THE ASIAN AGE

NATION 3

'Dissidents' warned not to lobby for leadership change in Madhya Predesh



Djokovic, Federer could

DELHI AGE 16

Shah Rukh Khan completes he is in 'rebuilding' phase

Vol. 28 No. 130 | 16 pages | ₹5.00

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RNI No. 57290/94, Regd No: DL-SW-05/4189/15-17



Singer H.E.R. performs on the Today Show at Rockefeller Plaza in New York City on

9 TN fishermen escape as Lanka **Navy 'opens fire'**

Rameswaram: Nine fishermen escaped unhurt when Sri Lankan naval personnel allegedly opened fire on their boats while they were returning from the Palk Straits after fishing. At least four boats in which they were on were riddled by bullets fired by the Lankan Navv and one bullet each was recovered from two boats, Arokiyam, fishermen's representative and also a fisher, told reporters. "Luckily, nine of us escaped unhurt," he said. A fisheries department official said he has received a complaint from fishermen. — PTI
Full report on Page 4

Indian mother killed

daughter at UK home

London: A 36-year-old Indian woman in the UK has pleaded guilty to manslauahter by diminished responsibility after she admitted killing her five-year-old daughter at their home because she was terrified of thought the little girl could not live without her, accord-ing to a media report. — PTI

Pakistan continues to

be in FATF 'grey list'

New Delhi: The Financial

Action Task Force (FATF) on Friday retained Pakistan on its "grey list" for failing to check money laundering, leading to terror financing, and asked Islamabad to investigate and prosecute senior leaders and commanders of UN-designated terror groups.
Full report on Page 3



You are very lucky... you have plain Covid, not the Delta plus variant!







Forecast: Mostly sunny

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana Tithi: Jveshta Bahula Dwitiya till 6.15 pm Star: Uttarashada till 2.37 am **Varjyam:** 11.49 am to 1.18 pm **Durmuhurtam**: 5.47 to 7.31 am Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

SUNSET TODAY 7.22 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.25 AM MOONRISE TOMORROW 9.14 PM MOONSET TODAY 6.42 AM



SPORT 8

meet in Wimbledon final; Halep out with calf injury

29 years in Bollywood, says

■ AAP says SC panel report has not been signed ■ BJP slams Kejriwal 'Delhi made exaggerated claims for O2'

The requirement was 351 MT even if

the panel went by

the Delhi govern-

was 289 MT according to

ment's formula, while it

- Sambit

BJP

Patra,

the Centre's

■ Ministry says cases 'very localised' ■ 51,667 new cases in 24 hrs

48 Delta Plus cases in 11 states: Govt

Health workers rest during a break from duty at a

cremation ground in Guwahati on Friday,

and Karnataka (1). So far

two deaths due to Delta

Plus have been reported

from Madhya Pradesh

and one in Maharashtra.

The Centre has written to

all these states asking

ers. The ED had registered a case against Mr

Deshmukh soon after CBI

registered an FIR against

him in the case relating

to the alleged demand of

₹100 crore as extortion from bars and hotels in

The agency has so far

conducted a series of

raids and searches in the

city on Mr Deshmukh and his son's associates,

In Mumbai, the Central

probe agency also searched the premises of Mr Deshmukh's personal

assistant Kundan Shinde

Sanjeev Palande. In April, the CBI had

also carried out searches

in Mumbai and Nagpur

in this case registered

with the Central Bureau

Turn to Page 4

Mumbai.

including

accountants.

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

An interim report prepared by a Supreme Court-appointed committee has reportedly claimed that the Delhi government 'exaggerated" the capital's oxygen needs by four times at the peak of the second wave of Covid-19 and the excess supply to national

"affected other states".

The report has set off a major controversy with Delhi's deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia denying the existence of any such report and the BJP blaming chief minister Arvind Kejriwal of com-

VINEETA PANDEY

NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

The Centre on Friday said

49 cases of the Delta Plus variant of Covid-19 have

been found in 11 states

from over 45,000 samples

that have been sequenced

for this mutated strain of

the virus. The Union health ministry said till

now the cases are "very localised".

The Delta Plus has been

termed as a "Variant of Concern" by the World

Health Organisation. The

states with Delta Plus cases are Maharashtra

Maulya 11 adesii (7), Kerala (3), Punjab (2), Gujarat (2), Andhra Pradesh (1), Orissa (1), Rajasthan (1), Jammu (1)

Madhya Pradesh

SONU SHRIVASTAVA

Enforce-

home minister Anil Deshmukh in Mumbai

and Nagpur in connec-

tion with a money laun-

dering case. According to

sources, the searches

have been carried out as

the ED has found a money trail of ₹4 crore

that was allegedly extort-

ed from a few bar owners

in Mumbai by now sus-

pended assistant police

inspector Sachin Waze at

The probe agency has

also recorded statements of some of the bar own-

of Mr

behest

Deshmukh.

Maharashtra

(ED) on

MUMBAI, JUNE 25

ment Director-

Friday conduc-

ted searches on

five premises of

Tamil Nadu (9),

residence in Nagpur

fought for the breath of my two crore people. When you were doing an election rally, I was awake all night arranging for oxygen Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi CM

mitting a "heinous crime" by making exaggerated claims about oxygen

The five-member panel headed by AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleria said the Delhi government made the claims for allo-

spokesman cation of 700 MT oxygen on April 30 of medical grade oxygen using a wrong formula. It said that the claim of 1,140 MT was four times higher than the formula for bed

capacity requirement of

them to take immediate

steps to contain the

India on Friday record-

ed 51,667 fresh cases and

1,329 Covid related deaths. Union health ministry

ED raids Deshmukh 4 killed, 160 still missing in US building collapse

spread of Delta Plus.

Mr Sisodia claimed that the members of the Supreme Court's oxygen audit committee have "not signed or approved" the interim report and that the report "being shared by the BJP was drafted at its party headquarters'

'One purported report is being quoted as having said that Delhi's oxygen demand was inflated. There is no such report. The report being shared by the BJP does not exist at all. They are lying. The members of the panel we spoke to are saying that they have not signed or approved any report. The matter is sub-judice and

officials said the numbers

are higher on some days

because the second wave

has not subsided com-

pletely.

ICMR director general,
Dr Balram Bhargava, said
both Covidshield and

Covaxin work well against all the variants of SARS CoV 2 — Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. He added that Delta Plus

is present in 12 countries.

This virus has been iso-

lated and cultured now.

We are doing the same

test that we have done for

Alpha, Beta, Gamma and

Delta. Looking at the labo-

ratory test to check the

vaccine effect, we should

have the results in about 7

to 10 days time," said Dr

Turn to Page 4

Bhargava.

Char Dham Yatra to partially open for locals July 1

Friday decided to par-tially open the Char Dham Yatra for locals in limited numbers from

government spokesman Subodh Uniyal said Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri will be opened for residents of Chamoli, Rudraprayag and Uttarkashi districts respectively from July 1.
— PTI

TMC leaders' pics with fake vaccine scam kingpin viral

Kolkata/Berhampore, June 25: The major fake Covid-19 vaccination racket which Tollywood actor and TMC MP Mimi Chakraborty claimed to have busted with the help of the Kolkata police after getting herself a fake dose at a camp run by a bogus IAS officer has boomeranged to her own party and its government in West

Bengal within two days. The backfire unfolded as several photos of th-ree TMC MLAs, includ-ing two heavyweight Cabinet colleagues of CM Mamata Banerjee and a Rajya Sabha MP of their party, allegedly with the arrested king-pin, Debanjan Deb, at various events were flashed by the BJP on Thursday evening.

More on Page 3

Dehradun, June 25: The

NARADA SCAM

SC directs HC to consider plea by Didi, WB afresh

High court's June 9 order annulled

PARMOD KUMAR NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Calcutta high court to reconsider a plea by West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee and state law minister Moloy Ghatak to take on record their reply affidavit countering the CBI's plea that they had obstructed the arrest and subsequent production of the accused TMC leaders in the Narada scam case before the trial court on May 17.

Remanding the matter back to the high court and asking it to consider the matter afresh, a vacation bench comprising Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari said the June 9, 2021 high court order refusing to take on record the reply affidavit by the CM, law minister and the State of Bengal stands West annulled.

The high court by its June 9 order declined to take on record the counter (reply) affidavits by Mr Ghatak and the state government, noting that the affidavits were filed belatedly after the proceedings had begun and the arguments were



THE SC ordered that the CBI, if it so desired, would file a reply to the applications by June 29, 2021. after serving an advance copy to Mr Ghatak and the State of West Bengal by June 28

at an advanced stage. Noting while filing the reply affidavits late, they were not accompanied with an application giving the reasons for delay, the court said on Friday that in de-novo proceed ings the affidavits by Mr Ghatak and the West Bengal government will be accompanied with an application giving the reasons for delay in filing them (affidavit). This should be done on or before June 27, with an advance copy being given to the CBI and other "nec-

Sending the ball back to the high court, the Supreme Court said Supreme Court Sure Friday: "We request the Turn to Page 4

essary parties'

IT minister attacks Twitter as it blocks his a/c for an hour

Says Indian IT rules were violated

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

Twitter Friday blocked



account for an hour for alleged violation of the US Copyright Act, a move the minister said was arbitrary and a gross violation of India's IT rules. Hitting out a Twitter, Mr Prasad said in a couple of posts on Koo, another social media platform, that Twitter's action was a breach of the IT rules, as Twitter failed to give prior notice before denying access to his account. The account was subsequently unblocked after a

Mr Prasad, who is alleged to have breached

warning.

the copyright law by posting clips of himself from television debates, said: 'Twitter denied access to my account for almost an hour on the alleged ground that there was a violation of the US Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Subsequently, they allowed me to access the

account. The minister added: "It of Rule 4 (8) of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021, as they **Turn to Page 4**

is apparent that my statements calling out the high-handedness and arbitrary actions of Twitter, particularly sharing the clips of my interviews to TV channels and its powerful impact, have clearly ruffled its feathers." He said Twitter's actions were "in gross violation

PM criticises Congress, tweets about 'dark days of Emergency'

Grand Old Party says India under 'Modi-gency' for 7 years

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

Urging people to pledge

to do everything possible to strengthen India's democratic spirit and live up to the values enshrinin the Constitution, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the 46th anniversary of the imposition of Emergency on Friday, said those "dark days" can never be forgotten when the Congress "trampled over our democratic ethos." Senior BJP leaders, including Union ministers, used the hashtag #DARKDAYOFEMER-



Gandhi-led government for the "monstrous conspiracy to crush Indian democracy.

'The dark days of Emergency can never be forgotten. The period from 1975 to 1977 witnessed a systematic destruction of institutions. Let us pledge to do everything possible to strengthen India's democratic spirit, and live up to the values enshrined in

our Constitution... This is

GENCY to how Congress trampled over our democratic ethos. We remember all those greats who resisted the Emergency and protected Indian democracy," the PM tweeted while sharing a link about several draconian measures taken by the then Congress government.

Reacting to Mr Modi's tweet, Congress general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the time has come for people to rise in unison to assess the "annihilation of the very foundation of democracy in India by an Turn to Page 4

650 US troops to be in Afghan after pullout

Washington, June **US SECRETARY** of state Antony Roughly 650 US troops are erating Taliban battlefield Blinken, speaking in Paris on Friday,

■ Biden to meet Afghan leaders in show of support as Taliban violence rises

expected to remain in Afghanistan to provide security for diplomats after the main American military force completes its withdrawal, which is set to be largely done in the next two weeks, US officials told the Associated Press.

An aerial view shows search and rescue personnel working on site after the partial

Thursday. About 160 people were still unaccounted for Friday and searchers combing

through a twisted, shifting pile of concrete and metal feared the death toll of at least

collapse of the Champlain Towers South in Surfside, north of Miami Beach, on

four could go much higher. Report on Page 6

Several hundred additional American forces will remain at the Kabul airport, potentially until September. They'll assist Turkish troops providing security, a temporary move until a more formal Turkey-led security operation is in place, the officials said.

President Joe Biden is set to meet on Friday with top Afghanistan leaders in a show of support for their government amid escalating Taliban vio-

lence and as the US speeds up its withdrawal of troops to end America's longest war. Overall, officials said the US expects to have American and coalition

military command, its leadership, and most troops out by July Fourth, or shortly after that, meeting an aspirational dead-

noted the increased violence and cited a 'real danger' that if the Taliban tries to take the country by force, 'we'll see a renewal of a war or possibly worse' line that commanders

developed months ago. The officials were not authorised to discuss details of the withdrawal spoke to the Associated Press on con-

dition of anonymity.

The departure of the bulk of the more than 4,000 troops that have been in the country in recent months is unfolding well before President Joe Biden's September 11

deadline for withdrawal.

gains, fueling fears that the Afghan government and its military could collapse in a matter of months.

US secretary of state

Antony Blinken, speaking Friday in Paris, noted the increased violence and cited a real danger" that if the Taliban tries to take the country by force, 'we'll see a renewal of a war or possibly worse.

But, Mr Blinken said the Biden administration came to the conclusion that not removing United States troops, as the Trump administration had promised the Taliban in February 2020, would have been a bad choice.

















SHORT TAKES

Tabs for over 2,000 new teachers of **Delhi govt schools**

New Delhi: The Delhi government has decided to provide tabs to over 2,000 teachers newly appointed by the Directorate of Education, **Deputy Chief Minister Manish** Sisodia said on Friday. Sisodia, in an official statement, said the vision of the Delhi government is to provide excellent education to each child, and providing tablets to teachers is a step in this direction. Usage of tabs by teachers will enable better teaching and learning, and empower teachers to use creative techniques in teaching children, he said. According to him, it was important to incorporate novel techniques into teaching as tabs would enable teachers to do their jobs without hassle in times of Covid. "In the 21st century, It has supremely important to incorporate various novel techniques in teaching," he

2 Nigerians arrested for drug-peddling

New Delhi: Two Nigerian nationals have been arrested by the Delhi Police for allegedly peddling drugs in outer Delhi's Chander Vihar area. The accused have been identified as Olunna Iriakannu (30) and Chidi (44). A total of 15.90 grams of heroine have been recovered from them, the police said. According to the police a tip-off was received after which the police kept a close watch on accused persons. Following this a team while on patrolling duty noticed them and found their activities suspicious. The accused tired to fled away but they were arrested on Tuesday. During enquiry, they could not give any satisfactory reply regarding their presence at the spot during wee hours. One transparent polythene pouch each having brownish substance was recovered from



initiative of Delhi Police to the next level, commissioner of police S.N. Shrivastava on Friday rolled out the programme to train 10,000 youth in healthcare and also inaugurated an advance Covid care training simulation lab at police station Chittaranjan Park. Shrivastava further launched a YUVA job & training portal. On the occasion, Shrivastava said that Delhi witnessed the severity of the second wave and all of us need to take lessons from it and put in place systems to deal with any emergencies.

■ Celebrity send-off for murder accused at Mandoli prison

Sushil's custody extended for 14 days, shifted to Tihar

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

With a delhi court on Friday extending the judicial custody by 14 more days of the twotime Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar, the murder accused received a celebrity send-off by Delhi Police personnel on his way to Tihar Jail from Mandoli prison, where he was imprisoned earlier.

Keeping ethics aside, the Delhi police personnel or staff were seen getting clicked with the murder accused who were all smiles for the shutterbugs.

Sushil and Ajay Kumar had been arrested on 23 May in Delhi in connection with the Chhatrasal stadium murder case which led to the death of a 23-year-old wrestler Sagar Dhankar. A magistrate

has extended Kumar's judicial custody till July 9 after he was presented before the court on the expiry of his earlier period of judicial custody. On



Olympic medallist wrestler Sushil Kumar being shifted from Mandoli jail to Tihar in New Delhi on Friday.

the national capital.

alleged

A non-bailable warrant

was issued against

Kumar and others in the

case relating to the

killing

remanded to judicial custody till June 11, which was later extended till

According to Kumar's defence counsel, he has shifted from been Mandoli to Tihar Jail. He was earlier remanded to six days of police custody which was later extended to four days.

Kumar, a prime suspect

in the murder case, and Court dismissed an antic-Bakkarwala were arrested by a team of Special Cell, Delhi Police on May tion with the case. An incident of a brawl 23 in the Mundka area of

filed by Kumar in connec-

among wrestlers was reported on May 4, in were injured and had to be admitted to a hospital. Sagar, who was one of them, died during the

My crime, I fought for breath of 2 crore people: Kejriwal

New Delhi, June 25: In the face of BJP's accusation of "criminal negligence" citing a report that

Arvind the Delhi gov-"exaggerated" oxygen requirement during Covid-19 second wave, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said his only "crime"

was that he "fought for the breath of two crore people". A sub-group constituted by the Supreme Court to audit oxygen consumption in the national capital's hospitals has said that the Delhi government "exaggerated" con-sumption of the life-saving gas. The five-member panel, headed by AIIMS director Randeep Guleria, said that during the second wave of Covid-19 infections, the Delhi government had made claims for allocation of 700 MT of oxygen on April 30 using a "wrong formula".

After the report came to light, the BJP accused

'No report approved by SC panel about inflated 02 use'

New Delhi, June 25: Deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia on Friday claimed there is no report approved by the Supreme Court-appointed Oxygen Audit Committee about Delhi exaggerating its oxygen requirement by four times during the second wave of

the Covid-19 pandemic. At an online press briefing, he accused the BJP of lying and alleged that the "bogus' and "misleading" report has been "cooked up" at its office and submitted by the Central government in the apex court.

Kejriwal of "heinous crime" and "criminal negligence". In reply to the allegation, Kejriwal took to Twitter to say, "My crime — I fought for the breath of my two crore people. When you were doing an election rally, I was ments spokesperson Sambit Patra,

citing Manish appointed audit sisodia panel's report, slammed the Delhi govern-

a "heinous crime". "The truth about this report is that it does not exist. This alleged report which is being used by BJP to senselessly slam CM Arvind Kejriwal does not exist," Sisodia said. -PTI

ment over it, terming it to be

awake all night arranging for oxygen. I fought, pleaded to get oxygen for people." "People have lost their loved ones due to lack of oxygen. Don't call them liars, they are feeling so bad," he said in a tweet in Hindi. -PTI

Shoe godown fire: Forensic team co**llect**s human remains

International Day Against

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, JUNE 25**

A forensic team on Friday collected charred human remains from a two-storey building in west Delhi's Udyog Vihar where a massive fire broke out four days ago, police said.

Six workers of a shoe godown located in the building are still missing. The search operation will continue till all areas of the building have been scanned, they

Police also said they are conducting raids to nab the godown"s owner, Pankaj Garg, who has been on the run since the day of the inci-

dent. The fire broke out in the building, where shoes were assembled and packed for sale, on Monday and 35 fire tenders and around 140 firefighters were pressed into service to douse the blaze.

Deputy commissioner of police (Outer) Parvinder Singh said, "One set of human remains has been collected from the second floor of the building. No identification is possible. The remains have been sent to a mortuary for preliminary autopsy.

The search inside the building will continue till all areas have been scanned, he said.

Director of Forensic Science Laboratory, Rohini, Deepa Verma said, "Two forensic teams have been deployed at this site for finding and collecting biological evidence. We have been informed that six people were trapped in the fire and

Shopkeeper shot dead **in Delhi**

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

A 36-vear-old man was shot dead allegedly by a group of men inside his shop in west Delhi's Raghubir Nagar on Friday, police said. The victim has been identified as Vinod Bhati.

His house and shop are located in the same building. He was out on bail in a murder case registered in 2018 at Khayala police station, they said. Around noon, some

men came on two motorcycles entered Bhati's shop and shot him. He was declared brought dead at Balaji Action Hospital.

cards vaccinated at special session **New Delhi, June 25:** Without an identity proof or a mobile phone, 46drive for homeless people. Nobody knew how to officers present at the camp said he got to know about the drive last night. register such people without an identity card "There were no preparawaited for four hours to or mobile number," an officer at the vaccination

Homeless people without identity

get vaccinated at a special inoculation centre set up for homeless people at Yamuna Pushta Night Shelter here, while people who came from places like Baghpat and Ghaziahad and had IDs got jabs within minutes. "Confusion marred the

centre said. Delhi Urban

Shelter Improvement Board organised the vaccination camp in association with the office of the district magistrate (Central Delhi) the Holistic Centre for Development. One of the

Someone, we got it started around 10:30 am," he said.In the absence of a mechanism to register homeless people on the Cowin portal, those having an identity proof and a mobile number were vaccinated Covishield first. "This

homeless people; most of them do not have any identity proof or mobile number. So, they had to wait for hours while people from outside got themselves registered and took the jabs within minutes," a member of an NGO present at the night shelter said.

Most of the first 50 peo-ple vaccinated at the centre till 2 pm on Friday belonged to nearby resi-

NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

Delhi Police on Friday injured, officials said.

The incident took place on Thursday in Dwarka's Ambarhai village.

ing gun shot injuries to a couple. The husband, identified as Vinay Dahiya, received four gunshot injuries around stomach and chest, while his wife Kiran Dahiya (19) received gunshot wound on her neck," Deputy Commissioner of

residents of Gopalpur village in Sonipat and they got married in August 2020, following which they were living in Ambarhai. Vinay

Police (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said.

was working as a cab

driver at airport.

The neighbours got to know about the incident and took the victims to Venkateshewara hospital Vinay where declared brought dead, the DCP said.

Kiran is undergoing treatment and her condition is stated to be not out of denger, police said.

"The identification of the accused is underway and we have identified

According to police, the father and uncle of the woman were interrogat ed in connection with the incident, however, they were not arrested.

The victims were the residents of Gopalpur village in Sonipat and they got married in August 2020, following which they were living in Ambarhai. Vinay was working as a cab driver at airport, police said.

In August last year, the approached Punjab and Haryana high court for their safety. The local police of Sonipat was given direction for the action, police

Dwarka murder: Cops quiz relatives of slain man's wife

AGE CORRESPONDENT

questioned the father and uncle of the woman and identified some persons in connection with the incident where a 23-yearold man was shot dead and his wife got severely

"Around 9.30 pm, a PCR call was received regard-

Call centre busted, 82 held; ₹64L seized

AGE CORRESPONDENT

With the arrest of 82 people, the Delhi Police claimed to have busted a fake international call centre which used to dupe people in the name of answering Amazon related queries. Police has recovered ₹64 lakh cash, 93 laptops, two SUVs and four computers from their possession.

A tip-off was received that an illegal call centre is being run near Jagatpuri area which is involved in large scale cyber cheating on the pretext of solving queries and hacking of Amazon services by taking money as security, the police said.

Accordingly, a raid was conducted and it was found the accused impersonating themselves as Amazon employees were engaged in attending calls. After seeing the police, they tried to run away but could not succeed, the police said. It also came to notice that they were using illegal techniques through VOIP calling by passing the illegal international long-distance gateways and thus causing wrongful loss to govern-

wrongful gain to themselves. They were cheating on the pretext of solving queries related to Amazon. Attractive messages were flashed on the mobile phone of customers saying that 1000 dollars has been credited to their particular Amazon account. On receiving these messages, they used to call back to know more about the message of credited amount after which the accused used to threaten that their social security number has been hacked and can be repaired only by purchasing gift vouchers and sharing the same with them. Out of fear, these customers bought the gift

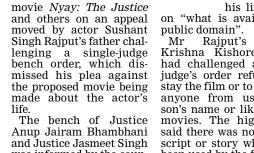
voucher and shared the details which in turn was redeemed immediately into the selective account of the main accused persons. During interrogation it was revealed that one Rakesh was an overall caretaker and was reportedly running this call centre on behalf of one Mannu Singh Tanwar. On asking about any license and authority to run this centre the accused could not produce any documents.



Email to CP, Delhi at: cp.snshrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in | Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL 1090

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL 112



HC refuses to stay release of film based

was informed by the counsel of makers of film Nyay: The Justice that the movie has been released on June 11 as per schedule on OTT platform named Lapalap. Earlier, the court sought clarity on the status of the movie as both sides lawyer gave contradictory version about the release of the movie

AGE CORRESPONDENT

The division bench of Delhi High Court on

Friday sought a response from all the makers of the

NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

The vacation bench of Justices during the hearing said there is nothing to show that there would be



"any detri-mental effect" Rajput's reputation by pro-

S.S. Rajput movies about his life based on "what is available in

father Krishna Kishore Singh had challenged a single judge's order refusing to stay the film or to restrain anyone from using his son's name or likeness in movies. The high court said there was no written script or story which has been used by the filmmaker and refused to pass any interim order on the

"There is nothing that they (makers) have, or they could have had used except what is available in the public domain. There is no unholy interest in the life story because the man's life was an exceptional life which is a plausible theme for a movie and they have made a movie," the court said.

SHORT TAKES **UP man shot at for**

not wearing mask Bareilly: A security guard posted at the Junction Road branch of Bank of Baroda here on Friday allegedly opened fire at a customer who was trying to force his way inside without a mask, police said. The customer, Rajesh Kumar, was seriously injured and admitted to the district hospital while the guard has been taken into police custody, superintendent of police (city)

Ravindra Kumar said. Rajesh Kumar had come to the bank for some work at around 11:30 am when an altercation took place with the guard, Keshav Prasad Mishra, who in anger shot at him, the SP said. According to eyewitnesses, the guard was heard repeatedly shouting before he was taken into custody that the customer was trying to force his way inside without a mask and abused him when he was checked for it. He also said that he had to open fire when the customer forcibly

Odisha BJP unit

protest against govt

Bhubaneswar: Leaders of Odisha state BJP unit on Friday gheraged the head office of the state civil supplies corporation here alleging gross irregularities in paddy procurement at different market-yards in the state. The leaders protested the state government's inaction against the millers who they said were 'exploiting' the farmers by reducing the 8-10 kg of paddy per quintal during procurement on the pretext of moisture content in the crop. The leaders alleged that farmers failed to sell their produce at the market-yards due to the highhandedness of millers. Tokens issued to many farmers have lapsed, the leaders said. "Inordinate delay in the procurement has led to the piling up of sacks of paddy under open sky at different procurement centres in Western Odisha. Soaked in rain, sacks of paddy have become sprouts," the saffron leaders alleged. "We have been alleging gross irregularities in Mandi. Tokens are getting lapsed and minimum support price is not ensured.

DO NOT LOBBY FOR LEADERSHIP CHANGE: BJP

Our allegations were con-

firmed later by the Central

team.," said Mukesh Mahaling,

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY **BHOPAL, JUNE 25**

"Dissidents" in ruling Bharatiya Janata Party here have received a rap on their knuckles by the party leadership for 'trying to build a perception on imminent change of leadership' in Madhya Pradesh by indulging in 'closed-door meeting' politics. Party affairs in-charge of Madhya Pradesh P. Muralidhar Rao has taken strong exception the recent incident of closed-door meetings by some senior Bharativa Janata Party leaders, giving rise to the speculation about replacement of chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, at the executive committee meeting of the state Bharativa Janata Party here on Thursday. Sources said Mr Rao told the 'dissidents' that "The tactics of creating a perception on imminent change of leadership through media management and by indulging in 'closed-door meeting' politics will not work. Lobbying to get posts is not BJP's culture. In BJP, one has to deliver to acquire the posi-

Need details of money spent on medicines: **HC to Bengal**

Kolkata, June 25: Observing that taxpayers' money, of which the state is a trustee, cannot be wasted by letting "precious medicines" lie unused at a hospital when other facilities are in dire need of those, the Calcutta HC on Friday asked the Bengal to apprise it of the amount spent on purchase of medicines in the last five years.

The state has to make plans to save money wherever possible, a division bench comprising Acting chief justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Arijit Banerjee said, while hearing a suo motu writ petition on a news report which pointed out that medicines worth ₹1cr may get wasted at Beliaghata ID Hospital as these are allegedly nearing their expiry dates.

One needs to keep in mind that taxpayers' money of which the state is a trustee, cannot be allowed to be wasted like this. The entire mind and energy should not be used for framing the schemes to make the voters happy," the bench said. The matter was taken up suo motu earlier this week after Justice Shivakant Prasad brought to the notice of the acting chief justice a news report published in a Hindi daily that expressed apprehension over waste of medicines at the Bengal-run Beliaghata ID hospital here. The division bench directed that a notice be issued to the Bengal government through its chief secretary and the secretary of health and family welfare department. The bench directed the government to apprise the court of "the amount spent on pur-chase of different medicines and other consumables in Bengal during the last five years in different hospitals and medical colleges and the amount of medicines which had to be disposed of as the same could not be utilised before their expiry date"

SIT to probe Maha vaccination fraud

Mumbai, June 25: The police has formed a special investigation team to probe a fake Covid vaccination camp racket that took place in several places in the metropolis, leading to the arrest of ten persons, a senior official said on Friday. The police investigation has also found that the so-called Covid vaccine doses administered to the victims contained saline water, he added. A total of ₹12.40 lakh,

which was taken as vaccine cost and camp fees by the organisers, has been recovered along with a car, the official added.

"Prima facie, the probe has found the accused gave doses containing saline water. Some of the victims had complained about vaccine vials used in the camps having bro-ken seals. Considering the danger in which the accused put people at these camps, we have slapped section 308, which is for attempt to culpable homicide not amounting to murder, apart from other IPC provisions," said Vishwas Nangre Patil, joint commissioner of police (Law and Order).

The Joint CP, addressing a press conference,

said at least nine such Mumbai between May 25 and June 6, and seven cases have been registered at various police stations here so far.

He said the police had received information about a camp that was held for over 500 people on April 24, adding that all such inoculation events where the beneficiaries did not receive certificates will be checked starting from April 24.

"So far, the police has recorded the statement of at least 200 people, and have recovered 114 dupli-cate certificates which were uploaded on CoWin app. The accounts of main accused Mahendra Pratap Singh, who owns an event management firm, and Manish firm, and Manish Tripathi, who has a nursing institute, have been frozen. Singh's firm was involved organizing such camps and it was manned by students from Tripathi's institute," the Joint CP informed. He said the vaccine vials were provided by Shivam Hospital in Charkop in Kandivali, and Dr Shivraj Pataria and Neeta Pataria have been arrested in this con-

Ratnagiri woman 1st in Maha to die of Delta

Mumbai, June Maharashtra on Friday reported the first death from the 'Delta Plus' variant, with an octogenarian woman succumbing in Ratnagiri civil hospi-

tal, a senior official said. The woman hails from Sangameswar and was admitted to the hospital, over 330 kilometres from Mumbai, a few days ago, Sanjay Shinde, additional collector, Ratnagiri said. He said the woman's death was being audited to see if she suffered from comorbidities.

Shinde said district offi-

cials have been told to

increase awareness as well as sensitize people about appropriate behavior. 48 cases of Delta Plus' variant have been detected from 45,000 samples sequenced so far in the country, Maharashtra reporting the highest number of such cases at 20, the Centre said. The characteristics of the Delta Plus increased transmissibility, stronger binding to receptors of lung cells as well as potential reduction in monoclonal anti-

Strict norms to tackle Delta+ variant in Maha

'First 2 levels having max relaxations have been removed'

SONU SHRIVASTAVA

In the wake of Delta Plus variant found in the state, Maharashtra has decided to impose stricter Covid restrictions in all districts notwithstanding weekly positivity rate and hospital beds availability. Maharashtra also became the first state in the country to administer more than three crore vaccine doses. The Maharashtra chief secretary Sitaram Kunte on Friday issued a notification stating that the first two levels having maximum relaxations have been removed till

further order. The government notification said, "Given that the virus causing Covid is undergoing mutations in various geographies, and that these mutations are displaying more transmissibility and potential reductions in monoclonal antibody response, a statelevel trigger mandating all the administrative units, irrespective of values of the indices of weekly positivity rate and oxygen bed occupancy percentage, to remain at a



A health worker administers a dose of Covid vaccine to a beneficiary during a drive-in vaccination camp by BMC at Kandivali in Mumbai on Friday.

operation till withdrawn by specific order of the Disaster Management Authority (SDMA)."

A senior official said that the decision of imposing stricter restrictions was taken after considering emerging cases of Delta Plus variant in the state.

The state has also changed the parameters for level of restrictions.

"Weekly positivity rate to be considered for decision regarding levels of restrictions to be applied must be determined only

level not below 3 is to be in on the basis of RT-PCR tests and not other tests. Data for this shall be made available by the public health department," it said.

The senior official said that the Central government has directed the state not to let its guard down in connection with the Delta and Delta Plus among other variants. Therefore, it is decided to cut down the relaxations.

The state government has also asked all the DDMA to impose fines effectively on violators of Covid appropriate behav-

■ India last year accused Pak of 'providing safe haven to terrorists'

Pakistan stays in FATF 'Grey List'

KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

In a major blow to Islamabad and a boost to India's position on the menace of terrorism, Pakistan will remain in the "grey list" of the global anti-terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) at least till October this year—despite "largely addressing" 26 out of the 27 items on the action plan it committed to ago—on three years account of failure to address "one key action item concerning the

investigation and prosecution of senior leaders and commanders of UNdesignated terror groups," the FATF said on Friday at the end of its five-day virtual plenary meeting.

FATF president Marcus Pleyer made it clear that Islamabad has to address all items on the action list before it exits the grey list. He said the FATF has Pakistani government on areas that still need to be improved as part of a "new action plan that largely focuses on money laundering risks and India had last year accused Pakistan of "continuing to provide safe haven to terrorist entities and individuals" and not taking any action "against several terrorist entities and individuals including those pro-scribed by the UN

Ibrahim, and Zakir-ur-Rahman Lakhvi number of investigations and prosecutions and making sure that law enforcement agencies cooperate internationally

S. Tender No. Brief Description

01 16200558

02 07203447

03 07211972

04 09212365

05 07211537

06 07213651

07 07210090

08 09202471E

10 07210377

11 07210299

12 07210201A

13 06191066

14 16200330

15 09212320

16 07210336

09212141

18 09212310

19 09215001A

08201531A

09

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on

behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for

MASTER CONTROLLER OF

LATERAL BUMP STOP FOR

KIT OF BREAK GEAR BUSHES

495-4A QUICK DRAW FOR BLC

STAINLESS STEEL TROUGH

SAFETY WIRE ROPE, FOR

POLYMER BUFFER SPRING

GROUND CONNECTION FOR

WATER TANK (2X685 LITERS)

BALL JOINT TRACTION LEVER

M R FILTER DRAWING NO. KBIL

KIT (2 ITEMS) FOR BRAKE

IMPROVED HIGH TENSILE

TIGHT LOCK CENTRE BUFFER

ROTARY BOTTOM OPERATED ARTICULATED LOCK

KIT (4 ITEMS) FOR COMMON

CAST STEEL CASNUB 22HS

BOGLE FOR BVCM WAGON

DUMP VALVE GV 12-ESRA

IRS POINT MACHINE

M.S.EQUAL ANGLES

65X65X8MN

CYLINDER

POH KIT FOR KE TYPE

EMD LOCOMOTIVE

FOR BMBC

FLOOR

BRAKE BEAM

Security Council such as

Masood Azhar, Dawood

to trace, freeze, and confiscate assets."

The FATF's grey list

comprises nations which have failed to fulfil their obligations to combat terror financing. Pakistan was put in the FATF grey list in June, 2018. India had last year accused Pakistan of "continuing to provide safe haven to terrorist entities and individuals" and not taking any action "against several terrorist entities and individuals including those proscribed by the UN Security Council such as Masood Azhar, Dawood Ibrahim, and Zakir-ur-Rahman Lakhvi.

Closing Date

19.07.2021

19.07.2021

19.07.2021

19.07.2021

24.07.2021

26.07.2021

26.07.2021

26.07.2021

28.07.2021

30.07.2021

30.07.2021

30.07.2021

02.08.2021

04.08.2021

05.08.2021

06.08.2021

06.08.2021

09.08.2021

30.11.2021

30 NOS

3087 NOS

5861 SET

10041 SET

35520 NOS

2076 SET

699 NOS

246 NOS

10060 NOS

60000 KGS

186 NOS

435 NOS

9845 NOS

6650 SET

ANVT-2021-24 Dated 25.06.2021 1410/2021

60 NOS

RailMadad 139

station on 29.06.2021.

its proper route from 01.07.2021.

NORTHERN RAILWAY Your Convenience - Our Concern

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Revised Traffic Handling Plan

In continuation to the Notice "Temporary Cancellation

Diversion/Partial Cancellation/ Rescheduling/ Regulation/

Skipping of Stoppage of Trains due to traffic block" which was published in the various Newspapers on 25.06.2021.

• Train No. 09325 Indore Jn.-Amritsar Jn. Special Express will be

diverted via Chandigarh-Sanehwal with stoppage skipping of Sirhind

Train No. 09326 Amritsar Jn.-Indore Jn. Special Express will run on

Train No. 08104 Amritsar Jn.-Tatanagar Special Express will be

Note: For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table & Stations

enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or

may visit Indian Railways website: https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App

diverted via Sanehwal-Chandigarh also on 30.06.2021.

Following amendments are being issued:-

NORTHERN RAILWAY OFFICE OF Principal Chief Materials Manager Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001 Mail ID: salenr365@gmail.com

No: 117/S/Auction Programme/Sale/2021-22 Extra date in Auction Program of Northern Railway Following extra dates of the auction program for the month of July 202 will be as under

S No. Depots/Depot Extra date for e-auction Shakurbasti 011-27015387 All other auction dates advised earlier will remain same. For further details regarding e-auction please visit Railway website. 'www.ireps.gov.in'

> (D.S. Ramu) Dy. CMM/S&P For Principal Chief Materials Manager

Serving Customers With A Smile

This is notified for the information of all concerned that to meet the operational requirements, the timings of the following special trains will be revised w.e.f. 01.07.2021 instead of 26.06.2021 as notified earlier:-

02582 New Delhi-Manduadih Superfast Express Special						
STATION	Existing Timings		Revised Timings			
	Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Departure		
GYANPUR	09:03	09:05	08:48	08:50		
01061 Lokmanya Ti	lak Termi	nus-Jaynaga	ar Expres	s Special		
BHULANPUR	12:12	12:13	12:08	12:09		
VARANASI JN.	12:35	12:45	12:25	12:35		
VARANASI CITY	12:53	12:55	12:45	12:47		
SARNATH	13:06	13:08	12:58	13:00		
AUNRIHAR JN.	13:33	13:35	13:20	13:22		
02562 New	Delhi-Jay	nagar Expre	ss Specia	al		
GHAZIPUR CITY	10:00	10:05	09:30	09:35		
BALLIA	11:05	11:10	10:55	11:00		
04005 Sitamarhi-	Anand Vit	ıar Terminal	Express	Special		
SIWAN	09:50	09:55	09:30	09:35		
JIRADEI	10:11	10:13	09:45	09:47		
MAIRWA	10:24	10:26	10:10	10:12		
BHATPAR RANI	10:40	10:42	10:16	10:18		
09454 Samastipur-Ahmedabad Express Special						

DEORIA SADAR 12:40 12:45 12:20 12:25 02564 New Delhi-Saharsa Express Special CHHAPRA 10:22 10:27 10:10 10:15 05115 Chhapra-De i Expres 11:25 **CHHAPRA** 11:30 12:58 13:00 12:25 12:30 **BALLIA** YUSUFPUR 13:38 13:40 13:13 13:15 14:15 14:20 13:35 13:40 **GHAZIPUR CITY AUNRIHAR JN.** 14:53 14:58 14:20 14:25 15:14 15:16 14:51 14:53 DOBHI 15:24 15:26 15:05 15:07 KERAKAT

Passengers are advised to please check the detailed Time-Table of above trains through RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

tization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensure

www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in Download RailMadad a Please **NORTHERN RAILWAY** join us on

Your Convenience-Our Concern SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE Visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

BJP attacks TMC over fake Covid vaccination

RAJIB CHOWDHURI and **PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI**

Kolkata/Berhampore, June 25: The major fake vaccination racket, which Tollywood actor and Trinamul MPCongress Mimi Jadaynur Chakraborty claimed to have busted with the help of the Kolkata police after getting herself a false dose at a camp run by a bogus IAS officer,

has boomeranged to her own party and its government in West Bengal within two days.

The backfire unfolded as several photos of TMC MLAs including two heavy-weight Cabinet colleagues of chief minister Mamata Baneriee and a Rajya Sabha MP of their party allegedly with arrested kingpin Debanjan Deb at various events were flashed by the BJP on Thursday

evening. The two state Cabinet members are Firhad Hakim and Subrata Mukherjee. While Mr Hakim is the state transminister, Mukherjee is the state

THE BACKFIRE unfolded as several photos of three TMC MLAs including two heavyweight Cabinet colleagues of chief minister Mamata Banerjee and a Raiva Sabha MP of their party allegedly with arrested kingpin Debanjan Deb at various events were flashed by the BJP on Thursday evening

panchayat Accused in the Narada sting bribery, they were arrested chargesheeted by the Central Bureau Investigation (CBI) last

month. The third TMC MLA is Debasish Kumar who was elected from Rashbehari seat this time. He is also a member of the board of administrators under Mr Hakim at the Kolkata Municipal Corporation where Debanjan claimed to have been posted as a joint commissioner and allegedly forged official documents, signatures,

racket. The TMC Rajya Sabha MP is Dr Santanu Sen

and emblems to run the

who is now the Indian Medical state secretary. ing his identity.

TMC government further are the photos about Debanjan's partic-(Government at Doors)

State BJP president reached such a of the TMC.

Association (West Bengal branch) lodged a complaint of cheating with the police on Friday against Debanjan for clicking a photo with him by hid-

ipation in its key project Duare Sarkar ahead of the Assembly

Dilip Ghosh, however, said: "Fraud and forgery level in our state that fake drives of vaccination are held as part cut money and syndicate nexus People of Bengal are not guinea pigs. The outgoing mayor is directly involved in the racket. He should guit now. A CBI probe is the need of

What embarrassed the Kolkata police commissioner Soumen Mitra said. "The act of the accused was inhuman. It reflects his mental disorder. We are investigating how he did it.'

have to be arrested.

MP to get genome sequencing facility soon

ples respectively. Two patients who con-

complications.

Two other patients suffering from Delta-Plus variant infection have not received the vaccine, but they have

2. No Manual offer will be entertained. Tender Notice No. 22/2021-22 Dated: 25.06.2021 1415/2021 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE NORTHERN RAILWAY **E-TENDER NOTICE** Comprehensive cleaning contract for the surface cleaning world and daily removal of solid waste/ rubbish / refuse / garbage / hedge cuttings / silt etc. from the surrounding / circulating areas of Multi-storied Officers' Flats of Block No.s 101 and 102 and Single Storey work with

NOTE:-1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details

Quarters at Anand Vihar Railway Colony, New Delhi (as per Annexure -I) and periodical cleaning & thorough desiliting of manholes & sewer lines in the said area with contractor's own labour, tools & materials and to dump the solid waste/ rubbish/ refuse/garbage/hedge cuttings/silt etc. from the Railway premises into the Municipal-Corporation dumping grounds at least once daily at 9.00 hrs. and keeping the area around Railway Dustbins clean and hygienic for a period of three years from the date of award of work on a monthly payment basis plus GST extra as applicable. Rs. 22,420/- P.M. or Rs. 8,07,120/-(Eight Lakh Seven Thousand estimate cost One Hundred Twenty Rupees only) & GST extra as applicable 2360/- (Rs. Two Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Only) to be deposited by online payment mode at www.ireps.gov.in Address of the office website where the tender form can be www.ireps.gov.in EMD to be deposited Rs.16,100/- (Rs. Sixteen Thousand One Hundred Only) to be deposited by online payment mode at www.ireps.gov.in Three (03) year from the date of award of work Date & Time for submission of 19.07.2021 up to 15.00 hrs. and opening tender & opening of tender 15.30 hrs. same day Website particulars where complete www.ireps.gov.in details of tender can be seen etc.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

No. 31-Med-SAN-Comprehensive cleani

sequencing facility for early detection of evolving mutants of coronavirus, considered highly infectious.

tion one desires"

State medical education minister Vishwas Sarang told reporters here on Friday that the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) was going to set up genome sequencing facility in Madhya Pradesh shortly.

Madhya Pradesh is soon

going to get a genome

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY

BHOPAL, JUNE 25

genome sequencing facility in MP will help the state detect early the cases of the evolving coronavirus mutants particularly the recently emerged Delta-Plus variant of the virus, which is considered highly infectious. This will help the state curb spread of the new variants of the virus by conducting the contact tracing of the patients early", he

According to him, it takes at least 15 days to get genome sequencing reports ((B.1.617.2) is detected in 318 NCDC from MP, making the samples, Alfa (B.1.1.7) and

task of contact tracing of Delt-Plus variants were the patients challenging. Delt-Plus variants were found in 56 and seven samthe patients challenging. Genome sequencing of the samples could be done in five days if the facility is established in MP, he added. MP has sent 2025 samples NCDC for genome to sequencing since November 2020. Of them, reports of samples have been

received by the state health department to date. An analysis of the reports said three variants of coronavirus have been detected in MP so far.

While the Delta variant

tracted the Delta-Plus variant of the virus succumbed to infection in the state.

Three Delta-Plus variant infected patients, who have received single or double doses of vaccines earlier, have recovered. They are currently under home isolation without developing any

recovered.

SHORT TAKES

Actor Payal Rohatgi

arrested in Gujarat

Ahmedabad: Bollywood actor Payal Rohatgi was arrested by the Ahmedabad city police on Friday for allegedly threatening the residents of her housing society, an official said. An FIR was registered against her on Thursday based on a complaint lodged by society chairman Dr Parag Shah, inspector A.S. Roy of satellite police station said. The 36year-old actor, who has been living with her parents in a posh society in Satellite area for the last over one year, was booked for uttering obscene words (IPC Section 294-b), intentional insult (504) and criminal intimidation (506), said Roy, quoting the FIR. In his complaint, Shah claimed that Rohatgi has been harassing society members, including children for some time, and she once even threatened children that she would "break their legs" if they played in the common area of the society. -PTI

Akhil Gogoi given

parole to meet mom

Guwahati: An NIA court on

Friday granted two-day parole to Independent Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi on humanitarian grounds to visit his mother and son. NIA special judge Pranjal Das, after hearing a petition filed by Mr Gogoi's lawyers requesting permission for him to visit his family mem-bers in Guwahati and Jorhat, and people of Sivasagar, granted him parole for 48 hours which he can take as per his convenience. The court, however, allowed Mr Gogoi to visit only his ailing mother in Jorhat and his son, who has recently recovered from Covid-19, in Guwahati but forbade him from meeting the people of his constituency due to the prevailing pandemic situation. The Raijor Dal chief can choose his parole days, and as he is still jailed, he will be escorted by security forces.

— PTI

Zambian held with

cocaine worth ₹7cr Mumbai: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a trans-continental drug racket with the seizure of cocaine worth ₹7.35 crore from a Zambian woman passenger at the Mumbai international airport, an official said on Friday. The woman, Emile Mulinde, seemed to be acting as a mule' (drug carrier), he said. Mulinde was intercepted by a DRI team after her arrival here from Addis Ababa on Thursday, A special pocket in the ladies purse in her checked-in baggage was found to have 700 grams of cocaine inside, the official said. The contraband was worth ₹7.35 crore in the illicit market, he said, adding

that the woman was booked

under the NDPC Act. - PTI

■ PM's initiative has raised a lot of expectations across J&K, says ex-IAS officer Shah Faesal Leaders failed to speak for J&K, feel people

The sequel of Thursday's all-party meet on Jammu and Kashmir is a huge disappointment for many people in the Union Territory (UT) who took to social media platform to ridicule the invitees for their perceived failure in presenting the case of the people they claim to reprebefore Minister Narendra Modi

expressly". More importantly, as some of them pointed out, the mainstream leaders from the Valley did not speak in unison on the vital issue of restoration of the erstwhile state's special status with some of them taking refuge under the pretext of it being sub judice. "The BJP leaders, including ministers, have been repeatedly and vocif-

Pune, June 25: There was

an attempt to harass Anil Deshmukh out of "frus-

tration" as the investiga-

tion against him and his

family has not revealed

anything, NCP chief Sharad Pawar said on

Friday as the Enforcement Directorate

(ED) conducted searches

at the former's properties.

houses in Nagpur and

Mumbai. Mr Deshmukh,

an NCP leader, resigned as

Maharashtra home minis-

ter in the aftermath of

corruption allegations levelled by former Mumbai police commis-sioner Param Bir Singh.

"Earlier some (Central)

agencies had showered

loving attention on the

businesses of his son....As

far as I know, they did not find anything. So out of frustration, there is

frustration, there is attempt to see if he (Anil

harassed in any other

way," Mr Pawar said.
"All these things are not

new to us. Anil Deshmukh

is not the first (to face

such action). A new trend

of using power has been

shown by those who are in power. There is no need to

talk about that issue any

more. We are not at all worried about it," Mr

Pawar told reporters here.

Asked about the BJP

passing a resolution to

seek CBI inquiry against

NCP leader and deputy

chief minister Ajit Pawar

and Shiv Sena minister

Anil Parab, Mr Pawar said this was novel. "A nation-

al party passing a resolu-

can

Deshmukh)

searched

The ED on Friday

Deshmukh's

and 35A can't come back even as the matter is before the Supreme Court. If it is not sub judice for them why are some of our so-called leaders so apologetic about it?" asked one

Senior journalist Altaf Husain tweeted, "All-party meet on Kashmir yields nothing. Some leaders have, by their statements after the meeting, proved that they are collaborators. Others have proved they are spineless and inconsequential".

But Mushtaq Ahmed Alaqaband, a Srinagar resident, disagreed with him. He said, "I don't think major political decisions can be made in a single meeting, but require a continuous and comprehensive negotiation process, and Thursday's meeting was the beginning".

■ NCP mocks BJP's resolution against mantris

Deshmukh is being harassed

out of frustration, says Pawar

been repeatedly and vociferously saying Articles 370 resident, said, "People leaders of J&K main-stream political parties

Security personnel stand guard at the residence of for-

mer Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh in

BJP says ED raids not

politically motivated

Mumbai: The BJP said

investigation against for-

mer home minister Anil

Deshmukh was going on

as per a Bombay high

court order and rejected

suggestions that ED searches at his premises

were politically motivated.

The Opposition party

also hit out at its former

ally Shiv Sena, heading

the ruling Maharashtra

coalition, for linking the ED action against the

NCP leader with the BJP.

BJP leader Devendra

Fadnavis said investiga-

tion to demand probe

against the leaders of an

Opposition party was

unheard of. (State BJP

chief) Chandrakant Patil

is an achiever, he can do

things hitherto unseen

and unheard of, so we are

not surprised," Mr Pawar

Prime Minister's initiative has raised a lot of expectations across J&K. Everyone I spoke to from Kashmir told me that something good is happening after

- Shah Faesal, Former IAS officer

here as well in Jammu had attached several hopes with the meeting. But once again, they have been dis-

appointed."
Elaborating, he said, "If you wanted to win the hearts of the Kashmiris you should have sent through these leaders a gift, big enough to restore their faith in you and these leaders as well. Had you done it, people would have begun to trust you, these meetings and the entire system.

All the 14 prominent

the meeting."
Prime Minister Modi he urged said Kashmiri leadership to associate itself with the ongoing process in a prelude to assembly elections in J&K. The government sources said that the

Minister and his government are committed to restoration of J&K's statehood but the same would be done through an act by dialogue with Parliament at an appropriate time which has not come vet. The sources. once again, ruled out the possibility of returning special status to it.

Gupkar "Prime

Dr Noor Ahmad Baba, political analyst and former professor at the political science department at

Kashmiri leaders were

also told that the Prime

any of the issues and more particularly from the perspective of a Kashmiri, demands put forth during say it is somewhat a disap-pointment because the the meeting, in a way, gave greater clearance to Delhi than the leadership here. delimitation It helped Narendra Modi

> internationally also". However, former IAS officer Shah Faesal said, "Prime Minister's initiative has raised a lot of expectations across J&K" He claimed, "Everyone I spoke to from Kashmir told me that something good is happening after a long time.

> to build up his own image

at the country level and

Referring to the Prime Minister's assurance to the participants of Thursday's meeting that he wants to gap 'Dilli ki duri, Dil ki duri (the detach from Delhi and the heart)," he said, "May the

Kerala: Women's panel chief steps down

GILVESTER ASSARY
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

Kerala State Women's Commission chairperson M.C. Josephine resigned on Friday fol-lowing public outrage over her highly insensitive remarks against a woman petitioner during a live television programme of a Malayalam channel on Wednesday.

The CPM state secretariat met at the party headquarters AKG Centre here on Friday morning to discuss the matter. Ms Josephine, who is also a secretariat member, explained her position before the leadership. She informed the party about the apology tendered by her on Thursday evening.

"Josephine explained her side at the meeting and offered to step down from the post of Chairperson," said CPM acting state secretary Mr A Vijayaraghavan at a press conference held after the meeting. When asked whether the party had sought her resignation, he said, "Josephine offered to resign from the post.

During a TV pro-gramme that was held following back-to-back dowry harassment deaths in the state, the harassment woman said that she was being harassed by her husband and mother-inlaw. Josephine asked her if she had complained about the matter to the police.

When the woman said she hadn't lodged the complaint yet, the chairperson shot back angrily; in that case, you suffer." Josephine was rude to her throughout the brief conversation.

chairperson's The insensitive remarks went viral on social insensitive media, triggering huge public outrage.

who attended the meeting said they raised the issues like the demand for restoration of its special status and statehood, release of political prisoners, addressing the economic distress to the urgency of resumption of peace dialogue with Pakistan and cross-LoC trade. But, as was confessed by Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, CPIM chief leader

spokesperson of People's Alliance for Declaration, Minister heard us all very

Raut seeks CBI, ED probes into Ayodhya land deal

SONU SHRIVASTAVA



The BJP's state unit had passed a resolution on Thursday demanding CBI investigation against Maharashtra deputy chief investigation minister Ajit Pawar and state transport minister Anil Parab in connection



with the Sachin Waze case. Earlier the Sena had demanded an intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and RSS chief Dr. Mohan Bhagwat to ensure there is no scam in the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

The Sena spokesperson said that he was surprised that the BJP had passed a resolution for a probe against Mr Pawar and Mr Parab in its state executive meeting.

M. Raut said that if the case of corruption in land

investigate the land sold Janmabhoomi Trust by Deep Narayan Upadhyay, who is the nephew of Ayodhya's mayor Rishikesh Upadhyay.
"For this, the BJP's

purchase is to be exposed,

then CBI and ED should

national executive should pass a resolution that the CBI and the ED would probe irregularities and corruption in Ayodhya land purchase. If investigation is done then the CBI and ED can find a big scam," he said.

The Sena leader said that if there are any allegations against Mr Pawar and Mr Parab, the state agencies were capable of investigating those. "If the BJP thinks that with use of the CBI and the ED, they would come into power then they are wrong," he said.

TN fishermen escape Lankan tiring should condemn this and

Rameswaram (TN), June Nine fishermen escaped unhurt when Sri

Lankan naval personnel allegedly opened fire on their boats while they were returning from the Palk Straits after fishing.
At least four boats in riddled by bullets fired by

the Lankan Navy and one bullet each was recovered from two boats, Arokiyam, fishermen's representative and also a fisher, told reporters here. "Luckily, nine of us

escaped unhurt," he said. A fisheries department official said he has received a complaint from

fishermen, seeking action to protect them.

They had to face the "Lankan bullets" on their return early on Friday and the island Navy also fired in the air, the representative alleged, adding they had set out for fishing on Thursday in more than 200 boats with 1,500 fisher-

This is the third instance of "Lankan Navy opening fire" on fishermen in recent times and they were fishing on the Indian side of Palk Straits, he said.

The two bullets that were found in boats were hand▶ THIS IS the third instance of the 'Lankan Navy opening fire' on fishermen in recent times and they were fishing on the Indian side of Palk Straits, Arokiyam, fishermen's representative said

authorities, he added. Video clips of boats riddled by bullets surfaced in the social media as well. Rajya Sabha Anbumani

Ramadoss tweeted saying though nine fishermen thankfully escaped unhurt, their boats were damaged. The government should provide compensation for damaged boats. Condemning the firing Mr Ramadoss said the

Centre should not tolerate such attacks anymore. "To find a permanent solution, the Centre should take legal steps to

retrieve Katchatheevu (an islet) that was given to Sri Lanka on a platter," he

Ramanathapuram MP, K. Navas Kani, meanwhile, has written to external affairs minister Jaishankar, seeking appropriate steps to prevent fishermen from being

48 Delta Plus cases...

■ Continued from Page 1

variant, Maharashtra government has started re-imposing restrictions on the movement of people.

The state is aspiring to vaccinate 70 per cent of its eligible population as fast as it can and flying squads have been deployed to check Covid-19 rule violations. Shops and restaurants can now open only till 4 pm and suburban trains will remain out of bounds for the general public. Meanwhile, ICMR chief

said a vaccine study has begun on children in the age group of 2-18 years and its results should be available by September.

Whether Covid-19 shots can be administered to children is a debatable question until enough data is available. There is only one country in the world, the US, which is administering vaccines to children at the moment, but there we have seen some complications with vaccines among children," Dr among Bharagava said.

Minister attacks Twitter

■ Continued from Page 1 failed to provide any prior

notice before denying me access to my own account." Twitter and the government have been at loggerheads over

multiple instances in the past few months. The new rules for social networking websites, which include appointing India-based compliance executives and other conditions, have led to a protracted feud, raising concerns that Twitter may no longer enjoy protection against user-generated content.

"Further, it is now apparent why Twitter is refusing to comply with the Intermediary Guidelines because if Twitter does comply, it will be unable to arbitrarily deny access to an individual's account which does not suit their agenda.' Mr Prasad wrote. As Twitter invoked the US Digital Millennium Copyright Act, Mr Prasad said: "The issue

that further needs to be deliberated in this context is whether India shall be guided by the copyright laws of the USA or its own copyright laws? Can a multinational platform like Twitter which proclaims itself as the flag bearer of free speech invoke American laws in India to curtail free speech of a senior minister of the Government of India?" He added: "No matter what any platform does, they will have to abide by the new IT rules fully, and there shall be no compromise on that.

Meanwhile, Congress MF Shashi Tharoor, responding to Mr Prasad's tweet, said a video posted by him was deleted by Twitter later owing to a copyrighted BoneyM song Rasputin in it. Mr Tharoor is chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology.

■ Continued from Page 1 one should not play politics over issues that are in

court," Mr Sisodia said. The interim report prepared by the SC panel has already been submitted to the apex court. The top court had on May

6 named a sub-group for carrying out the audit exercise for Delhi's health

infrastructure and allocation of oxygen and said that it shall consists of Dr Guleria, Sandeep Budhiraia Healthcare and two IAS officers not below the rank of joint secretary -- one each from the Centre and the Delhi government. From Delhi government, principal home secretary Bhupinder Bhalla was part of the committee, and from the Central government Jal Shakti ministry's joint secretary Subodh

Yadav and Sanjay Kumar

Singh of the Petroleum

and Oxygen Safety Organisation (PESO). Reacting to the alleged

tion against Deshmukh

was underway on direction of the high court and

it was wrong to attribute

political motive to the ED

action against the former

Mr Fadnavis, speaking

to the media at the Nagpur airport, said, "All

these inquiries are going

on as per direction of the

high court. There is no

reason to find any politi-cal motive in them. We

working as directed by the

He was speaking after a

programme where former

Union minister Subodh

Mohite joined the NCP

along with his supporters

Mr Mohite has been with

various other parties ear-

ieel that agencies

said.

home minister.

report, Mr Kejriwal said his only "crime" was that he had "fought for the breath of two crore people". He also said that those who lost their loved ones due to the shortage of oxygen should not be called "liars" and that when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was busy with election campaigns, he was fighting and begging to arrange oxygen for the

people of Delhi. Several BJP leaders, including Union ministers, attacked Mr Kejriwal with party spokesperson Sambit Patra citing the report to note that the government had demanded 1,140 MT of the life-saving gas during the peak of the second wave. "The requirement was 351 MT even if the panel went by the Delhi government's

'Delhi made exaggerated claims for O2' formula, while it was 289 MT according to the Central government's estimate," he said.

"It was discussed that

there is a gross discrepancy (about 4 times) in that the actual oxygen consumption claimed (1,140MT) was about 4 times higher than the versus calculated consumption by formula for bed capacity (289MT)," says the interim report of the subgroup which the Centre has submitted to the Supreme Court along with recommendations of the National Task Force on

The panel in its report pointed out that four model hospitals in Delhi — Singhal Ĥospital, Aruna Asaf Ali Hospital, ESIC Model Hospital and Liferay Hospital -- claimed extremely high oxygen consumption with very few beds and the claims erroneous, leading to extremely skewed information and significantly higher oxygen requirement for Delhi.

The panel, which submitted its interim report to the top court, said that during the meetings of the subgroup, it was repeatedly noted that there was gross discrepancy in the data recorded from proformas.

Additional secretary, department of promotion of Indian industry and internal trade, expressed anguish over the way the data was collated by the Delhi government. "It is still not clear on what basis had an allocation of 700 MT been sought by the government of Delhi in the Supreme Court of India when collated data had so many errors and it took an oxygen audit to page interim report said.

ED raids Deshmukh...

■ Continued from Page 1 of Investigation. The CBI registered a

case against Mr Deshmukh following a preliminary inquiry against him. The high preliminary court had ordered the CBI to conduct the inquiry on the complaint of city based lawyer Jayshree Ms Patil had filed a peti-

tion seeking inquiry into the allegations made by Param Bir Singh, former Mumbai police commissioner, in a letter written to Maharashtra chief Uddhav Thackeray alleging cor-

ruption charges against Mr Deshmukh. Ms Patil had filed the petition claiming that the police

her complaint against Mr Deshmukh. Mr Deshmukh, who had

to resign from his post in April following the allegations, has denied any wrongdoing. The agency's probe is

focused on the allegation that illicit funds were generated in the transfer, posting of police personnel in Maharashtra and if illegal extortion was done by the cops as claimed by Mr Singh in his complaint.

The ED has powers to attach assets of the accused during the investigation stage and later file charge sheets against them before a PMLA court for trial.

SC annuls HC's Narada order

■ Continued from Page 1 high court to first decide the aforesaid applications of the petitioners herein, for taking the counter affidavit/affidavits response on record, before proceeding to decide the

The court further said that to avoid any prejudice to any of the parties, the June 9 order "shall stand annulled" and "the high court shall decide

merits of the case.

the matter de-novo". Similarly, the Supreme Court ordered that the CBI, if it so desired, would file a reply to the applications by June 29, 2021, after serving an

advance copy to Mr

The hearing on the CBI's plea for transfer of cases outside West Bengal and other matters are due to be heard by the high court on June 29. In its June 9 order that was challenged by Mr

Ghatak and the State of

West Bengal by June 28.

Ghatak, the high court had said the chief minister, law minister and the

state government had "waited for the arguments in the case to be substantially completed before seeking to place on record their pleadings in response... It is nothing else but filling the lacunae or supporting the accused"

PM Modi criticises Congress

■ Continued from Page 1 arbitrary Modi regime". Hitting back at Mr Modi,

Mr Suriewala tweeted. "Says a PM, who is synonymous with three 'S' Suppress, Stifle and

Subjugate."
"A PM-who has undermined Parliament, A PM who has disdain for Constitution, A PM who has eroded Institutions, A PM-who has trampled

preach, for India is under 'Modi-gency' for 7 years,' he alleged. Union home minister

Amit Shah said the Congress "murdered the largest democracy in the world" for its selfishness and arrogance of power. He said Emergency was imposed to trample on voices that were raised against a family.

BJP president J.P. Nadda paid tributes to those who fought against Emergency while suffering numerous atrocities.

Union textiles minister Smriti Irani said the Emergency era "saw illegal arrests of 1.4 lakh-plus people, muzzling of the freedom of press and expression, silence of the system umpteen number of atroci-

ties on innocent citizens." The Emergency was imposed by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for a 21-month period from were imposed on the fundamental rights of people. It was lifted in 1977 and during the then Lok Sabha polls, the Congress faced first defeat since Independence by the combined Opposition



THE ASIAN AGE

26 JUNE 2021

J&K: Delimitation, polls on; statehood is carrot

here was no official agenda set for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with leaders of mainstream parties of Jammu and Kashmir last Thursday. That was evidently done to let the Valley politicians steam off if they so wished about the events of August 5, 2019 when the state's constitutional autonomy was taken away and its status reduced to that of a Union territory. But that does not mean Delhi did not have an agenda. And it is on this scheme of things that the PM was apparently able to secure the agreement of the Kashmiri leaders, although no papers appear to have been signed.

It's three years since the last popular government was pulled down. In this time

no major objectives cited as justification for ending J&K's constitutional statusending of terrorism, rapid development, and squelching of the separatist mindset (which does influence a segment of the population) have been achieved, although the Union home ministry has made extravagant claims. An elected government had to be installed.

To make that possible, the very politicians who were locked up in August 2019, and called the "Gupkar gang", had to be persuaded to

The official mantra is this would happen at an 'appropriate time'. This suggests that J&K will be run from the Centre as a UT even after the Assembly poll.

engage in dialogue with the PM. And they did. This is perhaps the Modi government's singular achievement. But it is hard to bet on the people. It is useful to remember that alienation in the Valley has never been so complete. Still, as a rule the people of Kashmir do not refuse dialogue, and that is what we just saw. Does this mean that a chapter of hope has opened after the darkness that descended two years ago? Hardly. In no way can Mr Modi's effort be compared with the mood that captured the Valley when another PM — in a speech in Srinagar — spoke of meeting the aspirations of the people in a spirit of "insaniyat, jamhooriyat, Kashmiriyat". Alas, the present dispensation in Delhi

lacks credibility in Kashmir as well as in Hindu-majority Jammu However, people in J&K are fed up with bureaucratic rule in which they have no voice. They have been hungering for an early Assembly election, and their politicians could not have turned against the popular mood. But the promise of Assembly polls comes with a caveat — that there would be a fresh delimitation exercise in the UT while the national-level delimitation is slatted for 2026.

A plausible reason for this is the decades-old demand of the Sangh Parivar for more Hindu-dominated constituencies in the Muslim-majority state in the belief that this might offer a chance to have a Hindu CM. Will this hope of the BJP materialise after delimitation? That is an open question.

In light of the Thursday meeting, delimitation and state polls are now officially on the cards, and the Valley's main politicians appear to have lent the process their sanction. Without their endorsement these processes would lack credibility.

In spite of impassioned appeals by senior elements among those gathered for the discussion with the PM, the Centre has not budged on restoring J&K's statehood. The official mantra is this would happen at an "appropriate time". This suggests that J&K will be run from the Centre as a UT even after the Assembly poll. This leaves questions: Is the election idea deceptive? Is it what the people want? In the final analysis, will Kashmir politicians agree to such an election? The fundamental subject of restoring J&K's autonomy is before the Supreme Court, and that was cited as a reason to stymie discussion on it on Thursday.

McAfee: Fame and misfortune

The rich and famous may be destined to living their lives in a goldfish bowl unless they get obsessively reclusive. The rich also tend to come in all shapes, sizes and lifestyles with the only constant in their lives being that they are invariably led under public scrutiny. The cybersecurity pioneer John McAfee did not, however, fall into any well-known stereotypes of the rich with their lavish lifestyles whose privacy is invariably invaded by the tabloids, especially when their marriages run into the rocks as they often tend to in that charmed circle.

McAfee was an unusual man who made his fame and a bit of fortune when the first major computer virus named "Brain" hit the web in 1986 and he devised ways to combat it. To his misfortune he left the company in 1994 long after which Intel took it over, in 2011, for \$7.68 billion and built up a customer base of 500 million. McAfee's expertise in computer security meant he made a small pile himself but he said he lost most of it in the 2008 crash. In a replay of the sour grapes fable, he knocked McAfee for what it had become without him but all that brought him was 10 million viewers and more notoriety than fame.

His troubles as a disillusioned millionaire may serve as a general warning to all of his ilk. He seemed to lose his self control when suspected of shooting a neigh-bour in a tiny island off Belize because that man may have poisoned four of his dogs. He somehow emerged from it unscathed until he ran afoul of the US tax authorities. Avoiding income tax may be a plaything of the rich but McAfee, once a wannabe US presidential candidate, simply refused to pay taxes on principle and ended up in a Spanish jail where he said he didn't like the food. The fear of extradition to 30 years in a US prison pushed him into taking his own life, a final warning then that fame and fortune can lead to Shakespearean tragedy too.

THE ASIAN AGE

KAUSHIK MITTER

Printer & Publisher

THE ASIAN AGE office is located at:

New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone (011) 23211124.

Published and Printed on behalf of and for

Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg,

New Delhi 110 002 at BFL Infotech Ltd., C-9, Sector-III, Noida -201301. London: Quickmarsh Ltd, 8th Floor, Block 2, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NQ.

> Farrukh Dhondy **Cabbages**



Of 'flat earth' & science denial: New orthodoxy of intolerance

"The poets have all claimed the wine From Rumi to Hafiz I asked if they meant the draught

And they said "mind your own biz!" Now Bachchoo cries out in vain to

Who replies with a fiendish grin "Abh sab khuttam, Koochh nahi baki The wages of your sin!

hink, gentle reader, as you skim this column, of Galileo, one of the fathers of science and hence of freedom from assertive superstition. He looked through telescopes and observed the movement of the planets and the sun. He proceeded to assert, from his observations, that the sun didn't circle the earth but, contrary to the firmly held doctrines and teachings of the Church, that our planet revolved and rotated, circling the sun, giving rise to day and night and to the seasons. All hell broke loose on Twitter and If this pioneer of truth had any supporters at the time, they might have pointed out to the court, and indeed to the world, that Galileo had not called for the castration or execution of those who believed that the sun went round the earth. He hadn't even called for the banning of all documents or teaching materials which asserted that the earth was flat or that it didn't move. Nevertheless, he was tried for merely

saying what he had scientifically deduced. He was aware that if they found him guilty of blasphemy, he could be put to death. Such was the power of the prevalent orthodoxy. Realising this, Galileo confessed to the bigots of the Inquisition that he recanted his blasphemous outburst. Of course, the earth was the centre of the universe and, as God's central creation, didn't move a millimetre. He may not have been applauded by the court, but he was certainly spared twenty lashes of the whip or being burned at the

The story goes that, true to his beliefs, as he left the court, he muttered to himself, or perhaps to his God if he still believed in Him, "eppur si muove" and yet it moves!

I don't suppose one can quite call her the Galileo of our times but, gentle reader, here follows the story of an artist called Jess de Wahl who this week hit the headlines through a controversy which she had sparked.

Ms de Wahl is an embroidery artist, and her work is famous enough and deemed good enough to be adopted by and sold in the gallery shop of the Royal Academy of Arts. The RA is probably the premier institution run by artists of all sorts. Their permanent exhibition and other occasional displays are among the most respectable, reviewed and revered in Britain.

Apart from excellence in her floral patterns, Ms de Wahl declares a devoted, thematic commitment to feminist principles and to feminist radical activism through art. But! But she doesn't believe that men and women can through assertion, surgery, hormone treatment or all of these, change

their gender. She expressed her scepticism in a blog. She was very careful to assert that she absolutely supported the right of people to think as they like and for the political and social rights of everyone, including men who assert that they are women or women who assert that they are really men. Her reservations were about the scientific fact that you are born and grow with one gender determined by the chromosomes in your thirty trillion cells. I suppose the harshest way of putting it is that "trans-women are not really women and trans-men are not really

The trans community's representa tives, if there are such people, took exception to her expressing this view. Eight people wrote to the Royal Academy to point out that the RA's professed ethical stance was to respect and include, etc etc. The RA responded hastily and removed and banned all Ms Wahl's exhibits and work from their

shop, labelling her "transphobic" Ms Wahl objected, saying she had not been in any sense the perpetrator of a "hate crime" and that her freedom to express a scientifically valid view

should be respected. There was, from her supporters, some mention of suing the RA for transgressing equality laws. No such action has yet been taken. Following this row, Ms Wahl has

received literally thousands of texts, tweets or whatever in support of her stance and also some nasty ones wish-

ing that she was dead. Her stance follows that of Harry Potter writer J.K. Rowling and feminist philosopher Germaine Greer, among others. It is also supported by feminists who object to trans-women entering women's athletic competitions and even challenge the idea that trans-women should use women's changing rooms and toilets and be confined in women's prisons when they offend.

The strictures against Ms de Wahl are part of a new orthodoxy of intolerance. Of course, individuals can assert what they please about their own gender or sexuality - though white people asserting that they are black would meet with the same intensity of strictures the orthodoxy favours. That "of course" should include the right to publicly assert scientific facts. The earth is not flat simply because I say so!

Subhani



Do Indians and our govt really care about sports?



Shobhaa's Take

ndia rediscovered legendary athlete Milkha Singh after he died of Covid-19 —complications at a Chandigarh hospital just five days after he lost Nirmal, his wife of 58 years, to the same disease. An avalanche of tributes poured in, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi calling him a "colossal sportsman who captured the nation's imagination". Several flowery tributes followed, but one thing that struck me amid all this gush was the sad fact that this outstanding sportsman, who brought so much fame and glory to India when he "flew" on the track, had only got the Padma Shri back in 1959, and nothing since. He declined the Arjuna Award and sulked pub-licly, hinting he expected a Padma Bhushan. We all know how Padma awards work; but surely later Milkha 'upgraded"!

We can still do it! So many other sports stars have been richly rewarded for their achievements Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar, for example. No disrespect, but if a world-class cricketer can get the country's highest civilian award. why not an internationally recognised track star? There is talk of a posthumous award for Milkha, but frankly posthumous awards have little meaning. The only people who benefit are family members. The recipient passes away without the thrill and joy of being publicly feted. Posthumous awards are a waste of time; those deserving should be celebrated when they are hale and hearty and can cherish the honour with their loved ones.

Milkha Singh must have been a fairly modest man: a huge attribute in today's times when every

Instagram. The bigots of Catholicism

accused him of blasphemy! The earth

doesn't move, they insisted. The outcry

led the leaders of the Church to arrest

poor Galileo and subject him to a trial.

second person is a brazen hustler. Had Milkha been shrewder or more calculating, he would have milked his awe-inspiring status and demanded all sorts of privileges, like many others. I watched Bhaag Milkha, Bhaag thrice in 2013. For one, I was a track athlete myself, and know what it takes to breast that tape and create new records.

Farhan Akhtar played Milkha in the biopic, which grossed over ₹100 crores. Apparently, Milkha asked for ₹1 as his fee, but insisted that a share of the profits go to his foundation. Akhtar did a convincing job of not just acquiring a run-ner's taut frame, but sensitively portraying a runner's anxieties and vul-nerabilities. The man behind the movie, Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, said of Milkha: "He believed there are no short cuts if you want to be the best in the world." It's not too late to cours

and sports bodies the world over are commissioning statues of living the Olympics sports heroes — Rafael Nadal recently posed in front of his magnificent statue that was unveiled at Roland Garros as Rafa fans worldwide cheered and applauded the legend, winner of 20 Grand slams. In India, the politics of erecting statues of public figures is mired in controversy. It's bad enough that we have to endure the mediocrity of netas while they are alive. It's much worse to have precious urban spaces blocked by ugly statues of awful people

Governments

correct.

Madame

whose "contribution" is dodgv at best. I'm sure nobody would question an appropriate statue of "The Flying Sikh" (a title given to him by Pakistan's Ayub Khan) outside Chandigarh airport. There is a wax statue of his at Delhi's Tussaud's been 'upgraded'!

ly enough? Milkha Singh was orphaned during Partition and saw five members of his family being butchered. He arrived as a refugee in Delhi and joined the Indian Army after abandoning plans to become a dacoit out of sheer frustration! He went on to bring glory to the nation as a four-time Asian Games gold medallist. His 400 metres timing of 45.6 seconds was unbroken for 38 years. What a story for youngsters to

derive inspiration from! India really needs to value its sporting greats and reward them suitably. Since I am one of the growing voices saying
"No" to the Tokyo
Olympics (23 July-8
August 2021), I read
sports minister Kiren Rijiju's comments on India's participation with interest. "This time we are aiming high, with full confidence and I believe we should do better than any of our previous per-formances." Wait a minute, Sirji. Our "best" show was way back in 2012, when we came back with six measly medals. Minister saab is expecting a record haul and says he has interacted with most of our elite the record, Mr Rijiju's ministry spent ₹1,000 crores in the past four years preparing for

While I admire his faith and am also hoping for a decent showing this year, despite the pandemic with all its challenges, it must be said that our contingent came back with two medals from the 2016 Rio Games (where China won 70). At that time, I was slaughtered across the social media for "criticising" our athletes for their dismal per-

This outstanding sportsman had only got the Padma Shri back in 1959, and nothing since. He declined the Arjuna Award. We all know how Padma awards work; but surely Milkha should have

formance. Our athletes are only as good as their support system. Mr Rijiju is a smart, young, dynamic politician (future Prime Minister material). He has as much riding on our medal haul as the ath-letes themselves, who have trained hard for this momentous event.

The problem is our casual attitude towards sports. Apart from cricket, almost no other sport-ing activity is "recognised" or encouraged as enthusiastically. Milkha Singh's son Jeev Milkha Singh (also an Arjuna Award winner) is arguably one of India's best golfers. We have our star tennis players and more recently, badminton is also receiving its due, along with table tennis. Our staple hockey— where we used to be world leaders — has been relegated to a less hallowed position, after we failed to win any significant title after dominating the game for decades. The mindset of most Indian parents has not shifted sufficiently to support the sporting dreams of their children. Golf and tennis are seen

as elitist sports that require generous financial support. Sports scholarships are hard to come by. Talented athletes have it tough. It's only now that we see women boxers and wrestlers coming into their own and shining at global events. As are female shooters. Archery is finding takers across the country, but in terms of commercial success the megabucks are made by cricketers, and cricketers alone. With our Olympics contingent all set to compete in the most prestigious sporting event on earth, here's wishing them love and luck. Milkha Singh titled his autobiography *The*

> Instagram handle: @ShobhaaDe; Twitter: @DeShobhaa

Race of My Life, and the

nation ran it with him.

His race ended on June 15. 2021. It's time to cho-

Bhaag", and hope Mr

Rijiju's prediction of a

rich Olympics' haul goes

beyond wishful thinking.

"Bhaag India,

KABUL CONUNDRUM

This refers to the editorial, "Cutting Kabul's Gordian knot" (June 25). The Taliban are violating the peace pact by attacking the Afghan forces. If the US and Nato pull out by September, they will capture the power by force. New Delhi has every reason to worry about the massive investments made in Afghanistan since it rallied behind the Ashraf Ghani government whose legitimacy has been eroded. Moreover, they are now being armtwisted to make concessions in Jammu and Kashmir. India must revisit its Afghan policy.

Sankar Paul Chakdaha, West Bengal 'INDIAN' VARIANT

THE DELTA PLUS VARIANT of SARS-CoV-2 appears to be spreading its tentacles far and wide. A day after Karnataka reported the first case of the variant in Mysuru, the health authorities detected another case in Bengaluru on Wednesday. Both patients have no history of foreign travel. Health experts have discovered 40 cases of the deadly variant in India, and they have rightly warned winds. Stress on surveillance. enhanced testing, quick contracttracing and priority vaccination where such a strain exists could indeed prove handy.

N.J. Ravi Chander

Rengaluru

HAIL SAO JOAO

WHILE THE FEAST of Sao Joao (St John the Baptist) was celebrated across the Catholic world on June 24, Goa is the only place where it was marked by revellers leaping into wells. On this day, groups of Goans go around singing traditional Konkani songs accompanied by instruments like the ghumat, mhadalem, kansallem and guitar. Sao Joao is also a thanksgiving for newly-weds, and for families with babies born during the preceding year. Participants from Chapora and Zhor villages of Anjuna and Badem in Assagao and Siolim would come in boats to the chapel of Sao Joao in Pereira Vaddo, Siolim, every year to pay homage to the saint. The festival is known as Sanjao in East Indian Marathi and celebrated in the East Indian villages of Mumbai

Jubel D'Cruz



SHORT TAKES **UK POLICE SEIZE \$114 MILLION IN CRYPTOCURRENCY**

London: London police have seized a trove of cryptocurrency worth £114 million (\$159,000) that criminals were planning to launder, the UK's largest-ever seizure of digital currency.

The Metropolitan Police said late Thursday that detectives had seized the digital currency after receiving information about the transfer of criminal

The statement did not say what type of cryptocurrency was involved.

"As technology and online platforms develop, some are moving to more sophisticated methods of laundering their profits", said deputy assistant commissioner

"But we have highly trained officers and specialist units working day and night to remain one step ahead," McNulty added.

FIVE DEAD, MANY HURT IN CZECH REPUBLIC TORNADO

believed to be the most devastating in the Czech Republic's modern history has torn through the country's southeast, killing at least five people and injuring hundreds, rescue services and police said on

The tornado touched down late Thursday as strong thunderstorms hit the entire country. Seven towns and villages sustained heavy damage that included buildings turned to rubble and overturned cars The storms were accompanied by hail which in some cases

was as big as tennis balls.
Hrusky Deputy Mayor
Marek Babisz told Czech public radio that half of his town
was almost completely wiped out. "The church is without the tower, the elementary school has no roof and insulation any more, only walls remain from what were houses ... It's really terrible." Some 360 extra police officers were dispatched to the area, along with army personnel.

FIRE KILLS 18 AT CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL

Beijing: At least 18 people, mostly children, were killed and 16 others injured when a deadly fire ripped through a boarding martial arts school in China's Henan province in the

early hours of Friday.
The children, aged between seven and 16, were asleep on the first floor when the blaze Martial Arts Centre.

A total of 34 students were enrolled at the boarding school in Shuangqiu city's Zhecheng

Four people were severely injured and 12 sustained minor wounds in the fire, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post newspaper quoted local official media reports as saying.

An eyewitness said he heard

the children screaming for help. "All the children screamed and we tried to help by pouring water on the fire, but it didn't stop. It eventually got so fierce there was simply no way for adults to get close, the eyewitness said.

SINGAPORE SHIP CATCHES FIRE IN INDIAN OCEAN

Colombo: A fire broke out on a container ship sailing toward Singapore in Ocean, the Sri Lankan Navy said on Friday, a week after a cargo ship carrying tonnes of chemicals sank near the country's main port in Colombo nearly a month after catching

Navy spokesperson Indika de Silva said the Liberian-flagged MSC Messina ship had left the port of Colombo on June 22 heading for Singapore and it caught fire outside the island's international maritime borders. He said the Navy was alerted to the ship's fire early hours of Friday and since the ship is still within Sri Lanka's search and rescue limits they

were obliged to respond. The fire was reported from the engine compartment of the vessel, which is currently located some 483 nautical miles away from Kirinda, the southern most tip of the island, the Navy spokesman said. A merchant vessel in the proximity had been alerted to provide assistance and at this point it was unlikely that Sri Lanka Navy would be called upon to launch any rescue missions, the spokesperson

Over 160 missing in Miami mishap

Crews comb rubble of collapsed condo

About 160 people were still unaccounted for Friday a day after an ocean-side condominium build-ing collapsed into a pile of rubble, and searchers combing through a twisted, shifting pile of concrete and metal feared the death toll of at least four could go much higher.

With scores of firefighters working overnight to reach any possible survivors both from under and atop the remains of the building, hopes rested on how quickly crews using dogs and microphones to sift through the wreckage could complete their grim, yet delicate

"Every time we hear a sound, we concentrate on those areas," said Assistant Miami-Dade Fire Chief Raide Fire Jadallah.

Three more bodies were removed overnight, and Miami-Dade Director Freddy Ramirez said authorities were working with the medical

CHINA SLAMS U.S.

CURBS ON SOLAR

details of possible retali-

agency said Thursday it

will block imports of

Industry Co., which

might use forced labor

as part of a Beijing cam-

paign against ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang region in the northwest Imports from

six other Chinese suppli-

ers of raw materials and

components for solar

panels also are to be

customs

Silicon

ation.

polysilicon

Hoshine

restricted.

MATERIALS AS

examiner's office to identify the victims. Eleven injuries were reported, with four people treated at

hospitals. Miami-Dade Daniella Levine Cava said rescuers were at "extreme risk" going through the

rubble.
"Debris is falling on them as they do their work. We have structural ensure that they will not be injured, but they are proceeding because they are so motivated and they are taking extraordinary risk on the site every day," she said.

With searchers using saws and jackhammers to look for pockets large enough to hold a person, Levine Cava said there was still hope of finding people alive.
The missing at what was

left of the 12-story Champlain Towers South included people from around the world: A beloved retired Miamiarea teacher and his wife. Orthodox Jews

of Paraguay's first lady. Others from South America.

State Sen. Jason Pizzo of Miami Beach told the Miami Herald he watched as tactical teams of six worked early Friday to sift through the debris. He said he saw one body taken in a yellow body bag and another that was marked. They were taken to a homicide unit tent that was set up along the beach.

Many people remained at the reunification center set up near the collapse site early Friday morning, awaiting results of DNA swabs that could help identify victims.

Officials said no cause for the collapse has been determined. Video of the collapse showed the center of the building appearing to tumble down first and a section nearest to the ocean teetering and coming down seconds later, as a huge dust cloud swallowed the neighbor-

N-deal: Iran told time running out

ECONOMIC ATTACK Paris. June 25: Beijing, June 25: China's United States and France government on Friday on Friday warned Iran criticised US curbs on imports of solar panel materials that might be made with forced labor that time was running out to return to a nuclear deal, voicing fear that Tehran's sensitive atomic as an attack on its develactivities could advance if opment and said Beijing talks drag on. will protect Chinese companies, but gave no On the first high-level

visit to Paris by President Joe Biden's administration, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his French hosts saluted a new spirit of cooperation after four years of turbu-lence under Donald

But the two sides said that one key Biden promise — to return to the 2015accord on the Iranian nuclear programme that was trashed by Trump — was at risk if the clerical regime does not make concessions during talks that have been going on months

that the United States still had "serious differences' tion won by hardliner Ebrahim Raisi.

develop in bomb.

Vienna.Blinken warned with Iran, which has kept negotiating since last week's presidential elec-

"There will come a

point, yes, where it will be very hard to return back to the standards set by the JCPOA," Blinken told reporters, using the formal name of the accord.

"We haven't reached that point — I can't put a date on it — but it's something that we're conscious of." Blinken warned that if Iran "continues to spin ever more sophisticated centrifuges" and steps up uranium enrichment, it will bring nearer the "breakout" time at which it will be dangerously close to the ability to nuclear

Facing deportation, Indian youth seek White House aid

America, facing imminent prospects of deportation, has met senior Biden administration officials at the White House and influential lawmakers, appealing them to "let us stay in the US'

There are 2,00,000 such young Americans, who have spent their entire childhood and teenage in the US, who are facing the prospects of imminent deportation to the country of their origin as they have either attained the age of 21 or about to reach that age, after which they can no longer be dependent on their parent's visas.

A significantly large number of these parents are in a decades-long wait for a Green Card. A Green

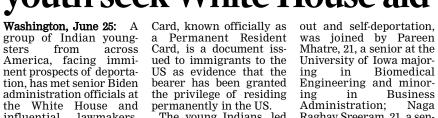
ued to immigrants to the US as evidence that the bearer has been granted the privilege of residing permanently in the US. The young Indians, led

by Dip Patel, a clinical pharmacist in Illinois, surprised many of the congressmen and senators, who greeted them at the Capitol last week, as they were probably the first batch of lobbyists at the US Congress, after the recent lifting of social distancing restrictions by the for Diseases Center Control and Prevention

Patel, 25, is founder of Improve The Dream, a youth-led organisation bringing awareness for children who face ageing them.

ing in Bu Administration; Raghav Sreeram, 21, a senior at the University of California, Davis major-

ing in Computer Science. Lakshmi athan, 18, a sophomore at Drexel University majoring in Biological Sciences; Sarvani Kunapareddy, 18, a rising freshman at the University of Illinois at Chicago majoring in Computer Science and French Ashley Pardo, 17, a rising freshman at the University of California, Berkeley studying Political Science and



Parvathin-Human Rights also joined



pandemic on Friday even as officials urged marchers to wear masks amid a surge in infections. Organisers called it

Australia, Israel bring back mask rules as variant spreads

Sydney, June 25: Australia and Israel, which had been successful in fending off Covid-19, reimposed restrictions on Friday as cases surged of the highly contagious Delta variant which also threatened Africa with a brutal third

The centre of Australia's largest city Sydney entered lockdown, a shock for a population that had returned to relative nor-mality after months of recording very few local cases, while vaccination success story Israel reimposed indoor mask-wearing less than two weeks after it lifted the measure.

And in Fiji, another country that saw early successes against the virus, health authorities admitted for the first time that Covid transmission is widespread in the commu-

nity.
While vaccination campaigns have helped bring down infections in numerous - mostly wealthy countries, the rise of the Delta variant which was first found in India has led to fears of new waves of a virus that has already killed nearly 3.9 million

In Australia, which has been one of the most successful nations in containing the Coronavirus after snutting borders. around a million people in four eastern and central Sydney neighbourhoods were ordered to stay home for at least a week.

of New South Wales, Gladys Berejiklian, called the "scariest period"since the pandem--AFPic began.

Covid-19 adapted to JAPANESE COLD CHAIN WORTH human cells: Study virus to humans. The

Melbourne, June 25: The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes Covid-19, is most ideally adapted to infect human cells, rather than bat or pangolin cells, according to a study which raises questions about the origin of the virus.

The researchers from Flinders University and La Trobe University in Australia used high-per-formance computer modelling of the form of the SARS-CoV-2 virus at the beginning of the pandemic to predict its ability to infect humans and 12 domestic and exotic ani-

The study, published in the journal Scientific Reports on Thursday, aimed to help identify any intermediate animal vector that may have played a

researchers used genomic data from the 12 animal species to painstakingly build computer models of the key ACE2 protein receptors for each species. These models were then used to calculate the strength of binding of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein to each species' ACE2, which acts as the receptor for SARS-CoV-2 and allows it to infect the cell.

The results showed that SARS-CoV-2 bound to ACE2 on humans cells more tightly than any of the tested animal species, including bats and pan-golins. The researchers explained that if one of the animals species tested was the origin, it would normally be expected to show the highest binding to the virus. — PTI

\$9.3 MN TO INDIA

Tokyo, June 25: Japan on Friday announced that it will provide \$9.3 million worth cold chain equipment and related assistance to India to help in the country's fight against Covid-19 pandemic.

The assistance, under Japan's Emergency Grant Aid scheme, will provide India with cold chain equipment including med-ical equipment such as cold-storage facilities, as "Last One Mile Support" to ensure vaccination in each country, through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a state-

India's coronavirus tally rose to 3,01,34,445 on Friday after a single-day rise of 51,667 Covid-19

UK health minister admits virus breach with embrace

neaith minister apologised Friday for breaching national restrictions after a newspaper ran pictures of him embracing a woman with whom he The premier of the state allegedly had an affair.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock, who has led the country's response to the Coronavirus pandemic, is the latest in a string of

accused of breaching restrictions imposed on the rest of the population to curb the spread

The tabloid Sun newspaper ran images appearing to show the married Hancock and a senior aide embracing in an office at the Department of Health. It said the closed circuit television images were

London, June 25: Britain's government officials to be taken May 6-11 days before lockdown were eased to allow hugs and other physical contact with people outside one's own household. Hancock said in a statement that "I accept that I breached the social distancing guidance in these circumstances." "I have let people down and am very sorry," he said. — PTI

EU divided on meeting Putin

ean Union countries bordering Russia rejected a Franco-German plan to resume official meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin, with one leader likening the move to an attempt to talk a bear out of stealing honey. In a statement in the early hours of Friday morning, EU leaders said only that

they "will explore formats and conditionalities of dialogue with Russia." There was no mention of any high-level meetings or sea pipeline project, and a

plans for a summit with Putin. The European Union is deeply divided in its approach to Moscow. Russia is the EU's

biggest natural gas supplier, and plays a key role in a series of international conflicts and issues linked to Europe's strategic interests, including the Iran nuclear deal, and conflicts in Syria and Libya. European heavyweight Germany has strong economic interests there, notably the NordStream 2 under-

including France, are reluctant to continue waging a sanctions battle with Russia, including over the poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

The EU is concerned that Putin is turning increasingly authoritarian and wants to distance himself from the West. Both the 27-nation trading bloc and the NATO military alliance are struggling to bring Russia to the table. U.S. President Joe Biden's meeting with Putin this month

"We have to deal with Russia, but being very cautious about the real intentions of Putin's regime," Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda told reporters at an EU summit in Brussels. "So far, we don't see any radical change in the pattern of behavior of Russia." "If, without any positive changes in the behavior of Russia, we start to engage, it will send very uncertain and bad signals," Nauseda

UNHEALTHY I TREND Many countries saw rise in use of cannabis during the Coronavirus pandemic

275 mn used drugs worldwide in 2020: UN

36 million people suffered from drug use disorders as 275 million people used drugs worldwide in 2020, according to the 2021 World Drug Report which was released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on

Thursday. As per the report, in the last 24 years, cannabis potency had increased by as much as four times in parts of the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. In surveys of health professionals across 77 countries, 42 per cent asserted that cannabis use had

increased. "Lower perception of

drug use risks has been linked to higher rates of drug use, and the findings of UNODC's 2021 World Drug Report highlight the need to close the gap between perception and reality to educate young people and safeguard public health," said UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly.

"The theme of this year's International Day against Trafficking is "Share facts on drugs. Save lives", emphasising the importance of strengthening the evidence base and raising public awareness, so that the international community, governments, civil



Afghanistan accounted for 85% of the global total of opium production in 2020, says Report.

families, and youth can make informed decisions, better target

efforts to prevent and treat drug challenges,"

BETWEEN 2010-2019 the number of people using drugs increased by 22 per cent. Based on demographic changes alone, current projections suggest an 11 per cent rise in the number of people who use drugs globally by 2030 - and a marked increase of 40 per cent in Africa, due to its rapidly growing and young population.

added.

Between 2010-2019 the number of people using drugs increased by 22 per cent. Based on demograph-

projections suggest an 11 per cent rise in the number of people who use drugs globally by 2030 and a marked increase of 40 per cent in Africa, due to its rapidly growing and young population.

According to the latest global estimates, about 5.5 per cent of the population aged between 15 and 64 years have used drugs at least once in the past year, while 36.3 million people, or 13 per cent of the total number of persons who use drugs, suffer from drug use disorders.

Globally, over 11 million people are estimated to inject drugs, half of whom

C. Opioids continue to account for the largest burden of disease attrib-

uted to drug use. The two pharmaceutical opioids most commonly used to treat people with use disorders, methadone, and buprenorphine, have become increasingly accessible over the past two decades. The amount available for medical use has increased six-fold since 1999, from 557 million daily doses to 3,317 million by 2019, indicating that science-based pharmacological ment is more available now than in the past.





INDICATOR	%	
Sensex	52,925.04	0.43
Nifty 50	15,860.40	0.44
S&P 500*	4,278.70	0.29
Dollar (₹)	74.20	-0.04
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.17	0.39
Euro (₹)	88.59	0.00
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,309 ▼ 66	0.14
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	76.07	0.67
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.028	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.502	0.015
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

PNB HF voting okays red-flagged re-appointments

PNB Housing Finance shareholders have passed the resolutions regarding appointment of Hardayal Prasad as managing director and CEO and reappointments of others on the company's board. Among various passed resolutions were reappointments of independent directors (IDs) Chandrasekaran Ramakrishnan and Nilesh S. Vikamsev—whose re-induction was red flagged by a proxy advisory firm this month.

LIC, SBI Life pick up stake in Indian Bank under QIP



Life Insurance Corporation, SBI Life and Canara Bank were among the top investors picking up stakes in Indian Bank under a qualified institutional placement (QIP) that closed on Thursday, a regulatory filing said. LIC picked up 17.80 per cent, SBI Life Insurance 11.87 per cent, SBI Mutual Fund and its various schemes 11.87 per cent, SocGen and its various schemes 9.74 per cent and Canara Bank 5.93 per cent of the shares offered.

FAME Phase-II scheme extended by two years

The government said it has extended the second phase of FAME India scheme by two vears till March 31, 2024, for faster adoption of electric mobility and development of its manufacturing ecosystem. The second phase of FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) India scheme focuses on supporting electrification of public and shared transportation.

India Pesticides IPO subscribed 29 times

The IPO of India Pesticides Limited was subscribed 29 times on the closing day of the subscription. The Rs 800-crore IPO received bids for 56,07,11,650 shares against 1,93,10,345 shares on offer. The qualified institutional buyers category was subscribed 42.95 times, non-institutional investors 51.88 times, and those for retail individual investors 11.30 times. The offer was in a price range of Rs 290-296.

Printed & Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at BFL Infotech Ltd, C-9 Sector 3, Noida-201301. Published at 219, N D Tiwari Bhawan, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Editor: Kaushik Mitter. RNI Registration number 30074/09, Air surcharge Re 1. © All rights

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■Open offer makes it over ₹6,300-cr deal

Pharmeasy to take reins of Thyrocare

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JUNE 25

In yet another transaction in the online pharma space, digital healthcare company Pharmeasy on Friday announced it will acquire a controlling stake in diagnostic chain Thyrocare for Rs 4,546 crore in an all-cash deal. With this, the online space is witnessing acquisition of a listed entity by a start-

up.
API Holdings, the parent of the Pharmeasy, will buy a 66.11 per cent stake in Thyrocare from A. Velumani, chairman and managing director of the company and his affiliates at Rs 1,300 per share, according to a statement.

The affiliates include A Sundararaju, Amruta Velumani, Anand Velu-Thyrocare Properties & Infrastructure, Pavilion Commercial, Thyrocare Publications, Sumathi Infra Project and Mahima Advertising.

The acquisition of majority stake in the listed entity will also see a sub-sidiary of API Holdings, Docon Technologies, making an open offer to acquire an additional 26 per cent stake of Thyrocare.

Docon Technologies along with API Holdings has announced an open offer for acquisition of up to 1,37,55,077 fully paid-up equity shares of face value of Rs 10 each from the public shareholders of Thyrocare Technologies, representing 26 per cent of the expanded voting share



capital, at a price of Rs 1,300 per equity share aggregating to total consideration of Rs 1,788 crore in cash, Thyrocare informed the exchanges. This takes the total value of the deal to about Rs 6,334 crore.

Velumani will be separately acquiring a minority non-controlling stake of less than 5 per cent in API as part of a series of equity investments by existing and new investors of API. According to reports, Velumani will be investing Rs 1,500 crore and hold a 4.9 per cent stake in API.

Shares of Thyrocare closed 6.23 per cent up at Rs 1,448.05 apiece on the BSE on Friday.

Pharmeasy has a user base of 12 million consumers, and a network of 6,000 digital consultation clinics and 90,000 partner retailers across the country. Thyrocare performs over 110 million diagnostic tests annually. It is the largest B2B player in the diagnostics space and has a network of 3,330 collection centres across 2,000 towns in India. "The unique reach and strength of Thyrocare in diagnostics blended with the young and dynamic team of PharmEasy will bring in better healthcare solutions for common man nationwide" said Velu-mani, CMD of Thyrocare.

Earlier in Pharmeasy acquired Medlife after entering the unicorn club. API Holdings is reported to be strengthening its portfolio ahead of an initial public offering, probably in 12-18 months.

In other major deals in the online healthcare space in recent times, Tata Digital bought a majority stake in 1MG Technologies. Reliance too had acquired a majority stake in Netmeds to enter the online pharmacy space.

According to consultants RedSeer, the e-health space touched a gross merchandise value of \$1.2 billion in FY20 and is esti-mated to have clocked a value of \$2 billion in FY21

Bids invited for leasing out 16 railway land parcels

New Delhi, June 25: The Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) has called for bids for leasing out 16 land parcels across the country with the aim of generating revenue of over Rs 1,900

Prominent these 16 sites are Boulevard Road Colony in Delhi, land near Moula All Flyover in Secunder abad, Ramgarh Tal Colony in Gorakh-pur, Lucknow Railway Railway Station Redevelopment, plots at Gomti Nagar in Lucknow and at Salt Golah in Howrah.

These sites have been chosen due to their marketability and exclusive locations, which make them eminently suitable for commercial and residential development,

the authority said.
"RLDA will lease out these land parcels to prospective developers who will be mandated to develop these sites in line with local bye-laws," RLDA vice-chair-Parkash man Ved Dudeja said.

The authority is targeting revenue genera-tion of Rs 2,000 crore for the Indian Railways in 2021-22, up from Rs 352 crore the previous year. RLDA is a statutory authority under the Ministry of Railways for the development of railway land. Indian Railways has

about 43,000 hectares of vacant land across

No tax liability on Covid-related receipts

FC BUREAU **NEW DELHI, JUNE 25**

Providing a much-needed tax concession to the people who may have received financial help from their employers and well-wishers for meeting expenses incurred for Covid-19 treatment, the government on Friday announced that there will be no tax liability on such

amounts received. "In order to ensure that no income-tax liability arises on this account, it has been decided to provide income-tax exemption to the amount received by a taxpayer for medical treatment from an employer or from any person for treatment of Covid-19 during FY2019-20 and subsequent years,' the finance ministry said in a notification.

"Ex-gratia payments received by family members of a person who has died due to Covid 19 from an employer will also be tax exempt without any limit. Such a payment from other persons aggregating to Rs 10 lakh will be tax exempt," the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said.

Besides, the government also announced various the tax exemptions and extended some key tax compliance deadlines.

Of the deadline relaxation, the most important deadline extension involves the linking of PAN and the Aadhaar card. It has been extended by three months. "Other than that, the time to invest in residential house for tax deduction has been extended by more than three months

DEADLINES RELAXED

Linking of PAN and the Aadhaar card extended to Sept. 30 On sale of residen-

tial property the re-

investment deadline extended to Sept. 30 Due date for furnishing TDS statement for Q4 is now

July 15

and the 'Vivad se Viswas' payment without interest has been extended by two months from June 30 to August 31," the notification said.

gains arising out of trans-fer of residential house property, the CBDT fur-ther said that for relief in taxation, the re-invest-ment deadline would be September 3, 2021 for such capital gains. Generally, Section 54 of the Income Tax Act provides that in case there is capital gain on account of transfer of a residential house property, such capital gain can be exempt from tax if the taxpayer invests the capital gain amount into another house property within two years (in case of pur-chase of new house) or within three years (in case of construction of a house) from date of transfer of original house

property.

However, the CBDT circular now provides that in case any such time period of two/three years is expiring between April 1, 2021 and September 29, 2021, will

Date for furnishing TDS certificate in Form 16 extended till July 31

• Quarterly statement in Form 15CC can be furnished by July 31

▶ Equalisation Levy Statement in Form No. 1 can be submitted by July 31

be extended to September 30, 2021. "Besides, the deadline for making payments under the Vivad Se Vishwas direct tax dispute resolution scheme has been extended by two months till August 31," it said. In case of taxing capital

The last date for PAN-Aadhaar linking too has been extended by three months to September 30, 2021, while the same for furnishing Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) certificate in Form 16 to the employees by employers has been extended till July 31, from July 15, 2021," it added.

The due date for furnishing TDS statement for the last (January-March) quarter has also been extended to July 15, from June 30. "The quarterly statement in Form 15CC to be furnished by an authorised dealer for remittances made for the June quarter would have to furnished by July 31."

"Also, the deadline for furnishing Equalisation Levy Statement in Form No. 1 for the financial year 2020-21, has been extended by a month till July 31, 2021, the CBDT said.

INVESTORS OUST TOSHIBA CHAIRMAN

MAKIKO YAMAZAKI TOKYO, JUNE 25

Toshiba's board appointed CEO Satoshi Tsunakawa as interim chairman on Friday after investors voted to oust his predecessor in a stunning rebuke for its collusion with the Japanese government against shareholders.

Tsunakawa's appointment came after shareholders delivered a clear message to management by voting out Osamu Nagayama as chairman and another director over the handling of the scandal, which has put Japan's governance under the microscope.

"The company recognises the seriousness of the rejection," of the two, Toshiba said in a state-

The board said in a separate statement that it had would identify a permanent successor for Tsunakawa and would consider external candidates.

It also said it would expand the scope of a newly formed strategic review committee, which would undertake a full review of assets and devise a plan focused on creating growth via share buybacks and dividends.

The board said it would "engage with potential strategic and financial investors," leaving open a possible further shake-up.

Tsunakawa retook the helm in April after Toshiba's previous CEO left, but has said he does not plan to stay for too long.

Ousters of board members at Japanese compa-nies, particularly household names like Toshiba, are extremely rare.

'This result is a sign of a paradigm shift in Japan and will only embolden activist investors whether foreign or domestic," said Justin Tang, head of Asian research at United First Partners in Singapore.

But supporters of Nagayama say his failure to win re-election will only set back Toshiba further, depriving the industrial conglomerate, which has lurched from crisis to crisis since an accounting scandal in 2015, of experienced leadership.
A breakdown of the vote

was not given. — Reuters

vaccine coverage cuts risk to economy'

states to end lockdowns as new coronavirus infections drop, rather than waiting for vaccination rates to rise, risks triggering fresh restrictions and holding back the nation's recovery, according to Oxford Economics.

"States are easing lockdowns based on lower test positivity rates rather than vaccination Priyanka progress,' Kishore, head of India and South East Asia Economics at Oxford Economics, wrote in a report to clients. "This risky strategy increases the chances of renewed outbreaks that would fur-

ther delay the recovery." Provinces including national capital New Delhi have begun reopening amid signs of infections plateauing, causing mobility rates to

improve as of mid-June. While that's likely to fosreturn demand in the nearconsumption and business activity suffering going ahead should newer placed to control a resurgent virus wave.

With only 3.9 per cent of India's population fully vaccinated, Kishore sees economically important states, including Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, not yet reaching the "safe"

'The vaccine situation keeps our outlook cautious," said Kishore, who maintained growth forecast for this year at 9.1 per cent -- a pace slower than the 9.5 per cent predicted by the nation's central bank. "Economic data also doesn't support an upward revision to our growth expectations at this point," she said.

RBI bars MPs, MLAs from urban co-op bank helm FC BANKING BUREAU To curtail the nexus between urban co-opera-

tive banks and political leaders that have resulted in frauds and led to bank failures, the Reserve Bank

of India (RBI) on Friday prescribed educational qualifications and 11t and proper' criteria for managing directors (MDs) and directors whole-time (WTDs) of primary urban cooperative banks and barred MPs and MLAs from these posts.

appointment of MDs and ŴTDs, the RBI said MPs. MLAs and representatives of municipal corporations will not be eligible to hold such positions in the primary urban cooperative banks (UCBs).

It further said the MD/WTD should be a post graduate or have qualifications in finance discipline. He or she could be either chartered/cost accountant, MBA (finance) or have a diploma in banking or cooperative business management. The person

years of age or more than 70 years, it added. "The person shall have a

combined experience of at least eight years at the middle/senior management level in the banking sector (including the experience gained in the concerned UCB) or non-banking finance companies engaged in lending (loan companies) and asset financing," the notification said.

Besides MPs, MLAs and representatives of municipal corporations and local bodies, persons engaged in

business, trade or having substantial interest in any company too will not be eligible for appointment to such positions.

Regarding the tenure, the RBI said the person can be appointed for a maximum of five years and will be eligible for re-appointment, but not beyond 15 years. After that, the person, if necessary, may be reappointed after a threeyear cooling period.
It said the "UCBs whose

existing MD/CEO has completed a tenure of five years may approach RBI."

COMPENSATE FOR

UNCOMPETITIVE

ENVIRONMENT:

MARUTI CHIEF

Kolkata, June 25: The pro-

duction linked incentive

(PLI) scheme announced

by the government for

PLI DOESN'T

SBI will weather any wave: Khara

MUMBAI, JUNE 25

lender, State Bank of India, has adjusted itself to the ing on Friday.

tioned to tackle any subsequent wave. I am cautiously optimistic that the performance trajectory of FY2021 will continue in FY2022 as well," said

He said in the current Yono further.

"With the rollout of prepackage insolvency for res-

He said that the Bank is comfortably placed in terms of growth capital and opportunities for lending in promising sectors

extremely challenging year, SBI reported the highest ever net profit of Rs

will be explored.

Despite FY2021 being an ramping up large-scale manufacturing capacity does not compensate for obstacles in an uncompetitive business environment, Maruti Suzuki

chairman R. C. Bhargava said on Friday. He advocated policies directed at making manufacturing globally competitive by bringing down

"The PLI scheme will help certain sectors and products. It cannot compensate for the obstacles of being uncompetitive," Bhargava said at an interactive session with The Bengal Chamber.

The government had announced an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore for the PLI scheme for 13 sectors, including automobile, in the 2021-22 Union budget.

To a question, Bhargava said the Maruti Suzuki was not looking for new manufacturing plants as the industry CAGR for the last few years was less

than 2 per cent. To attract investment, there has to be political and administrative will, besides measures that ensure that costs are competitive, he said in the context of revitalisation of

industry in West Bengal.



'Easing lockdown by

JAIVEER SHEKHAWAT

The rush by India's

some term, there's the risk of restrictions be

levels of vaccination.

-Bloomberg

demic and is better posi-**FALAKNAAZ SYED**

country's largest

challenges posed by the pandemic and is well-positioned to tackle any subsequent Covid wave and as well continue the performance trajectory of FY21 in FY22, its chairman Dinesh Khara said at the bank's 66th annual general meet-

'In conclusion, the bank adjusted to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 panKhara.

financial year the bank will continue to accelerate its digital agenda besides also focussing on recovery from bad loans. The bank will focus on expanding the scope and reach of of app

olution, resumption of courts and formation of National Asset Reconstruction Company, efforts will be in full force to keep the momentum in stressed asset recovery in the current financial year.'

BEING | 'COOL' | Prez offers \$30 worth of Bitcoin to citizens to boost its use Bitcoin to be legal tender in El Salvador

MICHAEL MCDONALD

El Salvador President Nayib Bukele doubled down on the country's new law making Bitcoin legal tender and offered \$30 worth of the cryptocurrency to any citizen who signs up for a digital

wallet. The government will create its own Bitcoin wallet called Chivo, which is slang for "cool" in El Salvador, Bukele said during a national address on Thursday night. The funds will be deposited into the account of any citizen who downloads it and registers as a user with their phone number and ID number, he said. The law making Bitcoin legal tender will enter into force on September 7, he

Bukele, 39, reiterated his arguments that using the cryptocurrency will help attract investment, boost consumption and cut the cost of sending remit-tances for millions of Salvadorans working abroad. But bank accounts in dollars will remain in dollars, and salaries and pensions will continue to be paid in dollars, he said.

"Why create this law?

Because Bitcoin has a \$600

billion market capitalisa-

tion globally and if we do

this, investors and tourists

who own Bitcoin will

come to the country and

benefit Salvadorans and

the economy," Bukele said.

Consumers can pay businesses with Bitcoins from their wallets for items listed in dollars. But if business owners want to receive payment in dollars, they can press a button in the Chivo application to convert the Bitcoins immediately to dollars, according to dollars, according to Bukele. "It will be totally optional. The dollar will continue to be legal tender," he said. The Chivo wallet will be available to download in September and it will be compatible with other Bitcoin wallets, Bukele The government will

provide training for businesses on Bitcoin transactions and seek to improve Internet and mobile phone penetration to encourage the cryptocurrency's use, he said. Businesses that are technologically unable to receive e-payments will be excluded from the law, he added.

Not everyone shares Bukele's enthusiasm for the plan. Fitch Ratings said in a report on Thursday that the legislation establishing Bitcoin as legal tender would

for financial institutions, including the potential of violating international anti-money laundering and terrorist financing standards. "A rushed implementation of the new alterna-

increase regulatory risks

tive payment system platform will affect financial institutions' management framework for operational, cyber/ransomware, currency and liquidity risks," Fitch ana-lysts including Rolando

Martinez wrote. International Monetary Fund has also criticised the move, while the World Bank rejected a request from the government to assist with Bitcoin implementation.

SHORT TAKES

Sam & Liam seal series for England

Cardiff: Sam Billings and Liam Livingstone burnished their Twenty20 credentials as England withstood a top-order

wobble to seal a series win over Sri Lanka following a rainaffected second contest. The duo are on the fringes of the limited-overs setup but after England stuttered to 36-4 in pursuit of 112 - a target reduced to 103 from 18 overs following a sharp shower they put on a crucial 54 from 48 balls. Billings departed with 13 still needed but Livingstone and Sam Curran got England over the line with five wickets

and 11 balls to spare as they moved into an 2-0 lead. - PTI Brief scores: Sri Lanka 111/7 (Kusal Mendis 39; Mark Wood 2/18, Adil Rashid 2/24) lost to England 108/5 (Livingstone 29 (not out), Sam Billings 24; W. Hasaranga 2/20). (Won by five wickets, D/L method)

Bronze for Indian

women shooters

Osijek, Croatia: The Indian troika of Manu Bhaker, Yashaswini Singh Deswal and Rahi Sarnobat claimed the bronze medal in the 10m air pistol women's team event of the ISSF Shooting World Cup here on Friday. They defeated the Hungarian team of Veronika Major, Miriam Jako and Sara Rahel Fabian 16-12 in the bronze medal match. The three Indians had qualified third with a score of 573. Earlier, in the 10m air rifle events, the men's trio of Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Deepak Kumar and Divyansh Singh Panwar lost the bronze medal match, while the women shooters failed to get past the qualifying round. Tomar, Kumar and Panwar lost 14-16 to the Serbian team of Milenko Sebic. Milutin Stefanovic and Lazar Kovacevic in the third-place match.

Women archers

enter Cup final

Paris: The Indian women's recurve archery team, who failed to book an Olympic quota in the Qualifier, bounced back strongly to storm into the final of the World Cup Stage 3 here on Friday. The fancied trio of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Komalika Bari had lost to lower-ranked Colombia on Sunday to miss the Olympic team qualification, but on Friday they just dropped a set before defeating sixth-ranked France 6-2 in the semi-finals. World Cup Stage 3 is not an Olympic qualifying tournament. he trio, who had won the first stage of the World Cup in Guatemala City in April, will face Mexico on Sunday in a repeat of the first stage final. Deepika will be in the hunt for a hat-trick of gold medals. Deepika is also in the semi-final

Judoka Sushila

of the recurve section. - PTI

gets Olympic spot

New Delhi: Ace Indian judoka Sushila Devi has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics through the continental quota, the sport's international federation confirmed on Friday. Sushila, who competes in the 48kg category, has 989 points which puts her at seventh spot in the Asian list, the International Judo Federation said. The continental quotas are allotted based on a judoka's ranking in the region. Asia has 10 quota slots. This will be the 26-yearold's first participation at the Olympics. Only one athlete per **NOC (National Olympic** Committee) per division can qualify. Each NOC is entitled to only one spot through the continental quota. - PTI

Aditi gets off to creditable start

Johns Creek, Georgia: Aditi Ashok carded a one-over 73 in the opening round to be placed tied 39th at the KPMG Women's PGA Championship, which is her 17th Major start. Still searching for first Top-10 in a Major, Aditi was one-under through 12 holes. Aditi's 17 Major appearances are the most by any Indian and she now overtakes Anirban Lahiri with whom she was tied at 16. It must be noted that women have

Published by K. Sudhakar for and on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited at Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002. and Printed by him at BFL Infotech Limited, C - 9, Sector - III, Noida - 201301.

five Majors and men have four

each year. - PTI

Editor - Kaushik Mitter, RNI Registration number 57290/94, Price in Nepal - Nep.Rs. 20.00

ASSURED AZZURRI Cool Cavani fires

Italy look to continue unbeaten streak, face Austria

London, June 25: Italy's unbeaten streak won't last forever, and Austria coach Franco Foda is plotting to be the one to stop it.

The Italians have become one of the favourites at the European Championship after winning all three of their games in the group stage, scoring seven goals and conceding none. Those three victories at Euro 2020 extended the team's unbeaten streak under coach Roberto Mancini to 30 games matching the previous record set in the 1930s.

"Initially it seemed to be an insurmountable and impossible challenge for us, because they haven't lost for an eternity," Foda "But sooner or later even Mancini's team will

Austria have reached the round of 16 at the tournament for the first time, will get their chance on Saturday at Wembley Stadium.

Besides the unbeaten streak, Italy will also be trying to set another record. They have not conceded a goal in 11 matches, a total of 1,055 minutes. If Austria fail to score, Italy will surpass the record of 1,143 minutes set between 1972 and 1974.

For a team who failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup, Italy's recent results are quite remarkable.
"It's something that

makes us proud, especially considering what they thought of us before the tournament started," Italy forward Lorenzo Insigne said.

"But we have to stay focused, calm and think ourselves. Our



Italian players Giorgio Chiellini and Ciro Immobile during a training session ahead of their Euro Last 16 clash against Austria.

objective is to go all the way, it wasn't just to get through the group stage." **DENMARK ON EURO**

ROAD FOR FIRST TIME After three emotional European Championship matches in Copenhagen,

Denmark will next play in

Eriksen once called home.

city that Christian

The Danes will take on Wales in the round of 16 at the Johan Cruyff Arena on Saturday, a stadium where Eriksen is fondly remembered by Ajax fans as a stylish midfield playmaker from 2010-13 before his transfer to Tottenham. Denmark lost their first match to Finland 0-1 after

Eriksen suffered cardiac

arrest on the field and had to be resuscitated with a defibrillator. The Danes also lost to Belgium before beating Russia 4-1 to finish second in Group B and advance to knockout rounds.

While Denmark are hitting the road for the first is being played in 11 cities

Live on TV

Wales vs Denmark from 9.30 pm Italy vs Austria from 12.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

HEAD TO HEAD

WALES-DENMARK

 Matches: 10. Denmark: 6. Wales: 4 EURO MEETINGS **1987:** Wales beat Denmark 1-0 in

Cardiff. 1987: Denmark beat Wales 1-0 in Copenhagen. **1998:** Wales beat Denmark 2-1 in Copenhagen. 1999: Denmark beat Wales 2-0 in Anfield.

ITALY-AUSTRIA

Matches: 35. Italy: 16. Austria: 11. Drawn: 8. EURO MEETINGS

1970: Italy beat Austria 2-1 in Vienna. 1971: 2-2 in Rome.

- S. PERVEZ

across Europe, Wales have had a tougher travel schedule.

Wales' victory over Turkey and a draw with Switzerland were enough for second place behind Italy in Group A. The Welsh lost 1-0 in their final match against the Italian, one of the tournament's top teams.

New Delhi, June 25: India's star badminton player and Rio Games sil-ver medallist PV Sindhu is

a front-runner to become

one of the two flag-bearers

for the Indian contingent

at the Tokyo Olympics. This time, India will have

one male and female ath-

lete as the flag bearer at

The Olympics begin July

opening ceremony.

Uruguay into QF

Sao Paulo, June 25: Uruguay and Paraguay secured their spots in the Copa America knockout stage by winning their Group A matches by 2-0 Uruguay had their first

win in the tournament against Bolivia, who could have jumped ahead on the table, but are out of the tournament due Paraguay's convincing victory against Chile on Thursday.

Argentina lead Group A with seven points, followed by Paraguay with six. Chile have five, one more than Uruguay. Bolivia have

Uruguay's victory started after Bolivian goalkeeper Carlos Lampe, one of the best players of the match, had an own goal in the 40th

Edinson Cavani doubled the Uruguayan lead from short range in the 79th minute at the Pantanal in Cuiaba. It was the veteran striker's first goal for Uruguay since November.

Paraguay beat Chile with a header by Braian Samudio in the 33rd minute and a goal from the spot by Miguel Almirn in the 58th at the Man Garrincha stadium in

Uruguay and Paraguay will clash on Monday in a match that will decide who face defending champions and favourites Brazil in the quarterfinals.

If they draw or Uruguay win, Chile will face the hosts. A Paraguayan victory means Uruguay will take that spot.

'We have to think about winning, not about choos-

SINDHU SET TO CARRY TRI-COLOUR AT GAMES

end of this month but it is

all but certain that Sindhu

will be one of the flag-

one of the flag-bearers,"

an IOA source said.

the next edition.

The official announce—were two medallists and ment will happen at the one of them wrestler

Rio de Janeiro.

"Sindhu is likely to be

Although there is no rule

but the convention has

been that last edition's

medal winner always has

been the flag-bearer for

From last edition, there

bearers

COPA RESULTS

Uruguay (Jairo Quinteros 40-og, **Edinson Cavani 79) Bolivia**

Paraguay (Braian Samudio 33, Miguel Almiron 58-p)



Uruguay's Edinson Cavani celebrates after scoring a goal against Bolivia in Copa America.

ing rivals," Uruguay mid-Giorgian Arrascaeta said.

"We created a lot of opportunities, we missed some that were very clear, but this gives us confidence. We never stopped believing in this squad.

Paraguay's Almirn is also optimistic about the future of his team in the tournament.

"We have done great work here," he said.

"Winning was the most important thing, but the most important thing is how we are playing,"

Sakshi Malik has not qual-

will be the joint flag-bear-

er. Some of the big names

TT

Punia, boxer

Sharath Kamal, wrestler

Amit Panghal to name a

No male athletes got any medal at the last edition in

Neeraj

player

include athlete

Chopra.

Bajrang

ified during this edition. It is still not clear who among the male athletes

AMACEING | JOURNEY



New Zealand's World Test Championship Mace is heading home in style.

IT IS YET TO SINK IN: SOUTHEE ON WTC WIN

Southampton, June 25: New Zealand pacer Tim Southee says the Championship umph over the mighty Indian team will take at least a couple of

weeks to sink in. For Southee, it wasn't just about 15 players in the current squad.

"It is amazing to be part of this team. We have been working for this (WTC final win) for the last two years. Not only the 15 players but others probably in the last 5-6 years (have contributed) to get us to where we are now.

"It is very special. We had come very close to a few tournaments. It is yet to sink in and may take a couple of weeks. Southee believes that

the crucial wickets of India captain Virat Kohli and Cheteshwar Pujara on the final day had set up his side's triumph.

India lost Kohli and Pujara to Kyle Jamieson inside the Pujara first eight overs of the

day.
"We knew it was going to be tough on the final day, three results were possible then and the first hour to be crucial. But picking up the two wickets in that period was crucial in the end,' Southee said in a video interview released by NZ Cricket. — PTI NZ Cricket.

TEAM INDIA UNLIKELY TO GET WARM-UP GAMES

New Delhi, June 25: The Indian cricket team will intra-squad two games at the Riverside ground in Durham before the five-match Test series against England as Virat Kohli's men are unlikely to get any warm-up first-class against county

Kohli had Virat expressed his displeasure at not being given any firstclass games before the England series, starting in Nottingham on August 4.

"Due to Covid-19 protocols, they will play two intra-squad four-day matches before the first Test in August," an ECB spokesperson said on

While it is understood that BCCI had requested ECB for a few practice games, the Covid-19 situation won't allow any such plan to go ahead.

Asked if there is any chance of a game against sides, spokesperson said, "No". In England, cricketers from various counties are

regularly being tested for Covid but are not being kept in any bubble. The Indian team, once it assembles in London on July 14 and moves to

Durham, will be once

again be in a bubble. The domestic cricketers of England not being in a bubble is an issue for sure. That's why the games in Durham will be intra-squad ones," a BCCI official said on conditions of anonymity. India are currently trav-

elling with 24 players — 20

squad games. However, legends like Sunil Gavaskar have questioned the amount of pre-

in the official squad and

four reserves — which will

allow them to play intra-

paredness that a simulated match can give the team. **BCCI SELECTORS NOT**

TO TRAVEL TO UK

Chairman selectors Chetan Sharma and another senior selector Sunil Joshi are not going to England for the five-Test series as strict quarantine rules have become an impediment.

It is understood that India being among the Red List countries, there are no direct flights to the United Kingdom.

Anyone travelling from India either needs to travel by a charter flight like the team or first fly to a country which is not in UK's Red List, quarantine there and then take a connecting flight to England.

"Yes, Debu (Debasish Mohanty) and Abbey (Kuruvilla) are going to Sri Lanka where the white-ball squad will play six games. They are in quarantine at the Mumbai hotel along with rest of the team. But no selector is travelling to UK," a BCCI common a selector is travelling to the beautiful and the selection and the sele

informed. It is also understood in the year of a T20 World Cup, it is more important to check out the younger crop of players in Sri Lanka rather than the tried and tested automatic choices who are in the UK for the traditional format.

In order to upgrade the infrastructure, Railways will undertake the Non-Interlocking work

CANCELLATION/DIVERSION OF TRAINS

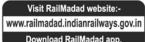
in connection with doubling work between Betgara, Altagram, Dhupguri, Khalaigram, Jalpaiguri Road & Teesta Bridge Cabin stations of Alipur Duar division. To execute this work suitable traffic blocks from 26.06.2021 to 01.07.2021 will be taken on Betgara -Khalaigram - Jalpaiguri Road & Teesta Bridge Cabin section of Northeast Frontier Railway. During this Period following trains will temporarily be affected as under:-

CANCELLATION OF TRAINS				
Train No. & Train Name	Date of Cancellation (from Originating Station)			
02550 Anand Vihar Terminal - Kamakhya Special	28.06.2021 to 30.06.2021			
02549 Kamakhya- Anand Vihar Terminal Special	29.06.2021 to 01.07.2021			
05956 Delhi Jn Kamakhya Brahmputra Special	28.06.2021 & 29.06.2021			
05955 Kamakhya - Delhi Jn. Brahmputra Special	29.06.2021 & 30.06.2021			
DIVERSION OF TRAINS				

Train No. & Train Name	Diverted Route	Date (from Originating Station)
05910 Lalgarh Jn Dibrugarh Avadh Assam Special	via	28.06.2021
02424 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Special	Raninagar Jalpaiguri Jn Teesta Bridge Cabin - Mathabhanga -	25,26,27,28 & 30.06.202
02504 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Special		25, 26, 28 & 30.06.202
02506 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Special		27.06.2021
02550 Anand Vihar Terminal - Kamakhya Special	New Cooch Behar	25,26 & 27.06.2021
05934 Amritsar Jn Dibrugarh Express Special	- via	25.06.2021
05623 Bhagat Ki Kothi - Kamakhya Special	Siliguri Jn Alipur Duar Jn Samuktala Road	29.06.2021
02424 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Special		29.06.2021
02504 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Special	- Gamaktala Road	29.06.2021
02503 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Special		26, 27 & 30.06.2021
02505 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Special	via New Cooch Behar - Mathabhanga - Teesta Bridge Cabin - Raninagar	25 & 28.06.2021
02423 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Special		25, 26, 27 28 & 30.06.20
05653 Guwahati - Jammu Tawi Special		30.06.2021
05909 Dibrugarh - Lalgarh Jn. Special	Jalpaiguri Jn.	30.06.2021
02501 Agartala - Anand Vihar T. Rajdhani Special	1	28.06.2021
02503 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Special	via	29.06.2021
02423 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Special	Samuktala Road - Alipur Duar Jn	29.06.2021
05668 Kamakhya - Gandhidham Jn. Express Spl.	Siliguri Jn	30.06.2021

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

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









Serving Customers with a Smile

It could be Novak vs Federer in final against Nick Kyrgios.

Wimbledon, June 25: Djokovic and Federer were placed on opposite sides of the Wimbledon bracket in Friday's draw, meaning they only could meet in the final — which would be a rematch of their epic

2019 title showdown. The top-seeded Diokovic will have a lot at stake when play begins at the All England Club on Monday, a year after the grass-court tournament was canceled because of

the pandemic. He seeks a 20th major title, which would tie the men's record shared by Federer and Rafael Nadal;

he can move closer to a calendar-year Grand Slam

after winning the Australian Open in February and the French Open this month: he will be trying to win his third consecutive trophy, and overall, Wimbledon.

Two years ago, Djokovic edged Federer in a fifthset tiebreaker after saving two championship points in the final. Two of the top five men are out: No. 3 Nadal and

No. 5 Dominic Thiem. The possible men's quarterfinals are Djokovic vs No. 5 Andrey Rublev, and No. 3 Stefanos Tsitsipas

WIMBLEDON | DRAW

vs. No. 8 Roberto Bautista Agut in the top half; No. 2 Daniil Medvedev vs. No. 6 Federer, and No. 4 Alexander Zverev vs. No. 7 Matteo Berrettini in the bottom half. Among the noteworthy

first-round men's matchups are Djokovic against wild-card entry Jack Draper, a 19-year-old from England who was the Wimbledon boys' runner-up in 2018; two-time champion Andy Murray against No. 24 seed Nikoloz Basilashvili; and No. 21 Ugo Humbert **DEFENDING CHAMPION HALEP WITHDRAWS**

Simona Halep said she was "really down and upset" at not being able to defend her ladies singles title at Wimbledon due to a calf injury.

The 29-vear-old Romanian had been battling to be fit since withdrawing from her second round match at the Italian Open in mid-Mav.

"It is with great sadness that I'm announcing my withdrawal from The Championships as my calf injury has not fully recovered," she said.