



Jairam Ramesh calls for a transparent policy in allocating vaccines

Page 9



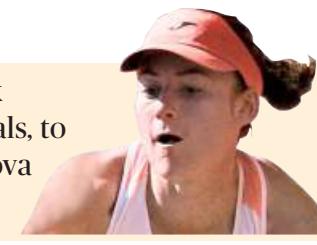
Take action against illegal adoption of orphans, says SC

Page 10



BRICS opposes exceptionalism, says China's Wang Wenbin

Page 11



Unseeded Zidansek makes it to semifinals, to meet Pavlyuchenkova

Page 13

PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

NEARBY



Active COVID cases fall below 5,000 in Delhi

NEW DELHI
The downward trend in COVID-19 cases continued in Delhi with active cases falling below 5,000 on Tuesday, said a health bulletin released by the government. The city reported 316 new cases over 24 hours, taking the total to 14,29,791.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Involve RWAs in vaccine drive, HC tells Centre

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court has asked the Centre to "seriously consider" involving Residents' Welfare Associations in organising vaccination drives within their respective colonies. "The Centre should seriously consider this proposal at the earliest," the court said.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Ladakh reserves all jobs for local residents

Srinagar
All jobs in the Union Territory of Ladakh have been reserved for local residents, stated an order issued on Tuesday. "No person shall be qualified for appointment to the service unless the person is a resident of the UT of Ladakh," read the order issued by L-G R.K. Mathur.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8

OPPORTUNITIES ▶ BACK PAGE

Centre places fresh orders for 44 cr. COVID-19 vaccine doses

Govt. also books 30 crore doses of vaccine under trial

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre has placed fresh orders for 44 crore vaccine doses of Covishield and Covaxin, which will be available from August-December. It has also placed an order for 30 crore doses of Corbevax, produced by Hyderabad-based Biological E

Plan of Action

- In addition to 25 crore doses of Covishield and 19 crore doses of Covaxin, the Health Ministry has also placed an order for 30 crore doses of Corbevax, produced by Hyderabad-based Biological E
- It has released 30% as advance to these manufacturers and 74 crore doses are expected to be rolled out between August and December
- Corbevax is a protein sub-unit vaccine developed by the U.S.-based Baylor College of Medicine and Dynavax, a biopharmaceutical company. Biological E will be testing the vaccine in phase-3 clinical trials
- India has a target adult population of 94 crore that is eligible for vaccination, and 28.5 crore doses have already been administered

already administered – were expected from Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech.

If all the estimates were to come to fruition, it would mean 127 crore doses could be available, enough to en-

sure India's estimated population of about 94 crore gets one dose of vaccine.

However, a lot depends on the speed at which vaccines are disbursed.

After a lacklustre May that saw vaccine stocks and im-

Price cap on jabs at private hospitals

The maximum price chargeable for Covishield is ₹780, for Covaxin ₹1,410 and for Sputnik V ₹1,145, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday. The Centre said it would continue to give the "highest priority" to healthcare workers for vaccination. ▶ PAGE 10

munisation plummet, the number of daily doses have started to rise after May 29, touching over 30 lakh on several days.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
MORE REPORTS PAGES ▶ 5, 9 & 10

Nepal stops distribution of Coronil kits

Order says procedures not followed during procurement

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Nepal's Department of Ayurveda and Alternative Medicines on Monday stopped distribution of Coronil kits that were gifted by the Patanjali group of Indian yoga teacher and businessman Ramdev.

Kathmandu's order cited

that proper procedures were not followed while procuring the 1,500 kits of Coronil that Patanjali claims are useful in dealing with the COVID-19 infection.

Move to 'delink'
The issue has drawn attention as it is being interpreted as a move to delink the lead-

ing Madhesi political families from the Indian group. The latest order of the Government of Nepal says, the tablets and nasal oil that are part of the Coronil kit are not equivalent to medicines to defeat COVID-19 virus.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

New Election Commissioner appointed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday appointed Anup Chandra Pandey, a retired Uttar Pradesh-cadre IAS officer, to the post of Election Commissioner. The Law Ministry notified the appointment late on Tuesday evening.

Following the elevation of Sushil Chandra as the CEC, the position of an EC was vacant since April 13.

JNU in list of top 1,000 varsities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

JNU has entered the top 1,000 of the QS World University rankings for the first time, as its new undergraduate engineering programme now makes it eligible for the rating.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 8

Mammoth task



Safety first: Nasal swab being collected from an elephant at a camp in Tamil Nadu's Mudumalai Tiger Reserve to test for COVID-19. A lioness died of suspected coronavirus infection in Vandular zoo, prompting the forest department to conduct more tests. ▶ M. SATHYAMOORTHY

I thank Your Honour, schoolgirl tells CJI

She cites steps to handle pandemic; CJI lauds letter

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

A 10-year-old Kerala schoolgirl has written to Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana, saying how "happy and proud" she felt to see the Supreme Court make vital interventions to alleviate the sufferings of her fellow citizens in the grip of the pandemic.

"I am happy and feel proud your honourable court has moved orders for supply of oxygen and saved many lives. I understood your honourable court has initiated effective steps in bringing down COVID-19 and death rate in our country, especially in Delhi. I thank Your Ho-



Thoughtful gesture: The illustration that accompanied 10-year-old Lidwina Joseph's letter. ▶ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

nour for this. Now I feel very proud and happy," Lidwina Joseph, a Class V student from Thrissur in Kerala, wrote in the letter that the Supreme Court received towards May-end.

Lidwina said she got the news from *The Hindu*, adding that she had been "much worried" about the deaths caused by the virus.

The handwritten letter, in the form of a scroll, is accompanied by a colourful illustration showing a bespectacled

judge using his gavel to give the coronavirus a knock on its head. A portrait of the Mahatma hangs from a wall behind the judge.

Chief Justice Ramana replied to Lidwina, saying "I have received your beautiful letter along with a heart-warming illustration of the judge at work". He conveyed that she was impressed by the way she kept track of the happenings in the country.

He particularly took note of the student's concern for the well-being of her compatriots. "I am sure you will grow up into an alert, informed and responsible citizen who will contribute immensely towards nation-building," he said.

Chief Justice Ramana also sent her a signed copy of the Constitution.

HINDU

DELHI
CITY EDITION
14 pages • ₹10.00

'Ensure no break in studies of children hit by pandemic'

Supreme Court accepts amicus curiae's suggestion

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has ordered the States and the Union Territories to ensure there is no break in the education of children orphaned due to COVID-19.

"The State governments/Union Territories are directed to make provisions for continuance of education of the children both in government as well as in private schools," a Bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose ordered.

Mr. Agrawal had recommended the court to intervene and direct the States to make sure that the children impacted by the pandemic continue in the same school.

The order, published on Tuesday, came after amicus curiae, advocate Gaurav Agrawal, voiced concerns that even children studying in private schools should continue in the same institutions for at least the next six months until some further



arrangements could be worked out.

"We accept the suggestion made by the amicus curiae. The State government/Union Territory administrations should ensure that there is no break in the education of children who have become orphans or lost either parent during the pandemic," the Supreme Court ordered.

The Bench said it would examine other issues related to COVID-19 impacted children, including protection of their property rights of the children, their further education and employment opportunities and special care to be taken in respect of the girl child. These issues would be taken up in the next hearing on June 27.

Free rice offer boosts vaccination drive

Circle officer in Arunachal hit upon idea to push those above 45 years to take jab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

An administrative circle in Arunachal Pradesh has scaled up vaccination among those above 45 years of age with a free rice offer.

Rumours about COVID-19 vaccines causing impotency and microchips being injected through them have de-

ferred many in the Northeast, specifically those above 45 years, from taking the jab. Requests and threats have not worked in districts such as Baksa in Assam, which have among the lowest vaccination coverage in India.

Tashi Wangchuk Thongdok, the circle officer of Yaza in Lower Subansiri district

the vaccination coverage in the Yazali circle. We wish to continue giving away free rice until we achieve 100% coverage by June 20," Mr. Thongdok, a 2016-batch officer of Arunachal Pradesh Civil Service, said. He thanked two local activists – Taba Nagu and Lich Birbal – for donating the rice for distribution.

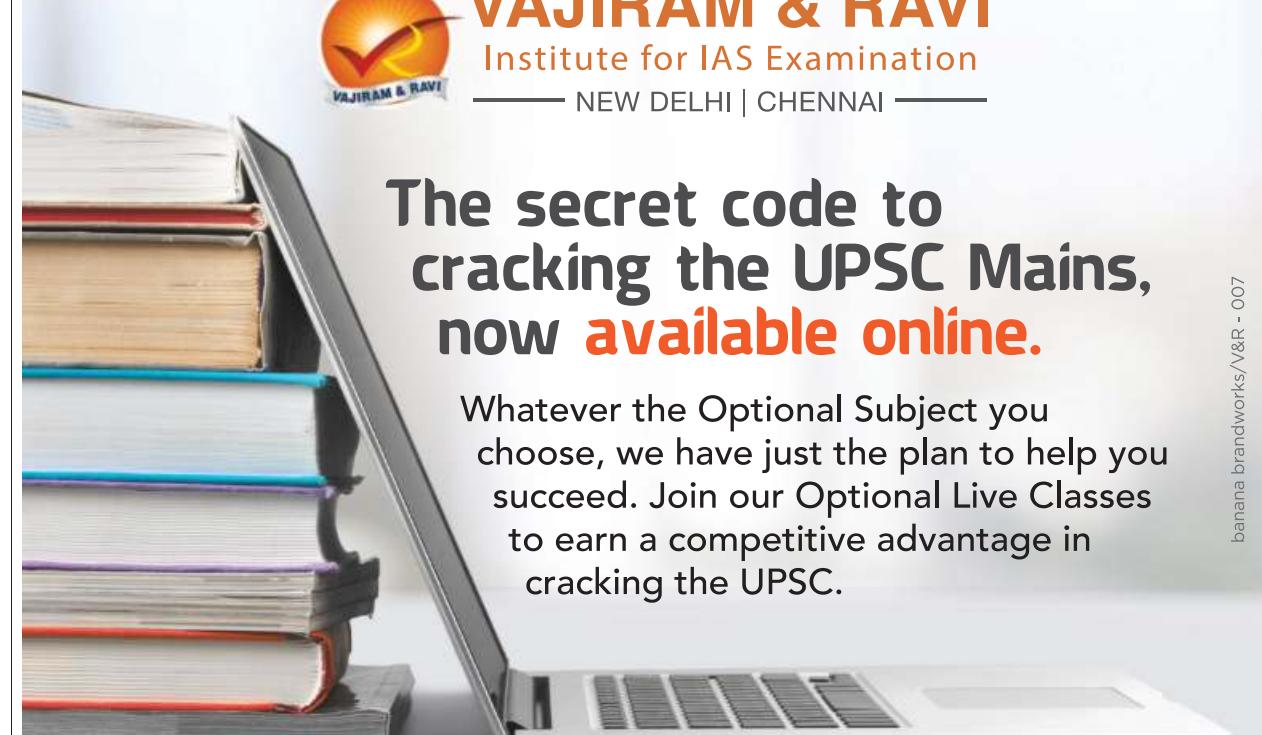
VAJIRAM & RAVI

Institute for IAS Examination

NEW DELHI | CHENNAI

The secret code to cracking the UPSC Mains, now available online.

Whatever the Optional Subject you choose, we have just the plan to help you succeed. Join our Optional Live Classes to earn a competitive advantage in cracking the UPSC.



COURSES OFFERED

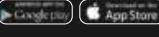
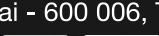
- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Public Administration | Mathematics | Economics |
| Geography | Political Science & I.R. | Sociology |
| Anthropology | Philosophy | History |
| Commerce & Accountancy | Psychology | |

Free Optional subject seminar
11-13 June 2021

Optional subjects online
LIVE classes beginning
on 15 July 2021

LIVE GENERAL STUDIES CLASSES FROM 21ST JUNE 2021

VAJIRAM & RAVI (A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP)
9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi - 110 060, Tel: 011 - 4100 7400
No.43, 2nd Floor, Haddows Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai - 600 006, Tel: 044 - 4330 2121
E-Mail: online@vajiramandravi.com



Eyewitness in wrestler case moves HC for protection

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

An eyewitness in the wrestler Sagar Dhankar case has moved a writ petition in Delhi High Court, seeking protection for him and his family.

The witness claimed that nine accused have been arrested in the present case, so far.

The accused – Mohit, Bhupender, Manjeet and Gulab – have previous involvements in heinous cases; all of them are from Haryana. They were called by accused Sushil Kumar during the brawl.

During investigation, it is learnt that some of the accused persons are members of dreaded gangs operating in Delhi and adjoining States.

On June 2, the HC gave directions to take steps under the witness protection scheme, 2018 before the competent authority.

'Sushil is influential'
The witness claimed that the accused, Sushil Kumar, is an international wrestler, rich and is an influential person. There is an apprehension that the accused may cause harm to the victims/witnesses in the case. The case is very sensitive and widely covered by the media.

In view of the above, there is very much apprehension that the accused persons may cause any harm to the above-mentioned star witnesses of the case. It is, therefore, requested that adequate security may please be provided to the above-mentioned victims of the case as per the provisions of Delhi Witness Protection Scheme, 2018, as per Delhi HC order.

Sushil Kumar seeks special food in jail

Court to pronounce its order today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court will pronounce its order on Olympic medalist wrestler Sushil Kumar's application seeking special food and supplements in the prison, where he is lodged in connection with the alleged murder of a young wrestler, on Wednesday.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Satvir Singh Lamba reserved the order after hearing the contentions of prosecution and defence at length. Sushil, who is facing charges of murder, culpable homicide and kidnapping, is currently lodged in Delhi's Mandoli jail.

In the plea, Sushil's counsels advocate Pradeep Rana, Kumar Vaibhaw and Satwik Misra stated that their client takes supplements like isolate whey protein, omega 3 capsules, jointment capsules, pre-workout C4 and Hyde, multivitamin GNC, excercies bands etc.

The application added that denial of these basic re-



Wrestler Sushil Kumar on his way to court. ■ FILE PHOTO

quirements will have a huge implication on his career, as the special nutrition diet and supplements are extremely necessary for him to maintain his health and performance.

However, the jail authorities in their reply to the court have stated that Sushil's medical condition does not require food supplements or an extra protein diet as an "additional diet".

Advocate Rana said that the special diet and supplements have been sought at Sushil's personal expenses and not of the jail authorities.

Policemen find it tough to ensure social distancing in busy markets

District police also deployed to manage traffic; over 1,200 fined on Day 1 of 'unlock'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The police on Tuesday said they are finding it "tough" to ensure social distancing in busy markets since the unlock process, which began on Monday.

"We are finding it tough to maintain social distancing in busy markets. Shopkeepers are making all efforts to maintain social distancing, but vendors are not following rules. We are imposing fines on them but people also need to be aware of the rules and follow them," said an officer.

The police said traffic has also increased.

Barricades removed

"Apart from traffic police, District police have also been deployed in traffic management. During morning and evening hours, traffic jam was reported on several stretches," said the officer, adding that they had to remove barricades at ma-



Office-goers boarding a bus from the Seemapuri bus depot on Tuesday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

ny places to ensure smooth movement of vehicles.

Police personnel was de-

ployed at liquor shops as well to maintain social distancing.

On Monday, the police fined over 1,200 people for not adhering to COVID guidelines. According to data shared by the police, a total of 1,285 challans were issued on Monday. Of them, 1,053 were for not wearing masks,

229 for not maintaining social distancing and three against the large public gatherings or congregations.

"The process of unlocking has begun, and we urge peo-

ple to follow the COVID-appropriate behaviour. Use face mask when you step out of your house, maintain social distancing and regularly sanitise hands. People should not step out of their homes unnecessarily," said

Delhi Police Additional Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anil Mittal.

A total of 1,24,196 challans have been issued from April 19 to June 7, the data showed.

While 1,04,440 people were fined for not wearing face masks, 18,034 were penalised for not maintaining social distancing, 1,529 for large public gatherings or congregations, 72 for spitting and 121 for consumption of liquor, pan, tobacco etc., it stated.

On the first day of unlock-ing, Delhi Police and market associations had made an-nouncements and also distributed pamphlets to visitors, urging them to follow the guidelines.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday had an-nounced various relaxations in the ongoing lockdown that was imposed on April 19, saying the COVID situation was improving, and the economy needs to be revived.

Liquor vends told to deploy marshals

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has directed all liquor vends in the city to deploy marshals and staff to strictly ensure COVID-appropriate behaviour.

"All the four Govern-ment Corporations viz. DSIDC, DTTDC, DSCSC and DCCSC shall deploy adequate marshals at all their vends [L-6 & L-8] and private licensees [L-7, L-9 & L-10] shall deploy their staff to ensure that COVID-appropriate behaviour viz. wearing of masks, main-taining social distancing, regular use of sanitiser, no con-sumption of liquor, pan, gutkha, tobacco, etc. shall be ensured in all the liquor shops/vends/licen-sees," the Excise Depart-ment said in an order is-sued on June 6. It also directed them to co-ordinate with the local admin-istration and police to main-tain security.

The department has asked all vends to follow the orders issued by the DDMA.

Jamia student gets bail to take B.A. examination

HC sets detailed conditions for the riots accused

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has granted interim bail to Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) student Asif Iqbal Tanha, arrested in connection with the north-east Delhi riots, to allow him to take his three remaining backlog examinations to complete his B.A. (Hons.) (Persian).

A Bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Anup Jai-

ram Bhamhani also attached a string of conditions for Mr. Tanha to comply with, including banning him from deleting or tampering with his browsing history/cookies on the computer, or any SMS or call records from the phone, during the interim bail period.

The 25-year old was arrested in May last year for allegedly being part of a "pre-meditated conspiracy" in the riots. He has been charged under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The HC ordered that Mr. Tanha be released on inter-

rim custody bail on June 13 by 9 a.m. and shall be brought back to prison by 6 p.m. on June 26.

During this period, Mr. Tanha will stay at a hotel in Kalkaji under the custody of two prison guards who would be deputed by the Jail Superintendent.

Mr. Tanha will have to bear all charges, costs and expenses for two rooms at the hotel, one to be occupied by him and the other to be occupied by the two deputed prison guards.

As food is not available at the hotel because of CO-

VID-19 restrictions, food for Mr. Tanha as well as for the deputed prison guards will be arranged through online apps/websites by or on behalf of Mr. Tanha at his cost and expense.

"During the period of interim custody bail, Mr. Tanha shall not invite to the said facility any visitors or guests, including family members, friends, classmates or any other person," the HC ordered.

A laptop and a basic mobile phone, which will be used during the period, will first be checked by the pol-

ice. Mr. Tanha has also been directed to provide details of the IMEI number and the name of the manufacturer service provider of dongle/mobile hotspot, to the Spe-cial Cell officials.

The HC took note that Mr. Tanha has undertaken that he will not use the laptop or the phone or the dongle/mobile hotspot device for any purpose other than for study, preparations and taking of the exams.

Mr. Tanha will be entitled to make phone calls to his family and counsel for up to a total of 10 minutes per day.

BJP names candidates for mayoral elections

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP, with a clear major-ity in the three municipal corporations in Delhi, on Tuesday nominated its can-didates for various posts in the civic bodies.

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta said Sardar Ra-jendra Iqbal Singh and Archana Dilip Singh filed their nomi-nations for the posts of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, respectively, of the North Delhi Municipal Corpora-tion; Jogiram Jain for Chairman of Standing Com-mittee, Vijay Kumar Bhagat for Vice Chairman and Shail Bihari Goswami for Leader of the House.

For the East Delhi Munici-pal Corporation, Shyam Sunder Agarwal and Kiran Vaid filed papers for Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Veer Singh Pawar for Standing Committee Chairman, Deepak Malhotra for Vice Chairman and Satyapal Singh for Leader of the House.

For the South body, Mukesh Suryan and Pawan Sharma filed their nomi-nations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Colonel B.K. Oberoi and Poonam Bhati for Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Standing Com-mittee, Vijay Kumar Bhagat for Vice Chairman and Shail Bihari Goswami for Leader of the House.

All the BJP candidates are set to be elected on June 16.

Constables served show-cause notices for 'amusement videos'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A woman head constable and a male constable – posted in Model Town police station – have been served show-cause notices for uploading amusement videos in uniforms on social media, the police said on Tuesday.

The notice, served by DCP (North-West) Usha Rangnani,

said the two officials pre-pared amusement videos while on duty during the lockdown and also flouted COVID guidelines by not wearing masks. "Being members of a disciplined force, their conduct appears to be unprofessional in the discharge of their official duties," the order read. The of-ficials told to explain their conduct in the next 15 days.

IP University starts online admissions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The IP University on Tues-day started online admis-sion process for the up-coming academic session and also added five new pro-grammes. The university has over 40,000 seats avail-able in around 150 different programmes ranging from undergraduate to research-level.

The new courses that the university has launched will be offered at its new East Delhi campus in Surajmal Vihar. The new coursed in-clude B. Tech in Artificial Intelligence& Data Science, B. Tech in Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, B. Tech in Industrial Internet of Things and B. Tech in Automation & Robotics, under the newly created school – University School of Automation & Robotics (USAR), the university said.

The fifth course it is launching is a Bachelor of Design under another newly created school – the University School of Design & Innovation (USDI). The ad-mission to the programme will be given on the basis of Nation Level Test - UCEED/NID.

Delhi Police maintains a central database of stolen/lost mobile handsets in ZIPNET

Follow these steps to verify online

- ❖ Visit <https://zipnet.delhipolice.gov.in> and check the IMEI numbers under Missing Mobiles link.
- ❖ Enter IMEI number of the mobile phone you want to buy.
- ❖ If the phone has ever been reported stolen/lost from Delhi, its IMEI no. will be listed in ZIPNET.

Remember the second hand mobile phone you are buying may have been stolen/lost/used for committing crime

Email to CP, Delhi at: cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in

Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

For immediate police help call : 112

To share information call 1090

JHARKHAND BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED
CIN No. U40108JH2013SGC001702
Regd. Office : Engineering Building, H.E.C., Dhanbad-834004
Telephone : 0651-2400799 & Fax : 0651-2400799 / <http://www.jbvn.co.in>

4th Extension Notice

Tender extension notice for NIT No. 303/PR/JBVNL/20-21 the date extension for above NIT is available on the site www.jharkhand.gov.in.

A revised Date and Time for Bid Submission and Technical Bid Opening is as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Details
1	Name of Work	Supply, Installation, Operation and FMS of AMI System for consumers having load above 10 KW in JBVN. Estimated cost Rs. 20 Crores (Rs. Twenty Two Crores)
3	Last Date / Time for receipt of bids	05.07.2021 at 04:00 PM
4	Date and Time for Opening of Technical bid	05.07.2021 at 05:00 PM

Sd/-
General Manager (IT)

PR No. 247212 PR 247662 Jharkhand Bijli Vitran Nigam Ltd(21-22)D

कार्यपालक अभियन्ता का कार्यालय
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता यांत्रिक नागरिक प्रमंडल, रौची

शुद्धि पत्र

इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित अति-आल्पकालीन निविदा सुचना संख्या 05 / 2020-21(2nd Call), जो समाचार पत्रों में P.R. No. 246649 (Drinking Water & Sanitation) 21-22(D) द्वारा प्रकाशित किया गया था, में निम्न रूप से संशोधन किया जाता है –

अंति-आल्पकालीन निविदा सुचना संख्या – 01 / 2021-22	
3. वेबसाइट पर निविदा प्रक्रिया की तिथि एवं समय	09.06.2021 को 04:00 बजे अपराह्न में
4. प्री-बीड मिटिंग का तिथि एवं समय	15.06.2021 को 11:30 बजे पूर्वाह्न में
6. निविदा प्राप्ति (ऑन-लाइन विडिओ) की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	21.06.2021 को 05:00 बजे अपराह्न में
7. पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता यांत्रिक नागरिक प्रमंडल, रौची में परिमाण विप्रत का मूल्य एवं अग्रधन की राशि की मूल प्रति जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	22.06.2021 को 02:00 बजे अपराह्न में
8. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	23.06.2021 को 02:00 बजे अपराह्न में

निविदा का विवरण :-

क्रम सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्रावकलित राशि (₹० में)	अग्रधन की राशि (₹० में)	परिमाण विप्रत का मूल्य (₹० में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1.	Supplying, installation and commissioning of Horizontal split casing centrifugal pump of Kirloskar/ Jy				

IN BRIEF



Huzurabud will teach a lesson to TRS: Eatala

HYDERABAD
Telangana former Minister and rebel TRS MLA Eatala Rajender said a new agitation for a democratic Telangana will start from Huzurabud and the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) will get a befitting reply for failing the spirit of the statehood movement.

A.P. to help small traders with interest-free loans

GUNTUR
The Andhra Pradesh government credited ₹370 crore to 3.7 lakh small traders towards interest-free loans, under the second phase of Jagananna Thodu scheme. Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said that small and petty vendors, artisans needn't approach private parties for loans, as they can take loans from banks under Jagananna Thodu scheme to cater to their working capital.

One of Kuthiran tunnels to be opened on August 1

THIRISSUR
One of the twin tunnels at Kuthiran on the Thrissur-Palakkad National Highway will be opened on August 1. After a high-level meeting to review the progress of the work on Tuesday, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan asked the authorities to make arrangements to open one of the tunnels for vehicle traffic.

Former Minister C.M. Udas passes away

BENGALURU
Six-time legislator and former Minister C.M. Udas, 85, passed away on Tuesday at a private hospital here due to age-related illness. He is survived by wife, a daughter, and son Shivakumar Udas, a BJP MP. A former Minister for Public Works in the B.S. Yediyurappa Cabinet in 2008, he was popular due to his easy access to people.

Govt. staff in Lakshadweep worried

They are set to be given intelligence gathering job

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE**

The Lakshadweep Government Employees' Union has objected to the island administration's decision to deploy government staff aboard fishing vessels for intelligence gathering.

In a letter to the Director of Port, Shipping and Aviation, union general secretary Fathahudheen said that the decision had made government servants who are members of the union 'nervous'. He urged the union territory administration to desist from such a move.

There were agencies such as the police, the marine force, Coast Guard and the Navy to guard India's territorial waters and beyond. For a government servant, other than those working in the field of fishing, being asked to work for eight to 10 hours on fishing boats would only unnerve them, Mr.



UDF members staging a protest, demanding withdrawal of the proposed 'anti-people laws' in Lakshadweep. ■ PTI

There were State and Central Intelligence agencies too working to detect security threats.

In another development, following up on a letter written by T. Abdul Khader, chairperson of the Village (Dweep) panchayat in Kavaratti, its members, along with two members of the district panchayat, met the District Collector Asker Ali to re-

Fathahudheen said.

In another development, following up on a letter written by T. Abdul Khader, chairperson of the Village (Dweep) panchayat in Kavaratti, its members, along with two members of the district panchayat, met the District Collector Asker Ali to re-

Plea for providing food to needy islanders

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE**

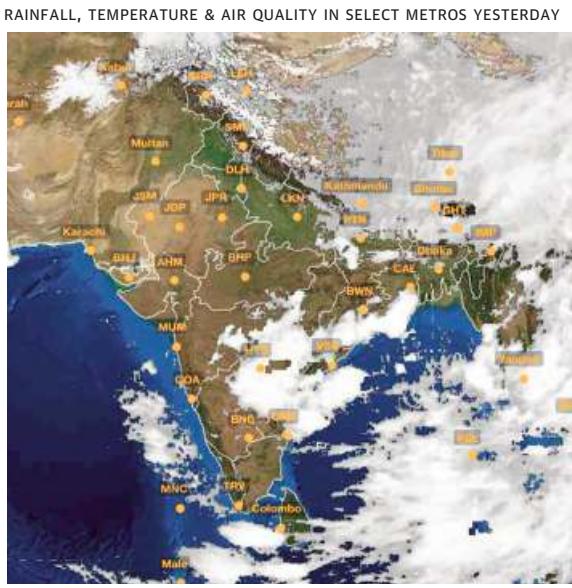
A writ petition was filed in the Kerala High Court on Tuesday seeking a directive to the Centre and Lakshadweep administration to provide food kits to needy islanders and transfer cash into their account till the lockdown is

lifted. The petition was filed by Nasih K.K. of Amini island.

According to the petitioner, 80% of the islanders depend on fishing, coconut cultivation, and coir twisting.

Most of them were jobless following the imposition of lockdown and curfew.

WEATHER WATCH



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP, INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty winds (speed reaching 40-50 kmph) at isolated places very likely over West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana, Kerala, Bihar, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, central Maharashtra, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	30...	29.4...	25.0	Kozhikode	...	34.0...	25.4
Ahmedabad	39...	31...	28.5	Kurnool	...	37.4...	26.6
Aizawl	25...	25.8...	23.5	Lucknow	...	39.2...	27.8
Altafabad	40...	40.4...	28.5	Madurai	...	36.8...	26.8
Bengaluru	31...	21.9	—	Mangaluru	...	30.5...	23.4
Bhopal	6.2...	39.5...	24.5	Mumbai	21...	32.1...	25.5
Bhubaneswar	36.7...	25.6	—	Mysuru	...	33.0...	21.4
Chandigarh	40...	28.3	—	New Delhi	...	41.7...	28.6
Chennai	47...	37.1...	22.5	Patna	...	40.0...	27.0
Coimbatore	35...	25.4	—	Port Blair	25...	30.7...	24.9
Dehradun	36.9...	25.3	—	Puducherry	...	35.2...	26.6
Gangtok	6...	22.3...	17.7	Pune	...	31.4...	22.5
Goa	7.4...	30.6...	24.5	Raipur	...	40.8...	29.2
Guwahati	6...	31.3...	24.0	Ranchi	0.8...	34.6...	24.1
Hubballi	29.0...	22.0	—	Shillong	...	28.1...	16.5
Hyderabad	35.6...	25.5	—	Shimla	...	30.7...	22.9
Imphal	2...	30.0...	21.0	Srinagar	...	34.3...	18.6
Jaipur	41.4...	30.5	—	Thiruvananthapuram	1...	32.1...	25.5
Kochi	31.8...	25.4	—	Tiruchi	...	38.6...	26.6
Kohima	2...	27.8...	18.0	Vijayawada	...	39.4...	27.0
Kolkata	40...	36.1...	24.3	Visakhapatnam	...	37.6...	29.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	.3	45	130	47	..65	■■■■■
Bengaluru	.3	52	21	28	..59	■■■■■
Chennai	.7	5.5	45	33	..69	■■■■■
Delhi	.2	46	..	128	400	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.2	40	..	56	..62	■■■■■
Kolkata	.5	12	22	46	..48	■■■■■
Lucknow	11	39	89	128	127	■■■■■
Mumbai	.59	21	26	..5	..53	■■■■■
Pune	.6	8	50	..87	..58	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	17	47	19	..57	..—	■■■■■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sonipat, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 312, indicating unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 19

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

WEST

Sudhakaran is president of Congress in Kerala

Information was given by Rahul Gandhi



K. Sudhakaran

with powerful social groups by naming V.D. Satheeshan as Leader of the Opposition and now, Mr. Sudhakaran as the party's State president.

It had weighed several names for the post, including Kodikunnil Suresh, MP. It was likely to retain Mr. Sudhakaran as working president.

'More people involved in parlour firing'

**KOCHI BUREAU
KOCHI**

More people beyond the six accused are suspected to have links to the beauty parlour firing case being probed by the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS). So far, four have been arrested.

The agency has reached such a conclusion after grilling gangster Ravi Pujari during his nine-day-long custody, which ended on Tuesday.

"More people are involved in the case going by the confessions of Pujari. But that information will have to be verified before they can be arraigned in as accused," said ATS sources.

The firing took place outside the beauty parlour on December 15, 2018.

Maoists say police killed Madhukar

'But they claim he died of COVID-19'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD**

Communist Party of India (Maoist) on Tuesday alleged that Telangana police were carrying out a false campaign that its activist Gadmad Madhukar alias Shobh Rai died of ill health after Sirupur squad of Maoists at the age of 16 in 1999.

The party's official representative said Telangana police had themselves declared that Madhukar was caught on June 1 when he was going to a hospital. Five days later, they announced that he died of COVID-19.

The bureau's official representative Samatha said the party appealed to all democratic activists not to be

lieve such propaganda by the police.

Thirty-eight-year-old Madhukar hailed from Kondapally village of Bejjur mandal in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district. He joined Sirupur squad of Maoists at the age of 16 in 1999.

The party's official representative said Telangana police had themselves declared that Madhukar was caught on June 1 when he was going to a hospital. Five days later, they announced that he died of COVID-19.

The CPI (Maoist) representative charged the police with subjecting Madhukar to torture from June 1 to 6 without extending him any medical treatment.

Maharashtra reports 10,891 COVID-19 cases, 295 deaths

16,577 patients recover; Mumbai records 682 fresh cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Maharashtra on Tuesday recorded 10,891 fresh COVID-19 cases and 295 deaths, bringing the total to 1,01,172. The State's caseload rose to 58,52,891, while the death toll increased to 1,01,172.

On Monday, the State reported 10,219 COVID-19 cases, the lowest after March 9 this year, and 154 fatalities.

A total of 16,577 patients were discharged from hospitals during the day, raising the count of recoveries to 55,80,925 and leaving the State with 1,67,927 active

cases, the department said. Maharashtra's case recovery rate now stands at 95.35%, while the fatality rate is 1.73%. With 2,11,042 new tests, the number of samples tested so far went up to 3,69,07,181.

Of the 295 deaths, 208 occurred in the last 48 hours and 87 were from the last week. As part of a reconciliation exercise, the Health Department added 407 deaths, which occurred before the last week, into its cumulative figure, which means the fatality count increased by 702 on Tuesday.

Mumbai reported 682 fresh cases and seven deaths, taking the infection count to 7,12,055 and the toll

to 15,006. The State capital has reported its lowest single-day death count after March 28, when eight patients had succumbed to the infection.

The wider Mumbai division, which consists of the city and its satellite towns, reported 2,022 new cases and 49 deaths, raising the tally to 15,52,411 and the fatality count to 28,447, a release said.

The total deaths in the division, Mira Bhayander Municipal Corporation areas and rural parts of Palghar district recorded 13 deaths each, it said. The Nashik division reported 953 new cases, while the Kolhapur division added 3,614 cases.

Commenting on the issues raised by the delegation, Mr. Fadnavis said that the majority of the issues could have been handled at



A necessary reversion

The changes in vaccine policy should help improve India's response to the pandemic

The Centre has announced a much-needed course correction in India's vaccination policy with Prime Minister Narendra Modi taking the podium to announce that the month-old decision to leave States to procure vaccines on their own for their 18-44 population would be ending in two weeks. States were allowed to procure 25% of the vaccines manufactured and the Centre 50%, a policy that the Supreme Court termed "irrational and arbitrary". The Court's comments have had a salutary effect. From June 21, the Centre will be procuring 75% and States will no longer have to pay vaccine companies for the same. Vaccines will continue to be free for all those who choose to get their shot at government centres. The 25% vaccines that were allotted to private hospitals will continue too, though the service charges that they charge will be capped at ₹150. This ceiling price on vaccines in hospitals will bring predictability and be hugely beneficial to citizens. The Centre, which controlled all supply of vaccines and had negotiated prices and orders with Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute saw itself desperately short of supply right in the middle of India's deadly second wave. The hospital emergencies worsened the Centre's panic and so it chose a path that no country had undertaken, of devolving the responsibility of buying vaccines to States. Health has traditionally been within the purview of States, and it stands to reason that they would invariably have to deal with the challenges that vaccination throws up. This includes vaccine hesitancy, the problem of transportation, the availability of trained personnel and the existing capacity at health-care sites. Faced with the intensity of the second wave, States demanded more vaccines and autonomy in deciding how to administer them. What resulted were frequent public spats, with the Centre blaming States for inefficiently using available stocks and yet demanding more.

Though there are substantial numbers of senior citizens yet to be vaccinated, particularly with a second dose, it is clear that the foreseeable demand will be in the sub-45 category. The Government appears more confident of getting a steady stream of supply from Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute and, in a bold move, has ordered 30 crore doses of an untested vaccine from the Hyderabad-based Biological E. Assuming that a third wave is not in the vicinity, these changes in total could be the beginning of a smoother, more efficient vaccine roll-out. Mr. Modi's announcement was preceded by a truculent defence of himself and his government and passing on blame to a variety of actors, including governments before 2014, for India's very real shortcomings on vaccination. However, the path to positive change is often meandering, and surviving the pandemic and being wiser from mistakes must be the spirit in which these policy changes are adopted.

This time for Male

Maldives and India have an opportunity to work for changing power structures at the UN

The election of Maldives Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid as the President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly, that begins in September for 2021-22, is a major boost for the island-nation's international profile. The election marks the first time a Maldivian will hold the post in the UN's history, and his margin of victory, 143 to his challenger's 48, indicating support from nearly three fourths of all countries at the UN, is significant. Maldives also sees it as a win for the 52-member Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which are battling climate change vulnerability and other developmental challenges. In addition, in a year when events in Afghanistan will draw attention as U.S. forces begin to pullout, Mr. Shahid's victory over his surprise opponent, former Afghanistan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul, is remarkable. For India too, that helped Maldives canvass support, the outcome is welcome, not only because of its close ties with Male but also the high regard for Mr. Shahid, a key member of the Solih government. In a break from the norm of not announcing one's choice for an election by secret ballot, Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla had announced India's support for the Maldives in November 2020, South Block's explanation being that Afghanistan had not yet announced Mr. Rassoul's candidature – which it did in January 2021. New Delhi should now ensure that the Afghan government carries no hard feelings, as some in Kabul had even hinted that India might wish to support Afghanistan as it had sacrificed its turn at the UNSC for India's current term there. It would also be important to analyse why Kabul decided to field a candidate late in the race, and not withdraw despite it being clear that its South Asian neighbour was ahead, and did not consult India closely on the process.

The focus now shifts to his tenure and South Asian issues such as the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and equitable access to vaccines. Cooperation is close and Mr. Shahid is in discussions to appoint an Indian diplomat as his chief aide. Given that the previous President of the General Assembly, from Turkey, had ruffled feathers with his remarks in Islamabad that Pakistan was "duty" bound to raise the Jammu and Kashmir dispute "more strongly" at the UN, Mr. Shahid's tenure is expected to see a far smoother term for India, especially as the Modi government focuses on showcasing the country at the UN during India's 75th Independence anniversary next year. Above all, it is hoped that India in the UNSC and the Maldivian President of the General Assembly will work in tandem as New Delhi pursues its goals for multilateral reform, and re-energise the dormant process of effecting change in the old power structures in the global body.

Bring genomic sequencing into the pandemic fight

Emerging variants, with evidence of higher transmissibility and immune escape, demand re-strategised responses



CHANDRAKANT LAHARIYA

If there is one tool in the COVID-19 pandemic response, which India has been slow in adoption and has used sub-optimally, it is genomic sequencing. An effective COVID-19 pandemic response requires, *inter alia*, keeping track of emerging variants (total 10 till now including variants of interest and concern) and then conducting further studies about their transmissibility, immune escape and potential to cause severe disease. Therefore, genomic sequencing becomes one of the first steps in this important process. When the success of the United States and the United Kingdom in containing the virus is discussed, a lot of credit is being given to the increasing vaccination coverage; however, it is often forgotten that alongside, these countries have scaled up genomic sequencing, tracked the emerging variants and used that evidence for timely actions. India seems to be faltering on both expanding vaccination coverage and genomic sequencing. Unfortunately, there is not enough attention to scale up genomic sequencing, which as per the original plan was supposed to cover 5% of confirmed COVID-19 cases (<https://bit.ly/3x76vVC>).

Though the procedural steps such as setting up the Indian SARS-CoV2 Genomic Consortia, or INSA-COG (<https://bit.ly/3uWpf8Y>) have been taken, the sequencing has remained at a very low level of a few thousand cases only. It is no surprise that we understand the Delta variant (B.1.617.2, the original lineage B.1.617 was first reported

from Maharashtra, India in October 2020) far less than the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7, first reported from Kent, England in September 2020) reported just month before Delta. The challenge of insufficient genomic sequencing is further compounded by the pace at which data is being shared, especially when the emergence of strains is so vital in tracking and responding to a pandemic. Reportedly, the Indian government took two weeks, from early March – when research scientists submitted information on new variants – to issue a public announcement on the variants on March 24, 2021 (<https://reut.rs/3cnhLWO>).

The Delta strain

Amidst this, the release of findings of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Institute of Genomics; Integrative Biology and National Centre for Disease Control and Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research study, tracking variants of SARS-CoV-2 in Delhi; on a pre-print server (yet to be peer reviewed) is a welcome change and provides new insights (<https://bit.ly/3z9jd8j>).

Based upon the analysis of nearly 3,600 genomic sequence samples from November 2020 to April 2021, the authors have reported that by April 2021, the Delta variant became the most circulating variant in Delhi and was found in nearly 60% of the samples analysed; is 50% more transmissible than the Alpha variant (which already had 70% higher transmissibility over the ancestral virus); is likely to be associated with high viral load, as reflected by the declining Ct value (for RT-PCR) over the study period and resulted in a higher proportion of breakthrough infection (people already vaccinated getting infected). Based upon these findings, the authors attribute the Delta variant respon-



sible for the pandemic wave (which was fourth for the city state) in Delhi in April-May 2021. However, the authors did not find any difference in severity of disease or case fatality rate due to the Delta variant and suggested the need for further studies.

This is the first detailed study of SARS-CoV-2 genomic sequencing data from any Indian State and provides very useful insight on the behaviour and impact of Delta variants. Around the same time, Public Health England (PHE) reported that the Delta variant has become the most common circulating strain in the U.K., replacing Alpha. The early data from the PHE has interpreted that the Delta variant may be responsible for more severe disease and higher rate of hospitalisation compared to all previous variants. A week before this data, on May 27, the PHE reported that the effectiveness of a single dose of vaccine (amongst symptomatic patients) was lower against the Delta strain. On June 3, medical journal *The Lancet* published research findings from laboratory studies which examined the neutralising capacity of antibodies from individuals vaccinated with two doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, which was nearly 5.8 fold lower against Delta variants and 2.6 fold less against the Alpha variant, when compared with the ancestor virus (<https://bit.ly/2RzisV7>).

Our scientific knowledge and

understanding about emerging strains is going to be the key to deploy public health interventions (vaccines included) to fight the pandemic. The emerging variants – with early evidence of higher transmissibility, immune escape and breakthrough infections – demand continuous re-thinking and re-strategising of the pandemic response by every country. Scientific research would make a difference only if it results in informed policy decisions. There are a few steps Indian policy makers should consider as urgent.

The steps ahead

First, India needs to scale up genomic sequencing across all States. There should be sufficient and representative samples collected for genomic sequencing to track district-level trends in circulating variants. More genomic sequencing is needed from large urban agglomerations. A national-level analysis of collated genomic sequencing data should be done on a regular basis and findings shared publicly.

Second, the Indian government needs to invest and support more scientific and operational research on vaccine effectiveness. The data should be analysed on a regular basis and should include various stratifiers such as age, gender and comorbid conditions, etc.

Third, there are early indications of immune escape and reduced vaccine effectiveness against the Delta variant (especially after one shot). India, till the end of May, has administered at least one dose of vaccines to 43% of people older than 60 years and 37% of those older than 45 years. Does it mean the focus of vaccination should be to achieve saturation coverage of the high-risk population, with both shots, than one shot to everyone? Does it mandate a need for a reduced gap between

two doses of Covishield for anyone older than 45 years? Should vaccination of those 18-44 years be put on hold till vaccine supply is assured or should it be done only in districts where the Delta strain is predominant? These are the questions which experts need to deliberate and come up with the answers.

The data from genomic sequencing has both policy and operational implications. The State and district officials should engage the epidemiologists in coming up with practical and operational implications and strategies. As Indian States plan to open up after COVID-19 restrictions, the settings with predominantly the Delta variant in circulation (which has higher transmissibility) should aim for far stricter adherence to COVID appropriate behaviour, in public places.

Use evidence for actions

Continuation of many unproven and ineffective therapies in COVID-19 treatment guidelines is proof that India is not quick in adopting evidence to the practice.

There is a need for rapidly expanding genomic sequencing, sharing related data in a timely and transparent manner, and understanding of the impact of new variants on transmissibility, severity and vaccine effectiveness. The only assured way to fight the pandemic is to use scientific evidence to decide policies, modify strategies and take corrective actions. As India prepares for the third wave, increasing genomic sequencing and use of scientific evidence for decision making are not a choice but an absolute essential.

Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya, a medical epidemiologist, is a public policy and health systems expert and co-author of 'Till We Win: India's Fight Against The COVID-19 Pandemic'

State interventions, Lakshadweep's future

The archipelago's integration into the mainstream should not lead to emotional alienation and physical damage



MUKUL SANWAL

The Lakshadweep Administration, which is now facing a storm over its draft rules introduced by its Administrator, has now provided a fresh rationale for its proposals, shifting from public policy to public purpose ignoring public interest, whereas the strategic issue is the interplay of ecological fragility, insular cultural geography and strategic location. There are two competing visions for its future. NITI Aayog, in 2019, identified water villas and land-based tourism projects as the development issue faced by the islands, suggested zoning based on land acquisition and focused on sustainable development ignoring the fragile environment and culture. The Integrated Island Management Plan prepared under the guidance of the Supreme Court and National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management, in 2016, had rejected 'home stays' in view of the strict social customs and strong resistance of the vast majority. It stipulated that development programmes be implemented in consultation with the elected local self-government bodies adhering to scientifically determined plans (<https://bit.ly/3v4sdrO> and <https://bit.ly/2T5q8II>).

Questionable public purpose
The rationale, or thinking, of the appointed Administrator of the

Union Territory, planning for flight loads of tourists, through four controversial proposals – the Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation, Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation, Lakshadweep Panchayat Regulation and Lakshadweep Animal Preservation Regulation – as "regulations of peace, progress and good government", has apparently not even been able to convince the Union Home Minister. For the local people, and across the political spectrum, these changes are arbitrary, authoritarian and will destroy the way of life. The Administrator's fresh response is reliance on the power of government or 'public purpose' for acquiring private land, unnecessarily opening the door to conflict and the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court in the case of *Dev Sharani vs State of Uttar Pradesh*, in 2011, pointed out that, "Any attempt by the State to acquire land by promoting a public purpose to benefit a particular group of people or to serve any particular interest at the cost of the interest of a large section of people especially of the common people defeats the very concept of public purpose...."

The proposals have been challenged before the High Court of Kerala, which had, in 2019, in a separate case, recognised the special status given to the inhabitants for protecting their ethnic culture and traditions, and to maintain the serene atmosphere in these islands without unnecessary interference by mainlanders.

Lakshadweep is unique. It is an egalitarian coconut tree owning society, with little economic in-

equality, a very high level of both literacy and unemployment. The Muslim community is designated as Scheduled Tribes. The land area is fully covered with coconut trees, the main agricultural crop, and fisheries is the main economic activity employing a quarter of the working population. Electricity generation is mainly through diesel generators and is expensive and solar electricity has limitations as it requires a large land area. They need employment in the mainland.

Review tourism strategy

The Lakshadweep Administration has framed the development issue as the development of the islands on the lines of the Maldives, whereas the fact is that it is adopting a very different strategy without any real consultation.

In the Maldives, tourism since the 1970s is centred on water villas in uninhabited islands, ensuring that very few coconut trees are cut with limited home stays introduced in 2015, and few cultural and other conflicts. Second, a 'one island, one resort' policy has kept pressure on reefs low due to a wide distribution of the tourist population. Third, the business

model is about giving coral reefs economic significance where rich and healthy reefs are essential for private capital's economic returns. Fourth, tourists come because of the natural beauty and the sheer amount of marine life; resort owners commit to conserve the reefs and divers at the resorts are quick to report illegal activities. Fifth, regulation is limited to ban on reef fishing and collection of corals, having no centrality to land acquisition.

In Lakshadweep, the separation of resorts from villages, including for drinking water, sewage disposal and electricity, gives priority to the fragile ecosystem, socio-economic conditions and well-being of the inhabitants. Groundwater occurs as a thin lens floating over the seawater and is tapped by open wells replenished by the monsoon; all the inhabited islands have a scarcity of drinking water supply. The conventional method of sewage treatment is not feasible because of the coral sandy strata and high water table. The existing water balance is already under stress and inhabited villages cannot accommodate tourism. Why the Ministry of Environment is quiet about this is not clear.

Political insensitivity

Meanwhile, public interest is being re-defined, shifting the debate from private tourism to urbanisation, both inappropriate for inhabited islands. Despite inhabited islands being defined as 'cities' in the Census, they do not need to be developed as 'smart cities' with a focus on infrastructure requiring large-scale construction and land acquisition. The irony is that the

Administration has anticipated public opposition and, despite there being no case of murder, robbery or local involvement in smuggling, the new draft legislation seeks preventive detention for 'anti-social activities', and covers 'cruel person' and 'depredator of environment'.

The relation between state and society is being arbitrarily changed, despite the constitutional protection. The powers of the panchayats have been withdrawn on grounds of corruption, an unusual step. The two-child policy for those seeking election to panchayats does not exist in other Union Territories or States. A ban on beef has been instituted, contrary to the practice in Northeast India. Liquor is being permitted for tourists in inhabited islands.

Innovation needed

Lakshadweep is a uni-district Union Territory with a top-heavy administrative system of more than half-a-dozen All-India Service officers essentially creating work for themselves.

Interventions should be limited to setting boundary conditions for both resorts and development institutions, with income from tax-free resorts given to the inhabitants. Active state intervention should be limited to generation of electricity in partnership with public sector units, and water, sewage and health as well as education, technology-enabled employment in call centres and future employment in the mainland.

Mukul Sanwal is a former Indian Administrative Service officer who has been to Lakshadweep in the 1970s

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Vaccine procurement

An evolving pandemic demands a fluid and dynamic approach to policymaking (Page 1, "Govt. will revert to centralised procurement of vaccines: Modi", June 8). Strategies need to be tweaked along the way depending on the nature of exigencies. Prime Minister Modi's turnaround in the vaccine policy is sensible though belated. States should work closely with the central government because the next couple of months are going to be critical for the nation. Expanding vaccination coverage is the only way to

prevent the pandemic's possible third wave. When are we going to build a collaborative political culture if not in a health emergency?

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN,
Thiruvananthapuram

■ The Opposition, while remaining reasonably proud of its role in compelling the government to take the decision, should also appreciate the Prime Minister's gesture. The Supreme Court of India's posers and observations might have also dictated the course to the government. But, despite the policy-change, the situation is far

from satisfactory. It should be made clear that vaccination will be provided absolutely free of cost to all, without age specifications, making it truly universal. The process should be regulated only in relation to the time of production of vaccines, with consequent acceptance of some priority sections.

Leaving 25% to private hospitals by asking them to purchase direct from manufacturers and allowing them to collect the cost of vaccine and service charge from the public is unacceptable. This does not tally with the Mr. Modi's own assessment that "never in a hundred years has there

been such a (global) pandemic". The old example of free universal vaccination for smallpox should be followed.

P.R.V. RAJA,
Pandalam, Kerala

Vaccination hurdles
I write this letter as senior consultant and professor, department of obstetrics and gynaecology, CMC, Vellore. There are media reports saying that the Union Health Ministry on Monday asked the States to include the Unique Disability Identification (UDID) card as a photo ID for registration on [the] CoWIN 2.0 portal for COVID-19 vaccination'. I

wonder how many adult Indians on the margins of our society have Aadhaar/PAN/UDID cards and also a smartphone to register themselves on the CoWIN site. I am sure we can reach such people who cannot have access to a vaccine in the same way as schemes such as providing rations to their homes free of cost. If we want to return to normal, have our children get back to school, and not lose many productive lives, we need to work hard to immunise everyone – and this includes even those who have no access to CoWIN centres.

Ds. JESSIE LIONEL,
Vellore, Tamil Nadu

Unchecked and rising
Fuel prices, both petrol and diesel, have gone through the roof, yet the central government seems unconcerned about the plight of the people and blaming the rise in world crude oil prices for the increases. How long is the Government going to increase the pressure on consumers? It has stopped subsidies to LPG consumers too. People are suffering, already stressed beyond tolerable limits because of the COVID-19 crisis.

V. PADMANABHAN
Bengaluru

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



Preparing for the next COVID-19 wave

Vaccinating the vulnerable, constant surveillance and reliable data will help India tackle the third wave



GIRIDHARA R. BABU & V. RAVI



A healthcare worker administers a COVID-19 vaccine to a shepherd during a vaccination drive in Pulpwama district in south Kashmir. ■ REUTERS

Using the data in Karnataka, Aniruddha Adiga et al. show in a paper in *medRxiv* that a third COVID-19 wave is imminent in the State even if the strongest non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) are implemented and 1,67,000 persons are vaccinated each day. This is corroborated by evidence from other countries. It took nearly eight weeks in the U.K. to go from a second to a third wave, 17 weeks in Italy, and 23 weeks in the U.S. Some people are still debating whether there will be a third wave. It is not a question of 'if' but 'when'. In all likelihood, the next wave might be in late November or December in India. Despite the quantum of cases in the next wave, it is important to plan and prepare for it. These are several actions that India needs to take to prepare for and tackle the next wave.

Vaccination

Data from several States indicate that the average age of mortality is reducing in several States and stabilising at 30-45 years. This suggests that vaccination might have already offered survival advantage to those aged 45 years and above. This was the main objective of providing vaccination: preventing deaths and limiting serious morbidity requiring ventilation or oxygenated beds.

Given the undoubted benefits of vaccination, extraordinary efforts will have to be made to secure vaccines for vulnerable people. The vaccine supply constraints are likely to be resolved by the end of July. Till then, people with co-morbidities, irrespective of age, should be prioritised for vaccination. Micro planning for vaccination should be strengthened. For this, health workers and volunteers need to go house to house and prepare lists of all the eligible beneficiaries. Next, efforts should be made to help in registering and vaccinating the vulnerable. We estimate that the country should vaccinate at least 10 million people each day to cover the vulnerable population in the next three months. To reach this pace, it is important to develop a strong mobilisation strategy, address

the concerns of the vulnerable, and improve access to vaccination sites. A strong focus on bottom-up micro planning, similar to what was adopted during the measles-rubella elimination programme and polio programme, can be helpful.

The periods between waves

We only wake up to disease threats when there is a large outbreak. We have selective amnesia to health-related issues in the intervening periods and quickly get back to 'normal' activities. But it is these intervening periods between waves/outbreaks that are actually important. It is during these periods that surveillance needs to be meticulous. One of the critical aspects of surveillance is to sustain aggressive testing, especially in symptomatic individuals, and keep a close watch on the seven-day moving average of the test positivity rate (TPR). A TPR of less than 5% indicates that the disease is under control. Another important facet of surveillance is genomic sequencing to keep a watch on the emergence of new variants of SARS-CoV-2.

The surveillance programme in the country needs strengthening, and strict review should guide the early identification of clusters. Timely investigation and early containment of outbreaks should be the mainstay of preventing the onslaught of cases and deaths. Combining the syndromic approach with enhanced testing levels is necessary for all the areas. Preparing for the next wave involves developing a standardised definition for minimum cases to be de-

tected in each part of the country. Based on the available data, States can aim to detect and review, say, 1,000-1,300 cases per million each month provided adequate testing is done. This will help them identify areas where there is poor reporting and strengthen the overall response in these areas. In order to detect these cases, nearly 20,000-25,000 tests per million will have to be done each month.

Use data-driven interventions

As stated by historian John Barry, the most important lesson from the 1918 influenza is to "tell the truth". Whenever true figures are suppressed during a pandemic, the data get skewed. As a result, modellers make unreliable projections, and wrong policies and programmes are formulated. Hence, data should be made freely available to experts. Systematic collection, compilation and analysis of clinical, epidemiological and laboratory data is paramount to decision-making. A core expert group comprising clinicians, epidemiologists and laboratory personnel should be constituted at every level (district, State and national) and entrusted with the responsibility of suggesting appropriate interventions to the concerned authorities. Data alone should drive interventions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been associated with a high attack rate among household contacts. Therefore, non-pharmacological interventions represent the cornerstone to halting transmission. These include avoiding mass gatherings, closing schools, isolating those with infec-

tion, contact tracing, and implementing infection prevention strategies in health care settings. These are critical to achieving at least a 50% reduction in transmission, which correlates with a basic reproductive number lower or equal to one ($R_0 \leq 1$). A critical determinant that ensures the success of any intervention, whether vaccination or NPIs, is appropriate communication. Therefore, a robust communication strategy must be developed that is directed at behavioural change for subverting the third wave.

The available data indicate that every age group was affected in the second COVID-19 wave. The susceptible persons comprise those not protected by vaccination or those who are not infected yet. The proportion of susceptible people is higher in the younger age groups, including children. A higher risk of infection is not the same as a higher risk of serious illness, especially for children. However, even if there is a small proportion of complications and deaths, absolute numbers can strain the health system resulting in a shortage of beds. Higher mortality is not so specific to the virulence of the virus, or age group, but mostly arises from the shortage of beds during a sudden surge in cases.

To reduce the number of deaths, we should immediately create adequate capacity to handle the surge. More paediatric ICUs and specialist care are needed to handle a complex disorder, namely Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome. Enhancing paediatric specialised beds and ICUs can help in managing meningitis and other diseases in the community. Many patients who have recovered from active COVID-19 infection are experiencing long-term residual effects of the disease both physically and mentally. It is necessary to address these issues in all hospitals through counselling at the time of discharge and by establishing post-COVID-19 care clinics and services. We need to make a realistic assessment of needs. Every effort should be made to strengthen the human resources and infrastructure in the rural, vulnerable and remote areas.

Giridhara R. Babu is a Professor of Epidemiology at the IIPH-Bengaluru, Public Health Foundation of India and V. Ravi is a Neurovirologist and nodal officer for genomic confirmation of SARS-CoV2, Government of Karnataka

The proportionality principle

Hamas endangers Israeli civilians by targeting them and endangers Gazan civilians by using them as human shields



MICHAL GUR-ARYEH

Every war is tragic. Every civilian death is a world lost. Nevertheless, when legal discourse is applied to a war, legal terminology, concepts, and resulting conclusions should be accurately implemented. One common misconception concerns the term 'proportionality'. Particularly, it is the argument that proportional use of force is a numbers game; that one only needs to compare the number of casualties on each side of the conflict in order to deduce which side used force disproportionately. From a legal standpoint, this notion is flawed. Had this been true, many NATO operations would have been guilty of being disproportionate and unlawful.

What proportionality means

The principle of proportionality is defined as the obligation to refrain from "any attack which may be expected to cause incidental loss or injuries to civilians, or damage to civilian objects, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated". What does this mean in practice? At the outset, it may be useful to stress what 'proportionality' does not mean: clearly, it does not address casualties in a collective manner pertaining to the whole conflict, but rather, refers to particular attacks; it does not address only civilian casualties and damage, but also the intended military advantage; and it is not examined in hindsight, but before the attack takes place.

The proportionality principle means that before every military strike, military commanders must assess two factors. First, they must examine the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated from an attack, when naturally, the neutralisation of some targets would have a higher advantage than others. In order to offer such advantage, the target must be a military target, such as a weapons depot. Importantly, a seemingly civilian object, used by the adversary for military purposes (for example, a residential building used to store weapons) may be considered a lawful target.

Second, the commanders must assess, based on reasonably available information at the time of the attack, what the expected collateral damage would be. They must assess how many civilians, if any, will be present in the area of the planned attack. Then they must assess the extent of expected damage to civilian property, including indirect damage that is to be accounted for, such as infrastructure. Lastly, they must implement all

feasible precautions to mitigate harm to civilians and civilian objects. If the assessment of the two factors leads to the conclusion that the expected damage to civilians or civilian objects is deemed excessive in relation to the anticipated military advantage, carrying out an attack would be unlawful.

It follows that not every civilian death in armed conflict necessarily testifies to a breach of international law. This principle of proportionality is the way that the law, created by states, saw fit to balance the military needs of states, who fight to protect civilians, with humanitarian imperatives.

Wrongfully blamed

How is the principle of proportionality affected when instead of protecting its civilians, Hamas intentionally conducts its military activity from within densely populated areas? How is Israel expected to protect its major cities from Hamas rockets, when these rockets are developed, built and launched from within Gazan civilian population? Hamas is committing a double war crime - endangering Israeli civilians by targeting them and endangering Gazan civilians by using them as human shields. What does international law require Israel, a law-abiding state, to do, when facing Hamas' unlawful tactics?

The law of armed conflict states that when civilian presence is used to shield military objectives from attacks, that presence does not grant the target immunity. When Hamas commits the double war crime of attacking Israeli children, schools and airports from within its own civilian population, the analysis of the situation would be distorted if its criminal behaviour is not taken into account.

Despite Hamas's blatant disregard for the law or its citizens' well-being, Israel does everything feasible in order to prevent or at least minimise harm to the Palestinian civilian population, often at the cost of operational advantage. In doing so, Israel employs precautions that exceed the requirements of international law, as well as the practices commonly employed by advanced militaries of western states. Fighting an enemy that deliberately abuses the law of armed conflict raises grave challenges for Israeli soldiers. Nevertheless, Israeli commanders apply international law, including the principle of proportionality, in every military action.

Why is Hamas using its own population as human shields? This brings us back to the misconception of the principle of proportionality, and the knee-jerk reaction that ignores the question, who put Gazan civilians in danger in the first place? In other words, Hamas pays no price for its war crimes and often it is Israel that is wrongfully blamed. This situation provides an incentive to Hamas to continue with its heinous practices.

Michal Gur-Aryeh is a senior Israeli diplomat

Building trust in governance

A service delivery platform which builds trust between citizens and government has shown results

VIRAJ TYAGI

versed, and citizen participation increases.

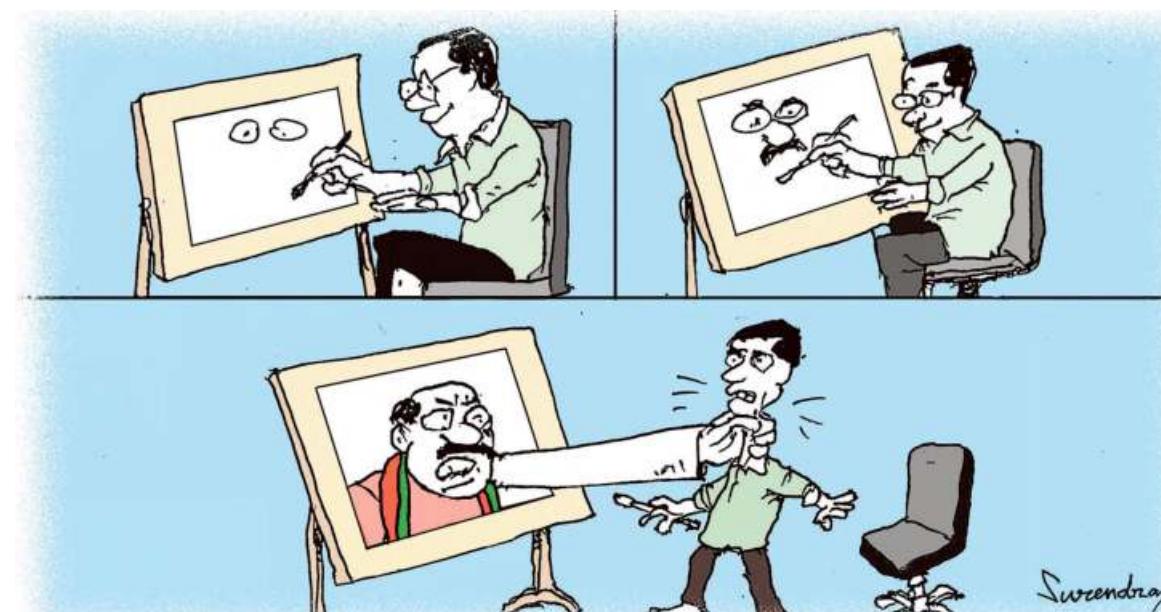
In Andhra Pradesh, we at eGov Foundation partnered with the government to roll out a citizen services delivery platform (PuraSeva) in all 110 towns and cities. We saw the positive impact of this platform on social trust. One of the areas reformed was the complaints process: multiple channels to lodge complaints, prompt acknowledgement with a reference number assigned, SMS notifications providing an expected completion date and responsible person, and notifications of each status change. Finally, citizens are invited to provide a star rating upon completion. Moreover, citizens and civil society groups can view the performance data for their localities through open dashboards.

How trust grows

This trust is exponential: it is built as consumers get consistent information and predictability, over time, every time. When we book an Ola cab, we get an OTP every time, we can track our cab every time, the OTP works every time we give it to the driver, and so on. Of course, the actual delivery of service needs to live up to expectations for trust to be built, and there can be the occasional glitch. Still, having visibility of interactions directly (without having to go ask someone to look up a request status or complaint number) and a mechanism to hold the service provider accountable is fundamental to building trust.

In our experience in working in the area of service delivery by urban local bodies, we find that citizens' default position is low trust. Their past experiences, where requests have not been responded to, or have vanished into the ether, adds to this sense of apprehension. Corruption makes this worse. The worst is paying a bribe and still not being served. We also observe power imbalance: citizens feel that they do not have any recourse.

These frictional interactions pile up over time. They lead to apathy, disengagement, a 'nothing will happen' mindset. The good news is that when government service delivery manifests this new currency of social trust – visibility of status, alerts at key stages, knowing who is accountable, ways to escalate the complaint, ways to rate or give feedback – the confidence of citizens starts to grow. Over time, the trust deficit is re-



DATA POINT

Shifting the tax burden | In FY21, despite a stringent lockdown and a raging COVID-19 first wave, the gross tax revenue collected by the Centre increased over FY20. However, the increase was made possible by a sharp rise in contributions from union excise duties. This compensated for the sharp drop in the share of corporate tax collection. The shift in tax burden from the corporates to the masses has come at a time when the pandemic has led to many job losses and reduced income levels thereby pushing more people into poverty. By **The Hindu Data Team**

HIGHER COLLECTIONS | Despite a national lockdown, the gross tax revenue grew in FY21 compared to FY20. About ₹20.24 lakh crore was collected in FY21

■ GROSS TAX REVENUE (₹LAKH CRORE)



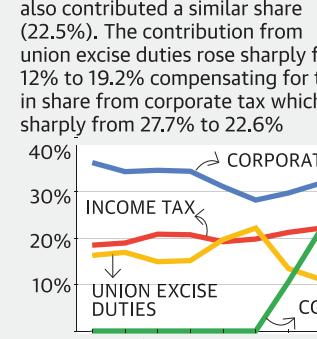
TAX BURDEN | In FY21, the share of income tax (23.2%)

exceeded the contribution from corporate tax (22.6%). The Central Goods and Services Tax also contributed a similar share (22.5%). The contribution from union excise duties rose sharply from 12% to 19.2% compensating for the loss in share from corporate tax which fell sharply from 27.7% to 22.6%

■ INCOME TAX

■ UNION EXCISE DUTIES

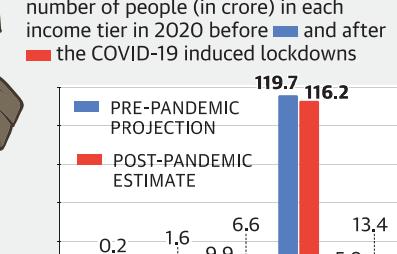
■ CGST



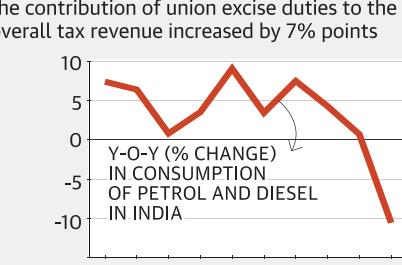
SLIPPING INTO POVERTY

According to the Pew Research Center, the number of poor people in India (incomes <=\$2 a day) is estimated to have increased from almost 6 crore to 13.4 crore due to the pandemic.

The chart shows the estimated number of people (in crore) in each income tier in 2020 before and after the COVID-19 induced lockdowns



CONSUMING LESS | In FY21, while fuel consumption decreased by more than 10%, the contribution of union excise duties to the overall tax revenue increased by 7% points



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 9, 1971

Demonetisation meant to hit refugees

The Pakistan Government's demonetisation of its currency in the denominations of Rs. 500 and Rs. 100 yesterday has been regarded in official circles here [June 8, New Delhi] as a deliberate move to inflict more hardship on the refugees who have crossed over to India. Pakistan's decision to demonetise notes bearing the slogans, "Joy Bangla", "Bangla Desh" and "Dacca" is also regarded as evidence of continued resistance within Bangla Desh to the reign of terror under the Pakistani Army. The Pakistan Government would not have found it necessary to declare these notes as ceasing to be legal tender, unless the circulation of these notes had assumed huge proportions.

UPI reports from Islamabad: The Pakistan Government claimed to-day that a large number of people were turning up at banks to surrender the notes. The authorities have ordered the banks to accept 500 rupee notes to-day and to-morrow and 100 rupee notes until Thursday.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 9, 1921

Payment for jurors

Jurors are not paid for their work, which is generally regarded as a privilege and even a duty attaching to their citizenship. They may be kept hanging about a court for several days to the complete dislocation of their business. The rigid rule of punctual attendance and the monotony of trials often cause great hardship. It is stated that the Special Juror in the United Kingdom is more or less "adequately rewarded," with the fee of a guinea for each suit to which he listens, but the Common Juror is a "very long suffering individual". A private member's Bill in the House of Commons seeks to sanction the payment of expenses which Common Jurors incur in the discharge of their duties. There is no idea of paying any remuneration for his work and the proposal is merely to reimburse his out-of-pocket expenses. Jury service is generally not popular and it may grow more and more unpopular if it should involve personal expense. It stands to reason that the honorary worker in the great cause of Justice should not be victimised in his pocket for the common good. The success of the private member's Bill will be watched with wide interest since none would like honorary work becoming a source of expenditure.

FROM PAGE ONE

Centre places orders for 44 crore vaccine doses

To be able to administer at least a single dose to all adults by December, over 9 crore people need to be inoculated per month.

The government has earmarked ₹35,000 crore towards vaccine procurement. Until May 28, it had ordered 28.5 crore doses for ₹4,488 crore according to data from the Health Ministry.

Biological E said it had got permission from India's Drug Controller on April 24 to begin phase-3 trials in India. The Phase III clinical study to be conducted in 15 sites across India would evaluate the extent and nature of immunity and safety of Biological E's SARS-CoV-2 COVID-19 vaccine in about 1,268 healthy subjects in the age range of 18 to 80 years. It

is intended to be part of a larger global Phase III study, the company said in a statement.

Biological E has successfully concluded the Phase I/II trials of the vaccine candidate, which began in India in November last year. Data from the Phase I/II trial suggested that the Covid-19 vaccine was "safe, well-tolerated, and immunogenic," according to a company statement.

The vaccine candidate has an antigen developed by the Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development and in-licensed from BCM Ventures, Baylor College of Medicine's integrated commercialisation team, and Dynavax Technologies' advanced adjuvant, CpG 10187M.

Nepal stops distribution of Patanjali's Coronil kits

While pointing at shortcomings of the kits, Nepalese officials pointed to the recent statements against Coronil by the Indian Medical Association (IMA), which has challenged Mr. Ramdev to prove the efficacy of his products to deal with the COVID-19.

Nepal is the second country after Bhutan to stop distribution of Coronil kits. Bhutan's Drug Regulatory Authority has already stopped distribution of Coronil in the kingdom.

Monday's order also sparked controversy within the Government of Nepal as the Coronil kits were received during the tenure of previous health minister Hridyesh Tripathi and the minister in charge of women and child development, Juli Mahato. Soon afterwards, Ms. Mahato and her husband Raghuvir Mahaseth tested positive drawing attention to their support for Patanjali group.

The latest order is being interpreted as an attempt by Oli government to distance itself from the Patanjali group as it is perceived to be close to Ms. Mahato's brother, industrialist Upendra Mahato. Mr Mahato is one of the biggest industrialists of Nepal and is widely known to be a partner of Patanjali group in the country.

Ladakh reserves all jobs for region residents

'A welcome but delayed move'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

All jobs in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh have been reserved for the residents of the region, according to an order issued on Tuesday.

"No person shall be qualified for appointment to the service unless the person is a resident of the UT of Ladakh," reads the order issued by Lieutenant-Governor R.K. Mathur.

The new recruitment rules are mentioned in the Clause II of the Union Territory of Ladakh Employment (Subordinate) Service Recruitment Rules, 2021.

The move has met a long-pending demand of the people of Ladakh, after it was carved out as a UT on August 5, 2019. "It was our demand since the bifurcation of J&K almost two years ago.

"It's a welcome move," Chief Executive Councillor, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council-Kargil, Feroz Ahmed Khan told *The Hindu*.

He said the order has come very late as many unemployed youths have crossed the upper age limit in the past two years. "We will also demand age relaxation for fresh recruitments," Mr. Khan said. He said there should be similar laws on land too. "At present, the State land of the UT comes under twin elected councils, Leh and Kargil. However, private land does not have any protection."

Mr. Khan said till the Centre meets the demand of the Sixth Schedule for the UT, it should also grant legislative powers to the twin councils.

Rajnath lauds India-Sweden ties in defence production

Minister points to growing co-development options

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

There is lot of scope for Swedish and Indian defence industries for co-production and co-development and Indian industry can also supply components to Swedish industries, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday.

"On behalf of Government of India, I would like to extend an invitation to a delegation at highest level from Sweden to India and have a glimpse of Indian defence industries and defence industry corridors," Mr. Singh said at an India-Sweden defence webinar.



Close network: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releasing the first copy of the SIDM Members Directory 2020-2021. ■ PTI

Welcoming the recent understanding by India and European Union to resume negotiations on a free trade agreement, Swedish Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist said one area with potential for deepening defence industry cooperation was amongst Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) businesses. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed during the event between Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers and Swedish Security and Defence Industry Association to promote bilateral defence industrial relations.

New norms for digital content

Children with special needs must find it operable, understandable: Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Education Ministry has laid down new guidelines for producing digital education resources for children with disabilities, after a year in which the COVID-driven shift to online education has spotlighted the lacunae in such resources.



Learning activities must include multimodal experiences, norms say.

However, the PDF document containing the guidelines does not even follow its own rules, making it partially inaccessible to the visually challenged, says an activist, raising concerns about effective implementation.

Guidelines released

The guidelines, released by Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Tuesday, are based on four guiding principles, stipulating that all resources must be perceivable, operable, understandable and robust for disabled students.

They recommend that all textbooks be made digitally accessible in a phased manner, so that they are available in multiple formats such as text, audio, video and sign language with turn-on and turn-off features. Detailed technical standards have been provided.

The closure of regular schools and learning centres due to COVID-19 has led to special difficulties for many disabled children.

For instance, a recent stu-

dy by the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy showed that more than half of the NCERT textbooks available on the government's virtual education platform DIKSHA were not accessible for visually impaired students.

Supplementary content

The guidelines provide strategies to produce supplementary content for varying disabilities, including students who face visual and hearing challenges, those on the autism spectrum, those with intellectual or special learning disabilities, and those with multiple disabilities.

They note that learning activities must include audio, visual and tactile experiences, while evaluation must be multimodal.

Ironically enough, while the guidelines call for the use of image descriptions wherever pictures are used

in order to be accessible to visually challenged students using screen readers, this is not even followed by the guidelines document itself, according to Muralidharan, secretary, National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled.

"So much for a document that talks of e-accessibility," he said. "As guidelines they are very comprehensive and cover all aspects ... Concerns of each disability are identified and solutions worked around them. How far they would be implemented is something that we will have to see. The taste of the pudding will lie in its eating."

The guidelines do include an implementation roadmap. The next steps are the nomination of an expert technical team to update the DIKSHA platform, followed by training and development of prototypes of the accessible digital textbooks.

Top varsities

JNU, featuring for the first time in the QS World Universities Ranking list, is among the top-600 in the world

= indicates shared ranking

2022 global rank	Name
177=	Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
185	Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
186=	Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
255=	Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
277=	Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
280	Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
395=	Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati
400=	Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee
501-510 (ranking band)	University of Delhi
561-570 (ranking band)	Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

JNU enters list of top 1,000 universities

IIT-Bombay ranks the highest in India

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Jawaharlal Nehru University has entered the top 1,000 of the QS World University rankings for the first time, as its new undergraduate engineering programme now makes it eligible for the rating.

It debuted at the 561-570 ranking band in the rankings, which only rate institutions offering both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

Overall, there are 22 Indian institutions in the top 1,000 list compared to 21 last year, with the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Madras making major strides in rankings.

However, some institutions are still worried that the rankings do not accurately reflect the quality of education in India, as they are largely dependent on international perception factors.

IIT Bombay maintained its position as the top Indian institution for the fourth consecutive year, although it fell five places in the global rankings to the joint 177th

place.

IIT Delhi (185th rank)

overtook the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore (186th rank), giving India

three institutions in the world's top 100. IISc was also declared the world's top research university by the indicator of most citations per faculty member, when adjusted for faculty size.

The citations per faculty metric were also key to the 75 rank jump by IIT Guwahati and the 73 rank jump by IIT Kanpur, according to QS regional director Ashwin Fernandes.

Commercial pressure

However, one IIT director, who did not wish to be named, alleged that this year's improvement in scores was simply a manipulation of numbers by the rankings agency, driven by commercial pressures.

Of the 35 Indian institutions in the rankings, 20 have improved on academic reputation this year.

"Half of the score comes from reputation indicators which are based on perception, rather than any objective methodology. They cannot afford too much unhappiness, or they may face a boycott like the THE [Times Higher Education rankings], so they manipulate the numbers. It does not reflect the quality of Indian education in any real sense," said the director.

Interpol-led Operation Pangea XIV targeted sale of counterfeit health products

DEVEESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

More than 1.1 lakh web links, including websites and online marketplaces, have been taken down in an operation involving the police, customs and health regulatory authorities of 92 countries against the sale of fake and illicit medicines and medical products.

It showed that criminals were continuing to cash in on the huge demand for personal protection and hygiene products due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than half of all the medical devices seized during the operation from May 18 to 25 were fake and unauthorised COVID-19 test kits.

In the United Kingdom, apart from the seizure of some three million fake medicines and devices worth over \$13 million, the authorities removed more than 3,100 advertising links for the illegal sale and supply of unlicensed medicines, and shut down 43 websites, Interpol said in a statement on Tuesday.

A person in Venezuela was arrested for developing

potentially dangerous pharmaceuticals worth over \$23 million.

During the operation, searches of about 7.10 lakh packages led to the discovery of fake and illicit drugs concealed amongst a range of legitimate products, including clothes, jewellery, toys, food and baby products. "In Qatar, officials discovered 2,805 nerve pain tablets hidden inside tins of baked beans," said the Interpol.

The seized items included hypnotic and sedative medication, erectile dysfunction pills, medical and surgical devices like COVID test kits, masks, syringes, catheters, analgesics/painkillers, anabolic steroids, antibiotics and germicides, anti-cancer medication, anti-malarials and vitamins.

They write to Union Home Minister and Assam Chief Minister, asking for their voices to be heard

VIJAYA SINGH
NEW DELHI



Long fight: The Rengma Nagas community has been seeking an autonomous council for many years now. ■ FILE PHOTO

Narrating its history, the council said that during the Burmese invasions of Assam in 1816 and 1819, it was the Rengmas who gave shelter to the Ahom refugees.

The petition said that the Rengma Hills was partitioned in 1963 between As-

sam and Nagaland at the time of creation of Nagaland State and the Karbis, who were known as Mikirs till 1976, were the indigenous tribal people of Mikir Hills.

"Thus, the Rengma Hills and Mikir Hills were two separate entities till 1951. Karbis have no history in the Rengma Hills. People who are presently living in Rengma Hills are from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya. They speak different dialects and do not know Karbi language of Karbi Anglong," the memorandum said.

RNPC president K. Solomon Rengma told *The Hindu* that the government was on the verge of taking a decision without taking them on board and thus they had written to Mr. Shah and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

"How can they do this? We have been writing to them for many years. The KACB population is around 12 lakh and the Karbis constitute only 3 lakh, the remaining are non-Karbis, including

the Rengma Nagas, whose population is around 22,000. We are also demanding a separate legislative seat for Rengmas," he said.

The National Socialist Council of Nagaland or NSCN (Isak-Muivah), which is in talks with the Centre for a peace deal, said in a statement on Monday that the Rengma issue was one of the important agendas of the "Indo-Naga political talks" and no authority should go far enough to override their interests.

More than 3,000 Rengma Nagas were forced to relocate to relief camps in 2013 after several people were killed in a series of attacks following a call given by a Karbi insurgent group.

IN BRIEF



Farooq says he is not against delimitation

National Conference (NC) president and MP Farooq Ahmad Khan on Tuesday said his party would continue to strive for J&K's special status and was not against the ongoing delimitation process.

"The method adopted is not in tandem with the procedure," he said. Party vice-president Omar Abdullah also asked the workers "to remain steadfast in their resolve to fight for the right cause".

M.P. CM's new OSD quits after row over his tweets

A newly appointed communication adviser to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Tuesday that he would not take up the post after some BJP leaders flagged his past tweets criticising the Hindutva ideology. "I have decided to not accept the responsibility offered to me by

@chouhanshivraj and have communicated my inability to the CM," Mumbai-based Tushar Panchal said in a tweet from the handle @tushar. It could not be ascertained if it was Mr. Panchal's own Twitter account, but a State BJP leader confirmed that he has refused to accept the post. ■

SAD hits out at govt. for case against its leaders

Chandigarh A day after the Punjab police booked its leaders and workers on the charge of violating COVID-19 curbs, the Shiromani Akali Dal hit out at the Congress-led Punjab government on Tuesday for "suppressing" the voice of those standing by the people in this hour of crisis. ■

Delhi ration shops urged to use ePOS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey has written to the Delhi government, urging it to resume the use of electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) machines at ration shops, so that the One Nation One Ration Card scheme can be implemented in the State.

In a time of COVID-related distress, the scheme would be of immense help to an estimated 10 lakh migrant workers in Delhi who have ration cards in their home States but are unable to access subsidised foodgrains in the capital, Mr. Pandey wrote in his letter to Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Kumar Dev on Tuesday.

Medium Enterprise (SME) businesses. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed during the event between Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers and Swedish Security and Defence Industry Association to promote bilateral defence industrial relations.

Webinars to provide expert career guidance to students

IN BRIEF



Four take oath as Rajya Sabha members

Four Rajya Sabha members — two elected from Kerala and two nominated members, including Swapna Dasgupta — took their oaths on Tuesday. Mr. Dasgupta returned to complete his tenure after having resigned ahead of the West Bengal election, where he contested on BJP ticket. The other nominated member was senior lawyer Mahesh Jethmalani. The two members from Kerala were senior journalist John Brittas and CPI(M) leader V. Sivadasan.

Maratha quota: CM seeks lifting of 50% ceiling

MUMBAI A delegation led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take steps to lift the 50% ceiling on reservation to ensure that Marathas and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) continue to get benefits. "The Supreme Court scrapped the Maratha reservation and also the political reservation for OBCs in local civic bodies. We presented all the facts and the steps to be taken for the same," Mr. Thackeray said at a press conference after a meeting with Mr. Modi.

Gujarat BJP convenes meeting on June 15

AHMEDABAD The Gujarat BJP has convened a legislature party meeting on June 15. All MLAs from the party have been asked to attend. Members of the State parliamentary board, State party chief C.R. Paatil and other top office-bearers of the party will also be present. "We have called the meeting of all legislators to brief them about the measures the government has taken during the pandemic second wave," Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel said in a statement. Mr. Patel said no meeting of the party's office-bearers and legislators had been held for two months and, hence, this meeting.

On vaccines, India always quick on the uptake

PM's claim that country earlier had to wait decades for procuring vaccines from abroad is at odds with the facts

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Monday presentation of India's vaccination history is at odds with the facts. "If you look at the history of vaccinations in India, whether for smallpox, hepatitis B or polio, you will see that India would have to wait decades for procuring vaccines from abroad. When vaccination



Viral claims: Prime Minister Narendra Modi receiving the second dose of the vaccine in New Delhi in April. ■ AFP

NEWS ANALYSIS
programmes ended in other countries, it would not have even begun in our country," he claimed.

India, even before Independence, was among the countries that indigenously manufactured vaccines a few years within their discovery, historical records suggest.

While there have been several challenges to the uptake of vaccines, their availability was the least of the problems.

A vaccine for smallpox, as

a history of vaccination in India published in the *Indian Journal of Medical Research* (IJMR) by Chandrakant Lahariya in 2012 said, was first administered to a three-year-old Indian, in 1802, a mere four years after English physician Edward Jenner published the result of his experiments on inoculating subjects with a cowpox virus. The smallpox vaccines were imported until 1850, but preserving the liquid lymph solution was a challenge. This led to institutes in India researching ways to increase lymph supply with early success by 1895.

The first animal vaccine depot was set up in Shillong in 1890, from where it started to be produced.

While vaccination never ceased in India once it began, it had varying popularity. There was hesitancy, opposition from 'tikadaars' (who performed variolation) and those actually administering vaccines charged a

small fee contributing to its fluctuating uptake.

"The vaccination coverage went down and in 1944-45 in India, the highest numbers of smallpox cases in the last two decades were reported.

As soon as World War II ended, the focus was brought back on smallpox vaccination and cases decreased," Dr. Lahariya said. "In 1947, India was self-sufficient in the production of smallpox vaccines." It took until 1971 to eradicate the virus in South America and 1975 in Asia

(and India) and 1977 in Africa. The challenge, said Dr. Lahariya, was not a lack of access to vaccines, but social and economic factors surrounding vaccination.

The history of polio vaccination in India is more complicated. "India was also the pioneer-leader in polio research – epidemiology, vaccine-prevention – and in the manufacture of both Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) and Injectable Polio Vaccine (IPV). India's lead position was

squandered in later years

due to short-sighted policies and capricious decisions, a blot in our history of public health," write T. Jacob John and M. Vipin Vashishta in the 2013 edition of the *IJMR*.

The Pasteur Institute of India developed and produced, for the first time in India, an indigenous trivalent OPV in 1970. It was not until 2006 that IPV was licensed for manufacture in India.

It was only due to the use of a combination of both kinds of vaccines, concerted sustained campaigns and inadequate attention by governments to boost vaccine production that it required until 2011 to eliminate polio. Again, it was not because India was unable to make those vaccines.

The Prime Minister also claimed that since 2014, the Mission Indradhanush programme had increased the percentage of children covered under vaccination from 60% to 90%. The latest round of the National Family

Health Survey, which provides data only from 17 States and five Union Territories, showed that none of the States had achieved 90% vaccination coverage. The Health Ministry released data on this December 2020 and was expected to provide data from the remaining States by May this year.

A vaccine against the bacterium causing plague was made by Waldemar Haffkine at the Grant Medical College, Bombay, in 1897 that he first tested on himself and later on the inmates of the Byculla jail. A Plague Laboratory was set up in 1899 and in 1925, it was renamed the Haffkine Institute.

Several vaccine institutes came up in different provinces of the country, including the 1948 BCG (for tuberculosis) Laboratory in Guindy, Madras. These institutes enabled the manufacture of vaccines for diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus in India, before 1940.

High number of Cong. MLAs joined BJP'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The highest number of MLAs who switched parties in the recent Assembly elections left the Congress and joined the BJP, according to a report released by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) on Tuesday.

The ADR report said the highest number of MLAs who changed parties were from the Congress (20 or 39.22%) of the total. Fifteen All-India Trinamool Congress MLAs, or 29.41% of the total MLAs, who switched parties left to contest elections.

"In the recent Assembly elections 2021, 20 [39.22%] out of 60 recontesting MLAs who switched political parties joined the BJP, followed by 17 [33.33%] MLAs who joined AIUC and 7 [13.73%] MLAs who joined Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam," it said.

Out of the 60 recontesting candidates in the five Assembly polls, the maximum number (eight or 13.33%) left the Congress.

Group seeks action against NRC head

Adopt a transparent policy in allocating vaccines: Congress

Spell out road map of meeting deadline by Dec., it tells govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the reversion to the centralised procurement of COVID-19 vaccines from June 21, the Congress on Tuesday asked the government to adopt a transparent policy in allocating vaccines to the States and spell out a road map of meeting its own deadline of fully vaccinating 100 crore citizens by December.

The Congress reiterated its demand for free universal vaccination, whether these vaccines are administered in a private hospital or a government one, and questioned the government's decision of continuing with the policy of allowing the priv-



Jairam Ramesh

ate sector to obtain 25% of the vaccine production.

Addressing a virtual press conference, former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh claimed that 50% of the vaccines meant for the private sector had been "grabbed" by nine major hospital groups with presence in metro cities and that was a

"dangerous situation" as it affected supply to smaller hospitals in non-metros and small towns.

The government should also do away with the procedure of registering oneself in the CoWIN app and set up walk-in vaccination for all categories.

"This government is deadline-driven and not deadline-driven," Mr. Ramesh said.

"The government must work out a transparent allocation formula in consultation with States for providing vaccines, as we have seen that BJP-ruled States have been favoured by the Central government in the past in allocation of vaccines and medicines," he alleged.

'25% of vaccines for private hospitals is a licence to loot'

CPI(M) demands an immediate withdrawal of the clause

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre's failed vaccine policy has not been fully reversed, the CPI(M) Polit Bureau said in a statement here. By reserving 25% of vaccines for the private sector, the party said, the government was providing them with a licence to loot.

The CPI(M) Polit Bureau said the Modi government had been forced to withdraw its "liberalised vaccine policy" for three reasons – a strong opposition, pushback from States and the Supreme Court's criticism. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's efforts to lay the blame at the door of the State governments, the party said, was condemnable. The "liberalised vaccine policy" was a unilateral decision made by the Centre.

"However, the failed vaccine policy has not been ful-

ly reversed. The government has chosen to continue the dual pricing policy. As much as 25% of vaccine production is still reserved for the private sector. This is nothing but a licence for loot by private manufacturers to make super profits," the statement said.

And this 25% diversion of vaccines, the CPI(M) said, came at a time of acute vaccine shortage. This would "dilute and weaken" the need for universal vaccination, essential to prevent a third wave of COVID-19. The Centre must procure all the vaccines manufactured in India and bought globally, and distribute it to States in consultation with them, the statement said.

Commuters travelling in the Metro on Monday in New Delhi. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Modi's efforts to lay the blame at the door of the State governments, the party said, was condemnable. The "liberalised vaccine policy" was a unilateral decision made by the Centre.

The party demanded an immediate withdrawal of this clause, too, to bring in 100% universally free vaccines.

However, the failed vaccine policy has not been ful-

ly reversed. The government has chosen to continue the dual pricing policy. As much as 25% of vaccine production is still reserved for the private sector. This is nothing but a licence for loot by private manufacturers to make super profits," the statement said.

And this 25% diversion of vaccines, the CPI(M) said, came at a time of acute vaccine shortage. This would "dilute and weaken" the need for universal vaccination, essential to prevent a third wave of COVID-19. The Centre must procure all the vaccines manufactured in India and bought globally, and distribute it to States in consultation with them, the statement said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

A minority organisation has asked the Union Home Ministry to take action against Hitesh Dev Sarma, Assam's Coordinator for the National Register of Citizens (NRC), for "biased activities" and failure to issue rejection orders to those excluded from the updated list of citizens.

In a letter to the Ministry's Secretary on June 7, the All Assam Minority Students' Union said bias had prompted the NRC Coordinator to file two applications in the Supreme Court on May 11 seeking reverification of the list of citizens published in 2019.

Monsoon session of Parliament likely to begin in July: Minister

COVID-19 protocols on seating are expected to continue



Pralhad Joshi

short. Last year, the monsoon session, which usually starts in July, began in September.

"I am hopeful that the Parliament session will be held as per its normal schedule in July," Mr. Joshi told PTI. However, Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkiah Naidu did not share Mr. Joshi's opti-

mism. At an oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected members, Mr. Naidu, said, "Oath and affirmation has been arranged now because convening of the next session may take some time."

Sources said with the COVID-19 spread under control and the possibility of a third wave in the coming months, the government did not want to postpone the session to September. The monsoon session, sources said, would be short. Most MPs have got at least one dose of the COVID vaccine. However, the COVID-19 protocol followed in the last three sessions, including members sitting in galleries to maintain physical distance, is expected to continue.

Bengal BJP speaking in different voices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

A month after the Assembly election, the rift in the West Bengal unit of the BJP is out in the open, with leaders speaking in different voices on crucial issues, including Article 356. On Tuesday, the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Suvidhu Adhikari met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and party pre-

sident J.P. Nadda in Delhi.

Mr. Adhikari and Mr. Banerjee were Ministers in the Trinamool government and had joined the BJP before the Assembly election.

But party leader Rajib Banerjee on social media said if "every stage the party tries to scare people by pointing at Delhi and the ghost of Article 356, the people of West Bengal will not

take it well". Mr. Adhikari and Mr. Banerjee were Ministers in the Trinamool government and had joined the BJP before the Assembly election.

The State BJP held a meeting in Kolkata under the leadership of Dilip Ghosh. Mr. Ghosh had a tough time explaining why Mr. Banerjee and party leader Mukul Roy did not participate.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY CORPORATION

Re-Tender Notice No : 2/ 2021 - 2022

DL 07.06.2021

Receipt and Submission of tenders as per Tender Notice No. 2/2021-2022, is Postponed due to administrative reason as detailed below.

Details	Date already notified	Date Postponed
Last date of download of Bid Documents	08.06.2021 Upto 15.00 Hours	22.06.2021 Upto 15.00 Hours
Submission of bids through e-submission	09.06.2021 Upto 15.00 Hours	23.06.2021 Upto 15.00 Hours
Tender Opening Date and Time	09.06.2021 Upto 16.00 Hours	23.06.2021 Upto 16.00 Hours

Other terms and Conditions remain unchanged.

Commissioner, Tiruchirappalli City Corporation

DIPR/ 1718 /TENDER/2021

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD

6th Extension Notification No. IFB No. 15-6 / DSP – VPM Pkg I / DO / CE / VLR / 2021 / Dated : 07.06.2021

Name of work : Design, Build, Operation of 60 MLD Capacity Desalination Plant based on (SWRO) Sea Water Reverse Osmosis at Konimedu near Marakkanam in Villupuram District in Tamil Nadu and Operation and Maintenance for 20 years (Paid Maintenance) – Package I – Period of Execution – 24 months (Design part – 6 Months – Execution part – 18 Months)– Trial period – 6 Months.

Ref : 1. This offer Invitation of Bid. IFB No. 15/05/DSP – VPM Pkg I/DO/CE/VLR/2021/Dated : 07.01.2021

2. Tender Extension Notification No. IFB No. 15-1/DSP – VPM P

IN BRIEF



Bihar lifts lockdown; night curfew to stay

PATNA
The Bihar government on Tuesday announced that the lockdown will be lifted from June 9. However, night curfew will continue from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. Government and private offices can open with 50% strength till 4 p.m., but malls, schools, colleges, religious places and cinema halls will remain closed. Shops will be allowed to remain open till 5 p.m. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar cautioned people to avoid crowded places.

Railways to run 100 more trains soon

NEW DELHI
The Indian Railways are making all efforts to ramp up passenger services and will begin running 100 more trains in the next five or six days to meet the increase in demand, Railway Board Chairman and CEO Suneet Sharma said on Tuesday. The Railways are currently running 889 Special Mail Express trains on an average daily. "We want to normalise services as soon as possible... we had operationalised about 1,500 trains before the second wave of the pandemic. However, due to the pandemic and restrictions on movement in various States, we faced challenges," Mr. Sharma said.

Odisha to start unlock process in phases

Bhubaneswar
Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday said the State government was contemplating starting the unlocking process in districts registering a decline in COVID-19 infection rate. He also asked the administration to ensure a foolproof preparation for the possible third wave. He was reviewing the prevailing corona situation in the State. While expressing satisfaction over the decline in cases in certain districts, he said the State was yet to get out of the impact of the second wave.

Piramal Foundation, NITI unveil home care drive
MUMBAI
Piramal Foundation, in association with NITI Aayog, on Tuesday unveiled a campaign to provide COVID home care to 20 lakh citizens staying in rural areas. The Foundation, which has been working in 25 districts to provide COVID care to senior citizens, has now expanded its scope of work to 112 backward districts. The 'Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyan' will be rolled out in these 112 aspirational districts to assist the administration in providing home-care support to patients who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms. Most of these districts are in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra, officials from the Foundation said.

Take action against illegal adoption: SC

It directs govt. to prevent private entities from revealing identity of children orphaned by pandemic

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has directed the States and the Union Territories to take stringent action against private individuals and NGOs who invite people to illegally adopt children orphaned by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose, in an 18-page order published on Tuesday, directed the government to step in and prevent private entities from revealing the identities of affected children, usually on social media, and inviting people to adopt them.

"The State Governments/Union Territories are directed to prevent any NGO from collecting funds in the names of the affected children by disclosing their identity and inviting interested persons to adopt them. No adoption of affected children should be permitted con-

Invitation to persons for adoption of orphans is contrary to law as no adoption of a child can be permitted without the involvement of CARA. Stringent action shall be taken against agencies/individuals who are responsible for indulging in this illegal activity

SUPREME COURT

trary to the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015," the court ordered.

CARA involvement

It was illegal to invite strangers to adopt children, already traumatised by their personal losses, without the involvement of the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), a statutory body under the Women and Child



Development Ministry, it said. "Invitation to persons for adoption of orphans is contrary to law as no adoption of a child can be permitted without the involvement of CARA. Stringent action shall be taken by the State Governments/Union Territories against agencies/individuals who are responsible for indulging in this illegal activity," it observed.

The order came after the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), on Monday, raised the alarm on a spate of complaints about illegal adoption of COVID-19 orphans through private individual and organisations. "Social media posts are circulating that children are up for adoption. This is plainly illegal and violates the Juvenile Justice Act," advocate Shobha Gupta, for intervenor 'We the Women of India', made an impassioned plea.

NCPCR statistics show that 3,621 children were orphaned, 26,176 children lost either parent and 274 abandoned between April 1, 2021 to June 5, 2021. The court is hearing a *suo motu* case on the plight of children impacted by the pandemic.

Child trafficking

Advocate Gaurav Agrawal, *amicus curiae*, said cases of

child trafficking have been going up. The government should intervene to care and protect children orphaned, abandoned or whose families have lost their earning members.

The court said lack of knowledge about the rights of children under the Juvenile Justice Act had led to many falling victim to efforts at illegal adoption. It directed the Centre, States and the Union Territories to give wide publicity to the provisions of the 2015 Act at regular intervals so as to make the general public, children and their parents or guardians aware of such provisions.

It ordered the States and the Union Territories to continue with their efforts to identify children in need of care and protection after March 2020 and upload their details on the NCPCR database in order to provide them welfare schemes.

Govt. caps prices of COVID-19 vaccines at private hospitals

High cost unacceptable: V.K. Paul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre has capped the prices at which vaccines will be sold at private hospitals. With a ceiling of ₹150 that hospitals can charge per dose as 'service charge' and a GST of 5%, the maximum price chargeable for Covishield is ₹780, for Covaxin, ₹4,140 and for Sputnik V ₹1,445, the Union Health Ministry said in an order on Tuesday.

The State governments would be entrusted with ensuring that these price barriers were not breached and if, in future, vaccine prices fell, it would influence the maximum cap.

Currently, nearly 9,000 private hospitals across the country are involved in the vaccination programme, and the government expects more of the 25,000-30,000 hospitals across the country to be more involved in the programme.

Private hospitals have, however, expressed reservations over the changed norms. The larger hospital chains that dominate vaccine procurement say the price is too low given the higher costs the hospitals incur, and the government should aim to reduce the vaccine prices for the private hospitals as well.

"The cap of ₹150 will not cover the additional costs incurred for such off-site vaccination camps which involve substantial costs... We urge the government to consider a higher charge," Fortis Healthcare said in a statement on Monday following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address.



Covishield will cost ₹780 a dose and Covaxin ₹1,410.

not just big cities, to come forward for administering vaccines."

Though vaccines would be available to all the Centre would continue to give "the highest priority" to healthcare workers, Dr. Paul added.

The high price of COVID-19 vaccines at private hospitals is "unacceptable", and the revised vaccination policy will see reductions, said V.K. Paul, Chairman of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19, on Tuesday.

Dr. Paul's remarks came a day after the Centre announced a revised vaccine policy from June 21 in which everyone above 18 will be eligible for free vaccines at government centres and State governments will no longer need to compete to buy vaccines.

Addressing a press conference, Dr. Paul said, "It is unacceptable that hospitals charge ₹1,600 or even ₹4,000 for vaccines that cost ₹600. They must limit their price. Earlier it was ₹100 and we felt that there is a need for it to be increased. We are confident that this will encourage more hospitals, across the country and

Maintain vigil over private hospitals'

They may sell vaccines at a higher price, unless regulated stringently, SC told govt.

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court was worried about the role of private hospitals in COVID-19 vaccination, saying whether they would prefer profit over public health.

The court's anxiety is real and present as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech on Monday revealed that private hospitals would retain their capacity to buy 25% of vaccine stock from the manufacturers.

The court had advised the government to maintain a strict vigil over private hospitals in a May 31 order. It had

raised apprehension that private hospitals would sell vaccines they procure at higher prices unless they were "regulated stringently". It had reminded the government that private hospitals, though they provide public health service, have "profit" at the core of their existence.

A Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud, L. Nageswara Rao and S. Ravindra Bhat said, "Further consequences of vaccination by private hospitals under the liberalised vaccination policy relate to a simple issue at the core of their existence: that

while they provide a public health service, they still remain private, for-profit entities. Consequently, they may sell the vaccine doses procured at a higher price, unless regulated stringently."

Transparency issue
The court was also worried about transparency. "Private hospitals also may not sell all their vaccine doses publicly through appointments on Co-WIN, but rather sell them for lucrative deals directly to private corporations who wish to vaccinate their employees," it said.

The Bench pointed out

that many, especially those who live in small cities and villages, have limited access to private hospitals. "Private hospitals are not equally spread out across a State/UT and are often limited to bigger cities with large populations. As such, a larger quantity will be available in such cities, as opposed to the rural areas," it stated.

However, the court clarified that it was not against private hospitals playing a role in the vaccination drive. It accepted the Centre's point that they would reduce the burden on government facilities.

Union seeks compensation for pilots

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

As nearly 21 pilots have succumbed to COVID-19 during the second wave, a welfare association has moved the Bombay High Court demanding that it determine suitable compensation in case of death of a pilot operating flights under the government's Vande Bharat Mission.

In its PIL plea, the Federation of Indian Pilots sought an interim ex gratia of ₹10 crore for all those who have lost their lives in the line of duty due to COVID-19.

Probe ordered into 'mock drill' by Agra hospital

It cut off oxygen supply for 5 minutes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The Agra district administration launched a probe after the owner of a private hospital was heard in a video allegedly claiming how the hospital shut down oxygen supply for five minutes on April 27 as part of a "mock drill" to see which patients would survive and which would not.

Twenty-two patients "started turning blue, while 74 others survived", the owner of Paras Hospital, Arinjay Jain, can be heard saying in the video.

Mr. Jain, whose face is not visible, says there was acute shortage of oxygen on the day and claims they were told that even the Chief Mi-

nister could not arrange oxygen for them. He says they started discharging patients. While some were willing to listen, others did not. This is when he decided to conduct the "mock drill". "We did a mock drill at 7 a.m. and identified 22 patients. We realised they would die. We shut it [oxygen] down for five minutes. They started turning blue."

Agra District Magistrate Prabhu N. Singh, after conducting a preliminary probe, said there were no deaths due to lack of oxygen in the hospital. He also said an FIR would be lodged against Mr. Jain for trying to spread "fear". The hospital would also be sealed with immediate effect.

The figures do not include cases and deaths from Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep and

Over 88,000 new cases recorded

Country also registers over 2,100 deaths; test positivity rate drops below 4%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

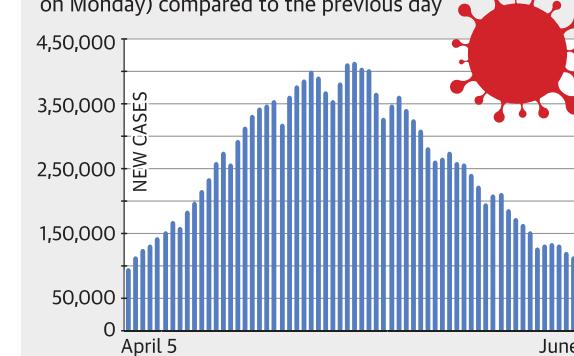
India recorded 88,747 new COVID-19 cases and 2,128 new deaths till 9.30 p.m. on Tuesday. The country has so far reported a total of 2,90,84,204 cases and 3,53,463 deaths.

Tamil Nadu reported 18,023 new infections, followed by Kerala (15,567) and Maharashtra (10,891). Maharashtra recorded 702 new casualties on the day, followed by Tamil Nadu (409) and Karnataka (179). Maharashtra's fatalities include backlog deaths which were missed in the previous reports.

The figures do not include cases and deaths from Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep and

Easing burden

Daily recorded COVID-19 cases in India fell below the 1 lakh-mark on Monday, the first time in 62 days. However, 4,48 lakh fewer samples were tested on Sunday (results of which were made available on Monday) compared to the previous day



Ladakh. The data are sourced from the health bulletins of the respective States.

Nearly 18.73 lakh samples were tested in the country on Monday (the results for which were made available

on Tuesday). India's average daily test positivity rate (positive cases identified for every 100 tests) continues to decline. It was 3.8% on June 7 compared with 8.6% recorded a week before.

Nearly 33.64 lakh vaccine doses were administered in the country in the 24 hours ending 7 a.m. on Tuesday, which is nearly 19.74 lakh doses more than what was recorded in the previous 24 hours. It is also 5.84 lakh more doses than what was recorded during the same period a week ago. The seven-day rolling average of daily vaccinations in the country continues to increase. It stood at 27.8 lakh on June 7, which is more than the 23.92 lakh recorded a week before (May 31).

U.S. firm pays \$15 million for Covaxin rights

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HYDERABAD

Ocugen Inc, the U.S. partner for Bharat Biotech's COVID-19 vaccine, announced the payment of \$15 million upfront to the Indian drug maker for extending the vaccine rights to Canada.

In a regulatory filing, Ocugen said it had agreed to pay another \$10 million within a month from the commercial launch of Covaxin in Canada. Bharat Biotech on June 3 said it had agreed to expand the agreement with Ocugen Inc to commercialise the jab in Canada.

The two firms have entered into an agreement to co-develop, supply and commercialise Covaxin for the U.S. market.

SUDOKU

1		8		7				
7	4	6	9					
8		7		4	3			
		4		8	1			
6	9		1					
5	7		4			9		
	3	9	4	7				
8		6		2				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13268

A

MARKET WATCH

	08-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,275	-0.10
US Dollar	72.89	-0.12
Gold	4913.00	2.13
Brent oil	71.57	0.13

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	874.20	-4.40
Asian Paints	2926.25	-6.85
Axiscity	746.35	-4.75
Bajaj Auto	4269.90	20.15
Bajaj Finserv	11733.10	-95.45
Bajaj Finance	5755.40	25.65
Bharti Airtel	546.80	10.35
BPCL	487.45	6.05
Britannia Ind	3601.75	59.15
Cipla	953.75	13.95
Coal India	156.00	-0.25
Divis Lab	4241.20	11.25
Dr Reddys Lab	5274.75	55.55
Eicher Motors	2763.80	9.35
Gasim Ind	1502.15	2.15
HCL Tech.	967.20	17.60
HDFC	2554.50	-31.25
HDFC Bank	1483.05	-16.80
HDFC Life	689.70	9.60
Hero MotoCorp	3055.95	3.70
Hindalco	387.75	-7.25
Hind Unilever	2359.00	19.70
ICICI Bank	642.40	-5.80
IndusInd Bank	1020.15	-5.05
Infosys	1412.95	23.30
Indian Oil Corp	116.70	2.00
ITC	213.65	2.20
JSW Steel	707.50	-8.25
Kotak Bank	1793.55	-21.35
L&T	1549.15	-8.65
M&M	807.85	4.00
Maruti Suzuki	7336.75	61.10
Nestle India Ltd.	17482.60	-49.95
NTPC	116.20	-0.20
ONGC	124.80	-0.35
PowerGrid Corp	234.05	-2.20
Reliance Ind	2214.60	-12.80
SBI Life	979.85	-8.65
State Bank	427.20	-5.05
Shree Cement	28955.35	-200.45
Sun Pharma	678.75	3.40
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	710.45	10.50
Tata Motors	352.75	7.25
Tata Steel	1111.10	-17.60
TCS	3200.15	16.95
Tech Mahindra	1057.75	23.35
Titan	1712.50	27.40
UltraTech Cement	6794.40	-55.25
UPL	853.55	3.05
Wipro	550.60	2.35

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	72.69	73.01
Euro	88.54	88.96
British Pound	102.83	103.32
Japanese Yen (100)	66.41	66.70
Chinese Yuan	11.36	11.41
Swiss Franc	81.07	81.48
Singapore Dollar	54.92	55.17
Canadian Dollar	60.16	60.46
Malaysian Ringgit	17.63	17.72

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Mercedes-Benz unveils Maybach SUV at ₹2.43 cr.

MUMBAI Mercedes-Benz India has forayed into the ultra-luxurious SUV segment with the introduction of Mercedes-Maybach GLS 600 4MATIC, the first-ever SUV in the Maybach range. It has been introduced at starting prices of ₹2.43 crore ex-showroom all India. Fifty customers have booked the SUV so far, the company said.

Ashok Leyland effects senior level changes

CHENNAI Ashok Leyland has made senior-level organisational changes to strengthen the sustainability agenda through its Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives. N.V. Balachander, president, human resources, communication and CSR, will lead the sustainability agenda as president - ESG. Amanpreet Singh has been appointed as president and head of HR. He is currently vice-president, Group HR.

VA Tech Wabag Q4 profit surges to ₹33 crore

CHENNAI VA Tech Wabag Ltd., a water and waste-water treatment solutions provider, reported net profit for the quarter ended March surged to ₹33 crore from ₹1.4 crore in the year-earlier period. Revenue jumped to ₹700 crore (₹491 crore). Order book stood at more than ₹9,500 crore. "We are poised to generate value for our stakeholders with almost ₹10,000 crore orders to execute," said Rajiv Mittal, managing director.

'Preserve CCTV footage of demonetisation days'

MUMBAI The RBI on Tuesday asked banks to preserve the CCTV recordings of their branches and currency chests from November 8, 2016, to December 30, 2016, to assist enforcement agencies to take action against those involved in illegal activities during the demonetisation period. On the basis of various inputs, the agencies started probing illegal accumulation of new currency notes. PTI

World Bank sees India growing by 8.3%

Lender says forecast, however, masks damage from COVID second wave; pegs global growth at 5.6%

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

India's economy is expected to grow by 8.3% in the fiscal year that began in April 2021, the World Bank forecast in its June 2021 Global Economic Prospects released on Tuesday. The forecast, however, masked the significant expected economic damage caused by the "enormous" second wave of COVID-19, the Bank said.

Raising its projection for global growth, the bank said the world economy would expand at 5.6% in 2021, the fastest post-recession growth rate in 80 years, underpinned by U.S. stimulus spending and faster growth in China. Observing that global output would still end up 2% below pre-pandemic projections by the year end, the development lender said



Widening gap: 'Highly unequal' access to vaccines is a factor in the uneven global recovery, says World Bank. ■ FILE PHOTO

Franklin Templeton to move SAT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

63 Moons Technologies said it will challenge the order of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Mumbai allowing Piramal Group to acquire DHFL under the IBC.

"63 Moons believes the current resolution plan is contrary to law and against the interest of all DHFL's creditors, including NCD holders," it contended.

"DHFL's administrator has filed applications for the recovery of almost ₹45,000 crore under the IBC against promoters and other persons," 63 Moons said, adding that the ₹45,000 crore must be paid to the defrauded parties who are creditors.

"Instead, the resolution

plan favours the resolution applicant" Piramal Group, allowing it to reap the benefits of recoveries, it held.

Absorbing a value of ₹1 to

the recoveries of fraud where claims were in excess of ₹45,000 crore "creates unjust enrichment of the buyer" at the cost of creditors, 63 Moons argued.

"Piramal has bid only for the current value of DHFL which does not include the amounts taken away fraudulently. Hence, the recoveries must come to creditors only," it said. 63 Moons, which holds over ₹200 crore of DHFL's NCDs, had filed an application in the NCLT, demanding the payment of fraudulent transaction recovery benefits to creditors.

Also, it has been asked to refund investment management and advisory fees of over ₹512 crore. A Franklin Templeton spokesperson said, "We strongly disagree with the findings in the order and intend to file an appeal with the SAT."

Assuming an average

price of ₹150/dose, with a si-

milar amount incurred on logistics and supply charges, we estimate the total fiscal cost to the Centre will be ₹40,000-₹45,000 crore and of this, ₹35,000 crore has already been provided for in the Budget, which means the Centre will have to allocate a maximum of ₹10,000 crore for this, she said.

pandemic levels since March, in part due to greater restrictions on mobility," the bank noted.

'Collapse and recovery' Economic activity in India would likely follow a similar but less pronounced 'collapse and recovery' trend seen during the first wave, the bank said in its outlook.

"The pandemic will undermine consumption and investment as confidence remains depressed and balance sheets damaged. Growth in FY2022/23 is expected to slow to 7.5% reflecting lingering impacts of COVID-19 on household, corporate and bank balance sheets; possibly low levels of consumer confidence; and heightened uncertainty on job and income prospects," the global lender added.

For the world as a whole, losses to per capita income would not be reversed by 2022 for some two-thirds of emerging market and developing economies, the bank said. Low income countries that had lagged in vaccinations had witnessed a reversal in poverty reduction, with the pandemic exacerbating insecurity and other long-standing challenges.

"While there are welcome signs of global recovery, the pandemic continues to inflict poverty and inequality on people in developing countries," World Bank Group President David Malpass said in a press release.

"Globally coordinated efforts are essential to accelerate vaccine distribution and debt relief, particularly for low-income countries," Mr. Malpass added.

Textile units in Kanpur, Chennai-Kancheepuram worst hit by COVID stress'

Credit to sector fell 20%: SIDBI report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's textile clusters in Kanpur and Chennai-Kancheepuram have been worst hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the highest proportion of loans turning delinquent by December 2020, according to a report.

The country's textiles industry has been in trouble since the national lockdown imposed in March last year, with outstanding credit to the sector falling 20% year-on-year by December 2020



rupur-Coimbatore-Madurai recorded the lowest proportion of loans going bad, at 8.24% and 8.6%, respectively, compared with the overall delinquency rate of 16.4% in the textiles sector.

Among micro, small and medium textile enterprises, the textiles cluster in Punjab reported the highest delinquencies at almost 25%, followed by Chennai-Kancheepuram (23.6%) and Hyderabad-Guntur (22.8%).

The SIDBI survey found that ongoing changes in the GST portal and filing of returns has created confusion for units, with exporters stating that getting Integrated GST refunds is a 'major challenge'. The lack of clarity on the export benefits that would accrue under the new Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP) scheme, isn't helping.

Most units said access to working capital was a challenge and cash flows were constrained, while 'ever-increasing fuel prices' have escalated transport costs. The rise in yarn and other raw material prices, and fluctuating cotton prices, are also difficult to cope with, even as export orders have slowed down due to COVID-19, the survey found.

'Free vaccines to States to add just ₹10,000-cr.'

Fiscal deficit to widen by only 0.4%: UBS



price of ₹150/dose, with a similar amount incurred on logistics and supply charges, we estimate the total fiscal cost to the Centre will be ₹40,000-₹45,000 crore and of this, ₹35,000 crore has already been provided for in the Budget, which means the Centre will have to allocate a maximum of ₹10,000 crore for this, she said.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

IN MEMORIAM

56 NDA COURSE

Passed out from National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Pune on 9th June 1979.

The Iconic Course where all the three Chiefs today are Coursemates



In Memoriam
In fond and everlasting memory of our dear Departed Coursemates

Alpha
Wg Cdr A Gode, Wg Cdr DK Shukla, Capt YV Prasad

Bravo

Cmde J Moses, Sqn Ldr M Nagendra, Lt AK Raghava, Capt KA Ramana, Lt Col SS Soin, Flt Cdt AS Malhotra, Flt Lt N Sridhar, 2nd Lt SK Chawla, Wg Cdr AM Hameed

Charlie

Flt Lt CM Shivkumar, Lt Col H Pahwa, Flt Lt AG Narahari, Col SN Jha

Delta

Wg Cdr C Vinodkumar, Lt (IN) SG Purnoosil, Capt (IN) P Baokar, Capt Gurpreet Singh

Echo

Cmde DS Chhillar, Col B Yadav, Lt SK Mahakal, Lt J Rajkhowa, Col S Maira, RAdm SS Jamwal, Fg Offr S Kaul, Maj KV Thomas

Fox

Col NK Jha, Gp Capt KR Rathindranath, Maj CM Vishwanathan

Golf

Lt Col SK Rathore, Fg Offr PB Madhavan, Maj J Pandian, Col AV

IN BRIEF



'Milkha has shown continuous improvement'

LEGENDARY Indian sprinter Milkha Singh's battle with COVID-19 at PGIMER's Intensive Care Unit completed its sixth day on Tuesday amid continuous improvement in his condition. "...there is continuous improvement in the condition of sprint icon Shri Milkha Singh Ji, who has been admitted in the Intensive Care Unit of the NHE Block of PGIMER since June 3 and getting treated for COVID-19," PGIMER official spokesperson Prof. Ashok Kumar said. PTI



Robinson has team's full support, says Anderson

LONDON Veteran England pacer James Anderson says the team has unanimously accepted Ollie Robinson's apology for posting racist and sexist tweets as a teenager nine years ago. "He stood up in front of the group and apologised and you could see how sincere he was and upset he was. He's done a lot of maturing and growing since then, and he's got the full support of the team," said Anderson. PTI



Hasan, Jayawickrama and Mushfiqur nominated

DUBAI Pakistan pacer Hasan Ali, in pic, Sri Lankan spinner Praveen Jayawickrama and Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim were on Tuesday nominated for the ICC men's Player of the Month award for May. The ICC also nominated Kathryn Bryce of Scotland and Irish duo of Gaby Lewis and Leah Paul for women's honours. PTI

CA adds six players to preliminary squad

MELBOURNE Cricket Australia, concerned that top players might opt out of the limited-overs tours of the West Indies and Bangladesh due to "bubble fatigue", has added six cricketers to its preliminary squad for the upcoming assignments, beginning July 10. Australia's white-ball squad swelled to 29 after the selection committee called up Ben McDermott, Dan Christian, Cameron Green, Ashton Turner, Wes Agar and Nathan Ellis. PTI

BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

The badminton great Prakash Padukone once pulled up a youngster for literally toying with an opponent, playing trick shots, pretending to smash and occasionally holding his racquet in the wrong hand. It was a friendly match, yet Prakash called the youngster aside and told him that a sportsman should never disrespect an opponent.

All sports have ways of dealing with unsportsmanlike conduct. The 'dive' in football, the racquet abuser in tennis, the player showing dissent at an umpire's decision in cricket all have to pay the price. Whole books have been written about golf etiquette. There are rules and then something called 'spirit'.

What is legal may not always be acceptable. When Trevor Chappell bowled an underarm delivery to

Historic highs for Zidansek, Pavlyuchenkova

Reach Grand Slam last-four for the first time; defending champions Swiatek, Nadal stay on course

ROLAND-GARROS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PARIS

Before the French Open, Tamara Zidansek had never advanced past the second round at any Grand Slam. The former snowboarder has now become the first woman representing Slovenia to reach the semifinals at a Major.

Spurred on by the vocal support of her coaching team on Court Philippe Chatrier, the 85th-ranked Zidansek defeated Spanish rival Paula Badosa 7-5, 4-6, 8-6 Tuesday at the clay-court tournament.

"It feels overwhelming," she said.

The French Open is the only remaining Grand Slam where tiebreakers are not played in the last set. Wimbledon recently installed tie-breakers at 12-12 in the final set.

Losing it

After splitting the first two sets, Badosa violently threw her racket in anger at the changeover after Zidansek held for a 6-5 lead in the third.

She regained her composure, but Zidansek then saved three break points to take a 7-6 lead and converted her second match point with a big forehand in the next game. Zidansek's next opponent at the clay-court event will be Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, another first-time semifinalist.

Pavlyuchenkova came out

THE HIGHLIGHTS



WEDNESDAY'S PICKS:

Men: 3-Nadal vs 10-Schwartzman
1-Djokovic vs 9-Berrettini
(night session, 11.30 p.m. IST)

Women: 8-Swiatek vs 17-Sakkari
24-Gauff vs Krejcikova

1 Maiden Grand Slam semi-final for Pavlyuchenkova, snapping a six-match run in Major quarterfinals without victory

2 Last eight opponents Nadal and Schwartzman are the only two remaining in the men's draw who are yet to lose a set this edition

2 Defending singles champion Swiatek has entered the doubles semifinal for the second straight year

3 Zidansek, prior to her semifinal run, had only won three main draw matches from eight Grand Slam appearances. At 85, she is also the lowest-ranked Slam semifinalist since No.131 Nadia Podoroska (2020 French Open)

6 There were six first-time Slam quarterfinalists in the women's draw, an Open Era record for ladies. Only Swiatek and Pavlyuchenkova had prior experience

I didn't feel myself in the whole match. I couldn't control the nerves during the entire match. But at least I fought until the last moment and had my chances.

BADOSA, AFTER HER TIGHT THREE-SET LOSS

I knew before the match that it's going to be a tough battle. I was a set and 4-2 up, she came back, I was struggling a little bit but I managed to get [into] my groove

ZIDANSEK, AFTER BEATING BADOSA

on top of another tense battle to rally past her doubles partner Elena Rybakina 6-7 (2), 6-2, 9-7. The 31st-seeded Russian had lost at this stage 10 years ago at Roland Garros and was 0-6 in Grand Slam quarterfinals before taking to the court.

"Mentally it was really, really hard this morning," she said. "Especially since I needed to play Elena. But this is tennis, we both wanted to win. The key was to be able to return her serve."

Pavlyuchenkova did it well and converted six of 17 break points against her rival and friend.

Earlier on Monday, de-

fending champion Iga Swiatek reached the quarterfinals after beating unseeded 18-year-old Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-3, 6-4 in the fourth round.

Kostyuk saved one match point on her second serve at 30-40 as she held in the ninth game of the second set.

Smart lob

That forced Swiatek to serve out the match and she clinched victory with a smart lob from the net.

Swiatek has now won 22 straight sets at Roland Garros, including her run to the title last year. She next faces

17th-seeded Greek Maria Sakkari, who reached her first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

Schwartz continued to impress in doubles too as she and partner Bethanie Mattek-Sands beat the 11th-seeded pair of Darija Jurak and Andreja Klepac 6-3, 6-2 in the quarterfinals.

Third seed Nadal downed

19-year-old Jannik Sinner 7-5, 6-3, 6-0 and goes on to face 10th-seeded Diego Schwartzman of Argentina who he defeated in the semifinals last year.

Nadal hit 31 winners while Sinner claimed just 10 points in the third set. Nadal has now won 104 matches at Roland Garros against just two defeats since his 2005 debut while Monday's victory extended his run of consecutive sets won to 35.

"I started well but was a little too defensive. I gave him the chance to come inside the court and play his best shots. That was a mistake," said Nadal after reaching a 44th Slam last-eight.

Baffled

Despite Monday's match being played in bright sunshine, Nadal was baffled as to why the lights inside Court Philippe Chatrier were switched on.

"I don't know why they put the lights on that early. We used to have TV before we had the lights on. I saw plenty of matches here, and from the TV the quality of the image was great without the lights," said Nadal.

THE RESULTS

Quarterfinals: Women: 31-Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (Rus) bt 21-Elena Rybakina (Kaz) 6-7(2), 6-2, 9-7; Tamara Zidansek (Slo) bt 33-Paula Badosa (Esp) 7-5, 4-6, 8-6.

Monday's results: Fourth round:

Women: 8-Iga Swiatek (Pol) bt Marta Kostyuk (Ukr) 6-3, 6-4.

Men: 3-Rafael Nadal (Esp) bt 18-Jannik Sinner (Ita) 7-5, 6-3, 6-0.

Chhetri stays as humble as ever



On the prowl: Chhetri, who moved past Messi in the scorers' list, says he doesn't count his strikes. • TWITTER/INDIANFOOTBALL

FOOTBALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DOHA

Sunil Chhetri has never liked counting his goals and he prefers to keep it that way even after surpassing the great Lionel Messi as the second-highest scorer among active players in international football.

The 36-year-old Chhetri achieved his 74th strike with his brace against Bangladesh in the joint preliminary qualifying round match for 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup here on Monday night. Messi has 73 so far.

The skipper said he will get down to counting his goals probably 10 years down the line.

"I do not count the number of goals. 10 years later, we will sit together, have a chat and then count," the veteran said.

Instead of his goals, Chhetri focused on the many lessons his team will take home from Monday's game. "We were guilty of missing a lot of chances. We could have done better. It has been a topsy-turvy qualifying campaign. We will talk about it but I am happy that we got three points," Chhetri said.

The India captain is just a goal away from entering world football's all-time top-10. He is behind Hungary's Sandor Kocsis, Japan's Kunishige Kamamoto, and Kuwait's Bashir Abdulla, who all have 75 goals.

Indians to get time to switch off

Will have a three-week break between WTC final, England series

CRICKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LONDON

The Indian team management has decided to give a three-week break to its players after the World Test Championship (WTC) final in a bid to address the mental fatigue that might be triggered by lengthy spells in a bio-bubble.

The WTC final against New Zealand will be held from June 18-22 at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton and the members of the Indian

squad will disperse for close to three weeks (20 days) before regrouping on July 14 to prepare for the five-match series against England starting in Nottingham on Aug. 4.

"As skipper Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri had told the media at the pre-departure press conference, there will be a break. There is a six-week gap between WTC final and the opening Test against England and we had to address the issue of players' well-being. Within the UK, they can disperse off, go for a holiday, meet

friends and family," said a senior BCCI official.

"Most of them have come to the UK many times and have friends and acquaintances around the country. It's only fair that they can switch off," said the source.

Officials for WTC final

England's Richard Illingworth and Michael Gough will be the on-field umpires for the WTC final. Richard Kettleborough will be the TV umpire and Alex Wharf the fourth official. Chris Broad will be the match referee.



Welcome break: The Indians can cool off after the WTC final. • FILE PHOTO

Temporary truce reached, SLC names squad for England tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan cricketers have agreed to compete against England on a tour-specific contract, but would not sign the annual contracts unless Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) explained the evaluation process.

The Minister of Youth and Sports, Namal Rajapaksa, gave his approval for the chosen Sri Lanka squad. It is scheduled to play three T20Is and as many ODIs between June 18 and July 4.

The squad: Kusal Perera (Capt.), Kusal Mendis, Daren Gunathilaka, Avishka Fernando, Pathum Nissanka, Nirosh Wickramasinghe, Dhananjaya de Silva, Oshada Fernando, Charith Asalanka, Dasun Shanaka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Ramesh Mendis, Chamika Karunarathne, Dhananjaya Lakshan, Ishan Jayaratne, Dushmantha Chameera, Isuru Udana, Asitha Fernando, Nuvan Pradeep, Shiran Fernando, Lakshan Sandakan, Akila Dananjaya and Praveen Jayawickrama.

DEFENDERS: Lucas Digne, Leo Dubois, Lucas Hernandez, Presnel Kimpembe, Jules Koundé, Clement Lenglet, Benjamin Pavard, Raphael Varane, Kurt Zouma

MIDFIELDERS: N'Golo Kante, Thomas Lemar, Paul Pogba, Adrien Rabiot, Moussa Sissoko, Corentin Tolisso

FORWARDS: Wissam Ben Yedder, Karim Benzema, Kingsley Coman, Ousmane Dembele, Olivier Giroud, Antoine Griezmann, Kylian Mbappe, Marcus Thuram

GOALKEEPERS: Hugo Lloris, Mike Maignan, Steve Mandanda

DEFENDERS: Lucas Digne, Leo Dubois, Lucas Hernandez, Presnel Kimpembe, Jules Koundé, Clement Lenglet, Benjamin Pavard, Raphael Varane, Kurt Zouma

MIDFIELDERS: N'Golo Kante, Thomas Lemar, Paul Pogba, Adrien Rabiot, Moussa Sissoko, Corentin Tolisso

FORWARDS: Wissam Ben Yedder, Karim Benzema, Kingsley Coman, Ousmane Dembele, Olivier Giroud, Antoine Griezmann, Kylian Mbappe, Marcus Thuram

GOALKEEPERS: Hugo Lloris, Mike Maignan, Steve Mandanda

DEFENDERS: Lucas Digne, Leo Dubois, Lucas Hernandez, Presnel Kimpembe, Jules Koundé, Clement Lenglet, Benjamin Pavard, Raphael Varane, Kurt Zouma

MIDFIELDERS: N'Golo Kante, Thomas Lemar, Paul Pogba, Adrien Rabiot, Moussa Sissoko, Corentin Tolisso

FORWARDS: Wissam Ben Yedder, Karim Benzema, Kingsley Coman, Ousmane Dembele, Olivier Giroud, Antoine Griezmann, Kylian Mbappe, Marcus Thuram

GOALKEEPERS: Hugo Lloris, Mike Maignan, Steve Mandanda

DEFENDERS: Lucas Digne, Leo Dubois, Lucas Hernandez, Presnel Kimpembe, Jules Koundé, Clement Lenglet, Benjamin Pavard, Raphael Varane, Kurt Zouma

MIDFIELDERS: N'Golo Kante, Thomas Lemar, Paul Pogba, Adrien Rabiot, Moussa Sissoko, Corentin Tolisso

FORWARDS: Wissam Ben Yedder, Karim Benzema, Kingsley Coman, Ousmane Dembele, Olivier Giroud, Antoine Griezmann, Kylian Mbappe, Marcus Thuram

GOALKEEPERS: Hugo Lloris, Mike Maignan, Steve Mandanda

DEFENDERS: Lucas Digne, Leo Dubois, Lucas Hernandez, Presnel Kimpembe, Jules Koundé, Clement Lenglet, Benjamin Pavard, Raphael Varane, Kurt Zouma

MIDFIELDERS: N'Golo Kante, Thomas Lemar, Paul Pogba, Adrien Rabiot, Moussa Sissoko, Corentin Tolisso

FORWARDS: Wissam Ben Yedder, Karim Benzema, Kingsley Coman, Ousmane Dembele, Olivier Giroud, Antoine Griezmann, Kylian Mbappe, Marcus Thuram

GOALKEEPERS: Hugo Lloris, Mike Maignan, Steve Mandanda

</

TV PICKS

Roland-Garros: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 2.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Nets steamroller

Bucks

NEW YORK
Kevin Durant had 32 points as Brooklyn Nets rolled to its largest point win in franchise history on Monday with a 125-86 beat down of Milwaukee Bucks in game two of their NBA series.

The results: Nets 125 bt Bucks 86. Nets lead 2-0; Suns 122 bt Nuggets 105. Suns lead 1-0.

Siddhant Bantia beats second seed

MONASTIR (TUNISIA)

Siddhant Bantia knocked out second seed Lee Duckhee of Korea 6-3, 2-6, 6-4, 6-3.

€132,280 Challenger, Nottingham: First round: Catherine McNally (US) bt Ankita Raina 6-4, 6-3.

\$25,000 ITF women, Madrid: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Nicole Fossa Huero (Ita) & Noelia Zeballos Melgar (Bol) bt Rebeka Masarova (Esp) & Karman Kaur Thandi 6-4, 6-2.



Italy calls up Pessina for injured Sensi

FLORENCE

Atalanta midfielder Matteo Pessina was called up Monday as a late replacement for the injured Stefano Sensi in the Italy squad for the upcoming European Championship. Sensi aggravated a muscular injury in training last week. The Italian soccer federation announced that the 24-year-old Pessina would replace Sensi after getting the green light from UEFA's medical commission. AP

FIFA imposes transfer ban on Blasters, EB

FOOTBALL

STAN RAYAN

KOCHI Football's world body FIFA has banned Indian Super League (ISL) clubs Kerala Blasters FC and SC East Bengal from signing players from the coming transfer window after receiving complaints about unpaid wages.

"The list includes Kerala Blasters, East Bengal and Churchill (I-League) but it is only an issue of making the payment (to players)," Kushal Das, AIFF general secretary, told *The Hindu* on

EB's woes increase

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA

KOLKATA East Bengal has found itself in big trouble following the FIFA Players' Status Committee (PSC) barring it from signing Indian players in the upcoming season. With the club already embroiled in a dispute with its investor, the ban will stop its team-building process ahead of the new Indian Super League season.

The ban comes as an after-effect of a failed tie-up with its previous investor Ques Corp, who quit the deal midway last season (2019-20) without making full payments to contracted players. As the club took back the "sporting rights" from Ques, it did it without ensuring that the investor pays off the dues in time, according to a senior club official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

With their payments falling due, some players approached the All India Football Federation (AIFF)

Ankita to partner Sania at the Olympics

There is also a strong possibility of the former making the singles entry list

TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

It was the best kept secret in Indian women's tennis for some time.

The country's top-ranked woman player, Ankita Raina, went on Instagram to announce that she would be competing in the Tokyo Olympics doubles event with six-time Grand Slam champion Sania Mirza.

"I will do my best to make India proud!" Ankita stated.

Ranking

Former World No. 1 Sania will make the Olympics entry on the basis of her injury-protected ranking of No. 9.

As per the rule, Sania can

make the doubles draw with a partner ranked in the top-300.

The 28-year-old Ankita is 183 in singles and 95 in doubles. The ranking list on June 14 will be applicable for making the cut.

Ankita had played the last three Olympics in Beijing, London and Rio with Sunitha Rao, Rushmi Chakravarthi and Prarthana Thombare respectively.

There is also a strong possibility of Ankita making the singles entry list in Tokyo as the Asian Games bronze medalist.

The gold and silver medallists from China, Wang Qiang and Shuai Zhang, ranked 39 and 46 at the moment, could get direct entry when 56 players are taken

into the Olympics singles event on the basis of their world ranking.

Before the Billie Jean King Cup World Group play-off in Latvia recently, Sania had invited Ankita to Dubai for a week-long training.

Funding

The two were soon inducted into the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) by Sports Authority of India (SAI) so as to provide them funding for Olympic preparation.

Thanking her employer Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Ankita wrote, "the effort and hard work put in all these years have been fruitful with your invaluable support and encouragement".



Ready for action: Sania will take part in her fourth Olympics with a new doubles partner in Ankita. ■ FILE PHOTO

IOC picks 29-member refugee team



All the best! IOC president Thomas Bach at the unveiling of the refugee athletes. ■ IOC/GREG MARTIN

REUTERS

LAUSANNE

An expanded refugee team of 29 athletes competing across 12 sports at next month's Tokyo Games will provide hope and inspiration to the world, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said on Tuesday.

The team, which will compete under the Olympic flag and include people from countries including Syria, South Sudan, Eritrea, Afghanistan and Iran, is almost three times as big as the inaugural team at the Rio de Janeiro 2016 Olympics.

The athletes, who will march into the stadium dur-

ing the opening ceremony in second place behind ancient Games founder Greece, were selected from a pool of 56, supported by Olympic scholarships from 13 different countries.

"I speak on behalf of the entire Olympic Movement when I say that we cannot wait to meet you in person and to see you compete in Tokyo," IOC president Thomas Bach said at a virtual presentation of the team.

"It will send a powerful message of solidarity, resilience and hope to the world ... You are an integral part of our Olympic community, and we welcome you with open arms."

Srihari and Sajan's next attempt

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Srihari Nataraj and Sajan Prakash will continue their quests for the elusive A-mark Olympic Qualifying Time by participating in the Belgrade Trophy (June 19 and 20) and Sette Colli Trophy in Rome (June 25 to 27), both FINA-accredited Olympic Qualifying events.

Both have achieved the B-mark times. At the Uzbekistan Open in April, Srihari had clocked 54.07s in the 100m backstroke event, a new National record which was just 0.22s short of the mark for Tokyo.

Sajan, chasing the A-mark in 200m butterfly (1:56.48s), had clocked 1:57.85s in Uzbekistan.

The team also includes seasoned back-stroker Maana Patel along with youngsters Aryan Nehra, Shoan Ganguli, Tanish Mathew and Kenisha Gupta.

The team will be accompanied by coaches Nihar Ameen and Pradeep Kumar.

Deepak pulls out of Poland Open

Wrestler doesn't want to aggravate elbow injury

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WARSAW

Olympics-bound Indian wrestler Deepak Punia, on Tuesday, pulled out of the Poland Open here to avoid aggravating his left-elbow injury that he carried into the last ranking series event before the Tokyo Games.

"He did not want to aggravate the injury and had informed the federation that he will take a call on competing after reaching. After assessing his hand this morning, he decided not to take the mat," a source in the Indian camp said.

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) confirmed the sequence of events.

bronze-medalist had suffered the injury during practice a few days before leaving for Warsaw.

"He did not want to aggravate the injury and had informed the federation that he will take a call on competing after reaching. After assessing his hand this morning, he decided not to take the mat," a source in the Indian camp said.

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) confirmed the sequence of events.

Three para shuttlers make it



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Three Indian para shuttlers, including World No. 1 Pramod Bhagat on Tuesday officially qualified for the Paralympics, scheduled from August 25 to Sept. 5.

Besides Bhagat (SL3 – standing/ lower limb impairment/ minor), Tarun (SL4 – standing/ lower limb impairment/ severe) and Nagar Krishna (SH6 – standing/ short stature) too received invitations to participate in the Paralympics.

Two flag-bearers likely: Batra

"We may use the Olympic symbol, flag, motto, anthem, emblems, flame and torches and any other musical works, audio visual works or other creative works or artefacts commissioned in connection with the Olympic Games by the IOC subject to the use of non-profit making activities only," the IOA stated in its communication to the State units.

In a first, India might have two flag-bearers – one male and one female – at the upcoming Tokyo Olympics to ensure "gender parity", the Indian Olympic Association chief Narinder Batra said on Tuesday.

IOA's campaign to cheer Indian athletes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD

The Indian Olympic Association and the Sports Authority of India, in coordination with the various state sports authorities, will soon jointly organise awareness programmes as part of the nationwide campaign about the Olympics with focus on the participation of Indian athletes in the Tokyo Games next month.

The campaign includes Olympics quiz with rewards

for the winners, Olympics dialogues \ debates, articles etc, fan engagement drives through best slogan \ best digital poster \ best theme song \ most probable medal winning Olympian contests etc.

Social media amplification and selfie points at various locations pan India are also planned as part of this campaign.

The State Olympic Associations are to get involved in this programme in collab-

oration with the Sports Authority.

"We may use the Olympic symbol, flag, motto, anthem, emblems, flame and torches and any other musical works, audio visual works or other creative works or artefacts commissioned in connection with the Olympic Games by the IOC subject to the use of non-profit making activities only," the IOA stated in its communication to the State units.

GENERAL



TMB
Tamilnad
Mercantile
Bank Ltd
Be a step ahead in life

TMB - one of the leading Private Sector Bank invites applications for the post of

- Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Chief Digital Officer (CDO)

Last date for filing application : 21.06.2021

For more details and filing application, Please log on to www.tmb.in

Thoothukudi

09.06.2021

General Manager (HRDD)

UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD
(Central University)

Brief Advertisement

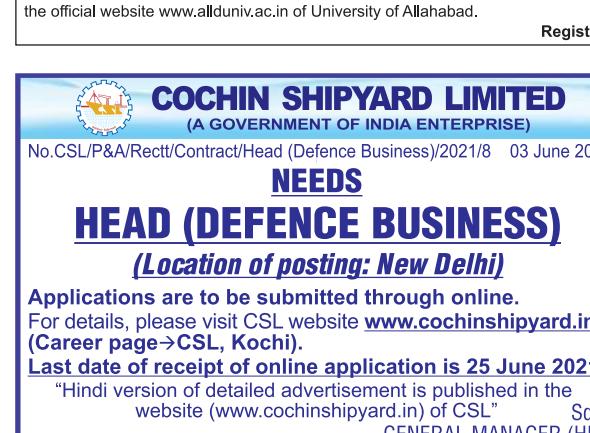
Advt/AUNT/01/2021

07/06/2021

Advertisement for Non-Teaching Positions

University of Allahabad invites applications from the Indian citizen for the post of Controller of Examination (01), Internal Audit Officer (01)-On Deputation, and Deputy Registrar (01) on leave vacancy for the period of one year. Separate applications must be submitted for each post. Eligibility & other related details & Application form can be downloaded from our official website: www.alldu.ac.in. Complete printed application along with necessary documents and bank receipt of payment of fees must reach to the office of the Registrar by 06 July, 2021 till 05:00 PM. University of Allahabad along with one set of self attested photocopy in support of their essential qualifications and experience. The proforma of application may be downloaded from the official website www.alldu.ac.in of University of Allahabad.

Registrar



No.CSL/P&A/Rect/Contract/Head (Defence Business)/2021/ 03 June 2021

NEEDS

HEAD (DEFENCE BUSINESS)

(Location of posting: New Delhi)

Applications are to be submitted through online.

For details, please visit CSL website www.cochinshipyard.in

(Career page→CSL, Kochi).

Last date of receipt of online application is 25 June 2021.

"Hindi version of detailed advertisement is published in the website (www.cochinshipyard.in) of CSL"

Sd/-
GENERAL MANAGER (HR)

INSTITUTE OF BANKING PERSONNEL SELECTION
(An autonomous body set up by Reserve Bank of India, Central Financial Institutions and Public Sector Banks)

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय बैंकिंग पर्सनेल सिलेक्शन

(प्रारंभिक नियन्त्रण कार्यालय, भौतिक वित्तीय संस्थानों एवं सरकारी बैंकों के बीच ग्राह कराया जाना चाहिए एक व्यापार संस्था)

In assessment, India trusts us

Website: www.ibps.in

In case of queries / complaints please log in to <http://cgrs.ibps.in/>

COMMON RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR RECRUITMENT OF OFFICERS (SCALE-I, II & III) AND OFFICE ASSISTANTS (MULTIPURPOSE) IN REGIONAL RURAL BANKS (RRBs) - CRP RRBs X

The online examinations for the next Common Recruitment Process for RRBs (CRP RRBs X) for recruitment of Group "A"- Officers (Scale-I, II & III) and Group "B"- Office Assistant (Multipurpose) will be conducted by the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) tentatively in August and September/October 2021. The interviews for recruitment of