# onicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

**COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 17 | JUNE 2021** 

**WEATHER** 



ASTROGUIDE

Pilava: Aani 3 Tithi: Sapthami **Star**: Pooram Rahukalam: 1.30 noon to 3 pm Yamagandam: 6 am to 7.30 am **PRAYERS Fajar:** 4.23 am Luhar: 12.14 pm **Asar:** 3.35 pm

Maghrib: 6.36 pm Isha: 7.55 pm **SUNSET TODAY 6.46 PM** 

**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.00 AM MOONRISE TODAY 11.44 AM MOONSET TOMORROW 1.04 AM** 



CASES (+67,256)

(+2,329)2,96,99,555 3,81,931

covid19india.org

(+10,448)

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

TN: 23,88,746 30,338

**WORLD CONFIRMED CASES** 

17,75,59,790 **DEATHS 38,40,527** 

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES 219 worldometers.info

#### Cabinet approves hike in DAP fertiliser subsidy by ₹700/bag

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a Rs 700 per bag hike in subsidy for DAP fertiliser and the increase will result in an additional cost of Rs 14,775 crore to the exchequer.

The hike is part of the government's effort to ensure that farmers gets the key soil nutrient at old rates despite rise in global prices. After urea, Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertiliser is the most widely one in the country.

#### Nod for bid to explore deep ocean for resources

New Delhi: The Centre on Wednesday approved a proposal to roll out a "deep ocean mission" to explore the deep ocean for resources and develop deepsea technologies for sustainable use of ocean resources." The decision was taken by the Union Cabinet at its meeting chaired

by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This will support the blue economy and take India into a new era," Union minister Prakash Javadekar told a press conference after the cabinet meeting. Full story on pg 4



I want to wind up this business too ... I can't afford oil!

DC CORRESPONDENT HENNAI, JUNE 16

Kelambakkam,

Shivashankar Baba, the founder of Sushil Hari International school in

has been arrested by crime

Chennai,



STATE | 3 Sasikala, AIADMK leaders continue their mind games



NATION | 4 Eshwarappa says some within BJP want CM Yediyurappa replaced

SPORT | 8 Ronaldo snub takes fizz out of Coca-Cola

Vol. 11 No.171 Established 1938 | 8 PAGES | 4.00

# Increase in gap between vaccine doses is backed by data: Centre

Covaxin contains no serum of new-born calf, clarifies government

VINEETA PANDEY |DC NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Wednesday sought to douse a controversy erupted over the decision to increase the gap between the two doses of Covishield vaccine saying it was "transparent and backed by scientific data".

The Centre had increased the gap between the two doses for Covishield from 8-12 weeks to 12-14 weeks in May raising questions if that was done based on scientific evidence or due to shortage of the vaccines. The doses of the vaccines remain unchanged now even after the United Kingdom, which was quoted by Central government officials as an example, has

decided to reduce the gap. Dr Vardhan's clarification came after some members of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) said they had recommended only 8-12 weeks but the government on its own

PAWAN BALI |DC

Union

In a major decision, the

corporatisation of the

country's main producer

of weapons and military

Factory Board (OFB), under which it will be

split into seven govern-

ment-owned corporate

entities that will be run by

professional manage-ment. The existing 41 fac-

tories under the OFB will

now be subsumed into

allow these companies autonomy as well as help

improve accountability

and efficiency in the func-

tioning of 41 factories

under the new companies," a source said.
The Ordnance Factory

Board is currently a sub-

"Today's decision would

seven corporate entities.

cabinet Wednesday approved the

India to corporatise

defence arms-maker



deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

Dr S. Vijaya, director of the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at government hospital for women and children at Egmore, Chennai, inaugurates the vaccination camp for new mothers at the hospital on Wednesday. Vaccination will protect not only the moth-

ers but also the newborns.

came out with a 12 to 16 weeks gap. It was initially

Chairman of NTAGI Dr N.K. Arora explained that the decision to increase the gap between two Covishield doses from 4-6 weeks to 12-16 weeks lay in the fundamental scientific

ministry of defence.

The functioning of the

OFB has come in for

scrutiny by various high-

level committees in the

last two decades with the

aim of improving its func-

tioning and making these

factories vehicles of self-

reliance for defence pre-

Among the seven enti-

ties, the 'ammunition and

explosives' group will be

mainly engaged in pro-

duction of ammunition of various calibres and

explosives. The govern-

ment believes it will have

a huge potential to grow

exponentially, for Make

in India and also by mak-

The second entity, the

'vehicles' group, will mainly engage in produc-

tion of defence mobility

and combat vehicles such as tanks, trawls, BMPs

and mine-protected vehi-

ing for the world.

paredness.

reason regarding behaviour of adenovector vac-

"In the last week of April, 2021 the data released by Public Health England, United Kingdom's executive agency of the Department of Health...

### **RAJNATH PITCHES FOR FREEING**

DC CORRESPONDENT

defence minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday called for freedom of navigation, overflights and unimpeded commerce in the South China Sea is flexing its muscles.

Mr Singh called for an open and inclusive order in the Indo-Pacific based upon respect for sovereignty and the territorial integrity of nations while addressing the eighth Asean defence ministers meet-

ing Plus.

The ADMM Plus is an annual meeting of the defence ministers of 10 Asean countries and eight dialogue partner countries - Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the

#### **SECOND LION SUCCUMBS TO COVID AT ZOO**

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 16

A second lion at the Arignar Anna Zoological Park in Vandalur suc-cumbed to Covid-19 on Wednesday. The lion,

named Pathbanathan, aged 12, had tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 as per the report of the National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases (NIHAD), Bhopal, communicated on June 3. The lion was under intensive treatment since then, a release said.

A nine-year-old lioness died in the zoo on June 3 and was said to have been asymptotic and showed some nasal discharge only

the day before her death. The zoo authorities said three lions that tested postive for Covid-19 were responding to the treatment very slowly. They are treated by a team of zoo veterinarians in coordination with the experts of TANUVAS.

### **THIRD WAVE: TN TO OPEN SPECIAL CHILDREN WARDS**

T. SUDHEESH |DC CHENNAI, JUNE 16

Health minister Ma. Subramanian said on Wednesday that the government has decided to open special pediatric wards in all five govern-ment medical college hospitals in the city and all the districts across the state in an effort to protect children from the possible third wave of Covid-19.

#### **DELHI TO TRAIN 5,000 YOUTHS**

New Delhi, June 16: The Delhi government will train 5,000 youths to assist doctors and nurses as part of preparations for the third wave of Covid-19, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Wednesday. The health assistants will be given two weeks' basic training in nursing and lifecare.

# Covid fight to top CM's Delhi agenda

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR, D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, JUNE 16

The maiden visit of M.K. Stalin to New Delhi as Chief Minister is likely to strengthen the churning in the opposition politics of the nation, besides enabling the state to get its due share of privileges which include adequate doses of Coronavirus vaccine to tide over the present pandemic.

Though the Chief Minis-

ter's stay in the national capital would be a brief one spanning just two days, his engagements cover a wide range of activities. Leaving Chennai by a special flight at 7.30 am on Thursday, Mr Stalin would

meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi at 5 pm, which alone is listed as the

despite a series of meet-ings having been lined up during the two days.

Among the issues that the Chief Minister is expected to discuss with the Prime Minister are aid to tackle the Coronavirus crisis, more vaccines for the state, scrapping of NEET, allowing the state use to the centre's vaccine complex in Chengalpattu

district and so on.
Sources said the Chief Minister has a list of 35 demands to be placed before the Union government.

Mr Stalin had also reportedly sought 10 minutes for a personal one-toone with the Prime Minister during the meeting that will see many party colleagues and top bureaucrats attending it. **P2** 

## Twitter loses 'safe harbour' protection

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

Twitter has lost its "safe protection in India over non-compliance with IT rules and failure to appoint key personnel mandated under the new guidelines, despite repeat-

ed reminders, and the platform will now be liable for action under the Indian Penal Code for third party unlawful content, sources said. Earlier this month, the government had given one last chance to Twitter to comply with the new IT

# ORDNANCE FACTORY BOARD — **SOUTH CHINA SEA**

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

With China listening,

#### ordinate office under the Delhi Police calls HC bail order perverse, moves SC PARMOD KUMAR, SANJAY KAW | DC and had gone overboard not amount to a "terrorist

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 16** 

A day after the Delhi High Court allowed the bail of three student activists Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita and Asif Iqbal Tanha — the Delhi Police has challenged the order in the

Supreme Court, calling it

The Delhi Police's appeal claims that the high court judges crossed their jurisdiction in bail matters by

with their comments on 'dissent not amounting to terrorist act" without realising its impact on pending trials under the the

While granting bail to the three activists, arrested under the UAPA in connection with last year's anti-CAA protests, the high court had on Tuesday

gation Agency (NIA).

law enforcement agencies. three

remained in jail on Wednesday as the police claimed procedural delays in verifying their sureties

#### The high court order, which came as a major blow to Delhi Police, concluded that the accused Unlawful Activities (Prevhad taken part in a protest ention) Act (UAPA) and against CAA that was lawcases being investigated by the National Investiful and was monitored by

Cops nab Shivashankar Baba from Delhi POCSO Act and Tamil Nadu

> Mahabalipuram All Women Meanwhile, an CB-CID

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branch CID (CB-ČID) of Tamil Nadu police near Delhi on Wednesday followalumni of the school made against him.
The Baba had given the ing a series of sexual complaints

Dehradun hospital on a tip off that he was admitted here. The team, however, tracked and arrested him from a place on the outskirts of Delhi. He will be brought to Chennai late on Wednesday, said a source.

Three cases have been reg istered against the selfstyled godman under vari-

Police station following complaints of sexually harassment of students a few years ago when they were studying in the school. team is conducting investi-

Prohibition of Harassment

of Women Act at the

#### SHORT



G. S. Sameeran, IAS, takes charge as District Collector in Coimbatore on Wednesday.

#### **200 beds donated to** rural hospitals

DC CORRESPONDENT HENNAI, JUNE 16

Government hospitals and public health centres in the districts of Dharmapuri, Ulundurpet, Villupuram and Mayiladuthurai have been donated 200 beds by Syngenta, an agricultural company.

Since the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic impacted rural areas more causing a strain on hospital beds, the company decided to donate the beds, a press release said, adding that sanitisers, masks and PPE units were also given

#### **CM** expected to meet Union ministers in Delhi

From P1

Stalin is also expected to meet several Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Piyush Goel, Gajendra Singh Shekawat and Harshvardhan to discuss issues concerning their ministries and Vice-President M. Venkiah Naidu.

Another item in the tentative unofficial itinerary of Mr Stalin is a visit to the DMK office that is being constructed at the Deenadayal Upadhaya Marg area in New Delhi.

But more important is the series of meetings that have been lined up for the Chief Minister with leaders of the various national opposition

Mr Stalin is expected to meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party leader Rahul Gandhi and Seetharam Yechury of CPM, besides a few other leaders on Friday before taking the flight back home.

Since the DMK is the third largest party in Parliament, the leaders want the visit of the Chief Minister to the capital to be a purposeful one and have plans to make it a gala

Mr Stalin, through his meetings with the national party leaders, is also expected to start the discussions pertaining to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, which would need the coming together of all national and regional parties to put up a viable fight against the

Mr Stalin would be staying at Tamil Nadu House in New Delhi, where the state's new special representative A.K.S. Vijayan, took charge on Wednesday in the presence of members Parliament.

Apart from those DMK MPs in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, several top leaders of the party including state ministers had already reached New Delhi to make arrangements for the Chief Minister's

#### **Health risk**



The department of food safety and drug administration seized nearly seven tonnes of artificially ripened mangoes from the Koyambedu fruit market in the city on Wednesday. A team of six officials headed by the Chennai district designated officer Jagadish Chandrabose and P. Sundaramurthy, food safety officer, Koyambedu, conducted an early morning inspection in 150 shops. It was found that about 30 shops had stocked artificially ripened mangoes. About seven tonnes of such mangoes were destroyed at the bio-methanation plant located in the market.

DC CORRESPONDENT

Pointing out that the case

on hand is one of the cases where due to the gravity of

the offences and the per-

sonality involved, granting

anticipatory bail at this

stage when the investiga-

tion is in a preliminary stage will not arise, the

Madras high court has dis-

missed the anticipatory

bail petition filed by former

Dr.M.Manikandan, who apprehended arrest in con-

nection with a sexual abuse

case lodged by an actor, a

Justice Abdul Quddhose

said in the case on hand. where FIR has been regis-

tered against the petitioner

under sections 376 (rape),

313 (causing miscarriage

without woman's consent),

323 (voluntarily causing

hurt, 417 (cheating) and 506

(i) (criminal intimidation)

ÌPC read with section 67A

form) of the Information

Technology Act and the

petitioner being an influen-

tial person who was earlier

(transmitting

material in

Dismissing the petition,

Malaysian citizen.

minister

CHENNAI, JUNE 16

-N. Sampath

HC dismisses bail

plea of ex-minister

MLA, it is not desirable at

this preliminary stage of

investigation to grant anticipatory bail to him

that too, when there are several other witnesses

who may have to be inter-

unearthed for the purpose

of eliciting the truth.

Further, the petitioner till

date has also not come for-

ward to cooperate with the

investigation by giving his

version to the police and

that is also one of the major factors which has

influenced the mind of the

court to reject the petition-

er's request for anticipato-

ry bail at this preliminary

stage of investigation, the

on hand, the petitioner has

been charged with a

heinous crime. He was an

ex-MLA and an ex-

Minister. He held office as

minister till August 2019

which was not long ago.

The witnesses to the

offence alleged to have

been committed by the peti-

tioner were his staff mem-

bers, servants and his

friends. Therefore, after

giving due consideration to

the gravity of the offences

The judge said in the case

iudge added.

and materials

#### 2 more arrested for black marketing mucormycosis drugs DC CORRESPONDENT

The police have arrested two persons for alleged black marketing of black fungus drugs.

A team of Tambaram police had launched a probe into the black marketing of mucormycosis in Tambaram.

The police arrested two persons involved in online sales of mucumycorsis drugs. The accused arrested have been identified as Chiranjeevi (38) and Prasanth (26), residents of Tambaram and conworkers Omandurar government

hospital in the city.
A probe revealed that the suspects were selling vials at higher prices. The demand for black fungus drugs has significantly increased amid the second wave of

The police said the fraudsters posted online advertisements promising quick delivery of medicines of black fungus injections. accused were remanded to judicial custody and

lodged at a prison. Recently, the St Thomas Mount police team arrested five persons for attempting to sell black fungus drugs online. The police have asked the people not to attempt to buy Covid-19 and black fungus related unknown sources in the

who may have to be inter-

rogated, there was reason-

able apprehension that

there was a possibility that

the petitioner may tamper

with the evidence/witness-

es as the investigation was

in a preliminary stage and

some more witnesses and

materials will have to be

unearthed by the investi-

gating team to find out the

truth. There was also a pos-

sibility that the petitioner

may flee from justice using

his influence and money

power, if anticipatory bail

was granted at this stage

major offences alleged

to have been committed

grave in nature and there

was also prima facie

under the said sections, the

was required as only then

elicitation from the peti-

tioner was easier than when he was well settled

with a favourable anticipa-

tory bail order and there

was every possibility, he

may escape from the

rigours of investigation by

using his influence.

by the petitioner

The judge said in view of

that

about the

interrogation

of

the judge added

satisfaction

registration

# TN braces for protecting children from third wave

T. SUDHEESH I DC CHENNAI, JUNE 16

Tamil Nadu, witnessing the downward trend of the second wave of Covid-19 for the last couple of weeks, has turned the focus on protecting children from a possible third

Health minister Ma. Subramanian on Wednesday said the government will open special paediatric wards in all five government medical college hospitals in the city. "The health department will open such special wards in all districts across the state. We are hearing reports of a third wave that could spread among children. In order to avoid any crises, the government is taking all precautionary measures. There is nothing to worry about it," said the minister.

As part of this, the Tamil Nadu Directorate of

issued a set of guidelines for preparedness and management of a possible third wave of Covid-19 cases. According to the new guidelines, the nodal officers, preferably paediatricians, will make necessary preparations for the possible onset of Covid-19 wave in the future. Each institution should keep 100 beds ready with oxy-gen facilities and monitors for ICU care for children. No paediatrician or staff nurse of the paediatric ward can be posted out of regular duty rotation. Staff nurses at the hospitals should be trained in batches to attend to emergencies in the paediatric ward. The medical officers of general medicine and anaesthesia have also been asked to be trained to handle paediatric emergencies in batches, apart from pae-diatricians.

Meanwhile the paediatricians suggest it's time to take utmost precautions to prevent the impact of a possible third wave as children have not vet been given the vaccine protection.

Dr Jayanthi Viswa-nathan, consultant paediatrician, Gleneagles Global Health City, said the parents and elders have to play a key role in keeping children safe. "We have seen many children being affected by the Covid-19 compared to the first wave. Though the mortality rate is less, the children, going by the past experience, are vulnerable to getting affected by the virus. So, family members should avoid attending closed-door meetings and functions along with children. If you want to go to beaches and parks for unwinding, you have to choose less crowded places. Since children are for a long time, it could develop psychological and avoid this, children can be allowed for activities like cycling and playing in less crowded areas. Above all, children should be taught regular high hygiene etiquette at home," she said.

However, a recent report from the Lancet Covid-19 Commission India Task Force ruled out the greater risk of Covid-19 infection among children in the anticipated third

As per the report, the mortality rate among hospitalised Covid-19 positive children below the age of 10 (excluding neonates) was 2.4 percent. About 40 per cent of the children who died had co-morbidities and 9 percent of all hospitalised Covid19-positive children presented with severe illness are under 10 years of age.

# Covid victim-doctor's wife gets reprieve

CHENNAI, JUNE 16

The wife of a deceased doctor, whose claim form to provide insurance coverage of ₹50 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Package Insurance Scheme for Health Workers Fighting Covid-19' for the death of her husband, who was undertaking private practice and was treating patients affected due to Covid-19 and who ultimately lost his life due to the same virus, has not been processed by authorities on the ground that the RT PCR test result was not submitted by her, got reprieve with the Madras high court directing the authorities to consider her claim without insisting for the test result and pay the amount under

the scheme.
Justice N.Anand Venk-

while disposing of a peti-B.Varalakshmi.

The judge said the entire world and particularly India, was facing an unprecedented situation due to the untimely attack of the Covid-19. It was the doctors and the frontline workers who in spite of knowing about the risk involved through exposure to this virus were selflessly and tirelessly working to save the lives of millions of citizens of this country. If not for the selfless services rendered by the doctors, a major population of this country would have been wiped out due to the deadly Covid-19. Therefore, the least that should be done for a doctor, who has lost his life due to Covid-19, which had spread to him

while he was on duty, was

to acknowledge the selfless service of the doctor and provide with the necessary compensation to his family under the laudable scheme that has been introduced by the government of India, the judge added.

The judge said it was very clear from the 'CT Chest Covid Screening Test' that the husband of the petitioner was affected with Covid-19. When such a clinching document was available, there was no requirement for insisting for the RTPCR test result. In cases of this nature, the authorities must not stick to technicalities and the claim must be considered with more humanness with the available documents which clearly substantiates the fact that the husband of the petitioner was suffering from Covid-19, the judge added.

#### **Study finds** vaccines potent against Covid

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 16

A study carried out by Apollo Hospitals among the healthcare workers (HCWs) across 24 cities in the country has found that Covid-19 vaccines were able to provide more than 95 per cent protection.

The study, which covered a total of 31,621 HCWs from January 16 to May 30, showed that post-vacciinfection occurred in only 4.28 percent of healthcare workers with no incidence of severe infec-

tion and no deaths.
Dr Prathap C. Reddy, founder-chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group, said the results of this study would make a compelling case for Indian citizens aged above 18 to get to tide Covid-19 vaccinated the crisis . "The main conclusions from the study are that post-vaccination infections are usually minor and vaccination helps to prevent severe infection, admissions and death,' Dr Reddy added.

Dr K Hariprasad, president – hospitals division, pointed out that the HCWs comprised doctors, nursing, paramedical as well as support and administrative staff. While the study emphasises that vaccines are effective, it is important to continue with the Covid-19 appropriate behaviour, even when fully vaccinated. such as wearing a face mask, sanitising hands, maintaining social distance, and avoiding crowds, added



relief fund and groceries at New Avadi Road ration shop.

# 'Courts cannot interfere in administrative transfers'

obscene

holding the post of which were serious in Minister and was also an nature and in view of the

electronic

CHENNAI, JUNE 16

The Madras high court has said the administrative transfers are the prerogative of the competent authorities and the court cannot interfere with such administrative transfers issued in the interest of administration and to maintain efficiency level in the public administration more specifically, in the uniformed services.

Justice S.M.Subramaniam made the above observation while dismissing a petition filed by C.Karthikeyan, serving as a sub-inspector of police in Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in Chennai, challenging his

According to the petitioner, his 97-year-old father was taking treatment and therefore, his presence was required to assist his father to continue the medical treatment at Chennai. The impugned order of transfer has been issued transferring him from Chennai CISF unit to ASG. Hyderabad, and in the event of joining in the new station he cannot take care of the health of his father. Thus, he submitted a

ities to defer the order of transfer for a period of one year. Since there was no response, he has filed the present petition, he added. The judge said undoubted-

ly, every citizen of our great nation may have one or other grievances of his own and therefore, the nature of the grievances and the consideration to be shown was to be decided by the competent authorities and certainly not by the high court. The men and women in the uniformed services were bound to work in the interest of the public at large. An amount of sacrifice was imminent and courage in uniformed services was of paramount impor-tance. An expected level of confidence and courage to be shown by the personnel of uniformed services was part of their service conditions and thus, cannot be compromised or neutralised by showing any misplaced sympathy by the high courts. Uniformed services were the pride of our great nation. Thus, any sort of compromise on discipline would cause serious injury to the maintenance security, the judge added.

nation may have one or other grievances of his own and therefore, the nature of the grievances and the consideration to be shown was to be decided by the competent authorities and certainly not by the high court. An expected level of confidence and courage to be shown by the personnel of uniformed services was part of their service conditions and thus, cannot be compromised or neutralised by showing any misplaced sympathy by the high courts. Thus, any sort of compromise on discipline would cause serious injury to the maintenance of security, the judge added.

The judge said the question may arise if certain officials were facing great difficulties due to family circumstances and personal grievances. Undoubtedly, those grievances were also to be looked into in order to keep the morale amongst the men and women in the Uniformed Services. In respect of those grievances, the Head of the Department or the Ministry has issued certain guidelines for redressal and the aggrieved personnel has to approach the appropriate authority for the purpose of redressing the grievance and thus authorities were empowered to consider those representations based on the guidelines and by conducting an enquiry by ascertaining the facts and genuineness of the griev-

ances put forth by the officials. Such considerations require deliberation and such an exercise cannot be one by the high court in writ proceedings under Article 226 of the Constitution. Thus, the competent authorities, on receipt of any such representation regarding personal grievances, were consider the same in the

light of the guidelines and rules in force and take appropriate decisions. In the case on hand, the authority competent was bound to look into the grievance put forth by the petitioner and take a decision by following the guidelines and rules in force However, this court was not inclined to interfere with the order of administrative transfer, the judge added.

#### 26 yr-old man killed in Banned manja thread country bomb attack

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 16

A 26-year-old man killed in a country bomb attack night Perumbakkam.

The incident happened at around 9: 30 pm on Tuesday right outside the victim's house Street Perumbakkam, the police said.

Sarath (26), was talking over the phone outside his house on Tuesday night when assailants hurled country bombs at him. After hurling bombs, the sixmember gang that had arrived on two motorcycles, attacked the victim with lethal weapons. despite he being already collapsed from the country bomb attack. He died on the spot. The gang allegedly threatened the eyewitnesses to clear the place and fled the spot.

Tension prevailed in the area until the Perumbakkam police got there. They had sent Sarath's body in an ambulance to the Chromepet Government Hospital General Perumbakkam police registered a murder case and the investi-

gations are underway.

leaves biker hurt DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 16

**CRIME FILE** 

the

police having banned flying kites due to the continuous accidents involving Manja thread, the dangerous kites have once again taken over the sky over Chennai. The latest victim to the

abrasive manja thread being a 29-year-old man who suffered injuries due to illegal kite-flying in Pallavaram area. Venkatesan, an employ-

ee of a private college in the city and his mother were riding on a motorbike on Tuesday evening Thoraipakkam-Pallavaram radial road within Chitlapakkam police limits, when a stray manja thread slit Venkatesan's neck. He was taken to a private hospital in Pallavaram for treatment. On information, Chitlapakkam police registered a case

and a hunt has been launched for the kite The incident happened when the ban on flying kites and selling manja thread on in place in the Chennai city police juris-

An order under section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure Criminal 1973 and sub-section (2) of section 20 of the Criminal Procedure, 1973, promulgated prohibiting use, sale, manufacture, store and dealing with manja thread for kite flying was put up by the City police.

The ban was imposed by the police in the city after the abandoned threads started turning into fatal tools as it slashed the necks of people on the road, mainly bikers. It may be noted that the police have also warned of detaining the kite flyers under the Goondas Act.

### **Gold worth** ₹10L seized

Prasad.

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 16

The customs officers at the Chennai airport seized gold worth ₹10 lakh.

According to the information from the customs, Based on intelligence, Arulraj Subramanian (41), of Cuddalore who arrived from Dubai by Emirates flight EK-544 was inter-

cepted at exit. On examination of his baggage, a portable juicer was found inside among his personal belongings. The juicer appeared to be heavy and on opening one cylindrical gold piece was found concealed in the motor portion of the

Gold weighing 200 grams of 24 k purity valued at ₹10 lakh was recovered and seized under the Customs Act. Further investigation is OTHER STORIES

#### Construction material costs, **DMK's new bugbear**

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 16

The reported increase in the prices of construction material, particularly cement, in the last one month has turned out to be a new bugbear for the DMK government even as it struggles to ward off criticism on various other fronts.

State minister for industries Thangam Thenarasu was questioned about the unprecedented price hike after he presided over a consultative meeting on archeology and other issues, forcing him to say that the government

was looking into it. He told the media that Chief Minister M. K. Stalin had urged the department to make efforts to bring down the prices and that the officials were discussing the issue with the companies concerned.

Even AIADMK leader D. Jayakumar alleged that the prices of cement, steel, gravel and sand had more than doubled, putting a big strain on the construction industry that was already reeling under heavy

Though Jayakumar was making that charge as part of a litany of allegations the govern-ment, even BJP leaders had made pointed accusations against the DMK government for not addressing the issue properly and bringing down the

Among the other things that Jayakumar said against the government were the security lapse at the general hospital, where a coronavirus woman patient were killed for gain by a woman worker and the failure of the government to micromanage the Covid-19 crisis.

State minister for industries Thangam Thenarasu was questioned about the unprecedented price hike after he presided over a consultative meeting on archeology and other issues, forcing him to say that the government was looking into it.

#### On inspection spree



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inspects TUCS shop at Alwarpet on Wednesday.

### Greens voice out against hydrocarbon project in Ariyalur

OP ARULN I DC CHENNAI, JUNE 16

Environmental activists have opposed the public sector ONGC's move to set up a hydrocarbon extraction project in Ariyalur district. The ONGC sought permission to set up pilot borewells in Ariyalur from the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) two days after Chief Minister M.K. Stalin wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to cancel the tender the hydrocarbon extraction project in Pudukottai district under the Centre's Discovered Small Fields (DSF)

He requested the PM to remove Vadatheru in Pudukottai from the list of DSFs of hydrocarbons put up for bidding by the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons as the Cauvery basin was the bedrock of Tamil Nadu's food security and an ecologically fragile zone supporting the livelihood of millions of farmers and

farm workers. Poovulagin Nanbargal, an NGO, recalled that in 2004, the ONGC obtained permission to extract hvdrocarbon in Javamkondam and surrounding areas in Ariyalur, Neyveli and Cuddalore districts. The company had proposed to set up five deep borewells for research purposes in Cuddalore district and 10 bore wells in Ariyalur district. As a first step, the ONGC

sought permission from SEIAA and TNPCB to set up 10 borewells for research purposes in Ariyalur district.

The NGO has demanded the government to reject the application. Fearing desertification of the delta region, protests had been raging across the state and the Cauvery delta since 2015 against the proposed hydrocarbon exploration projects. Farmers and opposition parties have been opposvarious including in Neduvasal, Kathiramangalam and

# Water released from Grand Anicut for Kuruvai cultivation in Thanjai

**G. SRINIVASAN I DC** THANJAVUR, JUNE 16

Water was released from Grand Anicut in Thanjavur district for the Kuruvai cultivation on Wednesday. K.N. Nenru, M.R.K. Panneerselvam, S. Raghupathy, Meyyanathan, M. Subramanian, Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, and S.S. Sivashankar participated in the function.

Water gushed out of the sluices when the ministers pressed the electric switch to lift the shutters in Cauvery, Vennar, Grand Anicut canal and Kollidam systems.

The function, usually celebrated with much fanfare, was a low-key affair this year due to the Covid-19 second wave.

Dinesh Ponraj Oliver, who took charge as new collector of Thanjavur on Tuesday, and S. Sivarasu, Tiruchy collector, were present.

Pujas were performed at lord Anjaneya and Ganesha temples at the anicut before water release. Paddy seeds were sown to mark the

■ Dinesh Ponraj Oliver, who took charge as new collector of Thanjavur on Tuesday, and S. Sivarasu, Tiruchy collector, were present

Pujas were performed at lord Anjaneya and Ganesha temples at the anicut before water release. Paddy seeds were sown to mark the beginning of cultivation in the **Cauvery delta districts** 

beginning of cultivation in the Cauvery delta districts. Later, K.N. Nehru told mediapersons that initially 500 cusecs of water each will be let into Cauvery, Vennar, GA canal and Kollidam systems. This will be increased to 2,000 each in Cauvery, Vennar and GA canal and 500 will be maintained in Kollidam based on the availability of water from the Mettur dam.

The water level at the Mettur dam stood at 94.91 ft on Wednesday morning. Storage was 55.65 tmc ft. Inflow was 300 cusecs while discharge from the dam was

The minister said that Kuruvai (short-term crop) will be raised on 3.10 lakh acres in Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai Cuddalore districts. In this, Thanjavur district will account for a major share of 1.04 lakh acres, while Tiruvarur will account for U.89lakhacres,Nagapattinam0.05lakh acres, Mayiladuthurai 0.96 lakh acres and Cuddalore

0.16 lakh acres. Depending on the availability of water, release into the four systems will be increased step by step. The minister appealed to the farmers to use water effi ciently and reap a successful Kuruvai crop. He said Chief Minister M.K. Stalin is taking steps to get the due share of Cauvery water from Karnataka.

The water release will be managed based on the strength of southwest mon-

He said water is expected to reach the tailend areas without any hitch as desilting works had been carried out at ₹65 crore to a distance of nearly 4,000 km in the

delta districts. Panneerselvam said that there is adequate stock of Kuruvai seeds and fertilisers and farmers will not have any problem in getting them. Kovi.Sezhiyan, gov-ernment whip, MLAs T.K.G. Nelamegam, Chandrasekaran,

Anbalagan, Jawahirullah, Annathurai, Ashokk Kumar, Poondi Kalaivanan, Ramamoorthy, CE, PWD (SE-PWD), Anbarasan Justine, joint director of agriculture were also pres-

# Sasikala, AIADMK leaders continue their mind games

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR I DC CHENNAI, JUNE 16

Top leaders of Opposition AIADMK and V. K. Sasikala, who aspires to capture the leadership of the party by mobilizing the cadre, continued to play their mind games that have been going for quite some time in a rhetorical fashion. With Sasikala leaking

yet another audio tape of a conversation she had with a party functionary, AIADMK top honcho D. Jayakumar was forced to again come out with a reiterating the stand: "She is no member, she cannot stake claim to

capture the party."

This is the typical drama that has been playing out in the political arena ever since Sasikala, the erstwhile confidant of former Chief Minister J.

Javalalithaa, first struck up a conversation with a supporter over telephone some time back.

First Sasikala's camp would leak the video that would go viral on social media and also other news channels, prompting one of the leaders of the AIADMK to clarify that she would not be able to pull up the coup that she seemingly plans to do.

Also the leaders were maintaining that those who spoke with Sasikala over phone were not members of the AIADMK and that they belonged to the AMMK, the party floated by her nephew T. T. V. Dhinakaran on his expulsion from the AIADMK after Sasikala went to jail

But the AIADMK purged 16 party cadre, including its spokesperson Pugalendhi, a few days back, reportedly because they

were in touch with her The purge, however, did not stop the audio leaks.

In the latest conversations, Sasikala was making strident remarks, assuring the cadre at the other end of the line of her determination to take over the reins of the AIADMK. Jayakumar, on being asked about Sasikala's

plans on Wednesday, told the media that she was unable to stomach the extraordinary performance of the AIADMK in the Assembly elections. While she had expected

the party to bite the dust, AIADMK emerged as the powerful Opposition party in the House, he said.

As of now she plans to split the party and take over the reins would not materialize, Jayakumar said, adding the party cadre would not accept her as their leader.

was doing it out of desperation. But her calling up people, who fawningly respond to her pleading with her to lead the party, creates an impression that she has the capability to capture the party.

Though the AIADMK leaders consistently deny that she is capable of winning over the grassroots workers and staking her claim to be the general secretary again, Sasikala on her part is nurturing hopes and is openly claiming ownership of the party that she helped to build. But with 66 MLAs, most

of them rallying around the leader of the opposi-Edappadi tion Palaniswami, it will be difficult for Sasikala or Dhinkaran to storm into the party by mobilizing individual cadre. Yet, she continues playing the

#### **BJP's Selvam** elected Speaker of **Pondy Assembly**

Puducherry, June 16: BJP legislator 'Embalam' R Selvam was elected unopposed as Speaker of the Puducherry Assembly here on Wednesday.

As soon as the proceedings began in the assembly, pro tem speaker K Lakshminarayanan announced the election of Selvam as Speaker of the House. On being elected unop-

posed as the Speaker, Selvam appealed to all members to extend cooperation to him to conduct the House. He noted that the suc-

cessful conduct of the House proceedings depended on the cooperation of all members.

Selvam further said the members could come out with constructive suggestions for the development of Union Territory in general and the constituencies they were elected from in particular. Selvam was elected to the House from Manavely constituenc among the first legisla-

Selvam's was the only nominated received till 12 noon, the deadline on Tuesday for the election of the Speaker. He is the 21st Speaker of territori-

al Assembly. As election of Speaker was the only business scheduled for the meeting today, the House adjourned

AINRC and BJP are constituents of the NDA here and have formed the government. AINRC leader N Rangasamy alone was sworn as Chief Minister on May 7 pending induction of other ministers belonging to the AINRC and

## Nil revenue: Chennai zoo seeks help from govt, animal lovers

Chennai, June 16: With its revenue, mainly through ticket sales, through ticket sales, touching rock bottom owing to Covid lockdown and the death of a lioness due to the infection causing concern, the Arignar Anna Zoological Park (AAZP) here is in dire need for funds to feed

thousands of animals besides their upkeep.

A senior official at the zoo said the park has pinned hopes on the state government to provide funds also to meet the salaries of casual labourers apart from meeting the administrative costs and other increasing requirement for precautionary measures and medicines to contain the spread of Covid-19 among the animals.

"It's crisis time. Revenue became zero. Zoo depended last year on the government and CSR funds. The government provided ₹6 crores towards meeting the cost for animal feed last year. This year, a proposal sent to the government is under process," a deputy director of AAZP said when asked if the zoo adoption could help tide over the crisis.

On the expenditure incurred by the zoo, the deputy director told PTI "monthly we spend ₹55 lakh for feeding 2,300 plus animals, ₹25 lakh for our casual labourers salaries and ₹10-15 lakh for our infrastructure costs like water, electricity bills Literally, the revenue is 0 now from ₹15-16 crores. So you can imagine the loss!" he said.

Before the pandemic (in 2019-2020) the zoo had 130

animal adopters and it attracted a visitor footfall of\_19,24,513. The revenue from visitor

ticket sales was ₹14.3 crores. During the pandemic (In 2020 - 2021) the number of animal adopters dwindled to 117 and so did the footfall to 3.95.124 while the revenue drastically plunged to ₹4.7 crores. There is nil revenue this year.

Normally, the zoo attracts 18-20 lakhs visitors annually and the Pongal festival holidays in mid-January and summer vacation lures several thousands of families. On the measures being taken to promote the adoption programme, he said, "we appealed through various social media channels, reached out to some CSR. We reached out to the press and media." The AAZP official added that the animal adoption process has completely been made online to facilitate quick and transparent adoption. And the response to the recent appeal for animal adoption programme has been overwhelming. Over 200 people adopted the ani-

This is the highest in the last few months wherein generally we have only 20-30 adoptions in a month, that too when the zoo is

### Govt will set up rope car facilities in 5 temples: Min

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC TIRUCHY, JUNE 16

The Tamil Nadu government will set up rope car facilities at five hill temples in the state for the benefit of devotees, fulfilling the DMK's election promise, said HR & CE Minister P.K. Sekar

The minister, accompanied by his cabinet colleague Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, Tiruchy East MLA Inigo Irudayaraj and joint commissioners of HR & CE department Kalyani and Mariappan, inspected the site for the proposed rope car facility atop the historic rock fort temple complex (Uchi Pilliyar Sannidhi) at Tiruchy on Wednesday.

Chief Minister M.K.

Stalin had sought a detailed project report after inspecting the proposed rope car projects at Arathanareeswarar hill temple at Tiruchengode, Arulmigu Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy hill temple at Sholinghur, Thiruneermalai Chennai,

Subramaniya Swamy temple at Tiruttani and Sri . Uchi Pillayar temple at Tiruchy

He said originally the rope car project for the rock fort temple, Tiruchy, was planned during the previous DMK regime under M. Karunanidhi, but it was kept in abeyance by the AIADMK government. He said after going

through the rope car projin neighbouring states and abroad, detailed plan will be prepared and the projects for these five temples will be started at the earliest. He said all schemes

announced by the Chief Minister are not mere mouthwash Jaalam), but are to be executed.

He said the exclusive app for receiving complaints related to the HR&CE department has received 1,600 complaints so far and a special team headed by the HR & CE commissioner will take up followup actions.

He said Tamil Nadu will become a Coronavirus-free state within a week and thereafter the chief minister will take a decision on opening of temples for public darshan.

# Toda people take Covid vaccination near Ooty



**B. RAVICHANDRAN I DC** 

Shedding their fears on vaccination, the Toda tribespeople, one of the ancient tribes in the country, turned up in large numbers to take the Covid-19 vaccine jab, giving confidence to the officials to hold inoculation drives for all primitive tribes in the Nilgiris.

The health and other officials, handling the Covid crisis here, had a tough task in convincing the tribes folks to take the jab. As all the six tribal communities living in the hills here -Toda, Kurumba, Paniyar, Irular, Kota

Toda people turn up in good numbers to take Covid-19 vaccine at the special camp held at Bagalkodemund Toda tribal hamlet

■ The health and other officials, handling the Covid crisis here, had a tough task in convincing the tribes folks to take the jab. As all the six tribal communities living in the hills here - Toda, Kurumba, Paniyar, Irular, Kota and Kattunayakan are categorised as primitive tribes of the country, the administration had to take an extra care to safeguard their lives amid the Corona second

gorised as primitive tribes of the country, the administration had to take an extra care to safeguard their lives amid Corona second

The district administration conducted special awareness camps recently and a special vaccination drive in some tribal hamlets to allay fears on vaccination.

On Wednesday, the Toda men and women turned up in large numbers to take the vaccine at a special camp held at Bagalkodemund hamlet near here. Northe

Kattunayakan - are cate- Kuttan, president of the Primitive Association of Nilgiris said that due to the initiative taken by the Nilgiris district administration to reach out to the doorsteps of tribal hamlets, the health offi-

> camp Bagalkodemund Toda hamlet near Ooty where Toda tribes from 37 other nearby hamlets turned up and took the jab. The officials convinced

cials organised a vacci-

nation

the tribes folks about the benefits of vaccination and the measures needed to be taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19.



Wednesday. - K. Senthil Nathan

**OSBI** 

STATE BANK OF INDIA  $Modification in Eligibility \, Criteria \, \& \, Re-opening \, of \, Online \, Application$ Advertisement No. Manager (Job Family & CRPD/SCO/2021-22/06 Succession Planning) CRPD/SCO-FIRE/2020-21/32 The eligibility criteria for the above posts have been modified

Interested candidates may apply after confirming their eligibility. Candidates who have already applied need not apply afresh, Date of submission of Online Application & payment of Fee

The details of the modification and the link to apply online are

available on SBI Careers website https://bank.sbi/careers OR

https://www.sbi.co.in/careers under the above mentioned

15.06.2021 to 28.06.2021 General Manage SHORT TAKES

#### **ODISHA EXTENDS** PARTIAL LOCKDOWN **TILL JULY 1**

Bhubaneswar, June 16: The Odisha government on Wednesday extended the partial lockdown for two more weeks till July 1 and divided the state into two categories depending on the COVID-19 positivity rate, a senior official

The restrictions will be in force till 5 am of July 1, Chief Secretary S C Mohapatra said The weekend shutdowns on Saturdays and Sundays will also continue across Odisha till the end of the month. He said that under Category A, there are 17 districts located in the southern and western parts of the state where the positivity rate is 5 per cent or less, while 13 districts in coastal regions feature in Category B, the official said. Mohapatra said the borders with Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand will now be opened keeping in view the decline in COVID-19 cases in these states, but restrictions will continue along the borders with West

#### **INDIA TO CORPORATISE DEF ARMS-MAKER**

Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

— PTI

FROM PG 1

The third entity, the 'weapons and equipment group, would be mainly engaged in the production of small arms, medium and large calibre guns and other weapon systems and is expected to increase its share in the domestic market through meeting domestic demand as well as product diversification. In addition, the 'troop comfort items group, the 'ancillary group' 'opto-electronics' group and 'parachute' group constitute the entire structure.

"The structure would help in overcoming various shortcomings in the existing system of OFB by eliminating inefficient supply chains and provide these companies incentives to competitive exploring new opportunities in the market including exports," the source said.
This restructuring is also

aimed at transforming the Ordnance Factories into productive and profitable assets, deepen specialisation in product ranges, enhance competitiveness, improving quality and cost-efficiency, the source

In taking this decision, the government has ensured that the service conditions of the existing Central government emplovees of the OFB are protected. The government has decided all employees of OFB (Group A, B & C) belonging to the production units would be transferred to the corporate entities on deemed deputation initially for a period of two years without altering their service conditions as Central government employees.

#### **TWITTER LOSES 'SAFE HARBOUR' PROTECTION**

FROM PG 1

That came into effect on May 26, and had issued a stern warning that failure to adhere to the norms will lead to the platform losing exemption from liability under the IT

Sources in the government confirmed that Twitter has lost the safe harbour immunity, as it failed to comply with the IT rules, and appoint key executives under the new guidelines

While the resident grievance officer and the nodal contact person nominated by the company, is not an employee of Twitter Inc in India, the ministry had also not received any concrete information on chief compliance officer, the name, or details, sources said.

IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said Twitter failed to comply with intermediary guidelines and has "deliberately" chosen the path of noncompliance despite being granted multiple opportuni-ties. Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh Police have booked Twitter, a news portal and six persons for in connection with the circulation of a video in which an elderly Muslim man narrates his ordeal after he was allegedly attacked by some people in Ghaziabad.

The FIR, which was lodged at the Loni Border police station in Ghaziabad around 11.30 pm on Tuesday on the basis of a complaint lodged by a local policeman, alleges that the video was shared with an intention to provoke commu-

#### **FURTHER PROGRESS OF MONSOON STOPS**

New Delhi, Jun 16: Atmospheric conditions are still not favourable for further advance of monsoon into Rajas-than, remaining parts of Gujarat, Punjab, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said

on Wednesday. It said a cyclonic circulation lies over east Uttar Pradesh and neighbourhood and there is also a western disturbance. These conditions are not favourable for the advance of monsoon, IMD Director General M. Mohapatra said.

"Large-scale atmospheric conditions are not favourable for fur-ther advance of monsoon into Rajasthan, remaining parts of Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi," the IMD said.

However, there could be a slow progress of monsoon into some more parts of Uttar Pradesh during the next five days in association with the existing cyclonic circulation over east Uttar Pradesh, the IMD added.



Tourists take a selfie at Hawa Mahal that reopened after authorities eased some restrictions in Covid-19 lockdown, in Jaipur, Wednesday.

# 62,224 new Covid cases in India

#### Country's active caseload for the first time in 70 days comes down below nine lakh

FROM PG 1

showed that vaccine efficacy varied between 65% - 88% when interval is 12 weeks. This was the basis on which they overcame their epidemic outbreak due to the Alpha variant. The UK was able to come out of it because the interval they kept was 12 weeks. We also thought that this is a good idea, since there are fundamental scientific reasons to show that when interval is increased, adenovector vaccines give better response. Hence, the decision was taken on May 13, to increase the interval to 12 - 16 weeks. This also gives flexibility to the community, since everyone cannot come at precisely 12 weeks or so," said Dr Arora. lar.
Dr Arora said that the On any fresh proposal to said Dr Arora.

earlier decision of four reduce Covishield dosage

weeks was based upon the bridging trial data available then. He referred to studies by PGI Chandigarh and CMC Vellore which compared effectiveness of partial versus full immunization. "A PGI Chandigarh study very clearly shows that vaccine effectiveness was 75% for both partially immunized and fully immunized. So at least in the short run, effective-

ness was similar whether you are partially or fully vaccinated. This was in relation to the Alpha variant which had swept Punjab, Northern India and came to Delhi. This also meant that even if you received only one dose, still you are protected." Results from the CMC Vellore study were simi-

gap, Dr Arora said the decision will be taken scientifically, giving paramount importance to the health and protection of the community. "Covid-19 and the vaccination are very dynamic. Tomorrow, if the vaccine platform tells us that a narrower interval is better for our people, even if the benefit is 5% - 10%, the Committee will take the decision on the basis of merit and its wisdom. On the other hand, if it turns

added. Meanwhile, the Union Health ministry has contradicted claims on social media that Covaxin contains the newborn calf serum. The ministry said the newborn calf serum is used only for preparation

or growth of vero cells

out that the current deci-

sion is fine, we will continue with it," Dr Arora

UNION HEALTH

Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Wednesday clarified that the decision to increase the gap between the two doses was `transparent and backed by scientific data'.

CHAIRMAN of NTAGI Dr N K Arora explained that the decision to increase the gap between two Covishield doses from 4-6 weeks to 12-16 weeks lay in the fundamental scientific reason regarding behaviour of adenovector vaccines.

and is later washed away. The Ministry said this technique has been used for decades in Polio, Rabies, and Influenza vaccines too.

"Different kinds of bovine and other animal

enrichment ingredients used globally for vero cell growth. Vero cells are used to establish cell lines which help in production of vaccines. This technique has been used for decades in Polio, Rabies, and Influenza vaccines. These vero cells, after the growth, are washed with water, with chemicals (also technically known as buffer), many times to make it free from the newcalf serum. born Thereafter, these vero cells are infected with coronavirus for viral growth," the ministry

It added that the vero cells are completely destroyed in the process of viral growth. "Thereafter this grown virus is also killed (inactivated) and purified. This

and in the final vaccine formulation no calf serum is used. Hence, the final vaccine (Covaxin) does not contain newborn calf serum at all and the calf serum is not an ingredient of the final vaccine product," the ministry clarified. India on Wednesday

standard to make the final vaccine,

reported 62,224 new cases Covid-19 and 2,542 deaths. Country's active caseload for the first time in 70 days came down lakh. Recovery Rate increased to 95.80 per cent while daily positivity rate stands at 3.22%

The positivity rate has been less than 5% for nine consecutive days. the pace of vaccination picking up, the Centre hopes to check the daily cases and blunt the possi-

#### **ASSAM EDU DEPT TO TAKE CALL ON HOLDING EXAMS**

MANOJ ANAND | DC

The Assam cabinet on Wednesday observed that the Covid situation in the state has not improved to conduct class 10 and 12 board examinations but the final decision will be taken by the Education Department in consultation with the stakeholders.

Informing that in zero-18 years group about 25,000 children were infected by Covid in the state, Assam health minister Keshab Mahanta told reporters that state health department gave a detailed presentation before the state cabinet about the prevailing rate of positivity besides the possible congregation of people in case of holding board nations.

After seeing the presentation, the cabinet concluded that it would not be wise to hold the board examinations, he said adding that the decision on whether the exam will be conducted or not will be taken on June 18 by the education department.

Pointing out that Covid situation has not yet improved in districts Golaghat, Morigaon, Kamrup (M) etc, the minister said that the cabinet was of the view that all necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the spread of pandemic is brought under control.

"We have decided not to allow home isolation to persons who don't have separate isolation facilities at home," he said adding that home isolation was responsible for the spread of the pan-

demic in many cases The demand to cancel Assam board examinations has grown louder in the state with a group of class 10 and 12 students moving to the Supreme Court seeking scrapping of the board examinations.

In their plea, the students have said that they are being forced to appe ar in the exams amid a threat to their lives due to the ongoing pandemic.

students approached the apex court after Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that they are considering holding the board examination in the middle of July if the positivity rate comes below two

percent by July 1. The students in their plea before the apex court said, "In the interest of the safety of lakhs of students and their parents, it is better to cancel the exams. The government's statement that Covid positivity rate below 2 per cent has

no relevance."
According to reports and ongoing campaigns on social media, students are undergoing mental turmoil due to the suspense and the delay in the state board examination.

The HSLC and HS examinations scheduled to begin on May 11 but were postponed due to the prevailing Covid situation in the state. Even after several states cancelled the board examinations following the pattern of the CBSE, Assam education department was insisting on holding the board

# **DELHI POLICE CALLS HC BAIL ORDER PERVERSE, MOVES SC**

FROM PG 1

In a Delhi sessions court, which is to sign the final release order of the three student activists, the police said on Wednesday that it needs time to verify the outstation permanent addresses of Ms Narwal, Ms Kalita and Mr Tanha for the purpose of their release.
In its appeal in the Supreme Court, the police

said that the high court has gone by "the social media narrative rather than the evidence gathered and elaborated in the chargesheet." The police has contended that the high court "has not only conducted a mini-trial but has also recorded perverse finding which are contrary to record" and that the high court "completely lost sight of the evidence and statements and it also discarded the evidence, which clearly made out a sinister plot of mass-scale riots being hatched by the three accused along with other co-conspirators"

In the sessions court, while seeking time to file the verification report for the release of the three student-activists, the police said that since Mr Tanha, Ms Narwal and Ms Kalita are permanent residents of Jharkhand, Assam and Rohtak, respectively, requires time till June 18, 19 and 21 respectively to verify the three addresses.

Additional sessions judge Ravinder Bedi has reserved the order in the plea moved by the studentactivists seeking their immediate release from Tihar jail. During the course of hearing, the sessions court abruptly removed all the media persons attending the proceedings from the virtual hearing link.

A defence lawyer said that the student activists were arrested from their residences in the city, which are listed in police's

Bengaluru, June 16: Karnataka BJP president

should be replaced.

charge

remain in the post for the next two years," Kateel told reporters.

Development K.S. Eshwarappa conced-

### Eshwarappa says some within BJP want CM Yediyurappa replaced Ministers who want to

Nalin Kumar Kateel on Wednesday once again ruled out the possibility of a leadership change in the State, even as senior Minister K.S. Eshwarappa acknowledged that a section within the party is of the view that Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa

The statements have come as the BJP national general secretary inof Karnataka Arun Singh's three-day visit to the state begins on Wednesday amid speculain some quarters about leadership change.
"There is no question of

leadership change. Chief Minister Yediyurppa will Rural

However, Minister

"What you are saying is right, some have proposed that the Chief Minister should be changed, while a few others are proposing that he (Yediyurappa) should continue as the Chief Minister; a few have even gone to Delhi and come back," Eshwarappa said in response to a question

ed that some within the party are proposing that the Chief Minister should be replaced.

'What you are saying is right, some have proposed that the Chief Minister should be changed, while a few others are proposing that he (Yediyurappa) should continue as the Chief Minister; a few have even gone to Delhi and come back," Eshwarappa said in response to a ques-

Eshwarappa, however, hoped that all issues would be resolved, as Singh would Ministers, legislators and MPs and elicit their opinion and share the same with the central leader-

Eshwarappa, also a former State BJP president, on March 31 met the Governor Vajubhai Vala and submitted to him a five-page letter on "serious lapses and authoritarian ways of running the administration" by the Chief Minister.

As part of his three-day visit, Singh would be holding a meeting with all the Ministers, and during the next two days he would have one-on-one meetings legislators and

meet him, and finally on Friday he would take part in the State BJP core committee meeting, party sources said. Speculations have been

rife for some time now that a section of the ruling BJP is trying to push for unseating Yediyurappa. However, Singh had recently ruled out replac-

ing the Chief Minister asserted Yediyurappa would continue in the top post. His visit comes amid

growing disgruntlement among a section of BJP legislators like Hubli-Dharwad MLA Arvind Bellad and Tourism Bellad and Tourism Minister C.P. Yogeshwar who have made visits to Delhi to meet national leaders and expressed the feeling of some legislators against Yediyurappa's style of functioning and requested them to rein in the Chief Minister.

# Nod for bid to explore deep ocean for resources

New Delhi, Jun 16: The Centre on Wednesday approved a proposal to roll out a "Deep Ocean Mission" to explore the deep ocean for resources and develop deep-sea technologies for sustainable use of marine resources.

The decision was taken by the Union Cabinet at its meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prakash minister Javadekar told a press conference.

"This will support the blue economy and take India into a new era," he said. The proposal for launching the "Deep Ocean mission" came the Ministry of Earth Sciences

Javadekar said under the mission, a mineral study will be conducted 6,000 metres deep in the ocean. The mission will also study the changes, if any, noticed due to climate change.

Under the mission, he said, a study will be conducted on more deep-sea biodiversity.

The minister said an advanced marine station will be set up for ocean biology under the mission. There will also be an offshore thermal energy centre, which will help new emerging sectors.

After the US, Russia, France, Japan and China, India will be the sixth country to have this kind



of technology, Javadekar

**MSMEs** and research. This will also help in our "There will be good endeavour and opportunities for towards an Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India)," he added. The estimated cost of the

mission for a period of five and it will be implemented in a phase-wise manner, according to an official statement.

"The estimated cost for the first phase for the three years (2021-2024) would be ₹2,823.4 crore. The Deep Ocean Mission will be a mission-mode project to support the blue economy initiatives of the government. The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission," the statement

The mission consists of institutes and private six major components development of technologies for deep-sea mining and manned submersible, development of ocean climate change advisory services, technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity, a deep-ocean survey and

exploration, energy and freshwater from the ocean and an advanced marine station for ocean biology. technologies required for deep-sea mining have strategic implica-tions and are not commercially available. Hence, attempts will be made to

indigenise technologies by

collaborating with leading

industries. A research vessel for deep-ocean exploration would be built in an Indian shipyard, which would create employment opportunities," the statement said.

"This mission is also directed towards capacity development in marine biology, which will provide job opportunities in Indian industries. In addition, design, development and fabrication of specialised equipment, ships and setting up of the required infrastructure are expected to spur the growth of the Indian industry, especially the MSMEs and start-ups," it added. -

SHORT TAKES

#### **EXTEND BREXIT SAUSAGE WAR DEADLINE: UK**

London, June 16: Britain has asked the EU to extend a grace period for some post-Brexit trade rules in Northern Irela nd, Brexit minister David Frost said Wednesday, as a sausage-centred dispute between London and Brussels sizzles on. Frost confirmed the UK has asked the bloc to delay an endof-month deadline to implement a new trading regime around chilled meats in the British province, which could see Northern Irish imports of pro-

ducts like sausages banned.
"We have asked and suggested to the EU that the right way forward would be to agree to extend the grace period, at least for a bit," Frost told a British parliamentary scrutiny panel.

#### **RECORD-BUSTING HEAT SPREADS ACROSS S-W U.S.**

Phoenix (US), June 16: Dang erous, record-busting heat spread across the US Southwest on Tuesday and into parts of Utah, Montana and Wyoming as a dome of high pressure hovered over a large swath of the region, pushing temperatures into the triple digits this week and intensifying the risk for wildfires amid a long-run-

ning drought. Some of the highest temperatures were seen in bone-dry Arizona, where the National Weather Service forecast a record high of 117 degrees (47 degrees Celsius) in Phoenix. The previous high for the date was 115 degrees (46 Celsius), set in 1974. "It is kind of early to see temperatures this high, that's for sure," said Marvin Percha, senior forecaster at the weather service's Phoenix office.

#### THINNER KIM **LEADS TO HEALTH SPECULATION**

Seoul, June 16: The health of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has long been a source of morbid fascination in rival South Korea, which sits in the sh adow of Kim's 1.2-million-strong army and his growing arse nal of nuclear-armed missiles.

Has he gained even more weight? Is he struggling for breath after relatively short walks? What about that cane? Why did he miss that important state anniversary? Now, the 37-yearold faces fresh speculation in the South about his health again. But this time, it's because he's noticeably slimmer. Kim's health matters in Seoul, Washington, Tokyo and other world capitals because he hasn't publicly anointed a successor who would control an advancing nuclear programme targeting the United States and its allies

#### **2 CANDIDATES PULL OUT OF IRAN PREZ RACE**

Tehran, June 16: Two days before Iran's presidential elect ion, which is expected to be won by an ultraconservative cleric, two of the seven men vying for the post pulled out of the race on Wednesday.

Conservative lawmaker Alireza Zakani withdrew hours after reformist Mohsen Mehralizadeh had also thrown in the towel ahead of Friday's vote.

Iranian media reported.

That leaves five hopefuls in the race, in which ultraconservative judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi, 60, is seen as the clear favourite after other promine-nt politicians were barred from running. Zakani, 55, was quoted as saying of Raisi to a state television reporter: "I believe him to be qualified and will vote for him, and I hope that fundamental reforms take place in the country.'

#### PIO NOMINATED CONNECTICUT **FEDERAL JUDGE**

Washington, June 16: US President Joe Biden has nominated Indian-American civil rights attorney Sarala Vidya Nagala as a federal judge in the State of Connecticut.

If confirmed by the Senate, federal prosecutor Nagala would become the first judge of South Asian descent to serve on the District Court for the Dis-

trict of Connecticut. Nagala is currently serving as the Deputy Chief of the Major Crimes Unit in the US Attorney's Office in the District of Connecticut, a role she has held since 2017.

She joined the US Attorney's Office in 2012 and has served in a number of leadership roles, including as Hate Crimes

Coordinator. Previously, Nagala was an associate at Munger, Tolles, & Olson in San Francisco, California from 2009 to 2012.

#### **AUSTRALIA COURT REJECTS FOREIGN INTERFERENCE LAW CHALLENGE**

Canberra, June 16: Australia's highest court on Wednesday rejected a challenge to foreign interference laws in a case that involved a US conservative political organisation and free speech arguments.

China has condemned the laws introduced in 2018 that are widely seen as a means of preventing covert Chinese interference in Australian politics, universities and other institutions.

People working on behalf of a foreign powers have to be publicly registered with the Attorney-General's Department in the interests of transparency. But LibertyWorks Inc, an Australian libertarian think tank, objected to having to register while working on communications for the American Conservative Union ahead of conferences held in Australia. LibertyWorks promotes the American group's annu-

al political conferences. LibertyWorks argued the so-called Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act was not valid because it burdened the implied right to free speech in Australia.

LibertyWorks said the registration process was onerous and therefore deterred political communication. But six of the seven High Court judges found the law was valid and any burden was justified.

Even when the purpose of the foreign interference is not to damage or destabilise Australia, if left undisclosed it can impede the ability of decision-makers in Australia, Justices Susan Kiefel, Patrick Keane and Jacqueline Gleeson wr-ote. Attorney-General Michaelia Cash wel-

comed the ruling. Foreign influence activities, when conducted in an open and transparent manner, can contrib-ute positively to public debate and are welcome in Australia, her office

said in a statement. The scheme is not there to prohibit people or entities from undertaking these activities. Rather, it acknowledges that it is in the public interest that these arrangements are transparent, the statement added. LibertyWorks president Andr-Cooper could not b immediately contacted for comment.

Kulbhushan Jadhav

#### **JADHAV'S CASE ADJOURNED TILL OCTOBER 5**

Islamabad, June 16: A Pakistani court has adjourned till October 5 the hearing of a government's plea to appoint a counsel for Indian deathrow prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav on request of the country's top law officer, according to a media report.
Jadhav, the 50-year-old

retired Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017.

India approached the International Court of Justice against Pakistan for denial of consular access to Jadhav and challenging the death sentence.

The Hague-based ICJ ruled in July 2019 that Pakistan must underta-ke an "effective review and reconsideration" of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav and also to grant consular access to India without further delay. On Tuesday, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) adjourned the hearing of the government's plea to appoint counsel for Jadhav till October 5 at the request of the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Khalid Javed The Express Tribune reported.

# Putin says summit 'constructive'

Despite worst US-Russia tensions in recent years, both Presidents struck positive notes

#### Geneva, June 16: A first Authorities shove off journalists dent Joe Biden and his Russian counterpart was "constructive", Vladimir Putin said Wednesday after journalists for what's northe talks in Geneva ended.

dent Joe Biden's summit with Russian President "The conversation was absolutely constructive", Putin told reporters, adding that the sides had agreed for their ambassa-Vladimir Putin began with minutes of unusually fierce shoving and shouting among United States dors to return in a small and Russian journalists

and security forces.
Organisers at Wednesday's summit in Geneva opened the meeting room to

great powers" capable of

agreeing to disagree. He stressed his desire to take US-Russian relations off

their increasingly unsta-

ble trajectory, in which

Washington accuses the Kremlin of everything from meddling in elec-

"It's always better to meet face to face," he told

Putin as they met in the

villa's library, with a globe

mine where we have a

mutual interest, where we

can cooperate; and where

we don't, establish a pre-

dictable and rational way in which we disagree - two

great powers," Biden said.
Putin noted at the start

of the meeting that "a lot

of issues" need addressing "at the highest level" and

that he hoped the meeting would be "productive".

— AP

'We are trying to deter-

tions to cyberwarfare.

placed between them.

mally a few minutes of news media filming and shouting questions before talks start.

On Wednesday, however, Russian and United States security forces and officials initially blocked journalists as they tried to enter the site for the scheduled press meeting.

The scene then devolved into minutes of chaos inside the meeting room. American journalists de-

scribed Russian security and news media grabbing them by the arms and clothes to try to hold them United States journalists

tried to shoulder their way in, and a US reporter

knocked to the

Before the scene calmed, some in the crowd shouted they were being crushed in the melee.

Biden and Putin initially sat awkwardly in front of watched and at times laughed at the tumult.

# Masks requirements vary in Geneva, say authorities

Geneva, June 16: The acting chief of protocol for the Geneva region says staff members at the villa where United States President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin are meeting will keep masks on during the summit even if the two leaders don't. authorities Geneva require the wearing of masks in public, though there are exceptions. The requirement holds particularly in places with a lot of pedestrian traffic, such as shopping areas.

Marion Bordier Bueschi, who is managing the

grand lakeside mansion that will serve as the sum-Associated Press that staffers inside Villa La Grange were already wearing masks. She said Putin and Biden

would likely not wear masks during their talks on Wednesday. She noted that both leaders have been vaccinated against the coronavirus. Confirmed cases and

deaths from Covid-19 have dropped across Switzerland, and authori-ties are planning steps to ease the mask requirement later this month.

made clear that he will not follow in the footsteps of his recent predecessors by aiming to radically alter the United States' ties to Russia. Instead, the White House is looking to move toward a more predictable relationship and attempt to rein in Russia's disruptive behaviour.

Biden will push Putin on Wednesday to stop meddling in democratic elections, to ease tensions with Ukraine and to stop giving safe harbour to hackers carrying out cyber and ransomware attacks.

Jerusalem, June 16: Is-

raeli aircraft carried out

a series of airstrikes at

militant sites in the Gaza Strip early Wednesday, the first such raids since

a shaky cease-fire ended the war with Hamas last

The airstrikes targeted facilities used by Hamas

militants for meetings to

military said, blaming the

group for any act of vio-

lence emanating from

There were no immedia-

te reports of casualties.

On Tuesday, hundreds of

Israeli ultranationalists, be a provocation

GREATER VISAKHAPATNAM WIAG

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

ASSAM RIFLES, SHILLONG - 793 010

o Greater Visakhapatham Municipal Corporation office on or before Dt:26.06.2021 🔽

month.

Israeli airstrikes

target Gaza sites

#### RUSSIA, U.S. TO **HOLD TALKS ON CYBERSECURITY**

Geneva, June 16: Russian President Vladimir Putin says that he and US President Joe Biden have agreed that their two nations will start consultations on cybersecurity.

After a meeting with Biden in Geneva, Putin said: "We believe that cybersecurity is important for the world in general, for the US in particular, and for Russia as well." The Russian president said that the two countries "just need to abandon various insinuations, sit down at the expert level and start working in the interests of the US and Russia."

Putin charged that "most of the cyberattacks in the world are carried out from the cyber realm of the United States," with Canada and Britain coming sec-

ond and third.

However, the most damaging cyberattacks on record have been attributed by the United States and the European Union to Russia's GRU military intelligence agency, including the NotPetya virus.

some chanting "Death to

Arabs," paraded in east

Jerusalem in a show of force that threatened to

spark renewed violence.

Palestinians in Gaza resp-

onded by launching ince-

ndiary balloons that caus-

ed at least 10 fires in southern Israel.

for Israel's fragile new

government as well as the

tenuous truce that ended

last month's 11-day war between Israel and Ham-

as. Palestinians consider

the march, meant to cele-

brate Israel's capture of

east Jerusalem in 1967, to

COMMISSIONER GVMC

The march posed a test

#### Sun, sea and sand

gesture of healing in their

The ambassadors "will return to their place of

work. When exactly is a

purely technical ques-

after the summit, which

lasted about three and a half hours. Diplomatic

relations between Moscow

and Washington had all

but broken down since Biden took office in Jan-uary. After Biden likened Putin to a "killer", Russia

in March took the rare

step of recalling its am-

bassador Anatoly Anto-nov. The US envoy, John

Sullivan, likewise returned to Washington.

summit at an elegant villa

on the shore of Lake Ge-

neva got off to a good st-

art, with the two leaders shaking hands and strik-

ing cautiously positive notes. Biden, who was set to

hold a separate press con-

ference later, pressed Put-

in to replace the combus-

tible US-Russian stand-off

with a more "predictable" relationship between "two

Despite tensions,

Putin told reporters

strained relations.



People enjoy the sunshine on Brighton beach, south east England, on Wednesday.

# Russia orders mandatory vaccinations over case surge

**Moscow, June 16:** The mayor of Moscow on Wednesday ordered mandatory vaccinations for residents of the Russian capital working in the service industry, citing a "dramatic" rise in Coronavirus infections. The announcement by

Sergei Sobyanin — one of the first compulsory vaccination orders for a major world city — was a stark admission from a senior Russian official that authorities are struggling to bring the pandemic under control. Russia lifted most Two vax for kids show promise Moderna Covid-19 vaccine and an experimental protein-based preven-

tive proved to be safe and showed good antibody response against SARS-CoV-2 in a trial on baby rhesus macaques, scientists say. research, pub-The

restrictions last year, and the country has pressed ahead with large in-person events, like a recent

New York, June 16: The lished on Tuesday in the know children can trans-Immunology, suggests that vaccines for young children are likely children are likely important, safe tools to

curtail the pandemic. "Safe and effective vaccines for young children will help limit the spread of Covid-19 because we

economic forum in Saint Petersburg and Euro 2020

President Vladimir Put-

hosting duties.

whether they get sick from SARS-CoV-2 infection or remain asymptomatic," said Permar from New York-Presbyterian Komansky Children's Hospital,

in has repeatedly signall-

ed Russia was moving be-

yond the Coronavirus.

#### **RECRUITMENT RALLY 2021** 1. Online applications are invited from Indian Nationals Male & Female both as prescribed in detail advertisement to fill up 131 vacancies in Rifleman/Riflewomen General

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4. How to apply. Applications will be accepted through online mode only. To apply, fill up the online application by clicking on "ONLINE APPLICATION" option and follows the instructions given on the Online Application portal of the website. The online applications portal will remain functional till last date of submission of online Application Form.

Candidates to undergo Physical Standard Test (PST) Field Trials in respective sports and Medical Examination at own risk and expense. Injuries including fatal due to the test during recruitment rally and transit will not be compensated in any matter by the Govt or

6. Vacancies are tentative & may increase or decrease. The Assam Rifles has right to make any change in the advertisement or cancel it without assigning any reasons.

### **FATF TO GIVE PAK REPORT NEXT WEEK**

Islamabad, June 16: The global watchdog for money laundering and terror financing has prepared a preliminary report on Pakistan's progress on the implementation of the 27-point action plan and will present it at FATF's next plenary meeting from June 21, according to a media report.

The report has been prepared by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) International Cooperation Review Group (ICRG), which includes the US, the UK, France, China and India.

Currently placed on the FATF's 'grey list', Pakistan has been scrambling in recent months to avoid being added to a list of countries deemed noncompliant with anti-money laundering and terrorist financing regulations by the global watchdog, a measure that officials here fear could further hurt its economy.

STATE INDUSTRIES PROMOTION CORPORATION OF TAMIL NADU LIMITED, Tender Notice NIT.No. 23/CD/T.No.23/2021-22 For and on behalf of State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited, sealed

tenders are invited under "Single Cover System" for the following work from Class-I State level Civil Contractors registered in State/Central or Government of Tami Nadu undertakings having experience in similar nature of works. Tenders will be received upto 3.00 PM on 06.07.2021 and the me will be opened on the same day at 3.30 PM.

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For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, sealed Tenders will be received upto 3.00 pr on 07.07.2021 from the PWD Registered Contractors by the Superintending Engineer, PWD Buildings (Construction & Maintenance) Circle, Coimbatore - 641 001 for (1) Construction o KGBV Type II Residential School Building in GHS at Pallipalayam in Erode District (II CALL) and (2) Construction of Additional Class Room Building in GHS Devarmalai in Erode Distric (II CALL) at his office and Tender will be opened on the same day at 3.30 P.M.

All other details are available in the website www.tenders.tn.gov.in. If any changes corrections etc., to the tender, it will be published on the above website only.

DIPR/1758/Tender/2021

For Superintending Engineer, P.W.D.,(IC Buildings (C&M) Circle,



# **Chronicle**

## HC's ray of hope: To protest is a right, it's not like terror

The order of the Delhi high court granting bail to three research students incarcerated for their alleged role in the Delhi riots of 2020 comes as a ray of hope for those who have been anguished by the government's propensity to use legal means against political opponents and the judiciary's proclivity to shut its eyes to executive excesses The students, two from Jawaharlal Nehru University and one from Jamia Milia Islamia University, were charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, (UAPA), 1967.

The court has made significant observations on two important points that needed judicial clarification. One, the line that demarcates legitimate protests and terrorist activities and two, the police's unmindful application of laws such as UAPA on people and the lower judiciary's failure to apply their judicial mind to it. On the first, the court was categorical in assailing the state for blurring the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity in an attempt to suppress dissent. Such a mindset gaining traction would harm democracy, the court

has observed. On the second, the court reminds the police that it was not the legislative intent of the UAPA that It defies the basic principles of the rule of offences of the usual and ordinary law if the executive thinks kind, however grave, egregious or heinous in their nature and extent, to that the process of law be covered by that law. can be the punishment a citizen would face for

defiance. There are far too many such people, including the 84-year-old priest

Referring to the constitutional scheme of things and the separation of powers under the Union, State and Concurrent Lists, the court pointed out that such laws are enacted for the defence of India, trashing the police act Fr Stan Swamy, now of booking students for shouting slolanguishing in jail under gans. It has also found that the the very same law. chargesheet reveals nothing to prove that the students were engaged in "terrorist activities" the definition of which was, according to the court, vague". The court enjoined upon the courts to apply its mind when such

what the executive prescribes. Governments may be uncomfortable with citizens asking questions, but that's the way democracy functions. It defies the basic principles of the rule of law if the executive thinks that the process of law can be the punishment a citizen would face for defiance. There are far too many such peo-

laws are invoked on unsuspecting people instead of giving its assent to

ple, including the 84-year-old priest Fr Stan Swamy, now languishing in jail under the very same law. Entries in the statute book cannot be allowed to be tools in the hands of a repressive government that has no compunction towards invoking the most stringent of laws against political opponents at the drop of a hat and muzzle dissent. The executive should be stopped from going beyond the legislative intent of the laws, and any transgression must be viewed from the point of view of the victim. It's the job of the judiciary to raise the protective covering of the Constitution when a vindictive government takes aims at a peacefully rebellious citizen. The Delhi high court has just done

## BJP behind drama in LJP?

that. Every court must do it, should democracy survive and succeed; it

should not be left to the individual judges to show the gumption.

Then the late Ram Vilas Paswan, once among the leading young Lohia socialist leaders of Bihar and the country along with Lalu Yadav and Nitish Kumar, figured that his best bet lay in emerging as a dalit leader, he created the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP). But he had a handicap. His base lay exclusively among the Dusadh community of dalits

of Bihar. On that basis alone, it was not easy to be a long-distance runner. But Mr Paswan survived with clever footwork, joining alliances which he changed with frequency to retain a position in the Union cabinet in a range of governments. He had a personal standing and was a well-liked politician. After the demise of the nine-term parliamentarian last October

the LJP has clearly lost its way.

The party had mostly become a family affair, with his son Chirag named its president, a brother and a nephew being bought to Parliament, and another nephew heading the party's Bihar unit. This lot is now busy fighting. The Lok Sabha Speaker promptly gave recognition to the breakaway group, which has five of the six party MPs, while only Chirag is out. So, the BJP's blessing to the move is a likely assumption.

Such parties usually do not last long. The split may have been brought about in the hope that one among the group may be made a Union minister in a Cabinet expansion. In the last Bihar Assembly election, Chirag had earned the enmity of chief minister Nitish Kumar by setting up candidates against his Janata Dal (United) nominees while remaining in the NDA at the Centre. It was the strangest of situations. Now, many think JD(U) may have exacted revenge by engineering the process of LJP's split or eventual vapourising. In any case, it is the BJP in Bihar to which the Dusadh community may gravitate. For socioeconomic reasons, this direction was manifesting itself in the late Ram Vilas Pawan's lifetime.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER Editor

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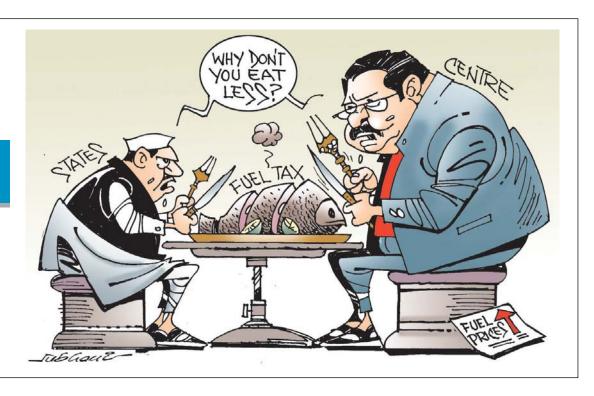
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# Covid-19 accountability: Making the dead count



Patralekh<u>a</u> Chatterjee

**Dev 360** 

hyper-polarised India, it needs dollops of bravery for governments to admit that they got their Covid-19 death data wrong, that the magnitude of the problem they face in the time of the pandemic is more serious than they previously stat-ed. Because political rivals are likely to pounce on such bursts of honesty as evidence of rank incompetence.

Nevertheless states are taking baby steps towards greater transparency of Covid-19 data. That is good news.

Bihar is in the spotlight. Covid-19 death figures in the state shot up from 5,478 on June 8 to 9,429 on June 9 in the wake of data revision. The dramatic jump in the number of coronavirus casualties did not happen because the Bihar government suddenly woke up to the need for good data. It was because the judiciary high court demanded an audit of the figures after widespread allegations that the state government was underplaying the scale of infections and

Arguably, Bihar is not the only state which has faced such accusations. Ground reports by the media from crematoriums in many places, along with images of dozens of bodies dumped in rivers or buried in shallow graves have only bolstered the widespread belief that the official Covid-19 death count in the country doesn't tell the real story. Many states like Maharashtra and Telangana are revising their official death toll in the Covid-19 pandemic. Interestingly, Jhar-khand, one of India's poorest states, is setting an inspiring example by initiating an Intensive Public Health Survey.

25,490 people died in the state in April-May 2021 that is 43 per cent higher than the 17,819 total deaths officially regis-tered across all 24 districts in the state in April-May 2019.

What should one make of this sudden rush for data integrity in many states even as the pan-demic rages on? Will other states follow suit? Will the Narendra Modi government stop denying that India's official Covid-19 death toll is a massive undercount?

It is too early to tell. The

pandemic is indeed making many countries finally acknowledge that they have been undercounting Covid-19 deaths. Peru did Mexico did it. But truth-telling may not be as contagious as the mutating coronavirus. Here in India, even as state governments start to revise their Covid-19 data, the Centre insists all is well. It recently lashed out at an nternational magazine for pegging the country's excess deaths due to the pandemic at 5-7

times the official figure. But better late than ever. Whatever be their motives, the states which are embracing greater transparency deserve to be cheered even if by doing so, they push up India's official

Covid-19 death count. As health economist Rijo M. John puts it: "Those brave states that are indeed doing this must be appreciated and I hope it motivates the rest to do so too.

Dr John cites the example of Maharashtra, which he says "has been relatively honest with the data right from the beginning, compared to many

Now, more states are joining in.

In India, even in normal times, many deaths are not officially recorded. Globally two-thirds (38 million) of 56 million annual deaths are still not registered, according to World

But the coronavirus pandemic may have set in motion a laudable trend; many governments are beginning to acknowledge that there has been a massive undercount of deaths. The science of death-counting is making headlines and the critical need for strong and developed death registries is a talking point.
Dr Hemant Shewade, a medical doctor specialis-

ing in community medicine and operational research, points to the uneven quality of even routine surveillance of deaths in the country. The coverage of routine death surveillance (proportion of deaths registered along with medical certification of cause of death) is as high as 100 per cent in Goa and as low as 2.5 per cent in Jharkhand One did not really expect 100 per cent accuracy in Covid-19 death reporting. We cannot improve routine death surveillance overnight. But in the time of the pandemic, the problem rose because the undercounting of deaths

was way too high," he told What is really unacceptable, says Dr Shevade, "is singling out certain states for contributing higher proportion of Covid-19 deaths. This creates an environment that encourages poor Covid-19 death reporting.

Why is accurate Covid 19 data so important? Because poor data

makes for poor planning. "The administration, as well as the public, become lax as the true picture is not presented. Then it takes a wave as large as the second wave to wake us up. By then any action is too little too late," says Dr Shevade.

What should be done? Public health experts

In India, even in normal times, many deaths are not officially recorded. Globally two-thirds (38 million) of 56 million annual deaths are still not registered, according to the **World Health** Organisation.

making an honest attempt to not "show less numbers" by reporting all Covid-19 deaths, captured by routine death surveil-lance. "Accepting that under-reporting is an

who have been tracking the Covid 19 numbers

stress the importance of

inescapable reality in India, we need regular local estimates of underreporting to guide us regarding the true esti-mate of mortality," says Dr Shevade, "This can be through postmortem surveillance of all Covid-19 deaths in sen-tinel sites. Every district should have one sentinel site (local data for local action). This should be explored. This is important because in a country like India it takes time for

Alongside inaccurate data, there is the problem of inadequate data. Together, they create a fertile ground for the spread of misinformation which severely hampers the battle against Covid-19. Many public health experts say the Centre must proactively and regularly publish reliable allcause mortality data in regular intervals at the national level so that studies using incomplete and unreliable data to measure the true extent of deaths become redun-

data on excess deaths to

Telling the truth may seem politically risky, but it's the only way out. Bad data causes reputational damage. India has already suffered heavily with its official Covid-19 data being widely questioned and public trust being dented. It's true that the Indian Council of Medical Research has issued a "Guidance for appropriate recording of Covid-19 related deaths in India", as the Centre likes to

However, there are gaps. As Dr Rijo John tweeted last week: "Do you have data to show which states adhere to these guidelines & which do not? What actions have you taken against those who did-

> development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee @gmail.com

The writer focuses on

#### **RISING PRICES**

Soaring prices of essential goods in the country reminds one of the sarcastic definitions of inflation, which reads as 'Confiscation without compensation." It's clear that rising prices are due to cost-push and hence it is imperative that the government accelerates the production of essential goods in particular or reduce the indirect tax component of them to contain the prices. Now, since the scenario is such that 'invisible hand' (self-interest of private entrepreneurs) is hard to come by due to the pandemic, the ball is purely in the court of the Indian state to focus on supply economics and enhance the real income (goods and services) of the common man.

S. Ramakrishnasayee,

#### **GOLD HALLMARKING**

The Centre made hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts mandatory in a phased manner and will initially be implemented in 256 districts of the country. A decision in this regard was taken after a meeting chaired by Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal with industry stakeholders and the government had announced that hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts would be made mandatory. But the deadline was extended for four months till June 1 and later till June 15 after the jewellers sought hallmarking is a purity certification of the precious metal and has been voluntary in nature so far. Jewellers can continue to buy back old gold jewellery without a hallmark from consumers.

M.R. Jayanthy,

#### **PLAY TO WIN**

Cricket is a team game where performance is the name of the game. The Indian think tank is trying to make a match of the WTC final by picking a balanced and strong side to match the Kiwis. The players to miss out from the original 20-member squad that has toured England are: Axar Patel, KL Rahul, Shardul Thakur, Mayank Agarwal, Washington Sundar. Axar was too good at home against England and both Shardul Thakur and Washington Sundar earned a name as bowling all-rounders in the side in the famous win on Australian soil. But suddenly these three workhorses are totally ignored to accommodate the senior cricketers in the side. When we try to balance batting then we let down the bowling. Inconsistent in fielding can be a major let down for a team aspiring to win an ICC sponsored tournament after a long gap. Good luck Team India. The aim should be to play for a win in a do or die game.

C.K. Ramanathan,



Bye bye Bibi: Netanyahu's exit may not spell change

mong the various heads of state and government who have seemed like permanent fixtures on the international political landscape in the past decade or so, no one's perch has looked as precarious as that of Benjamin Netanyahu. There's a degree of irony in the fact that Israel's longest-serving prime minister apparently ran out of steam midway through the presidential term of the most fervent White House admirer he could conceivably

have attracted.
It's all relative, of course. Ever since its inception, Israel has never not had an ally in the White House, and occasional tensions have scarcely dampened US enthusiasm for — let alone hindered its munificence towards what was identified early on as an invaluable satellite in a region once

deemed broadly hostile to US interests. The Obama administration, for instance, set a record in generosity, notwithstanding the toxic personal chemistry between Bibi and Barack. By then, it hardly looked like a case of the tail wagging the dog. The transformation may not have been sudden, but Netanyahu had few qualms about treat-

This is the first such door-

to-door counting of deaths

by any state during the

second wave of the pan-

demic. It has revealed that

ing America as the tail. He was happy to do most of the barking until another top dog chimed in, determined, as the leader of the pack, to be louder than anyone else. And lovally tagging along behind Donald was Jared Kushner. Even Trump and Kushner apparently baulked, however, when Netanyahu talked about fulfilling his dream of annexing much of the occupied West Bank. Had the US flashed the green light, enabling him to pursue this project, Netanyahu would probably still be Prime Minister, and Israel would almost certainly be embroiled in a military campaign far more vicious than its most recent assault on the Gaza Strip.

The latter did not suffice to keep him in power - not least because a substantial proportion of Israelis are under the impression that he chickened out. Unable to pull together a coalition after Israel's fourth election in two years, Netanyahu predictably ranted against the alternative regime

that was taking shape.
In the past couple of weeks he has ludicrously labelled his opponents as dangerous and far left. The new Prime Minister, Naftali Bennett, is an extremist all right, but on the other end of the ideological spectrum. He has served Netanyahu as chief of staff and in various ministerial capacities, and throughout his political career has been described as even more right

wing than his former master. In the past he has not only enthusiastically hailed the idea of West Bank annexation but also proudly boasted about seeing "no problem" having "killed lots of Arabs in my life". Now, as a Prime Minister at the head of a disparate — and desperate — eight-party coalition, whose Yamina party boasts only six seats in the 120-member Knesset, he has indicated that there will be no movement on the Palestinian front. The idea that the status quo can indefinitely be maintained while the state-sponsored settlers (whom Bennett has been proud to represent) keep gnawing away at what's left of the diminishing Palestinian territories is one of Netanyahu's proudest achievements. There's no need to bother with a deal, not even with an eagerly compliant Palestinian "authority" in place under Mahmoud Abbas, who put off his elections to ward off the likelihood of another triumph for Hamas.

That likelihood has only increased in recent months, but yet another Israeli election before the end of the year cannot be written off. After all, the Bennett led coalition has the bare minimum parliamentary support necessary, and Netanyahu as Opposition leader will no doubt continue trying to topple his rivals. The 'Bye bye Bibi' placards displayed by jubilant demonstrators after his comeuppance may prove to have been premature. Does any of this matter very much? Not for the Palestin-ians. Sure, there is an Arab Islamist party on the fringes of the Bennett coalition, playing pretty much the sort of collaborationist role that the odd relatively unrepresentative black

apartheid. It also includes the Meretz and Labour parties, which remain wedded, at least formally, to the fantasy of a

What's far more important is that the political centre has shifted sharply to the right — Netanyahu deserves some of the credit for that, but the narrowing of the political spectrum from the centre right to the far right is by no means an exclusively Israeli phenomenon. Hardly anywhere, though, is the political system more fractured: what once were factions have evolved into a plethora of parties, and one-party majorities are now a thing of the past.

Netanyahu has hitherto thrived on this dysfunction, but whether he can exploit it much longer remains to be seen. The criminal justice system may catch up with him. One thing that won't change, however, is what Joe Biden reiterated last week: "Israel has no better friend than the United States." Which in effect means nothing will really change.

By arrangement with Dawn













# # FINANCIAL

# Chronicle

THURSDAY | 17 JUNE 2021 | COIMBATORE

<b>INDICATORS</b>		%
Sensex	52,501.98	-0.51
Nifty 50	15,767.50	-0.64
S&P 500*	4,234.42	-0.29
Dollar (₹)	73.30	0.02
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.48	-0.28
Euro (₹)	88.90	0.02
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	47,814▼48	0.10
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	74.32	0.45
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.045	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.485	-0.014
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

#### **Subsidies hiked** for DAP, other fertilisers



The Union Cabinet raised the subsidies for DAP and some other non-urea fertilisers by Rs 14,775 crore to keep the prices low for farmers. After urea, diammonium phosphate is the most widely used fertiliser. Minister of state for chemicals and fertilisers Mansukh Mandaviya "Farmers will continue to get DAP at the old rate of Rs 1,200 per bag." He said the subsidy for DAP has been raised to Rs 1,200 per bag from Rs 500.

■ Three firms hit daily limit for the third day

# Adani stocks tumble more

**NUPUR ACHARYA** JUNE 16

The slump in shares of companies controlled by Indian billionaire Gautam Adani deepened on Wednesday with three of them tumbling by the daily limit for a third straight day.

Adani Total Gas Ltd, Adani Power Ltd and Adani Transmission Ltd hit the lower circuit after dropping 5 per cent each even as the group denied a local report on Monday that said accounts of three Mauritius-based funds that own the group's stocks were frozen.

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone tumbled 7.17 per cent and flagship Adani Enterprises tanked 5.77 per cent on the BSE. Adani Green Energy declined 3.10 per cent.

dramatic rout marks a halt to the dizzying rally in shares of some of the Adani Group of Companies that had added almost \$40 billion to the billionaire's wealth this year through Friday that made him the secondrichest person in Asia. His net worth, based on Tuesday's closing share prices, is \$71.5 billion.

The conglomerate refuted the reports that said National Securities Depository Ltd froze the Albula accounts of Investment Fund, Cresta **APMS** Investment Fund. It called the report "blatantly erroneous" and followed up with another statement on

#### INVESTORS FRET OVER LITTLE-KNOWN FUNDS

\$73 billion, this week's

events have pointed to a

deeper pain point: opacity

around the group and its key non-founder share-

holders. There's also scant analyst coverage for

Adani companies, high-

lighting the information lacunae could be a chron-

"It is extremely crucial

for the Adani Group to

disclose relevant details

regarding ultimate bene-

ficial ownership of for-

eign portfolio investors,'

said Zulfiquar Memon,

managing partner of

Mumbai-based law firm MZM Legal LLP. Some of the group's list-

ed stocks have soared more than six-fold in

value since the start of

2020 on bets Adani's push

into infrastructure will

pay off as the economy

revives. Adding to the tail-

wind was MSCI Inc inclu-

ding three more Adani

stocks to its India bench-

mark index, taking the total to five.— *Bloomberg* 

Dollar bonds issued by

ic issue.

NUPUR ACHARYA & P. R. SANJAI

Confusion over three Mauritius-based funds that whipsawed shares of Adani Group companies this week has under-scored a deeper risk for investors in such stocks owned by opaque entities. "It is important for

investors and the regulator to be aware of the ownership in listed companies, especially when they originate from tax havens like Mauritius," said Hemindra Hazari, an independent research analyst in Mumbai. "The names of the funds are not very well known in the capital market and they have high concentration into a select number of stocks, which in itself is unusual."

Even as a massive share rally in the companies of the conglomerate has this year more than doubled the net worth of Adani to

**OUICK CROSSWORD** 

Tuesday citing communication from the national depository that the three funds' demat accounts are "suspended for debit." The funds, registered at

Adani group firms have pared some of the losses from earlier this week. Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone's dollar the same address in Port bond due 2031 fell by a Louis, own more than Rs record 3.3 cents on the dol-43,500 crore (\$6 billion) in lar on Monday to 94.1 cents four Adani group firms, the report had said. and is now trading at 95.4 — Bloomberg

#### **SHYAM METALICS IPO SUBSCRIBED** 121 TIMES, **SONA 2.33 TIMES**

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD** MUMBAI, JUNE 16

Integrated metals manufacturer Shyam Metalics and Energy's Rs 909 crore initial public offering received huge subscrip-tion demand as it got subscribed 121.40 times shares offered in the public issue. But another issue that closed on Wednesday, that of Sona Comstar, got subscribed by a modest 2.33 times.

In the Shyam Metalics public offer, priced in the band of Rs 303 to Rs 306 per share, the portion reserved for retail investors was subscribed 11.64 times. The qualified institutional buyer category was subscribed 155.71 times, the non-institutional investor category was subscribed 339.98 times.

Shyam Metalics received over 21.13 lakh applications across investor categories as per last update made available by sources close to the merchant bankers.

Automotive technology company Sona BLW Precision Forgings (Sona Comstar) Rs 5,250 crore IPO was subscribed 2.33 as per last update from the stock exchanges.

The portion reserved for retail investors was subscribed 1.61 times.

The qualified institutional buyer category was subscribed 3.54 times, the non-institutional investor category was subscribed 0.40 times as per the last update made available by sources close to the merchant bankers.

Sona Comstar received over 4.46 lakh applications as per the last update.

# Cooking oil prices start softening

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 16

After more than doubling in the past one year, edible oil prices have started softening in the last one month. "Edible oil prices in India are showing a declining trend across a wide array of oils. As per data from the Department of Consumer Affairs, over the past month, the prices of edible oils are now coming down," an official statement said

Wednesday. Palm oil prices have dropped 19 per cent from Rs 142 per kg on May 7 to Rs 115 per kg, sunflower oil prices dropped 16 per cent to 157 per kg, price of soya oil has come down from Rs 162 per kg to Rs 138 per kg in the past few weeks. Mustard oil was down 10 per cent, groundnut oil 8 per cent and vanaspati 8 per cent at Rs



157, Rs 174 and Rs 141 per kg, respectively.
"Expectations of a pro-

duction recovery Malaysia and Indonesia amid slowing demand have pulled down the prices. Due to the second wave, exports of edible oils were affected in these countries. In the case of soya oil, the surge in the interest for renewable energy too had supported prices. However, the market now finds that the

the US would be reduced due to the intervention of the environmental protection agency. This has cooled down prices," said Ajay Kedia, MD, Kedia Commodities.

The international price trends are directly affect-ing the domestic edible oil market as India imports a significant quantity of the commodity to meet its demand. As per reports, India meets 56 per cent of its domestic demand through imports. The effective rate of import duties, including agriculture infrastructure and development cess and social welfare cess, ranges from 35 per cent to 59 per cent for edible oils. This too has led to higher edible oil prices in India.

Despite the rising prices the industry has been asking the government not to cut the import duties.

### Govt plans ₹50,000-cr loan guarantee for health infra

SIDDHARTHA SINGH

The government is considering offering as much as Rs 50,000 crore (\$6.8 billion) of credit incentives to boost health care infrastructure in the nation hit by the coronavirus pandemic, according to people familiar with the matter.

The programme will allow companies to access funds for ramping up hospital capacity or medical supplies with the government acting as a guarantor, said the people, who asked not to be identified citing rules.

A finance ministry spokesperson could not be immediately reached for comment.

The government's loan guarantees will complement the central bank's efforts last month to boost credit for health care services and provide fresh lending to vaccine-makers.

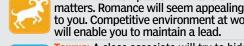
The Reserve Bank of India had then announced an on-tap liquidity window for banks worth Rs 50,000 crore to extend credit to health services and vaccine manufacturers until

March 2022. The government also last month separately included airlines and hospitals in a \$41-billion emergency credit programme to cushion them from the impact of the pandemic.

Bloomberg

# **COFFEE-BREAK**

#### Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam Aries: Avoid temptation in financial



to you. Competitive environment at workplace will enable you to maintain a lead. aurus: A close associate will try to hide some



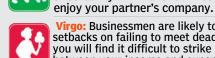
important secrets from you. Your efforts to shine at the workplace are not likely to materialize. Gemini: You will look for someone to share your feelings with. Working upto your full potential will enable you to achieve newer



heights of professional excellence. **Cancer:** Confronting your partner could lead to separation. Health is not likely to remain very sound today. It is time to make



use of your hidden talents. Leo: Listen to the voice of wisdom and avoid jumping to conclusions. Distrust and uncertainty will make it difficult for you to



Virgo: Businessmen are likely to suffer some setbacks on failing to meet deadlines. Today you will find it difficult to strike a balance between your income and expenditure. Spend time with family.

#### her screen debut in Ab Ke Baras for which she was nominated for the Best Female Debut Award in 2003.

ra: You are likely to be assigned the responsibility of leading the staff at work place. You need a clear vision to convey your goals to your team.

You share your b'day with

Amrita Rao is an Indian actress and model who

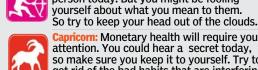
primarily appears in Hindi-language films. She made



will encourage you to be light-hearted. This will be exciting and liberating, so you'll want to do more of it in the near future. ttarius: You have a high opinion of a

person today. But you might be fooling

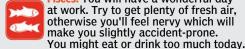
rpio: Today, your romantic partner



ricorn: Monetary health will require your attention. You could hear a secret today, so make sure you keep it to yourself. Try to get rid of the bad habits that are interfering with your well-being.



Aquarius: Someone will bring out the best in you today. There could also be a flirtatious encounter with a friend or a neighbor. It's a good time to tidy up any loose ends connected with your job. ces: You will have a wonderful day

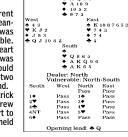


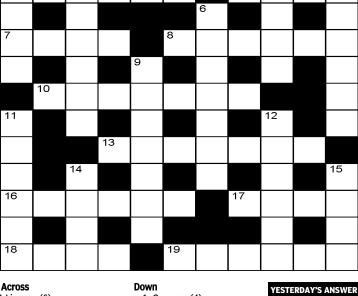
bridge ALDER

**WAS IT COURAGEOUS** OR **FOOLHARDY?**  "Pain nourishes courage. You can't be brave if you've only had won-derful things happen to you." Bridge players whose finess-es work more than 50% of the time can afford to be opti-mistic. But for most players, finding a courageous play may require considerable This deal occurred during a

ary Tyler Moore said, "Pain nourishes (West) missed a chance for a truly courageous play. The auction by Laurent Bouscarel (South) and Jean-Christophe Quantin was lengthy but reasonable. Following South's two-heart reverse, three diamonds was

game-forcing; North would have rebid a conventional two no-trump with a weak hand. Declarer won the first trick with his club ace, drew French tournament some trumps and played a heart to years ago. Jean-Pierre Carde dummy's nine. After it held





Across 1.License (6)

3. Common sense (4)

7. Serendipity (4) 8. Brief turbulent storm (6)

10. Premeditated (7) 13. Circling bird of prey (7) 16. Detective (6)

17. Penalty (4) 18. Obligation (4) 19. Sovereign's stand-in (6)

K

G

at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed

1. Canvass (4) 2. Bring to mind (6) 4. Elliptical (4)

5. Puzzled out (6) 6. Compress (7) 9. Yearly allowance (7)

11. Swore (6) 12. Extol (6)

14. Gusto (4) 15. Retained (4))

Across: 1. Hierarchy, 6. Rusty, 7. China, 9. Seek, 10. Rebuff, 12. Reduce, 14. Stub, 17. Moist, 18. Aware, 19. Telegraph. **Down:** 2. Issue, 3. Rays, 4. Racket, 5. Haiku, 6. Rostrum, 8. Affable, 11. Scythe, 13. Drive, 15. Tramp, 16. Fair.

#### **Word Mine** jumble **TAHSS CHNEE** P **GPDOAA** GOOD; 15 OUTSTANDING How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be **NPHOCO**

(Answers tomorrow) THORAX OUTBID GECKO Jumbles: AGAIN

queen, preparing to throw a second club. When East cov-ered with the king, South ruffed, played a heart to dummy's ace, threw his sec-ond club loser on the spade jack and conceded one heart Nicely done by declarer, but Carde realized he had missed a great chance.

Suppose, on the first heart

the trick, Bouscarel continued with the spade ace (discarding a club) and the spade

lead, he had bravely played the king. Wouldn't South, placing the heart jack with East, have won with dummy's ace, thrown one club on the spade ace and run the heart 10 through East? If so, the contract would have failed, South having to lose a club trick as well.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as

Copyright United (Asia Features)

#### CALVIN AND HOBBES | Bill Watterson









#### THE WIZARD OF ID|Parker and Hartsd

SO, YOU'VE PERFECTED LEAVE HERE YOUR LEVITATION SPELL WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO WITH IT?





ARCHIE|Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



YES, VICAR. BECOMING

AN ATHEIS

FOR ME





**BLONDIE** Dean Young and John Marshall





#### ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe





TARZAN|Edgar Rice Burroughs





#### SHORT TAKES

### Milkha is stable &

out of Covid ICU

Chandigarh: Legendary Indian sprinter Milkha Singh is "stable" and he has been shifted out of Covid ICU to another section of the PGIMER hospital, a statement from his family said on Wednesday. The 91-year-old had contracted the dreaded virus last month. "Milkha is stable and is out of the Covid ICU, but is in the Medical ICU," a spokesperson of the Milkha family said. "Thank you for your continued prayers and good wishes," it added. PGIMER sources said that Milkha was fine, stable and recovering". "He has tested Covid negative after which he was shifted out of the Covid ICU," the sources said. The sources further said that a medical team comprising senior doctors of the institute were closely monitoring his

#### **Japan to set 10k**

daily health progress. - PTI

spectator-cap

**Tokyo:** Japan is planning to set a cap of 10,000 fans at sports events ahead of the Olympics, a cabinet minister said on Wednesday, as organisers weigh how many domestic spectators can attend the Games. The proposed measure would come into force after a Covid-19 state of emergency in Tokyo and other parts of the country ends on June 20, and would last until the end of August, said Yasutoshi Nishimura, the minister in charge of virus measures. It would limit spectators to 50 percent of a venue's capacity 10,000 people, whichever is smaller, he said. The plan is expected to become official later this week. - AFP

#### **Federer suffers** defeat in Halle

Berlin: Roger Federer suffered a setback in his preparations for Wimbledon after crashing out of the second round of the ATP grass court tournament in Halle on Wednesday. Federer, who will bid to win a ninth title at Wimbledon which starts June 28, suffered a shock 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 defeat to 20-year-old Canadian Felix Auger Aliassime, who is almost half Federer's age. "It's amazing, for sure I didn't expect this," Auger Aliassime said after beating one of his heroes at the first attempt on the ATP tour. "I wanted to win, but Roger Federer is my idol and it was a huge honour to play him. Federer is exactly 19 years older than Auger Aliassime

#### **Karun joins UK Board of Directors**

as the pair share the birth

day on August 8. - AFP

Chennai: In a big honour for India's Karun Chandhok, the former Formula 1 driver was on Wednesday appointed to the Board of Directors of Motorsport UK, the governing body for four-wheel racing in the island nation. Chandhok is one of the only two Indian drivers to have made it to Formula 1 with the other being Narain Karthikeyan. "I feel very honoured to be invited onto the Board of Motorsport UK. I moved to England from India nearly twenty years ago because the belief at the time was that if you wanted to get to Formula 1, you had to come and race in the UK as it was the capital of world motorsport. "To now have the opportunity to work with the rest of the **Board and the Motorsport** UK organisation in shaping the future landscape of motorsport in the UK is very

#### Live on TV

exciting," said Chandhok,

who has become the gov-

board member.

erning body's youngest ever

**EURO** 

**Group Stage:** Ukraine vs North Macedonia from 6.30 pm; Denmark vs Belgium from 9.30 pm; Netherlands vs Austria from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2,

**COPA AMERICA** Group Stage: Colombia vs Venezuela from 2.30 am (Friday); Brazil vs Peru from 5.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1

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# Shot in the foot Ronaldo breaks scoring record

Germany go down as Hummels kicks into own net

Germany in a blockbuster Euro 2020 clash on Tuesday.

In Munich, a 20th-minute Mats Hummels own goal proved enough for 2018 World Cup winners France to beat 2014 World Cup winners Germany in Group F. France deserved the win, with both Kylian

Mbappe and Karim Benzema having second-Karim half goals disallowed for tight offside calls while Adrien Rabiot also hit the post for Les Bleus.

"I knew my players would be ready and they were up for the fight,' France coach Deschamps said. Didier

"It's our first match, but this is a game that could have been a semi-final or a final and to take these three points in a group like this was important."

The win was savoured by

a small band of French

fans among the crowd in the Allianz Arena, which was limited to just 20 percent of capacity because of Covid-19 restrictions. It was also enjoyed by fans back home in France who packed into bars to see their team kick off their bid to add the

#### **POGBA PLAYS DOWN RUEDIGER 'BITE'**

European crown

France midfielder Paul Pogba has played down Antonio Ruediger's apparent attempted bite on his back during their win

over Germany. Immediately after the incident, Pogba cried out complained Spanish referee Carlos del Cerro Grande, who did not punish the German, and the Manchester United star played it down after

'I think he nibbled at me a little bit, but we've known each other for a long time. It was nothing big. We hugged after the game," Pogba said.

doesn't mind a bit of

"criticism" but has

never been too overtly

bothered by what peo-

ple think about his

game as he goes on with his job of winning

Test matches for India.

blow-cold form over the

last few years, India's

Test vice-captain with

1095 runs in 17 games is

team's top scorer in the

two-year World Test

Championship cycle leading to the final against New Zealand.
"It feels special," Rahane said about

emerging as the top

scorer. But what about

Despite his blow-hot-

I'VE REACHED HERE BECAUSE

OF CRITICISM, SAYS RAHANE

**Southampton, June** the flak that he has **16**: Ajinkya Rahane faced because of poor



Germany's Matthias Ginter (left) vies for the ball with France's forward Kylian Mbappe (centre) during their Euro group match at the Allianz Arena in Munich. — AFP

# Injury mars Russia win

St. Petersburg. June 16: A special goal by Aleksei Miranchuk allowed Russia to kickstart their Euro 2020 campaign with a 1-0 win over Finland in Saint Petersburg on Wednesday, but the game was marred by an injury to Mario Fernandes.

Miranchuk, of Serie A side Atalanta, produced a glorious finish in firsthalf stoppage time for the only goal of the game between the neighbours in Group B. It blows open

run of scores?

happy to take criti-

cism. I feel it's because

of the criticism I'm

here. I always want to

give my best whether

people criticise me or

"For me, it's impor-

tant to give my best for

my country and con-

tribute each and every

time be it as a batsman

or a fielder," Rahane

Having played Test cricket for more than eight years, Rahane

knows that public opin-

ion is fickle and at best

left alone with focus on

controllables.

Russia (Aleksei Miranchuk 45+2) **Finland** 

one of nine participating nations at the Euro playing matches at home, had lost 3-0 to Belgium in their opening game at the week-

Finland had beaten Denmark 1-0 on Saturday, a game completely overshadowed by Christian Eriksen's cardiac arrest.

I'm happy to take

because of the

criticism. I feel it's

criticism I'm here.

my best whether

I alwavs want to give

people criticise me or

India vice-captain

**AJINKYA** 

**RAHANE** 

Here it was Russia's Fernandes, the Brazilianborn CSKA Moscow right-back, who provided an injury scare.

The 30-year-old went up for a high ball in the Finland box in the first half and came down awkwardly, the back of his neck taking the full force of the landing. He needed to be stabilised and was stretchered off before being taken to hospital.

The Russian team's Twitter feed said he was

### **EMOTIONAL DENMARK TO FACE BELGIUM**

Copenhagen, June 16: Denmark can take heart that Christian Eriksen is recovering and will be cheering them on along with the rest of the country as they try to salvage their Euro 2020 campaign against fancied Belgium Copenhagen Thursday.

Kasper Hjulmand's tal-ented side know that their qualification from Group B will be in jeopardy if they get the same treatment that leaders Belgium dished out to Russia on Saturday, and they need to bounce back from their traumatic 1-0 defeat by Finland.

#### **UKRAINE, MACEDONIA DESPERATE FOR WIN**

Both Ukraine and North Macedonia conceded late goals in their opening matches at the Euro, and both lost because of them.

The teams will next play each other at Euro on Thursday, knowing another loss just might end their chances of advancement. "We have two more games to go and we will still play with the same said Ukraine energy," captain Yarmolenko.

#### **DUTCH & AUSTRIA EYE MOMENTUM**

Netherlands will meet Austria in the team's second Group C match at the Johan Cruyff Arena. Both the Dutch and the Austrians won their opening matches at Euro 2020, so both can advance with another victory.

The top two teams in each of the six groups advance to the knockout stage, along with the four best third-place teams.

Cristiano Ronaldo netted a double to become the European Championship's all-time leading scorer as Portugal struck three times late on to beat a stubborn Hungary 3-0 in their Euro 2020 opener at a packed Puskas Arena on Tuesday.

The holders, who appear to have a much stronger squad than when they won their first major title five years ago, laboured for long periods in Budapest.

But Raphael Guerreiro made the vital break-through in the 84th minute and Ronaldo slammed in a penalty shortly afterwards before tapping home in injury time.

We didn't deserve a 3-0 defeat, with a bit of luck it could have been a point each, but it was an experi-ence of a lifetime," said Hungary goalkeeper Peter

#### **LEGEND PLATINI**

Ronaldo netted his 10th and 11th goals at Euro, surrecord of nine held by France legend Michel Platini. The 36-year-old has **Portugal** 

(Raphael Guerreiro 84, Cristiano Ronaldo 87, 92)

Hungary

#### Milestone man

- All-time Euro top scorer with 11 goals and
- counting. ■ All-time top scorer for
- Portugal with 106 goals. ■ First player to appear in
- 5 Euro final tournaments. ■ First player to score at 5

consecutive Euro final tournaments.

now scored at five different European Championship finals tournaments and has 106 goals for his country in total, leaving him just three away from matching Iranian Ali Daei's all-time international scoring record of 109.

"I am really grateful to the team for helping me to score twice and be named man of the Ronaldo said.

-AFP



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after scoring a

# CR7 snub takes fizz out of Cola

Budapest, June 16: Portuguese superstar removed Coca-Cola bottles placed in front of him at a European Championships press conference here, which reportedly cost the global beverage giant a staggering \$4 billion.

A well-known fitness enthusiast, Ronaldo set aside two Coca-Cola glass bottles which lay in front of him during a press conference ahead of Portugal's opening Euro match against Hungary here on Monday. In a video that has since

gone viral, the 36-year-old Juventus striker picked up a bottle of water instead saying "Agua!" in Portuguese, seemingly urging people to choose water over aerated drinks.

According to media reports, the share price of Coca-Cola, one of the official sponsors of Euro 2020, slipped from \$56.10 to \$55.22 almost immediately after Ronaldo's gesture.

The market valuation of

Coca-Cola went from USD 242 billion to USD 238 billion, a fall of USD 4 billion Reacting to the incident, Coca-Cola in a statement said "everyone is entitled

to their drink preferences' with different "tastes and needs" Ronaldo has spoken about his uneasiness with carbonated drinks earlier as well. In December last

year, he had tweeted, "My

son has potential, We'll see

if he will become a great footballer "Sometimes he drinks Coke and eats crisps and it irritates me.

#### **POGBA REMOVES BEER BOTTLE**

On Tuesday, France mid-Paul Pogba a bottle of fielder Pogba Heineken beer that had been placed in front of him at a press conference.

Pogba, a practising Muslim, removed the bottle when he sat down to speak to the media after his side's 1-0 win over Germany.

#### Gavaskar says India's batting depth is highly admirable New Delhi, June 16:

#### Former captain Sunil Gavaskar says India's bat-ting depth helps them bounce back from tough situations, as they face an upbeat New Zealand in World

India have a host of batting stars in their line-up including skipper Virat Kohli, his deputy Ajinkya Rahane and dashing opener Rohit Sharma.

Championship final this

week.

R. Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, both spinners who have six Test centuries between them while batting in the middle and lower-middle order, are also expected to take to the field in the title clash Southampton starting

Friday. "With Ashwin and Jadeja playing so well, India's batting depth is the envy of the cricketing world," Gavaskar, who is in England as a television pundit for the final said.

"Yes, there could be the bad-innings like Adelaide, Australia, but this team is like a won-

### **TAYLOR SAYS KOHLI & CO.**

ENVY OF WORLD

#### **HAVE SET BAR REALLY HIGH**

Southampton, June 16: Senior New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor has said India have set the bar really high and considering their bench strength, it will be an extremely tough battle for his team during the World Test Championship final beginning June 18. "You go through the Indian line-up, all world-class players all through and whatever side they do decide to go with, they will leave out some world-class players as well. We know whatever XI we face will be very tough," Taylor said.

"India have been a world no.1 side and they have kept the bar really high for a long period of time, everyone in the world had to catch up to and I don't see any difference, yes we had a couple of Tests here but playing India in home, away or neutral venue will be a tough opposition," he said. -PTI

bouncing back and keep on bouncing."

India crashed to record low of 36 all out in the first Test in Australia last year before bouncing back to win the fourmatch series 2-1 in a dramatic final in Brisbane in January.

New Zealand, led by the

world's top Test batsman Kane Williamson, head

derful rubber ball, always into the final with a recent 1-0 win over hosts England in a two-match

Gavaskar said once perennial underdogs New Zealand now have quality players in their team that have settled well in English conditions.

Zealand have invariably flown under the radar and thus underestimated by the opposi-

tion," said Gavaskar.
"They have one of the greatest batsmen in the world in their team as well as a pace bowler who will be among the greatest left arm pacers too. They will be high on confidence after the win over England."

India last played in March and are coming out of a stint in quaranbut Gavaskar believes the team would be hungry to perform. "In terms of match

practise, yes, the Indians may feel a bit undercooked but they will be hungry to get into action," said Gavaskar.

"And will have the drive and energy since they haven't played competitive cricket for over a month." Gavaskar said India's

'enormous self-belief'' will drive them in England's changing weather conditions which pose a challenge to the batsmen. "India have a terrific new ball attack and spinners who can take advantage of any pitch." -AFP

### **SOUTHEE BATS FOR CHANGE OF FORMAT**

Ajinkya Rahane

Southampton, June 16: New Zealand pacer Tim Southee on Wednesday said changes can be made to the format of the World Test Championship final going ahead, instead of it being a one-off match.

"At the start of the twoyear cycle, we knew that it was going to be a one-off final. Maybe it's something they can look at going forward and then potentially make changes," Southee said.

"It was made clear two years ago at the start of the cycle, what was required to win the championship.
"It's been great to put

context around the Test game, to have the twoyear cycle. There have already been adjustments going forward to the next cycle. So, it'll be an evolving thing," he added.

"It's been long time since we won the Champions Trophy in 2000. We've come very close in the last last couple," added the premier fast bowler of Zealand.

#### **INDIA DISMISS BEAUMONT BUT ENGLAND CONSOLIDATE**

Bristol, June 16: India women picked up the crucial wicket of Tammy Beaumont (66) in the second session but England women consolidated their position by reaching 162 for two at tea on the opening day of the one-off Test here on Wednesday.

After getting rid of Lauren Winfield-Hill (35) in the first session of the day, India toiled hard for most part of the post-lunch period before debutant off-spinner Sneh Rana picked up her maiden Test wicket.

She got rid of in-form of Beaumont, who was brilliantly caught by Shafali Verma at short leg. Beaumont faced 166 balls and decorated her innings with six fours en route to her second Test fifty.

Skipper Heather Knight (47 not out) batted cautiously and remained unbeaten in the company of Natalie Sciver (11 not out) as England made 76 runs off 28 overs in the second session. Earlier, the hosts made a solid 86 for one in the open-

ing session. The Indian pace duo of veteran Jhulan Goswami and Shikha Pandey made a promising start, doing just enough to trouble the English batswoman on more than one occasion.

**Brief scores:** England 162/2 in 55 overs (Lauren Winfield-Hill 35, Tammy Beaumont 66, Heather Knight 47 (batting); Pooja Vastrakar 1/37, Sneh Rana