

# The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### New responsibility

**Guwahati, June 3 :** Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday said that the Central BJP leadership will give new responsibility to former Sarbananda Sonowal, taking into account his past experience both in the State and at the Centre. Chief minister Sarma, however, said he is not aware of the party leadership's plans for his predecessor. "When Sonowal and I had our last meeting with Naddaji [BJP president J.P. Nadda], he told us that Himanta will be the Chief Minister for the next five years while Sonowal will be given a new responsibility," he told reporters in New Delhi. "I believe the central leadership will take a decision about Sonowal," Sarma said. He further said Sonowal's experience as a former chief minister and a former Union minister will definitely be used by the party. Sonowal was the Union sports minister in the Modi government from 2014 to 2016, before taking charge as the chief minister of Assam.

### Karbi Peace Accord

**Guwahati, June 3 :** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has informed that the signing of the Karbi Peace Accord is likely to be signed next week. "Final talks are going on with concerned groups. The Karbi Peace Accord is likely to be signed any day next week," Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said. Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma informed that during his visit to New Delhi held discussions on the matter with Union Home Secretary and officials of the Intelligence Bureau. "My meeting with Home Secretary and IB officials were about the signing of the Karbi Accord," CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said while briefing media in New Delhi.

### Freedom fighter Debeswar Doloi Died

**Guwahati, June 3 :** Freedom fighter Debeswar Doloi, who was a founder and former president of Asom Rajyik Mukti Joddha Sammilan, passed away at his Kushal Nagar residence at Jorhat in Assam on Thursday. Doloi was instrumental in forming freedom fighters association units in every district of Assam under the Asom Rajyik Mukti Joddha Sammilan. He was also president of the Jorhat unit. Doloi who was 98, leaves behind his wife, four sons, two daughters and grandchildren. The freedom fighter from Assam was a Gandhian and had participated in the Quit India Movement protest against British rule in 1942 at Teok when he was a student. Doloi was imprisoned in the Jorhat jail for seven months along with other freedom fighters from Assam like Pitambar Devo Goswami of Garmur Satra, Majuli, litterateur Baghmibor Nilomoni Phukan, Harijan bondhu Krishna Nath Sarmah, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, who later became President of India.

## Assamese litterateur Lakshmi Nandan Bora dies of Covid-19 complications



**Guwahati, June 3 :** Lakshmi Nandan Bora passed away at a hospital in Guwahati on Thursday morning. An acclaimed novelist and short story writer in the Assamese language, Lakshmi Nandan Bora has authored over 60 books. Padma Shri awardee and noted Assamese litterateur Lakshmi Nandan Bora died on June 3 after suffering from Covid-19 complications. Lakshmi Nandan Bora passed away at a hospital in Guwahati on Thursday morning. He was 89. An acclaimed novelist and short story writer in the Assamese language, Lakshmi Nandan Bora has authored over 60 books including Patal Bhairavi and Kayakalpa. Born in June 1932 in Hatichung of Kudijah village, Assam,

Lakshmi Nandan Bora did his schooling from Nagaon High School and graduated in Physics (BSc) from Cotton College State University, Guwahati. He secured his Master's degree (MSc) from Presidency College in Kolkata. He pursued doctoral studies in meteorology at Andhra University from where he secured a PhD, the first person to be awarded a doctoral degree in meteorology by the university. Lakshmi Nandan Bora's first short story, titled Bhaona, was published in Assamese magazine, Ramdhenu, in 1954. Dristirupa is his first book, which was published in 1958. He published his first novel, Gonga Silonir Pakhi, in 1963. Lakshmi Nandan Bora won

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## Assam Governor and CM mourns death of Lakshmi Nandan Bora



**Guwahati, June 3 :** Assam Governor Prof. Jagdish Mukhi mourned the death of Lakshmi Nandan Bora an eminent litterateur. In a condolence message here today, Prof. Mukhi said, "I am really saddened by the demise of eminent novelist Lakshmi Nandan Bora. An eminent litterateur, novelist

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## Mamata Banerjee eases COVID restrictions in Bengal, allows restaurants to open for 3 hours

**Kolkata, June 3 :** With the COVID-19 situation improving in West Bengal, the state government on Thursday (June 3) decided to allow restaurants to open for three hours in the evening, provided people working there are vaccinated, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said. The government is also thinking of allowing shopping malls to open with 25 per cent workforce after the ongoing COVID-related restrictions come to an end on June 15, she said at a meeting with representatives of various chambers

West Bengal following the imposition of restrictions. Restaurants

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## Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) Pass Certificate Valid For Lifetime : Government

**Guwahati, June 3 :** The government has decided to extend the validity period of the Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) qualifying certificate from 7 years to lifetime with retrospective effect from 2011, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' announced today. "This will be a positive step in increasing the employment opportunities for candidates aspiring to make a career in the teaching field," Mr Pokhriyal said. He further said that the respective state government

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## Myanmar military court sentences two journalists to jail



**New Delhi, June 3 :** A military court in Myanmar has sentenced two journalists to jail each after reporting on the anti-military protests. The court in the southern city of Myeik found both reporters guilty of sedition based on

a criminal law dating back to colonial times, dpa news agency reported on Thursday. Aung Kyaw, a reporter for broadcaster Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), and Zaw Zaw, a freelance reporter for online portal Mizzima News, had been re-

porting on the protests against the military coup until they were arrested a few weeks ago. The US Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), which fights for freedom of the press worldwide, called for the immediate release of the journalists. "Reporting the news is not a crime. Myanmar's junta must stop jailing and sentencing journalists on fabricated charges, and should allow the press to work freely," said Shawn Crispin, CPJ South-East Asia representative. On May 12, journalist Min Nyo of

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## AHSEC proposes Class 12 exam for only 3 subjects, final decision soon Education

**Guwahati, June 3 :** Assam HS Exam 2021 is likely to be conducted only for 3 subjects as proposed by the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council. The decision on the examination is expected to be announced soon. It is expected that the Assam HS Exam 2021 will be held only for 3 subjects. AHSEC proposes the state education department to reduce the number of subjects to three from the existing syllabus. Along with AHSEC, SEBA also showed its preparedness

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## PM Modi joins CBSE session, holds surprise interaction with students and parents



**New Delhi, June 3 :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday joined a session with CBSE students conducted by the Education Ministry. He surprised the students and their parents and had a chat with them on their issues and concerns. PM Modi on June 1 had decided to cancel the exams following a meeting attended by Union

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar, and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) chief Manoj Ahuja. The move has been widely welcomed across the country. The Centre took the decision keeping in mind the prevailing COVID-19 conditions in the country. The CBSE will now gauge the

progress of students over the past year based on well-defined objective criteria, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had said following the announcement to cancel class 12 board exams for the academic year 2021. Meanwhile, the CBSE said that the evaluation criteria for Class 12 is under consideration and would

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## Delhi communal violence : SC quashes FIR against Vinod Dua for 'inciting' people

**New Delhi, June 3 :** The Supreme Court on Thursday quashed a first information report (FIR) filed against journalist Vinod Dua for allegedly spreading rumours and 'instigating' people during



the communal violence in Delhi last year through his YouTube shows. A bench of Justices UU Lalit and Vineet Saran rejected another petition, put forth by Dua, demanding that

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## PM told me to have 'Zero Hour' in Cabinet to hear negative feedback : Himanta Biswa Sarma

**Guwahati, June 3 :** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has advised him to introduce a concept like the 'Zero Hour' during Cabinet meetings where he will get to hear only the negative feedback about the government. Sarma met the Prime Minister in New Delhi on Wednesday. "In the Cabinet, ministers will compile all the negative feedback (collected from MLAs) and give it to a se-

nior minister. Then I will join the Cabinet and the senior minister will explain only the negative things about the government, so that we can immediately take remedial action," Sarma said Wednesday at The Indian Express e-Adda moderated by National Opinions Editor Vandita Mishra. Sarma said the Prime Minister had drawn this from his experience as the Chief Minister in Gujarat. "Modiji said he did it in Gujarat, so I should start that

practice in Assam. He said, 'Achcha bolne wala toh tumko bahut milega, lekin burai suno, tabhi you will be able to rectify'," he said, responding to a question if the Prime Minister welcomed negative feedback. "He listens to negative feedback, he rather encourages it," Sarma said. The newly sworn-in Chief Minister of Assam, and the BJP's key leader in the Northeast, spoke on a range of issues, including measures in Assam to



tackle the Covid pandemic, his political career, problems with the Congress leadership, relationship between the Centre and states, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, and Assam's roadmap for the future. Elaborating on Centre-state relations, Sarma also referred to the recent incident when West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee skipped a Cyclone Yaas review meeting called by PM

Modi. "You have to respect the institution of the Prime Minister. The country will not survive like this. If a CM can say why should I wait 30 minutes for the PM... I think I have never heard such arguments in my entire political career. I have seen CMs after CMs sitting in Sonia Gandhi's waiting room for two to three hours..." he said. "We should have kept aside our ego and we should have waited as long as required to

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# Ajmal CSR have spent INR one crore during ensuing pandemic: Dr. Khasrul Islam



**Hojai, June 03 :** Dr. Khasrul Islam, Director of Ajmal Foundation said on Wednesday that, "Ajmal CSR comprising of Ajmal Foundation, Haam Hospital and Markazul Ma'arif together have spent INR One Crore during ongoing Covid 19 pandemic through different initiatives for the welfare of underprivileged needy people." While interacting with reporters at a newsroom organised at Ajmal Foundation premises in Hojai, Islam accompanied with Dr. Chaidul Islam, Director, Hamm Hospital; Dr. S H Choudhary, President, Markazul Ma'arif; Dr. Halil lal Choudhary, Deputy Director, Hamm Hospital informed that, "Ajmal CSR have taken three unique initiative in order to contain Covid 19 and

aid the needy people. He said, "We have launched two statewide mission namely, 'Ajmal Awareness and Consultation Mission' where 500 teachers of Ajmal Group of Schools' and Colleges' will be available for any query related to Covid-19 symptoms; another is 'Ajmal Covid Hello Doctor Service', where 150+ Doctors and Medical Students are in a mission to contain Covid-19 with tele-consultation service and the third mission viz., 'Hello Ajmal Food', is especially for the needy people who are infected with Covid-19 in the district, but they must inform us and after proper verification we will serve them the food." "Under the supervision of M. Badruddin Ajmal, M.P. Dhubri and

CEO, Ajmal CSR and Mohammad Sirajuddin Ajmal, Joint CEO, Ajmal CSR and MLA Jamunamukh, Ajmal CSR is rigorously working for the betterment of society as a whole." Islam said. He said Our trustee's have specially thanked Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam and Keshab Mahanta, Health Minister for their infallible management in order to contain Covid 19 in the State. Director of Hamm Hospital Dr. Chaidul Islam said, "Our main focus is on large scale Covid testing in order to support the government in fight against the deadly virus that's We are launching a free mega drive of RTPCR and RAT testing to detect the virus quickly." "Their is a good news for the denizens of Hojai District that a Oxygen Generator from Denmark within one month will be installed in Hamm Hospital which will produce near about 63 jumbo cylinder of oxygen per day.", Dr. Chaidul Islam added. He further said our hospital is having proper treatment for both post and pre Covid patients adding he said we have availablity of separate wards, ICU beds, Ventilator, also no shortage of oxygen cylinder, also the charge of this service is kept nominal to mitigate the burden on the patients family. He further lauded the efforts of Assam Government in maintaining the health department in a well structured manner. President of Markazul Ma'arif, Dr. SH Choudhary said, "We along with the other Ajmal CSR NGOs are working for the upliftment of the people." Choudhary said, "during the ensuing pandemic we are providing essential food relief, free medicine to the marooned people in addition to this We are planning to hold a mega sanitization drive at all the public gathering places within the district, also our volunteers are creating mass awareness through online medium in a bid to contain the Covid 19 virus." All of them have further urged the people to abide by Covid Protocol.

## Minister Pijush Hazarika visits Nagaon to review preparedness to tackle flood scene in the dist

**NAGAON, June 3:** The State Water Resource Minister and also the Guardian Minister for the district Pijush Hazarika today visited Nagaon and held a review meeting with Deputy Commissioner Kavitha Padmanabhan, Superintendent of Police and other heads of various departments at DC's conference hall. In the meeting, the minister took stocks from the officials concerned about the prevailing COVID situation in the district as well as other infrastructures of various COVID hospitals and COVID Care Centres set up at various places in the district. Besides, he reviewed other facilities available in the COVID hospitals as well as other COVID Care Centres too and directed the officials concerned to ensure the strict maintenance of COVID protocol by COVID patients during their isolation period at their homes. Similarly, he also directed the officials concerned to deliver the packets of essential commodities as estimated of Rs 2000.00 by government to the family as well as the COVID patients who are below poverty line at their respective doorsteps. He however strictly instructed the officials to maintain the quality of items in this regard. During the meeting, the minister also reviewed the preparedness of the district administration to combat the possible flood in the district during the coming rainy season and directed the officials of district administration to ensure all arrangements as well as readiness to tackle the possible flood scene in the district before hand. He appreciated the police administration for the incessant police operations against drugs and appealed to police administration to intensify more operations against the menace in the district. BJP MLAs Rupak Sarma and Jitu Goswami, Congress MLAs Rokibul Hussain, Nurul Huda, Sashikanta Das and Sibamoni Bora and AIUDF MLA Aminul Islam were also present in the meeting. Earlier the minister rushed to Chaparmukh and Garmari area and reviewed on spot the erosion of the Kapili river in those areas.

## GRD Pharmaceuticals completed 15 Glorious years of Service in NE region



**Guwahati, June 03 :** Chemist's and Drug-gists Association of Assam (CDAA) president Dr. N. L. Agarwal and Secretary Mr. Jitu Barman extended their heartiest congratulations to GRD Pharmaceuticals for completing 15 glorious years of service to North East India. GRD Pharmaceuticals was set up in 2006, with a focus towards the manufacturing and distribution of pharmaceuticals in North East India. Since then it has been the fastest growing pharmaceutical company of the region. GRD Pharmaceutical was the first company in the entire North East India to start the pro-

duction of Alcohol Based Handrub in 2012, under the brand name HandUser-C. In the past 9 years, HandUser-C has been the leading choice of hand sanitizer for health institutions and trade markets alike. This hand sanitizer uses a combination of Chlorhexidine and Ethanol to provide a higher level and longer period of protection when compared to standard hand sanitizers. The CDA, Assam also offered its best wishes to GRD Pharmaceuticals for the launch of their new liquid hand soap "HandUser-G", which is expected to be launched later this month.

## Miss Junashmita Bhuyan brings glory to Kakopather, Awarded Doctor of Philosophy

**Kakopather, June 03 :** Miss. Junashmita Bhuyan, Guest Faculty of Department of Philosophy, Assam University, Silchar, has been awarded the Degree of 'Doctor of Philosophy' in Philosophy for her thesis entitled "The Problem of Immaculate Perception in the Navya-Nyaya: A Critical Study". She carried out her research work under the supervision of Prof. Adarasupally Nataraju, Dean, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan School of Philosophical Studies, Assam University, Silchar. She is the younger daughter of Late Jogendra Nath Bhuyan and Mrs. Alpana Doloi Bhuyan, resident of Kakopather, Tinsukia, Assam.



## Two more people die of COVID 19 at Nagaon

**NAGAON, June 3:** Two more people including a woman died of COVID 19 in the district today. Including these two death cases, a total of 66 people succumbed to the virus till the time of filing of this

report. Besides, 308 fresh COVID cases have been detected today, taking the total cumulative active COVID cases in the district to 4183 while 449 COVID patients who were undergoing treatment in hospital as well as home, have been recovered from the infection of the virus today, sources said.

Sources claimed that among those who tested positive today, 84 were admitted to Nagaon COVID hospital as well as other COVID Care Centres set up at various places in

the district while the rest were put in home isolation.

Rapid Antigen Test was conducted on 5666 people on Thursday while RT-PCR test was conducted on 243 swab samples, sources added.

Meanwhile district body of Asom Jatiya Parishad (AJP) led by Anup Laskar today distributed packets of essential commodities among the families of the COVID victims in the town and other areas of Nagaon Sadar constituency.

## BSF Apprehend 01 Indian Drug Smuggler Alongwith Opium

**Guwahati, June 03 :** Troops of Border Security Force conducted an intelligence based special operation in the area of responsibility of Guwahati Frontier and apprehended one Indian national along with Raw Opium from bordering area of village Kalamati under Police Station Sahebganj, Distt- Coochbehar (West Bengal) on 02nd June 2021.. 2. Acting on tip off, troops of BSF BOP Kalamati of 192 Bn BSF under Guwahati Frontier launched a special operation in general area of village Kalamati under Police Station-Sahebganj, Distt -Coochbehar (West Bengal) and apprehended one Indian drug trafficker along with Opium & one Honda Motorcycle, while the consignment was being smuggled from India to Bangladesh. 3. Details of apprehended drug smuggler is as under:- Razak Sekh (37 Yrs), S/o Late Samiuddin Sekh, R/o village- Khaspara, Police station -Sahebganj, Distt- Coochbehar (West Bengal).. 4. The apprehended India drug trafficker along with seized raw Opium and Motorcycle were handed over to Police Station - Sahebganj (West Bengal) for further legal action. , 5. BSF troops are always alert towards the issues of trans-border crimes, drug trafficking and are making all endeavours to contain such trans-border crimes.

## Many shops were gutted after a major fire broke out at Laharighat Bazar

Life Drugs Distributor owner faces a huge loss



**Laharighat, June 03 :** Many shops were gutted after a major fire broke out at Laharighat Bazar in Morigaon district of Assam on 28 th May, 2021. According to primary information received the cause of fire possibly due to LPG cylinders explosion and spread rapidly, engulfing the entire market. Many shops, including Life Drugs Distributor were reduced to ashes and a huge loss have occurred. The owner of Life Drugs Distributor Sirajul Islam told that due to massive fire nothing have remained

intake at his shop. He also said that he has paid all kinds of taxes including income tax, Gst etc and had informed the concerned offices about these. He has nothing to run his business now. Hence Islam has sought government assistance to rejuvenate his business again. Newly elected MLA from Dhing Aminul Islam and Laharighat MLA Dr Asif Mohammad Najar have visited the spot. Morigaon SP, Senior officials also visited the market and took stock of the situation.

## Online summer camp for children at Nagaon

**NAGAON, June 03 :** Sanskritik Gosthi Kallol, Nagaon in association with Motiram Kakoti Cultural Centre, Setali is going to organize an exciting summer camp on online for children of 8 - 12 age group from June 7th to June 13th, 2021 in Assamese. During the camp, the children will get opportunity to learn various new things in different events scheduled by the organizing committee and also get privilege to meet many new friends. The prime contents of the camp are drawing, painting, world of words in English, drama and music, story telling, dental awareness, yoga and dance.

Dr Rajkumar Mazindar, Assistant professor, department of visual arts, Assam University, Madri Kakoti, Assistant professor, department of Linguistics, University of Lucknow, Dakshina Sarma, National School of Drama, New Delhi, Singer and performer Rupam Bhuyan, story teller and founder of Priyo Bandhu, Archana Borthakur and many prominent figures of various fields will grace the camp.

Interested children are requested to register online on <https://forms.gle/QMrwNqUYTaxYQNKZ8> before June 6 next, a press release added.

## CTET Passed Candidates Demand Appointment

**Golaghat, Jun 2 :** The newly formed state government as per its manifesto has decided to give employment to one lakh unemployed youths in different government departments. A high level selection committee has already been formed in this regard under state Finance and Social Welfare Minister Ajanta Neog. Amidst this the candidates who have cleared the Central Teachers Eligibility Test (CTET) are demanding to give preference to them in the requirement of teachers in the state government schools. Today in a press conference held at Golaghat District Journalist Association office several CTET qualified candidates stated that

they were being deprived of whenever recruitment process of teachers for state government schools conducted. They requested the new Education Minister of Assam Ranoo Pegu to reconsider the decision of not giving preference to CTET qualified candidates in the teachers recruitment process. Central TET examination is a very tough examination compared to that of state TET. So engaging such CTET qualified candidates as teachers in state government schools will be able to make good quality education system. The CTET candidates also requested state Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sharma to look into the matter.

## LDJA condemns police officer's alleged act

**North Lakhimpur, June 03 :** The alleged behaviour of the I/C of Narayanpur police station to the scribes has been condemned by Lakhimpur District Journalist Association (LDJA) in a statement released today. LDJA President Tutumoni Phukan and Secretary Manoj Barpatra Gohain while condemning the act of insulting in the strongest words, further said that it is of the opinion that the police of-

ficer is at dagger's drawn to the scribes because the media has been publishing news on his corruption. The LDJA demanded appropriate action against the police officer by the Lakhimpur District Administration at earliest. Notably, the I/C of Narayanpur police station insulted two local scribes for a petty matter yesterday when they went to Narayanpur to cover news.



# David Beckham buys stake in vehicle electrification firm



**London, June 03** : Snaps of David Beckham in expensive cars were a tabloid staple during the footballer's days as a star player, but now his interest has taken a surprising turn: bin lorries. The former Manchester United and Real Madrid midfielder has taken a 10% stake in Lunaz, a Silverstone-based company that electrifies classic cars from Rolls-Royce, Jaguar and Range Rover. Now it hopes to take the same engineering logic and apply it to refuse trucks and other specialist commercial vehicles, giving them a new lease of life in the transition away from fossil fuels. The company is part of a small but growing trend of the new battery economy: ripping out polluting engines and installing batteries and electric motors with zero exhaust emissions. The attraction for Beckham became clear during a Guardian test drive on

Wednesday afternoon alongside the famous Silverstone race track in the well-upholstered back of a 1961 Rolls-Royce Phantom. Electric motors may lack the engine roar beloved of petrolheads, but the smooth, quiet ride they offer is well suited to the more rarefied atmosphere of chauffeur-driven luxury. At first glance the plush interior could have been hand-upholstered 50 years ago, but wooden charge and power dials tell a different story. New cars powered solely by petrol or diesel engines will be banned by 2030 in the UK, but the government is unlikely to order classic cars off the road, whatever their emissions, while London's ultra-low emissions zone exempts historic vehicles. Yet there is still growing demand for upgrades in the car market. Workshops are springing up around the country

that cater to this new class of customer as batteries finally reach the point where they can be slotted in to older models. The technology is there, but financially, it is likely to be some time before conversions of mass-market cars are within reach. Lunaz charges for classic models start at £245,000 for a Range Rover, putting it within the reach only of the very wealthy. For a historic Rolls-Royce those prices are £350,000 and upwards - very far upwards, judging by the range of bespoke options on offer. One or two new electric motors take up much less space than an engine, allowing Lunaz to squeeze in custom-made batteries and whatever newer technologies customers need, from air conditioning to electric windows, phone chargers and in-built TVs. Other companies take a different approach, buying parts such as batteries secondhand from the few electric cars that make it to the secondhand market or that are written off in crashes. ElectroGenic, a classic car converter based in Oxfordshire, has said prices can start at £30,000 (albeit rising in line with customer requirements). Another, Swindon Powertrain, quotes about the same for converting an old Mini. You could convert a Rolls-Royce Phantom, or for roughly the same price you could get a bin lorry. The uses are probably very different, but the thinking is surprisingly similar, according to

David Lorenz, who founded Lunaz alongside Jon Hilton, who won the Formula One world championship three times as Renault's technical director. "When you take these vehicles you realise the new electric vehicle alternative comes at a higher price with all the same components," says Lorenz, standing beside the skeleton of a bin lorry that was built in 2011 to a diesel standard that will be rapidly ruled out of city use. Retaining many of the bin lifting components and renovating others means the cost to a local council of upgrading to electric can be 40% less than buying a new diesel version, Lorenz says. On top of that, electricity is less than a third of the price of the energy equivalent in diesel, meaning total cost of ownership gains could be very attractive. Bin lorries are particularly suited because of their short and predictable routes - the distance between charging points is still a limiting factor preventing widespread use of electric goods lorries. There is easily space to slot in six roughly car-sized battery packs where engine, fuel tank and exhaust cleaning technologies used to be. Lunaz only began in 2018, and the new Silverstone location should be able to handle about 120 cars a year. A larger facility due to be opened soon will deal with trucks, and Lunaz hopes to be upgrading 4,000 vehicles a year by 2028.



Dancers perform Jiuhe Zhuo Dance, a national intangible cultural heritage, in Jiuhe Village of Qonggyai County in Shannan

## Free Hong Kong Road: Budapest renames streets to frustrate Chinese campus plan

**Budapest, June 03** : Budapest has renamed streets around the planned site of a leading Chinese university campus to protest an "unwanted" project forced on it by the government of the prime minister, Viktor Orbán. Four street signs at the site now bear the names Free Hong Kong Road, Uyghur Martyrs' Road, Dalai Lama Road, and Bishop Xie Shiguang Road, the last referring to a persecuted Chinese Catholic priest. "We still hope the project won't happen but if it does then it will have to put up with these names," the city's mayor, Gergely Karacsony, told a joint press conference with the district mayor, Krisztina Baranyi. Currently derelict, the area is to house Fudan university's first European campus in a 500,000 sq metre (5m sq ft) complex by 2024, according to a deal signed between Hungary and the Shanghai-based university's president. But the sprawling project has fed growing unease about Hungary's diplomatic tilt from west to east and its soaring indebtedness to China. Leaked internal documents revealed that China is expected to give a €1.3bn (\$1.6bn) loan to cover most of the estimated €1.5bn costs. "We don't want the elite and private Fudan university here at the expense of Hungarian taxpayers," said Karacsony. The liberal mayor has previously blasted "Chinese influence-buying" in Hungary and urged Orbán to

honour a previous pledge not to force projects on the capital against its will. A city-wide "consultation" to canvass the population's opinion on the project begins on 4 June, said Baranyi. Opinion polls show a majority of Budapest residents oppose the plan. The government argues that a prestigious outpost of Fudan university would permit thousands of Hungarian, Chinese and other international students to acquire high-quality degrees. It would also fit in with previously agreed plans to build a "Student City" dormitory project for thousands of mainly Hungarian students at the site, it says, although Karacsony said the Fudan campus would take over most of that project's area. Fudan is the latest landmark in Orbán's foreign policy of "Eastern Opening", which analysts describe as a geopolitical balancing act. Critics portray the nationalist prime minister as China and Russia's "Trojan horse" inside the European Union and Nato. In May Karacsony announced he would run in a primary election organised by an alliance of six opposition parties to select a challenger to Orbán at a general election in early 2022. Polls show the opposition alliance holds a narrow lead over Orbán's ruling rightwing Fidesz party, and that Karacsony is currently the most likely to win the primary which will be held in September.

## Cargo ship carrying tonnes of chemicals sinks off Sri Lanka

**Colombo, June 03** : A cargo ship carrying tonnes of chemicals has sunk off Sri Lanka's west coast, and tonnes of plastic pellets have fouled the country's rich fishing waters in one of its worst marine disasters. The government on Wednesday suspended fishing along a 50-mile stretch of the island's coastline, affecting 5,600 fishing boats, and hundreds of soldiers have been deployed to clean affected beaches. The Singapore-registered MV X-Press Pearl, carrying 1,486 containers

including 25 tonnes of nitric acid along with other chemicals and cosmetics, was anchored off Sri Lanka's west coast when a fire broke out after an explosion on 20 May. Flaming containers laden with chemicals tumbled into the sea from the ship's deck as emergency crews sought to contain the blaze over the ensuing two weeks. The craft began to sink early on Wednesday, and a salvage crew tried to tow the vessel to deeper water away from the coast, the fisheries minister, Kanchana Wijesekera, tweeted, but the attempt was abandoned after several hours. "The towing of the fire-engulfed X-Press Pearl ship was stopped due to the rear end of the vessel hitting

the seabed," the navy spokesperson, Cap Indika de Silva, told Photos taken by the country's air force showed the charred wreck of the ship spewing white smoke as it listed to the right and began sinking, and part of it soon touched the seabed, 22 metres (73ft) deep in the immediate area.

**NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given to public at large the branch office of Tata Motors Finance Ltd. situated at 1ST FLOOR, VISHAL TOWERS, NEAR OLD BALIBHAT MASJID, MARWARI PATTI, JORHAT-785001, ASSAM is closing from 7th July 2021 and same branch will be operating from NEAR RRL GATE NO. 01, OPP. NOVA NISSAN, JORHAT-785006, ASSAM

## Nicaragua police detain opposition leader and expected Ortega challenger

**London, June 03** : Police in Nicaragua have stormed into the house of a prominent opposition leader, one day after formally filing money laundering charges against her in what was seen as an attempt to stop an electoral challenge to the autocratic leader Daniel Ortega. Cristiana Chamorro, 67, was detained at her home south of the capital Managua on Wednesday, 15 minutes before she was scheduled to give a virtual news conference to reporters. Live footage on local television and social media showed police entering and surrounding the home of Chamorro, and then forcing away journalists who had arrived to cover the scene. Chamorro, the daughter of former president Violeta Barrios de Chamorro had been expected to run in presidential elections on 7 November. But on Tuesday, prosecutors announced that they had lodged charges against her, and asked the country's electoral tribunal to bar Chamorro from running or holding public office. Antony Blinken, the US secretary of state said on Twitter: "Arbitrarily banning opposition leader [Chamorro] reflects Ortega's fear of free and fair elections. Nicaraguans deserve real democracy." The head of the Organization of American States warned that Nicaragua was heading towards "the worst elections possible" and said the moves against Chamorro removed all political credibility for the country's government and electoral system. In a statement, Luis Almagro criticized the politicized use of the country's legal system, adding: "This kind of systematic and repeated violations of the rule of law delegitimizes the electoral process before it has even begun." The Nicaraguan government has said Chamorro is under investigation for



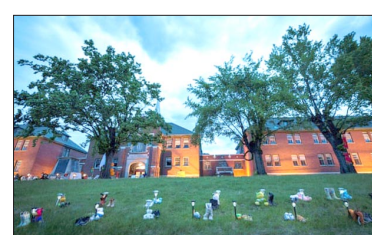
alleged financial irregularities related to the Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation for Reconciliation and Democracy - the nongovernmental group named after her mother. Chamorro has said the allegations were trumped up to keep her out of the race. In January, Chamorro stepped down from her role at the foundation. A month later, it closed its operations in Nicaragua after passage of a "foreign agents" law designed to track foreign funding of organizations operating in the country. In late May, police raided the offices of the foundation, as well as the offices of Confidential, the opposition newspaper edited by

Chamorro's brother. Chamorro's mother beat Ortega to win the presidency in 1990 and served until 1997. Her husband, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, had run his family newspaper La Prensa and was jailed and forced into exile multiple times by the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. He was assassinated in 1978. Cristiana Chamorro is the vice-president of La Prensa. Ortega returned to power in 2007, ruling the country alongside his wife and vice-president, Rosario Murillo, even as he has grown increasingly isolated internationally. In 2018 police and paramilitary groups crushed a nationwide civil uprising demanding his resignation.

## Canada calls on pope to apologize after Indigenous children's remains found

**Paris, June 03** : Canada's government has called on Pope Francis to issue a formal apology for the role the Catholic church played in Canada's residential school system, days after the remains of 215 children were located at what was once the country's largest such school. Justin Trudeau's government also pledged again to

support efforts to find more unmarked graves at the former residential schools which held Indigenous children taken from families across the nation. Chief Rosanne Casimir of the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation in British Columbia has said the remains of 215 children were confirmed last month at the school in Kamloops, British Columbia, with the help of ground-penetrating radar. So far none has been excavated. The Kamloops Indian Residential school was Canada's largest such facility and was operated by the Roman Catholic church between 1890 and 1969 before the federal government took it over as a day school until 1978, when it was closed. Nearly three-quarters of the 130 schools were run by Catholic missionary congregations. A papal apology was one of the 94 recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was set up as part of a government apology and settlement over the schools, and the prime minister asked the pope to consider such a gesture during a visit to the Vatican in 2017. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops announced in 2018 that the pope could not personally apologize for residential schools, even though he has not shied away from recognizing injustices faced by Indigenous people around the world. "I think it is shameful that it hasn't been done to date," Marc Miller, Indigenous services minister, said. "There is a responsibility that lies squarely on the shoulders" on the Catholic bishops of Canada, he added. Carolyn Bennett, Indigenous relations minister, added that an apology by the pope would help those who suffered heal. From the 19th century until the 1970s, more than 150,000 First Nations children were required to attend state-funded Christian schools as part of a program to assimilate them into Canadian society. They were forced to convert to Christianity and not allowed to speak their native languages. Many were beaten and verbally abused, and up to 6,000 are said to have died. The Canadian government apologized in parliament in 2008 and admitted that physical and sexual abuse in the schools was rampant. Many students recalled being beaten for speaking their languages. They also lost touch with their parents and customs.



A volunteer in charge of delivering necessities for residents under home quarantine helps another volunteer write her name on the protective suit at a residential area at Liwan District of Guangzhou

### Validity period of Teachers Eligibility Test qualifying certificate extended from 7 years to lifetime - Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'

**Delhi, June 03** : Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' announced that Government has decided to extend the validity period of Teachers Eligibility Test qualifying certificate from 7 years to lifetime with retrospective effect from 2011. The respective State Govts. / UTs will take necessary action to revalidate/issue fresh TET certificates to those candidates whose period of 7 years has already elapsed, he added. Shri Pokhriyal said this will be a positive step in increasing the employment opportunities for candidates aspiring to make a career in the teaching field. Teachers Eligibility Test is one of the essential qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in schools. The Guidelines dated 11th February 2011 of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) laid down that TET would be conducted by the State Governments and the validity of the TET Certificate was 7 years from the date of passing TET.

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Opp. Anuradha Cinema, Guwahati-781021				
EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2021 (Amt in 000 except eps)				
PARTICULARS	Quarter ended 31-03-2021	Year ended 31-03-2021	Quarter ended 31-03-2020	Year ended 31-03-2020
	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited
Total income from operations (net)	7,381.18	49,367.29	3,408.75	54,380.16
Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and Extraordinary items)	(1,496.62)	13,500.23	(33,858.31)	(33,603.88)
Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and Extraordinary items)	(1,496.62)	13,500.23	(33,858.31)	(33,603.88)
Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and Extraordinary items)	(4,029.06)	8,308.49	(30,881.23)	(30,626.80)
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/ (loss) for the period after tax and other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	(4,029.06)	8,308.49	(30,881.23)	(30,626.80)
Equity Share Capital (Face value Rs 10)	92,930.00	92,930.00	92,930.00	92,930.00
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the balance sheet of previous year)		(24,853.42)		(35,155.24)
Earning Per Share in Rs (of Rs. 10/-each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)	(0.43)	0.89	(3.32)	(3.30)
Basic	(0.43)	0.89	(3.32)	(3.30)
Diluted				
<b>NOTE:</b>				
The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the BSE and Company's Websites.				
Canopy Finance Limited				
Sd/-				
Lalit Kumar Tapadia				
Managing Director				
DIN NO: 08117881				
Place: Guwahati				
Date: 03/06/2021				

## THE ASSAM RISING

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## China's new child policy

The Chinese census in May showed that the country was ageing rapidly, its overall population growth was at its most sluggish in generations, and that its fertility rate had plunged to 1.3 children per woman - a level even lower than Japan, a country already in a state of population decline and very rapid ageing. Of course, we have known this for many years. A more notable development was the media's reaction to the census data. China's apparent demographic travails were narrated as an existential threat to the country's economic and geopolitical future. This led to panicked claims by commentators inside and outside China that it was experiencing a "demographic crisis". Then came the suggestion from a high-profile former McKinsey consultant that the solution was to "go all out on pro-birth policies" by taking a "carrot and stick" approach, which included limiting access to better education to couples bearing two children - coercive ideas that arguably show a lack of regard for human dignity. At the end of May, the government announced that the two-child policy would be further adjusted to allow all Chinese couples to have three children. In some ways, this was unsurprising. After the census results were announced, speculation increased about the scrapping of all birth control restrictions, as they appeared to be inconsistent with widespread concerns about population-ageing and stagnation. Most observers (myself included) don't think that the shift to a three-child policy will have a significant impact on the age of China's population or the size of its labour force. Survey data suggests that only a relatively small number of people really wish to have a third child. In common with people elsewhere in east Asia, parents (and prospective parents) in China are very concerned about the costs of bringing up children (especially extracurricular education), accessing decent and affordable childcare, the impact on women's careers, and so on. Without other support in place such as high-quality, affordable childcare, it is hard to see how the policy will directly stimulate a visible change in overall fertility rates. The announcement is just the latest in a series of adjustments to the family planning policy which have occurred piecemeal over the past three decades. Of course, this begs the question of why China is keeping any restrictions at all. To completely abandon the birth restriction policy would be a remarkable U-turn that would be perceived as an implicit statement about the wisdom and efficacy of China's original one-child policy. More practically, completely restructuring the family planning programme around the country and redeploying the local family planning officials who remain is a huge administrative task which requires both time and tact. What is almost comical, however, is the idea voiced by many observers that having more babies will fix China's demographic challenges in the short term. Lest we forget, babies don't go to work. In today's world, newborns are unlikely to enter the labour force until after 2040. Given that the urban pension fund alone is projected by the Chinese Academy of Social Science to become insolvent by the early 2030s, babies hardly seem the most helpful solution. Increasing the retirement age is an easy (if unpopular fix), but one which will only have limited impact - and may even have unintended consequences such as reducing the childcare provided by grandparents which could, ironically, put further downward pressure on fertility rates. More comprehensive changes will be needed to confront the new demographic reality of low fertility, rapid population-ageing and slow population growth (or even decline). China will need to continue adjusting to the seismic shift away from the decades-long era of renkou hongli, or "demographic dividend", when cheap labour was abundant and both the younger and older non-working population was small relative to the labour force. By realising the potential of an increasingly skilled, more mature population, China could reap a rencai hongli, or "talent dividend", sustaining both productivity growth and healthy, successful ageing. It can also learn from the mistakes of other countries that have already aged, and build ever-more resilient social and economic institutions to support elderly people. Together, such changes can set China on a sustainable path to respond to the challenges of population-ageing and, eventually, decline. This does not mean, however, that the shift to a three-child policy is unimportant. Reports of working-class couples with excess births being fined or charged "social maintenance" fees they struggled to pay have long been common.

## In rich countries, vaccines are making Covid-19 a manageable health issue



When Covid-19 began to spread rapidly in January 2020, governments across the world had limited strategies to deal with it. Without a vaccine or proven treatments for the disease, or even access to mass testing, the only choice political leaders faced was taking the least bad option available. There were four approaches that different governments took during the beginning of the pandemic. China, New Zealand, Vietnam and Thailand chose to eliminate the virus at the cost of stopping international travel. Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea suppressed the virus through rigorous testing, tracing and isolating while avoiding harsh lockdowns. Sweden allowed the virus to spread through the population before realising health systems could not cope with an influx of Covid-19 patients. Meanwhile, European countries including England and France controlled the virus through a cycle of lockdown measures while keeping borders largely open. This resembled a holding pattern for a plane running out of fuel: people grew tired of continual restrictions, the economy suffered and Covid-19 was never fully suppressed. Before the arrival of vaccines, the

most effective of these strategies was the elimination, or "zero Covid", approach taken by countries such as New Zealand, Taiwan and China. But the tools we have at our disposal have changed radically in the past 15 months. We now have safe and effective vaccines, treatments and mass testing, which permit governments to rethink their initial strategies and form a more sustainable plan for the future. Covid-19 forced governments around the world into a tailspin because of the substantial number of deaths it caused, the burden it placed on health services and the risks of long-term symptoms in younger people. Without lockdown measures in place, the virus could grow exponentially, finding endless hosts to jump between, while fear of the virus caused people to change their behaviour, resulting in economic damage. Vaccines are now addressing these three problems. If governments are able to vaccinate 80-90% of their population, Covid-19 will increasingly become a manageable health issue, much like other vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles or pertussis (whooping cough). We know that vaccines clearly help to re-

duce hospitalisations and deaths. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that elderly people vaccinated with mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) were 94% less likely to be hospitalised than people of the same age who were not vaccinated. A study in Scotland found that after the fourth week of an initial dose, the Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines reduced risk of hospitalisation by up to 85% and 94% respectively. Early research from Yale University also indicates that vaccines seem to help those with long Covid. As many as 30-40% of those who get the vaccines report improvement to their symptoms. If vaccines do indeed prevent people from dying or getting seriously ill, then the end of the pandemic is in sight for the countries that have high vaccine coverage, testing and treatments. One recent study of healthcare workers in Scotland that has not yet been peer reviewed suggests vaccines may also be able to prevent transmission. Israel has raced ahead in its vaccination programme, with the US and the UK not far behind. The European Union is steaming along, and the next group to join them will probably be in east Asia and the Pacific. Once these populations are protected with vaccine-induced immunity, they can start to open up again to the world and lift their border restrictions in a careful and managed way. In these countries, case numbers will become less relevant, as the link between cases, hospitalisations and deaths will be largely broken. This was always the aim of scientists working on treatments and vaccines, and science has succeeded. But there are still two areas of considerable uncertainty. We may yet see the emergence of a variant that reduces the effectiveness of vaccines against death and serious disease. And how we manage the virus in children and adolescents, who will be largely unvaccinated and still susceptible, will be a continuing challenge. It seems inevitable that children under 16 will also be vaccinated (the US has already authorised the Pfizer vaccine to be used in 12-15s). So when will the pandemic be over? Covid-19 won't end with a bang or a parade. Throughout history, pandemics have ended when the disease ceases to dominate daily life and retreats into the background like other health challenges. Barring a horrific new variant, rich countries such as Britain and the US may be within months, if not weeks, of what their citizens will see as the end of the pandemic. This isn't the case in poorer countries in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia. For countries that can't afford vaccines, technology or treatments for Covid-19, populations will remain trapped by outbreaks that cause chaos in hospitals and kill health workers and vulnerable and elderly people. It's now incumbent on richer countries that are emerging from the pandemic to turn their attention to poorer nations and ensure they have the resources they urgently require. It's only when Covid-19 stops disrupting lives and livelihoods in all regions that we'll truly be able to say the pandemic has ended.

## The government's Covid strategy was discredited but we're still paying the price

The big question isn't what mistakes were made over 'herd immunity', but why Westminster never learned from those errors. Rishi Sunak, Boris Johnson and Patrick Vallance gave a press conference about Covid-19 in March 2020. Amid the select committee revelations from Dominic Cummings, and in his recent claims on social media, there has been a lot of focus on suggestions that the government was following a "herd immunity" policy at the start of the pandemic, costing thousands of lives in the process. Of course, none of this is surprising. It is very clear that this was the flawed policy of the government through early March last year, not least because it was publicly discussed by the prime minister and by many scientific advisers to the government - including Patrick Vallance, who spoke of "enough people becoming immune to this" with mild illness, to help build herd immunity. The alternative strategy of high suppression or elimination of the virus was rejected by the government very early on, despite strong evidence

from other countries around the world showing that this could be successfully applied. There were several elements that underpinned the devastating herd immunity strategy. It was believed that infection of large swathes of the population was inevitable, and acceptable, and that there was no way to prevent it. This came with the tacit acknowledgment that hundreds of thousands of deaths were acceptable, most of which would occur among vulnerable and elderly people. A sense of national exceptionalism held by some suggested that other countries' experiences didn't apply to us - despite that by March we had had months to observe and learn from countries in south Asia, and seeing the devastating impact of late action in Italy. Real-world evidence was ignored in favour of models and flawed thinking. The government's strategy repeatedly conflated Covid-19 with flu, ignoring the much higher transmissibility, higher susceptibility, which would lead to many more people getting infected and dying, and unknown



### Deepti Gurdasani

long-term impacts from a novel virus. Finally, there was the idea that the health of the economy needed to be balanced with public health. A lot of emphasis was placed on the disruption lockdowns would cause, with attempts to slow down such decisions, without understanding that delays would inevitably lead to even longer lockdowns and more economic damage. It is widely known that the government made a U-turn when an Imperial College model showed the strategy would lead to 400,000 deaths. The late March lockdown swiftly followed. But this realisation did not require any sophisticated calculation and many experts had been raising the alarm for weeks. We knew even by March last year that locking down earlier would have saved tens of thousands of lives. What is even more concerning, and has not been discussed as much, is how little the government seems to have learned from those difficult early months of the coronavirus crisis. Even after the consequences of the herd immunity strategy became clear, the idea still casts a shadow over our pandemic response. These flawed ideas even reappeared last September when the government's Sage committee advised another lockdown with cases rising rapidly. The government chose to ignore this advice, instead meeting scientists who were proponents of the "naturally acquired herd immunity" strategy. Lockdown was delayed again, and once again it cost tens of thousands of lives. As recently as January this year, we heard Mary Ramsay, the head of immunisation at Public Health England speak about allowing the disease to circulate in younger people "where it's not causing much harm" while protecting "the

people who are really vulnerable". Even now the government and its advisers still speak about "living with the virus" and "acceptable deaths", despite strong evidence that this means thousands of more people getting infected and all that entails. Living with the virus also increases the risk of new variants arising, even as rollout of vaccines continues. Despite what some continue to claim, there has only ever been one real option: when faced with a novel respiratory virus, with a relatively high fatality rate and unknown long-term impacts, you have to eliminate it. Countries who got this right did so early. The differences between those countries that adopted an elimination approach and ones with mitigation strategies have become ever more stark over time, both for public health outcomes and the economy. And yet the government continues with a policy of halfway measures aimed at keeping infection levels just low enough so that hospitalisations are below NHS capacity. This has spawned and imported new variants of the virus and has led to at least 150,000 deaths, more than one million people living with long Covid, an over-run health service and a devastated economy. We have normalised illness, suffering and death. Now we have put all our eggs in the vaccine basket while taking no action to protect these vaccines by preventing virus adaptation or the import of new variants. As continued government negligence herds us towards a third wave of the pandemic, the big question isn't what mistakes the government made in March, many of which are well-documented, but why it never learned from those errors and continues on a path that risks people's lives and livelihoods.

## What should Britain's memorial to the Covid pandemic look like?



Memorials aim to be an eloquent last word on an event. A key quality is that they resist change: they attempt to fix for us an abiding sense of what exactly has happened. They can be many things: columns, tombs, plaques, cenotaphs, village halls, even housing. But who are they for? The people who suffered, their families, the wider public or future generations? At some point, inevitably, there will be an official, national memorial of the pandemic in the UK (as well as many more, surely, at local and international levels). What, then, should it look like? It will have to contend with how messy the past year has been - the death, the sorrow, the fear, but also the ensuing political and social division. Perhaps through

don't talk directly seem too vague. But at a time when narratives are brutally contested, it seems unlikely that a pandemic memorial will avoid controversy, no matter how skilful the architect. There have already been several attempts to memorialise the lives lost around the world during the pandemic, from the heartfelt and informal to the grandiose. Most recently, St Paul's Cathedral in London has announced it is fundraising to create a memorial from its online book of remembrance. Although these early expressions show there is a need to remember, none have fully grasped the scale of such an era-defining event. Sir Edwin Lutyens,

### Eddie Blake

in designing the Cenotaph to remember those lost in the first world war, tackled the problem of remembering through abstraction. The calm, mute form reached beyond allusion or literal interpretation. Yet Lutyens' attempt was criticised by Church of England bishops for being too ecumenical and secular. After the first world war, the British government erected monuments to mark the conflict across the UK and the empire. They also built many memorial halls and in some cases social housing as a more ambitious tribute to the fallen. The idea originated after the Boer war, but by 1919 had expanded to whole "memorial villages", which included traditional monuments to the dead but also housing and provision for employment. A good example of this can be found at Westfield War Memorial Village, Lancaster. The mundane everyday-ness of it somehow makes it all the more poignant. Site is crucial to how memorials work. Take London, where we have a kind of monument zone littered with commemoration, stretching from Trafalgar Square, down Whitehall, to Parliament Square and up to Hyde Park. The memorials sit next to places of power, marking them as an official record of events. In the design of public memorials the pendulum has swung between abstraction and figuration.

## Tips to check your home loan eligibility with co-applicant, existing loan and credit score

**Mumbai, June 03 :** Home loan interest rates across most banks and NBFCs are currently low and even the prices of residential properties are not moving up in a hurry. But, homebuyers may have to expedite their buying decision. In the post-Covid-19 world, home prices may firm up, especially of those which are based in locations where the demand is high. Several homebuyers are already firming up their home-buying plans and looking to take advantage of the current low-interest-rate scenario. If you are one of those who are looking to take a home loan, you need to approach a bank or an NBFC. The lender will calculate the home loan eligibility amount that can be sanctioned to you. The home loan eligibility will determine how much loan can be had from the bank. There are several home loan eligibility calculators on the Internet that may help you find out the amount of loan that you can get. Tax Relief for Work from Home: Need of the hour during Corona times rental housing in India Model tenancy act to strengthen organised rental housing in India. Primarily, home loan eligibility is based on one's income and repayment capacity. Other factors such as your spouse's age, interest rate, credit score, existing loans, and the tenure of the home loan also matter. Your other loans if any such as car loan or personal loan also impacts your home loan eligibility. While taking a home loan, the lender will ask you about your existing liabilities including personal loan or car loan EMIs. Banks generally do not lend an amount on

which the EMI will be more than 45-50 per cent of your monthly take-home pay. How much home loan can you get on Rs 40,000 salary? Assuming someone working in a private firm has a monthly income of Rs 40,000 but his take-home net pay is Rs 34,000. Then, the new loan will be for



an amount on which the EMI cannot exceed approximately Rs 17,000 i.e. 50 per cent of net pay. An EMI of Rs 17,000 at an assumed interest of 8 per cent for 15 years can provide a home loan of about Rs 18 lakh. It's better to take a loan where the home loan EMI is not more than 35 per cent of your monthly income while total EMI including car loan etc should be restricted to 50 per cent. If there is no other loan, you may go up to 50 per cent with a home loan. This will give you the opportunity to save for long-term goals as well. You can add spouse income to enhance home loan

eligibility as well. As the loan repayment through EMI's has to be serviced throughout the loan term, typically most banks keep tenure such that the loan ends by the time the EMI payer reaches age 65. Your Credit history and credit score show your past repayment track record and also help

lenders to decide on your home loan eligibility. All lenders will anyhow look at the borrower's credit profile before disbursing the loan. However, when they do so it is more to assess the risk and not much with the home loan eligibility. Still, few banks do offer a lower interest rate to borrowers with higher Credit Score. But, if you are falling short of the required amount of loan, here are three home loan tips to enhance your eligibility: By increasing the tenure of the loan, one can increase the home loan eligibility. In the example above, at the same interest rate, if one agrees

to increase the tenure of the loan from 15 to 20 years, the EMI stays at about Rs 17,000 but the home loan eligibility increases to Rs 21 lakh. Similarly, at same rate of interest, the loan amount increases to Rs 22.5 lakh for a loan tenure of 25 years. A word of caution: Increasing the tenure, increasing the interest burden if one keeps the loan running till the end of tenure. Therefore, always have a back-up plan to repay the loan as early as possible and not run it till its original tenure. One can add a co-applicant to the home loan thus increasing the eligibility amount of the loan. A co-applicant can be his spouse, siblings or even the parents if they too are earning members of the family. Banks and HFCs are providing loans at a varying interest rate and the differential is sizeable among them. Choose a lender that gives you the home loan at the lowest rate of interest. A difference of even 1 per cent can increase eligibility by a lakh. Finally, by scouting for an effective lower rate of interest, adding a co-applicant and by increasing the tenure of the loan, you may increase your home loan eligibility. Be prepared with these before you walk into the lender's office for a better home loan deal.

## Hyundai Alcazar launch on June 17: Everything you need to know

**Mumbai, June 03 :** The Hyundai Alcazar is said to be launched on June 17 in India. According to sources close to the matter, Hyundai Motor India is planning to launch its new three-row seat SUV later this month. Our sources have confirmed, Hyundai will launch the Alcazar on June 17. Although, the date may be brought forward or delayed by one or two days, depending on the lockdown restrictions and situation around the country. The Hyundai Alcazar will be aimed squarely at the MG Hector Plus, Tata Safari and the upcoming Mahindra XUV700 will also compete in the same segment. The Alcazar shares its underpinnings with the smaller Creta SUV. However, engine options are slightly different. The diesel model will use the same 1.5-litre turbocharged engine as the Creta, which delivers an identical 115hp and 250Nm of torque. But the petrol engine is a larger 2.0-litre unit borrowed from the bigger Tucson. In the Alcazar, the petrol motor will be tuned to produce 159hp and 192Nm of torque. Both engines will be available with 6-speed manual and automatic transmission options. The Alcazar will take the best bits from the Creta and elevate the offering. It is designed to offer a 2,760mm long wheelbase, which is 150 more than the Creta. It is also the longest in its seg-



ment compared to the Safari and Hector Plus. Hyundai will offer the Alcazar with a 7-seat configuration, or a 6-seat captain seat middle row layout with a centre console. It will come equipped with the 10-inch touchscreen infotainment system with Hyundai BlueLink like the Creta, wireless smartphone charging pads, panoramic sunroof among other features as well. The Alcazar will use the Creta as its base but will have its own bespoke touches to differentiate itself. The cascading front grille retains the shape of the one on the Creta but will come in a new chrome-studded design. The fog lamp housing has also been revised for the Alcazar. In profile, the Alcazar is a longer vehicle with distinct changes beyond the C-pillar featuring a larger glass quarter panel. It will also sit on 18-inch alloy wheels, a size larger than the Creta. At the back, the Alcazar has been styled to have a more upright tailgate, while the LED tail lamps have been revised as well. Hyundai will announce the prices of the Alcazar later this month.

## Aditya Birla Health Insurance expands its footprints in Assam

**Guwahati, June 03:** Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company Ltd. (ABHICL), the Health Insurance subsidiary of Aditya Birla Capital Limited, a significant non-banking financial services company, today announced the launch of its full-service branch in Bongaigaon. ABHI now has its presence in two markets in Assam including Silchar and Bongaigaon. In Assam, ABHI witnessed an increase in Gross Written Premium (GWP) by 176% in FY21 as compared to FY20. Going forth with the holistic health approach, ABHICL customers will avail coverage for mental illness counselling, unlimited homeopathy telemedicine, day care treatments, modern and advance treatment methods, Day 1 coverage for chronic illnesses and more across 60 total provider network including 22 diagnostic centers in Assam and 8670+ network hospitals across India. They will also have access to hassle-free digitized claim process. ABHICL customer will also be able to avail up to 100% premium returns, i.e. HealthReturns™, rewards through its flagship product 'Activ Health'. They can get up to 100% HealthReturns™ by leading a healthy and active life. HealthReturns™ can be used for either health-related expenses like buying medicines, paying for diagnostic tests, day care treatment, out-patient expenses (OPD), and alternative treatments (which are traditionally excluded), or most importantly can be used towards the payment of future premium. Customers can track and also earn their Health

Returns™ through the 'Activ Health' app. ABHICL's unique engaging 'phygital' strategy ensures higher level of customer satisfaction and a contactless processing. This includes: \*For Covid-19 - ABHI offers Covid-19 specific coverage plan called Corona Kavach and provides Covid-19 hospitalization expenses cover under retail indemnity products such as ABHI Activ Assure Diamond, ABHI Activ Health Platinum Enhanced, ABHI Activ Health Platinum Essential, and ABHI Activ Care. \*For Health Active - Comprehensive Incentivized Wellness Program that will attract the young and health conscious and will motivate, guide and reward them to stay healthy. \*For Health Anxious - A Chronic Care Management Program starting Day 1 for individuals dealing with chronic lifestyle conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma and high cholesterol. \*For Senior Citizens Health & Wellness - 360-degree indemnity health insurance covers for senior citizens with 100% of sum insured as reload for unrelated illness, 586 listed day care procedures that require hospitalization for less than 24 hours, incentivized wellness program and free health coach. \*For protecting health & future - Comprehensive plans for complete protection from major 64 illnesses, every stage of cancer and full protection along with financial backing for you and your family in case of an unfortunate accident. Commenting on the expansion plans in the city, Mr. Mayank Bathwal, CEO, Aditya Birla

Health Insurance Co. Ltd. said, "We are glad to announce the launch of our branch in Bongaigaon, whereby the customer can avail ABHI's customized health insurance product offerings and related services. Customers will have access to 60 total provider network in Assam. We, at ABHICL, have always endeavored to be ahead of the curve in designing innovative health insurance solutions by understanding our customer's needs, with an ultimate goal of providing protection for every household. Our 'health first' philosophy has allowed us to focus on the 'health' in health insurance. We are confident that the people of Bongaigaon would benefit from our differentiated product offerings and focus on living a healthy lifestyle; a key component embedded in our products." Aditya Birla Health Insurance is the fastest growing health insurance company covering 13.4 million lives with gross written premium at Rs. 1,301 Crore in FY21 who grew 49% year on year and is ahead of industry growth of 32% for standalone health insurers. In FY21, ABHICL has issued 98% of the policy digitally and has renewed 93% of policies digitally. As a response to the health and safety needs, this branch will strictly follow Covid-19 related safety instructions to protect customers as well as employees. These regulations include: but are not limited to social distancing, mandatory mask policy, regular branch sanitization, testing body temperature before entry, and hand sanitization.

## Marking its 17th anniversary, Vestige celebrates the spirit of togetherness amid pandemic with the theme 'EkSaath - Unbeatable Together'

**New Delhi, June 03 :** Vestige Marketing Pvt Ltd, India's largest home-grown direct selling company with a vast portfolio in health, wellness, and hygiene products, marked its 17th year of operations since its inception in 2004. Having grown strategically in business, markets and products, Vestige is now ranked 36, making it the only Indian-origin company to be featured in the reputed DSN Global 100 list. Along with this, Vestige has also been certified as The Great Place to Work for the third time in a row. Vestige has empowered and transformed the lives of millions of distributors across India and international markets providing access to health and wellness products for a better tomorrow. It has had a record growth of 30% CAGR and plans to expand its network to in Middle East, Africa and other regions by 2025. It was the phenomenal growth in India that encouraged Vestige's leaders to expand into international markets as well. Vestige is currently present in 6 countries including India and will soon start operations in countries like Thailand, Ghana and Philippines. Commenting on the significant rise of Vestige over the past 17 years, Gautam Bali, Man-

aging Director, said, "I feel humbled when I look back on our journey and at the same time take great pride in the fact that we have been able to fulfil our vision of helping people live a life of economic independence on their own terms. It is the collective effort and the goal of shared prosperity of our distributors and employees that is reflected in the theme 'EkSaath' for the 17th year anniversary. I am immensely grateful to all Vestigians for their trust and faith in the brand." He further added, "In India, over 65% of the population is below 35 years, and direct selling is a great opportunity to leverage for employment and income creation. The market is right now waiting to realise its full potential. We are committed to enable our vision of providing economic independence by creating entrepreneurs in tier 2 and 3 markets." In the FY 2018, as per industry studies there were 5.7 million direct sellers engaged in direct selling which is set to increase to 18 million by 2025. And according to ASSOCHAM, the direct selling industry is expected reach a value of INR 15,930 crore by end of 2021. As the company completes its 17 years, it celebrates its position as a torch-

bearer of the country's grassroots entrepreneurial skills to enable an Atmanirbhar Bharat. Since its inception in 2004, Vestige has been at the forefront of leading the direct selling revolution in India and has expanded its product portfolio exponentially in each category, offering over 300 products in 19 different categories. In India it has expanded to 3,500 online and offline touch points to enhance customer experience. Innovation and research are at the core of Vestige's product development. Its manufacturing partners have state-of-the-art facilities and are GMP, HALAL and ISO certified. The products are made by following high quality standards and globally recognized best practices. About Vestige Marketing Pvt. Ltd. Founded in 2004, Vestige has been at the forefront of leading the direct selling revolution in India. Today Vestige is the largest direct selling brand in India offering a portfolio of 300+ products across wellness, health, hygiene, home, and beauty segments through 3500+ distribution points across India, and a business presence in six international markets spanning Bahrain, Bangladesh, Nepal, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

## Google challenges new IT rules, says it's not a social intermediary



**Mumbai, June 03 :** Salve also argued that Google was not fighting against the victim in this case, and was rather trying to protect itself from being held guilty of violating court orders in countries where the Delhi court jurisdiction did not apply. Google LLC on Wednesday moved the division bench of the Delhi High Court against the order of its single judge directing it to remove morphed pictures of a woman on certain pornographic websites within 24 hours of receiving the order. The order stated that failure on the part of Google to remove the objectionable content from all the sites world-wide would lead the company to lose the immunity which it enjoys as an intermediary under Sec-

tion 79(1) of the IT Act and and its officers would be liable for action as mandated by Section 85 of the IT Act. In its appeal before the division bench, Google has contended that it was erroneous on the part of the single judge to refer to its search engine as a social intermediary as it was an aggregator. Further, it stated that it can remove the objectionable content from India but it may not be possible to do the same globally. Urban Company valuation at \$2.1 bn post \$255-m fundraise FY21 standalone and consolidated recurring EPS were up 4.2x and 3.9x YoY. Prefer BPCL among OMCs, keep TP unchanged at Rs 544 The division bench did not stay the order but issued notices to

the Centre, Delhi government, Internet Service Providers Association of India, Facebook, the pornographic site and the woman, on whose plea the single judge's ruling had come, and sought their responses to Google's plea by July 25. The complaint of the woman was that her pictures from Facebook and Instagram were taken by offenders, morphed and posted on certain pornographic sites. In its appeal, Google said, "The impugned judgment further casts onerous and impossible obligations on the search engine to proactively identify and remove the offending content from listed search results, concerned webpages, sub-pages and sub-directories where the offending content is found... the single judge has failed to appreciate that the fact that the index of such search results on search engine is from diverse third-party websites which may have legitimate content. Hence, for the purpose of removal of the content, context is critical to understand the differences between content that may otherwise look very similar." It went on to say, "The impugned direction is impossible for a search engine to comply with given its automated and passive functioning. It also vio-

lates the settled principles that no proactive monitoring can be directed as it has a chilling effect on free speech and may result in over-blocking of even content that is otherwise legitimate." Senior counsel Harish Salve, arguing on behalf of Google, said that justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani's (single judge) order had "mischaracterised" its search engine as a "social media intermediary" or "significant social media intermediary" as provided under the new IT rules. "Additionally, the single judge has conflated various sections of the IT Act and separate rules prescribed thereunder, and has passed template orders combining all such offences and provisions, which is bad in law," Google said in its appeal. Google told the court that it is "merely an aggregator" and that the IT Rules 2021 define social media intermediaries as platforms that enable online interaction or allows for the creation and uploading of content. "Google is an intermediary, not a social media intermediary," it said, while seeking protection against any coercive action for non-compliance with the template or guidelines laid down by the single judge.

## Tata Power wins 210-MW solar EPC contract from NTPC

**Mumbai, June 03 :** With this contract addition, the order pipeline of Tata Power Solar stands at about 2,800 MW with an approximate value of Rs 13,000 crore, the company said. Tata Power's solar EPC business has shown significant growth in the recent years, with earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) for this business segment increasing more than twice annually to Rs 185 crore at the end of FY21. Tata Power Solar said on Wednesday it has received a letter of award for an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract to build 210 mega-watt (MW) solar projects for TPC. The total order value of the projects is about Rs 686 crore and the commissioning date for NTPC is set for November 2022. With this contract addition, the order pipeline of Tata Power Solar stands at about 2,800 MW with an approximate value of Rs 13,000 crore, the company said. Tata Power's solar EPC business has shown significant growth in the recent years, with earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) for this business segment increasing more than twice annually to Rs 185 crore at the



end of FY21. Google challenges new IT rules, says it's not a social intermediary Urban Company valuation at \$2.1 bn post \$255-m fundraise Analysts expect Ebitda from the solar EPC segment to rise at 16% compound annual growth rate over FY21-23 to Rs 440 crore. The company had received new solar EPC orders worth Rs 2,294 crore in Q4 FY21 itself. "Tata Power Solar is the leader in producing solar energy across the country and this (latest order) further validates Tata Power Solar's excellent execution skills in solar projects," Praveer Sinha, CEO of Tata Power said. At the end of FY21, Tata Power solar EPC order book capacity was at 2,824 MW, of which 1,100 MW were from NTPC. About 550 MW of Tata Power Solar's overall EPC orders, worth 2,000 crore, had mandatory domestic content requirement.

Contd. From Page 1

## Assam Governor and CM mourns

and short story writer, his creations reflected the varied and rich aspects of Assam's social and cultural life". Prof. Mukhi also said that his demise is a loss to the State who had immensely contributed to the enrichment of literature. His death marks an end to a golden chapter of the State's literature. His death is an irreparable loss and will create a void. Moreover, his creations will be a source of inspiration to the posterity. "My deep condolences to the bereaved family members and pray to God to be with them at this trying time. I also pray to the Almighty for eternal peace of the departed soul", the Governor added. Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma offered his sincere condolence on the demise of eminent litterateur and Sahitya Akademi Award recipient Dr. Lakshmi Nandan Bora, who breathed his last today. In a condolence message, the Chief Minister said that late Lakshmi Nandan Bora was a gifted writer whose contributions to Assamese literature would be cherished by generations to come. With a unique writing style, the celebrated novelist reflected his profound understanding about human life in his captivating narratives, the Chief Minister said adding that his passing away was an irreparable loss and the people of Assam would continue to feel the void for all times to come. The Chief Minister also prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and expressed his deep sympathy with the bereaved family. Further, the Chief Minister entrusted Industries & Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary to take all needful measures to perform last rites of the eminent litterateur with full state honours.

## Assamese litterateur Lakshmi

the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1988. In 2008, he published Kayakalpa, which won the Saraswati Samman from KK Birla Foundation.Lakshmi Nandan Bora was honoured by the Government of India in 2015 with Padma Shri, the fourth highest Indian civilian award.Lakshmi Nandan Bora also served as the president of Assam Sahitya Sabha (1996/1997) and as a member of the Planning Commission of Assam.Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma mourned the death of the writer whose novel Patal Bhairavi fetched him the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1988."His death has left a void in the Assamese literary world," former Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said.Another of his novels, Kayakalpa, won him the Saraswati Samman in 2008.Mr. Bora was the first person to be awarded a doctoral degree in meteorology by the Andhra University and he had served as a visiting professor at the Johannes Gutenberg University at Mainz in Germany.He also served as the president of the prestigious Assam Sahitya Sabha (1996-97) and was the chairman of the Assam Pollution Control Board from 1997-2003.He edited Goriyoshi, an Assamese monthly literary magazine, too.Lakshmi Nandan Bora (15 June 1932 - 3 June 2021) was an Indian novelist and short story writer in the Assamese language, known for over 60 books he has authored,[3][4] including award winning novels, Patal Bhairavi and Kayakalpa. A recipient of Sahitya Academy Award and Saraswati Samman, Bora was honoured by the Government of India in 2015 with Padma Shri, the fourth highest Indian civilian award. He died on 3 June 2021 from complications caused by COVID-19.Lakshmi Nandan Bora was born on 15 June 1932 at Hatichung of Kudijah village, a small hamlet in Nagaon district in the North-east Indian state of Assam to Phuleswar Bora and Phuleswari as the youngest of their five children. His parents died while he was in his teens and was brought up by his eldest brother, Kamal Chandra Bora. He did his schooling at Nagaon High School, graduated in Physics (BSc) from Cotton College State University, Guwahati and secured his master's degree (MSc) from Presidency College, Kolkata. He pursued doctoral studies in meteorology at Andhra University from where he secured a PhD, the first person to be awarded a doctoral degree in meteorology by the university. For most of his career he worked at Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat as a faculty member and stayed with the institution till his retirement as a professor and the head of the department of physics and agrometeorology in 1992. He has also served as a visiting professor at the Johannes Gutenberg University for two terms. Bora married Madhuri in 1961 and the couple has one daughter Seuji and two sons Tridib Nandan and Swaroop Nandan.The family lives in Ganeshguri, a satellite town of Guwahati, Assam. Seuji Bora Neog is a Professor of Genetics and Plantbreeding at Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Tridib Nandan Bora is a Senior State Government Official while the youngest son Swaroop Nandan is a Professor of Mathematics at Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati. Lakshmi Nandan Borah died on 3 June 2021 at the age of 88.

## AHSEC proposes Class 12 exam

to conduct an exam within 15 days from the COVID situation returning to normal.Assam HS Exam 2021 is likely to be conducted only for 3 subjects. The Assam Higher Secondary Education Council, AHSEC, has sent a proposal to the state education department. The concrete decision on Assam HS Exam 2021 is expected to be announced soon.As per the report from TOI, AHSEC has asked to reduce the number of subjects to three from the existing syllabus for Assam HS Exam 2021. The Class 10 board may also be held simultaneously for five subjects except for the elective subject. The state education minister, Ranaj Pegu is firm in conducting Assam HS Exam 2021. However, speaking to the media on June 1, 2021, he said that the opinions of all the stakeholders had already been taken. The decision on Assam HS Exam 2021 will be taken in the next two days.Latest News: Best and most student-friendly decision: PM Modi on class 12 exam cancellationAs of now, the state government is fully prepared to conduct Assam HS Exam 2021. After receiving the nod from the state education department, AHSEC will circulate the question papers to the exam centres. More information on Assam HS Exam 2021 can be obtained on, ahsec.nic.in.Along with AHSEC, SEBA also showed its preparedness to conduct an exam within 15 days from the COVID situation returning to normal. Nearly 3 lakh students appear for Assam HS Exam 2021 every year. However, as many other states have cancelled their class 12 exams, we may expect AHSEC also to cancel Assam Class 12 Exam 2021. Students must keep checking this page for timely updates on Assam HS Exam 2021.

## Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) Pass

and union territories will take necessary action to revalidate or issue fresh TET certificates to those candidates whose period of 7 years has already elapsed.This change has been made to the guidelines dated February 11, 2011 of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) which laid down that TET would be conducted by the state governments and the validity of the TET Certificate was 7 years from the date of passing TET.Teachers Eligibility Test is one of the essential qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in schools.Earlier, though the validity of the TET pass certificate was for 7 years, there was no restriction on the number of attempts a person can take for acquiring a certificate. A person who has qualified in the exam was allowed to appear again to improve score.While states conduct their own TET, the Central TET or the CTET is conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

## Mamata Banerjee eases COVID

can be open for three hours in the evening from 5 pm to 8 pm provided the people working there are vaccinated," Banerjee said.However, it is not immediately clear from which date the eateries can start operating.The CM said that her government was mulling the option of vaccinating domestic helps in the same way it has planned to inoculate hawkers, bus conductors, vendors and others.Altgether 1.4 crore of people in West Bengal have been inoculated so far, she said.At the meeting, Banerjee also urged representatives of the chambers to help the government in vaccinating the population of the state."The government cannot single-handedly vaccinate everyone. I will urge you to come forward and help us to inoculate the people," she said.Mamata also sought their help in relief works in districts ravaged by Cyclone Yaas.

## PM Modi joins CBSE session

take up to 2 weeks. CBSE Secretary Anurag Tripathi said, "CBSE evaluation criteria for Class 12 are under consideration and it would take up to 2 weeks. Experts would look at all the possibilities and make a decision soon."Tripathi further said that if students are not satisfied with the evaluation process then an option of re-exam will be available for them after COVID-19.

## Myanmar military court

the Democratic Voice of Burma was sentenced for the first time under article 505a in Myanmar to three years in jail.On May 25, authorities in Myanmar detained Danny Fenster, an American journalist working at a local English-language publication, at the Yangon airport shortly before boarding a flight back home.The charges against Fenster are, however, unknown.The military leaders of Myanmar have cracked down hard on anyone they view as an opponent ever since the February 1 coup.There have been reports of more than 5,400 detentions since the start of their rules, including of many journalists.

## Delhi communal violence

a committee be formed to ensure no FIR involving sedition is filed directly against journalists with at least 10 year standing.The bench said, "any relied in terms of the second prayer will amount to encroachment of the field of legislature."However, the top court clarified that every journalist shall be protected as per its 1962 judgment in Kedar Nath Singh's case.In this judgment, a Constitution bench upheld the validity of the sedition law under IPC and also defined the scope of it. It held that Section 124A (sedition) of the Indian Penal Code only penalised words that reveal an intent or tendency to disturb law and order or that seem to incite violence. This definition has been taken as precedent for all matters pertaining to section 124A ever since."Over the last month, the Government has created awareness through various instrumentalities and media platforms, including, print, TV, Radio, social media etc. for creating awareness on the three critical issues - COVID treatment protocol, COVID appropriate behaviour and Vaccination," the Union government said. In picture - People wait for Covid-19 vaccine."He (Choksi) is currently in the custody of Dominica where some legal proceedings are underway. We will continue to ensure that he is brought back to India," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.The FIR was registered against Vinod Dua on May 6, 2020, in Himachal Pradesh by a local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader.The Supreme Court had protected the journalist from arrest in June 2020 when he approached the apex court after being served with a notice to appear before Himachal Pradesh's Kumarsain police station, 80km away from the state's capital Shimla, for questioning in the case.A total of 53 people were killed and more than 400 were injured in the riots that ravaged parts of north-east Delhi in February last year. Police have registered 755 cases related to the communal violence.

## Covid vaccine: Serum

Serum Institute of India (SII), all the vaccine companies should get indemnity protection against liabilities if foreign companies are granted the same," said the source.The country is currently using Covishield -- manufactured by SII -- and Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for its Covid-19 vaccination drive. Russian Sputnik V is the third vaccine to get approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for emergency use.As companies engage with the government over possible legal protection, a former senior ICMR official has said that no company in India's vaccination history has ever paid indemnity.The government, which is the biggest user of vaccines, has also not done it, he said."No Indian company has ever paid indemnity in India's vaccination history, and neither the government, the biggest vaccine user, has done that. Even deaths after Covid-19 vaccination have not come under this umbrella," former ICMR chief Dr Nirmal K Ganguly told.He said there is a risk-benefit ratio in vaccination and benefits far more outweigh any risks."In vaccination, risk-benefit ratio works. Even if there is one serious adverse effect in a million, the benefit to the community at large is more than if you don't vaccinate them," he said.

## PM told me to have 'Zero Hour'

greet and meet the PM," he said. He highlighted that PM Modi had not gone to West Bengal to address any election rally but to help the state's residents.Speaking about federalism, the Chief Minister said, "Today, the Centre-state relationship is redefined in a way that a CM like Mamata Banerjee could dare to challenge the Central government." Sarma, who was a minister in the Congress government in Assam since 2002 before shifting to the BJP, said the Central government today will continue developmental activity in any state irrespective of the political affiliation of the party in power.He said that PM Modi has structured the Centre-state relationship in such a new way that states could work in a sphere of cooperative federalism.Sarma said people who are unable to prove their Indian citizenship in the NRC and the associated judicial process might have to be disenfranchised before being deported to Bangladesh while assuring that as the state's CM he is committed to work for each and every person without any discrimination.On the NRC, which has as of now excluded over 19 lakh applicants, Sarma said the state government demands a re-verification of 20 per cent of the included names in border districts and 10 per cent elsewhere. He said that after being excluded from the NRC, people would get a chance to appeal at the state's Foreigners' Tribunals.Once the judicial process was over and the court of law pronounced a particular person as a citizen of Bangladesh, he was sure that the government of India would be able to convince Bangladesh to take that person back."Till we send them back, we have to create a class of non-citizens. We have to allow them to enjoy fundamental rights, rights to health and education, rights to life and liberty, however they may be disenfranchised till the question of extradition to Bangladesh is finally resolved. And there must be some specific time frame," Sarma said.On the CAA, a legislation which is considered contentious in Assam, Sarma said he was a vocal supporter. "CAA is discharging our historical responsibility - it should not be seen through a communal framework," he said.When asked about his comment during the election campaign earlier this year that he did not want minority votes (referring to that as 35% of the state's population), Sarma sought to make a distinction between a political campaigner and the Chief Minister."We did maximum welfare programs in the areas where the '35 per cent' people live. We have taken up construction of 8 lakh houses for Muslims in Assam. Roads, buildings, colleges, institutions after institutions are being built in areas where they live. But as a political person I know I am not going to get my vote out there. If I am a bit realistic and if I concentrate my resources in a place where I will get votes - what's wrong in that? But today as a Chief Minister, if you ask me, whether I am going to work for that 35 per cent of the population or not - I will answer, 'yes, I will work more and more for the welfare of that 35 per cent'. But as a BJP [politician] why will I go to seek vote where I am convinced that I am not going to get even a single vote," Sarma said.

## ED arrests RJD Rajya Sabha MP

## Amrendra Dhari Singh in fertiliser scam

**New Delhi, June 03** : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested RJD Rajya Sabha MP Amrendra Dhari Singh in fertiliser scam. He was arrested from his Delhi's Defence Colony residence.The agency had booked Singh under PMLA on the basis of an FIR filed by CBI last month.The CBI registered a case on the basis of references from Ministry of Chemical & Fertilizer, Department of Fertilizers, and other information against former MD & CEO of Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative Limited (IFFCO), former MD of Indian Potash Limited (IPL), and some others.It was alleged that IFFCO and Indian Potash Limited were importing huge quantities of fertilizers running into several thousands of metric tonnes and raw materials for fertilizers from various foreign suppliers.It was also alleged that in order to cheat the central government by claiming higher subsidy, the officials were importing fertilizers and raw materials through M/s. Kisan International Trading FZE in Dubai (a subsidiary of IFFCO) and other middlemen at highly inflated rates covering the commission meant for the accused.According to ED, searches are being carried out at the office and residential premises of the accused at 12 locations including Delhi, Gurgaon, Mumbai etc.

## Dr. Lakhminandan Bora's death condoled at Biswanath

**Biswanath Chariali, June 3:** Many organizations of the greater Biswanath including Biswanath district committee of Assam Sahitya Sabha, Biswanath AASU, Biswanath district committee of AJYCP, Biswanath ATTSA, All Assam Gorkha Student' Union, Biswanath Press Club, Binapani Natya Samaj etc. condoled the death of eminent literature, former president of Assam Sahitya Sabha, Sahitya Akademi awardee, recipient of Saraswati award Dr. Lakhminandan Bora who breathed his last on Thursday in a private hospital.

## These are the 3 Lakshadweep draft laws that have triggered controversy

**New Delhi, June 03** : A slew of draft legislation, brought in by Lakshadweep administrator Praful Patel since February this year, have sparked a massive uproar. Much of the anger appears to be directed at three of the draft laws - the Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation (PASA), the Animal Preservation Regulation, and the Panchayat Regulation. The union home ministry is currently scrutinising these three laws. This is apart from the draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation 2021 - another draft law that has led to a furore - which allows the administrator to acquire any land required for a public purpose. While PASA provides for the administrator to order the detention of a person for a period of upto one year if the offender's actions "adversely affects the maintenance of public order", the Animal Preservation Regulation bans slaughter of cows, calves, bulls or bullocks. The Panchayat Regulations disqualifies those with more than two children from becoming gram panchayat members. "We have sent the three regulations to the home ministry and they are scrutinising it. They have asked for some more information from us, which we have sent," S. Asker Ali, the Lakshadweep Collector, told Ali said that once the home ministry clears the regulations, they will be taken up by the Union cabinet. "Once cabinet approves, they will be sent to the President for his assent. Once the presidential assent comes, only then will the regulations be notified."ThePrint takes a look at the three regulations, and explains what they are all about and why they are generating so much controversy. Also read: 'Want to develop Lakshadweep like Maldives' - Administrator Praful Patel defends draft land lawMore popularly known as the Goonda Act, the regulation has raised the hackles of the local population of the island as well as opposition politicians, who have called it "draconian". Section 3 of PASA states that "the administrator may if satisfied with respect to any person that with a view to preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order, it is necessary to do so, make an order directing that the person should be detained". The regulation further specifies that a person shall be deemed to be acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order when he is engaged as a boot-legger or cruel person or dangerous person, or drug offender or immoral traffic offender or property grabber or cyber offender or money lending offender or depredator of environment or sexual offender.The PASA, however, isn't unique to Lakshadweep. Several states, including Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have similar regulations. Politicians from opposition parties, including the Congress, NCP and CPI(M), have, however, questioned the need for PASA considering the crime rate on the islands is very low as compared to the rest of India.The opposition's contention is not wrong. According to National Crime Records Bureau data, only 121 cases of crime were registered on the islands in 2017, 86 in 2018, 186 in 2019 and 89 in 2020. "Through this law they (authorities) basically want to suppress any form of protest or agitation. The regulation will give power to the administrator to order detention of any individual for an year without any valid grounds," Elamaram Kareem, the CPI(M)'s Rajya Sabha MP from Kerala, told ThePrint over the phone. Kareem has written to President Ram Nath Kovind demanding Patel's removal as the island's administrator. Lakshadweep Collector S. Asker Ali, however, said that the public outcry is completely uncalled for. "I agree that in Lakshadweep, the crime rate is low. But what is the guarantee it will always remain like this?" he asked. "We are developing the island as a tourist hub. Shouldn't we be prepared to tackle any law and order problem arising because of growing tourism numbers?" Ali said the law was important from a national security perspective. "We can't take a chance on the law and order front. The island is on the international sea route," he said.Giving an example, the collector said that in March, about 300 kg of heroin and five AK 47 rifles and 1,000 live rounds were confiscated in Lakshadweep. The coast guard had intercepted the consignment and registered a case. "Shouldn't we have provisions to deal with such crime? Many cases of illegal smuggling of marijuana and liquor and POCSO have also been reported here," he said. "Keeping this in mind, strict and stringent laws are needed so that the youth here are not misguided." Opposition leaders, however, point out that the administration had, in fact, recently lifted the ban on alcohol in the archipelago.The CPI(M) MP from Kerala, A.M Arif, had earlier this week, even written to President Ram Nath Kovind that the decision to issue liquor licenses under the guise of promoting tourism has led to resentment among the common people."As you are aware, over 96 per cent of the inhabitants in Lakshadweep are Muslims and in accordance with the religious and cultural beliefs of the community, the consumption of alcohol was banned in the islands," states Arif's letter, a copy of which was accessed by This law, which bans cow slaughter, has also caused a lot of uproar with opposition parties alleging that the BJP's communal politics is behind the administrator's decision.Around 96.5 per cent of Lakshadweep's population of approximately 70,000 people is Muslim.The new regulation not only bans cow slaughter, it also prohibits buying, selling, transportation or storing beef or beef products in any form. Violation will invite a maximum jail term of 10 years and fine of up to Rs 5 lakh. The regulation states that it provides for the preservation of animals suitable for milch, breeding or for agricultural purposes. For this purpose, no certificate will be given to slaughter cows, calves, bull or bullocks in the island. According to the regulation, the slaughter of animals, other than cows or bulls, for religious purposes will require a certificate from the authorities. The authorities, it adds, will not grant certificates for slaughtering animals other than cows and bulls if they are found useful for agricultural work or for the purpose of breeding. The law also prohibits transportation of cows and bulls for slaughter.While a number of Indian states, including Congress-ruled ones, have cow slaughter bills in place, the BJP has taken a different stand on the issue in other states where it is in power or looking to expand its footprint.In Northeastern states such as Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya, where the party is in power in some form, there is no ban on consumption of beef. BJP national secretary Sunil Deodhar had even in 2018 said that there won't be a ban on beef in the Northeast where it is widely consumed.The party was also silent on banning cow slaughter in Kerala ahead of the recent assembly elections.BJP's national vice-president A.P. Abdullahkutty, who is in-charge of Lakshadweep, however, told ThePrint that the opposition is unnecessarily giving a communal angle to the animal preservation regulation."We want to preserve milch animals. It has nothing to do with Lakshadweep being a Muslim-majority island and their religious beliefs," he said. "This is mischievous propaganda being spread by the Congress."This view was seconded by Ali, who said that it is a policy decision. "We want to preserve milch cows. Only those associated with its illegal business and those who have personal interests are propagating against this legislation," he told . The Lakshadweep Panchayat Regulation, 2021 The draft panchayat regulation specifies rules for getting elected to gram panchayats. The law disqualifies those with more than two children from getting elected to the gram panchayat. However, the law will not disqualify anyone having more than two children if they have been elected before the regulation has been notified. Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, and Karnataka have already enacted laws disqualifying a person having more than two children from contesting panchayat elections.

# Devon Conway's superb debut century puts New Zealand on top in first Test

London, June 03 : Test cricket's return to Lord's after a near two-year hiatus was a day to be savoured by the 6,500 or so spectators who sat dotted around the white stands like sprinkles on a 99 Flake. And for the three debutants on show, Devon Conway, Ollie Robinson and James Bracey, it was one they will certainly never forget. Headlining the newcomers at stumps - cricket-wise, at least - was Conway. An impressive unbeaten 136 at the first attempt had seen the left-hander become the 14th New Zealand batsman to etch his name on to the honours board and, more importantly, driven the tourists to a commanding 246 for three with batting still to come. For England it was a case of perspiration not quite transferring into the wickets column after Kane Williamson had called correctly at the toss. On a beige surface that offered decent carry but no lavish seam movement Robinson claimed figures of two for 50 from 16 overs on debut, while Jimmy Anderson nudged one closer to 1,000 first-class wickets when he bowled Williamson on 13 after lunch - the New Zealand captain's hands too soft for once - for victim number 993. Mark Wood delivered consistent pace over the course of his 18 overs, hitting a top speed of 95mph along the way, while Stuart Broad combined with Anderson for a burst of high-class swing in the afternoon when morning sunshine made way for cloud cover and a breeze came in from the south. Yet this quartet of seamers, augmented by 12 overs of Joe Root's off-breaks in the questionable absence of Jack Leach, were unable to prise Conway from his rock. Born and raised in South Africa but having emigrated to New Zealand in 2018, the 29-year-old had already shone in the white-ball formats for his adopted country after qualifying through residency. But his selection here, so close to the

World Test Championship final against India later this month, was no certainty at the start of the tour. Much like England's decision to select another South African-born batsman in Kevin Pietersen on the same ground in 2005, New Zealand took the positive option and were rewarded handsomely as, over the course of three sessions he demonstrated why a first-class average of 75 over the past five years was impossible to



ignore. Conway is not an opener by trade, having done so fleetingly in the past with a top score of 69 for Gauteng back in 2010. The left-hander looks inked in for a long spell now, however, having shown diligence outside his off stump, guts when wearing two nasty bouncers from Wood and some eye-catching cover drives among his 16 boundaries. He first found support from Tom Latham in a 58-run opening stand and then later on from another southpaw in Henry Nicholls who, after top-scoring for his country with 55 in that gut-wrenching World Cup final two years ago, delivered an unbeaten 46 from No5. Nicholls was at the non-striker's end when Conway's golden moment arrived after tea, the opener flicking Robinson to the square-leg boundary with an extravagant flourish before a celebration more in keeping with this New Zealand side's understated character. Having

earlier bowled Latham off the inside edge for 23, and pinned Ross Taylor lbw for 15 after a succession of inswingers, Robinson had started to flag a touch by this stage. And off the field, unbeknownst to him, a number of racist and sexist tweets he had written as a teenager back in 2012 had begun to circulate online. It made for a jarring development on a day when both teams stood in front of the pavilion before the start in a "moment of



unity". The gesture was designed to deliver a public message against all forms of discrimination but, come stumps, Robinson found himself sitting in front of the Sky cameras reading out a pre-prepared apology. It served to demonstrate how the spotlight intensifies exponentially at international level. The offending posts had sat on Robinson's timeline for the best part of eight years. Yet, despite rising to prominence at Sussex, after Yorkshire cut him loose for a lack of professionalism back in 2014, it was not until he stepped out for his Test debut that the online world decided to trawl back that far. Robinson had been squarely focused on demonstrating the skills that have delivered nigh-on 200 first-class wickets since the start of 2018 and, like Conway, made him impossible to overlook. Bounding in and delivering the ball from the top of his 6ft 5in frame, the right-arm clearly knows how to work

over batsmen as demonstrated by the removal of Latham that saw both edges challenged in the set-up. Both Robinson and Bracey had earlier been handed their England caps in the huddle by the coaches Jon Lewis and Marcus Trescothick, the ceremony taking place as the reduced crowd filtered into Lord's, stopping in their tracks to admire the new Compton and Edrich Stands that sit like butterfly wings either side of the media centre. Bracey's first outing pointed to a wicketkeeper with an abundance of energy if not yet fully grooved in his trade. A maiden Test dismissal was millimetres away on two occasions also, his stumping appeal off Nicholls on 29 seeing the batsman retreat in time and a top edge from Conway on 103 just evading the gloves at full stretch. These moments were as close as England came to a breakthrough in an evening session in which the second new ball was taken but four overs were left unbowed. Conway and Nicholls strolled back to the pavilion amid one final ripple of applause, their impressive unbroken stand having swelled to 132 and their team in a position of strength.

# 'There's only one head coach': Eddie Jones stands firm on England control

London, June 03 : England's head coach, Eddie Jones, has insisted he remains in sole charge despite being placed under greater scrutiny by the Rugby Football Union while also defending his "information-sharing" consultancy work in Japan. The RFU in April largely cleared Jones of blame for the dismal Six Nations campaign but pledged to keep his and England's performances under review via a group of unnamed "external rugby experts". Jones subsequently came in for widespread criticism when it emerged he was giving the All Blacks star Beauden Barrett "little pieces of gold" in his capacity as director of rugby at Suntory Sungoliath, just weeks after the Six Nations had finished. Jones, however, dismissed suggestions his wings had been clipped. "There's only one head coach, mate," he said. "At the end of the day, whether the team wins or loses, the responsibility is mine. I use a series of experts in and outside the game to come up with the best coaching environment. I welcome any good advice, I welcome any wisdom I can get. The only thing I know is that I took part in the review and I thought it was a good review. I didn't write the report. It is the RFU's. I'm the head coach. The head coach makes the decision." Jones has held a consultancy role with Suntory for more than 20 years but the timing of his latest trip to Tokyo raised eyebrows, not



least with England drawn in the same pool as Japan at the 2023 World Cup. Sir Clive Woodward was among those to lash out, claiming Jones's role with Suntory made "English rugby look ridiculous", though the RFU has always maintained it is comfortable with his additional work. "I go round clubs continually to try and pick people's brains and obviously you share some information with them. That's the obvious thing - it's information sharing - but very useful," Jones said. "I'm a coach, I've got to practise coaching. If you're a golfer you play golf, if you're a coach you coach and I only get 12 weeks of the year to coach with England so I've got to use my time in between to practise coaching and find better ways to coach. I'm not aware of any criticism but I'm sure there might have been."

# Gareth Southgate: England fans' boos 'feel like criticism' of black players



London, June 03 : Gareth Southgate has hit out at the section of fans who booed when England's players took the knee before their friendly win against Austria at the Riverside Stadium on Wednesday night. Southgate cut an angry figure after the anti-racism gesture was greeted by loud boos just before kick-off. On a night when the right-back Trent Alexander-Arnold sustained a minor injury during the closing stages - Southgate said he will be assessed in the next two days - the manager defended his players and stressed the act of taking a knee should not be seen as a political message. "I did hear it," Southgate said. "It's not something on behalf of our black players I wanted to hear because it feels as though it's a criticism of them. I think we have got a situation where some people seem to think it's a political stand that they don't agree with. That's not the reason the players are doing it. We're supporting each other. I was pleased that

was drowned out by the majority of the crowd." "We can't deny the fact that it happened. I think the most important thing for our players to know is all their teammates and all the staff are very supportive. I think the majority of people understand it. I think some people aren't quite understanding the message. I suppose we're seeing that across a number of football grounds at the moment." Bukayo Saka, who earned England victory with his first goal at international level, was similarly perplexed. "I don't understand why they did it," the 19-year-old said. "I heard some boos and I heard some claps. But you'll have to ask the fans that were booing to understand why they did it." England, who were without a host of key players against Austria, must wait to learn of Alexander-Arnold's fitness. The Liverpool defender, who is one of four right-backs in Southgate's squad, pulled up as full-time approached and

was close to tears as he walked around the pitch. England, who host Romania in another warm-up game on Sunday, have six players on their stand-by list. Jesse Lingard, Ollie Watkins, Ben White, James Ward-Prowse and Ben Godfrey are the outfield players who could benefit from Alexander-Arnold pulling out. "We'll have to assess him over the next 24 to 48 hours," Southgate said. "The medical team are still assessing it. We just have to see. It's not a good sign to see him have to walk off as he did. Let's see how Trent is first and then we'll go there. We don't know the full extent. Clearly it's not a good sign he looked in some discomfort." Alexander-Arnold's injury is another complication for Southgate, who is already likely to be without Jordan Henderson and Harry Maguire when England play Croatia in their opening group game. Henderson, who has not played since February because of a groin injury, was unavailable against Austria after feeling discomfort yesterday morning. "With Jordan we had hoped to involve him today," Southgate said. "This morning he wasn't so happy with how he felt. We've scanned him just to be certain. There's no problem on the scan so he'll be able to resume training but we've taken the decision to leave him out of the game." Jack Grealish, who has just returned from injury, needed ice on his shin after being substituted. "I've had an injury recently so to get 70 minutes under my belt was a perfect week," the playmaker said. "It's not shin splints, it's a bit of stress on my shin. I'm not concerned. I still need to keep on top of it, to heal it after the games, so that's why I put the ice on it."

# NFL to stop controversial use of 'race-norming' in brain trauma settlements



London, June 03 : The NFL on Wednesday pledged to halt the use of "race-norming" which assumed Black players started out with lower cognitive function in the \$1bn settlement of brain injury claims and review past scores for any potential race bias. The practice made it harder for Black retirees to show a deficit and qualify for an award. The standards were created in the 1990s in hopes of offering more appropriate treatment to dementia patients, but critics faulted the way they were used to determine payouts in the NFL concussion case. Wednesday's announcement comes after a pair of Black players filed a civil rights lawsuit over the practice, medical experts raised concerns and a group of NFL families last month dropped 50,000 petitions at the federal courthouse in Philadelphia where the lawsuit had been thrown out by the judge overseeing the settlement. Judge Anita B Brody later took the unusual step of asking for a report on the issue. Black retirees hope it will include a breakdown of the nearly \$800m in payouts so far by race. They fear the data will never come to light. "Words are cheap. Let's see what they do," said former Washington running back Ken Jenkins, whose wife Amy Lewis led the petition drive on behalf of retired NFL players struggling with cognitive problems. Jenkins, an insurance executive, has so far been spared. According to the NFL, a panel of neuropsychologists that was formed recently to propose a new testing regime to the court includes two female and three Black doctors. "The replacement norms will be applied prospectively and retrospectively for those players who otherwise would have qualified for an award but for the application of race-based norms," the NFL said in a statement issued on Wednesday by spokesman Brian McCarthy. Lead players lawyer Christopher Seeger, who negotiated the 2013 settlement with the NFL, said earlier this year that he had not seen any evidence of racial bias in the administration of the settlement fund. He amended those remarks on Wednesday, apologizing for any pain the program has caused. "I am sorry for the pain this episode has caused Black former players and their families. Ultimately, this settlement only works if former players believe in it, and my goal is to regain their trust and ensure the NFL is fully held to account," Seeger said in a statement. The NFL noted that the norms were developed in medicine "to stop bias in testing, not perpetrate it." And both Seeger and the league said the practice was never mandatory, but left to the discretion of doctors taking part in the settlement program. However, the NFL appealed some claims filed by Black players if their scores were not adjusted for race. "If it wasn't for the wives, who were infuriated by all the red tape involved, it never would have come to be," Jenkins said of the attention being paid to

the issue, three years after lawyers for former Pittsburgh Steelers Kevin Henry and Najeh Davenport say they first raised it. The binary race norms, when they are used in the testing, assumes that Black patients start with worse cognitive function than whites and other non-Blacks. That makes it harder for them to show a deficit and qualify for an award. Henry and Davenport, for instance, were denied awards but would have qualified had they been white, according to their lawsuit, which Brody dismissed in March, calling it an improper "collateral attack" on the settlement. They have appealed the ruling. More than 2,000 NFL retirees have filed dementia claims, but fewer than 600 have received awards, according to the most recent report. More than half of all NFL retirees are Black, according to lawyers involved in the litigation. The awards so far have averaged \$516,000 for the 379 players with early-stage dementia and \$715,000 for the 207 players with moderate dementia.

# Antonio Conte holds Tottenham talks and is leading contender for job

London, June 03 : Tottenham have opened talks with Antonio Conte about becoming their manager. Daniel Levy has overseen an extensive search to secure a permanent successor to José Mourinho, which has not been without its frustrations, and Conte is now considered to be the leading contender. Levy has discussed personal terms with Conte, who left his job as the manager of Internazionale last Wednesday, three and a half weeks after leading the club to their first Serie A title in 11 years. Spurs are also trying to recruit the former Juventus sporting director Fabio Paratici as Levy considers going back to a two-tier management structure, raising questions over the future of Steve Hitchen, effectively the head of recruitment. Levy has previously employed Damien Comolli, Frank Arnesen and David Pleat in the role of sporting director. Juventus announced last Wednesday that Paratici's contract would not be renewed, ushering him away after 11 years. Conte worked with him between 2011 and 2014 when he won three Serie A titles with Juventus. Conte, who won the Premier League with Chelsea in 2017, would be

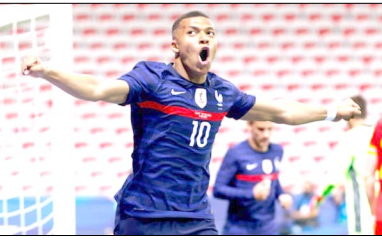


an exciting appointment, if a little at odds with the profile of manager Levy has prioritised. There is scepticism in some quarters as to whether a deal will be concluded. Conte left Inter because he was unhappy at their plan to sell about 80m of players to plug holes in their balance sheet. He had wanted backing for signings and a greater chance to build on his title win. The 51-year-old would reasonably expect to be offered something similar by Levy but it is unclear where the money would come from, with Spurs having suffered big losses recently. Levy wrote in his end-of-season programme notes that he wanted a manager whose "values reflect those of our great club and return [the team] to playing football with the style for which we are known - free-flowing, attacking and entertaining - whilst

continuing to embrace our desire to see young players flourish from our academy alongside experienced talent". In many respects, the template was a figure in the mould of Mauricio Pochettino, the manager before Mourinho, who worked wonders on a relatively small budget, developing a host of young players as he secured Champions League qualification in four successive seasons. Pochettino joined Paris Saint-Germain in January and Levy has explored the possibility of bringing him back. PSG have indicated they are not willing to let him leave; he has a further two years on his contract. Levy has previously spoken to Ajax's Erik ten Hag, who remains a contender, despite his club having triggered a one-year extension to his deal. Hansi Flick was also in the frame, only for him to leave Bayern Munich and agree to take over from Joachim Löw as the Germany manager after Euro 2020. And there have been talks with Ralf Rangnick, believed to be over a director's position. Spurs' interest in Julian Nagelsmann and Brendan Rodgers came to nothing, as the former went from RB Leipzig to Bayern and the latter said he was committed to Leicester.

# Kylian Mbappé inspires France to win over Wales after Neco Williams sent off

London, June 03 : Wales had a ball on their previous visit to France but this trip was not quite so enjoyable. If facing the world champions was not daunting enough, playing more than an hour with 10 men was always going to be a gruelling exercise. Didier Deschamps was able to flaunt his embarrassment of riches as Kylian Mbappé, Antoine Griezmann and Ousmane Dembélé earned victory but, strange as it may sound, Wales will point to plenty of positives. Griezmann's strike was a beauty and, if it is any consolation, Wales lost their final warm-up game before their historic Euro 2016 campaign by the same scoreline against Sweden. Ultimately Neco Williams' harsh red card helped France activate cruise control in Nice. The subsequent penalty was tailor-made for Karim Benzema to fill in the gaps on his return from international exile after 2,064 days in the wilderness, but Danny Ward dived the right way and extended the striker's miserable record from 12 yards. He has now missed his last three penalties for France. On another night Benzema, who also rattled a post, would have left the pitch with the match ball. "It's hard enough to defend with 11 men against them, never mind 10," Ward said. The penalty stemmed from Benzema being thwarted in his attempt to poke in after a superb left-handed save by Ward denied Paul Pogba. The referee, Luis Godinho, spent a couple of minutes poring over a replay of the ball crashing into Williams' arms and deemed it deliberate handball, giving the Liverpool full-back, lively until that point, a straight red card.



# Ollie Robinson's offensive tweets prove English cricket still has much to learn

**London, June 3** : It was possible to feel sympathy and scorn for the bowler as the fallout from grotesque remarks marred best day of his career. England's Ollie Robinson said he was embarrassed and ashamed of the offensive tweets he made between 2012 and 2014. The clouds blew over Lord's midway through the afternoon, when Ollie Robinson was deep into his second spell. He had bowled well, had won his first Test wicket that morning when he made Tom Latham play on, and was working away on his second, the great Ross Taylor, whom he soon dismissed leg before wicket. It all seemed so sweet but away from the middle it was already turning sour. There was no way for Robinson to know it then but around that same time screengrabs started circulating on social media, showing a series of offensive 'jokes' Robinson had Tweeted between 2012 and 2014, some racist, some sexist, all excruciating. Soon enough the talk was not about how well Robinson was bowling now but the idiotic comments he made nine years ago, when he was in his late teens. Watching him play for the rest of the day, it was possible to feel sympathy and scorn for him all at the same time. The remarks were grotesque but, given that the fallout overshadowed the best day of his young career, he paid a price for making them. He apologised at

length after stumps, said he was embarrassed and ashamed by the comments, that he regretted making them, but that "I'm not racist and I'm not sexist". Of course, it is not just about the tweets. Only a few hours earlier Robinson and the rest of England team had gathered



in a line-out by the boundary in front of the pavilion at the start of play. They were dressed in black T-shirts with 'Cricket is a Game for Everyone' written on the front and one of seven different slogans on the back, 'We Stand Together Against ... Racism, Religious Intolerance, Sexism, Transphobia, Homophobia, Ableism, Ageism'. It was pitched as a "moment of unity", and came across as a response to the criticism they got for the speed they decided to give up taking a knee after their Test series against West Indies finished last

year. "We know the start of last summer unearthed some ugly truths in society and in our sport," Joe Root said this week, when he was explaining the thinking behind it. Now, at the start of this summer, a young sports media student on social media had unearthed a few more by digging through Robinson's Twitter feed. His tweets included 'jokes' about Muslims, (one with the hashtag #racist attached). At the time he sent them he was on the books at Yorkshire, where he was playing alongside Azeem Rafiq, who has repeatedly spoken out about the racism he experienced at the club. We are still waiting to hear the findings of the "independent inquiry" into what went on. Rafiq has said he has already lost faith in the process. Robinson has spoken about how immature he was in those days and said again in his apology that "since that period I have matured as a person". Yorkshire sacked him in the summer of 2014 because of his unprofessional attitude. "We played a second game in Liverpool," Robinson said in a recent interview with the BBC. "Straight away I got into the car to go to Kent, a five- or six-hour drive. I stayed there for a night, saw my mates the next day, then left Kent at 1am to get to training at 9am. It was an unsustainable lifestyle that I was trying to live. At first they just thought I was a really bad time-keeper but, as it went on, they

realised what I was doing." It sounds like he was a kid who still had a lot of growing up to do. That does not excuse what he wrote but does, one hopes, help explain it. It comes the day after Robinson's rival for the last fast-bowling spot in the team this week, Craig Overton, spoke about the accusation that he had racially abused Ashar Zaidi in a match between Somerset and Sussex in 2015. The umpire in that match, Alex Wharf, reported that Overton had told Zaidi to "go back to your own fucking country". The batsman at the non-striker's end, Michael Yardy, also heard the remark. Overton was banned for two matches for using "obscene, offensive, or insulting language" but denied making the comment. And in an interview with Taha Hashim on wisden.com this week, he said again "I don't believe I said it". "I don't believe that I'm that sort of character. We've had Azhar Ali in our changing room and I'm the first one to go up and speak to him in the changing room and have a chat with him. I'm not that sort of person," Overton said. "We have chats about racism every year and I'm making sure I'm learning as much as possible because we can all learn more about what's happened in the past and what we can do in the future." Judging him on his words in that interview alone, it sounds as if he has some more learning to do. Given that the culture of the game in this country is one where two of our brightest young players have put themselves in these positions, maybe the rest of us do, too.

## Serena Williams survives tough three-setter to make French open third round

**London, June 3** : It remains to be seen whether Serena Williams can play herself into form over the coming days and rise to become a true contender for the French Open title but her effort alone cannot be faulted. The three-times Roland Garros champion moved into the third round by punctuating an arduous three-setter with a strong finish, beating Mihaela Buzarnescu 6-3, 5-7, 6-1 to advance. The victory, only her third of the clay season, may not have been convincing but during this uncertain period every victory marks a small step forward. After looking sublime in Australia, beating two top-10 players before losing in the semi-finals to the eventual champion, Naomi Osaka, she spent three months away and her absence has shown. So Williams is in Paris with expectations about as low as they have ever been for her at a major. Rather than mental, the question here is simply whether she can elevate her level enough. Williams is an underrated clay player - she has won three titles in Paris - but for her game truly to suit the slow, high-bouncing surface she has to be in top physical shape. For a while it seemed Williams could have a comfortable afternoon. She opened the match serving well, easily navigating her early service games. By the end of the set her uncertain forehand obliged as she dismantled Buzarnescu's serve; and she conceded only three points on her own serve in the opening

current top five to reach the final, her half of the draw is not a bad place to be. It has already seen the sad withdrawal of Naomi Osaka, a freak injury suffered by Petra Kvitová and an early loss for Bianca Andreescu, meaning Williams is the second highest ranked player left in her half behind the third seed, Aryna Sabalenka. They could face each other in the quarter-finals. First she faces Danielle Collins, playing her first tournament since undergoing surgery to address complications from endometriosis, a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the womb grows in different parts of the body. "I think, as most women in the world who have our menstrual cycles, sometimes when we're dealing with these painful moments, we learn to accept it," she said this week. "And for me things started to become too abnormal and really unhealthy. It certainly presented its challenges but it's been really kind of shocking, like since surgery I've just felt so much better, especially with my back pain." Earlier Japan's Kei Nishikori bolstered his reputation as the greatest fifth-set player of the 21st century by beating the 23rd seed Karen Khachanov 4-6, 6-2, 2-6, 6-4, his second five-set match in the first two rounds. Nishikori's record in the major deciders is now 26-7 (79%), sixth on the all-time list. Importantly the Tokyo Olympics entry list will be formed from



set. Buzarnescu is a tidy, diminutive lefty who generates power and depth through her feathery timing. She was a top-20 player in 2018 but her upwards trajectory was halted by injuries and she is now ranked 174. As the match went on and she began to read Williams' serve, she grew more comfortable and began to show her ball-striking ability. So often it was Buzarnescu bossing the rallies, with Williams forced into uncomfortable positions. She ended the set with a lovely running backhand crosscourt winner. Williams responded to the second set correctly, tightening her serve and reducing her unforced error count. Her movement also improved with more time on court, underlined when she somehow pulled out a 19-stroke rally at 2-0 that included an overhead, a defensive lob from Buzarnescu and an exhausted dropshot from Williams before the American flicked a passing winner. Both women laughed, with Williams apologising as Buzarnescu applauded. The tension broke and Williams never looked back. Unlike in Australia, where Williams had to go through three of the

rankings at the end of Roland Garros. After missing nearly a year with an elbow injury, there was a chance that Nishikori may not have qualified for his home Olympics. Today's win places his live ranking around 62nd and within the entry-list cut-off. In the evening session, world No 2 Daniil Medvedev fought back to beat Tommy Paul 3-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 and reach the third round. The Russian had never won a singles match in Paris before this year, but rallied impressively after dropping the opening set. Alexander Zverev and Stefanos Tsitsipas both progressed in straight sets, defeating Roman Safiullin and Pedro Martínez respectively. Organisers have announced that a men's doubles pairing have withdrawn from the tournament after testing positive for Covid-19. The pair were not named but Croatian top seeds Mate Pavic and Nikola Pietrangeli have been replaced in the draw by Martinez and Pablo Andújar. Pavic and Mektic's expected opponents, Feliciano López and Jaume Munar, have also been removed with alternates yet to be named.

## Aidan O'Brien set to run just hot favourite Bolshoi Ballet in the Derby

**London, June 3** : Aidan O'Brien, whose stable has become the dominant force this century in the Derby, has made the surprise announcement that he will have just one runner in the Epsom Classic on Saturday. The Ballydoyle trainer is to rely on Bolshoi Ballet, the favourite, while High Definition is set to run in the Irish Derby at the Curragh this month in a major switch in pre-race plans. O'Brien's decision resulted in Bolshoi Ballet ending the day as even-money market leader and Frankie Dettori, who was expected to get the call-up for High Definition, swapping to ride John Leeper. Adam Kirby had been booked to ride the John Dunlop-trained horse, but only as Dettori was set to partner the O'Brien runner. Dunlop told the Racing Post: "Frankie was the first choice and was approached quite a while ago, but he has been riding a lot for Aidan in England, and that was going to happen until the bolt out of the blue from Ballydoyle this afternoon," said Dunlop. "There are no negatives with Frankie riding in the Derby and the horse's work is all done now. He's done everything we've wanted him to

do so far, and touch wood, everything is going well going into the race. The news today came a bit out of the blue, but once [the owner] Mrs Patino heard, she was very keen and instructed us to see if Frankie was available." At the start of the week the speculation was that O'Brien would have his



normal high volume of runners and he has five entries left in the contest. However, speaking on Wednesday afternoon at the Curragh, O'Brien said: "Nothing is written in stone until 10 o'clock in the morning [final declarations], but it looks like the two horses are going to be split." It

looks like Bolshoi Ballet is going to Epsom and it looks like High Definition is coming straight here [to the Curragh]. Bolshoi would be our only runner at Epsom - that's what the lads are thinking to give the two of them a chance at a Derby." It means there's a little bit of extra time for High Definition and the two of them are getting a shot for the first time at a Derby each. "High Definition had spent the winter months as an ante-post favourite for the premier Classic after coming from the clouds to win the Beresford Stakes in September. However, his preparation this spring has not been entirely straightforward, with unsatisfactory blood test results ruling him out of his intended comeback run in the Lingfield Derby Trial. Instead, High Definition returned five

days later in the Dante Stakes at York - and while he was not disgraced in finishing third on the Knavesmire, O'Brien has revealed he is now set to be saved for the Curragh. "We were lucky to get the run into High Definition at York and we think he's a very good horse. A little more time won't do him any harm. It was just to give the two of them a chance until they have to meet. The Curragh Derby is a very important race, as the Epsom Derby is also. I'm very happy with both horses. If we didn't get the run into High Definition then there was no decision to make as if he didn't run in York then he definitely wouldn't go to Epsom." During racing at the Curragh on Wednesday evening he outlined his plans for the other horses still entered for Epsom: "St Mark's Basilica and Van Gogh are going to France [for the French Derby, on Sunday]. Kyrios is going to Ascot for the Queen's Vase and Sir Lamorak might go for the King Edward [also at Royal Ascot]. The Mediterranean is declared for the Nijinsky Stakes at Leopardstown on Thursday."

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