



USA, UK BEHIND BLACK  
SEA PROVOCATION,  
SAYS PUTIN

P10



PLAYING THE TRUMP  
CARD IN PERU

P7



ALI'S PLAYBOOK

TOKYO VIRUS CURBS  
COULD STRETCH  
INTO GAMES TIME

P6

## WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky with possibility of thundery development. Heat wave condition at isolated places. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 41 and 29 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 61% Min: 28%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 43.5°C (+7) Min: 28.2°C (0)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

05:28 hrs 19:23 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

00:23 hrs 11:52 hrs

## THUMBNAILS



Delhi Police personnel give a ceremonial send off to outgoing Delhi Police Commissioner SN Shrivastava on his last day in office, in the Capital on Wednesday. SUBRATA DUTTA (P2)

India asks EU member states to consider Covishield, Covaxin vaccines under Green Pass scheme: As the European Union relaxes travel restrictions under its 'Green Pass' scheme, India has asked the members of the 27-nation grouping to individually consider allowing Indians who have taken Covishield and Covaxin vaccines and want to travel to Europe, sources said. (P4)

Ramdev case: The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked Baba Ramdev to place before it the original record of his statement on the use of allopathic medicine during Covid-19 pandemic. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Ramdev, told the court that he would file the original video along with the transcript.

Delimitation panel: The delimitation commission will undertake a four-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir from July 6-9 and interact with political parties, leaders and officials to gather first hand inputs on the conduct of the exercise to carve out new constituencies there.

## Confident of getting EMA's approval for Covishield: SII

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Vaccine major Serum Institute of India is confident of receiving approval from the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for its Covid-19 vaccine Covishield in a month, company's chief executive officer Adar Poonawalla said on Wednesday.

He also said the issue of vaccine passports should be on the basis of reciprocity between the countries.

"The EMA is absolutely correct in asking us to apply, which we have through AstraZeneca, our partners, a month ago, and that process has to take its time. An approval process even with UK MHRA, WHO took its time and we have applied to the EMA."

**ADAR POONAWALLA**  
The EMA is absolutely correct in asking us to apply, which we have through AstraZeneca, our partners, a month ago, and that process has to take its time. An approval process even with UK MHRA, WHO took its time and we have applied to the EMA.

UK MHRA, WHO took its time and we have applied to the EMA." Poonawalla said at India Global Forum 2021.

"We are quite confident that in a month EMA will approve Covishield. There is no reason why not to, because it is based on

AstraZeneca data and our product is identical to AstraZeneca more or less and it has been approved by WHO, UK MHRA. So it's just a matter of time. It is not really going to hinder anything," he added. But the reason why it was flagged is because if the issue is not addressed now, and when India gets off the red list and when citizens want to travel they should not be refused in a given country just because they have a Covishield certificate.

Stating that it was difficult for the company to stop the export of Covishield as it had prior commitments, he however said Serum did it in the wake of the second wave of the pandemic hitting India. According to a statement by the vaccine manufacturer: "In

## Brazil suspends Covaxin deal, company denies any wrongdoing on its part

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, 30 JUNE

Denying any wrongdoing, Indian vaccine manufacturer Bharat Biotech has said it followed step-by-step approach and has neither received any advance nor supplied any vaccines to Brazil after being embroiled in a major controversy revolving around graft charges over Covaxin vaccine deal with the South American country.

Brazil has suspended a \$324 million contract for Covaxin shots due to charges of irregularities which has mired President Jair Bolsonaro prior to next year's presidential vote.

According to a statement by the vaccine manufacturer: "In



the specific case of procurement of Covaxin by Ministry of Health Brazil, since the first meetings with MOH Brazil during November 2020 until 29 June 2021 a step by step approach has been followed towards contract and regulatory approvals during this eight long month long process. EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) received on 4 June." It said it aims to dispel any notion or implication of wrong doing.

It went on to add: "As of 29 June 2021 Bharat Biotech has not received any advance payments nor supplied any vaccines to MOH Brazil," while clarifying that Bharat Biotech has followed a similar approach towards contracts, regulatory approvals and supplies in several countries worldwide where Covaxin is being supplied successfully. However, the company has received advance payments from several other countries with supplies in process pending approvals. The vaccine which is being supplied at the price between \$15-20 per dose to governments outside India was priced at \$15 in Brazil.

Bharat Biotech also follows a partnership model in all countries where its vaccines are supplied and in case of Brazil its partner is Precisa Medicamentos which is providing it assistance, guidance and support with regulatory submissions, licensure, distribution, insurance, conduct of phase III clinical trials and so on.

An invoice of Singapore-based Madison Biotech for an advance payment of \$45 million for the vaccines made by Bharat Biotech and negotiated by Precisa Medicamentos has led to charges of irregularities after Ricardo Miranda, the former chief of the import division at Brazil's Ministry of Health alleged he faced intense pressure after refusing to approve the invoice.

Fake vax camp:  
Centre seeks info,  
Mamata alleges  
BJP gameplan

KOLKATA, 30 JUNE

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today apprehended whether BJP had fabricated the fake vaccination camp incident to belittle West Bengal and told the Centre that it cannot shrug off its responsibility on this issue while alleging that it was a "planted game from the Home Minister's office to defame Bengal".

Hitting out the Centre over the issue, Miss Banerjee questioned what the Union health minister was doing when the fake camp was held as they cannot deny their responsibility.

"The Government of West Bengal has taken enough action. Show me any other government that has taken such fast action. Every day there is discussion of violence in West Bengal. National televisions are being dictated by the BJP. The BJP is giving misinformation about Bengal to defame us. This is a planted game from the Union home minister's office" said Miss Banerjee at a press conference at Nabanna.

Earlier in the day, the Centre sought a report from the West Bengal government over the issue of fake vaccination camp in Kolkata.

Miss Banerjee termed the incident of fake vaccination camp as an isolated issue and slammed the BJP for playing up the incident.

Miss Banerjee further alleged that the Central government has deprived West Bengal in vaccine allocation by providing around one crore fewer vaccines compared to other states resulting in the vaccination process being stalled for two days in the city.

## Big tech should be held accountable: EAM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday called for a debate on responsibility and accountability of the bigtech companies which enjoy huge power and influence as "non-state players", saying these issues cannot be brushed under the carpet on the pretext of "freedom of speech".

Jaishankar's comments came in the midst of growing tensions between Indian authorities and the US social media giant Twitter on a range of issues including the new IT rules.

In an interactive session with Tony Blair at the India Global Forum, he said that a vigorous debate on big technology firms is going on in India like in various parts of the world,

adding nobody denies that they are "forces of progress".

"But, in a democratic society, we have to ask ourselves, bigtech is there; it is in my life, very visibly in my life. You have a big presence, (but) where is the responsibility which comes with it?" Jaishankar said. "They have huge power, where is the accountability? This is again not an issue limited to India. They harvest our data as they do across the world. So you have, in a sense, the opposite of the American Revolution, which is to have representation and no taxation," he said. "These are very serious questions that need debating. I think they cannot be brushed under the carpet, saying you should not question them because then you are attacking freedom of speech. I think that's a cop-out," he said.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, police said they had responded to more than 65 sudden deaths since the heat wave began Friday. Authorities in Washington and Oregon were investigating about a dozen deaths. "Vancouver has never experienced heat like this, and sadly dozens of people are dying because of it," Vancouver police said in a statement.

The heatwave was caused by what meteorologists

described as a dome of high pressure over the Northwest and worsened by human-caused climate change, which is making such extreme weather events more likely and more intense. Seattle, Portland and many other cities shattered all-time heat records, with temperatures in some places reaching above 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 Celsius).

Amid the dangerous heat and drought that are gripping the American West, crews

were closely monitoring wildfires that can explode in the intense weather.

While the temperatures had cooled considerably in western Washington, Oregon and British Columbia by Wednesday, the interior regions were still sweating through triple-digit temperatures as the weather system moved east.

The government's Environment Canada agency issued heat warnings Wednes-

day for southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Heat warnings were also in place for parts of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana.

In Alberta, "a prolonged, dangerous, and historic heat wave will persist through this week," Environment Canada said in a release. The very high temperatures or humidity conditions also were expected to pose an elevated risk of heatstroke or heat exhaustion.

British Columbia's chief coroner, Lisa Lapointe, said her office would normally receive about 130 death reports over a four-day period. At least 233 deaths were reported from Friday to Monday afternoon, she said, adding that coroners are determining whether the record-breaking heat played a role. Like Seattle, many homes in Vancouver don't have air conditioning.

Environment Canada said

## Scores dead as heat wave grips Canada, USA

ASSOCIATED PRESS

VANCOUVER, 30 JUNE



the weather system shattered 103 heat records across British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon and Northwest Territories on Monday. Those records include a new Canadian high temperature of 118 degrees (47.9 Celsius) set in Lytton, British Columbia, smashing the previous record of 116 degrees (46.6 Celsius) set in the same village.

The United Farmers of British Columbia urged Washington Gov. Jay Inslee to issue emergency heat standards protecting all farm and outdoor workers in the state with a strong agricultural sector. In western Washington, the heat led a utility in Spokane to impose rolling blackouts because of the strain on the electrical grid. About 9,300 Avista Utilities customers lost power Monday, and the company said more planned blackouts began Tuesday in the city.

SNS



The Board of Administrators was tasked to combat the pandemic, but it has failed miserably

ASOK BHATTACHARYA, FORMER CHAIRMAN, BOA, SILIGURI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

SLAMMING THE PRESENT BOA OVER ALLEGED ANOMALIES IN THE VACCINATION PROCESS

## Sisodia announces special PTMs

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

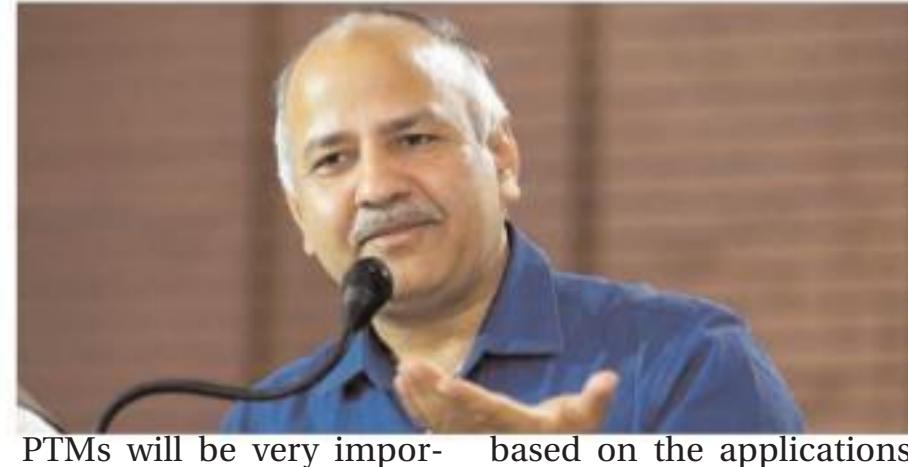
Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who also holds the education portfolio, today made two major announcements, one pertaining to admissions of children belonging to the economically-weaker sections (EWS) in private schools and the other regarding physical special parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) concerning government schools.

Addressing an online press conference, Sisodia said special PTMs would be held physically in government schools from 19 July to 31 July but in small groups, keeping in view the Covid-19-related protocol.

Parents of students belonging to class 6 onwards studying in government schools will be informed about these meetings through SMSes or WhatsApp with the date and the time slot.

He said, "Online learning owing to Covid-19 has increased the role of parents in their children's education. Keeping this in mind, the Directorate of Education (DOE), Delhi, has decided to conduct special PTMs in the physical form for parents of all students in Delhi's government schools. These PTMs will serve as a space for parents to understand how to provide regular learning support to their children."

Sisodia pointed out, "The



PTMs will be very important for students transitioning from MCD feeder schools to DOE schools. After having review meetings with MCD officials, we have created a structure for joint PTMs between MCD and DOE teachers. PTMs for students in the sixth grade will be held jointly between MCD school teachers and DOE school teachers. This will ease the transition of students from MCD schools to DOE schools in the sixth grade and ensure that children receive adequate emotional and learning support in their new environment. I request all parents to attend these PTMs."

Speaking about EWS admissions to private schools, Sisodia said in accordance with the Right to Education Act, private schools have to reserve 25 per cent of their seats for economically weaker sections of society. The Delhi government has initiated a system which says the government will announce a draw for admissions for the seats reserved under the EWS category,

based on the applications received and information provided by schools on the number of seats available. "When we called for applications under the EWS category, we received around 1.26 lakh applications based on which we announced a draw for 32,500 seats," Sisodia informed.

He directed every private school to admit students under the EWS category based on the allotted list sent by the government and regardless of the number of admissions in the general category. He said, "Under normal circumstances, when private schools admit three students under the general category, they take one student under the EWS category, based on the allotted list provided by the Delhi government. However, the Delhi government has now decided that regardless of admitting students under the general category or not, private schools will have to admit students under the EWS category, based on the allotted list sent by the city government."

# Covid: Capital sees 94 new infections, 6 more deaths

Delhi govt sets up 4 special vax centres for food & e-commerce delivery agents, says Sisodia

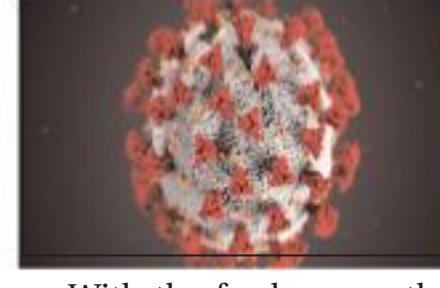
SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

**D**elhi today reported 94 fresh coronavirus infections at a positivity rate of 0.12 per cent and 6 more Covid-linked fatalities, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The recoveries logged in the city outnumbered fresh cases yet again, with 240 Covid patients recovering in the last 24 hours.

Delhi had recorded 101 cases at a positivity rate of 0.15 per cent and 4 deaths yesterday.

Last Monday, the national capital had recorded 59 cases, the lowest single-day rise this year, and 2 deaths. On Sunday, it had reported 89 cases



With the fresh cases, the city's cumulative Covid tally increased to 14,34,188 while its coronavirus toll climbed to 24,977, the health bulletin said. The case fatality rate is 1.74 per cent.

Delhi had recorded 101 cases at a positivity rate of 0.15 per cent and 4 deaths yesterday.

and 4 deaths while the positivity rate was 0.12 per cent.

Today's recorded infections were detected out of a total of 79,935 tests, including 56,899 RTPCR/CBNAAT/Tru-Nat tests, the bulletin stated.

The number of active cases in the city decreased to 1,379 from 1,531 the previous day.

A total of 14,07,832 patients have recovered from the pathogen in Delhi so far, the bulletin said.

The total of 77,53,986 people have been vaccinated in the national capital till now, including 17,81,369 who have received both the vaccine doses.

Meanwhile, deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia said that the Delhi government has set up four special Covid vaccination centres to inoculate food and e-commerce delivery agents.

"It is very important to protect delivery agents of services such as Zomato, Swiggy and Amazon against coronavirus. These people deliver our food or other articles to us daily," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

Sisodia said the Arvind Kejriwal government has started four special vaccination centres in the city to vaccinate such people.

Yesterday, 2,04 lakh people had got vaccinated against coronavirus in Delhi. The highest single-day vaccination — involving 2,07 lakh people — was reported in the city last Saturday.



SN Shrivastava during his farewell ceremonial parade at Kingsway Camp on Wednesday. SNS

## Balaji Srivastava is new Delhi Police chief

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Senior IPS officer Balaji Srivastava took additional charge as the Commissioner of Delhi Police on Wednesday after incumbent S N Shrivastava retired.

Balaji Srivastava was posted as Special Commissioner (Vigilance) of the Delhi Police.

A 1988-batch IPS officer of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and

Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre, he has previously worked as the DGP of Puducherry and Mizoram and Special Commissioner, Intelligence, Economic Offence Wing and Special Cell, Delhi.

He has also served in the Cabinet Secretariat for nine years and handled sensitive assignments, said an order issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The ministry had, in an order, said

Balaji Srivastava will discharge duties as the Commissioner of the Delhi Police in addition to his present responsibility till a full-fledged head of the national capital's police force is appointed.

SN Shrivastava too initially took the additional charge of the CP, Delhi, in February 2020 in the wake of the communal riots in the capital following protests over the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019.

## Classified

### PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
On behalf of my client Tech Mech International Pvt Ltd, it is informed to public at large and all the concerned that Mr. Mukesh Sharma S/o M. Narendranath, Flat No. R-6/10, Gali No. 3, Pandit Nagar, Shamshami, Patparganj, New Delhi-110091 is not working with my client Company Tech Mech International Pvt Ltd or its Group w.e.f. 10.04.2021.

Tech Mech International Pvt Ltd will not be responsible to anyone for any dealing with Mukesh Sharma on behalf of my client or its group after 10.04.2021.

Ram Sharma (Advocate) (Law Firm)

SCC Associates (Law Firm)

92 Civil Lines, SM Kuber Mehta-250001

Date: 30-06-2021

sourav.banerjee@sba.firm.in

**TENDERS**  
SEALED tenders are invited for recovered water damaged jute stock for sale at Budget Judge Jute Mill. Please contact A Sengupta at 9830123514 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The minimum reserve price is Rs. 32 lakh. Last date of submission of tender: 07.07.2021.

source: www.banerjeee.com

BY VIRTUE OF an affidavit I, Preetinanda Mund, D/o, Kusha Prasad Mund, Tulsinagar, P.O. / P.S.: Bolangir, Odisha-767001 dated upon me intimated along with documents / evidence in support thereof, within 10 (ten) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the same, if any, shall be deemed to have been abandoned, waived, disclaimed and / or given up irrevocably.

Sourav Banerjee Advocate C/o. M/s. Supriyo Basu & Associates, Advocates Room No. 48 Ground Floor Temple Chambers 6, Old Post Office Street Kolkata-700001 Ph.: 033-46014849 / 8910825107 sourav.banerjee@sba.firm.in Date: 30-06-2021

UNIVERSITY OF KALYANI Notice for E-tender E-tender is invited against Tender ID No.: 2021\_UOK\_334182\_1 through http://wtbentenders.gov.in for Supply and installation of Single Crystal X-Ray Diffractometer at Department of Chemistry. Last date for submission of quotation is 23rd July, 2021. For details please visit website: www.klyu.ac.in (for viewing only) and http://wtbentenders.gov.in (for viewing & tender submission). Sd/- Registrar

I, THARNARAN Saha, spouse of No. 6614906, Rank-Ex-SEP/REST, Name: Late Subhas Chandra Saha residing at Ward No. 9, Simhat, P.O.: Simhat, Dist: Nadia, Pin-741249, West Bengal have changed my name from Tharnaran Saha to Jharna Rani Saha vide affidavit at ACJM 1st Class Kalyani, Nadia on 28.06.2021.

RENTAL FLAT NO. 13, FIRST FLOOR, MEASURING AN AREA OF 1100 SQUARE FEET AND ONE CAR PARKING SPACE, GROUND FLOOR, ALL COMPRISED IN BUILDING NAMED "JASSAL PALACE", AT MUNICIPAL PREMISES, NO. 4A, BENJAMIN MUTHIAH ROAD (OPPOSITE AUCKLAND SQUARE), KOLKATA-700017. POLICE STATION: PARK STREET, WARD NO. 63 OF THE KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (VIDE ASSESSED NO.: 110630400648), DISTRICT: KOLKATA.

OUR CLIENT, DHANRASHI DEVELOPER CONSULTANTS PRIVATE LIMITED INTENDS TO PURCHASE THE ABOVE PROPERTY FROM ITS PRESENT OWNER SARDAR JAGMORAN SINGH. ANY PERSON OR ENTITY HAVING

### No relief from searing heat

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

With the monsoon keeping away from Delhi and nearby areas, another hot day is likely to trouble residents in the national capital on Wednesday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

A heat wave is predicted during the day as the maximum temperature is likely to settle around 41 degrees Celsius, Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre, said.

As the monsoon continued to play truant, Delhi on Monday recorded the first heat wave this summer season with the mercury soaring to 43 degrees Celsius, the highest so far this year. A severe heat wave seared Lodhi Road, Ridge and Pusa areas, where the mercury soared to 42.6 degrees Celsius, 43.4

degrees Celsius and 44.3 degrees Celsius, respectively, seven notches above the average temperature.

Najafgarh (44.4 degrees Celsius), Pitampura (44.3 degrees Celsius) and Mungerhupur (44.3 degrees Celsius) also reeled under a severe heat wave.

For the plains, a "heatwave" is declared when the maximum temperature is more than 40 degrees Celsius, and at least 4.5 notches above normal.

A "severe" heat wave is declared if departure from normal temperature is more than 6.5 degrees Celsius, according to the IMD.

Usually, the capital witnesses heat waves till June 20 and cooler temperatures thereafter. The increase in the maximum temperature this time can be attributed to the delay in the arrival of the monsoon, Srivastava said.

### Another arrested from Punjab in Red Fort violence case

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Evading arrest for five months, a 26-year-old man who allegedly hoisted a religious flag at the Red Fort during the violence on Republic Day has been nabbed from Punjab by the Crime Branch of Delhi Police, officials said on Wednesday.

The accused Buta Singh was carrying a reward of Rs 50,000, they said and claimed that his family and neighbours tried to stop a police team from arresting him when it reached his native village on Tuesday.

Police said Singh was present at the Red Fort during the violence that occurred at a tractor rally against the Centre's new agri laws and had claimed to have hoisted the religious flag at the Fort.

The arrest came days after another accused in the Red Fort violence case, Gurjot Singh, who was carrying a reward of Rs one lakh, was held near Gurudwara Shri Toot Sahib in Amritsar by the Special Cell.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Monika Bhardwaj said, "We received specific information about Buta Singh and a team was sent to Punjab which managed to trace him. Subsequently, a raid was conducted at his village in Talwandi Sobha Singh. But our raiding team had to face strong resistance from his family and neighbours who tried to get Singh out of police custody. They tried to block roads with their tractors but with the help of local police, our team finally managed to come out from the village along with accused Singh, she said. Singh was seen in a video along with his associates at Red Fort in which they claimed they have hoisted the religious flag at the main flag hoisting area, the officer said.

During interrogation, he disclosed that he was radicalised by seeing Facebook posts of various groups. He used to frequently visit Singh Border and was highly motivated by speeches made by the leaders there, she said.

According to police, as per their plan, Singh with his five-six associates and other unknown armed miscreants entered Red Fort and created mayhem there.

"His act of hoisting the flag had motivated already violent protesters to cause more mayhem at Red Fort by indulging in all sorts of violence against personnel on duty including policemen deployed for Republic Day security duty there and damaging the historical monument of Red Fort," the senior police officer said.

### DDMA shuts Laxmi Nagar market over Covid protocol violation

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The Laxmi Nagar main market and some nearby marketplaces have been closed by the East Delhi district administration till July 5 following violation of COVID-19 protocols there, officials said on Wednesday.

In an order issued on Tuesday, Soni Singh, chairperson of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (east district), said the market association and shopkeepers in the main bazaar of Laxmi Nagar were "unable to ensure Covid protocols (compliance) on last Sunday (June 27) due to large footfall".

"The guidelines/directions of Covid protocol are being contravened in the Main Bazaar, Laxmi Nagar which may cause super spreading of the coronavirus. The Market Welfare Association of Main Bazaar, Laxmi Nagar has failed to ensure strict compliance of guidelines of COVID-19," the order said.

19," the order said.

It was necessary to take an immediate and stringent action to curtail the spread of the virus in the larger interest of the public, it added.

The areas that will remain closed till July 5 include the Laxmi Nagar main market from Vikas Marg to Lovely Public School, Kisan Kunj, and its surrounding markets like Mangal Bazaar, Vijay Chowk, Subhash Chowk, Jagatram Park and Guru Ramdas Nagar.

The restrictions are applicable on all shops except those dealing in essential goods and services.

Delhi was under a complete lockdown from April 19 to May 30, following which the capital saw a phased unlock process. Markets were, however, allowed to reopen only from June 7 onwards.

Reacting to the order, the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) said the markets were being made a soft target.

"There are about 950 small and

### TENDER

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice

No. CIID/SLR/Tender/2020 (Part V)  
The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/Freight, Northern Railway, New Delhi invites E-tender for the contract of leasing of SLR/SLRD space in the following special trains originating from various stations over Delhi Division.

Tender Opening Date:- 22.07.2021

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Our members joined work for new TV serials from today after last evening's talks where it was decided that a new MoU will be signed addressing our concerns

PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION OF CINE TECHNICIANS AND WORKERS OF EASTERN INDIA SWARUP BISWAS

AFTER SHOOTING OF 29 NEW BENGALI TV SERIALS WAS RESUMED

The Statesman  
NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 01 JULY 2021

03

# BJP workers, anti-farm laws protesters clash in Ghazipur

Farmer leaders charge it was 'another conspiracy' by BJP dispensation to quell farmers' protest against Centre's agril laws; Khattar says it won't be good for anyone to 'cross their limits'

SNS & PTI  
GAZIABAD / CHANDIGARH, 30 JUNE

**T**he BJP workers and anti-farm laws protesters clashed in Ghazipur on the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border today.

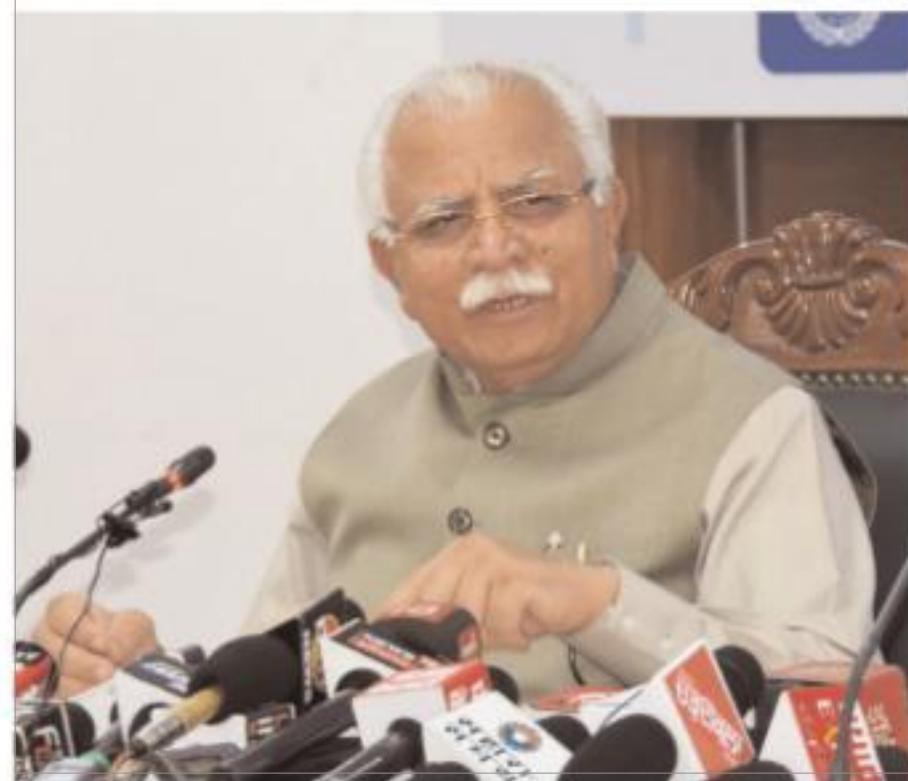
The clash between the two groups took place when the BJP workers were carrying out a procession on a flyway where the anti-farm laws protesters, mainly supporters of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), had been camping since November 2020, according to eye-witnesses.

As the two sides came near each other on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway around 12 pm, a scuffle broke out and they fought with sticks which led to some injuries, they said.

Videos and pictures surfaced on social media, purportedly showing some damaged vehicles which were part of a cavalcade of a BJP politician, Amit Vimali, for whose welcome the procession was being held.

Farmer leaders, however, alleged that the episode was another conspiracy by the BJP-led central government to quell the protest against the three contentious farm laws and give it a bad name.

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM)'s spokesperson Jagtar Singh Bajwa claimed that the farmers at the Ghazipur bor-



Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar addressing a press conference at Chandigarh on Wednesday.

der informed the district administration and government officials to remove the party workers as they were creating a ruckus in the name of a welcome rally.

"They misbehaved with farmers and themselves damaged their vehicles as part of a conspiracy. This conspiracy of the government is not going to succeed because such tactics to end the farmers' protest have been used in the past too," Bajwa said.

"We are going to lodge a complaint with the police on today's (Wednesday's) incident, and if no action is taken, we shall plan our future

strategy accordingly," he added. "We condemn the ruckus created by the BJP workers," Bajwa said, adding that such tactics won't work as the farmers' movement has been going on peacefully for the last seven months and will continue to do so in the future.

Following this clash between groups of BJP workers and agitating farmers, Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar charged that the word 'Kisan' (farmer) has been tarnished due to such unfortunate incidents.

Addressing a Press conference, the CM said political leaders have been patient in

the face of protests but it "won't be good for anyone to cross their limit".

"The word kisan (farmer) is pure and everyone holds them in high regard. Due to a few unfortunate incidents the word has become tarnished. Dignity of sisters and daughters is taken away, murders are happening, roads are being blocked. I condemn the incidents that are undemocratic," Khattar said.

The CM said his government had asked the protesting farmers to give it in writing that their protest would be non-violent. "If violence takes place then FIRs will be registered and they too will receive court notices," he said.

On reports that political leaders have been facing intense protests by farmers when they visit villages in the state, Khattar said those running the government have a responsibility to meet people.

"We have maintained patience but they keep threatening us that the chief minister

can't visit, the deputy chief minister can't visit the villages. Those running the government have a responsibility to meet and attend people. No matter how much they provoke us we are keeping our calm since they are our own people from Haryana. But it won't be good for anyone to

cross their limit," he added.

Earlier too, the Haryana CM had hinted at a crackdown on elements indulging in inappropriate incidents, especially against women at the ongoing farmers' protest. He was referring to the alleged gang rape of a 26-year-old woman from West Bengal, who was participating in the farmers' protest at the Tikri border.

Thousands of farmers from Punjab, Haryana and UP have been camping at several borders of Delhi, including Ghazipur to protest against the Narendra Modi government's three controversial farm laws — the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, the Farmers' Empowerment and Protection (Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services) Act, 2020, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 — since November last year.

They argue the laws will lead to edging out of traditional crop markets and usher in massive corporate houses to the farming sector that will result in their exploitation. They also demand a legal guarantee to the Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime.

The government says the laws will eliminate the role of middlemen in the agriculture sector and enhance farmers' income. It has promised that the MSP will not be scrapped.

## HP to start fellowship, internship scheme for students in govt depts



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 30 JUNE

rural development in Himachal.

He expressed satisfaction over the successful implementation of electronic financial management system e-FMS for transparent and prompt payment of wages under MGNREGA in the state.

Under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin, 11,935 houses had been sanctioned in the state in the last four years, out of which 7787 houses had been constructed.

Besides, 3,931 houses had been constructed by the state government from the year 2018-19 to 2020-21 under the Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana.

In addition, 1.50 lakh per unit assistance was being provided under both the schemes from the financial year 2019-20, he said.

He added rural roads were being constructed under MNREGA for the purpose of connecting every village and Palgarhi with roads under which 1,059 road works had been completed in the last 3 years.

Efforts are being made to construct crematoriums in every panchayat under MNREGA, he added.

State industries minister Bikram Singh said Himachal was ranked seventh in the country in Ease of Doing Business which shows the availability of suitable conditions and facilities for doing business in the state.

703 MoUs with an investment of Rs 96,721 crore were signed during the Global Investors' Meet held at Dharamsala on 7-8 November 2019 to promote investment in the state.

A total of 200 delegates from 36 countries participated in this meet, he said, adding the first ground breaking ceremony of projects worth Rs 13,656 crore was also held and a land bank had also been established for setting up industries in the state.

Bhardwaj further stated that development of the state was possible only through

## Haryana CM launches portal to provide ownership rights to ULB property holders

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 30 JUNE

After announcing ownership rights to those owning houses and shops of municipality on lease or rent basis for the past 20 years, Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, on Wednesday launched Mukhyamantri Shehri Nikay Swamitva Yojana Portal www.ulbshops.ulbharyana.gov.in inviting applications from the eligible beneficiaries.

Addressing a Press conference today, the CM said the process of inviting applications on this portal would start from 1 July.

"Since the announcement of this scheme, till date, data of as many as 16000 applicants is available with the Urban Local Bodies Department. As the process of inviting applications is beginning from 1 July, this number is likely to increase," Khattar said. "Hence a weekly plan for staggering the applications has also been made under which the process of

accepting applications would automatically be blocked after 1000 applications", he added.

The CM further informed that after taking the applications, objections would be invited within a month and once all the objections are rectified then the applicants would be called for submitting the required documents to get the scheme benefit.

"The applicants would be able to see the details of their applications on the individual dashboard designed for them. This would completely eradicate the manual registration process," informed Khattar.

The CM further informed that under this scheme, if someone has constructed more than the floor or area of the allotted building of the Municipality, then he will have to deposit an additional amount that is Rs 1000 as per the additional constructed area.

He said that if the applicant is not allottee or sublessee as per rules of the Municipality but fulfills all the eligibility criteria of

the policy, then they will also have to pay a lump sum regular fee of Rs 30,000 in addition to the amount and tax to be paid as mentioned in the policy.

Haryana government had framed a policy under which the tenant will have to pay less than the present collector rate to get the ownership right.

Under this policy if anyone has taken shop, house on the Municipal land either on rent, lease basis, Tehbazari or by paying a license fee for 20 years or more then all such occupiers would be given ownership right under this policy. As per the policy, the occupier should have completed 20 years as of 31 December, 2020.

The CM further shared that a rebate of 20 per cent on the current collector rate would be given to those tenants who have been residing in the house or are running a shop for the past 20 years.

Similarly, those who have an occupancy period of 50 years will get a rebate of up to 50 per cent.

## Himachal to give edu stipend to construction workers' kids

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 30 JUNE

Himachal Pradesh industries minister Bikram Singh on Wednesday said the government is giving more emphasis on the education of children and stipends will be provided to registered construction workers' wards to facilitate them in their studies.

Singh said for this purpose, Rs 4,000 per annum will be given to 1st to 8th class children and Rs 12,000 per annum to 9th to 12th class students of registered construction workers as stipend irrespective of their gender.

Similarly, a stipend of Rs 36,000 will be provided for graduation, Rs 60,000 for post graduate students, Rs 48,000 for ITI courses, Rs 60,000 to polytechnic diploma courses and Rs 1.20 lakh to LLB, MBA, MBBS and Ph.D courses, he added.

Singh directed HP Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (HPBOCWV Board) officers to work for the welfare of beneficiaries.

Besides they must ensure their registration so that they could avail all benefits of the welfare schemes being implemented under the HP Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board.

He stated that various welfare schemes under the board would be publicized



so maximum people come to know about these schemes and draw the benefits.

He urged the workers working in the state to get them registered in maximum number in HPBOCWV Board so that the benefits being provided under the Board can be availed.

"The state government is committed for the welfare of the workers and as many as 3.03 lakh workers have been registered under the board.

An amount of Rs 186.37 crore has been spent under various welfare schemes during the time of the present government," he said.

He further stated that with a view to help the registered construction workers in the adverse circumstances arising due to Covid-19 pandemic, Rs 2,000 per worker were transferred to the bank accounts of the workers by

the government.

Besides, Rs 51,000 in the shape of FDR would be given on the birth of a female child, maximum upto two girls, which can be encased only after attaining the age of 18 years. Apart from this, the financial assistance of Rs 20,000 per year would be provided for the care of specially challenged children of registered construction workers.

Similarly, under Mukhya Mantri Awas Yojna, Rs 1.50 lakh will be provided as financial assistance under the existing Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna or Mukhya Mantri Awas Yojna, he added.

## Pb sets up panel for speedy probe, prosecution in sexual offence cases

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 30 JUNE

cases, an official spokesperson said.

The meeting also reviewed the status of Punjab State Victim Compensation Scheme, by July 15.

The Director General of Police (DGP), Punjab Dinkar Gupta disclosed that the Police department had fast tracked the investigations in sexual assault cases, and trial of at least 150 cases, registered between 1 January 2016 to 31 December, 2020, have been started in the court.

He said that out of total 1526 cases related to sexual assault registered in the last four years, as many as 1505 (98.5 per cent) have been charge sheeted.

The investigation in cases registered from 1 January 2021 till now are also being monitored continuously, he added.

Further, said the DGP, Sexual Assault Response Teams constituted in all the 28 police districts of the state were working closely with the Women Help Desks in all the 382 police stations to ensure speedy justice to sexual assault victims.

# Haryana Government

## Resolving disputes of urban properties

### Mukhyamantri Shehri Nikay Swamitva Yojana

The land leased out on Tehbazari/Shops/Houses given on rent/lease/licence fee/tehbazari which are in the possession of persons/entities for a period of 20 years or above as on 31.12.2020 shall be Eligible for Granting of Ownership Rights



Occupier will have to pay less than collector rate for the ownership

Sh. Manohar Lal, Chief Minister, Haryana

Parivar Pehchan-Patra holders may visit departmental website for detailed information

[www.ulbharyana.gov.in](http://www.ulbharyana.gov.in)

and <http://ulbshops.ulbharyana.gov.in>

Scheme is applicable from  
**1st July, 2021**



Directorate of Urban Local Bodies  
Haryana



Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana

[www.prharyana.gov.in](http://www.prharyana.gov.in) | [@DiprHaryana](https://www.facebook.com/DiprHaryana)



During a hot summer day in New Delhi on Wednesday.

AGENCY

**Stalin visits Anna memorial:** Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Wednesday visited the memorial of DMK founder, late CN Annadurai, in Kancheepuram and paid tributes to the Dravidian stalwart. He said his party-led government will forge ahead on the principles of public service laid down by Annadurai, a former CM. PTI

**Notion Press:** Notion Press, one of the leading self publishing platforms, achieved a unique feat with over 30,000 independent authors made enable to publish and sold their books. Through its do-it-yourself self-publishing platform commenced in April 2019, Notion Press is churning out a record 2,000 books a month, said the Press release. SNS

**Graft case:** Rajasthan Congress chief Govind Singh Dotasra on Wednesday sought the arrest of senior RSS leader Nimbaran in the graft case involving the alleged demand for Rs 20 crore 'commission' from a firm engaged in door-to-door garbage collection in Jaipur. BJP said targeting RSS will cost the state govt dearly. PTI

# Sasikala no longer with AIADMK: Palaniswami

Says her interaction will not affect 1.5 crore cadre-strong organisation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SALEM, 30 JUNE



Seeking to play down expelled general secretary V K Sasikala's purported interaction with party workers, AIADMK co-coordinator K Palaniswami on Wednesday said her telephonic conversations will not impact the 1.5-crore cadre-based organisation a wee bit.

Making it clear she is no longer with the AIADMK since her expulsion in 2017, the former chief minister said there has been an "overreaction" to her speaking to a few party members.

"Not just 10, let her interact with 1,000 persons, the 1.5-crore cadre-strong AIADMK will not be affected," he told reporters in Omalur here when asked about the leak of audio tapes of Sasikala's conversa-

"It's all the making of the media," Palaniswami said and added when there were several issues like vaccine shortage concerning the people, the

media chose to make this a big issue.

Charging the ruling DMK with causing a Covid vaccine shortage in the state, Palaniswami said people would not have returned home if either issued tokens for inoculation or announced a specific number to cover the target population on a given day.

"Instead, it launched a vaccination drive without taking into account the quantity of doses or the population. So, people thronged the vaccination centres in thousands leading to the shortage of the shots," he said.

There were serious issues such as rising cost of construction material, fuel prices and NEET, afflicting the people. "The DMK made about 505 assurances in the run up to the Assembly election, including

reducing the prices of petrol and diesel by Rs 5 and Rs 4, respectively per litre, but have not implemented any of them. It came to power on false promises," the former CM alleged.

Palaniswami demanded that the state government clear the confusion in the minds of students and parents on whether the NEET will be conducted or not.

The DMK had made a false promise on cancelling the exam only to capture power. But after coming to power, it had formed a committee, he added.

He also took a dig at electricity minister V Senthil Balaji for claiming that Tamil Nadu faced frequent power outages due to squirrels running on power lines, saying "squirrels can climb one line but not throughout the state."

## Gun battle

JAMMU, 30 JUNE

### TOURIST DESTINATION



Tourists on the banks of the Beas river, in Manali, on Wednesday.

AGENCY

## India asks EU member states to consider Covishield, Covaxin vaccines under Green Pass scheme

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

As the European Union relaxes travel restrictions under its 'Green Pass' scheme, India has asked the members of the 27-nation grouping to individually consider allowing Indians who have taken Covishield and Covaxin vaccines and want to travel to Europe, sources said.

India has also conveyed to the EU member states that it will adopt a policy of reciprocity and exempt European nationals holding the 'Green Pass' from mandatory quar-

antine in the country provided its request to recognise Covishield and Covaxin vaccines is heeded to, they said.

The sources said India has requested the EU member nations to accept the vaccination certificate issued through the CoWIN portal.

The European Union's Digital COVID certificate or 'Green Pass' will be rolled out on Thursday with an aim to facilitate free movement during the COVID-19 pandemic is to come into effect on Thursday.

Under this framework, persons who have taken vaccines authorised by the European

Medicines Agency (EMA) will be exempted from travel restrictions within the EU region.

The individual member states have the flexibility to also accept vaccines that have been authorised at the national level or those recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

"We have requested EU member states to individually consider extending similar exemption to those persons who have taken COVID-19 vaccines in India, that is Covishield and Covaxin, and accept the vaccination certificate issued through the CoWIN

portal," said a source.

The sources said the genuineness of such vaccination certification can be authenticated on the CoWIN portal.

"We have also conveyed to EU member states that India will institute a reciprocal policy for recognition of the EU Digital Covid Certificate," the source said.

"Upon notification of Covishield and Covaxin for inclusion in the EU Digital Covid Certificate and recognition of Indian CoWIN vaccination certificates, Indian health authorities would reciprocally exempt the EU member state con-

cerned for exemption from the mandatory quarantine of all those persons carrying EU digital COVID certificate," the source said.

There have been apprehensions in India that people who took Covishield and Covaxin jabs are unlikely to be eligible to travel to the European Union member states under its 'Green Pass' scheme.

The EU Digital COVID certificate or 'Green Pass' will be mandatory to travel to European countries and the document will serve as proof that a person is vaccinated against COVID-19.

An EU official on Tuesday said individual member states of the European Union will have the option to accept vaccines authorised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) like Covishield for obtaining the bloc's digital COVID certificate.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday took up the issue of inclusion of Covishield in the EU digital Covid certificate scheme during a meeting with Josep Borrell Fontelles, the High Representative of the European Union.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of a G20 meeting in Italy.

## BJP MLA calls Owaisi a political terrorist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BALIA (UP), 30 JUNE



dus are in majority.

The BJP MLA further said Bengal was going the Jammu and Kashmir way and the Central government was monitoring the situation there.

Akhilesh asserts democratic revolution

Samajwadi Party supremo

Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday asserted that there will be a democratic revolution in Uttar Pradesh in 2022 against the current "disruptive" and "negative" politics.

Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh are scheduled in 2022.

In a tweet in Hindi, Yadav said: "United against today's disruptive, conservative, negative politics, new politics of exploited, neglected, oppressed, deprived, poor, farmers, workers, women and youth is taking birth". In 2022, there will be no election in UP, there will be a democratic revolution," he said.

Rainha, who was addressing media persons in Srinagar on the issue of recent alleged abduction and conversion of a Sikh girl, said that implementation of the anti-conversion law would also prevent tensions between

## Kashmiri Sikh leader demands anti-conversion law in J&K

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 30 JUNE

All Parties Sikh Coordination Committee Kashmir leader Jagmohan Singh Raina on Wednesday sought implementation of the anti-conversion law and inter-caste marriage Act in Jammu and Kashmir to prevent forcible.

Raina, who was addressing media persons in Srinagar on the issue of recent alleged abduction and conversion of a Sikh girl, said that implementation of the anti-conversion law would also prevent tensions between

different communities.

On behalf of the Sikh community he also sought that the Inter Caste Marriage Act be applied in Jammu & Kashmir to safeguard interests of the people belonging to different communities and faiths.

Raina pointed out that over the years members of elite political families of J&K have indulged in inter-caste marriage but surprisingly nobody raised fingers at them.

But whenever such marriage happens in a common family the issue gets blown out of proportion.

This needs to be analyzed and people should be vigilant so that the opportunistic politicians don't exploit them.

"Since some unfortunate incidents came to the fore in the recent past, it is important that both Muslims and Sikhs maintain communal harmony and brotherhood.

The people need to remain vigilant and ensure that the congenial atmosphere does not get vitiated. Since both the communities have supported each other through thick and thin it is the responsibility of members of both communities to continue with the synergy," Raina said.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

Train No. & Name	Days of run	Presently Notified Upto	Extended upto
02237 Varanasi Jn.-Jammu Tawi Festival Special	Daily	30.06.2021	Till Further Advice
02238 Jammu Tawi-Varanasi Jn. Festival Special	Daily	01.07.2021	Till Further Advice
04041 Delhi Jn.-Dehradun Festival Special	Daily	30.06.2021	Till Further Advice
04042 Dehradun-Delhi Jn. Festival Special	Daily	01.07.2021	Till Further Advice
02231 Lucknow-Chandigarh Festival Special	Daily	30.06.2021	Till Further Advice
02232 Chandigarh-Lucknow Festival Special	Daily	01.07.2021	Till Further Advice
02448 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Manikpur Festival Special	Daily	30.06.2021	Till Further Advice
02447 Manikpur-Hazrat Nizamuddin Festival Special	Daily	01.07.2021	Till Further Advice
04184 Delhi Jn.-Tundla Jn. Festival Special	Daily	30.06.2021	Till Further Advice
04183 Tundla Jn.-Delhi Jn. Festival Special	Daily	03.07.2021	Till Further Advice

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

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

Visit RailMadad website [www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in) or Please join us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/railmadad) or [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/railmadad/). NORTHERN RAILWAY Your Convenience-Our Concern

Observing that the scheme provided by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) is not enough, the Supreme Court Wednesday permitted candidates scheduled to appear for the upcoming CA exams to opt out if they or their family members have suffered from Covid-19.

A three-judge bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Anirudha Bose also made it clear that a candidate need not produce RT-PCR test if medical certificate issued by registered medical practitioners for his

family members is produced along with request for opting out.

A candidate who has suffered Covid-19 personally or any of his family members, so certified by a registered medical practitioner, as a result of which he is unable to appear for exam, or disabled from preparing for the exam, is entitled to exercise the option of opting out. It will not be considered as an attempt. Such candidate will be permitted to appear for the next examination for both old and new syllabus, the bench said.

With regard to candidates affected by lockdown during the relevant period of exam, the apex court said as per ICAI scheme, such candidate will be allowed to opt out and it will not be treated as an attempt. They can give the exam in the next year. He may be permitted to appear in backup exams as per the rules, the bench said.

allowed to opt-out and will not be treated as an attempt such candidate will be allowed to appear in the next examination.

As regards the logistical arrangements, both infrastructural and human resources-wise, the ICAI shall ensure that there is strict adherence to the SOP notified by the competent authority, including the Disaster Management Authority.

It is also clarified if any candidate who is attempting exam gets Covid during exam, he will be allowed to opt out and it will not be treated as an attempt. They can give the exam in the next year. He may be permitted to appear in backup exams as per the rules, the bench said.

In 2022, there will be no election in UP, there will be a democratic revolution.

SAMAJWADI PARTY SUPREMO AKHILESH YADAV

EXUDING CONFIDENCE THAT HIS PARTY WOULD WIN 350 SEATS IN THE ASSEMBLY

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ndia

## KPCC chief Sudhakaran blames CPM for rising gangsterism among

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
30 JUNE



and politics go hand in hand as it did for their leaders".

He said gold smugglers, hawala racketeers, illegal granite and river sand miners and loan sharks paid the CPI-M protection money to operate in Kannur. "CPI-M leaders pocketed a third of the profits from gold smuggling," the Congress Kerala chief alleged.

Stating the CPI-M is cheating public by saying they have expelled quotation gang members from the party, he said Kodi Suni, Kirmani Manoj and others are still in the party.

Sudhakaran alleged that the CPI-M leadership is scared of people like Kodi Suni and Akash Thillengeri. "The CPI-M is fearful that its hired muscle would reveal incriminating secrets against party leaders, if the organisation sought to bridle the gangs," he said.

"The convicts in the RMP leader TP Chandrasekharan's murder ruled the roost in Kannur jail. They are leading an opulent life in jail. They had access to mobile phones, hotel food, friends and relatives. They plotted murder, ordered hits and controlled gold smugglers and hawala agents from the prison. The jail provided a perfect alibi for the gangsters," the Congress Kerala chief said.

Sudhakaran said the Customs has made it clear about CM's role in the UAE diplomatic channel gold smuggling case.

## 'Sidhu misguided missile'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH, 30 JUNE

Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal on Wednesday described Congress MLA Navjot Singh Sidhu a "misguided missile" that lacks control, drawing a retort from the Amritsar legislator who said his aim is to destroy the Akali leader's "corrupt businesses".

The SAD chief's statement has come amid infighting in the state Congress and on the day Sidhu met his party's national general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in New Delhi. Sidhu is at loggerheads with chief minister Amarinder Singh and has gone public against him in the recent past.

"Navjot Singh Sidhu is a misguided missile which does not have any control. It can go in any direction and hit anywhere. Maybe it can hit him self," said Badal responding to a question.

"He has crammed five to six dialogues, which he used at every place. By using them, he has misled Sonia



## Race and Reparations

More than one hundred years after the term "reparations" was the subject of international discourse in the aftermath of the First World War, this form of economic reprisal is being alluded to again, with United Nations human rights chief Michelle Bachelet calling for reparations to protect the historically persecuted blacks. No less critical is the global report of the UN, which states that the police in North America, Europe and Latin America use racial profiling and excessive force. Both are entrenched or arguably institutionalised in three vast swathes of the world. Racism against people of African descent remains systemic in many parts of the world, the United Nations human rights chief has said, calling for states to dismantle discrimination and prosecute law enforcement officials for unlawful killings. Her report assumes tremendous significance in the wake of the murder of George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis in May last year. The killer was awarded a prolonged jail term. Racism against people of African descent remains systemic in many parts of the world, the United Nations human rights chief has said, calling for states to dismantle discrimination and prosecute law enforcement officials for unlawful killings. Structural racism creates barriers to minorities' access to jobs, healthcare, housing, education and justice. "I am calling on all states to stop denying, and start dismantling, racism; to end impunity and build trust; to listen to the voices of people of African descent; and to confront past legacies and deliver redress," she said in the report to the UN Human Rights Council. She has welcomed a "promising initiative" by President Biden in signing an executive order in January to address racial inequity across the country. There is little doubt that this is a noble initiative to address the ignoble scourge of racism across continents. The report cited 190 deaths of Africans and people of African descent worldwide at the hands of law enforcement officials who are "rarely held accountable". She has somehow skirted Asian descent, exemplified by the killing of six women in Atlanta in March. Her report selected seven "emblematic cases", including that of Floyd, indeed cases that have galvanised the Black Lives Matter protest movement. Much will of course hinge on the action taken by respective governments in the follow-through. The execution will also call for humane treatment of blacks by whites. The scourge is most prevalent in countries with a legacy of slavery, the trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans, or colonialism resulting in ensnarement of large communities of people of African descent, the report stated. "Systemic racism needs a systemic response," Bachelet said. "There is today a momentous opportunity to achieve a turning point for racial equality and justice." She has advanced a robust presentation.

## Hosting the Taliban

In a rare moment of candour and a little over two months ahead of the scheduled withdrawal of US forces from embattled Afghanistan, Pakistan's interior minister, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, has (unwittingly or otherwise) made a remarkably rare admission, one that cannot but embarrass the government in Islamabad. Specifically, that the families of Afghanistan's Taliban militants "reside in Pakistan", notably in the periphery of the country's capital. Mr Ahmed's presentation can be contextualised with Prime Minister Imran Khan's stout refusal to host US bases for action inside Afghanistan, saying it would again be targeted for revenge by terrorists if civil war ensued. He had posed a remarkably pertinent query ~ "If the US with the most powerful military machine in history, couldn't win the war from inside Afghanistan after 20 years, how would America do it from bases in our country?" Islamabad has been consistently rejecting allegations levelled by Afghan leaders that the Taliban use Pakistani soil to direct and sustain insurgent activities in Afghanistan. In an interview aired by the private Pakistani TV channel, Geo News, on Sunday, the Interior Minister said, "Taliban families live here in Pakistan ~ in areas like Rawat, Loi Ber, Bara Kahu and Tarnol." These places exist on the map, but it was scarcely known that such relatively obscure places are used as Taliban turf. The areas mentioned by the minister are well-known suburban areas of Islamabad, reaffirming that as often as not, Pakistan plays footsie with the Taliban. "Sometimes their (fighters) dead bodies arrive and sometimes they come here to hospitals to get medical treatment," Rashid told the Urdu-language network. His statement doesn't run counter to the interior ministry's perception. It is rare for a Pakistani minister, helming the crucial interior department, to spill the beans, so to speak, in the manner he has done. The interior minister said that the former military dictator, Pervez Musharraf, believed in the efficacy of drone attacks to target rebels in areas which were inaccessible to Pakistani forces. The Taliban has intensified attacks against Afghan government forces since May 1 when the US-led international forces formally began their withdrawal from the country. In an opinion piece in *The Washington Post*, the Prime Minister wrote, "If Pakistan were to agree to host US bases, from which to bomb Afghanistan, and an Afghan civil war ensued, Pakistan would be targeted for revenge by terrorists again." The interior minister's pregnant assessment serves to negate Islamabad's outright rejection of allegations levelled by the United States and Afghanistan that Taliban terrorists use Pakistan's soil to direct and sustain their activities in Afghanistan. In parallel, Islamabad has blamed Afghanistan for facilitating militants and other illegal movements into Pakistan from its 2600-km-long open border. Parts of Pakistan do serve as a hideout for Taliban insurgents. It is an intricate plot for President Ashraf Ghani.

# Ali's playbook

Continuing the path of confused conflation between his promised notions of 'Naya Pakistan' (New Pakistan) and Riasat-e-Madina (modelled on the State of Medina), Prime Minister Imran Khan has failed to break free of the regressive playbook of misusing religion for political purposes. Having crossed the half-way mark of his elected tenure, Imran Khan oversees a battered economy, empty coffers, unhappy allies (including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), fear of blacklisting, societal unrest and a tinderbox like situation in contiguous Afghanistan



**C**houdhry Rahmat Ali is credited with coining the word 'Pakistan' in the pamphlet, *Now or Never*, published in 1933, albeit, without the insertion of 'i', that came later for more seamless pronunciation. Beyond the geographical context of regions suggested for its inhabitants, the word, 'Paks', importantly meant 'pure/clean', hence the 'land of the pure'.

But the painful birth of Pakistan itself was mired in contractions, compromises, and refutations amongst its activists, so that it bestowed an uneasy and unsettled legacy on itself. The competing strains of leadership included the relatively secular anchoring of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, for whom the positing of religion as a basis of sovereignty was a political necessity ~ to the likes of Choudhry Rahmat Ali (inspired by radical Jamal ud Din Afghani), who conceptualised an extremist and puritanical 'Continent of Dinia', where anti-Hindustan (by extension, latter-day India), was at the heart of a revisionist and aggressive ideology. So different was the aspirated outlook that Choudhry Rahmat Ali was to call the partition of August 1947 a 'Great Betrayal' and he called Jinnah Quilis-e-Azam (instead of Quaid-e-Azam, the father of the nation).

Almost 74 years after the independence of Pakistan, irrespective of the official statuses afforded, Choudhry Rahmat Ali's envisioned 'Pakistan' seems to be the more pervasive fructification, as opposed to the more Westernised-liberal preferences of Jinnah's Pakistan. Choudhry Rahmat Ali's spirit of usurpation and militant interventionism based on religiosity led him to term Muslim-dominated enclaves within the landmass of latter-day India as Osmanistan, Sidiqistan, Faruquistan etc. ~ in complete consonance with the existential fixation of modern Pakistan, which despite the slap to its foun-

dational 'two-nation' theory with the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, still remains recklessly committed to support armed insurgency in Kashmir.

However, for all of Choudhry Rahmat Ali's purported path of piety in Pakistan, the inevitable metamorphosis of extremist and bigoted intolerance has led to its featuring in the 'Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories' (NCCTs) in the parlance of the global watchdog agency on terrorism, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The claimed 'land of pure' faces the real-time ignominy of getting put on an international dashboard of getting 'blacklisted' or 'greylisted' for its nefarious actions on terrorism.

Earlier in the year, the FATF President Dr Marcus Pleyer, had made a damaging comment on Pakistan when he insisted "there remained some serious deficiencies in mechanisms to plug terrorism financing". Recently, the Pakistanis had made another bid to come out of the embarrassing 'grey list' ~ only to be told that it remains on the watchdog agency's 'increased monitoring list' (euphemism for 'grey list'), as the agency remained unconvinced about the sincerity concerning 'investigation and prosecution of senior leaders and commanders of UN-designated terror groups'.

Such a shaming commentary would do immense disservice to both Jinnah's, and Rahmat Ali's conceptualisation of Pakistan, though the disproportionate sovereign investment in the latter's path may perhaps explain the current situation.

India would be silently licking its wounds after having got used to the Pakistani patronage of the likes of Maulana Masood

Azhar, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar etc., who had wrought havoc on India with Islamabad's support and facilitation. Practically, none of them have faced any punitive consequences, the occasional drama of 'house arrest' and legal charades notwithstanding. All these perpetrators of violence and bloodshed against India have wrongly invoked religiosity to justify their cross-border terrorism ~ this seems to reflect the prejudiced and dogmatic spirit, straight out of Rahmat Ali's playbook of hate.

Expectedly, the Pakistani leadership which has mastered denialism was seen questioning incredulously if FATF was a technical forum or a political forum, the suggestive import of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's statement, "some powers desire to keep the sword of FATF hanging over Pakistan" was not lost

on anyone. Instead of genuinely reneging from its cancerous path, the finger of accusation was unmistakably pointed across the LOC (Line of Control), as the chosen playbook only imagines ghosts from India.

But it is not just India, but also Islamabad's supposed ally in the 'war on terror', United States, which is fed up with the duplicitousness on terror by the Pakistanis. In recent Congressional testimony, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, the commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East and South Asia, complained about the Taliban sanctuaries on Pakistani soil. That this pietistic misuse is so slippery that it can eventually turn on its progenitor is an invaluable lesson in history, one that now stares at Pakistan itself

as US troops exit Afghanistan and the doomsday prospect of a totalitarian and ultra-religious Taliban-led Afghanistan looms.

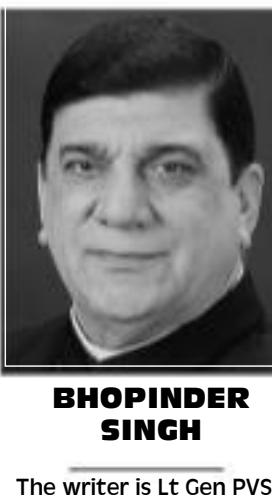
In arriving at such a desperate situation, the top US General minced no words in recognising the role of Pakistan when he said, "I would say frankly that it's a situation they have not been terribly helpful over the last 20 years so that's unfortunate for them that some of this is now gonna come back home in a way that they perhaps did not anticipate."

However, amidst growing global concern on their commitment to terrorism, especially after housing the infamous rogue's list from an Indian anti-terror perspective besides the unmitigated awkwardness of having Osama Bin Laden in its military garrison township of Abbottabad, the Pakistanis remained defiant, and in denial. Foreign Minister Qureshi says cavalierly, "there is no justification to keep Pakistan on the grey list".

Continuing the path of confused conflation between his promised notions of 'Naya Pakistan' (New Pakistan) and Riasat-e-Madina (modelled on the State of Medina), Prime Minister Imran Khan has failed to break free of the regressive playbook of misusing religion for political purposes. Having crossed the half-way mark of his elected tenure, Imran Khan oversees a battered economy, empty coffers, unhappy allies (including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), fear of blacklisting, societal unrest and a tinderbox like situation in contiguous Afghanistan.

The 'two-nation theory' was debunked with more Muslims reposing faith in the composite 'Idea of India' in 1947 itself, as also by the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. But then Rahmat Ali's playbook would always favour teaching ideology over history. The 'greying' of sovereign reputation is only consequential.

The writer is Lt Gen PVSM, AVSM (Retd) and former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry



BHUPINDER SINGH

The writer is Lt Gen PVSM, AVSM (Retd) and former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

## A crisis of survival

SIR, Congratulations to Jaydev Jana and *The Statesman* for the very timely and significant two-part article titled Planetary Boundaries (June 29 and 30). This article sums up very clearly how a number of very serious environmental problems, taken together, are now taking us towards a survival crisis in the sense that they threaten the life-sustaining conditions of our planet, or transcend planetary boundaries.

The writer has also done well to emphasise the importance of voluntary population control and more sustainable develop-

ment paths to check these problems before it is too late. In addition, it is very important to examine various policy failures of recent decades.

For example, as brought out in the article, agricultural development has been allowed to take a path which is ecologically harmful and worsens the survival crisis, whereas options of alternative paths of agricultural progress, of real progress which helps to resolve the survival crisis, are available. Why has more attention not been given to these alternatives and why do ecologically destructive paths sought

to be promoted by a few giant corporations who seek to control the world food system continue to get so much support?

The entire question of justice and integrating environmental concerns with justice concerns also needs to be studied more closely.

If planetary boundaries are to be respected and growth and production have to be within these boundaries, then it is also very important to ensure that needs of all people are met within these boundaries of production and for this, policies which bring more equality and justice are needed.

The need for equality and justice has increased much more in times of survival crisis but this linkage has not been adequately emphasized even by Left forces.

Yours, etc., Bharat Dogra, New Delhi, 30 June.

### STRONG REBUFF

SIR, This refers to Harsha Kakar's 'Defining the contours of a Kashmir agenda' (29 June). Accepting the finality of Article 370 by valley politicians has made Kashmir's integration complete. This is a strong rebuff to the deceitful narrative on

Kashmir peddled by the Left liberal media after the abrogation of Art 370, which surprisingly toed Pakistan's misleading narrative. Those who peddled the politically-motivated narratives two years ago must have eaten their words after the PM's successful parleys with valley politicians over the strengthening of grassroots democracy.

If acceptance of the finality on Art 370 has lulled the domestic detractors of

### OUT OF THE CLOSET

SIR, All's fair in love and war. There were no closets then. Everyone was user-friendly. In anarchy, monarchy and hierarchy, The non-binary became primary. In those days of toxic pride, The jumble of fair-foul scrambles. Of the phenomenal power-play. Of those sensational epic times. Remember the invincible warrior Bishma. Remember the supreme strategist Lord. The Commander in Chief. A rotating furious-speed slicer. On His raised finger. To win the war It had to be. Shikhandi standing guard as Arjun's human shield. Did obedient Shikhandi smirk as he. Stood guard, guarding the supreme Archer. Shikhandi outstared, outsmarted Bishma. Weakened by custom and belief.

Kashmir peddled by the Left liberal media after the abrogation of Art 370, which surprisingly toed Pakistan's misleading narrative. Those who peddled the politically-motivated narratives two years ago must have eaten their words after the PM's successful parleys with valley politicians over the strengthening of grassroots democracy.

If acceptance of the finality on Art 370 has lulled the domestic detractors of

The old man Bishma collapsed. Bishma forgot that in love and war. The end justified the means! Now of course in these barbaric times. Laws had to be created. As shields and keys to unlock closets. "Step out, Step Out" Was the freedom slogan. More powerful than bullets from guns. Released from claustrophobia. Those innocent, helpless humans. Incarcerated within so long. Thumped the closet doors. Claiming equal human rights. At last, those who were pushed to the margins and borders. Breathed freely in the free air. Breathed proudly as they looked up. At the proud resplendent rainbows. Overarching the boundless. Borderless blue skies.

Yours, etc., Sanjukta Dasgupta, Kolkata, 29 June.

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A K GHOSH

**I**t is a foregone conclusion that the impact of the first and second waves of Covid 19 on education has been huge even as educational institutions which are yet to reopen face the spectre of a third wave.

The second wave seemed to be more complex. This arises from the fact that students are not able to take proper examinations, and their grades in many cases might not be satisfactory. They would even have to face the negative eventuality of their "Covid impacted testimonials". Many brilliant pupils would have to put up with being marked down through no fault of theirs.

The focus was on the impact of digitally disadvantaged students of their poor performance. In the long run, what comes to be at stake is the social mobility that education is supposed to address as the leveler of society.

According to Unicef, Covid has affected about 90 per cent of the world's student population. Over 1.5 million schools across India closed down due to the pandemic affecting 286 million children from pre-primary to secondary level. This adds to 6 million children who were out of school before the pandemic. Only 24 per cent households have access to the internet, according to a 2019 government survey. In rural India, the picture is grimmer - only four per cent households have access.

India, like other countries, embraced the digital mode of education as a solution. The New Education Policy (NEP) also emphasised the importance of online education blended with traditional mode. Sadly, however, the Education Ministry's budget was slashed to Rs 469 crore in 2020-21 from Rs 604 crore the previous year.

A KPMG and Google study done before the outbreak of Covid estimated that the online education market in India was set to grow to Rs 14,836 crore with 9.6 million users by 2021, from Rs 1,870 crore and 1.6 million users in 2016. India has now emerged as the second biggest market for massive open online courses (MOOC) in the world after the US.

However, a recent report by the global education network, Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) says that Indian internet infrastructure is still far from ready to support the shift. A 2018 Niti Ayog report revealed that 55,000 villages in India did not have mobile network coverage. A 2017-18 survey by the Ministry of Rural Development found that more than 36 per cent of schools in our country operated without electricity.

As e-learning becomes the new normal, digitisation of education is being made accessible and affordable. The Union government is banking hugely on the Bharatnet project,

## Redesign learning to fit new needs



which aims to provide broadband to 250,000 gram panchayats through optic fibre to improve connectivity to rural schools to impart online education to students who do not have internet access at home.

It is feared that the overall growth and development of an individual that takes place in school is lost and underprivileged learners lose the opportunity beyond school. Students do not get free midday meals which may compromise health. Exposure to screens for a long time, technical difficulties, reduced interaction with teachers etc. are some of the other concerns. There is a strong possibility of increased dropout rates when schools reopen after the second wave. Unesco has estimated that 11 million girls may not return to school, especially those aged between 12 and 17. A Unicef study found that at least 463 million students globally were cut off from learning due to lack of resources at home.

A Parliamentary Committee Report released in December 2020 recommended that a scheme be formulated to provide financial assistance and subsidised smart phones and computers to students to address the digital divide. But it is well known

that if the digital divide has to be avoided, the spending on education must be raised from the present less than 3 per cent.

The crisis can be made an opportunity to rethink how digital technology may be used to support the teaching-learning process during and after the second wave. The past one year of emergency remote teaching tells us much about how education can go fully virtual or operate on a hybrid basis.

The best lesson to be learnt from the pandemic involves the informal, improvised, scrappy digital practices that have helped teachers, students and parents get through learning at home. Institutional shutdowns have seen them get together to achieve many things with relatively simple technology. This includes the rise of some Apps as a source of informal learning content. Some have been used as platforms for educational organisations, public figures and scientists to produce bespoke learning content as well as allowing teachers to put together material for a wider audience.

In some countries, classes have been run through WhatsApp, a platform most students and families have easy access to. Educators have learned

to set up BitMoji classes and cartoon avatars of themselves which act as a friendly online version of their familiar classroom space for students to check in and find out what they should be learning, access resources, and feel as if they were back at their educational institutions.

Teachers have learned to work out creative ways of Zoom based teaching giving live demonstrations, experiments and live music and pottery workshops. Social media, apps and games have proven convenient places for educators to share insights into their classroom practices which can some human contact and extra motivation to connect and learn.

A year of such practices may have developed a framework of how students and teachers can make the most of personal digital media outside the classroom — including allowing students to participate in online fan fiction writing communities, digital journalism, music production and podcasting. The year has also seen a rise in e-mail sports where teams of youngsters compete in video games. Informal digital media can serve a boon for the disadvantaged groups allowing students to find supportive communities of like-minded peers.

With US schools exploring the benefits of setting up official Tik Tok creation clubs to enhance their video making skill, it may encourage our country to exploit the crisis due to the first and second waves of the pandemic as an opportunity to make teachers, students and families work together.

EdTech and digitisation could greatly supplement the learning process. Beyond seeing a more seamless transition to remote learning scenarios, technology could help provide personalised learning solutions as well as novel and engaging avenues for teachers and students to participate in the teaching-learning process.

However, significant barriers may be faced to increased adoption of technology including inability of many educational institutions to make investment in building networks. Regardless, as we look at educational stagnation during the ongoing waves of Covid 19, we are likely to increasingly accept the role of technology.

The writer, a former Associate Professor, Department of English, Gurudas College, Kolkata, is presently with Rabindra Bharati University.

## Playing the Trump card in Peru

MAHIR ALI

**I**t is not unusual for battle lines in the class war to be delineated more clearly in Latin America than elsewhere, and the fault lines have deepened in recent decades. Yet the stark contrast between the competing candidates in Peru's presidential run-off earlier this month was nonetheless remarkable.

It pitted a rural primary school teacher born to illiterate Andean peasants, with little political experience beyond organising a union and spearheading a successful teachers' strike, against the very epitome of entrenched privilege, a would-be dynast whose father misruled Peru for a decade and is paying the price with a 25-year prison term.

The votes have all been counted, but more than three weeks after the election no result has been declared. According to the tally, endorsed by a variety of international observers, Pedro Castillo — the teacher — won by a margin of more than 44,000 votes. A close but clear result.

He has not formally been declared the president-elect, though, because his opponent has played the Trump card, alleging electoral fraud and attempting, with the assistance of some of the most expensive legal firms in Lima, to throw out more than 200,000 votes? "The election will be



flipped, dear friends," Keiko Fujimori told her supporters.

Whether it will be depends on the National Elections Jury, which is examining the fraud claims, and is expected to deliver its verdict within days — or possibly weeks.

Fujimori has twice before narrowly lost run-offs, to Ollanta Humala in 2011 and Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in 2016 — both of whom face pretrial detention and even as a presidential candidate she required special permission to campaign outside Lima.

Her father, Alberto Fujimori, who ruled Peru for 10 years from 1990, was in 2009 sentenced to 25 years in jail for authorising death squads as well as charges relating to kidnapping, vote-rigging and corruption. His legacy includes the forced sterilisation of 270,000 mostly indigenous women. His daughter's electoral platform included a vow to set him free.

The key factor in her desperation to win the presidency, however, may well be the fact that if she were to become head of state her own legal woes would be postponed.

Keiko Fujimori is not a particularly popular figure even among mainstream conservatives, most of whom voted for her chiefly to stave off the prospect of a Castillo presidency.

Racism undoubtedly plays a part: the contempt in which the European-descended elites and their peripheries hold indigenous populations is a continent-wide phenomenon reflecting its conquistador past and the settler colonialism that ensued. Before the advent of Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales, it was all but unknown for Native Americans to rise to positions of power at a national level.

Racism, though, may not be the paramount reason behind the resistance among Peru's entrenched vested interests to the very idea of a Castillo presidency. For them, a bigger issue is his election platform, which has included talk of nationalisation, higher taxation of lucrative mining interests, and improved funding for health — Peru has endured the world's highest per capita death toll from the Covid-19 pandemic — and education.

It is fairly common across the world for panic buttons to be pushed as soon as the slightest prospect of wealth redistribution rears its head.

The neoliberal model of capitalism, for which Chile was chosen as a laboratory by the US almost half a century ago, thrives on the sacred notion that the rich will keep getting richer — which in turn entails any trickle-down effect being restricted to a minimum.

Castillo hails from Cajamarca, one of Peru's poorest regions, which is also home to South America's largest gold mine. It would be odd if his ideas about who should benefit from Peru's natural resources did not differ substantially from those of the mine owners. In recent weeks, however, he has felt obliged to curb his enthusiasm, to declare: "We are not Chavistas, we are not communists, we are not going to take away property from anyone...we are democratic."

The trouble, of course, is that nowadays even a mildly social democratic agenda tends to be vilified as communist — and the manifesto of Castillo's Perú Libre party does indeed refer to Marx, Lenin and Peruvian Communist Party founder José Carlos Mariátegui, although its aims could hardly be construed as revolutionary.

Castillo's unfortunate social conservatism, meanwhile, won't cut much ice with those on the right who share his views. There are dark rumours of a military coup, should he be declared president, and he would anyhow face a hostile congress. Change will eventually come to Peru, but probably not this year.

Dawn/ANN

NO 28959

### OCCASIONAL NOTE

Sir P.C. Roy's strong appeal on behalf of the distressed people of Khulna District is reinforced by the official statement issued from the Revenue Department of the Government of Bengal. The facts cited in this statement show that, while at present no sign of actual starvation is visible, the distress which prevails over an area of about sixty square miles is acute. In the words of the Collector "it cannot be denied that the pinch of poverty is very heavy upon the people," whose crops have failed for two years. The poorest people in the affected area "get but a handful of rice from time to time," and they are only saved from starvation by the fruit which grows profusely in almost every village, the fish that can be caught in the Khas, and the milk, of which, apparently, there is a good supply. It is fortunate for the people that they have even these slender resources to take out their handfuls of rice, but what they gather from the countryside can give little better than a starvation diet. For the want of clothing, which the people have no money to buy, there is no corresponding alleviation. The official statement shows that the local authorities and the Government are doing much for the relief of the distress; and that "the charity which is found in every Bengal village" has not failed.

### NEWS ITEMS

### STRIKERS ATTACKS ON MADRAS MILL-HANDS

Madras, Je 30

Mr. P.C. Lobo, Chief Presidency Magistrate, in connection with the mills' strike disturbance, ordered non-bailable warrants to issue for the arrest of fourteen persons, bailable warrants against six, and summonses against four. Padshanabha Naidu, Honorary Deputy Superintendent of Police, pointed out how the strikes were divided into two sections, one of which consisted mainly of Adi Dravidas who were loyal to their employers and were being intimidated. Assaults had been committed on them by members of the other section. Feeling between the two sections was running high and if the persons against whom warrants were asked for were allowed to go about the situation would become worse. The case will be heard on July 4.

### EARNINGS OF STATE RAILWAYS

Simla, Je 30

The total approximate gross earnings of State railway from April 1, to June 18, amounted to Rs 18.24 crores. The Budget estimate for the current year was framed in anticipation of total gross earnings of Rs 87 crores and the result of the first eleven weeks given above have fallen short of the estimate for that period by Rs 97.47 lakhs. Last week's results show indications of a welcome improvement, which it is hoped may be maintained, on some of the principal lines. The most noteworthy being the North-Western, East Indian, Bombay, Baroda and Central India, and Oudh and Rohilkhand railways. The earnings of all lines taken together are, however, still short of the standard expected.

### FATAL MOTOR SMASH AT DELHI

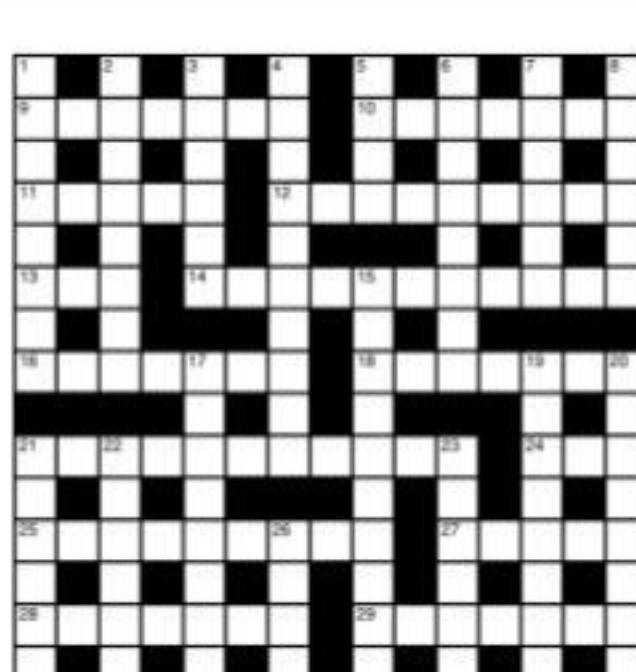
A fatal motor accident occurred during the early hours of yesterday morning when Mr. Jones, electrical engineer, East Indian Railway, Delhi, was driving home to the new cantonment with four sergeants after a whist drive at the fort. The car dashed against a bullock cart and Mr. Jones was killed instantaneously, while the sergeants were seriously injured. It is understood that one of them has since died in hospital, while two others are in a critical condition. Mr. Jones leaves a widow and five children who were at Cawnpore at the time of his death. The funeral took place yesterday.

### MALEGAON RIOTING CASE

Malegaon, Je 30

At today's hearing of the riot case one of the witnesses, a mechanical engineer, stated that he saw some of the accused carrying torches and kerosene. They sprinkled the oil over Pophale's temple which they afterwards set on fire. He also saw the mob throw the body of the sub-inspector and a constable into the flames. The manager of Pophale's temple stated that when he arrived he was told by the crowd that if he handed over the sub-inspector the temple, in which he had concealed himself, would not be burned. The crowd afterwards assaulted the witness who ran away and took shelter in a Marwari's house.

### CROSSWORD



### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

MALICE BASSET  
AOA EUR  
PERSONAL PRONOUN  
SED OFS  
STEREO OBSOLETE  
RNVOOE  
CONCRETE LOWKEY  
A E  
THIRST GENERATE  
ABERRATION  
FIGURINE CUPTIE  
RNPAATO  
KNUCKLES SANDWICH  
ELEPHANT  
TWEETY ROBROY

### ACROSS

- 9 Serenade briefly interrupted by cheers after sailor's refrain (7)
- 10 Baker perhaps follows short cut to do decorative work (7)
- 11 Parent caught fish (5)
- 12 Worst hospital is involved in public dispute (9)
- 13/24 Begin to date vacuous upper-class twit? (3,3)
- 14 Designer drug cut with crushed silica (11)
- 16 Suspect due ball in hearing (7)
- 18 Clamour about sealing off derelict pit is difficult to
- understand (7)
- Current time could be time to take on staff (11)
- 24 See 13
- 25 Awareness of crime essentially accommodated by court's punishment (9)
- 27 Computing device mainly provides means of summarising information (5)
- 28 Appropriate assertion of modernist poet? (7)
- 29 Deal with business issue (7)
- 1 Fanatical gunmen destroyed SAS training establishment (8)
- 2 Helped out when relative
- almost died (8)
- Terms of reference sometimes limited by vehicles in bill (6)
- 4 Rambling company has essential cover (10)
- 5 Wonderful nurses name condition one has to face? (4)
- 6 Perhaps local bank's run down by huge number of people (8)
- 7 Refrain from tasks requiring English to be universal (6)
- 8 Put away heads of syndicate that got into debt (6)
- 15 Men cycle in unusual and unforgiving position (10)

### DOWN

- 12 Book published that is without question catering to niche market (8)
- 19 Worried Russia's ready to invade Thailand's borders (8)
- 20 Face fine after distributing legal high? (8)
- 21 Having suit inside out in church is uncouth (6)
- 22 Cover article plugs something newsworthy (6)
- 23 Outstanding figures reportedly make firm leader in sector (6)
- 26 English academic revolutionised device connected to internet? (4)

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



I am concerned about Q1 FY2022 and what a series of state-wide lockdowns might do to businesses and economic growth.

RAHUL BAJAJ  
FORMER BAJAJ AUTO CHAIRMAN

## THUMBNAILS

**JSW Steel investment:** The country's leading steel maker JSW Steel is planning to invest another Rs 25,115 crore by 2024-25 to ramp up its capacity to 37.5 million tons (MT) per annum, its chairman and managing director Sajjan Jindal said in a message to its shareholders. The company, which sold nearly 15 million tons of steel in FY21, claimed to have invested Rs 48,000 crore in the past three years for augmenting its production capacity to nearly 28 million tons, company officials said.

PTI

**Luminous to get ₹400 cr:** Schneider Electric on Wednesday announced plans to infuse Rs 350-400 crore in its Indian subsidiary Luminous Power Technologies. The investments will be used to pursue aggressive growth plans of Luminous which entail doubling the battery and inverter production capacity, generating new employment opportunities, and ramping up its solar business, according to a Press release issued by the company.

SNS

**Open web livestream:** Firework, one of the fastest growing short-video platforms for publishers and businesses, launched livestream and shoppable video capability with India's first livestream sale that will showcase more than 15 brands across various categories offering huge discounts. The open web initiative will empower businesses and brands to sell their products through shoppable videos and livestream, said a Press release.

SNS

**Navi Nifty 50 fund:** Navi Mutual Fund, part of Sachin Bansal's BFSI group Navi, has announced the launch of Navi Nifty 50 Index Fund, an open-ended equity scheme which would replicate the Nifty 50 Index, with the lowest cost compared to any other index schemes in the passive funds category. The 10-day NFO will open on 3 July 2021 and close for subscriptions on 12 July 2021, said a Press release.

SNS

**Nucleus Software:** Nucleus Software has announced that FinnOne Neo will power the consumer finance business of Tien Phong Commercial Joint Stock Bank (TPBank), one of the leading banks in Vietnam. TPBank will offer instant digital loans anytime, anywhere, powered by the advanced digital lending platform FinnOne Neo, said a Press release from the company.

SNS

**Wadhwanie plea:** On the eve of International MSME Day, the global not-for-profit Wadhwanie Foundation has called for empowering MSMEs with capabilities to accelerate their growth. The International MSME Day 2021 is a time to introspect and reflect upon the hardships bestowed upon the MSME sector, it said.

SNS

# Second Covid wave: Banks face systemic risk, says S&P

Banks' weak loans will likely remain elevated at 11-12 per cent of gross loans in next 12 to 18 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

**S**&P Global Ratings today said Indian banks face a systemic risk as the second Covid wave will impair the performance of financial institutions in the April-September period.

Stating that economic recovery remains highly vulnerable to setbacks due to Covid, particularly if fresh outbreaks trigger new lockdowns, S&P said the banking sector's weak loans will likely remain elevated at 11-12 per cent of gross loans in the next 12 to 18 months.

"The second wave has front-ended weakness in asset quality," said S&P Global Ratings credit analyst Deepali Seth Chhabria. "Financial institutions face a strained first half amid weak collections and poor disbursements."

Indian banks face systemic risks as the country sorts through the aftermath of the Covid second wave. Lenders struggled with a high level of weak loans well before the pandemic struck and clearly, con-



"The second wave has front-ended weakness in asset quality. Financial institutions face a strained first half amid weak collections and poor disbursements."

DEEPALEI SETH CHHABRIA  
CREDIT ANALYST, S&P GLOBAL RATINGS

ditions have deteriorated, S&P said in a statement.

The government has announced support for the microfinance and tourism sectors that should help struggling borrowers. This support comes on top of the recently extended loan guarantees to small and mid-size enterprises (SMEs).

S&P said it expects the second wave to impair the performance of Indian financial institutions in the first half of fiscal year 2022, with much rest on the effectiveness of government measures to address this problem.

A Covid resurgence involv-

ing new and potentially aggressive variants, and a vaccine rollout that undershoots our current expectations, remain the key downside risks.

"Limited vaccine supplies and people's reluctance to take doses have held back the country's inoculation programme. Fully vaccinating roughly 70 per cent of the country will likely take at least until the first half of 2022.

This leaves the economic recovery highly vulnerable to Covid setbacks, particularly if fresh outbreaks trigger new lockdowns," S&P noted.

The US-based rating agency said the Indian economy has

been in recovery mode since June, following a sharp contraction in the economic activity in April and May after localised lockdowns across much of the country. The latest outbreak has less severely affected the country's manufacturing and exports than what was seen during the first wave of infections in 2020, but services continue to be disrupted.

"The current recovery should be less steep than the bounce that unfolded in late 2020 and early 2021. Households are running down savings. A desire to rebuild their cash holding may delay spending even as the economy reopens," S&P said, adding that it expects real GDP growth of 9.5 per cent in the current fiscal ending March 2022.

"Banks have much to digest in the quarter ahead. Disbursements slowed considerably in April and May. The credit that banks extended fell by about 1 per cent in the first two months of this fiscal year. The drop was largely seasonal - there were similar declines in the same period for

fiscals 2018 and 2019," it said. S&P said tourism and recreation-related sectors, commercial real estate, and unsecured retail loans may contribute to higher non-performing loans (NPLs). However, the banking system's exposure to many of these segments is moderate, and should have only a limited effect.

Housing finance (excluding affordable housing) and gold loans will likely be less affected compared with financing for micro enterprises or commercial vehicles. The finance companies will likely be more impacted than banks, it added.

The government has come out with ambitious measures. The initiatives include the state's emergency credit guarantee scheme, which bolsters the working capital of SMEs. The government recently added Rs 1.5 lakh crore to its ECLGS (emergency credit line guarantee scheme). This comes on top of its existing programme of Rs 3 lakh crore extended to SMEs and the partial guarantee scheme for the finance companies.

# Core sectors' output rises by 16.8% in May



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

The output of eight core sectors grew by 16.8 per cent in May, mainly due to a low base effect and uptick in production of natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity, official data released today showed.

The eight infrastructure sectors of coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity had contracted by 21.4 per cent in May 2020 due to the lockdown restrictions imposed to control the spread of the Covid-19 infections.

In March this year, these key sectors had recorded a growth of 11.4 per cent, and 60.9 per cent in April. According to the commerce and industry ministry

data, production of natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity jumped by 20.1 per cent, 15.3 per cent, 59.3 per cent, 7.9 per cent and 7.3 per cent in May, as against (-) 16.8 per cent, (-) 21.3 per cent, (-) 40.4 per cent, (-) 21.4 per cent and (-) 14.8 per cent in May 2020, respectively.

Coal output too rose by 6.9 per cent during the month under review as against a negative growth of 14 per cent in the same month of the previous year.

Fertiliser and crude oil segments recorded a negative growth during the month under review.

During April-May period of this financial year, the eight sectors grew by 35.8 per cent compared to a negative growth of 29.4 per cent in the same period last year.

## Cabinet okays ₹3.03 lakh cr scheme for power discoms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

was announced in Budget earlier this year.

On Monday, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman again announced the scheme as part of stimulus package post second wave of Covid-19, to boost the economy.

The revamped reforms-based result-linked power distribution scheme will provide financial assistance to discoms for infrastructure creation, up-gradation of system, capacity building and process improvement.

It provides state-specific intervention in place of "one size fits all".

For availing this scheme, the states will have to pre-qualify criteria like publication of audited financial reports, upfront liquidation of state government's dues/subsidy to discoms and non-creation of

additional regulatory assets. The scheme envisages 25 crore smart meters, 10,000 feeders, four lakh km of low-tension overhead lines planned under the ongoing works under Central government schemes.

The Central schemes - Integrated Power Development Scheme, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bili Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya) will be merged.

Total allocation will be Rs 3,03,058 crore, including Central government share of Rs 97,631 crore.

Sitharaman had also said on Monday that states have already been allowed an additional borrowing for four years up to 0.5 per cent of gross state domestic product annually (Rs 1,05,864 crore for 2021-22).

## GST: 66 crore returns filed so far

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Finance ministry today informed more than 66 crore GST returns have been filed so far and lower tax rates have helped increased compliance. Sharing the details in a series of tweets, the finance ministry said GST has simplified compliance for all taxpayers and the GST Council also recommended several trade beneficial clarifications in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"It is now widely acknowledged that GST is both consumer and taxpayer-friendly. While high tax rates of the pre-GST era acted as a disincentive to paying tax, the lower rates under GST helped to increase tax compliance. More than 66 crore GST returns have been filed so far," the ministry tweeted.

A nationwide GST, which



subsumed 17 local levies like excise duty, service tax and VAT and 13 cesses, was rolled out on 1 July 2017. Under GST, businesses with an annual turnover of up to Rs 40 lakh are exempt from the tax. Additionally, those with a turnover up to Rs 1.5 crore can opt for the composition scheme and pay only 1 per cent

tax. For services, businesses with turnover up to Rs 20 lakh in a year are GST exempt. A service provider having turnover up to Rs 50 lakh in a year can opt for composition scheme for services and pay only 6 per cent tax.

"The multiple markets across India, with each state charging a different rate of tax, led to great inefficiencies and costs of compliance. Under GST, compliance has been improving steadily, with around 1.3 crore taxpayers registered," said the ministry.

Tweeting with the hashtag "#4yearsGST", the ministry said GST has reduced the rate at which people have to pay tax. "The revenue neutral rate as recommended by the RNR Committee was 15.3 per cent. Compared to this, the weighted GST rate at present, according to the RBI, is only 11.6 per cent."

GST has significantly eased

one of the most complex indirect tax systems and a company looking to do business in every state had to make as many as 495 different submissions. Under GST, that number has reduced to just 12, it added.

"With the continuous simplification of procedures and rationalisation of rate structures so as to make GST compliance easy for common man as well as the trade, we have been able to achieve economic integration of the country with a humane touch," the ministry added.

Under GST, a four-rate structure that exempts or imposes a low rate of tax of 5 per cent on essential items and top rate of 28 per cent on cars is levied. The other slabs of tax are 12 and 18 per cent. In the pre-GST era, the total of VAT, excise, CST and their cascading effected to 31 per cent as tax payable, on an average.

## RBI ban hits market share: HDFC Bank

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 30 JUNE



It can be noted that HDFC Bank's credit card customers decreased by 4.67 lakh between December and April, when they stood at 14.9 million, while SBI has gained over 6 lakh new cards and ICICI gained 10 lakh.

against repeated technological outages at HDFC Bank over two years by slapping unprecedented penalties, which included a ban on any new credit card issuance and also prohibition on launching new digital initiatives.

"We have got very aggressive plans to get back in the market with a big bang... You will rapidly see HDFC Bank not just regaining market share but also significantly increasing our spend market share," Rao said.

Without sharing any details over when he expects the ban to be lifted, Rao said within 3-4 months of the ban getting lifted, one should expect a cor-

rection in the incremental market share back to the pre-ban levels, launch of new products and features and also partnerships which have been forged during this period.

"We were very clear that this is at best a temporal situation. During the six months when we were not issuing new credit cards, we increased our merchant acceptance base, our liability franchise increased and today we are sitting on a large base of already analytically data-mined customers who have already kept ready and pre-approved," he said.

The "large sales force" has been trained, re-skilled and

primed for the aggressive play ahead and backend processes for them have also been made more streamlined, Rao said.

He admitted that rivals have seized up on the opportunity once HDFC Bank stopped issuing the cards, amidst reports on how ICICI Bank and SBI, among others have grown. It can be noted that HDFC Bank's credit card customers decreased by 4.67 lakh between December and April, when they stood at 14.9 million, while SBI has gained over 6 lakh new cards and ICICI gained 10 lakh.

The bank has been in constant discussion with RBI ever since the ban was imposed and has upgraded its systems as per the indications from the regulator, Rao said, adding that it has now presented a plan which focuses on the immediate, short-term, mid-term and long-term plan to the central bank.

The Reserve Bank of India

## Current account surplus stood at 0.9% in FY'21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 30 JUNE

India reported a current account surplus of 0.9 per cent of GDP in the pandemic-hit FY'21, as against a deficit of 0.9 per cent in FY'20, data released by the RBI showed today.

The country's current account deficit widened to \$8.1 billion or 1 per cent of GDP for the March quarter, as against a surplus of \$0.6 billion or 0.1 per cent of the GDP in the year-ago period and a deficit of 0.3 per cent in the preceding December quarter, as per the central bank data.

The CAD, the gap between the country's overall foreign receipts and payments, is an important factor representing a nation's external sector's strength.

said the current account balance swung into the surplus territory on the back of a sharp contraction in the trade deficit to \$102.2 billion from \$157.5 billion in 2019-20.

Net invisible receipts were lower in FY'21 due to an increase in net outgo of overseas investment income payments and lower net private transfer receipts, even though net services receipts were higher than the year-ago period, it said.

Despite the pandemic,

the net foreign direct investment inflows at \$44 billion were higher in FY'21 than the \$43.6 billion in 2019-20, the central bank added.

Net foreign portfolio investments also increased by \$36.1 billion in FY'21 as compared to \$1.4 billion a year ago, it said.

External commercial borrowings by corporate India recorded an inflow of \$0.2 billion as compared to \$21.7 billion in 2019-20, the RBI data showed.

There was an accretion of \$87.3 billion to foreign exchange reserve on a balance of payments basis, it said.

The current account deficit in the March quarter was higher primarily on account of a higher trade deficit and lower net invisible receipts than in the corresponding period of the previous year, the RBI said.

## Suzlon loss narrows to ₹54 crore in Q4

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

Suzlon Energy's consolidated net loss narrowed to Rs 54.25 crore in the quarter ended 31 March 2021 mainly on the back of higher revenues.

The consolidated net loss of the company was at Rs 834.22 crore in the quarter ended 31 March 2020, according to a regulatory filing.

Total income rose to Rs 1,141.15 crore in the quarter, from Rs 658.89 crore.

For the financial year 2020-21, the company posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 103.59 crore, whereas it had reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 2,691.84 crore in fiscal 2019-20. Total income during



Once national security falls, the city will then be dominated by ideas of independence, mutual destruction and self-determination.

**SAFEGUARDING NATIONAL SECURITY DIRECTOR ZHENG YANXIONG**  
SAYING THAT THE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN HONG KONG

# China's Communist Party to turn 100 today

The highlight of the occasion, according to officials, is an address to a special gathering in the morning by President Xi Jinping

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING, 30 JUNE

**C**hina's ruling Communist Party which had a vice-like grip on the destiny of the world's most populous nation besides diverse influence on international leftist movements and global politics will turn 100 on Thursday.

The highlight of the occasion, according to officials, is an address to a special gathering in the morning by President Xi Jinping, who cast himself in the mould of Mao Zedong, the founder of the Communist Party of China (CPC) as it is officially called.

Xi's address would be telecast live by official media networks, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

While much of the "grand celebrations" as Xi put it earlier were shrouded in secrecy, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post quoted the officials as saying that there will be no military parade.

Earlier, there was speculation about a military parade at the historic Tiananmen Square,



demonstrating China's new military hardware. Some of the latest helicopters and fighter jets conducted rehearsals a few days ago.

The sprawling Tiananmen Square, where the Great Hall of People is located, has been completely blocked for about a month and also much of the events in the past few days like Wednesday's presentation of medals by Xi to 29 CPC members who have made "outstanding contributions to the Party and the people."

Journalists who are invited to attend Thursday's event are required to get both the doses of the Chinese Covid-19 vaccines. They have also been asked to produce a negative certificate

of coronavirus test taken 48 hours before the event besides a second test before checking into a designated hotel on Wednesday from where they will be taken to the venue in the early hours.

According to the Post, diplomats who are invited to the event can also attend if they have had a foreign vaccine.

China, which had stopped international travel to most of the countries after the coronavirus emerged in Wuhan in December 2019 and became a global pandemic, has contained the spread of the virus with stringent measures, though it continued to report a handful of cases every day in different parts of the country. Much of the

focus would be on Xi's speech, considering China faces global adversity over the origins of the COVID-19, allegations of genocide against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, massive crackdown in Hong Kong to put down the mass dissent, besides murmurs over his tenure.

The US, EU, Japan and a host of western countries have mounted a united campaign to rein in China's authoritarian governance at home and its attempts to forge a new global order with multi-billion Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Commenting on the CPC centenary, Gu Su, a political scientist at Nanjing University in China, said that the 100th anniversary might not yield any major announcements.

"The centenary is the most important year for any commemoration so the Party's centenary will be very big. But we might not see any major policy announcements. That part might be left to next year's party congress," he told the Post. "A lot is still undecided and China is facing lots of domestic and international challenges, he said.

Myanmar govt releases activists, journalists

BANGKOK, 30 JUNE

Myanmar's government began releasing about 2,300 prisoners on Wednesday, including activists who were detained for protesting against the military's seizure of power in February and journalists who reported on the protests, officials said.

Buses took prisoners out of Yangon's Insein Prison, where friends and families of detainees had waited since morning for the announced releases. It is standard practice to take freed prisoners to the police stations where they were originally booked to complete the processing for their freedom. Zaw Zaw, head of the Yangon Region's Prison Department, confirmed that more than 720 people were released from the prison.

Deputy Information Minister Maj.-Gen Zaw Min Tun earlier said that about 2,300 prisoners would be released nationwide. He told China's Xinhua news agency that the released detainees were those who took part in the protests but did not take part in the violence, who did not commit crimes and did not lead the riots.

Ethiopia hints at Tigray military move; ceasefire in doubt

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NAIROBI, 30 JUNE

Ethiopia's government says its military could re-enter the capital of its embattled Tigray region within weeks, calling into question the unilateral ceasefire it declared in Tigray just days ago.

Redwan Hussein, spokesman for the Tigray emergency task force, spoke to reporters on Wednesday in Ethiopia's first public remarks since its soldiers retreated from the Tigray capital and other parts of the region on Monday in a dramatic turn in the nearly eight-month war.

The Tigray forces that have retaken key areas after fierce fighting have rejected the ceasefire, saying it was a sick joke and vowing to chase out Ethiopian forces and those of neighboring Eritrea. "There will be no negotiations with Ethiopia until communications, transport and other services that have been cut or destroyed for much of the war are restored," the Tigray forces' spokesman, Getachew Reda said.

We have to make sure that every inch of our territory is returned to us, the rightful owners, Getachew said, adding that Ethiopian forces are still fighting to regain territory and Eritrean forces still control a significant part of the region.

The Tigray spokesman also issued a warning to the long-time president of Eritrea, Isaias Afwerki, who has long been an enemy of Tigray's leaders and sent soldiers into Tigray to support Ethiopian forces. Witnesses have accused the Eritrean soldiers of some of the worst atrocities in the conflict. Officials for Eritrea, described by human rights groups as one of the world's most repressive nations, have not responded to requests for comment.

## RESTORATION OF RAJDHANI EXPRESS SPECIAL

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that Railways have decided to restore the August Kranti Rajdhani Express Special Train as per the details given below:-

Train No. & Name	Frequency	Restoration w.e.f. (JCO)
02953 Mumbai Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Exp. Spl.	Daily	03.07.2021 to till further advice
02954 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Mumbai Central Rajdhani Exp. Spl.	Daily	04.07.2021 to till further advice

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

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

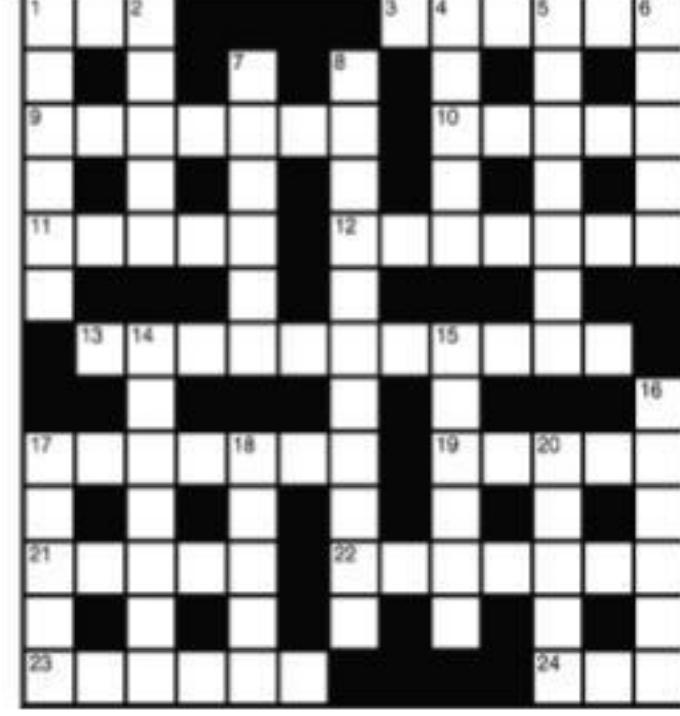
RailMadad Helpline No. 139 Visit RailMadad website: [www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in) & Download RailMadad app.

Please join us on NORTHERN RAILWAY Your Convenience - Our Concern Visit us at: [www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in) SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**

- 1 Rule (3)
- 3 Increase twofold (6)
- 9 Hatchet (7)
- 10 Suppress (5)
- 11 Upright (5)
- 12 Despotic (7)
- 13 Embroidered (11)
- 17 Ferret (7)
- 19 Earth pigment (5)
- 21 Salt solution (5)
- 22 Inspect (7)
- 23 Yearbook (6)
- 24 Young goat (3)

**DOWN**

- 1 Hit high in the air (6)
- 2 Not so good (5)
- 4 Take place (5)
- 5 Chocolate cake (7)
- 6 Monstrous poem (5)
- 7 Desert plant (6)
- 8 Garden building (7,4)
- 14 Avoidance (7)
- 15 Thrifty (6)
- 16 Intimate (6)
- 17 Equine mammal (5)
- 18 Musical drama (5)
- 20 Extreme edge (5)

**SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Rick,
- 3 Order,
- 7 Sofa,
- 8 Immobile,
- 9 Thermostat,
- 12 Embryo,
- 13 Reject,
- 15 Blackthorn,
- 18 Accolade,
- 20 Burp,
- 21 Tread,
- 22 Ages.
- 1 Reek,
- 2 Chapter,
- 3 Ohm,
- 4 Debts,
- 5 Reliance,
- 6 Wiped out,
- 10 Marmoset,
- 11 Implicit,
- 14 June bug,
- 16 Clone,
- 17 Iris,
- 19 Add.

**DOWN**

- 10 Marmoset,
- 11 Implicit,
- 14 June bug,
- 16 Clone,
- 17 Iris,
- 19 Add.

By arrangement with The Independent  
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

### BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



### RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



### DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



### NEED TO KNOW

#### HOSPITALS

22586262, 22585007

#### RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

• Toll Free Nos. 1800112511

• SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886,

54959, 5676747

#### ROADWAYS INQUIRY

• ISBT (General Inquiry):

23868836, 23865181

• Bahra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280,

29958747

• Deen Dayal Upadhyay

25496320, 25494403

• Guru Tegh Bahadur

23717473, 23325320

#### AIRPORT INQUIRIES

• AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407

• INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Center 099109383383,

180018038383, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines Air-

port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671576, Palam Road 25671571, 18001803838

• JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111

• EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3373377

• U.P. Roads 23868709

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#### FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

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*Today, we are finally getting back the things that we lost. But as far as we've come, we're not done yet.*

US FIRST LADY JILL BIDEN

JILL BIDEN TEAMS UP WITH NFL GREAT EMMITT SMITH TO PUSH VACCINATIONS

## WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C H
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C H
TOKYO	21°C	09°C CL
LONDON	17°C	09°C H
DUBAI	37°C	25°C H
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	09°C H
NEW YORK	34°C	12°C S
MOSCOW	18°C	14°C H

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

## THUMBNAILS



A child shovels dirt over a tree seedling planted with the remains of a family member who died from Covid in Colombia. ■ AP

**Russia hits record death toll:** Coronavirus deaths in Russia hit a record for the second day in a row on Wednesday, with the authorities reporting 669 new deaths, the highest daily tally in the pandemic. The previous record, of 652 new deaths, was registered on Tuesday. ■ AP

**UN war crimes court:** A United Nations court is delivering judgments on Wednesday in the retrial of two allies of the late Serbian President Slobodan Milošević who are accused of organizing, arming and supporting notorious Serb paramilitaries that committed atrocities in Croatia and Bosnia as Yugoslavia crumbled in the early 1990s. ■ PTI

**Russian cargo ship:** An uncrewed Russian cargo ship blasted off Wednesday on a mission to deliver supplies to the International Space Station. The Progress MS-17 lifted off atop a Soyuz rocket from the Russian space complex in Kazakhstan, at 4:27 a.m. (2327 GMT Tuesday). ■ AP

**Indo-American New Jersey Attorney Gen stepping down to join SEC**

NEW YORK, 30 JUNE

Gurbir Grewal (48), a prominent Indian-American and the longest-serving Sikh Attorney-General of the US state of New Jersey, is stepping down to take up a key position with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Grewal will become SEC's director of the enforcement division, which regulates financial markets, from July 26 after serving since January 2018 as the state's top law enforcement officer, the SEC said in a statement. I'm honoured and delighted to welcome Attorney General Grewal to the SEC, said Gary Gensler, the SEC Chairman.

He has had a distinguished career as New Jersey's chief law enforcement officer and as a prosecutor at both the local and federal levels. He has the ideal combination of experience, values, and leadership ability to helm the Enforcement Division at this critical time. I look forward to working closely with him to protect investors and root out wrongdoing in our markets, Gensler said.

Grewal is the second pick for the post since President Joe Biden took office in January. The commission had tapped attorney Alex Oh to lead the enforcement division in April, but she stepped down only days later for unstated personal reasons, the NJ.com reported.

I'm excited to get to work with the talented team of public servants to uncover and prosecute misconduct and protect investors. I thank Governor (Phil) Murphy for the opportunity to serve the people and all of the colleagues with whom I've had the pleasure to work during my career in the state. ■ AP

## Post Brexit blow for thousands of EU citizens who may lose legal status to live in UK

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON, 30 JUNE

pean migrant community in 2019, and the deadline for applications is Wednesday.

Marlies Haselton has called Britain home for more than 30 years. The Dutch national married a Briton, had her children there, and considers herself part and parcel of the UK. Until Britain's divorce from the European Union, she had never given a thought to her immigration status in the UK.

Haselton, 55, is among the millions of Europeans who have freely lived, worked and studied in the UK for decades, but whose rights are no longer automatically granted due to Brexit. Britain's government introduced a settlement plan for the country's large Euro-

### POST-BREXIT AGONY

» Britain's govt introduced a settlement plan for the country's large European migrant community in 2019, and the deadline for applications is Wednesday.

» From Thursday, any European migrant who hasn't applied will lose their legal right to work, rent housing welfare benefits in the U.K. They may even be subject to deportation.

» Those applying for post-Brexit residency permits in France also face a deadline on Wednesday.

» The freedom of movement that over 1 mn Britons have long enjoyed in EU countries is also ending.

Europeans may not have applied by the deadline. Many older people who have lived in the U.K. for decades are not aware they have to apply, and official figures show that only

2% of applicants were 65 years old or older. Many parents also don't realize they have to apply for their children, migrants rights' groups say.

Other vulnerable people,

such as an estimated 2,000 children in social care, also risk falling through the cracks and ending up with no legal status. For Haselton and many others, it's a moment that drives home the impact of Britain's referendum to leave the EU five years ago. Although Haselton successfully received her settled status, meaning she can reside permanently in the U.K., she said the whole process has made her feel insecure about the life she built in Britain.

I don't feel settled, she said. I'm concerned about the future. I just don't have a safe feeling about growing old here as a foreigner. The sense of home I used to have is

secure and safe, you want to continue making plans for your future you can imagine how complex it is not to have that certainty in your life right now when things are about to change so much.

Figures are not available to show exactly how many people will have missed the deadline. But even a small percentage of the European population in the UK would total tens of thousands of people. Many Europeans, especially young people whose parents failed to apply, won't necessarily realize they have lost their status right away, said Madeleine Sumption, director of Oxford University's Migration Observatory.

## Putin: US and UK behind Black Sea 'provocation'

'We are fighting for ourselves and our future on our own territory'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW, 30 JUNE

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that a US reconnaissance aircraft was operating in sync with a British destroyer last week when the ship sailed through the Black Sea in what he described as a provocation" to test Moscow's response.

Moscow said one of its warships fired warning shots and a warplane dropped bombs in the path of Britain's Defender on June 23 to force it from an area near Crimea that Moscow claims as its territorial waters. Britain insisted its ship wasn't fired upon and said it was sailing in Ukrainian waters.

The episode was the latest to raise tensions between Russia and the West since Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014, a move not recognised by most countries but one that gives it access to a long Black Sea coast.

Britain has insisted the Defender was making a routine journey through an internationally recognized travel lane and remained in Ukrainian waters. The U.K., like most of the world, recognises Crimea as part of Ukraine despite the peninsula's annexation by Russia.

Putin charged that the US aircraft's apparent mission



was to monitor the Russian military's response to the British destroyer. It was clearly a provocation, a complex one involving not only the British but also the Americans, he said, adding that Moscow was aware of the U.S. intentions and responded accordingly to avoid revealing sensitive data.

The Russian leader lamented that the move closely followed his summit with US President Joe Biden in Geneva earlier this month. Why would they make such provocations, he said.

Russian officials have warned that if a Western warship enters the waters again, the military could fire to hit.

Since it annexed Crimea, Russia has chafed at NATO warships visiting the area as destabilizing.

Britain has insisted the Defender was making a routine journey through an internationally recognized travel lane and remained in Ukrainian waters. The U.K., like most of the world, recognises Crimea as part of Ukraine despite the peninsula's annexation by Russia.

He also reiterated, as he often does, that there is a close kinship between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples, but accused the Ukrainian

leadership of being hostile towards Russia. Putin expressed doubt about the value of a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, describing him as a Western pawn.

Why meet Zelenskyy if he has put his country under full foreign control and key issues for Ukraine are decided not in Kyiv but in Washington, and, to a certain extent, Paris and Berlin? Putin asked.

Earlier this year, Russia beefed up its forces near Ukraine and warned Kyiv that it could intervene if they tried to use force to reclaim the areas in the east controlled by Russia-backed separatists since conflict erupted in 2014. Moscow later pulled back some of its troops, but the Ukrainian authorities said that the bulk of them have remained close to the border.

The Russian president spent most of the four-hour marathon call-in speaking about domestic issues as is typical for the tightly choreographed annual rite that helps Putin polish the image of a strong leader caring for people's needs. It didn't feature any questions about Russia's beleaguered opposition and the most prominent of Putin's political foes, Alexei Navalny, who is in prison.

## Mixing Aztra & Pfizer produces robust immune response: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, 30 JUNE

The mean age of the participants was 57.8 years, 45.8 per cent were female, and 25.3 per cent were from ethnic minorities.

830 participants, including 463 who were given a second dose at an interval of 28 days.

The mean age of the participants was 57.8 years, 45.8 per cent were female, and 25.3 per cent were from ethnic minorities.

The results show that when given at a four-week interval both mixed schedules induce an immune response that is above the threshold set by the standard schedule of the AstraZeneca vaccine,"

The findings, posted on The Lancet pre-print server on June 25, suggest all possible vaccination schedules involving the AstraZeneca vaccine, known as Covishield in India, and Pfizer preventive could potentially be used against Covid.

The study evaluated mix and match combinations of the two vaccines to see to what extent these preventives can be used interchangeably, potentially allowing flexibility in global vaccine roll-out.

The researchers enrolled

cell response from Oxford-AstraZeneca followed by Pfizer-BioNTech, according to the study. The T cell response is an essential part of the host immune response to acute virus infection.

"These results are an invaluable guide to the use of mixed dose schedules, however the interval of four weeks studied here is shorter than the eight to 12-week schedule most commonly used for the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine," Snape said.

"This longer interval is known to result in a better immune response, and the results for a 12-week interval will be available shortly," he added. Professor Jonathan Van-Tam noted that the data is a vital step forward, showing a mixed schedule gives people protective immunity against Covid after four weeks.

The researchers noted that an AstraZeneca/Pfizer schedule induced higher antibodies and T-cell responses than a Pfizer dose followed by AstraZeneca. Both of these induced higher antibodies than the licensed, and highly effective standard two-dose AstraZeneca schedule, said Snape.

He added that mixing doses of the two vaccines could support countries who have further to go with their vaccine rollouts and may be experiencing supply difficulties.

## Florida condo building collapse toll rises to 16

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SURFSIDE, 30 JUNE

Fernandez Rundle said she will pursue a grand jury investigation to examine factors and decisions that led to collapse.

Condo board boss warned of worsening damage: Weeks before a Florida condo building collapsed, the president of its board wrote that structural problems identified in a 2018 inspection had gotten significantly worse and owners needed to pay a hefty price to get them fixed.

The 9 April Dear Neighbors letter from Champlain Towers South Condominium President Jean Wodnicki hinted at an ongoing debate over the repairs and a reluctance by some condo owners to pay for major work that would cost at least \$15.5 million.

Wodnicki noted costs had increased since an October 2018 report by engineering firm Morabito Consultants first identified key issues with weakening concrete, and she predicted they would only grow more if put off any longer.

Germany and Italy declared their missions in Afghanistan over on Wednesday, bringing their deployments to a low-key end nearly 20 years after the first Western soldiers were deployed there.

Announcements from several countries show that a majority of European troops has now left with little ceremony, bringing the Western mission in Afghanistan close to an end as the United States' own withdrawal looms.

There was no update from NATO on how many nations still have troops in its Resolute Support mission. Germany publicly announced the end of its nearly 20-year deployment in a statement and a series of tweets from the defense minister.

Three transport aircraft landed at the Wunstorf airbase in northern Germany on Wednesday afternoon. The troops, wearing masks, lined up on the tarmac for a brief ceremony, but the military dispensed with a bigger reception because of the Covid.

We have worked long and hard to stand here today, said Brig. Gen. Ansgar Meyer, the last commander of the German contingent. As your commander, I can say for you: Mission accomplished. You have fulfilled your task. The orderly return of the German contingent in the Resolute Support has been concluded successfully.

Italy officially declared its mission in Afghanistan over in a statement Wednesday, with defense minister Lorenzo Guerini paying tribute to the 53 Italians who died, and 723 who were injured over the past two decades. Romania brought home 140 troops on Saturday, bringing an end to 19 years in Afghanistan. Spain pulled its last troops out on 13 May, Belgium on 14 June and Denmark on 22 June. Georgia's last troops returned home on Monday. ■ AP

## ETHNIC RITUALS



Aymara Indigenous people exit a ceremony after receiving the first rays of sunlight in a New Year's ritual in the ancient city of Tiwanaku, Bolivia. ■ AP

## William, Harry to unveil Diana statue as royal rift simmers

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON, 30 JUNE

mother, Princess Diana, on what would have been her 60th birthday. The event in the Sunken Garden at London's Kensington Palace will be their second public meeting since Harry and Meghan stepped away from royal duties over a year ago.

People shouldn't expect a quick resolution of the conflict because the two men are fighting over core beliefs, says Robert Lacey, a historian and author of *Battle of Brothers: William, Harry and the Inside Story of a Family in Tumult*. William is defending the monarchy, and Harry is defending his wife.

Royal watchers will be looking closely for any signs of a truce or deepening rift on Thursday when William and Harry unveil a statue of their

point of view, love, loyalty to his wife. He is standing by her. These are very deeply rooted differences, so it would be facile to think that there can just be a click of the fingers.

But finding some sort of rapprochement between the princes is crucial to the monarchy as Britain's royal family seeks to appeal to a younger generation and a more diverse population. When Harry mar-

ried Meghan just over three years ago, it seemed as if they would be central figures in that next chapter of the royal story. The Fab Four William and his wife, Kate, together with Harry and Meghan were seen as a cadre of youth and vigour that would take the monarchy forward after the tumultuous 1990s and early 2000s, when divorce, Princess Diana's death, and Prince Charles' controversial second marriage to Camilla, cast doubt on the future of the institution. But the words Fab Four were quickly replaced in tabloid headlines by Royal Rift.

First, their joint royal office was dissolved. Then, Harry stepped away from royal duties and moved his family to North America in search of a more

peaceful life. William pressed on with royal tasks, including goodwill events like accompanying his grandmother to Scotland this week to tour a soft drink factory.

The relationship was further strained in March when Harry and Meghan gave an interview to US talk show host Oprah Winfrey. But whatever their disagreements, out of respect for their mother, William and Harry won't put their differences on display during the statue ceremony, said historian Ed Owens, author of *The Family Firm: Monarchy, Mass Media and the British Public 1932-1953*, which examines the royal family's public relations strategy. We're not going to see any acrimony or animosity between the brothers on

Thursday," Owens said.

I think reconciliation is a long way off, but nevertheless these are expert performers. Harry and William have been doing this job for long enough now that they know that they've got to put, if you like, occasional private grievances aside for the sake of getting on with the job.

Lacey believes William and Harry will ultimately reconcile because it is in both of their interests to do so. Harry and Meghan need to repair relations to protect the aura

# Illuminating & relevant

If you are for biographies, this one will hold your attention... A review

KRISHNAN SRINIVASAN

This is a dual biography, of *The Light of Asia*, a poem in blank verse of 5,300 lines, and of its author, Edwin Arnold (1832-1904), knighted in 1888. While reams have been written about the poem, the only biography prior to this was a Harvard thesis by Brooks Wright in 1957. Thus, as usual, Jairam Ramesh breaks new ground.

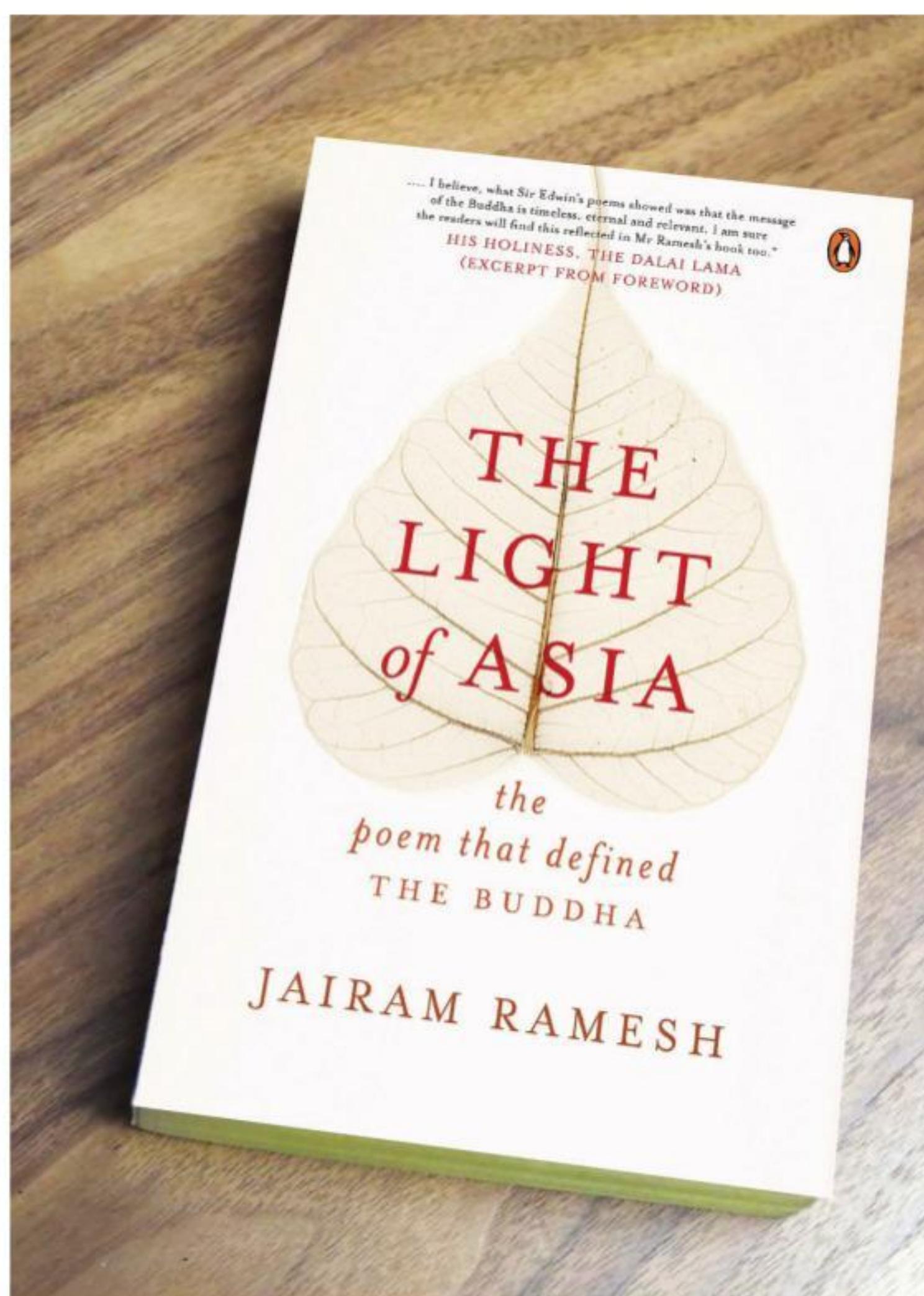
There can hardly be a more rigorous and forensic researcher than Ramesh; he tells one all they need to know, and more. Though he writes that Arnold "is an archival biographer's nightmare," he observes that "the life of the Buddha is hard-wired into the mind of every Indian", and uncovers multiple editions of *The Light of Asia*, which was reprinted 80 times and translated into 12 European and 20 Asian languages. In wide-ranging but never uninteresting digressions, Ramesh reveals strange and intriguing connections for both poet and poem.

The thrice-married Arnold, prototype Victorian polyglot and polymath agnostic, anti-clerical, with interests ranging over jewels, carpentry, yachting and exploration -- he supported the explorers Stanley and George Smith -- also published on Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. He endorsed the British Empire and saw merit in suttas, but supported nursing, forestry, female education, and was a member of the Geographical, Asiatic and Japan Societies.

Arnold's son wrote that father's "heart remained in India...he was always semi Oriental in outlook, tastes, manners and thoughts." But Arnold was in India only twice, from 1857 to 1860, as head of the Poona College and as a tourist in 1885-6, during which he visited Bodh Gaya. In a public letter he protested the "sad neglect of the noblest locality in all their Indian philosophical annals." He became a passionate supporter, along with the Ceylonese founder of the 1892 Mahabodhi Society in Calcutta, Anagarika Dharmapala, of the restitution of the Bodh Gaya Mahabodhi temple to Buddhist from Hindu hands, which would only be finally settled in a compromise arranged by Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajendra Prasad in 1953.

For a writer/poet, populariser of Indian classics, philosophy and literature, with an output of 13 major influential works on India and over 20 others, it is uncharitable of Ramesh to say of Arnold, "by no stretch of imagination could he be called a scholar"... his "reputation as a poet...was never great even during his lifetime;" he was regarded more as an Orientalist or journalist, being for 26 years editor at the *Daily Telegraph*. Arnold may not have been esteemed by his peers as a scholar, perhaps due to envy of his varied output, but he had won the Newdigate at Oxford, used multiple learned sources, and maintained contact on equal terms with savants worldwide.

*The Light of Asia* was remarkable for initiating in the 19th century a rediscovery of the Bud-



dha, Arnold being one of few to treat an Indian historical figure with respect. The poem was apposite in timing, chiming with Victorian inclinations, invoking reason and agnosticism. It was "the first popular attempt to piece together a consecutive account of the life and...teachings of the founder of Buddhism... there is a superb theme; compassion, self-dedication, intellectual adventure in a simple narrative of one man."

The poem revealed "the eternity of a universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indestructible element of faith," which lauded compassion, modesty, sensitivity, and human freedom. It "proved a profound revelation to the Western world," and brought the term nirvana into public discourse. *The Light of Asia* was supported and promoted as an iconic text by the Theosophists under Helena Blavatsky and

## Spot Light

### THE LIGHT OF ASIA: THE POEM THAT DEFINED THE BUDDHA

BY JAIRAM RAMESH  
PENGUIN VIKING,  
GURUGRAM  
457 PAGES, RS 799

Henry Olcott, who were "always in the news and impactful," and the poem was reviewed in the United States by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Latter-day critics said Arnold showed "cultural dominance typical of imperialism" and was an "apologist for the British Empire," but he was a man of his times. There was the inevitable push back by Christians, initially from North America, although Arnold had nowhere discredited their religion. His *Light of the World* (1891) in praise of Christ was probably "to make his peace with the Christian world," and possibly because he thought it would assist his quest to become Poet Laureate. The poem did not succeed in stilling carpings criticism, nor in his second objective, although Queen Victoria was believed to be in favour.

Besides *The Light of Asia*, Arnold translated *Gitagovinda* and his *Song Celestial* translation of the Bhagavad Gita was highly praised, among others by S Radhakrishnan, and became Mahatma Gandhi's constant companion. Arnold also apparently shared the Mahatma's vegetarian tastes.

Arnold's many admirers included the Sultan of Turkey, the Shah of Persia, the King of Siam, Laotian Prince Sakprasert, James Joyce, T S Eliot, Andrew Carnegie, Leo Tolstoy, Dimitri Medelev, Rudyard Kipling and Nicholas Roerich. His Indian followers included Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, C V Raman, B R Ambedkar and Burdwan Maharaja B C Mahatab. Gandhi believed Buddhism was an integral part of Hinduism, and Swami Vivekananda declared "*The Light of Asia* represents more of Vedantism than Buddhism." Among less direct connections unearthed by Ramesh were Sarah Bernhardt, Edward Lear, Annie Besant, Subhas Chandra Bose, Carl Jung, Helen Keller, Borges, John Masefield and Arthur Conan Doyle.

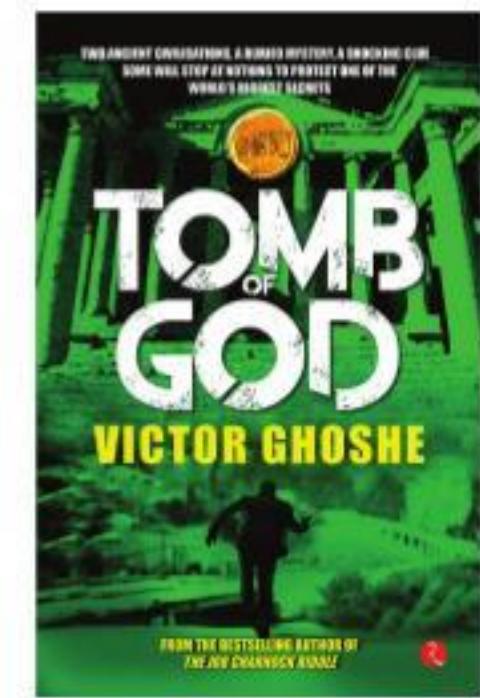
Arnold's second wife, like his first, died, after which he visited Japan in 1889 and 1892, became a firm advocate of that country, and married his third wife Tama Kurokawa who outlived him by decades. His old age was stressed with blindness and paralysis when he was cared for by Tama.

If you are for biographies, this one will hold your attention. It contains illuminating endnotes and relevant illustrations which enhance the text, and also indicates why so many Buddhist symbols were incorporated into Indian state emblems after independence.

The reviewer is India's former foreign secretary

## BOOKS RECEIVED

### Thrilling quest

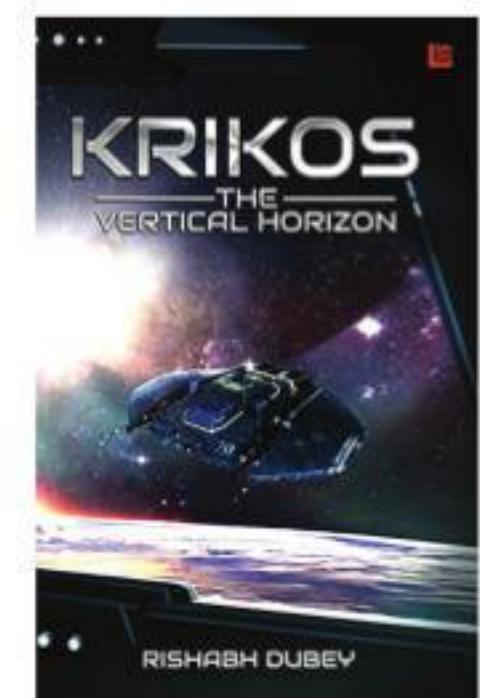


**TOMB OF GOD**  
BY VICTOR GHOSHE  
RUPA PUBLICATIONS, NEW DELHI  
FICTION, 313 PAGES, RS 395

A massacre at a Mesopotamian excavation site leaves presumably every member of the team dead, except one woman named Marina. Scared for her life and to find Dr Huntley, the team lead who has gone missing, Marina reaches out to his emergency contacts -- Eric, Aurin and Father Smit --, setting them off on a journey to find their missing mentor and friend. What starts off as their desperate bid to find Dr Huntley turns into an unthinkable adventure, as the three men and Marina run into several forces that will stop at nothing to protect secrets that the priceless finds can reveal.

An award-winning social communications and brand adviser by profession and a musician at heart, Victor Ghoshe is an explorer and a social researcher.

### Space tale



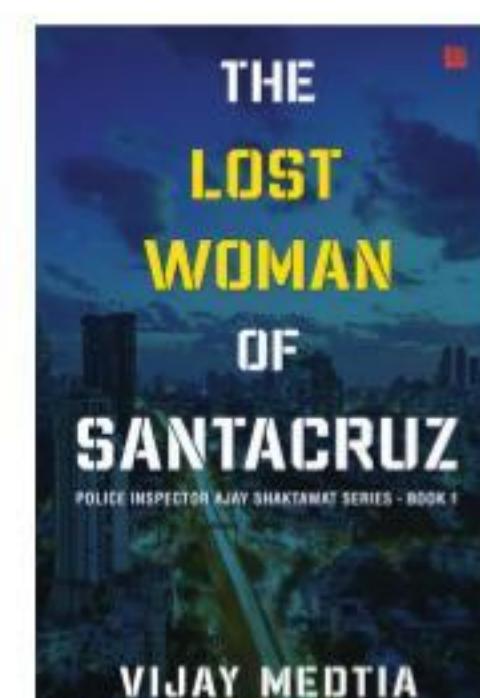
**KRIKOS: THE VERTICAL HORIZON**  
BY RISHABH DUBEY  
LEADSTART INKSTATE, MUMBAI  
SCIENCE-FICTION, 311 PAGES, RS 349

It is 4697 AD and Earth does not exist anymore. Humans reside in a celestial space station that is larger than the average star and is powered by the stars themselves. Though informally called a "Star-eater", its official name is Krikos.

While exploring the eternities of space, humans find a possibly habitable solar system. Krikos sends out a mission under the leadership of the famed warrior, Captain Krawn Xanethius, to examine the ideal planet.

A new war would engulf the Galaxy and plethora of lies shall be made known; making the anthropogenic yet existential human being question it all. The truth lies in a small journal, written a thousand years before the birth of Krawn, by the creator of the Krikos and the smartest being to have ever lived -- Dr Flex D'Dustener.

### Unravelling mystery



**THE LOST WOMAN OF SANTACRUZ**  
BY VIJAY MEDTIA  
LEADSTART INKSTATE, MUMBAI  
CRIME-FICTION, 263 PAGES, RS 299

Mid-July, inspector Ajay Shaktawat is called to a house. A retired deputy commissioner of police has been beaten to death. A young man is barely alive beside him. Both are the victims of shocking cruelty.

The intense investigation leads to a woman missing from Santacruz, Mumbai. At the same time, a crazed cop killer terrorises the city. Inspector Sakhtawat must battle against time and the increasing body count of retired officers if he's to succeed. Will Sakhtawat catch the elusive murderer before he strikes again?

Vijay Medtia is a short story writer and novelist.

## Of slow meetings & quick departures

Each poem in this collection is like a little gem waiting to be discovered... A review

JAYDEEP SARANGI

**A** Pushcart nominee, Bibhu Padhi's 16th collection of poems, *A Friendship with Time*, is a thought-provoking volume that transcends whatever it portrays into hope and light, turning the trivial into the sublime. He cannot rest until he translates what moves him into poems. For Padhi, anything that agitates, consoles, ignites, uplifts, electrifies and liberates, constitutes poetry.

Here is a poet who enters the home of thoughts, unbidden, and holds all under his spell. Readers take a trip down memory lane and relive old moments, filled with a new sense of realisation about the potency of the past. Padhi consistently strives to bring to the surface what lies in his subconscious, using language in nuanced ways to project meanings that often tend to go unnoticed.

History records what occurred in the past; poetry hints at what the future might be. That's why poetry has been defined as divine ecstasy. To spin a thought's wing, waiting in a kind of suspended animation. It is a stock currency of life and the seasons exploit it to the fullest.

We wait for the rains before we can plough. Padhi universalises the state of waiting in his poems, filling it with a significance of its own,

"This is the time I wait for

Throughout the year --

For sleep, further sleep." (An Ordinary Day)

Some things keep happening in the poet's mind. Padhi lives through the pain and waits for rain to restore ease,

"I am enclosed by

The superstitious safety of my home

And I wish I were out in the rains." (Mid-July Rains)

For Padhi, life unfolds its roots and dreams. He thinks that at times, the human mind is damp with cold and rain. His thoughts consider the seeds of lives to be sown into the earth's ancient subsoil and the dispensable prides of human journeys.

Life is a happy journey where we meet people from different shores. A close bond with night develops gradually. The poet is eagerly waiting for a



## A FRIENDSHIP WITH TIME



about a belated friendship or yearning for a friendship. Padhi thinks that time is everywhere, "inside yesterday, today, in the dreams of tomorrow."

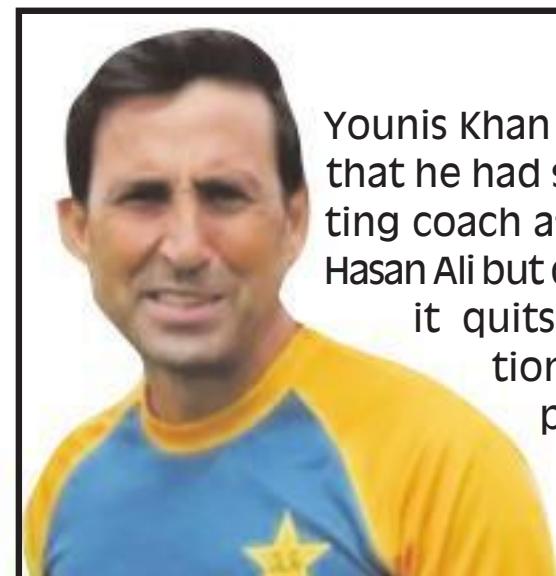
Each poem in this collection represents Padhi's personal yearning to find out what connects images and is like a little gem waiting to be discovered. He is a special poet who haunts us with exotic, unshared meanings. His achievement lies in the fact that the precise, mellifluous and intimate words have been able to convey the essence of deep, psychological thought and the clinical trekking of the mind which transcends the limitations generally expected by the form.

The reviewer is principal, New Alipore College, Kolkata



Bibhu Padhi





## PLOT THICKENS

Younis Khan (in photo, left) rejected reports that he had stepped down as Pakistan's batting coach after an argument with batsman Hasan Ali but declined to state why he had called it quits, citing his contractual obligations. According to him, some people in the country's cricket board were "leaking out things" to harm him.

For more updates [www.thestatesman.com](http://www.thestatesman.com)

## THUMBNAILS

**Proteas win:** South Africa's bowlers held their nerve during a thrilling run chase to clinch a win over the West Indies by one run in the third Twenty20 International, giving the Proteas a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. Quinton de Kock scored 72 from 51 balls as South Africa made 167-8 batting first and Tabraiz Shamsi's 2-13 from four overs helped the Proteas defend a total that was proved only just adequate.

**Williamson back at top:** New Zealand captain Kane Williamson has reclaimed the number one position in the ICC Test Rankings for batsmen after leading his side to the World Test Championship title in Southampton last week. The 30-year-old's knocks of 49 and 52 not out in the low-scoring final against India helped him move above the 900-point mark and he now enjoys a 10-point lead over Steve Smith (891 rating points). India skipper Virat Kohli remains in fourth position while Rohit Sharma has moved up to the sixth spot. India wicketkeeper batsman Rishabh Pant is seventh.

**Punja's demand:** The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Wednesday said that its Grievance Committee will look into Olympic-bound Seema Punja's demand for a hyperandrogenism test on fellow discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur. Punja, who qualified for the Olympics with a throw of 63.72m on the final day of National Inter-State Championships in Patiala on Tuesday, wrote to AFI, raising concerns about improvement in Kaur's performance in a short period and seeking a hyperandrogenism test on her.

**Archer Jyothi recommended for Khel Ratna:** Three-time World Cup silver medalist Jyothi Surekha Veniam has been recommended for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, the country's highest sporting honour, by the Archery Association of India (AAI). The AAI also recommended legendary coach and Olympian Limba Ram for Dronacharya (Lifetime) Award.

**Riju consoles injured sprinter Hima Das:** Sports Minister Kiren Riju on Wednesday consoled sprinter Hima Das who is set to miss the Tokyo Olympics due to injury. "Injuries are part & parcel of athlete's life. I spoke to @HimaDas8 and told her not to lose heart on missing the Olympics #Tokyo2020 and prepare for 2022 Asian Games, 2022 Commonwealth Games and 2024 Paris Olympics!" Riju tweeted.

**Messi's future:** Lionel Messi's contract with Barcelona is coming to an end Wednesday with no news from the player or the club about his future. The expectation is that the 34-year-old Messi, who is playing with Argentina at the Copa America, will stay at the Catalan club. He reportedly had been close to reaching a deal to extend his contract for two more years. Messi's future has been a mystery since he had his request to leave the club denied at the end of the 2019-20 season. He ended up staying and said he would reconsider his options when this season was over.

# Injured Serena is out of slippery Wimbledon

AGENCIES

WIMBLEDON, 30 JUNE

Serena Williams (in photo) bit her upper lip. She held her left hand over her mouth and tried to hold back tears while getting ready to serve.

It was the first set of her first-round match on Tuesday at Wimbledon - where the grass was a bit too slick - and Williams knew this stay at a tournament where she had won seven other Grand Slam singles titles was about to end because she had hurt her right leg when she lost her footing behind a baseline. Moments later, her legs buckled as she tried to change directions to chase a shot by her opponent, 100th-ranked Aleksandra Sasnovich of Belarus. Williams dropped to her knees, her head down on the grass.

She used her racquet to help her stand, but only so she could limp to the net to concede; just the second mid-match retirement at any Grand Slam tournament of her career and first since 1998. "I was heartbroken to have to withdraw today," Williams said in a statement released by the tournament. "Feeling the extraordinary warmth and support of the crowd today when I walked on, and off, the court," she said, "means the world to me. Said Sasnovich: "She's a great champion, and it's (a) sad story."

Roger Federer surely articulated a common sentiment when told by a reporter what had happened to Williams.



"Oh, my God," he said. "I can't believe it." Williams was serving while leading 3-1 at Centre Court - where the retractable roof was shut because of rain that forced the postponement of two dozen matches until Wednesday - when her left shoe seemed to lose its traction while she was hitting a forehand.

Williams winced and stepped gingerly between points, clearly troubled. After dropping that game, she asked to visit with a trainer and took a medical timeout. She tried to continue playing. The crowd tried to offer support and encouragement. Eventually, the 39-year-old American couldn't continue. The chair umpire climbed down to check on her, and

they walked together up to the net; the score was 3-all, 15-30 when Williams stopped.

## Djokovic beats Anderson to enter 3rd round

Top seed and world No. 1 Novak Djokovic cruised through to the third round at Wimbledon with a 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 win over 2018 finalist Kevin Anderson on Wednesday. Djokovic was dominant as he won four out of the eight break points he got and did not face any breakpoint from the South African who seems to have plateaued after a good start to his career.

The Serb won 84 per cent of the points on his first serve and 73 per cent of the points on sec-

ond serve. Anderson committed three double faults to Djokovic's one. Djokovic is eyeing a hat-trick of Wimbledon titles, afeat that only Roger Federer, Bjorn Borg and Pete Sampras have achieved previously. Also winning was Kei Nishikori, who became only the 12th active player to record 100 Grand Slam match wins after he defeated Australian Alexei Popyrin 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 to enter the second round.

## Cornet upsets Andreeescu

Alize Cornet upset Bianca Andreescu for the second time in two weeks by beating the fifth-seeded Canadian 6-2, 6-1 in the first round at Wimbledon.

Cornet broke the former U.S. Open champion five times and sealed the victory by chasing down a shot and hitting a lob that landed just inside the baseline on match point.

Cornet also beat Andreeescu in Berlin two weeks ago.

The 21-year-old became the highest women's seed to perish at this year's grasscourt major after Cornet capitalised on 34 unforced errors from Andreeescu to leave the 2019 U.S. Open champion still searching for her first win at the championships. Andreeescu, who was beaten by the 58th-ranked Frenchwoman less than two weeks ago on grass in Berlin, struggled to hit anything on target and even luck deserted her on Court Two.

At match point, Cornet

mis-hit a lob with her racket at full stretch while she charged across the back of the court and both players were left bemused as the ball clattered the corner of the baseline to end Andreeescu's ordeal. Cornet will hope her win over the fifth seed gives her the springboard she needs to do well at Wimbledon because in 13 previous appearances, she has only made it as far as the fourth round once.

## Svitolina battles past Van Uytvanck

World number five Elina Svitolina was made to work hard in her Wimbledon opener on Wednesday as the Ukrainian sealed a 6-3, 6-6, 6-3 victory over unseeded Belgian Alison Van Uytvanck. The pair traded breaks at the start of their second career meeting before Svitolina gained the upper hand following a tight game to go up 4-2, and the third seed held off a late fightback to claim the first set. The aggressive Van Uytvanck mixed up her shots, with rifled drives and delicate drops, and took every chance to approach the net to break Svitolina for a 3-1 lead in the second set before levelling the contest at one set apiece.

Both players wobbled on serve before 2019 semi-finalist Svitolina, who won the pair's last clash in three sets at Indian Wells six years ago, rediscovered her rhythm in the decider on Court One to close out the victory.

## AMUL MILK PRICES HAVE BEEN MARGINALLY REVISED AFTER 1.5 YEARS.

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	1L	59	61
Amul Buffalo Milk	500 ml	29	30
	1L	57	59
Amul Gold	500 ml	28	29
	2L	55	57
Amul Cow Milk	500 ml	108	112
	1L	24	25
Amul Taaza	500 ml	47	49
	1L	23	24
Amul Slim 'n' Trim	2L	45	47
	500 ml	88	92
Amul Slim 'n' Trim	1L	20	21
	500 ml	39	41

\*MRP (incl. of all taxes). Conditions apply

The new prices will be effective from the morning of 1st July, 2021 in Delhi and NCR.



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## Bopanna, Divij miss cut for men's doubles event at Tokyo Games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 30 JUNE

In a setback to India's medal chances in the tennis event of Tokyo Olympics, Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan have missed the men's doubles' draw, which also rules out the country's presence in the mixed team competition, its best chance for a podium finish. It was expected that with a low combined ranking of 113, Bopanna (38) and left-handed Sharan's (75) entry would depend only on large-scale withdrawals.

Even if there are more withdrawals, it will be extremely difficult for India to have a team in men's doubles.

The ITF has confirmed that Bopanna and Divij could not be entered as a team in the

men's doubles team. However, things might change till July 16 (if there are more withdrawals), an AITA source told PTI. When All India Tennis Association (AITA) Secretary General Anil Dhupar was contacted, he said he will be able to give a clear picture only when he has the complete entry list in his hands.

Despite some withdrawals, the cut for 22 teams out of 24 direct acceptances was as high as in mid-60s, according to sources but the final cut-off could not be confirmed.

If there are more withdrawals, it will be extremely difficult for India to have a team in men's doubles.

## England face Ukraine, Belgium meet Italy

AGENCIES  
LONDON, 30 JUNE



High-flying England have become favourites to reach the Euro 2020 final after beating Germany 2-0 at Wembley stadium thanks to goals from Raheem Sterling and Harry Kane.

In the quarter-finals, England will face Ukraine, who beat Sweden with a last-gasp goal in extra time. They will meet in Rome on 4 July. Spain, who beat Croatia 5-3 in extra time in the round of the last 16, will travel to Russia for the quarter-finals, where they face Switzerland on 2 July.

Belgium and Italy will meet on 3 July in Munich, while the Czech Republic are to take on Denmark on 3 July in Baku. In Glasgow, Ukraine had reached the round of 16 with two losses and the worst record of the advancing teams.

And now the quarter-finals, too. Ukraine eliminated previously unbeaten Sweden 2-1 on Tuesday with a goal in stoppage time at the end of extra time from a player who had been left on the bench for the entire group stage. Substitute Artem Dovbyk (\*\*\*in photo\*\*\*) stooped low to guide a header from Oleksandr Zinchenko's cross past goalkeeper Robin Olsen.

It was the 24-year-old forward's first goal for the national team. Ukraine's greatest ever forward, current coach Andriy Shevchenko, ran down the sideline to celebrate his player. Zinchenko gave Ukraine the lead in the 27th minute when

team had ever won a knockout game at a European Championship in a combined eight previous tournaments.

Emil Forsberg's deflected shot from outside the area in the 43rd minute equalised for Sweden. It was his fourth goal at Euro 2020, but a tournament lead-tying fifth eluded him in the second half despite curling shots off the post and the crossbar. "It's a very bitter defeat," Sweden coach Janne Andersson said. "In these half we had four really great chances. It felt like we would score eventually." Andersson noted the momentum shift in extra time when Swedish defender Marcus Danielsson was sent off in the 98th minute for following through on a challenge with a raised boot on substitute Artem Besedin. The Ukrainians had needed a favour from Sweden just to advance after losing two group games and having a negative goal difference. After losing to Austria last week, Ukraine would have been out if Poland had beaten Sweden two days later. Sweden won that game 3-2 with Forsberg scoring twice. Neither

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