

## Delhi HC to Centre: Release Rs 14 crore to Panacea Biotech if it gets nod for manufacturing Sputnik V vaccines

New Delhi, Agency.

The Delhi High Court on Friday said that Covid vaccine shortage was hitting everybody in the country and directed the Centre to release Rs 14 crore, with interest of 12 per cent per annum from 2012, to Panacea Biotech for manufacturing of Sputnik V. The Division Bench of Justices Manmohan and



Najmi Waziri said that the release will also remain subject to the undertaking given by Panacea Biotech that 20 percent of the sale proceeds will be deposited by it with the High Court Registry. "We are a bit anguished with the way things have transpired during the second wave. Vaccine shortage is hitting everybody," said the court, adding some from Russia has been able to locate infrastructure in Himachal Pradesh but the Centre has failed to do so. The court passed the order on the application filed by Panacea Biotech for release of the money awarded to it in 2019 by an arbitral tribunal in a 2010 case related to the manufacture of influenza vaccines. The company, which has collaborated with the Russian Direct Investment Fund, told the court in its application that it would be deprived of the opportunity to manufacture Sputnik V vaccine at "fastest pace" in case the money awarded to it in 2019 is not released.

# Kerala budget: Finance Minister Balagopal announces Rs 20,000 crore Covid package

Kochi, Agency.

A Covid-19 stimulus package worth Rs 20,000 crore; allocation of Rs 1,000 crore for free distribution of vaccines for all above 18 years; Rs 1,500 crore for first-phase conservation of fragile coastal areas; a scheme to reduce extreme poverty; and no new tax proposals these are some of the important announcements in the revised budget presented by Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal Friday for FY 2021-22. As Balagopal's predecessor T M Thomas Isaac had presented a full budget in February and with the LDF government returning to power in the state in the recent elections, the budget was merely a continuation of Isaac's proposals.

While the long-term aims of the government for the state remain unchanged in critical sectors, Balagopal had to weave in additional funds for bearing the cost of vaccine distribution and to manage the financial distress in the backdrop of the devastating second wave of the pandemic. Though the minister said increasing taxes was inevitable considering the state's financial situation, he decided not to



announce any new tax proposals in the context of a large section of the population suffering the effects of the pandemic. The finance minister said the Covid-19 stimulus package would include Rs 2,800 crore to tackle the health emergency situation in the state, Rs 8,900 crore which will be disbursed directly to people facing loss of livelihood and Rs 8,300 crore towards interest subsidy for loans to help rejuvenate the economy. The budget's emphasis on strengthening the health sector in the state is visible through several initiatives, such as introducing isolation wards for contagious diseases at all community

**■ Kerala budget: The finance minister said the Covid-19 stimulus package would include Rs 2,800 crore to tackle the health emergency situation and Rs 8,900 crore which will be disbursed directly to people facing loss of livelihood.**

health centres, taluk, district and general hospitals; separate blocks in medical college hospitals for combating contagious diseases like Covid-19 and Nipah virus; enhancing bed strength of pediatric ICUs; and setting up a liquid medical oxygen plant of 150 metric tonnes capacity. As a politician who takes a keen interest in environmental issues, Balagopal's imprint on the budget is clear on that front. A comprehensive package has been announced to contain the effects of floods through better systems like 'room for river' as implemented in the Netherlands, 'living with water', and eco-friendly construction. The first phase of the project will receive an

allocation of Rs 50 crore with an estimated expenditure of Rs 500 crore. The project will involve water resources, environment and local self government departments. In a big boost for Kudumbashree, the state's women empowerment mission, allocation for the Livelihood package has been increased to Rs 100 crore, while Rs 10 crore for starting value-added production units is also visible in the budget. Among the important announcements is the government's decision to convert 3,000 diesel buses belonging to the KSRRTC to CNG. This is aimed at reducing the corporation's operational losses and carbon footprint. On the tourism front, Balagopal announced additional funds of Rs 50 crore for marketing and Rs 5 crore for launching amphibious vehicles that move both on land and water as part of the first phase. Two new tourism circuits Malabar literary circuit and bio-diversity circuit have been announced. The Malabar literary circuit will connect places associated with literary giants of the state like Thunjath Ezhuthachan, Vaikom Muhammed Basheer, O V Vijayan and M T Vasudevan Nair.

## 'Map their needs, ensure parental property not sold off': WCD guidelines to states on children orphaned by Covid

New Delhi, Agency.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) has written to state governments laying down guidelines on how children, orphaned by Covid-19, must be handled. In a letter to Chief Secretaries on Thursday, WCD Secretary Ram Manohar Mishra listed safeguards to ensure children who have lost both parents to the disease are not exploited financially. This includes a structure that presents the sale of the child's ancestral property, and ensuring financial support the child will receive through grants announced by various states, as well as through the PM CARES Fund, are not to be adjusted against pending debts or other liabilities of the parents, but to be strictly used only for the child's education, expenditure and welfare. To ensure the child's ancestral property is not sold off, the District Magistrate (DM) is to maintain "proper oversight" of records maintained by the Registration or Revenue Department. Mishra further said the care and protection of children adversely affected by Covid-19 must follow protocol as mandated under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. The ministry said that to ensure the best interests of the children during the pandemic, there is a need for resource mapping along with careful planning to "foster access to resources needed for their individual needs". The ministry has deemed that the DM will be the guardian of vulnerable children impacted adversely by Covid-19. "All concerned government departments and other stakeholders at all levels must be activated to guarantee concerted efforts in the best interest of the child in distress. It may be ensured that none of the vulnerable children slip through the safety net," Mishra said in his letter.

For this, such children are to be identified through outreach and surveys, and databases with the profile of each child, along with the details of their specific needs and requirements, are to be created. The database is to be kept secure and confidential, as prescribed under the JJ Act. This data is also to be uploaded on Track Child Portal of Government of India. States are to publicise contact details of Child Welfare Committees and Childline (1098) at hospital reception and other prominent places. The state police is to be alerted to track and monitor the evolving situation carefully, to prevent crimes against children including child labour, child marriage, trafficking and illegal adoptions. A database of children at risk is to be maintained to ensure follow-up and regular monitoring. Hospitals will be instructed to identify one "trustworthy person" of Covid patients to be contacted for caring for their child in case of an eventuality. Adequate provisions for pediatric and neo-natal care may be ensured in every district. Immediate temporary rehabilitation of children through the existing child care facilities



supported under Child Protection Services scheme must be ensured. DMs are also to ensure quality care at Child Care Institutions (CCIs). CCIs are to make arrangements for isolation facilities for children who may have Covid, and create a roster of child psychologist or counsellors, apart from having a local helpline manned by child psychologists. The DM, who will be the local guardian, will ensure the orphaned child is restored to the extended family, and in cases where the Child Welfare Committees rule for adoption, this be done through the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA). The Ministry has instructed states to create a district-level multi-departmental taskforce to map the needs, monitor progress and ensure all benefits reach affected children. All panchayats as well as civil society organisations are to inform GWCs or District Child Protection Units about any vulnerable child in the district. Children whose parents have been unwell due to Covid are also to be temporarily shifted to CCIs in case the families are unable to look after them. With fears of possible child trafficking, the ministry has alerted the state police to trace offers for child adoption on social media, which is deemed illegal, and take action against the perpetrators. DMs are to organise orientation and sensitisation of Urban Local Bodies and Panchayati Raj Institutions, and inform them regarding measures being taken and schemes announced for such children. They are to ensure that all the orphan children are provided free education through government day schools or residential schools, and based on specific needs of the child, he/she can also be enrolled in the nearest private schools under RTE Section 12(1)(c). Eligible orphaned children are to be included under existing scholarship schemes. "Vocational training, wherever required, may be provided under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). Health Insurance may be secured for eligible children under PM Jan Arogya Yojana scheme of Government of India, as per the scheme guidelines," the letter reads.

## Indian team sent to bring back Choksi leaves Dominica, heads home

New Delhi, Agency.

India's multi-agency team that had gone to Dominica to bring back Mehul Choksi is headed back home on a Qatar Airways private jet after the island nation's high court adjourned the hearing on the fugitive diamondaire's habeas corpus petition, sources said. Publicly available flight data showed that the jet took off from the Melville Hall Airport in Dominica at 8:09 PM (local time) on June 3 and is travelling towards Madrid. The multi-agency team of officials is also returning, the sources said. The team led by CBI DIG Sharda Raut was stationed in Dominica for nearly seven days to bring back Choksi, who is wanted in the Rs 13,500-crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) scam, to India. On Thursday, the Dominica High Court adjourned the hearing on Choksi's habeas corpus petition. A habeas corpus petition is filed for producing before a court a person who is under arrest or in unlawful detention. It is likely that the next hearing may take place after a month and the businessman will remain in Dominica, local media reported. Judge Bernie Stephenson will decide the next date of hearing after meeting both sides, media outlet Antigua News Room said. The adjournment is to allow lawyers of Choksi and the Dominica government "to agree on



the language to be used with respect to the injunction filed to prevent his removal from Dominica", it said. Thursday's hearing was conducted through videoconferencing with a group of protesters standing outside the High Court building in Roseau carrying placards with messages seeking to know the truth about the controversy, "Who brought Choksi to Dominica?" read one of the placards, the photo of which was published by many media outlets. The judge had on Wednesday ordered production of Choksi before the magistrate to face charges of illegal entry into Dominica. The 62-year-old wheelchair-bound diamondaire, who has a pending Interpol Red Notice against him, arrived before presiding Roseau Magistrate Court in black shorts and a blue t-shirt from the Dominica-China Friendship Hospital, where he

is undergoing treatment. His application for bail was rejected. Choksi and his nephew Nirav Modi had fled India in the first week of January 2018, weeks before the PNB scam rocked the Indian banking industry. The duo allegedly bribed officials of the state-run bank to get Letters of Undertaking (LoU) on the basis of which they availed loans from overseas banks that remained unpaid. The allegedly corrupt bank officials did not enter these LoUs in the core banking software of PNB, thus evading scrutiny. The non-payment of these LoUs or bank guarantees worth Rs 13,500 crore resulted in default and became a liability on the bank.

Choksi had mysteriously gone missing on May 23 from Antigua and Barbuda, where he has been staying since 2018 as a citizen since he fled Delhi. He was detained in neighbouring island country Dominica for illegal entry after a possible romantic escapade with his rumoured girlfriend. His lawyers alleged that he was kidnapped from Jolly Harbour in Antigua by policemen looking like Antiguan and Indian and brought to Dominica on a boat. Most escaped to Europe and was finally held in London, where he is contesting his extradition to India. Choksi took the citizenship of Antigua and Barbuda in 2017.

## Two months after explosive surge, second wave of Covid-19 still visible but its worst over

New Delhi, Agency.

April 4 was the first time India's daily Covid case count crossed 1 lakh setting off the most explosive phase of the pandemic during which the daily count of new infections reached as high as 4.14 lakh on May 6. Two months since that milestone, the Covid curve, after claiming a devastating toll of at least 1.76 lakh lives, is finally falling into a zone where the disease, experts say, could be handled by existing health infrastructure. The number of active cases in the country is less than half that of the peak; the case count has begun to decline in almost every state; and, for the first time in more than two months, the weekly positivity rate has fallen below overall positivity. The biggest relief is that the daily count of deaths has begun to come down as well.

Less than 3,000 deaths are being recorded every day, compared to the high of over 4,400 barely 10 days ago. The worst might be over but the second wave is not yet. The daily count of cases, at least 1.22 lakh Wednesday, is still way above the peak of the first wave: 97,899 on September 16 last year. So is the number of active cases, and the daily death count. And most states in the North-East, barring Assam are still in the midst of a surge. Yet, there's reason to hope in the national curve. "By the end of this month, the daily case count should be somewhere around 20,000. That means we would see roughly at the same place where we were at the end of January before the start of the second wave," said Prof Manindra Agrawal of IIT Kanpur, who has been running a computer simulation to predict the course of the pandemic.

## Editors Guild welcomes SC judgment on sedition case against journalist Vinod Dua

New Delhi, Agency.

A day after the Supreme Court quashed a sedition case lodged in Himachal Pradesh against journalist Vinod Dua while stressing that "a citizen has the right to criticise or comment upon the measures undertaken by a government", the Editors Guild of India welcomed the judgment. Saying the judgment "underlines the importance of protecting journalists from sedition cases", the Guild appreciated the apex court's concerns over the "chilling effect that sedition laws have on free media and democracy". "While the reference to the earlier judgment of Justice Kedar Nath Singh and the need to protect journalists from sedition charges is welcomed, the manner in which such laws are implemented by law enforcement authorities in different parts of the country, leading to pre-trial incarceration, needs further intervention by the apex court," the Guild said in a statement. It added, "The Guild demands repeal of these draconian and antiquated laws that find no space in any modern liberal democracy." The Himachal Pradesh police had



registered an FIR against Dua for sedition, public mischief and other offences over the contents of a talk show broadcast on YouTube last year. The FIR was registered on a complaint filed by Ajay Shyam, a local BJP leader, that Dua "had asserted that the Prime Minister used deaths and terror attacks to garner votes and that the Prime Minister garnered votes

**■ The Editors Guild of India appreciated the Supreme Court's concerns over the "chilling effect that sedition laws have on free media and democracy".**

through acts of terrorism" in the Hindi talk show uploaded on March 30, 2020. A bench of justices U U Lalit and Vineet Saran said every journalist is entitled to protection specified under the Supreme Court's 1962 judgment in the Kedar Nath Singh vs State Of Bihar case. The bench ruled that "every journalist will be entitled to protection in terms of Kedar Nath Singh, as every prosecution under Sections 124A (sedition) and 505 (public mischief) of the IPC must be in strict conformity with the scope and ambit of said sections as explained, and completely in tune with the law laid down in Kedar Nath Singh".

## Indian Navy's oldest hydrographic survey ship INS Sandhayak decommissioned

New Delhi, Agency.

INS Sandhayak, the Indian Navy's oldest Hydrographic Survey Vessel was decommissioned at Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam after serving the nation for 40 glorious years on Friday. The ship was decommissioned in a solemn and low key event due to the ongoing COVID Pandemic when the National Flag, Naval Ensign, and the Decommissioning Pennants were lowered at sunset time in the presence of Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command, the Chief Guest for the ceremony.

The 'Decommissioning Ceremony' was also attended by Vice Admiral Vinay

Badhwar, Chief Hydrographer to Government of India and by serving Hydrographers, Indian Navy's oldest hydrographic surveys in Western and Eastern coasts of the Indian peninsula, the sea and surveys in neighbouring countries including Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Bangladesh.



**STERLING TOOLS LIMITED**  
 Regd. Office: Unit No. 515, DLF Phase-A, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi-110028  
 Website: www.sterlingtools.com, www.sterlingtoolsindia.com  
 TEL: +91-11-2270251-2

**NOTICE**  
 Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29(1)(a) & (e) read with Regulation 47(1)(a) of the Listing Regulations with the Stock Exchanges that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on **Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2021** to inter-alia, consider and approve the Standalone / Consolidated Audited Financial Results for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021 and if thought fit, to authorize the Board to make any such resolutions. This information is also available on the Company's website at [www.sterlingtools.com](http://www.sterlingtools.com) and on the Stock Exchanges website at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com).

Place: New Delhi  
 Date: 04/06/2021

For Sterling Tools Ltd.  
 Sd/-  
 Company Secretary