

The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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The necessity now is action

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Minors escape from children's home

Guwahati, June 15 : All police stations in Assam have been alerted after the escape of four children from a children's rescue home run at Cholahdara area in Assam's Jorhat district. The children's home is run by the Nagaon based NGO Shankar Madhab Krishti Bikash Kendra. Investigating officer Padmadhar Kalita said that the minors, all boys ran away at about 6:45 on Sunday after removing the grill of a dilapidated window. Two of the minors, both 10 year old, belonged to Mokokchung in Nagaland. The other two aged 12 and 13 years respectively, hailed from Assam. Kalita said that the complaint had been lodged by the superintendent of the children's home, Tukumoni Dutta. Dutta informed the police that one of the older boys had also run away from the children's home several times earlier and had been caught and brought back. The 10-year-old boys had been rescued while they were working as child labourers. Kalita said that he had alerted all the police stations across Assam to trace the boys. A case has been registered under Section 363 of the Indian Penal Code in the Jorhat Police Station.

3678 new cases

Guwahati, June 15 : Although the COVID-19 situation in Assam has improved considerably in recent days, the daily positivity rate of the State continues to hover at over 2 percent. Assam on Monday reported 3678 new COVID-19 cases. These new cases have been detected at a positivity rate of 2.52 percent, which is much lower than what was recorded last month during the peak of second wave of the pandemic. These new cases were detected after carrying out tests of 1,46,046 samples. Of the new cases detected in Assam, 232 cases have been reported from Kamrup-Metro district. The State logged 43 more COVID-19 deaths in the last 24 hours. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 recovery rate of Assam has improved further and currently stands at 90.34 percent.

Karnataka extends lockdown

New Delhi, June 15 : The Karnataka government on Tuesday has decided to extend restrictions under section 144 which prohibits assembly of more than 4 people in public places in Bengaluru till June 21. "Section 144 CrPC (prohibiting assembly of more than 4 people in public places, except for purposes which are exempted) to remain in effect till 21st June midnight. Bus stands, railways station and airports exempt", read the circular issued by Bengaluru City Police Commissioner and Additional District Magistrate.

Govt issues new SOPs, extends curfew in state till June 22



Guwahati, June 15 : The Assam government on Tuesday extended the curfew in the state till June 22 to prevent further spread of the Covid-19. In Guwahati, the curfew has been relaxed by one hour. All shops, commercial

establishments, restaurants, dhabas, government and private offices will shut down by 1 pm on all days. Earlier, all shops and commercial establishments are being shut down at 12 am on all days. "Except in eight districts,

there will be a total ban on movement of individuals from 2 pm to 5 am daily in the state," health minister Keshab Mahanta told reporters. Eight districts- Chirang, Udalguri, West Karbi Anglong, Bongaigaon, Majuli, Dima Hasao, South Salmara, and Charaideo- have given more relaxation due to the lower number of daily Covid cases and active caseload. The curfew will come into force in these eight districts from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. The inter-district travel in the state will remain suspended till June 22. All state government employees, who have received the second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, have been asked to attend office from Monday. The Assam government has said all schools will remain closed even after the summer vacation due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation in the state and asked

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Assam losing Rs 300 crore per month due to power theft, non-payment of electricity bills

Guwahati, June 15 : Assam chief minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday said that due to power theft and non-payment of electricity bills, the state power sector is losing revenue worth about Rs 300 crore per month, prompting the government to take firm steps to recover revenue and stop illegal power consumption. In a meeting with three Assam government-run power companies Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd (APDCL), Assam Power Generation Corporation Ltd (APGCL) and Assam Electricity Grid Corporation (AEGCL) held in Guwahati, the CM expressed his concerns over dip in revenue collection and consequent

loss and asked the power companies to work on strategies to plug the reasons behind the revenue loss. He directed the companies to design modalities for increas-

ing their revenue generation and profits, including quality service delivery to the consumers. "Some fraudulent consumers adopted dubious methods to save

electricity bills causing huge loss of revenue to APDCL. To recover this loss and to pay for power purchase, APDCL is compelled to approach to Assam Electricity the loss generated from the defaulting consumers is compensated from the general public," said Sarma. The Assam chief minister also directed the power companies to design modalities and plug the loopholes so that consumers cannot evade electricity tariffs and indulge in fraudulent practices and to maintain extensive vigilance to stop power theft and reduce transmission and distribution loss across the state. He advocated linking the revenue collection with promotion of qualitative performance and active service delivery system to the consumers. Sarma also asked the power companies to be innovative and look for ways to

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Delhi High Court grants bail to activist Devangana Kalita



Guwahati, June 15 : The Delhi High Court on Tuesday

granted bail to activist Devangana Kalita in a case related to violence in northeast Delhi in February 2020. The High Court also granted bail to two other activists Natasha Narwal and Asif Iqbal Tanha in the same case. Devangana, a resident of Assam, was booked under the stringent Unlawful Activities

(Prevention) Act (UAPA) in the Delhi riots case. The trio was granted bail by a division bench of Justices Sidharth Mridul and Anup Jairam Bhambhani of the Delhi High Court on Tuesday. The bail is subject to personal bond of Rs 50,000 and two local sureties, said a media report. According to the conditions of the bail, the three should surrender their passports and would not indulge in activities that would hamper the case. While Devangana Kalita and Narwal are members of women's rights group Pinjra Tod Collec-

tive, Tanha is a student from Jamia Millia Islamia University. Narwal and Kalita are PhD scholars at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and are associated with the Pinjra Tod. They had been in custody since May 2020. Earlier, Narwal was allowed interim bail to attend the last rites of her father, who died recently. In the FIR (59/2020) lodged by Delhi Police in the Delhi riots conspiracy case, a total of 15 people were named including Kalita, Tanha and Narwal. The Delhi Police claimed that Tanha had played

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Assam Health Minister Keshab Mahanta visits Dima Hasao to take stock of covid preparedness:

Addresses media regarding new directives to be followed from 16th June in State of Assam

Haflong, June 15 : Assam Health Minister Keshab Mahanta visited Haflong Civil Hospital and Maibang Community Health Center in Dima Hasao to take stock of the covid facilities available in the district, followed by a review meeting with

officers of all the line departments at the conference hall of Deputy Commissioner today. He was accompanied by local MLA Nandita Gorlosa, North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council, CEM, Debolal

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CM reviews schemes of Fisheries department CM directs to geo tag fisheries created by Dept

Guwahati, June 15 : Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma took a comprehensive review of the ongoing schemes and vision plan of the Fisheries Department in a meeting held at his office at Janata Bhawan today and made several directions to give a renewed push to the department. The Chief Minister asked the officials to geo tag all the fisheries created under 'Ghare Ghare Pukhuri Ghare Ghare Maach' scheme for their better uti-



lization. He also directed to draw a roadmap for increasing production of fish feed to meet the demand and supply gap through setting

up new production plants and skill development of the youth. Further underlining the potential of pisciculture

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Two minor girls of Kokrajhar raped and murdered

Guwahati, June 15 : The two minor girls found hanging from a tree in lower Assam's Kokrajhar district were raped and murdered. Assam Police has already identified the culprits involved in the crime. So far, 7 arrests have been made in connection with the brutal incident. Sharing the breakthrough,

Assam chief minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma tweeted, "The rape and murder of two minor tribal girls have been solved., IGP, BTR called me to inform about the outcome of the investigation. I have visited their residence on Sunday. Feeling extremely a sense of satisfaction that the Culprits have been identified." The minor girls - 14 and 16 years of age - were found dead, hanging from a tree at Abhayakhuti in Kokrajhar on Sunday. Both the girls were of the same family. They were aunt and niece in relationship. The girls belonged to indigenous Rabha tribe. The police on Monday detained two more persons in



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Karbi Students' Association blinded by 'KAATC syndrome': NSCN (IM)

Guwahati, June 15 : The NSCN (IM) on Monday said the Karbi Students' Association's (KSA) reaction to its statement on the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council (KAATC) issue is befuddling the people by being ignorant of their roots

blinded by the "KAATC syndrome". In a statement, the NSCN (IM) said the proposed KAATC ignored the legitimate rights of the Rengma Nagas, who are the true sons of the soil in Karbi Anglong. "Historical references are available in plenty about the bonafide status of the Rengma Nagas, or for that matter about the Karbis in the socio-political melee of Assam history. Irrespective of tribe affiliation, the Rengma Nagas or Karbis, nobody can play the fool with the well-documented historical records," the statement stated.



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Shahil Dey from Assam becomes first International Master from Northeast India

Guwahati, June 15 : Shahil Dey from Assam has brought laurels to the state and the country by becoming the first International Master from Northeast India. The 13-year-old chess player achieved the feat on Monday by achieving his third International Master norm at the First Saturday GM held from June 5-14 at Budapest in Hungary. Dey scored 5 points from 8 rounds of the event. The Sports & Youth Welfare, Assam and Sports Authority of Assam have congratulated the young chess player from Assam for his achievement. "Sports & Youth Welfare,



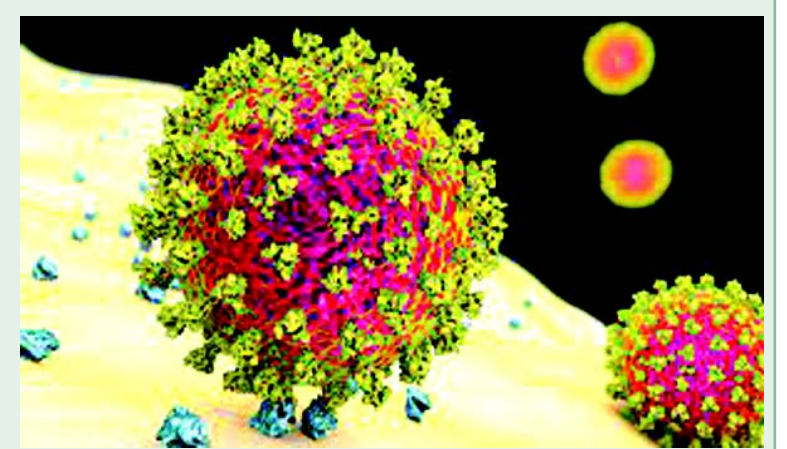
Assam and Sports Authority of Assam conveys heartiest congratulations to Shahil Dey for becoming Northeast and Assam's first and latest International Master of India. May he

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Genomes of Covid-19 variants prevalent in Northeast

Guwahati, June 15 : Three research institutes have come together to sequence genomes of the SARS Cov-2 virus variants prevalent/evolving in Northeast India. As per the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) database, out of the total SARS-CoV-2 genomes sequenced from samples all over India, only 0.71 per cent of genomes have been sequenced from samples originating from Northeast India. This indicates under-representation and the critical

dearth of genome surveillance in the region. Though sequencing efforts in a sporadic manner have been carried out on Covid-19 samples originating from Northeast India, a concerted effort under the aegis of INSACOG is yet to be undertaken. Senior officials of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-North East Institute of Science and Technology (CSIR-NEIST), Jorhat along with the Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Imphal, which



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South Korea-Japan ties sour amid fresh military drills near disputed islands

Tokyo, June 15 : South Korea has begun annual military drills near a pair of remote islands that are also claimed by Japan, as the long-running territorial dispute threatened to sour preparations for the Tokyo Olympics. The exercises near the Dokdo islands - referred to as Takeshima in Japan - began days after a meeting between the countries' leaders on the sidelines

on an online map showing the route of the Olympic torch relay. The start of annual military drills near Takeshima/Dokdo is expected to strain relations that have already been soured by recent disputes over the countries' bitter wartime history. Despite their status as key US allies and a shared interest in denuclearising North Korea, Tokyo and Seoul are locked in



of the Cornwall G7 summit was reportedly cancelled due to Japanese objections to the exercises. Earlier this month, South Korea lodged a complaint with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) after Tokyo 2020 organisers identified the islands as Japanese

disagreement over Japan's use of wartime sexual slavery and labourers who were forced to work in its mines and factories before and during the second world war. Naval, air and coast guard forces will join the drills, which will be staged mostly at sea with

minimal contact between troops due to coronavirus concerns, the South Korean defence ministry said. Yonhap news agency said a rumoured meeting between the South Korean president, Moon Jae-in, and the Japanese prime minister, Yoshihide Suga, last weekend was cancelled after Suga took issue with the drills. The Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper reported that Moon had been planning to tell Suga of his desire to attend the Olympics opening ceremony on 23 July in a public show of support for the controversial Games. The visit would also be an opportunity for the two men to hold their first talks. Moon said he was disappointed not to have met Suga during the G7. "My first encounter with prime minister Suga would have been a precious chance [for] a new start in the South Korea-Japan relationship, but I am sorry that it could not develop into a meeting," he said in a Facebook post. Japanese officials said the meeting had been called off due to scheduling problems. A foreign ministry official in Seoul would not confirm if the drills were the reason for the cancellation, saying only

"the exercises are regularly held every year for the purpose of defending our territory". The drills around the South Korean-controlled islets have taken place twice a year since 1986, prompting frequent protests from Japan, which insists they are "inherently" Japanese - a claim it says is supported by international law. "The drills are unacceptable and extremely regrettable," the chief cabinet secretary in Japan, Katsunobu Kato, said on Tuesday. "We have protested to the South Korean government and called for them to be halted." Kato added that there was "no truth" in reports that Moon planned to visit Tokyo during the Olympics. Japan has rejected South Korea's demand to amend the Olympics map, prompting calls from some South Korean MPs to boycott the Games. The islands - also known as the Liancourt Rocks after a French whaling ship that was almost wrecked there in 1849 - lie 225km (140 miles) off the east coast of South Korea. The territory is guarded by a small police detachment; its sole resident is 83-year-old Kim Shin-yeol, who lived there with her husband, Kim Sung-do, until his death in 2018.



Examinees walk out of an exam site of the 2021 senior high school entrance examination in Hefei, capital of east China's Anhui Province

Scientists convert used plastic bottles into vanilla flavouring

London, June 15 : Plastic bottles have been converted into vanilla flavouring using genetically engineered bacteria, the first time a valuable chemical has been brewed from waste plastic. Upcycling plastic bottles into more lucrative materials could make the recycling process far more attractive and effective. Currently plastics lose about 95% of their value as a material after a single use. Encouraging better collection and use of such waste is key to tackling the global plastic pollution problem. Researchers have already developed mutant enzymes to break down the polyethylene terephthalate polymer

just 14% are recycled. Currently even those bottles that are recycled can only be turned into opaque fibres for clothing or carpets. The research, published in the journal Green Chemistry, used engineered E coli bacteria to transform TA into vanillin. The scientists warmed a microbial broth to 37C for a day, the same conditions as for brewing beer, Wallace said. This converted 79% of the TA into vanillin. Next the scientists will further tweak the bacteria to increase the conversion rate further, he said. "We think we can do that pretty quickly. We have an amazing roboticised DNA assembly facility here." They will



used for drinks bottles into its basic units, terephthalic acid (TA). Scientists have now used bugs to convert TA into vanillin. Vanillin is used widely in the food and cosmetics industries and is an important bulk chemical used to make pharmaceuticals, cleaning products and herbicides. Global demand is growing and in 2018 was 37,000 tonnes, far exceeding the supply from natural vanilla beans. About 85% of vanillin is currently synthesised from chemicals derived from fossil fuels. Joanna Sadler, of the University of Edinburgh, who conducted the new work, said: "This is the first example of using a biological system to upcycle plastic waste into a valuable industrial chemical and it has very exciting implications for the circular economy." Stephen Wallace, also of the University of Edinburgh, said: "Our work challenges the perception of plastic being a problematic waste and instead demonstrates its use as a new carbon resource from which high value products can be made." About 1m plastic bottles are sold every minute around the world and

also work on scaling up the process to convert larger amounts of plastic. Other valuable molecules could also be brewed from TA, such as some used in perfumes. Ellis Crawford, of the Royal Society of Chemistry, said: "This is a really interesting use of microbial science to improve sustainability. Using microbes to turn waste plastics, which are harmful to the environment, into an important commodity is a beautiful demonstration of green chemistry." Recent research showed bottles are the second most common type of plastic pollution in the oceans, after plastic bags. In 2018, scientists accidentally created a mutant enzyme that breaks down plastic bottles, and subsequent work produced a super-enzyme that eats plastic bottles even faster.

China prepares to send astronauts to new space station

Beijing, June 15 : The first crew for China's new space station has reportedly begun final preparations to blast off this week. The mission is China's first crewed spaceflight in nearly five years, and a matter of prestige for the government as it prepares to mark the 100th anniversary of the ruling Communist party on 1 July with a propaganda blitz. A Long March-2F rocket carrying three astronauts in the Shenzhou-12 spacecraft is slated to lift off from a base in north-west China's Gobi desert on Thursday, according to experts with knowledge of the matter. They plan to spend three months on the Tiangong station, China's longest crewed space mission to date, with spacewalks among their tasks. The astronauts will aim to "get their new home in space kitted out and ready to use", said Jonathan McDowell, an astronomer at the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. "It's a practical goal rather than a groundbreaking one." The Long March rocket, with the Shenzhou craft attached, was moved to the launchpad at the Jiuquan satellite launch centre last week, according to the Chinese space agency. Shenzhou-12 will dock with Tianhe, the main section of the Tiangong station that was placed in orbit on 29 April. A cargo craft last month transported fuel, food and equipment for the crewed mission. Another 11 missions are planned over the next year and a half to complete the construction of Tiangong in orbit, including the attachment

of solar panels and two laboratory modules. Three of those missions will carry astronauts for crew rotation. "Keeping the station up and running smoothly involves much detailed and complicated work, as we saw on the International Space Station during its early days," said Chen Lan, an analyst at GoTaikonauts, which specialises in China's space programme. Once completed, Tiangong will have a mass of about 90 tonnes and is expected to have at least a 10-year lifespan, according to the Chinese space agency. It will be much smaller than the ISS, and similar to the Soviet space station Mir, which was launched in 1986 and decommissioned in 2001. China has invested billions of dollars over decades to catch up with established space powers such as the United States and Russia. It has so far sent humans into space, probes to the moon, and last month landed a rover on Mars. State media reported in October 2020 that astronauts have been selected for all four crewed missions, but officials have been tight-lipped about their identities. All 11 Chinese astronauts to date have been military pilots. The International Space Station - a collaboration between the United States, Russia, Canada, Europe and Japan - is due for retirement after 2024, although Nasa has said it could remain functional beyond 2028. It sets up a scenario where Tiangong could be the only operational space station.

Jacinda Ardern criticises new biography, saying author misled her

London, June 15 : Jacinda Ardern has distanced herself from a recently released biography documenting her leadership style, less than a week after joining widespread criticism of a film that focuses on her role leading New Zealand during the Christchurch terror attacks. The new book - Jacinda Ardern: Leading with Empathy - was written by activist and journalist Supriya Vani, and writer Carl A. Harte, based on "Vani's exclusive interviews with Ardern", according to its seller, Simon & Schuster. But at a press conference on Monday, the prime minister said that she was "clearly" misled by Vani about the intent of the interview and premise of the book. Ardern said she was approached in 2019 and "told the author was writing a book on women and political leadership". "I was told there were roughly 10 other female political leaders involved," she said. Ardern said she agreed to the interview only "on that basis, given it was not specific to me". She said that "the claim that it was an exclusive interview for the purpose of writing a book of that nature [a biography] is not true", and said she would ask that the claim be clarified. Harte denied the claim she was misled, saying Ardern's office was later made aware of the book's framing had changed to become a biography. The spat comes at a moment when presentations of Ardern in international media - often glowing - are under particular scrutiny in New Zealand. A proposed film about the Christchurch mosque attacks, called They Are Us and starring Rose Byrne as Ardern, has been fiercely criticised over accusations that Muslim victims have been sidelined in favour of a focus on Ardern. Ardern said on Sunday she was not an appropriate focus for a film about the 2019 mosque attacks. "There are plenty of stories from March 15 that could be told, but I don't consider mine to be one of them," she said. Ardern reiterated that she has no involvement with the film. In a statement to the Guardian, Harte confirmed the original interview was for a book profiling a number of female leaders. "Prime Minister Ardern was, however, not

misled, because at the time of the interview, we had no intention of writing a biography on her alone," he said. Harte said they shifted tack to a biography of Ardern after Covid-19 precluded plans for interviews with other world leaders, and because "her story deserved a book in itself, for her model leadership". "Our decision to change direction - something that, I must say, is the hallmark of many



creative endeavours - was made in 2020." He said Ardern's office was aware the book's framing had changed to biography, saying that in January, Vani had "informed the prime minister's office of our intention to publish our biography of Jacinda Ardern, and shared the cover". "We regret the miscommunication," Harte added. "We stand by our book". Vani did not provide independent comment, but said she would refer the request to her co-author. The book's claims of exclusive interviews with the prime minister raised some eyebrows in New Zealand, because Ardern does not typically grant interviews to biographers. Two senior New Zealand journalists, Madeleine Chapman and Michelle Duff, have written biographies of Ardern. Neither were able to secure an interview. A brief excerpt from Vani's interview was published by Vani in a Writers Digest

article about how to write and research a biography. Vani asks: "I feel that you laid the foundation of your personality when you instantly empathised in your own childhood with the children on the streets of New Zealand without shoes on their feet or anything to eat. Would you agree with me that you could observe all these things because you were born an empathetic person?" Ardern responds, "I would like to believe that it is something that is an inherent trait for all of us. It's about having the space to be empathetic." Simon & Schuster quote Booklist as having called the book a "readable, admiring biography". In a review for the Spinoff, Toby Manhire calls it "utterly uncritical, fawning, cloying". A passage describing Ardern's outfit on her visit to Europe reads: "In London, she upped the ante, featuring perhaps the most graceful, regal attire ever worn by a

New Zealand prime minister at an international event." It goes on: "The effect was breathtaking ... Even the Queen looked impressed." Another compares her favourably to the great British wartime leader Winston Churchill because of her response to the pandemic. "If there is a Winston Churchill of the war against Covid-19, for her success in rallying her country to fight the virus, there's a good argument to say it's Jacinda Ardern." The book is sold by Simon & Schuster and appears to have multiple publishers across different jurisdictions, including Harper Collins India, Hardie Grant in Australia and New Zealand, and Oneworld Publications. The Guardian has approached Simon & Schuster, Oneworld Publications, Hardie Grant and Harper Collins India for comment.

'Miniature Pompeii' found beneath former cinema in Verona

Verona, June 15 : Ancient Roman building with 'magnificent frescoed walls' appears to have been survived a fire. An ancient Roman building has been found during excavations at a former cinema in the northern Italian city of Verona in what has been described as a "miniature Pompeii". The discovery was made during excavations in the basement of Astra cinema, which is undergoing renovation after lying abandoned for more than 20 years. With its "magnificent frescoed walls", the building, which dates back to the second century, "evokes a miniature Pompeii", said Verona's archaeological superintendent, the department in charge of archaeology for the area. It is not yet clear what function the building had, but experts said it appeared to have survived a fire as the roof had collapsed and there were items of charred wooden furniture among the finds. "A fire seems to have

put an end to the attendance of the complex," the superintendent said. Despite the fire, "the environment was preserved intact, with the magnificent colours of the frescoed walls dating back to the second century". The find and evidence of a fire evoked connotations of ancient Pompeii, which was destroyed by the eruption



of Mount Vesuvius in AD79. "A calamitous event, in this case a fire, suddenly marked the end of the complex, leaving traces," the report added. The discovery comes just over a year after a perfectly preserved Roman mosaic floor was found close to Verona.

China hits back at 'slandering' Nato claim it poses threat to west

Beijing, June 15 : China's mission to the European Union has urged Nato to stop exaggerating the "China threat theory" after the group's leaders warned that the country presents "systemic challenges". Leaders from the transatlantic security alliance took a forceful stance towards Beijing on Monday in a communique at United States president Joe Biden's first summit with the alliance. "China's stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to alliance security," Nato leaders said. The new US president has urged his fellow Nato leaders to stand up to China's authoritarianism and growing military might, a change of focus for an alliance created to defend Europe from the Soviet Union during the cold war. But China's European mission hit back on Tuesday, saying in a post on its website that the Nato statement "slandered" China's peaceful development, misjudged the international situation, and indicated a "cold war mentality".



A contestant delivers a speech via video link during a contest of the 20th Chinese Bridge, in Ukraine,

Apollo Hospitals administers Anti-body Cocktail to Covid patients

Guwahati, June 15 : Apollo Hospitals announced that Roche India's Antibody Cocktail distributed by Cipla Ltd., available for administration from May 29 to patients with mild and moderate Covid-19 infection. The Antibody Cocktail was launched on May 24, 2021 in India by Roche India after receiving Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) from the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO). Apollo Hospitals, Chennai initiated the treatment on May 28 and two patients received the Antibody Cocktail at Apollo Hospitals, Chennai. Both the patients responded well to the infusion of the Antibody Cocktail and the patients went home after one hour of observation. Dr. R.K Venkatasalam, Director

Medical Services, Apollo Hospitals, Chennai said "Monoclonal antibodies bind to and 'neutralize' the SARS-CoV-2 virus. We are confident that this treatment option will significantly boost our efforts to bring the pandemic under control and will help prevent progression of the disease in those with mild to moderate COVID-19. The Antibody Cocktail can be administered for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 in adults and pediatric patients (12 years of age or older, weighing at least 40 kg). Who are confirmed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 and who are at high risk of developing severe Covid-19 disease

or hospitalization with at least one of the following criteria :- 1. Obese with Body mass index. 2. Chronic kidney disease. 3. Diabetes mellitus. 4. Immunocompromising condition. 5. Currently receiving immunosuppressive treatment. 6. Aged 65+ years. 7. Aged less than 55 years and have : a. Cardiovascular Disease (CAD) or b. Hypertension (HT), or c. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or some other chronic respiratory disease like ILD.

Success of Dr.Dipak Borah

North Lakhimpur, June 15: Dr Dipak Borah from Fulbari area in Lakhimpur district has passed with flying colours as a specialist in Acupuncture among the five successful doctors of the North-East in the recently announced result of the Post-Graduate Examination held under Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). The other four doctors of the North -East who also got this success are Dr. Bishnuram Deka, Dr.Sankar Das, Dr. Kailash Chandra Barma and Dr.Sanjay Dutta. It is to be mentioned that Acupuncture is an ancient and traditional medical system which is approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) and recognised by the Government of India (R.14015/25/96-U&H(R)(Pt), dated 25-11-2003), and IGNOU introduced a medical course for the first time by combining the Acupuncture and the modern medical system.

Spectrum allocation to Indian Railways and provision of more modern signalling solutions to boost all round safety in Railway operations

Guwahati, June 15 : Signalling System enhances safety in train operations. Upgradation and replacement of equipments in use over Indian Railways is a continuous process and is undertaken based on its condition, operational needs and availability of resources. In order to further improve safety in train operation and generate additional line capacity, modernisation of Signalling System has been taken in hand which includes - 1. Provision of Electronic Interlocking (EI)

been provided on 3447 Route km. Indian Railways has planned roll out of automatic signalling on around 15000 Rkm of high density and freight intensive routes. The roll out is planned to be undertaken in Mission Mode. With implementation of automatic signalling, increase in capacity will accrue resulting in more train services becoming possible. 3. Safety at Level Crossing gates - Enhancing Safety at Level Cross-

ing Gates has been a major area of concern. Safety gets enhanced by interlocking level crossings with Signals. As on 30.04.2021 Indian Railways have provided interlocking with Signals at 11705 Level Crossing Gates to enhance the safety at Level Crossings. 4. Automatic Train Protection (ATP) System as an aid to Loco Pilot to prevent human error - ATP systems are being used by advanced Railway systems in the world as an aid to the Loco Pilots. These systems prevent collisions due to any human error by Loco Pilot. In order to improve safety, a decision has now been taken to provide ATP systems on Indian Railways (IR) in a Mission Mode. So far IR was dependent on foreign

Golaghat Girl Comes Forward to Help Homeless People

Golaghat, June 15: Amidst this pandemic situation and mini Lockdown days poor and homeless people have to suffer a lot. They are in dire straits without food or an opportunity to earn a decent living. Seeing such pathetic condition of the homeless people a Golaghat Girl has come forward to help them. Anindita Das from Golaghat who is the spokesperson of All Assam Law Student's Union Kamrup (Metro) has shown honest leadership by providing a square meal to the needy. She cooked the meal on her own and then distributed the food all around the Railway Station of Golaghat, Furkating Railway Junction, Bengenakhwa and Tetelitol areas. She has also provided pure drinking water and masks to the needy and homeless people. Such noble initiative of Anindita Das has been acknowledged and appreciated by the local people.

BSF seized 1000 Yaba Tablets from Indo-Bangladesh Border



Guwahati, June 15 : Troops of Guwahati Frontier of Border Security Force, foiled the attempt of drugs smuggling at Indo-Bangladesh border and seized 1000 Yaba tablets on 14 June 2021, from bordering area of village Seoti, PS- Sahebganj, Distt-Coochbehar (West Bengal). 2. Acting on tip off, on 14 June 2021 at about 1505 hrs,

troops of BOP Sabri of 192 Bn BSF carried out a search operation in general area of village Seoti closed to Indo-Bangladesh Border. During search alert troops recovered 1000 nos Yaba tablets and 1.2 Kgs Cannabis from the spot. 3. Seized Yaba tablets and 1.2 Kgs Cannabis have been handed over to P.S Sahebganj, Distt-Coochbehar (West Bengal) for further disposal. 4. Keeping in view of the vulnerability of border, heightened activities of the smugglers and anti-national elements on the border, BSF troops are always alert towards the issues of trans-border crimes including drug trafficking & illegal trans-border crimes and are making all out efforts to prevent commission of such crimes.

Chief Minister calls on Governor

Discuss issues pertaining to higher education



Guwahati, June 15: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today called on Assam Governor Prof. Jagdish Mukhi at Raj Bhavan and apprised the latter of several activities that the government is undertaking for the welfare of the people of the state. During the meeting, among other issues, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma and Governor Prof.

Mukhi discussed on issues pertaining to qualitative improvement of higher education. They talked on the improving the functioning of the universities and colleges of the state and the modalities to transform them into centres of excellence. The Chief Minister during the discussion has declared that a Joint Secretary, Education Incharge of higher education

cum Joint Secretary to the Governor of Assam shall be appointed for improving the functioning of higher educational institutions. The Joint secretary shall have his office both in Janata Bhavan and in Raj Bhavan, Assam. This move has been taken to give a perfect coordination between the universities, colleges and Education department.

NRL Employees Contribute Rs. 57.37 lakh to Chief Minister Relief Fund



Guwahati, June 15 : NRL employees donated an amount of Rs. 57.37 lakh to Chief Minister's Relief Fund, Assam contributing at an individual level to help and strengthen the hands of the Govt. of Assam to combat

the 2nd Wave of COVID-19 pandemic. The cheque amounting Rs. 57.37 lakh was handed over to Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma at his office chamber on 15-06-2021 by a team NRL Em-

ployees led by DGM (Corporate Communications) M s . M a d h u c h a n d a Adhikari . NRL had earlier presented Rs. 5 Crore for CM's Relief Fund, Assam on 27-05-21. The Company has earmarked Rs. 25 Crore this year to fight the 2nd wave of the pandemic and has taken up several initiatives including a 120 bedded COVID Care facility in Jorhat Medical College and Hospital with 20 ICU beds which was inaugurated on 15-06-21 . It is also extended similar help at Majuli and providing consumables to several Govt. hospitals in the State.

Donation in CM Relief Fund

Hojai, June 15 : Hojai Unit of Nagaon District Medicine Dealer Association donated INR 10,000 in Chief Minister Relief Fund on Monday evening. A delegation of Unit comprising of Shasank Shekar Dutta, President; Gajanand Agarwal, General Secretary; Pradip Paul, Treasurer and Keshav Ghosh handed over the cheque to MLA of Hojai Constituency Ramkrishna Ghosh. Ghosh appreciated the step of the association for the betterment of the society.



to increase Safety and Flexibility - Electronic Interlocking are being adopted on a large scale to derive benefits of digital technologies in train operation and to enhance safety. So far 2221 stations have been provided with Electronic Interlocking upto 30.04.2021 covering 34% of Indian Railways. A policy decision has also been taken to provide Electronic Interlocking (EI) in future. Further, 1550 EIs are planned to be provided in next 3 years. This will enhance safety and efficiency of train operations. 2. Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) to increase Line Capacity - In order to increase line capacity to run more trains on existing High Density Routes of Indian Railways, Automatic Block Signalling is a cost effective solution. As on 30.04.2021, Automatic Block Signalling has

ing Gates has been a major area of concern. Safety gets enhanced by interlocking level crossings with Signals. As on 30.04.2021 Indian Railways have provided interlocking with Signals at 11705 Level Crossing Gates to enhance the safety at Level Crossings. 4. Automatic Train Protection (ATP) System as an aid to Loco Pilot to prevent human error - ATP systems are being used by advanced Railway systems in the world as an aid to the Loco Pilots. These systems prevent collisions due to any human error by Loco Pilot. In order to improve safety, a decision has now been taken to provide ATP systems on Indian Railways (IR) in a Mission Mode. So far IR was dependent on foreign

technology for ATP systems. IR with Indian firms has now successfully developed indigenous cost effective technology for ATP - called Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). It has been decided to adopt TCAS as the National ATP of India under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' Mission of Hon'ble PM. TCAS has been approved for 37300 Rkm covering important routes in 1st phase. The roll out of TCAS will eliminate train collision due to human error and enhance speed potential of IR thereby reducing travel time. It may be noted that giving a boost to 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' Mission, Government has approved allotment of 5 MHz Spectrum in 700 MHz frequency band to Indian Railways for public safety and security services at stations and in trains. With this spectrum, Indian Railways has envisaged to provide Long Term Evolution (LTE) based Mobile Train Radio Communication on its route. The estimated investment in the project is more than Rs. 25,000 Crore. The project will be completed in the next 5 years. It brings a strategic shift in Railways' operations and maintenance regime. It will help in improving the safety and increasing the line capacity to accommodate more trains using the existing infrastructure. The modern rail network will result in reduced transportation cost and higher efficiency. Also, it will attract multinational industries to set up manufacturing units to fulfill the 'Make in India' Mis-

sion and generate employment. The purpose of the LTE for Indian Railways is to provide secure and reliable voice, video and data communication services for operational, safety and security applications of Railways. It will be used for: ? Deployment of Modern Cab based Signalling System with Automatic Train Protection which will increase safety & throughput in train operation. Also, help during fog. ? Mission Critical Voice Communication with seamless connectivity in train operations between Driver, Guard, Station Master, Train Traffic Controller & Maintenance staff. ? Monitoring Limited Video Surveillance (Live Feed) through CCTV cameras in Trains to enhance passenger security. For IoT based Asset monitoring specially the rolling stock. Passenger Information Systems (PIS) in trains & at stations. In addition to LTE initiative, Other major initiatives in Railway Telecom are: Wi-Fi facility has been extended at 6002 stations and 101 balance feasible stations will be covered soon. Out of which 70% stations are of rural area. This facility is being used by passengers, local vendors, coolies, etc. To improve security CCTV System has been provided at 801 stations and balance are also planned. 92% Route of the Railway has been covered with OFC based system (62,205 Rkms). This is being used for Railway's internal communication and spare capacity is being commercially utilized by RCIL. Indian Railway is deploying e-filing

No.23/228/2021-2022/4

Dtd.14/06/2021

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tender subsequently to be drawn in F-2 form affixing Non-refundable court fee stamp of **Rs.8.25p** (Rupees eight and paise twenty five) only are invited from the Registered PWD Contractor's under Class-I (A, B, C) of Assam PWD (Rural Roads) and Class-II Roads category will be received for the following works up to **2.00 P.M. of 23-06-2021** in the office of the Executive Engineer, PWRD Kokrajhar Rural Roads Division, Kokrajhar which will be opened on the same date, place at **2.15 P.M.** in presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Tender Amount (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.) (ST, SC, OBC -1% & GEN-2%)	Cost of Tender Paper (in Rs.)	Time for completion in days
1	Temporary Restoration of Choibari to Bangaldoba Road damaged by over topping flooded water at Ch. 1600.00m under SDRF for the year 2020-21.	4,02,980.00	1%-Rs.4,030/- 2%-Rs.8,060/-	200.00	30 (Thirty)
2	Restoration/Repairing of Flood Damage road from Dotoma to Balajan Road at approaches erosion of CD No.7/1,8/1,9/1,9/4,13/1 and embankment erosion at 16th Km in Kokrajhar District under SDRF for the year 2020-21.	17,99,760.00	1%-Rs.17,998/- 2%-Rs.35,995/-	1000.00	60 (Sixty)
3	Temporary Restoration of Flood Damage Guide Bund of RCC Br. no 2/1 over river Gaurang on Phutkibari Kokrajhar at 130m under SDRF for the year 2020-21. (T.R.)	7,29,800.00	1%-Rs.7,298/- 2%-Rs.14,596/-	500.00	30 (Thirty)
4	Temporary Restoration of Flood Damage road from Kokrajhar to Moakocha Road (Approaches damaged of RCC Br. 8/1 & 8/2) under SDRF for the year 2020-21.	4,99,800.00	1%-Rs.4,998/- 2%-Rs.9,996/-	200.00	30 (Thirty)
5	Temporary Restoration of Flood Damage Approaches to RCC Br. No 6/1 on Narabari to Dawkibari Road at 6th Km under SDRF for the year 2020-21. (T.R.)	3,30,500.00	1%-Rs.3,305/- 2%-Rs.6,610/-	200.00	30 (Thirty)
6	Temporary Restoration of Flood Damage RCC Bridge no 2/1 on Nayegaon to Anajuli Road Eroded at Ch. 1.500m under SDRF for the year 2020-21.	8,15,700.00	1%-Rs.8,157/- 2%-Rs.16,314/-	500.00	30 (Thirty)
7	Temporary Restoration of Flood Damage at 2nd Km of Nayegaon to Anajulipara Road at Ch. 1700Km under SDRF for the year 2020-21.	3,26,800.00	1%-Rs.3,268/- 2%-Rs.6,536/-	200.00	30 (Thirty)

Details NIT may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the contractors or their authorized agent up to **12.00 Noon** on all working days from **16-06-2021 to 18-06-2021** in the office of the undersigned on payment of in the form of Banker cheque/Demand draft of any nationalized Bank (Preferable SBI) duly pledged to the Executive Engineer, PWRD Kokrajhar Rural Roads Division. The contractor should submit valid Registration certificate, GSTIN, PAN Card and Labour License along with the tender. In case the office remain closed in tender receiving/opening day the same will be received/opened on the next working day.

Notes:-

- The Executive Engineer, PWD Rural Roads Division, Kokrajhar does not bind himself to accept the lowest tender and also reserves the right to reject all tenders without assigning any reason.
- Payment will be made subject to availability of fund.
- Taxes will be deducted as per relevant provision of Act.
- Work order will be issued on receipt of Administrative Approval from competent authority
- Contractors will have to submit their tender with upto date registration certificate and item of annexure should be enclosed with the tender otherwise tender will be treated as cancelled.
- No T&P and stock materials issued to the contractors by the deptt. Contractor has to arrange the same by himself
- The tenderer should submit their tender with upto date GSTIN certificate and PAN card failing which the tender may be treated as cancelled.
- The tenderer must demonstrate the key equipment for road work specially the road Roller etc. failing which the tender may be treated as cancelled.

IPR(BTC)-64/2021

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD
Kokrajhar Rural Roads Division

Eviction drive in North Lakhimpur

North Lakhimpur, June 15 : Responding to the petition of Kalyan Dutta's family, the North Lakhimpur Municipal Board (NLMB) conducted an eviction drive yesterday at Hindu Gaon, North Lakhimpur town, in accordance with an order from the

Lakhimpur DC, led by the NLMB Executive Officer K.C.Pegu who was on the spot and conducted the drive managed to carry out the drive successfully. In the eviction drive, a forty-decade old streamlet was freed from illegal occupiers by demolishing the

illegally constructed concrete walls of the both sides of the streamlet. The closure of the streamlet led to the problem of artificial flood for long time in the area. People have lauded the NLMB for freeing the old streamlet from illegally occupied.

India's financial wealth likely to grow by 10% pa to \$5.5 trillion by 2025

Mumbai, June 15 : Total Global Financial Wealth reached new heights in 2020, rising 8.3% as strong stock market performance and a spike in savings fueled a wealth boom. According to the report, North America, Asia (excluding Japan), and Western Europe

recovery, the report reveals growth in prosperity and wealth significantly through the crisis and is likely to expand in the next five years. India is expected to lead percentage growth of fortunes worth \$100 million in 2025. The report, titled 'Global Wealth 2021: When Clients

nominees can easily process Death Claim Settlement New online tax payment system Income Tax Alert! CBDT relaxes norms for forms 15CA & 15CB amid glitches on new e-filing portal Commenting on the same, Ashish Garg, a member of Boston Consulting Group's Center for Digital Government, and a core member of the Financial Institutions and Public Sector Practices, said, "The next five years have the potential to usher in a wave of prosperity for individuals and wealth managers alike. They now have a chance to put that perspective into practice in their own work and pursue a client agenda. The report lays out what it takes to attract and retain clients and serve them in a competitively sustainable way. We hope that our detailed analysis will prompt stimulating conversation and reorient the entire business model accordingly." According to the report, North America, Asia (excluding Japan), and Western Europe will be the leading generators of financial wealth globally, accounting for 87% of new financial wealth growth worldwide between now and 2025. Many wealth management clients in 2020 embraced alternative investments in their quest for higher returns, shifting away from low-yield debt securities. As part of this trend, real assets, led primarily by real es-

tate ownership, reached an all-time high of \$235 trillion. Nevertheless, Asia, which has the largest concentration of wealth in real assets (\$84 trillion, 64% of the regional total), will see financial asset growth exceed real asset growth (7.9% versus 6.7%) in the coming years. In particular, investment funds in the region will become the fastest-growing financial asset class, with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.6% through 2025. In the report, BCG identifies two attractive markets for wealth managers. One consists of individuals with simple investment needs and financial wealth between \$100,000 and \$3 million. This "simple-needs segment" comprises 331 million individuals worldwide, holds \$59 trillion in investable wealth, and has the potential to contribute \$118 billion to the global wealth revenue pool. Retirees, one of the world's fastest-growing demographics, are another appealing market. Many are underserved and adversely impacted by the "advisory gap" that prevails during the retirement phase of life. Today, individuals over 65 own \$29.3 trillion in financial assets accessible to wealth managers. That figure will grow at a CAGR of close to 7% over the next five years, enabling wealth managers globally to target nearly

\$41.1 trillion in financial wealth by 2025. By 2050, 1.5 billion people globally will fall into the 65+ category, representing an enormous source of wealth. In addition to the simple-needs and retirees segments, the "ultra" wealth category—individuals whose personal wealth exceeds \$100 million—expanded in 2020, with 6000 people joining the 60,000-strong cohort, which has seen year-on-year growth of 9% since 2015. The category currently holds a combined \$22 trillion in investable wealth, 15% of the world's total. According to the report, China is on track to overtake the US as the country with the largest concentration of ultras by the end of the decade. If investable wealth continues to rise there at its current annual rate of 13%, China will host \$10.4 trillion in ultra assets by 2029, more than any other market in the world. The US will be close behind, with a forecasted total of \$9.9 trillion in such wealth by 2029. The faces of the ultras are changing too, with the rise of the next-generation segment. These individuals, between 20 and 50 years of age, have longer investment horizons, a greater appetite for risk, and often a desire to use their wealth to create positive societal impact as well as earn solid returns. Many wealth managers are not yet ready to serve these new ultras.



will be the leading generators of financial wealth globally, accounting for 87% of new financial wealth growth worldwide between now and 2025. The Covid-19 pandemic may have turned the world upside down but financial wealth in India grew from 2015 to 2020 by 11% p.a. to \$3.4 trillion and is expected to grow by 10% p.a. to \$5.5 trillion by 2025, according to a new report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG). In line with the emerging economic

Take the Lead', states that India represents 6.5% of the region's financial wealth in 2020. 13.7% were the region's real assets in 2020 which grew from 2015 to 2020 by 12.1% p.a. to \$12.4 trillion. Liabilities grew by 13.3% p.a. to \$0.9 trillion and are expected to grow by 9.4% p.a. to \$1.3 trillion by 2025. Bonds are expected to grow the fastest with 15.1% p.a. Life Insurance & Pensions will be 3rd largest asset class in the future. Life Insurance: How

HDFC Bank: Maintain 'buy' with price target of Rs 1,860

Mumbai, June 15 : Getting back to business: Mr. Jagdishan highlighted that, while the bank had taken a cautious view over the past 1-1.5 months in the light of Covid & its impact on staff & clients, the falling infection rates and vaccination are supporting the opening-up of the bank. HDFC Securities Ltd (HSL) has benefitted from the surge in retail trading volumes and its strong presence. It is expanding its reach and is scaling up its institutional platform. We hosted Mr. Sashi Jagdishan (MD&CEO) & Mr. Srinivasan Vaidyanathan (CFO) at Jefferies' India Financial Summit. It was encouraging to hear that, with fewer Covid cases & vaccination with opening-up, business is picking up with outbound activity on sales & recoveries. Getting back to business: Mr. Jagdishan highlighted that, while the bank had taken a cautious view over the past 1-1.5 months in the light of Covid & its impact on staff & clients, the falling infection rates and vaccination are supporting the opening-up of the bank. The field staff (both for sales and collections) are more comfortable

maintain our 'buy' rating with a price target of Rs 1,860 with the value of bank at 3.7x Mar-23E adjusted PB. Our price target for ADR is \$91, based on FX conversion of our local price target and a 22% premium. SME will be the fastest-growing segment over the next three-five years: HDFC Bank plans to leverage its distribution in non-urban markets and digital strengths in expanding its SME banking platform (20% of loans) where it is already among the top bankers. The recent changes in the management structure were aimed to facilitate a far more focussed approach towards execution here and Rahul Shukla will drive growth in the business. Bank is cognisant of the asset quality risks associated with this segment and hence will keep underwriting and collection teams tighter. Tech issues & fintech partnerships: Management highlighted that it continues to work with the RBI to resolve the issue and at the same time build more robust platforms. While tech-outages are a normal business risk for any bank/financial company, bank could have built a system to ensure faster recovery here.



taking outbound responsibilities. On the client side, the bank is largely comfortable as (1) 85% of retail clients work with AA and above rated corporate where job losses have been low, (2) SMEs were better prepared than in past, and (3) larger corps. have better liquidity in their balance sheet. Gold Rate Today, Gold Price Today in India Gold Price Today, 15 June 2021: Gold below Rs 49,000 ahead of US Fed meet; analysts advise 'sell on rise' IPO, SPAC IPO watch: Shyam Metalics issue oversubscribed; Sona Comstar's offering subscribed 11% on day-1 Maintain Buy. We see 19% CAGR in profit over FY21-24 and

On the fintech side, bank plans to build partnerships with platforms that can help to bring together scale (from bank) and seamless experience (from fintech platforms). Subsidiaries: HDB-FS has a niche position (ex-Covid strong track) & HSL will get more legs; open for some monetisation. HDB-FS has focussed on segments of customers that are few notches below bank's and had delivered well until Covid struck. Mgmt believes the company doesn't need to make any structural changes to its business model. HDFC Securities Ltd (HSL) has benefitted from the surge in retail trading volumes and its strong presence.

As brands make a beeline for K-Pop, India too soon to become its playground

Mumbai, June 15 : Love them or hate them, but you can't surely ignore them. Managed by Big Hit Entertainment, South Korean music band popularly known as BTS (it goes by several names Bangtan Boys/Bangtan Sonyeondan or Bulletproof Boy Scouts or Beyond The Scene) have earned popularity across the world—so much so now even North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called them vicious. Several markets are expected to see better than 20% growth,

cial channels - trending on Twitter both in the US and worldwide and on YouTube for our TV commercial," Rajeev Ranjan, chief operating officer, Connaught Plaza Restaurants Pvt. Ltd., elaborated. This meal is being served in over 50 markets, including India. According to McDonald's, the partnership is about driving relevancy and brand affinity among the younger customers. "Today is the day and age of seamless interaction and purchases across categories are impacted by the young in a very big way. With youngsters being one of the biggest influencers in the society today, brands are trying to appeal to these influencers through such collaborations," Harish Bijoor, brand strategy expert and founder, Harish Bijoor Consults Inc., told BrandWagon Online. As per The Korea Times, BTS



including the U.K., Brazil, China and India. Global advertising to exceed \$1 trillion in 2026: Report. Havas will continue to invest in people as it reaffirms its focus on Mx operating system. Havas Media Group India announces key elevations for senior management. The rise in popularity seems to have paid off with brands and advertisers making a beeline - from Samsung, Adidas, Coca-Cola, Hyundai, and even luxury brand Louis Vuitton. In fact, multinational fast food chain McDonald's recently collaborated with BTS to come up with a limited-edition meal - further seals the deal. "Since its launch on June 1, this global collaboration has resonated very well among the BTS fans around the world, creating a lot of social media chatter and we expect the conversations to continue. We drove record-breaking engagement on multiple so-

earns ₹3.0 billion (about \$2.69 million) to ₹5.0 billion (about \$4.49 million) from every Korean brand they endorse. Furthermore, the boy band is estimated to have earned ₹10.0 billion (about \$8.98 million) for participating in the "BTS Meal" promotion. Variety has estimated BTS' net worth to be around \$450 million. One of the main reasons behind the rise of BTS popularity is the kind of issues their songs highlight including bullying, elitism and mental health. Moreover, the boys are believed to be staying together in a dormitory, thereby promoting humble living. "BTS has become a huge phenomenon in the last five years with the popularity of K-Pop busting music charts around the world. Their music and videos are expectational with multi-layered narratives and they use their digital presence to create a BTS Universe that

makes them irresistible to the youth. This is an opportunity brands would like to ride on, and hence a range of brands have collaborated with them," Lloyd Mathias, business strategist and former marketing head, HP Asia, said. Even as the band has gained popularity in other parts of the world, it is yet to catch up in India.

Shyam Metalics issue oversubscribed; Sona Comstar's offering subscribed 11% on day-1

Mumbai, June 15 : The massive Rs 5,550 crore IPO of Sona Comstar has only been subscribed 11% so far. On the initial day of the bidding process, Shyam Metalics' initial public offering was oversubscribed by investors. On the other hand, Sona Comstar's IPO was subscribed 11%. Of the two, Sona Comstar is the larger offering - over 5 times the size of Shyam Metalics. Retail investors were upbeat on both the IPOs, tuning out to be the largest bidders so far. After a long pause, the IPO market saw two fresh public offerings open for

of the portion. Overall the issue has been subscribed to 123%. Paras Defence and Space Technologies, SEBI, IPO Paras Defence and Space Technologies gets SEBI nod to launch IPO; firm mulls pre-IPO placement. Shyam Metalics and Energy IPO Shyam Metalics grey market premium surges by 68% as IPO opens; should you subscribe? Investors can continue to bid for Shyam Metalics issue till tomorrow at the price band of Rs 303-306 per share, in a lot size of 45 stocks. With commodity prices soaring across the globe, Shyam

Broking said in a note. The brokerage firm has a subscribe rating on the issue. The massive Rs 5,550 crore IPO of Sona Comstar has only been subscribed 11% so far. Qualified Institutional Buyers and non-institutional investors have bid for less than 1% of the issue so far. Retail investors, however, have been more active bidding for 51% of the portion reserved for them. Sona Comstar is looking to raise the funds at a price band of Rs 285-291 per share. Investors can bid for the issue in a lot size of 51 shares. Sona Comstar or Sona BLW Precision Forgings

is a leading critical auto components manufacturer globally. The company has offerings for the Electric Vehicle segment which make the issue an attractive bet for investors. "We like SBPFL given its presence in fast growing global EV market, diversified portfolio across categories and robust financials," analysts at Motilal Oswal said while pinning a 'Subscribe with long-term view' rating on the IPO. In terms of valuations, Sona Comstar is available at a PE ratio of 79 times FY21 earnings per share (post-issue), at the higher end of the price band, said INDmoney.

Metalics is entering the market at a fitting time. "The steel sector is experiencing tailwinds on account of rising infrastructure spends by major economies. Domestically, prospects are looking up which is driving the capacity addition frenzy with high likelihood of demand outstripping supply," Angel

across categories and robust financials," analysts at Motilal Oswal said while pinning a 'Subscribe with long-term view' rating on the IPO. In terms of valuations, Sona Comstar is available at a PE ratio of 79 times FY21 earnings per share (post-issue), at the higher end of the price band, said INDmoney.



Paras Defence and Space Technologies gets SEBI nod to launch IPO; firm mulls pre-IPO placement

Mumbai, June 15 : Paras Defence and Space Technologies has received capital markets regulator SEBI's approval to launch an IPO. The public issue comprises fresh issue of shares worth Rs 120 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 17.24 lakh shares by promoters and existing shareholders. The company may also consider a pre-IPO placement of equity shares to the tune of Rs 35 crore, prior to the filing of the red herring prospectus. Paras Defence and Space Technologies said that the amount raised from the pre-placement will not be reduced from the fresh issue. Anand Rathi Advisors is the book running lead manager to the is-

sue. The equity shares of the company would be listed on BSE and NSE. The registrar to the issue is Link Intime India Private Ltd. Paras Defence and Space Technologies does not have any listed industry peers in India. The company has planned to utilise the net proceeds towards funding capital expenditure requirements worth Rs 31.2 crore, and funding incremental working capital requirements to the tune of Rs 50 crore. The company will also use the net proceeds for repayment or prepayment of certain borrowings/outstanding loan facilities of Rs 10 crore availed by the company and for general corporate purposes. Shyam Metalics

and Energy IPO Shyam Metalics grey market premium surges by 68% as IPO opens; should you subscribe? Initial public offering, IPO Sona Comstar's Rs 5,550-crore IPO opens; promoters to cut stake, should investors subscribe or not? The portion reserved for qualified institutional buyers (QIBs) will be up to 50 per cent of the offer, non-institutional investors (NIIs) will have up to 15 per cent of the portion reserved while up to 35 per cent will be reserved for the retail investors. Paras Defence's customer base ranges from PSUs to various defense public sector undertakings like Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bharat

Dynamics Limited (BDL) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), and has supplied products and solutions to private entities including Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Alpha Design Technologies Ltd. Currently, the company operates through two manufacturing facilities in Maharashtra, located at Nerul (Navi Mumbai) and Ambarnath (in Thane). Paras Defence and Space Technologies' consolidated total income stood at Rs 37.94 crore for the six-month period ended September 30, 2020, and Rs 149.05 crore, Rs 157.16 crore and Rs 152.53 crore for the fiscal years ended March 31, 2020, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

Indian Railways extends discount scheme on tickets booked through UPI

Mumbai, June 15 : The provision of 5 per cent discount on the total value of basic ticket fare on booking of reserved ticket through UPI including BHIM application across computerized PRS counters at railway stations is now extended up to 12 June 2022. Indian Railways has announced that it has extended the discount



scheme on booking train tickets at station railway counters through UPI/BHIM. Discount on Indian Railways Train Tickets: For those who travel frequently on Indian Railways, here is some good news for you. Piyush Goyal-led Indian Railways has announced that it has extended the discount scheme on booking train tickets at station railway counters through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) / Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM). According to the national transporter, the provision of 5 per cent discount on the total value of basic ticket fare on booking of reserved ticket through UPI including BHIM application across computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters at railway stations is now extended up to 12 June 2022. Here is the process of payment & booking: First, the person

has to go to the station ticket counter and provide with destination station details, total number of passengers and other travel details. After entering all the required details the person at the counter will select UPI as the payment option. The counter person will ask the customer to provide their Virtual Payment Address

(VPA). The counter person at the station will enter the VPA to initiate the transaction. Then the customer will receive payment request on his/her BHIM application to complete the payment. The customer will need to accept the payment request and the passenger's linked account will be debited. Once the transaction is complete, the person at the counter will print the train ticket for the customer. Earlier this year, it was reported by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) that the number of transactions through BHIM UPI more than doubled to 273 crore in March 2021. In the month of March 2020, around 125 crore transactions took place through BHIM UPI. During the month, the value of UPI transactions stood at Rs 5,04,886 crore against that of an amount of Rs 2,06,462 crore in the year-ago month.

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Govt issues new SOPs, extends curfew in state till June 22

authorities to take steps to conduct online classes, an official said on Tuesday. The Secondary Education Department's Principal Secretary B Kalyan Chakravarty has ordered officials of district administrations to arrange for online classes so that there is continuity in students' learning process. The summer vacation in schools ended on June 14. He asked directors of secondary and elementary education, all inspectors of schools, other officials of the department and heads of government and private educational institutes to take steps to conduct online classes until further orders or till the reopening of these institutes. The order was issued on Monday and came into force with immediate effect. The government had advanced the one-month summer vacation in schools from May 15 amid a raging second wave of COVID-19. The summer vacation in schools is usually held from July 1 to 31. According to a National Health Mission bulletin, Assam on Monday reported 43 more COVID-19 deaths, which took the toll to 3,994. As many as 3,678 new coronavirus cases pushed the caseload to 4,63,175. The COVID-19 curfew in Guwahati will begin from 2 p.m. from Wednesday. The new order will remain in force till June 22, said health minister Keshab Mahanta at a press meet in Haflong. The curfew will come into force from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. in eight districts of Assam where COVID-19 situation has significantly improved. The new order will remain in effect till June 22, stated fresh SOP issued on Tuesday. Curfew will begin from 5 p.m. in Chirang, Udalguri, West Karbi Anglong, Bongaigaon, Majuli, Dima Hasao, South Salmara and Charaideo.

Karbi Students' Association blinded by 'KAATC syndrome'

The NSCN said the Government of India's scheme of things as proposed under the controversial KAATC should find their support from historical legitimacy. According to it, simply to appease the Karbi militants at the cost of overlooking the indigenous Rengma Nagas will only complicate the matter. It said the KSA should study the issue from a credible historical perspective and not allow itself to be carried away by the unjustified generosity of the Government of India and Assam government in the good name of controlling Assam militants. The NSCN said the KSA need to go deeper into the history books available in plenty to know where they stand and scrutinize themselves if their claim is supported by historical facts. "The KSA should not dwell in their own make-believe world without respecting or admitting the factual account of history," it added. The NSCN stated that the Karbis, who are immigrants from different places like Sivasagar, Nagaon, Cachar, Tezpur, Lakhimpur, Silchar and Khasi and Jaintia Hills during the British rule cannot claim themselves the status of original inhabitants. It said the British rulers had declared the present Karbi Anglong areas as Rengma Naga Hills for the legitimate reason as they found the areas inhabited by the Rengma Nagas. It added the declaration came into effect vide 1841 Official Gazette. "Whatever status the Karbis are enjoying now in the Rengma Naga Hills, it is all rooted in immigration from other places as mentioned here, courtesy, the British Ruler," it added. The NSCN said the NSCN also advised the KSA to refer to some books on history such as Assamese history book, Rengma Naga Jonogosty Oit and Bortoman (which means - Rengma Naga History Past and Present, Book of the Year-1841, page no. 34) where the 52 villages of Rengmas were well recognised in the history, the book on the province of Assam written by A.J. Moffat Mills, page No. 216 and 217, (The Rengma Naga), Travel In Assam by John Butler and North East Frontier of India by Alexander Mac Kenzie. The NSCN said going through these books will serve as guidebooks to know the roots of Karbis (Mikirs) in Assam history. It also asked the KSA to go through the map detail on Rengma Hills: The year -1845-1846 and the year -1848, 1875 and 1884.

Assam Health Minister Keshab Mahanta visits Dima Hasao to take

Gorlosa, NCHAC, Executive Member in charge of Medical, Samuel Chngsan, Principal Secretary to Govt of Assam, Health, Anurag Goel, IAS, Dy, Secy Health & Family Welfare, Kamaljit Talukdar, Director of Health Services, Dr. Rabindra Bhuyan, Addl Director, Health Services, Dr. Timung, Dima Hasao Deputy Commissioner, Paul Barua, ACS, NCHAC, Principal Secy., LZ Nampui, ACS, Superintendent of Police, Jayant Singh, IPS Briefing about the facilities available in Haflong Civil hospitals like 13 numbers of testing centres, bed capacities currently available at isolation ward, four numbers of covid care centres, status of oxygen supply and other logistics, Joint Director of Medical & Health Services, Dr. Dipali Barman along with Medical EM, Samuel Chngsan put forward the memo seeking for support required in the district in regards to facilities while tackling the pandemic COVID-19. The Health Minister ensured for completion of the 11 bed ICU ward at Haflong Civil Hospital within 25th June, construction for which is in full swing. He also stated regarding the on-going construction of Pediatrics Intensive Care Unit (PICU) with 10 beds facility including recovery ward that will provide the highest level of nursing care and continuous medical monitoring of child. The Minister also addressed the issue regarding requirement of medical officers and staff strength urged by the council, for managing quality health service in Dima Hasao and also in the recently increased beds at Haflong Civil Hospital from 100 to 200. He is hopeful that in consultation with the Assam Chief Minister and discrete plan, the shortage of manpower and medical officers will be worked out not just in this district but in other districts too. He also discussed about the prevailing challenges of hesitation faced by the medical team during vaccination campaigns esp. in rural areas. Advising both the Council and District Administration to work hand in hand as a team, Minister Keshab Mahanta asked them to approach the people with the help of public representative leaders as well as administrative officials for awareness purpose. Some challenges faced by the medical department due to frequent power cut at the hospital area was also placed by the Council Secretary, Health, TT Daulagupu, to which Principal Secretary Anurag Goel responded with immediate action by conveying the grievance to concerned authority at Dispur over phone. It is to be noted that necessary steps for a hot line connection at Haflong Civil Hospital was written to APDCL but without any result so far, thus causing massive problem in hospital functioning. Others present during the meeting were EMs Nepolal Hojai, Paudeming Newme, Golonjo Thaoson, MACs Ratan Jarambusa, Nijit Kemprai, Addl SP, Indrajit Baruah, ADC L Khiengte and other officials from both council and district administration. Later in the evening, Assam Health Minister addressed all the media persons at Haflong Circuit House and briefed about the fresh directives to be followed considering the need for adequate measures for effective containment of Covid-19 in Assam. The order will be on effect from 5 A.M of 16th June till 5 A.M of 22nd June, 2021. Guwahati Metro will begin curfew from 2 P.M till 5 A.M considering the drop in positivity cases. Eight districts viz Chirang, Udalguri, West Karbi Anglong, Bongaigaon, Majuli, Dima Hasao, South Salmara and Charaideo with have curfew relaxation starting from 5 P.M till 5 A.M. Whereas, other districts will follow the same as per earlier SOP with special concentration on five district viz Cachar, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sonipur and Nagaon with rigorous implementation of the covid protocols due to its constant surge of covid cases.

Assam losing Rs 300 crore per month due to power theft, non-pay

increase the revenue earnings and profits. Directing APDCL to prepare a profile of the defaulting consumers, he also asked the power companies to make a list of cement companies and other high-valued consumers, tally their production or services with GST returns and electricity bills. "This exercise will help in bringing in semblance between total quantum of electricity consumed and electricity bills thus paid," Sarma said. He emphasised on the need to put in modern, state of the art technologies for the structural and qualitative development of the power companies to ensure 24x7 uninterrupted and quality power supply to the people of Assam as well the commercial establishments.

CM reviews schemes of Fisheries

for economic growth of the state, Chief Minister Sarma instructed the officials to develop large tanks in every village to be owned and maintained by the community under CMSGUY and individual ponds under MGNREGA. The Chief Minister also directed to identify ways and means for augmenting fish breeding and rearing in the water bodies of the state. Fisheries Minister Parimal Suklabaidya, Additional Chief Secretary in charge of Fisheries Department Ravi Shankar Prasad, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Samir Kumar Sinha, Commissioner & Secretary Fisheries Rakesh Kumar, Director Fisheries NK Debnath, MD AFDC Anuradha Adhikari, MD Fishfed Dr. Dhruvajyoti Sarma and other senior officers were present in the meeting.

Two minor girls of Kokrajhar raped and murdered

connection with the death of two minor girls, who were found hanging from a tree under mysterious circumstances at Abhiyakuthi village in Kokrajhar district recently. The accused have been identified as Nasibul Ali SK and Forizul Rahman, both from Salbari village under Kokrajhar Police Station. Police on Sunday arrested five persons- Hanif Ali, Jahanur Islam, Sankardev Barman, Mohd Atab Ali and Muzammel Seikh in connection with the case. "The investigation is proceeding in the right direction and police have got some positive clues in the case. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is assisting and guiding in the investigation," said Kokrajhar SP Prateek Thube. Meanwhile, a 10-member CID team also reached Abhiyakuthi on Monday to probe into the death of the two minor girls.

Shahil Dey from Assam becomes

bring more laurels for Assam," the Sports Authority of Assam tweeted. Ministry of Sports & Youth Welfare, Assam and Sports Authority of Assam conveys heartiest congratulations to Shahil Dey for becoming Northeast and Assam's first and latest International Master of India. According to reports, Shahil Dey was awarded his first International Master norm at the GM Round Robin Tournament held in Serbia. The tournament in Serbia took place in February. The former Under-7 and Under-9 National champion's overall performance rating now stands at 2473. He is currently coached by International Master Roktim Bandyopadhyay in Kolkata.

Delhi High Court grants bail to activist Devangana Kalita

an active role in orchestrating the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). A court in New Delhi in January 2021 rejected the bail plea of Devangana Kalita in the Delhi riots case. The Delhi court in January while rejecting her bail application said the allegations against her were prima facie and provisions of the anti-terror law were rightly invoked in the case. Devangana Kalita was arrested in the case for allegedly being part of a premeditated conspiracy behind the Delhi riots. Communal violence broke out in northeast Delhi on February 24, 2020 after clashes between the supporters of CAA and the protesters spiralled out of control, leaving at least 53 people dead and around 200 injured.

Genomes of Covid-19 variants prevalent in Northeast

is an autonomous institute under Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India and ICMR-Regional Medical Research Centre, NE, Dibrugarh recently met to discuss collaborative strategies and planning for a concerted genome sequencing of SARS-CoV-2. "This is a move for an increased monitoring and surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants prevalent, circulating, and spreading in the Northeast region," an official of NEIST said. CSIR-NEIST director G. Narahari Sastry, DBT-IBSD director Pulok K. Mukherjee and Biswa Jyoti Borkakoti, scientist E of ICMR-RMRCNE along with the team of core scientists for SARS-CoV-2 genome sequencing of the three Regional Genome Sequencing Labs (RGLS) participated in the brainstorming session. Sastry mentioned that CSIR-NEIST had created a state-of-the-art genome sequencing facility in its recently established Centre for Infectious Diseases at its Jorhat campus to lead the genome surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 in the northeastern region. He also mentioned that CSIR-NEIST had an advanced computational facility, which would play a pivotal role in the sequence data analysis. Sastry called for cooperation from all the eight northeastern states to make the genome sequencing, a success. In the wake of the sudden emergence of SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern B.1.1.7, commonly known as the UK variant, the Centre initiated the INSACOG formation for the surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 genome in order to understand the spread and evolution of the virus and to arrest the future spread of this virus in the country.

New COVID vaccine demonstrates 90 per cent overall efficacy: Novavax

New Delhi, June 15 : Novavax Inc, which has a vaccine manufacturing agreement with Serum Institute of India, said its COVID-19 vaccine candidate was highly effective with 90.4 per cent efficacy overall and also showed high efficacy against predominantly circulating variants. The vaccine candidate 'NVX-CoV2373' demonstrated 100 per cent protection against moderate and severe disease, 90.4 per cent efficacy overall, and met the primary endpoint in its PREVENT-19 pivotal Phase 3 trial, Novavax said in a statement. The study enrolled 29,960 participants across 119 sites in the US and Mexico to evaluate efficacy, safety and immunogenicity of the vaccine, it added. The vaccine demonstrated 93 per cent efficacy against predominantly circulating variants of concern and variants of interest, Novavax said. "Today, Novavax is one step closer to addressing the critical and persistent global public health need for additional COVID-19 vaccines." These clinical results reinforce that NVX-CoV2373 is extremely effective and offers complete protection against both moderate and severe COVID-19 infection," Novavax President and Chief Executive Officer Stanley C Erck said. "Novavax continues to work with a sense of urgency to complete our regulatory submissions and deliver this vaccine, built on a well understood and proven platform, to a world that is still in great need of vaccines," he added. The company intends to file for regulatory authorisations in the third quarter. Upon regulatory approvals, Novavax remains on track to reach manufacturing capacity of 100 million doses per month by the end of the third quarter and 150 million doses per month by the end of the fourth quarter of 2021, it added. As per reports, the Novavax vaccine can be stored in standard refrigerators, making it easier to distribute. The vaccine was effective against several variants, including the one first detected in the UK that's dominant in the US, and in high-risk populations including the elderly and people with other health problems. The company has committed to supplying 110 million doses to the US over the next year and a total of 1.1 billion doses to developing countries. Earlier in March, Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla had said that clinical trials of the vaccine 'Covovax' have begun in India and the company hopes to launch it by September this year. In September 2020, Novavax had announced COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing agreement with SII, increasing Novavax's global production capacity of NVX-CoV2373 to over 2 billion doses annually.

Not joining AAP, BJP circulating such 'baseless reports' to hide its failure during COVID-19 crisis: Hardik Patel

New Delhi, June 15 : Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel on Monday (June 14, 2021) refuted the reports claiming that he is going to join the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is behind such 'baseless reports'. He said that the incumbent state government is circulating such 'false reports' to hide its failure during the COVID-19 crisis in Gujarat. "I am surprised at the reports coming in from various media quarters that I am going to join the AAP and become their face for the next year's Assembly election in Gujarat. Such claims are baseless. Such fake reports are being planted in the media with malicious intent at the behest of the BJP," Hardik Patel tweeted in Hindi. "These are being circulated to create confusion among Congress supporters and the Patidar community. The BJP is circulating such baseless reports in order to hide its failure during the COVID-19 crisis in Gujarat," he added.

In a statement, he also said that he is the youngest working president ever of the Gujarat Congress and he joined the party 'with the sole aim of removing the anti-farmer, anti-worker and anti-Patidar BJP government'. Patel stated that he will try his best as the opposition party's state working president to see that Congress forms a government in Gujarat in 2022. However, Gujarat BJP spokesperson Yamal Vyas hit back at Patel and said that his allegations are far from the truth. Vyas said that the saffron party fights elections on the agenda of development and that is why people elect them. "Hardik Patel is having his own agenda and we are not concerned about it," he said. The reports of Patel joining AAP had emerged in the backdrop of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's visit to Gujarat on Monday. During the visit, Kejriwal also announced that the AAP will fight on all the seats in the 2022 Gujarat Assembly legislative polls.

'Age no issue', Lingayat seers back CM BS Yediyurappa amid speculation of leadership change in Karnataka

Tumkuru, June 15 : Karnataka's powerful Lingayat community seers have thrown their full weight behind Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa and warned the state BJP leaders not to create any obstacles for his government. According to reports, nearly a dozen Lingayat seers have demanded the BJP top brass to let BS Y, as Yediyurappa is popularly known, continue as the state's CM for the next two years. It may be noted that the Karnataka Chief Minister himself belongs to the powerful Lingayat community of the state. The seers from the community have warned the disgruntled state BJP leaders not to harass Yediyurappa till his term as Chief Minister gets over. The statement from the Lingayat seers came after BJP national General Secretary Arun Singh put an end to all speculation over leadership change in the state. Following Arun Singh's remarks, Yediyurappa too asserted that he would be at the helm of affairs for the next two years. The 78-

year-old Lingayat strongman also said his responsibility has increased because of the trust shown in him by the BJP high command. Around 12 top seers, under the aegis of Shri Shadakshara Bruhanmatha, said that Yediyurappa was the main reason for the BJP to gain a foothold in Karnataka. "He is often being cornered and harassed. We condemn this as seers. People should stop troubling the Chief Minister and start co-operating with him," the seers stated. Taking serious note of a section of BJP leaders cornering Yediyurappa over his age, the seers said that associating age with performance is nothing but an insult to a leader who has been relentlessly working for the party. "We seers feel that repeated silly remarks about his age annoy not only us but also the entire community which is upset with such meaningless remarks made by his own partymen," the seers said.

Child rights body concerned over rising cases of crime against minors in State

Guwahati, June 15 : The Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (ASCPCR) has expressed concern over the rising cases of crime against minors in the State. Speaking on the matter, ASCPCR chairperson Sunita Changkakoti said that every case of crime against minor must be thoroughly investigated. "It is a matter of serious concern. Proper investigation into every case is needed. Police must file full proof charge-sheets with no scope for any loopholes so that culprits do not go scot-free," Sunita Changkakoti said. She also stressed on the need of initiating fast-track courts to deal with cases of crime against minors. Sunita Changkakoti made these remarks after visiting the home of two minor girls in Abhiyakuthi village in Kokrajhar, who were found hanging from a tree under mysterious circumstances on June 11. Also read: Assam reports 43 more COVID-19 deaths, 3678 new cases at 2.52% positivity rate Changkakoti along with senior ASCPCR members and Child Welfare Committee, Kokrajhar members visited the home of the two minor girls and interacted with their family members. Talking to reporters later, Changkakoti said that she suspects the death of the two girls as a pre-planned murder and demanded proper and thorough investigation into the case. Two minor girls - 14 and 16 years of age - were found dead, hanging from a tree in Assam's Kokrajhar district on Friday. Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has ordered the state police to conduct an "expedient investigation" of the case.

Telangana government cancels Class 12 exams, Class 11 students to be promoted

Hyderabad, June 15 : The Telangana government on Tuesday announced that it has decided to cancel the Class 12 exam for the academic year 2020-21. In an official notification, the state government said that Class 12 results will be declared on basis of pre-determined objective criteria. As per the notice released, the government has asked the authorities to submit the evaluation criteria for Class 12 evaluation to the government for approval. "State Govt decides to cancel Class XII exam for academic yr 2020-21. Results to be declared on basis of pre-determined objective criteria. Secretary, Board of Intermediate Examination is directed to issue orders for promoting all Class XI students to Class XII," the government of Telangana said, State Govt decides to cancel Class XII exam for academic yr 2020-21. Results to be declared on basis of pre-determined objective criteria. Secretary, Board of Intermediate Examination is directed to issue orders for promoting all Class XI students to Class XII: Govt of Telangana Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education, TS BIE 2nd Year Inter Exams 2021 were cancelled on June 8, 2021. The state government had decided to instead evaluate the students on the basis of predefined objective criteria. The evaluation criteria, however, have not been shared by the board as yet. The move came after almost all the states in the country decided to take lead from CBSE and cancel the Class 12 examinations. Even the larger boards like Maharashtra and UP have cancelled their Class 12 Board Examinations. Education Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy said that this decision was taken keeping in mind the surge in Covid-19 and the concern of the students and their parents.

Southgate praises Chilwell and Sancho for positivity despite Croatia omission

London, June 15 : Gareth Southgate has praised Ben Chilwell and Jadon Sancho for responding positively to being left out of England's squad against Croatia, saying their professionalism played a part in the team making a winning start to Euro 2020. England's manager experienced the downside of squads being increased to 26 when he had to tell two outfield players they would not be involved against Croatia. Uefa regulations state teams must name two goalkeepers on the bench in their 23-man matchday squads and that left Southgate with some awkward decisions to make before his side's opening game in Group D. The strength of England's attacking options led to Croatia missing out and Luke Shaw was preferred on the bench to Chilwell following the surprising decision to start Kieran Trippier at left-back. However Southgate, who will have to omit three outfield players when Harry Maguire returns to fitness, believes the atmosphere in the camp remains strong and he does not feel that the potential problems of naming a larger squad have emerged. "They haven't because of how professionally they took those discussions and how much respect they've shown for the whole group," he said. "As have lots of



substitutes who are good players who haven't been able to get on the pitch [against Croatia]. We know that to be a successful team this is one of the areas that's got to be right. "We don't win today's game without the way players prepared for the friendlies. Without the way the players who didn't make the final squad of 26 contributed through that preparation period. All of those factors come into a team getting the sort of result it did today. That's a

team - that's what it's about. We've got to continue that right the way through this tournament. "Southgate, who wants England to remain focused when they face Scotland on Friday, did not relish having to explain his thinking to Chilwell and Sancho. "This was the downside of a squad of 26 - to have to have conversations with boys that don't deserve to be left out," he said. "But we've got to cover certain positions and for this game we went

a certain route with Trippier at left-back. "Everybody knows the competition for places in those attacking areas. So through no fault of their own we have to make a decision somewhere along the line and whoever we did that with is going to be a very good player who didn't deserve it. "Southgate said he did not mind his team hitting long passes against Croatia at times. "We didn't want to do that every time," he said. "But there are moments to go longer, we've got a centre-forward who wins more of his share of the ball. And we shouldn't be football snobs. It's great to play out from the back and get to the halfway line in control of the ball, but it's just as effective to go to the centre forward and be in control of the ball and be able to play from there. The variety is important against top opposition." The manager added that Maguire, who hopes to make the bench when England face the Czech Republic next Tuesday, stepped up his recovery from damaged ankle ligaments in training on Monday. England are not underestimating Scotland. "The game on Friday will probably go down in our careers as one of the most memorable games you will ever play," Declan Rice said. "We know the history with Scotland. We know the type of game it will be."



Wimbledon finals to allow full crowd capacity with 45,000 at Euro 2020 final

London, June 15 : The final weekend of Wimbledon will be played on Centre Court in front of a capacity crowd - the first at a sporting event since the UK went into lockdown as the Covid-19 pandemic took hold. The tournament, which gets under way on 28 June, will begin with 50% ground capacity before the finals on 10 and 11 July are played out in front of a 15,000-capacity crowd. The government has confirmed plans for up to 20 pilot events across sport and entertainment, with Wimbledon and football's Euro 2020 the big winners. The final four European Championship matches to be played at Wembley including the final, which is also on 11 July, and both semi-finals in the preceding week will welcome crowds of up to 45,000 - half the stadium's capacity - as key sporting fixtures will be allowed to open the doors to more fans. A total of 20 events, which could include the British F1 Grand Prix and the Challenge Cup final, are to be added to the third stage of the government's Events Research Programme despite the continuing growth of a third wave of Covid-19. The news comes as the government were forced to abandon broader plans for a "freedom day" of 21 June. Rule changes which would have brought an end to social distancing and mask-wearing have now been pushed back to 19 July. England's first two group stage matches are also part of this "research programme" with current caps lifted to allow a potential 22,500 into the ground.

For the semi-finals and the final - due to take place on 6, 7 and 11 July - the rules will be further eased, allowing the stadium to be half-full with crowds of around 45,000. Fans entering the test events have to show proof of a negative Covid test or carry a "vaccine passport" showing they have been fully protected against the disease. On Sunday England began their Euro 2020 finals campaign with a 1-0 win against Croatia. The official attendance fell short of the permitted capacity, however, with only 18,497 people recorded as being in the ground. Uefa was unable to explain the shortfall but suggested a lack of take-up from Croatian fans, who would have had to undergo 10 days' quarantine on arrival in the country, was a factor. While fans were able to transfer their tickets if they were affected by Covid, this appears not to have occurred in the numbers desired. There will be concerns that, should similar rules apply to ticket holders in the event of the final, problems of reallocation may persist in July too. Silverstone chiefs have had preliminary talks with the government over an exemption to host next month's British Grand Prix in front of a capacity 140,000 crowd. An exemption for the race is being discussed which would allow substantially greater numbers than the 10,000 spectators currently permitted. Organisers of golf's Open Championship, which is slated to be held at Royal St George's from 15-18 July, also expect to be able to finalise fan numbers shortly.

'I can still compete with the best': Andy Murray upbeat for Queen's Club return

London, June 15 : Andy Murray believes he is still capable of competing with the top players in the game as he returns to competition this week at Queen's Club in London. "I know that I can still compete with the best players in the world," Murray said. "I have been doing it consistently in practice over these last six months, seven months, and certainly on the grass I don't see why

of hope and caution: the confidence he still has in his own game is clear, but that positivity was tempered by having had so many physical issues in recent years. He says he has been practising well and consistently and that he is feeling "OK", although not perfect. "I have been feeling good at different points throughout the last nine months or so and, you know, practised really well, felt good going

Rafael Nadal and he expected the world No 1 to beat Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final as soon as he broke serve early in the third set, even though he was still two sets down. Asked whether he feels that Djokovic has fortified his argument as the greatest of all time with his victory, Murray said he is uninterested in that discussion. "All of them have things or achievements that you could argue make them better than another," he said. "I don't know if they are, maybe they are, but I'm not that fussed about who is the best. I think there is no doubt that it's been the best era in tennis history." Murray is more interested in what they have achieved collectively, particularly considering many people thought Pete Sampras's count of 14 grand slam singles titles, set just a year before Federer's first Wimbledon title, would not be beaten. "Then you've got three guys that are probably going to win 20-plus majors in the next generation. So it's incredible what all of them have done." It's been great to have played during that period and also challenging, but yeah, I think as a tennis fan it's been a great, great time to get to watch it and play a small part in it as a player as well. "While discussing his own future, Murray said discussions with his old coaches and former players about retirement reaffirmed his conviction to play for as long as possible. "Unanimously, they were all like: 'Look, it was extremely difficult to stop playing and our advice would be to play as long as you can, so long as you are still

enjoying it and providing your body can still do it.' Which maybe there are question marks over mine in that respect. They were like: 'Nothing replaces it. I want to keep playing as long as I can.' As Murray trained on Thursday afternoon with the young Australian Alexei Popyrin, a session that offered little indication of his physical shape as he only practised his serve and return, the 19-year-old British player Jack Draper painted a hopeful picture of the future.



not. "You can speak to the players about that as well. I have practised with lots of them. My level is still good. It's just I need my body to hold up, and it's been extremely frustrating for me with all the different issues." Murray is scheduled to compete on Tuesday afternoon against Benoit Paire in his first singles match since sustaining a groin injury in March. Throughout his pre-match press conference he struck a balance

into tournaments," he said. "Then something's happened or whatever happened in Miami. I can't say with any great certainty I will be OK. I mean, I hope I will be, because I'm sure and I have seen enough again in practice that my tennis is fine and in a good place." Murray also offered his perspective on Novak Djokovic's French Open victory. He was not surprised by Djokovic's ability to recover from his semi-final win against

Graham Thorpe backs the Hundred to help England's struggling Test batsmen

London, June 15 : Graham Thorpe hopes the Hundred allows England's batsmen to relax before their five Test series against India and believes their mental approach is proving more of a hindrance than any technical problems. Thorpe, the assistant coach, and Marcus Trescothick, the elite batting coach, have plenty of work to do with their charges before the first Test against India on 4 August after the 1-0 defeat against New Zealand exposed shortcomings. There are only two rounds of County Championship cricket before then and England's players will be made available for a thrash during the first 10 days of the

Hundred - their last competitive action before facing India's stellar attack at Trent Bridge - in order to boost the tournament's inaugural season. Asked how this might affect them, Thorpe said: "I hope what it does is allow them to free up and enjoy their cricket, help them to relax. Free up the hands and the arms but [while] being able to adapt to each form of the game." I hope it gives them a mental break and the ones who come back into the Test squad come back with that hunger and desire to be better." Thorpe, a member of the England team that lost at home against New Zealand in 1999, stressed that, while players are being backed, the runs column remains all important. He has diagnosed some anxiety when individuals start at the crease and urged greater strike rotation as one cure. The eight-wicket defeat in Birmingham prompted debate over some idiosyncratic techniques and off-stump guards, something that led the former captain Nasser Hussain to lament a "we

are right" mentality among the current generation. Thorpe, like the captain, Joe Root, is less convinced by this. "Look around the world, players have different techniques," he says.

it comes down to decision making. It is about doing it more consistently and that is a mental thing really. "Techniques will be looked at and sometimes as a player



"But whatever technique you have, the basics are still the same: you have to get in, you have to be positive in your defence, leave the ball well outside off stump and play straight. England left trailing on and off pitch by clear-thinking New Zealand." If you look at the techniques of all our batters from Dom Sibley to Rory Burns, to Ollie Pope to Dan Lawrence, to me

you need to not listen to too much noise from the outside. But the reality is that you do need to perform. "Meanwhile Sussex have confirmed that Ollie Robinson will return from a short break to play a second XI Twenty20 match versus Hampshire at Hove on Tuesday as he awaits the outcome of England's investigation into offensive tweets written in 2012 and 2013.

Biosecure bubble can help forge stronger Lions bonds, insists Ken Owens

London, June 15 : The British & Irish Lions hooker Ken Owens believes the strict Covid-19 restrictions facing the squad can act as a strength rather than a weakness for the upcoming tour of South Africa. Training got under way on Monday for the 26 players who have arrived at the Lions' pre-tour training base in Jersey and Owens insists the biosecure bubble will make team-bonding easier. Last night the Lions were due to allocate key responsibilities including overseeing entertainment and laundry while, as was the case four years ago, choir practice is expected to be introduced again. The Lions will be based in Jersey until flying to Edinburgh for the warm-up match against Japan next Saturday and then on to South Africa. If they have to quarantine upon their return at the end of the tour they will spend 10

weeks in a bubble environment with Gatland recently warning: "The rugby side takes care of itself, so it's important we get the other stuff right and think about the players' mental health." During the Six Nations, Ellis Genge was among the players to speak out about how difficult life in the bubble was and while there will

be a brief period of respite in Jersey, the squad is still isolating in the hotel, having arrived on Sunday. "We are lucky in some ways because we are in a bubble and we're very tight together," Owens said. "It's easier to get those social connections going because you don't have people drifting off here, there and everywhere. We are restricted to what we can do. Obviously we are not sharing rooms so we do tend to spend a lot more time down around the team room, because you don't want to be isolated." While Euro 2020 is already providing a welcome distraction, choir practice is soon to be a prerequisite, as was the case four years ago before the tour to New Zealand. Owens, who played a leading role in 2017, said: "It is an opportunity to learn about the culture of the other nations and it is a way of having a bit of fun as well and spending half an hour in the evening just having a bit of a laugh and a get-together. "England have called up the Wasps hooker Gabriel Oghre after Jack Singleton was unable to



meet up at the start of their camp on Monday after he was identified as a close contact of someone who had tested positive for Covid-19. Oghre becomes the 22nd uncapped member of a callow squad, ready to be bolstered by losing semi-finalists next week. Exeter, meanwhile, could be without Sam Skinner and Dave Ewers for their semi-final against Sale with both facing a disciplinary hearing on Tuesday night. The former Gloucester and Bristol centre Jack Adams has died from cancer, aged 34. Adams made his Gloucester debut in 2005 and went on to accumulate 35 appearances for the Kingsholm club. "Everyone connected to Gloucester is deeply saddened to hear the news of Jack Adams passing over the weekend," read a Gloucester statement. "The outpouring of love and support from the wider rugby community over the last few days goes to show just how adored Jack was as a person."

North Macedonia call on Uefa to investigate Marko Arnautovic remarks

London, June 15 : The North Macedonian football federation has called for Uefa to investigate Marko Arnautovic's remarks towards North Macedonia supporters after the Austria striker scored late in their Euro 2020 game on Sunday. Arnautovic has denied using racist language during the match in Bucharest, but apologised for his reaction towards opposition fans after scoring in the 89th minute of Austria's 3-1 win. The Austria captain, David Alaba, stepped in to restrain an apparently furious Arnautovic while he was celebrating his goal. "There were some heated words yesterday in the emotions of the game for which I would like to apologise - especially to my friends from North Macedonia and Albania," Arnautovic, whose father is Serbian, said on Instagram. "I would like to say one thing very clearly: I am not a racist. I have friends in almost every country

and I stand for diversity. Everyone who knows me is aware of that." Initial media reports suggested that the 32-year-old's anger was also directed at North Macedonian players Egzon Bejtulai and Ezgjan Alioski, both of whom have Albanian roots. The Football Federation of Macedonia (FFM) statement, released on Facebook on Monday, claims that Arnautovic's remarks were aimed at Alioski. "The FFM strongly condemns the nationalistic outburst of Austrian player Marko Arnautovic, after a goal scored in yesterday's match, addressed to Ezgjan Alioski," a statement said. "At the same time, we inform you that we have submitted an official letter to Uefa demanding the harshest punishment for Arnautovic. " "We are always against nationalism, discrimination and all other forms of insults and outbursts that are not in the spirit of football and values that we all stand together.

PSL 2021: People wonder how can a woman be talking about sports', says Pakistani sports presenter **Zainab Abbas**

Dubai, June 15 : From a makeup artist to Pakistan's most recognised female sports presenter, Zainab Abbas, who is in the UAE for the ongoing Pakistan Super League, maps her journey. It was not for the nudge from her mother, Zainab Abbas would perhaps still have been content with her life as a professional makeup artist. Bringing about a revolutionary change in the world of Pakistan's sports broadcasting was certainly not in her imagination. Making her clients look elegant with makeup brush was. But then Andleeb Abbas, a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, had an inkling that her daughter might have a significant role to play in cricket, albeit off the field. Married to a former first-class cricketer, Nasir Abbas, Andleeb had seen how her husband's passion for the sport trickled into her daughter. From a very early age, Zainab would follow all Pakistan games religiously, even the ones against minnows like Kenya and Zimbabwe. So Andleeb pushed Zainab to go for Dunya News channel's audition for a show on the 2015 ODI World Cup. Zainab didn't take it seriously because she had no experience in media. What she did have, though, was the love and the knowledge of the game. So when she did go for the audition, she was comfortable because she really didn't have any "expectations of getting the call again". But that's what happened. "They were happy to see that somebody - a woman - is talking about the game with so much passion and they thought that I could add another flavour, or another dimension to the show that they had constructed," recalls Zainab. So what began as an unplanned foray into a new territory - sports broadcasting - soon became a full-time career as Zainab grew from strength to strength, eventually becoming the first Pakistani female presenter to be part of an ICC World Cup broadcasting team in 2019. Now here in Abu Dhabi for the Pakistan Super League (PSL), Zainab is brimming with excitement for her next big project in England. Sky Sports has roped her in for England's highly

ambitious new league - The Hundred - cricket's newest format in which teams would play 100 balls each. Zainab would be part of a multinational Sky Sports broadcasting team in a league that has attracted some of the biggest stars in world cricket. But it was not an easy ride for Zainab when she took her first steps in Pakistan's male-dominated sports broadcasting industry. Negativity and prejudices threw countless obstacles, but Zainab leaped over those with poise and dexterity, eventually earning the respect of the pundits and gaining over 4.6 million followers on social media. In an exclusive interview with *wknd*, Zainab looks back at her journey and how her success has now inspired many young girls in Pakistan to follow in her footsteps. Your father was a former first-class cricketer who played with

in a completely sports fanatic family, so it was not just cricket, it was other sports as well. But cricket was a massive part of our household. I grew up in a joint family, so we all used to watch cricket together, it used to be a festive occasion anytime there was a cricket match on. Your husband Hamza Kardar is the grandson of Pakistan's first cricket captain, the iconic Abdul Hafeez Kardar, who played Test cricket for both India (before the Partition) and Pakistan. Cricket has a fascinating connection with you... It was not something which was pre-planned. It just so happened that I got married into the family which had a cricketing legacy. Abdul Hafeez Kardar was, of course, the first Test captain of Pakistan. Everybody has read a lot about him, his leadership, how the team excelled under him. So I think I am really

men... When I started, I got a culture shock because sports presenting was very much male dominated. I now feel times have changed for the better. But when I started, I didn't really know anybody around who I could take help from. There was no female idol that I could really look up to because at that time, there was nobody. So I was kind of thrown in at the deep end, and trying to find my own path. I feel, at that time, you are always challenging perceptions of our society. There are lots of prejudices, there are lots of pre-conceived notions about women talking about sports because there's always that mentality that 'how can a woman be talking about sports?'. So those were the challenges that I had initially. And it took a lot of hard work, a lot of consistent efforts to be able to change that. You have indeed changed that and now you have more social media followers than some of the top international cricketers. Do you feel a sense of responsibility when so many people look up to you? When you have a voice, when you have a platform, which can reach millions of people, you should always use it in a positive way. And I try to do that. I always attach myself to some good social causes. There is also a social responsibility, and I feel that whatever you say on that platform really influences your followers and people who look up to you. So, I try and associate myself with good causes. Apart from doing what I am doing, it's also very important to use my platform in the best way possible. If you have been blessed with this kind of following, then you need to understand the level of influence you have on people's lives. I am quite conscious of that. Now that have established yourself as a top-notch presenter, your journey will inspire lot of young girls in Pakistan to follow in your footsteps. What will be your message to them? I get a lot of messages and people who didn't really think that this was ever an avenue for them to express their love for the game, have now seen that it's possible to follow my path, it's possible to grow and reach new heights.



the likes of Ramiz Raja in domestic matches. That perhaps was a reason you fell in love with the game... I think it was. Both my parents did have some element of influence on why I chose this as my career. While growing up, I used to watch all the matches, and I used to often get told off by my parents, for not really studying at times. In fact, I was more focused on watching the games, and understanding them. And I remember I grew up

happy that I have become part of a family which has a cricketing legacy. It certainly makes life more relatable because this is what I do. I feel like I am blessed in that sense, to be part of a family that understands the game, that has a history attached to it, and it certainly makes my job much easier. But, perhaps, it was not so easy to establish myself as a female cricket presenter in Pakistan. It's an industry dominated by



Chris Silverwood points to England's inexperience - but he is picking the team

London, June 15 : Repeatedly, as the home team came within a raincloud of losing two Tests against a country with a fraction of their resources, England's head coach Chris Silverwood and his camp kept talking about inexperience. His players couldn't have attempted to score three runs per over for two sessions after a generous New Zealand declaration at Lord's because they didn't have the experience. They collapsed in three other innings due to inexperience. It was unfair to expect more given the players rested from the side. There was no awareness, apparently, of something as hard to miss as the Lord's spaceship perched at the Nursery End. Who had batted them out of the game there? A batsman playing his first Test. Who joined him in the next engagement? One playing his third Test. Devon Conway made 200 in the first innings at Lord's and 80 at Edgbaston, where Will Young came into the team and made 82. As for missing quality players, New Zealand made six changes for the second Test and still won at a canter. Joe Root's 105 Tests of experience didn't improve the fortunes of his team. "Once we get [Ben] Stokes, [Jos] Buttler, these guys back," said Silverwood in the aftermath, "getting that experience back into the lineup will help the younger guys and pull them along as well." But who exactly lacks experience? Rory Burns is a county captain, 30 years old with 25 Tests. Dom Sibley has played 20 and will soon turn 26. Ollie Pope was the next big thing three years ago and has played 19 times since. Zak Crawley got that tag last summer and has crammed in 14 Tests. Plenty of excellent players in the past only totalled these sorts of numbers in entire careers. Dan Lawrence was the least experienced of the top six, playing his seventh Test at Edgbaston, and handled it the best of anyone. Conway and Young entered the series as seasoned domestic players with years of runs banked up. The thing is, so did the English. Sibley, Burns, and Lawrence have played more first-class matches than Young, while Pope and Crawley are not far behind. The New Zealand pair played with calm and poise, spending hours in studied concentration. England's players moved across the crease, ostensibly to leave a line that they didn't end up leaving, and were either dismissed that way or by the vulnerability it created to the ball angled in. After a miserable couple of matches keeping wicket and batting at seven, James Bracey won't be helped along by Buttler's return because Buttler will take his spot. So, too, whoever is replaced by Stokes. But the other facet of nonsense is that the top five as they were at Edgbaston would all have been in the

team had Stokes and Buttler played. These are Silverwood's first-choice players, yet their team apparently couldn't be expected to compete. As for the last couple of spots, Ben Foakes getting injured was bad luck, but Bracey had been chosen as his back-up. If a chase at Lord's was too risky because Bracey or Lawrence or Crawley couldn't be relied on, why were they in the side? Surely the players chosen to play Test cricket have to be considered competent to meet the demands of Test cricket? Or is England now choosing batsmen on the same grounds as England chooses PPE suppliers? The limitations that Silverwood kept citing were down to the choices that Silverwood had made. He is, after all, the only one who picks a team these days. It's not clear whether players, coach or administrators were behind the push in April that removed Ed Smith as national selector by eliminating the position entirely. Smith had a bad final month in India, but Silverwood's insistence on four fast bowlers at Lord's and Edgbaston, and his refusal to concede that it was a tactical mistake, suggest his influence on the four-seamers debacle in Ahmedabad. The argument is that cricket's new system works in football, with direct lines of control and accountability. Football managers, though, have plenty of players waiting on the bench, so experiments or hunches can be abandoned when they don't work. A cricket XI can't even be changed after an adverse result at the toss. It's also the case that football managers get sacked with a higher frequency than those whistles that only dogs can hear. For cricket coaches to last long enough to have an influence, some insulation from accountability is for the best. After Edgbaston, Silverwood was back to old themes. "I'll be looking forward to galvanising that team and looking forward to the Ashes." Much the same as his comments in May, and March, and January, treating engagements against No 1-ranked New Zealand and No 2-ranked India as "preparation" for the grudge match against No 3. The question for the coach is whether he heads south with a planeload of players stuck in perpetual adolescence, a retinue of large adult sons, unable to take the step from county to country, always excused as learning or developing or growing. Root, too, talks about learning from losses. The lessons, though, are usually pretty apparent. Don't get bowled out for 100. Pick a spinner on grounds where they prosper. When you don't bother trying to win matches, you tend to lose series. And when your opponents are producing players who handle the heat but you're not, it pays to work out why.

Phil Mickelson eyes career grand slam on his home course at US Open

Washington, June 15 : Phil Mickelson believes he has a "unique opportunity" to complete the career grand slam in his home city of San Diego on the back of his stunning US PGA Championship triumph. Just nine days before rolling back the years at Kiawah Island to become golf's oldest major champion, Mickelson had reluctantly accepted a special exemption for the 121st US Open at Torrey Pines, where he will celebrate his 51st birthday on Wednesday, the day before the event starts. That exemption was required because Mickelson had slipped out of the world's top 100 and the prospect of him joining Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger

Woods in having won all four majors looked increasingly far-fetched. Phil Mickelson will get another chance to claim the career grand slam after a special exemption.



Woods in having won all four majors looked increasingly far-fetched. Phil Mickelson will get another chance to claim the career grand slam after a special exemption. tion into the U.S. Open. "Now, you always need some luck, you always need things to kind of come together and click, but I know that I'm playing well, and I just wanted to give myself every opportunity to play at my best." Mickelson has won three times at Torrey Pines, including back-to-back victories in the Buick Invitational - now the Farmers Insurance Open - in 2000 and 2001, but three months after the last of those successes the South Course underwent a major redesign. In his 18 starts since, the left-hander has recorded four top-10 finishes and in the last seven years has missed the cut three times, withdrawn once with a back injury, skipped one year to play on the European Tour and

has a best finish of 14th in 2017. "What's happened for me is I spent so many hours as a kid that, when the course was redesigned, all that local knowledge went away," Mickelson added. "I really haven't come out here and spent a ton of time. It's hard to get a tee time out here, and when you do, it's a long round. So I don't spend a lot of time out here other than the Farmers." I really made an effort here, having the last week off, to spend time out here and really learn, relearn the greens. So I spent a lot of hours out here on the greens last week to see if I can get that local knowledge again, and we'll see how it goes, but I had a lot of fun kind of relearning and spending a lot of time out here."

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