on the mend, as the second wave of the coronavirus outbreak subsides. While exports were already growing in May, power consumption, mobility and industrial activity have improved in June, as the unlocking process started in several states.

As per the data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), in the second week of June unemployment rate has eased sharply to 8.7 per cent from 13.6 per cent in the first week of June. In the week ended May 23, the jobless rate was as worse as 14.7 per cent. There was a slight improvement at 12.2 per cent in the week to May 30.

The recovery is visible both in the rural and urban markets. Rural unemployment rate has eased to 8.2 per cent from 13.5 per cent. Urban jobless rate too has come down to 9.7 per cent from 17.9 per cent.

"We have just received the data. We will have to analyse the data to understand the factors that have triggered this improvement on the job front," Mahesh Vyas, founder and CEO of CMIE told *Financial Chronicle*.

CMIE had expected a recovery of sorts in employment. "This relentless loss of employment



can be expected to abate somewhat in the coming weeks as many parts of the country that were under a lockdown have started announcing cautious relaxations," it had said. Most of the states, including Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Maharashtra, Kerala and Karnataka have relaxed their restrictions while getting into the unlocking process.

Monster.com has also found growth in job postings in several sectors. Around 45 per cent of the industries indicate positive month-on-month growth in May against

April in job postings, with retail, home appliances and telecom showing the highest growth, it said. Other industries that are doing well compared to the previous month include IT hardware & software, banking & financial services, insurance, office equipment & automation, healthcare, biotechnology & life sciences and pharmaceuticals.

Further, the Google Mobility report released recently too has indicated improvement in activity in Indian public places and offices, denoting more relaxation in states under lockdown.

Power consumption too had grown by 12.6 per cent in the first week of June, indicating improved industrial and manufacturing activity.

Merchandise exports grew both yearly as well as sequentially in May. Exports in May 2021 were 67 per cent higher than the low base of the lockdown-hit May 2020. The exports were also 7.93 per cent higher than May 2019. Most importantly, exports continued to grow sequentially by 6.6 per cent over April 2021.

AstraZeneca's antibody cocktail fails to prevent Covid

SUZI RING JUNE 15

AstraZeneca Plc's antibody cocktail was found to be only 33 per cent effective at preventing Covid-19 symptoms in people who had been exposed to the virus, failing the study's main goal and dealing a setback to the drugmaker.

The study, named Storm Chaser, looked at whether the long-acting antibody combination could protect people who had recently been in contact with the Sars-CoV-2 virus in places like care homes.

The outcome is a blow to Astra for a drug that was hoped to be a bright spot in the company's pandemic efforts following the mixed success of its vaccine with the University of Oxford. One of the first shots to be authorised, the vaccine has since faced issues with take-up after a link emerged with rare

blood clots. The study looked at about 1,121 unvaccinated adults in the US and UK. As many as 23 volunteers who got the drug cocktail developed symptomatic Covid-19 after exposure, compared with 17 cases in the group that got a placebo, Astra said in a statement on Tuesday.

The antibody trial is one of six advanced-stage studies Astra is running to test its drug against different endpoints. Another study called Provent, looking at whether the cocktail can prevent infection in people at high risk of catching Covid or with compromised immune systems, is also expected to readout soon. The US has ordered up to 700,000 doses of the medicine for delivery in 2021, while the UK was already reconsidering an earlier order for one million.

— Bloomberg

RBI BANS DHFL FROM TAKING DEPOSITS UNDER PIRAMAL FOLD

Mumbai, June 15: The Reserve Bank has revoked the deposit-taking status of Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL) and has reclassified it as a non-deposit taking housing finance company, before approving the Piramal Group's bid to take over the firm towards the end of the resolution process.

The revelation comes in the June 7 NCLT Mumbai order that has approved the Rs 35,250-crore bid for the once second largest mortgage lender by Piramal Capital & Housing Finance, forcing over 65 per cent haircut on the creditors and just Re 1 to its NCD holders to whom it owes more than Rs 45,000-crore.

On the 14th page of the 86-page NCLT order by H.P. Chaturvedi and Ravikumar Duraisamy, it says DHFL no longer is a deposit taking NBFC but a non-deposit taking one.

The changes were made in February 2021, after the RBI gave a non-objection to the January 25, 2021 application by R.Subramaniakumar, the DHFL administrator, citing Rule 5 of its FSP (financial services providers) Rules.

In the concluding part of the NCLT order, the bench reiterates that the resolution is subject to the fact that RBI's non-objection, based on the condition that "the status of the corporate debtor (DHFL) is changed from a deposit-taking company to a non-deposit-taking housing finance company.

— PTI

Jewellery hallmarking must in 256 districts from today

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 15

The government has announced that mandatory hallmarking will be implemented in 256 districts which have hallmarking centres. There will be no coercive action against jewellers till September 1.

After a meeting with jewellers and trade representatives, the minister of commerce and industry Piyush Goyal said that mandatory hallmarking will come into effect from Wednesday in these 256 districts. The jewellers will have to sell hallmarked jewellery and get their entire inventory hallmarked by September 1. Till then, the government officials will not take any coercive action against the jewellers for stocking non-hallmarked jewellery.

In the remaining districts, steps will be taken to set up hallmarking centres at a fast pace. As and when the centres are set up, jewellers will have to get the Bureau of Indian Standards licence and get their inventory hallmarked. There will be more than 450 districts which do not have hallmarking centres, said a traders' association.

Mandatory hallmarking has been exempted for jewellers with less than Rs 40 lakh turnover. Kundan and polka jewellery, and jewel-studded watches are also exempt from hallmarking.

The fee for BIS registration has been withdrawn. In future hallmarking will be the responsibility

US RETAIL BOON FOR G&J EXPORTS

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 16

With the US retail market projected to grow in double-digits in 2021, Indian gems and jewellery exports are expected to rebound. Over 200 per cent growth in US jewellery sales has already lifted exports of studded gold jewellery and polished diamond sales above pre-Covid levels in April-May.

The National Retail Federation of the US has issued its revised annual forecast for 2021, anticipating that retail sales will grow between 10.5 and 13.5 per cent against the initial projection of 6.5 per cent.

"The combination of vaccine distribution, fiscal stimulus and private-sector ingenuity has put millions of Americans back to work", NRF president and CEO Matthew Shay said.

This is good news for Indian gems and jew-

ellery exporters, who have been witnessing stagnant growth in shipments for the past few years. US retail jewellery sales grew 203 per cent in May 2021 compared to May 2020 and grew 44.7 per cent compared to May 2019, according to the Mastercard Spending Pulse monthly macroeconomic report.

The positive momentum is already visible in the April-May exports from India. Studded gold jewellery saw a growth of 41 per cent in April-May 2021 compared to pre-Covid April-May of 2019. Cut and polished diamond exports too have witnessed an increase of 21 per cent. "The revival of exports has happened due to the opening of international markets, resurgent demand and strong unstinted support from the Government of India on various issues," said Colin Shah, chairman, GJEPC.

of the manufacturer.

Over 37,000 jewellers have already registered their business with the BIS and another 63,000 are expected to get their registration done.

Meanwhile, the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court has adjourned the hearing of the case on hallmarking to June 28. Earlier, it had given a relief from coercive action till June 14th. This relief will also get extended till then.

MF industry equity assets cross ₹11L cr

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, JUNE 15

Equity assets of the mutual fund industry reached a new high of Rs 11 lakh crore in May, aided by a 6.5 per cent rally in the Nifty-50 Index and robust inflows in equity funds and other funds with equity as a component.

Redemption from equity funds also fell, helping the equity assets swell.

"Equity assets under management (AUM), including ELSS and index funds of mutual funds,

increased 7.7 per cent month-on-month (MoM) to Rs 11.1 lakh crore in May 2021. This was on account of a rise in market indices (Nifty up 6.5 per cent MoM) and an increase in equity scheme sales, which was up 15 per cent MoM to Rs 27,700 crore," said the Fund Folio report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

The total equity value of the top 20 AMCs increased 7.2 per cent MoM in May '21 versus a rise of 6.5 per cent MoM in the Nifty.

Among the top 10 mutu-

al funds, the highest MoM increase was seen in Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund (8.1 per cent), SBI Mutual Fund (7.7 per cent), Mirae Asset Mutual Fund (7.6 per cent), HDFC Mutual Fund (7.6 per cent), and DSP Mutual Fund (7.5 per cent).

MFs top picks in May were PSU banks, oil & gas, automobiles, capital goods, insurance, and private banks.

Healthcare, metals, consumer, technology, telecom, chemicals, durables, and cement reported MoM decline in weights.

Draft on revising WPI base year issued

New Delhi, June 15: The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has issued a draft technical report of a working group, which suggests revising wholesale price index base year from 2011-12 to 2017-18 and proposes addition of about 480 new items such as medicinal plants, pen drive, lifts, gymnasium equipment, and certain motorcycle engines in the new series.

Revising the base year to

2017-18 for computation of wholesale inflation would help in presenting a more realistic picture of the price situation, the report has suggested.

In the case of agriculture commodities, new items such as medicinal plants like isabgol, aloe vera and menthol; fennel seed and methi seed, mushroom and watermelon were proposed to be added in the new series subject to availability of data.

Currently, the index has a total of 697 items, includ-

ing primary articles (117), fuel and power (16) and manufactured products (564).

In the new series, a total of 1,176 items in these three categories have been proposed—primary articles (131), fuel and power (19) and manufactured products (1,026).

"No items have been dropped at this stage. The items of the current series would be dropped only after consultation with the stakeholders," it added.

— PTI

FIVE-YEAR TARGET Auditors are grappling with managing quality in WFH phase

PwC to add 100,000 jobs in \$12 bn revamp

BELLA GENGA & ROXANNE HENDERSON JUNE 15

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP is investing \$12 billion across its global business in an overhaul targeting better audits, digitization of services and greener operations.

The professional-services provider will hire 100,000 employees and develop the skills of existing staff over the next five years as it seeks to respond to the post-pandemic operating environment, it said in an emailed statement on Tuesday.

"We will continue to evolve our ways of working, and expand our capabilities in the areas that



matter most for the future, while remaining steadfast in our commitment to quality," PwC chairman Bob Moritz said. "We want our people to be the most sought

after in the market."

Auditors are grappling with managing quality amid a shift in ways of working introduced by the Covid-19 pandemic. The International Auditing

and Assurance Standards Board has revised standards for auditors, coming into effect in 2022, to boost technology use, help manage new risks, and improve quality management.

PwC is also seeking ways to address growing calls for transparency in the profession from stakeholders after several accounting scandals among the Big Four auditing firms knocked public trust. In South Africa, for example, KPMG has put in place a variety of reforms after it came under fire in 2017 for work done for a politically connected family accused of plundering the government's coffers.

The South African unit

of PwC will add at least 2,500 new employees over the next five years, chief executive officer in the region Dion Shango told reporters in a conference call. Across Africa, where it has a presence in 34 countries, the firm plans to bulk up its operations with a \$400 million investment. The company is also interviewing for non-executive directors to strengthen audit oversight.

PwC has also set aside \$3 billion of its total global investment to help double the scale of its Asia-Pacific operations, it said. The firm's spending will also focus on responding to environmental, social and governance trends across its operations.

— Bloomberg

JLR PLANS TO TEST PROTOTYPE HYDROGEN LAND ROVER



NICK CAREY LONDON, JUNE 15

Jaguar Land Rover will begin tests later this year on a hydrogen fuel-cell prototype model based on its Land Rover Defender vehicle as the carmaker looks to expand its zero-emission car options, the company said on Tuesday.

JLR, owned by India's Tata Motors, earlier this year said that its luxury Jaguar brand will be entirely electric by 2025, and the more rugged, off-road Land Rover brand will launch six pure electric models over the next five years, read more.

Most of the auto industry is focusing its efforts on developing battery-electric cars to meet tightening emission standards in Europe and China.

But JLR is one of a small number of carmakers that sees possibilities for the mass adoption of hydrogen fuel cells, which emit only water as they produce electricity, and has said it believes hydrogen has a future role in the auto industry. Hydrogen fuel cells "provide high energy density and rapid refuelling, and minimal loss of range in low temperatures, making the technology ideal for larger, longer-range vehicles, or those operated in hot or cold environments," JLR said.

The hydrogen Land Rover Defender will undergo tests to "verify key attributes such as off-road capability and fuel consumption," the company said in a release.

As well as offering the prospect of harmless emissions, hydrogen fuel cells also provide greater range than battery-electric cars. But there is little fuelling infrastructure currently in place to support mass adoption of the technology.

— Reuters



## SHORT TAKES

## Nurse told 'not to disturb Maradona'

**Buenos Aires:** A nurse accused of neglect in Diego Maradona's death told Argentine prosecutors on Monday that he was following orders "not to disturb" the football icon while he slept.

Ricardo Almiron, 37, was Maradona's nighttime carer and was one of the last people to see the World Cup winning captain alive. He is suspected of lying when he claimed Maradona was sleeping and breathing normally hours before he died. An autopsy revealed he was dying at that time. Almiron is one of seven people under investigation for manslaughter after a board of experts looking into Maradona's death found he had received inadequate care and was abandoned to his fate for a "prolonged, agonising period".

— AFP

## Ollie to return for Sussex 2nd team

**Sussex:** Suspended England pacer Ollie Robinson, who had taken a short break last week from international cricket, will return to action with Sussex's second team on Tuesday, the county announced. Robinson was suspended by the ECB for his offensive racist and sexist tweets, dating back to 2012-13 when he was 18 and 19.

Robinson missed Sussex's Vitality Blast T20 fixtures against Gloucestershire and Hampshire Hawks last week as the pacer decided to take a break to spend time with his family. Robinson has already apologised for his tweets and he got support from his teammates even as a few said the ECB did the right thing. — PTI

## IOC VP arrives in Tokyo for Games

**Tokyo:** International Olympic Committee vice-president John Coates arrived in Japan on Tuesday, as organisers ramp up final preparations with just over five weeks until the pandemic-postponed Games open. Ahead of his arrival, several dozen people protested against the Games in Tokyo, though recent opinion polls suggest public opposition may be weakening. Organisers will release the final version of their virus countermeasures for athletes in a so-called "playbook" that they say will keep the event safe. They have already announced measures including daily testing for athletes and GPS tracking of journalists coming from abroad, in an attempt to reassure a sceptical public. — AFP

## India, Afghanistan play out 1-1 draw

**Doha:** India benefitted from an own goal by Afghanistan goalie as they ended their World Cup Qualifiers campaign with a 1-1 draw to book a berth in the next qualifying round of the Asian Cup here on Tuesday. A howler by Afghanistan goalie Ovays Azizi handed India a 1-0 lead in the 75th minute but Hossein Zamani equalised in the 81st minute in a match marred by poor refereeing. The two sides had also played out a 1-1 draw in the first leg match in Dushanbe in 2019. It was an open and fast-paced game with the Afghans playing a more physical game. — PTI

## Sachsenring next stop for Honda

**Germany:** After a series of difficult races and a fruitful test, the German GP offers Marc Marquez and Pol Espargaro a chance to apply their learnings. The MotoGP World Championship will return to the Sachsenring for the first time since 2019, the 3.7-kilometre-long circuit known for its tight layout and 10 left-hand corners. In the past it has been a happy hunting ground for the Repsol Honda Team who have won there each year since 2010, but the focus this year remains on improving on recent results and finding the form the team is accustomed to. In previous years, Marc Marquez has been peerless around the Sachsenring and has taken victory in all of his seven premier-class Grand Prix starts for the Repsol Honda Team.

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## RED CHILE BITE

## Messi on target, but spicy Chile frustrate Argentina in Copa

**Rio De Janeiro, June 15:** Argentina superstar Lionel Messi scored a stunning freekick but Chile hit back to earn a 1-1 draw in the Copa America on Monday.

Messi's magical left foot gave dominant Argentina a deserved first half lead but Eduardo Vargas equalised in the second half after Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez saved veteran midfielder Arturo Vidal's penalty. Despite Argentina's dominance, Messi lamented that "we weren't calm, we didn't have control of the ball."

His coach Lionel Scaloni saw things differently, though.

"We deserved to win but in the end we drew. In any case, it's only the start of a very tough tournament," said Scaloni.

Before the Group A game started in the Nelson Santos stadium in Rio de Janeiro, there was a light and effects tribute to Argentina legend Diego Maradona, who died in November aged 60, although the ground was empty due to coronavirus restrictions.

The first chance fell to Messi on eight minutes as Leandro Paredes picked out Nicolas Tagliafico on the left and the fullback nodded the ball down for his captain, who sent a volley wide.

Minutes later, Giovanni Lo Celso crossed from the left but a sliding Lautaro Martinez could only spoon the ball over the bar from inside the six-yard box. Argentina were in total command and Lo Celso picked out Nicolas Gonzalez to shoot from 20 yards but goalkeeper Claudio Bravo got down well to his right to tip the ball around the post.

From Messi's corner

Gonzalez headed over the bar and moments later he was released by Lo Celos but shot straight at Bravo. It would be a frustrating night for Gonzalez.

Argentina got the goal their domination deserved on 33 minutes, and inevitably it was Messi who scored, curling a free-kick from 25 yards out just beyond Bravo's dive.

They should have had a second soon afterwards but teed up by Gonzalo Montiel 10 yards out, Martinez screwed his shot horribly wide.

"I would be worried if the team wasn't creating chances. The important thing is we are, we're getting lots of players in the box. And it will go in," said Scaloni.

Chile started the second half with more intent and Erick Pulgar played Vargas into the area but his shot on the stretch was saved by Martinez.

However, Vidal stormed in to try to fire home the rebound and was caught by Tagliafico as he shot.

## ROMEROS DO IT FOR PARAGUAY

Paraguay lead group A after a 3-1 win over Bolivia at the Olimpico stadium in Goiania. Bolivia scored first via Erwin Saavedra's first-half penalty, but Paraguay changed its fortunes after the break with goals by Alejandro Romero and a brace by Angel Romero. Argentina's next match is against Uruguay on Friday.

<b>Paraguay</b>	<b>3</b>
(Alejandro Romero 62, Angel Romero 65, 80)	
<b>Bolivia</b>	<b>1</b>
(Erwin Saavedra 10-pen)	



Argentina's Lionel Messi in action during a group game against Chile in Copa America on Monday.

— AP

## EURO | 2020

## Spain &amp; Sweden in dull 0-0 draw

**Seville (Spain), June 15:** Spain's new team struggled with the familiar problems on Monday as a string of missed chances allowed Sweden to hang on for a goalless draw in their Euro 2020 opener in Seville.

Alvaro Morata wasted the best opportunity of a dominant first half, in which Spain churned out 419 passes, the most of any team on record in the opening 45 minutes of a European Championship fixture.

But Luis Enrique's team lost their rhythm after the interval and Sweden might even have won it, the excellent Alexander Isak hitting the post before his strike partner Marcus Berg missed a sitter from two yards out.

A goalless draw leaves Spain playing catch-up in Group E after Slovakia earlier pulled off a shock 2-1 victory over Poland, raising the stakes for the game between Spain and Poland on Saturday, when a loser would be left struggling to qualify.

Another failure to convert possession into chances was reminiscent of recent disappointments for Spain, most notably when they were frustrated by Russia at the 2018 World Cup, before going out on penalties.

In the wake of that

defeat, Luis Enrique was tasked with launching a new era as coach, a project that involved promoting a fresh crop of players but also a more direct, penetrative style.

## SKRINIAR FIRES SLOVAKIA PAST POLAND

Inter Milan defender Milan Skriniar fired Slovakia to a 2-1 victory over neighbours Poland on Monday in their opening game in Saint Petersburg. An own goal from Poland goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny handed Slovakia the lead on 18 minutes, but Karol Linetty equalised for Poland right at the start of the second half.

Poland were reduced to 10 men on the hour when midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak picked up a second yellow card, and Slovakia made their advantage count as Skriniar drove in a well-taken winner at a corner. "We're delighted to start the competition with a win. It was a difficult game, Poland are a quality team," said Skriniar.

— AFP

<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>2</b>
(Wojciech Szczesny 18-own goal, Milan Skriniar 69)	
<b>Poland</b>	<b>1</b>
(Karol Linetty 46)	

## Quick passes

## Eriksen thanks supporters

Christian Eriksen sent his first public message from the hospital on Tuesday, thanking supporters for their "sweet and amazing" well-wishes after his collapse at the European Championship. Eriksen remains in the hospital after suffering cardiac arrest during the game against Finland on Saturday, when he had to be resuscitated with a defibrillator on the field.

"Big thanks for your sweet and amazing greetings and messages from all around the world. It means a lot to me and my family," Eriksen wrote in a message that was shared by the Danish association on Twitter.



Christian Eriksen

## Ronaldo shuns Cola bottles

Rworkers in the game, taking his fitness obsessions to another level in order to push his top playing days well into his late 30s. In a move likely to anger the Euro sponsor, the Juventus and Portugal forward glanced to the side before moving two glass bottles away from his position and saying "drink water" to the media while his microphone was still turned off before disapprovingly saying: "Coca-Cola!"

## Sweden sound out police

The Swedish football federation filed a police report on Tuesday after striker Marcus Berg was subjected to a flood of social media abuse and threats from fans after missing a late chance against Spain at the Euro. Berg couldn't connect cleanly with the ball and missed the target when he had an open net in the second half of the 0-0 draw in Seville. He received a torrent of abuse online after the game and team officials said some of the posts contained illegal threats that have been reported to Swedish police. Berg said he turned off his social media channels but had been told about the threats. "It was tough. What happens on social media is really sad," Berg said.

## INDIA VS ENGLAND | ONE-OFF TEST

## Seven-year wait ends for women

**Bristol, June 15:** A favourable record in England and "positive mindset" despite inadequate preparation time will spur the Indian women when they take on the seasoned hosts in their first Test engagement in nearly seven years here from Wednesday.

After multiple quarantines in India and UK, the Mithali Raj-led squad got little over a week to prepare for their first red ball game since November 2014. Mithali was among the seven current players, who were a part of that victorious eleven against South Africa in Mysuru.

While experienced players like the skipper, her deputy Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana and Jhulan Goswami have not played red ball cricket at all in recent times, it will be a tougher test for the younger lot who don't get to play first-class matches in domestic cricket.

Unlike the men's squad, which played intra-squad

games in Southampton ahead of the WTC final, the women prepared only in the nets which might hurt them in the four-day game.

Mithali said she would not want rookie players to be burdened with expectations and would advise them to enjoy the game.

"Well, we did brief them (players) about how the long format is played and clearly for someone who is making a debut, you don't want to burden them with expectations and responsibility. "So, it is just that I would brief together as a team, support them on the field and they should just enjoy playing this format," the skipper added.

Mithali also batted for having all three formats in a bilateral series going ahead, saying the away Tests against England and Australia are just the beginning. India will also play a Test, a day-night match, when they tour Australia. — PTI

## Swiss ready for Italian challenge

**Rome, June 15:** A 74-year-old chain-smoking Czech coach might have made just as much of an impact on this Italy squad as Roberto Mancini has.

Ciro Immobile, Lorenzo Insigne and Marco Verratti each had breakout seasons under Zdenek Zeman in Serie B nearly a decade ago at Pescara, where they learned an attacking philosophy that they're currently employing at the European Championship.

Italy's third goal in their 3-0 win over Turkey in the Euro 2020 tournament opener was a case in point, as Immobile hardly even looked when he slotted a pass between two defenders to set up Insigne for one of his preferred curled shots.

Having missed the game against Turkey as he works his way back from a right knee injury, Verratti is expected to take a spot on Italy's bench for Wednesday's second

Group A game against Switzerland.

## FINLAND FACE RUSSIA

Lost, perhaps, in the drama surrounding Christian Eriksen's collapse during Denmark's game against Finland at the Euro was the result after play resumed.

The Finns, playing in their first ever game at a major soccer tournament, won 1-0 in Copenhagen. It will likely go down as one of the most overlooked

scorelines in the history of the tournament, given what had happened to Eriksen. Indeed, Finland captain Tim Sparv said there were barely any celebrations in the dressing room.

"It was very quiet," Sparv said, "and understandably so."

## TURKEY SEEK WIN

Turkey will be expecting a big boost from a supportive crowd in Baku, and they might just need it.

After a 3-0 loss to Italy without even a shot on target, Turkey will face a Wales team looking to build on their opening draw when the teams meet Wednesday at the European Championship.

"Hopefully we can feed off the negative energy of the Turkey fans as opposed to the positive one. We can try and have the game on our terms, which is always the objective," said Wales midfielder Joe Morrell.

— Agencies

## UMESH PIPS SHARDUL IN INDIA SQUAD

**Southampton, June 15:** Veteran speedster Umesh Yadav pipped Brisbane Test hero Shardul Thakur as the 15th member of the Indian squad that will take on New Zealand in the World Test Championship final starting here on June 18. Umesh, along with Mohammed Shami, and Hanuma Vihari all of whom got injured during the Australia tour, were back in the 15 that needed to be announced as per ICC squad protocol.

Apart from Shardul, the notable names to miss out were Mayank Agarwal, and Washington Sundar. England series hero Axar Patel also missed out.

## WILLIAMSON TO LEAD KIWIS

Kane Williamson will be available to lead New Zealand against India in the World Test Championship final, head coach Gary Stead announced. — Agencies

**India squad:** Virat Kohli (c), Shubman Gill, Rohit Sharma, C. Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Rishabh Pant (wk), R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Md Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Siraj, W. Saha, Umesh Yadav and Hanuma Vihari.

**NZ squad:** Kane Williamson (C), Tom Blundell, Trent Boult, Devon Conway, Colin de Grandhomme, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Tom Latham, Henry Nicholls, Ajaz Patel, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Neil Wagner BJ Watling and Will Young.

## ADVANTAGE INDIA Sachin expects fast bowlers to deliver knockout blow

**New Delhi, June 15:** Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar said New Zealand will be well prepared for this week's World Test Championship final but warned that India's fast bowlers could deliver the "knockout blow".

In an interview, the record-breaking batsman said India can draw on their stunning Test win in Australia as they prepare to take on the in-form Kiwis.

While New Zealand thumped England by eight wickets to clinch a 1-0 Test series win on Sunday, Virat Kohli's team last played in March and are coming out of a stint in quarantine.

But India upset the odds to beat Australia in January, and Tendulkar pointed to their wealth of pace options for the inaugural championship's title clash starting Friday in Southampton.

Swing bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar did not make the squad, but India can call on Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Umesh Yadav and Ishant Sharma.

"All these guys are talented bowlers and successful bowlers," Tendulkar said.

"They would go out and do their best and are fully capable of launching a knockout blow."

Tendulkar said it would be a toss-up between the veteran Ishant and the up-and-coming Siraj, who



India skipper Virat Kohli during an ICC photoshoot ahead of the World Test Championship final against New Zealand.

— ICC

starred in Australia, for a place in the starting XI.

"It will be a nice challenge for the team management to have in front of them where you have more bowlers who are capable of playing and delivering," he said.

"All these bowlers are terrific bowlers. I have not seen their practise sessions and don't know who is in good rhythm or not. I feel it is going to be between Ishant and Siraj."

Siraj, 27, played a key

role in India's triumph in Australia as they recovered from a heavy loss to win the four-match series 2-1, sealed with a memorable victory by their second-stringers in Brisbane.

But despite India's pace stocks, Tendulkar also expected spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja to make the team with their ability to bat in the middle order.

"I see a high probability there because both spin-

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