

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

VISAKHAPATNAM | FRIDAY 12 JULY 2021



## WEATHER



Max: 36.8°C  
Min: 27.6°C  
RH: 71%  
Rainfall: 0.00

Forecast: Haze.  
Max/Min temp.  
36/27.9°C



## WORLD | 7

**Xi warns against bullying China**



## SPORTS | 8

**Abhimanyu Mishra youngest ever chess Grandmaster**



## TABLOID

**YS Jagan biopic on the anvil**

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## ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Jyeshta Bahula Ashtami till 3.32 pm  
Star: Revathi full day  
Varjyanam: 5.01 pm to 6.47 pm  
Durmuhamtan: 8.25 am to 9.17 am; 12.46 pm to 1.38 pm  
Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon  
**HJRI CALENDAR**  
Zeeqad 20,1442 AH  
**PRAYERS (ROYAL MOSQUE)**  
Fajr: 5.05 am  
Zohar: 1.30 pm  
Asar: 5.00 pm  
Maghrab: 6.19 pm  
Isha: 8.30 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY** 6.36 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 5.26 AM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW** 10.19 PM  
**MOONRISE TOMORROW** 00.19 PM



TS police restrains an AP official from entering Telangana at Nagarjunasagar project. A large number of police personnel were deployed at Nagarjunasagar and Pulichintala projects.

## Tension brims at N'sagar dam

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

High tension prevailed at Nagarjunasagar Dam as the Telangana police did not allow officials from AP to meet their Telangana counterparts and the latter also refused to meet officials from AP following the water dispute between both AP and Telangana on Thursday.

As Telangana authorities started hydroelectric power generation from Srisailam, Nagarjunasagar and Pulichintala projects in the last few days in violation of norms of the Krishna river management board and draining out Krishna water into the sea, AP water resources department officials went to Nagarjunasagar Dam

### KRMB CONVENES MEET ON JULY 7 TO RESOLVE KRISHNA WATER DISPUTE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Amid heightened tensions between the two states, the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) has decided to convene a meeting between TS and AP to resolve the dispute by

intending to meet TS Genco chief engineer and irrigation department superintending engineer to explain about how drawing of water would affect the interests of AP.

However, the Telangana police did not allow the AP

### JAGAN WRITES TO PM, WATER MIN AGAINST TS ACT

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union minister for Jalshakti, Gajendra Singh Shekawat, seeking a Central government notification on the jurisdiction of KRMB and a direction to Telangana to stop "illegal drawal" of water for power generation.

■ Report on Page 4

■ Page 4: KRMB objects to TS using more water

■ Page 4: TS officials refuse to meet AP counterparts

## WHATAPP HITS ROUGH PATCH FOR AN HOUR

SANJAY SAMUEL  
PAUL | DC  
HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Popular messaging app WhatsApp was paralysed for some time on Thursday evening, which was purportedly caused by a glitch in its server. Many people have complained that they could not download photos or forwarded videos at 10 pm. The issue got resolved after one hour.

According to IT experts, the problem could have been caused by some problem at the WhatsApp server network.

Amar Daniel, a software professional in Hyderabad, "Popular social networking sites will have the most high-end servers with high-security firewalls. Sometimes, these servers might encounter some errors due to software bugs, which don't allow a user to download heavy files."

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy pointed that the state government had brought 1.2 crore families under the insurance coverage and paid premium to banks. However, only 62.5 lakh accounts could be opened

and the remaining accounts were yet to be opened by banks though AP had credited the insurance premium. He said that the banks which had to follow up about individual insurance claims with the insurance firms to process the registration, were unable to do so on time. This bottleneck led to a severe delay in receipt of claims.

In an additional clause put by the Centre, a 45-day lien period from the day of account opening, meant that if someone dies within 45 days, the insurance will not be paid. Due to

this, around 12,039 families who lost someone, after being enrolled with the 45-day lien period, were not eligible for the claims. The Chief Minister said that due to this, the state government came forward and paid for all those 12,039 claims at a cost of ₹254 crore.

"After witnessing all the chaos, the government took the entire responsibility of the scheme and shall clear the claims within one month of receiving the application. The responsibility for screening of insurance applications has been given to village/ward secretariats monitored by the Joint Collectors. Any eligible person who was left out from YSR Bima can call toll free number 155214 for getting registered or to resolve their issues related," the Chief Minister said.

Some names doing the rounds are late BJP leader Gopinath Munde's daughter Pritam Munde and Rajya Sabha MP Narayan

■ Page 4: CM: YSRC gave priority for health



BASIC | RIGHT

**Justice Ramana blames government for not giving priority to medical sector**

## CJI calls for universal free healthcare in India

BALU PULIPAKA | DC  
HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana said huge economic losses inflicted by the Covid-19 pandemic on India, and across the globe, "should wake us up to the reality that there is no substitute for a free and universal public healthcare system that focuses on disease prevention."

"The government," the Chief Justice of India said, was "not giving priority to the medical sector or

issues of immediate concern."

Launching the 'Defeat Diabetes' campaign by the Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India on Thursday, Justice Ramana, in a virtual address, said if diabetes was to be battled effectively, the state had to come up with a comprehensive policy framework in which awareness campaign became a part of diabetes eradication endeavours.

"For the programme to be successful, it needs to



be integrated into a free and universal public healthcare system. Left to

individuals, we will never reach the goal," he said.

On the rising diabetes cases in India, he said, "One must pause and wonder about the implications of this on the already strained healthcare system in the country. Formulating public healthcare policies based on intense scientific research is needed."

Studies, Justice Ramana said, had shown that knowledge and awareness was negligible in rural India on diabetes. The knowledge gap leads to

myths like it is the obese, those who consume more sugar, are the ones who get the disease, or that it is contagious and the one that says women are immune to the disease.

"Where there is room for myths, there is room for quackery. Quackery is the biggest disease affecting India. Quackery begins where awareness ends," he said.

Quoting the Telugu saying 'Aarogyamey mahabhagyam', the Chief Justice of India said it was the uni-

versal truth that health was wealth. "Any investment is justified to acquire this wealth because only a healthy nation can become a wealthy nation," he said.

Here are a "few thoughts and facts for all stakeholders to ponder over," he said, adding, "Our doctors are being attacked while on duty. Why is it that our medical professionals are at the receiving end for someone else's failure?"

■ Page 4: CJI points out at insufficient medical infra

## Call rates must rise, says Mittal

New Delhi: Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal said tariffs need to go up amid "tremendous stress" in the telecom sector, but Airtel will not hike rates unilaterally. The comments come when Vodafone Idea sought a one-year moratorium on payment of spectrum instalment of over ₹8,200 crore.

## POLAVARAM TO BECOME TOURIST ATTRACTION: MIN

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, JULY 1

Tourism minister M. Srinivasa Rao announced that the state government proposes to develop an image park, restaurants and other facilities near Polavaram Project to attract tourists from within and outside the state to the scenic sites along River Godavari.

Flagging off a tourism boat at Gandhi Pochamma Temple in Devipatnam mandal on Thursday, he said the government is setting up command control centres at various places in the state including Gandhi Pochamma temple, Pochavaram, Rajamahendravaram, Sangampalli, Peratalapalli in East and West Godavari districts, Rishikonda in Visakhapatnam, Nagarjunasagar in Guntur district, Srisailam in Kurnool district, and Beram Park in Krishna district.

■ Page 4: Polavaram has tourism potential: Min

## COPS: ARRESTED L.E.T. TERRORISTS PLANNED BLASTS

NAVEEN KUMAR  
HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Two LeT operatives, Imran Malik alias Imran Khan and his brother Mohammad Nasir Malik, arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Hyderabad on Wednesday were part of a conspiracy to execute terror acts across India, according to police.

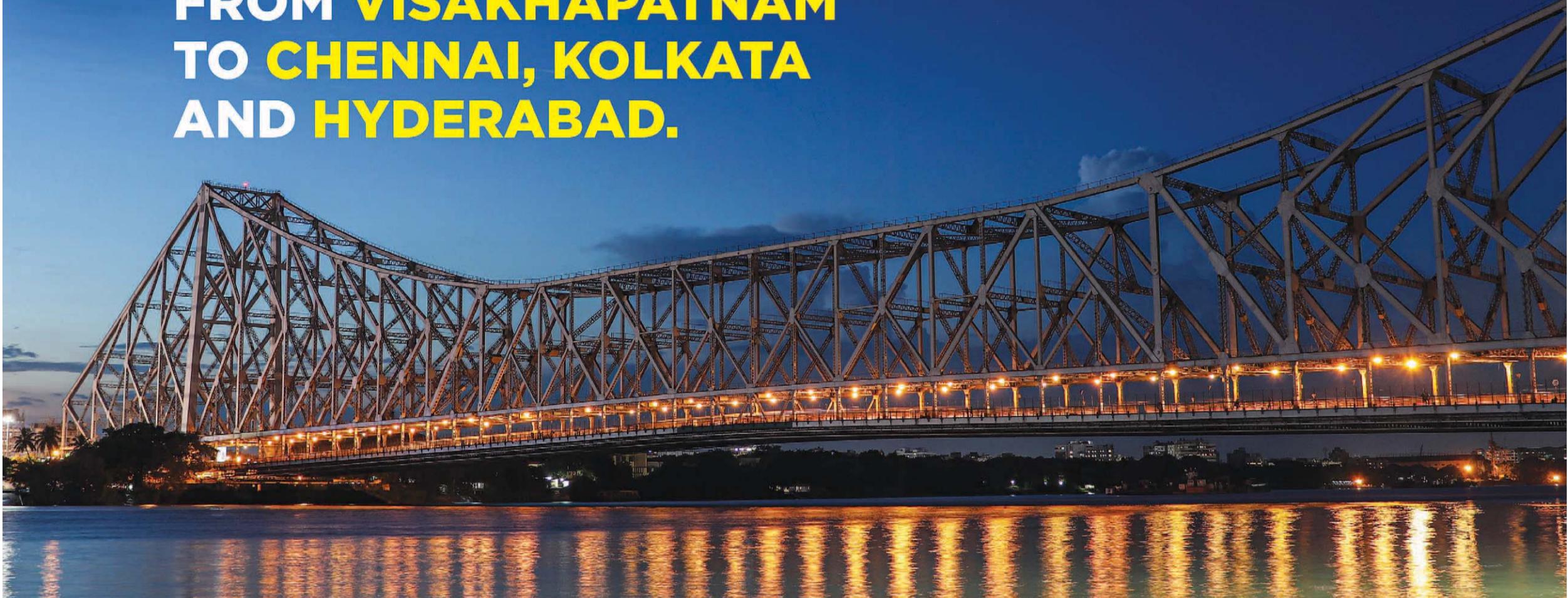
Imran Malik and Mohd Nasir Malik, hails from Kairana in Shamli of UP.

"It was found an explosion in a parcel on platform 1 of Darbhanga railway station was booked in Secunderabad and arrived in Secunderabad-Darbhanga Express. On June 24, the NIA re-registered the case."



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Visakhapatnam - Chennai	17:45	19:25	Daily
Chennai - Visakhapatnam	07:05	08:35	Daily
Visakhapatnam - Kolkata	08:55	10:55	Daily
Kolkata - Visakhapatnam	11:20	13:25	Daily
Visakhapatnam - Hyderabad	14:00	15:30	Daily
Hyderabad - Visakhapatnam	16:05	17:20	Daily

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Guwahati - Visakhapatnam	11:00	17:20	Tue, Thu, Sat & Sun
Visakhapatnam - Tirupati	14:00	18:20	Daily
Tirupati - Visakhapatnam	08:50	17:20	Daily
Visakhapatnam - Jharsuguda	14:00	18:30	Daily
Visakhapatnam - Mumbai (Via Chennai)	17:45	08:10+1	Daily

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**SHORT TAKES**  
**MAN 'SUSPICIOUSLY' DIES AFTER GETTING VACCINATED**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

A 33-year-old Uggina Yallaji Naidu 'suspiciously' died on Thursday after taking the first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine at a vaccination centre in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. The family lodged a complaint with the Sabbavaram police in Visakhapatnam rural.

The Sabbavaram sub-inspector B. Satish said that they registered an FIR and filed an 'unnatural death' case. The body was sent for post-mortem in Visakhapatnam.

The autopsy would be carried out by a team of doctors, as it is a sensitive case, on Friday. "Naik died within eight hours after taking his first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine," sub-inspector Satish said.

**VIZAG GST SURPASSES NATION'S SHARE**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

The Central GST Visakhapatnam zone principal chief commissioner Naresh Penumaka said the Vizag zone's revenue collection surpassed the national-level earnings for the current quarter up to June compared with the corresponding period last year.

Penumaka said Vizag zone collected revenue of ₹4493.28 crores, which was 106.4 per cent, against the nation's revenue growth of 81 per cent.

The GST revenue collections were ₹15,008 crores in 2020-21 with a marginal drop of 0.39 per cent over the previous year, he said.

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
 I, BHASKAR RAO Residing at 49-54-8/12, Triveni Towers, Balayastri Layout, Seethammadhara, Visakhapatnam - 13, I have changed my name from BHASKAR RAO to PARUCHURI VENKAYYA BHASKAR RAO vide affidavit Dt. 01-07-2021 sworn before Notary L.B.G.TILAK, Visakhapatnam.

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
 I, ANUP VK MADHAVAN MENON (Old Name), S/o VK Madhavan, resident of K-2, Buil Tech Green, Palakkad, Kerala - 678013 shall henceforth be known and called as ANUP MENON.  
 (CA D00005)

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**Vaccination drive**



People wait in a queue to get vaccinated against Covid at Urban Primary Health Centre near One Town Police Station in Visakhapatnam on Thursday.

# Hotels, restaurants up for sale in Vizag

## Hotels and restaurants sector worst affected by Covid-19

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC  
 VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

After losing huge chunks of money due to the two spells of Covid-19, the hotel and restaurant business owners gave up hopes of revival and planned to dispose of their enterprise for a song. According to travel and tour operators, the hotels and restaurants sector was one sector which suffered heavy losses due to Covid-19 that put people at homes since the breakout in January 2020.

The industry which picked up business with the establishment of steel plant and other private sector undertakings in the mid 1980s never looked back and dreamt

of making it bigger after the YSRC government announced Vizag would be executive capital.

"The virus dashed all our hopes and most of us are now planning to shift to other businesses for self sustenance," said Visakhapatnam Hotel Owners Welfare Association president K. Satyanarayana.

Talking to *Deccan Chronicle* on Thursday, he said with the third wave looming large over the horizon, the owners felt the industry would have to be shut for some more time. He said many entrepreneurs unable to manage the loan liabilities have decided to dispose of the establishments for less than half the price. The sale notifi-

cations are being circulated among the hotel and restaurant entrepreneurs through social media.

"Not single sale has been reported so far and we are waiting to see who are the takers of this sick business," Satyanarayana said.

He said there were around 600 stand alone restaurants, food parlors and mobile food vans spread across from Gajuwaka to Madhurawada. Only those selling take away parcels were surviving and others have shut down their shops.

Among the 1,000 odd hotels and lodges, the present occupancy was going at ten per cent for the reputed establish-

ments in Vizag city. With such low occupancy, it would be difficult to run the show, he said.

Satyanarayana said he owned a hotel in the heart of the city having 51 rooms and only ten were occupied on Thursday.

"During shutdown I paid the power bill-80 percent of the load which comes to ₹1.5 lakh per month," Satyanarayana said. Another hotelier said people stopped eating outside on the advice of medical professionals and conducting all the meetings online and stopped visiting Vizag for business meets.

He said that the pandemic also caused huge unemployment in the industry in the region.

## GVMC notification on property tax opposed

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

Various apartment dwellers in the city under the umbrella of Visakha Apartments Residents' Welfare Association and Nivas Federation of Colony Residence Association submitted 15 objections to GVMC on the draft notification on property tax, and demanded them to cancel the notification and continue the existing system of property tax in the interest of the citizens. VARWA general secretary B.B. Ganesh said that at the time of enacting the amendments for changing the system of levying property tax from annual rental system to capital value system, neither public opinion was sought nor that of the stakeholders. This is therefore an undemocratic amendment.

Ganesh further said that it is not justified to

levy property tax on the basis of artificially changed notional capital values of buildings or lands. As such, they record their objection for levying property tax on the capital value of the property and hence cannot accept any percentage on the capital value of properties including 0.15 per cent on the residential buildings, 0.30 per cent on the nonresidential buildings, and 0.50 per cent on the vacant lands as proposed in the said resolution 1976/2021 dated on 31 January 2021.

Nivas general secretary P. Narayana Murthy said that as capital values of properties would be increased every year by the Stamps & Registrations department, levying property tax on the basis of capital values will lead to heavy taxation and hence they oppose the new system of taxation.

## Woman, 3 kids die by suicide

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

A 35-year-old woman along with her three children died by suicide by jumping into a well in Jagannadhavalasa village under G. Sigadham Mandal in Srikakulam district.

The deceased were identified as Botta Bhogeswari (35) and her daughters Botta Chakri (5), Botta Jayalaxmi (3) and her son Botta Bharat (1).

The police said that Sankarao and Bhogeswari were married a few years ago and they have been living happily with their children.

However, Bhogeswari had some differences with her in-laws and often picked up a fight

for which she was admonished by them. Apparently disappointed after one such incident, Bhogeswari along with three children came out from the house and took the extreme step. She pushed her children into the well and later she also jumped into the well.

On information, the police led by Inspector D. Naveen Kumar rushed to the spot and organised recovery of the bodies from the well. The police shifted the bodies to the government hospital for post mortem.

After verifying the facts and based on the complaint from the Bhogeswari's parents, the police registered a case under Section 306 of IPC (Abetment of Suicide) has in-laws.

● **THE DIVISION head** Chetan Kumar Shrivastava inaugurated the environmental project.

● **HE WAS informed** that nearly ₹28 lakh would be saved to the exchequer with the commissioning of the plant at the country's largest wagon workshop.

## 3,841 Covid cases, 38 deaths in AP

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

Andhra Pradesh has reported 3,841 fresh Covid-19 infections and 38 deaths in the last 24 hours.

The state has been registering slight dip in fresh infections in the last three days as it reported 3,797 on June 30, 3,620 on June 29 and 2,224 on June 28 unlike earlier days of reporting more than 4,000 cases daily on an average.

The state health authorities reported on Thursday that out of 90,574 samples tested, 3,841 persons were found infected with confirmed Coronavirus. Out of a

total number of 22,084,192 samples tested so far in the state, 18,93,354 persons were found infected with the virus and of them, 18,42,432 were recovered in the course of treatment while 38,178 are still active with the virus.

East Godavari continues to lead the state with highest number of 760 daily fresh infections followed by 616 in Chittoor, 504 in West Godavari, 350 in Krishna, 313 in Guntur, 296 in Prakasam, 261 in Nellore, 171 in Kadapa, 163 in Visakhapatnam, 141 in Anantapur, 113 in Srikakulam, 108 in Vizianagram and 45 in Kurnool.

## RED SANDERS LOGS SEIZED IN CHITTOOR

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 TIRUPATI, JULY 1

In a huge haul, the Chittoor district police wing has seized red sanders logs and vehicles worth ₹10.25 crores from a location in Tamil Nadu and arrested seven persons in connection with this case.

### PARADIP PORT TRUST

#### e-Tender Call Notice

NOTD/TM/GEN-235(Vol-V)/21/1199

DL 29.06.2021

Name of the Work: "Allotment of 04 (Four) nos. of Mechanical Iron Ore/Iron Ore Pellet plots at IOHP". License fee: ₹ 2,81,92,560/-, Wharfage Charge: ₹ 15,28,690/-, Last date & time of Bid Submission 19.07.2021, 1600 Hrs., Bid Opening Date and time: 19.07.2021, 1700 hrs. Refer our website for details [https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app](http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app) Sr. Asst. Traffic Manager PPT/PR/51/21-22 DT. 01.07.2021

## TAHSILDAR, DEPUTY IN ACB NET

DC CORRESPONDENT  
 VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

Tahsildar in Chodavaram in Visakhapatnam rural district B. Ravi Kumar and deputy Tahsildar M. Raja landed in ACB on Thursday.

The officials said tiles business owner S. Venkata Rama Krishna lodged a complaint with the additional SP of ACB in Visakhapatnam that the both the officials demanded a bribe of ₹4.5 lakh for mutation of 1.65 acres of land in survey no 113 of Narasapuram village of Chodavaram mandal which is in the name of J. Venkata Ramana, who entered into an agreement with the complainant. He also applied for conversion of 41 cents of land in survey no 353-2A of Narasayyapeta village under the same mandal.

He said that the bribe demand was for both the cases.

### GREATER VISAKHAPATNAM SMART CITY CORPORATION LIMITED

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Last date of Submission of bid : 15-07-2021 @ 4.00 PM

For further details visit <http://www.ap-e-procurement.gov.in>

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Mobile No: 7989772161 MD & CEO, GVSCCL

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#### NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

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Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813 | Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)

(Phone No.: Mobile 964109106022)

Tender Enquiry No. 02/CE/JAL/2021-22 Dated: 30.06.2021

Chief Engineer/North Zone, PSPCL Jalandhar invites e-tender for work of attending to resolving the Fuse-Off-Call Complaints & LT/HBT line Breakdowns for restoration of Electrical Power Supply in Various Sub Divisions under CE/DS North Zone, Jalandhar. For detailed NIT & tender specification, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 30.06.2021 (05:00 PM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. C-253/21 RO : 76155/12/338/2021/5676

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Hero MotoCorp celebrates the 72nd birth anniversary of

**SHORT TAKES**  
**PIL CHALLENGING AP DEVELOPMENT CORP ACT FILED IN HC**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

A petition was filed in the High Court challenging the AP Development Corporation Act, 2020.

Visakhapatnam East MLA from Telugu Desam Velagapudi Ramkrishna Babu filed the public interest litigation in the AP High Court through his lawyer Y. Balaji.

The petitioner's contention was that mortgaging government assets in Visakhapatnam was unconstitutional and said that though the government's income was to be deposited in Consolidated Fund of the state as per articles 266 and 204 of Indian Constitution, sources of income like taxes, excise revenue and others were being diverted to the AP Development Corporation instead of depositing them in Consolidated Fund of the state.

**HC: SUBMIT DETAILS ON BRAHMAMGARI MATAM HEAD**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

Kadapa-based Brahmamgari Matam late pontiff Veerabhoga Vasanta Venkateswara Swamy's second wife Maruti Mahalakshmi moved the AP High Court claiming that her son Govinda Swamy should be declared as legal successor to the matam.

Mahalakshmi filed the petition on behalf of her son, asking the High Court to issue directions to set aside proceedings issued by the endowments special commissioner handing over management of the matam to the assistant commissioner.

Petitioner's counsel submitted that as per will of Mahalakshmi's late husband and also traditions of the matam, her elder son should be made as the legal successor of the matam and said that as her son was a minor, she should be made as head of the matam until her son became a major.

The petitioner's counsel argued that the state government was not having any authority to appoint a special officer to the matam as only Dharmika Parishad was empowered to take any decisions pertaining to management of the matam.

The court asked the state government whether matam's Dharmika Parishad permitted selection of matam's head and directed it to file an affidavit with all details and posted the next hearing to July 5.

**AP TO SUPPLY RICE TO 59L NON-NFSA RICE CARD HOLDERS**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

The Andhra Pradesh government to bear additional cost of ₹2,100 crore to distribute rice free of cost to 59 lakh non-NFSA rice card holders who are not being covered under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana-III and IV under National Food Security Act, 2013. The state government to supply sortex rice under public distribution system from July onwards and will also supply non-sortex rice under PMGKAY through Food Corporation of India.

However, following variation in quality of both sortex and non-sortex rice, the state government intends to distribute sortex rice from July to November in two phases every month from then on first day through mobile vehicles along with sugar and toor dal.

**AP'S FIRST SMART POLICING SYSTEM OPENED IN VIZAG**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 1

Visakhapatnam district superintendent of police B. Krishna Rao inaugurated E-Malkhana, a first of its kind smart-policing project in the state at Narsipatnam town model police station on Thursday.

The Narsipatnam additional SP Tuhin Sinha initiated a project for smooth interactive and easy to use by everyone. The digitalisation of all the case properties in the coding package and arrange in order in proper shelves.

After digitalisation, it would be easy to retrieve the case property and would also save valuable time and synchronisation of functioning of e-Malkhana in all police stations of the district, the SP said.

**DOCTORS' DAY**

# Jagan wants PM to restrain TS from "illegal" drawal of water

**CM alleges Telangana state taking water without release orders from KRMB**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 1

Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union minister for Jal-shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekawat, seeking a central notification on the jurisdiction of KRMB and a direction to Telangana to stop "illegal drawal" of water for power generation. The Chief Minister alleged that Telangana was doing this "without water release orders from KRMB".

Jagan also sought central control of all off-takes of common reservoirs with CISF protection and safeguarding of the interests of AP.

The CM said the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) that came into existence as per Section 85 of Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, is responsible for the administration, regulation, maintenance and operation of such projects as may be notified by the central government from time to time.

According to the water sharing pact, AP and Telangana agreed to share 81tmc of water allocated to the erstwhile state of AP by KWDT-1 at 75 per cent dependability, in the ratio of 512tmc and 299tmc respectively. The states of AP and Telangana are sharing water in the ratio of 66:34 on ad hoc basis by deducting minor irrigation utilizations, evaporation losses and Godavari diversions. The decision taken by KRMB shall be implemented as per the inflows observed into the reservoirs, available storage and pro-rata entitlements from time to time.

Jagan said, "Unauthorised actions of Telangana are putting AP into tremendous disadvantage. Srisailam Reservoir having a gross storage capacity of 215.8tmc at FRL +885 ft and +834 ft is the Minimum Draw Down Level (MDDL) for power generation and +854ft is the MDDL for irrigation. Our concern is that the Telangana government is drawing water from three projects - Srisailam, Nagarjunasagar and Pulichintala - for power generation and a huge amount of water is getting drained into the sea. At present, water level at Nagarjunasagar dam is 534 ft with storage of 174.05 tmc ft of water in the reservoir against the dead storage of 131.66 tmc ft of water. If there is any forecast of floods to the Krishna resulting in huge inflow of water, the

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Guntur Rural SP Vishal Gunn takes stock of the situation as both officials from irrigation departments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana reach Nagarjunasagar on Thursday. — TEJO ROY ELETI

## TS officials refuse to meet AP counterparts

From page 1

Nagarjunasagar right main canal superintendent engineer Ch. Purushottama Ganga Raju said, "When we were stopped by the Telangana police as we were proceeding to meet TS Genco CE and irrigation SE near the Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, I requested TS Genco CE to allow us to meet him to submit a representation and also explain how AP's interests will be affected due to drawing of water by TS at three projects for power generation. The official refused to meet me and instead asked me to send messages on social media platforms. So was the case with irrigation SE from TS as he also refused to meet me and asked for sending messages when I spoke to them over phone. I have informed our senior officials on the issue."

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"Under Nagarjunasagar RMC, there is nearly 12 lakh acres of command area located in parts of Krishna, Guntur and Prakasam districts and farmers are getting ready to raise paddy, chillies, cotton and other crops for the ensuing kharif season. People living in parts of these three districts also get drinking water from RMC. If the TS government drains out water, the

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## SHORT TAKES

## MP MINISTER FALLS FROM DAIS DURING EVENT

DC CORRESPONDENT

BHOJAL, JULY 1

Madhya Pradesh energy minister Pradyumna Singh Tomar on Thursday fell from the dais during a programme in Gwalior in MP and twisted his ankle.

The incident happened when the minister was going to address the function organised on the occasion of inauguration of National Horticulture Board's office in Gwalior.

He accidentally hit a flower base kept on the dais and fell down, police said.

He was in a state of shock for some time following the incident. He, however, recovered and was rushed to the local government hospital.

He twisted his ankle, but his condition was normal, doctors said.

Gwalior district superintendent of police Amit Sanghi said the minister underwent a check-up in the hospital and was normal now.

The minister left for Bhopal to attend an important meeting after he was discharged from the hospital, police said.

## HC: JOURNALISTS NOT EXPECTED TO DRAMATISE NEWS

Lucknow, July 1: The Allahabad High Court has rejected the bail plea of a reporter accused of abetting a suicide, saying a journalist is not expected to dramatise sensational incidents and create news by putting a person's life in danger.

A Lucknow bench of Justice Vikas Kunvar Srivastav made the observation while rejecting the plea of city journalist Shamim Ahmad, co-accused of abetting a man's suicide and filming it outside the Uttar Pradesh assembly complex last year.

In an order, the judge said, "A journalist is not expected to dramatise a sensational and horrifying incident and make news by putting his actor in pitiable condition and in danger of death."

The journalist keeps an eye on anticipated or sudden events happening in society and brings them to the information of all people through various news media without any tampering. This is his business, the judge observed on June 21. The order in the case was uploaded on the court's website on Thursday.

Journalists Shamim and co-accused Naushad Ahmad had allegedly contacted a man who was facing eviction from his house and induced him to set himself ablaze in front of the state assembly so that they could film the incident and telecast it on television as it could save him from being thrown out of the premises where he was staying.

## ACB RAIDS SR. IPS OFFICER'S PROPERTIES

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC

Raipur, July 1: The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) of Chhattisgarh police on Thursday conducted raids on at least ten premises linked to ADG-rank IPS officer G.P. Singh in the state.

This was the first time an IPS officer was raided by the anti-graft wing of Chhattisgarh police for allegedly amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

Incidentally, the 1994 batch IPS officer headed the ACB and the Economic Offences Wing of Chhattisgarh police a year ago before being shifted as director of state police academy in June last year.

Sources in the ACB said the raids were conducted following complaints that the police officer had amassed disproportionate assets at several places and also unaccounted money.

"The raids started simultaneously at ten places at around six in the morning. The raids are still continuing", sources said. The IPS officer had served as inspector general of police in Raipur, Bilaspur and Durg, considered coveted postings for an IPS officer in Chhattisgarh.

Ten teams of ACB conducted raids in different premises linked to the cop.

Sources said his computer system was seized on suspicion of his alleged involvement in recording the phones of some influential people.

Sources said the ACB sleuths were looking into complaints that the IPS officer has made investments in the mining sector.

## NIA COURT ACQUITS AKHIL GOGOI, OTHERS IN SEDITION CASE

MANOJ ANAND | DC

GUWAHATI, JULY 1

In what led to release of noted RTI activist turned MLA Akhil Gogoi languishing in judicial custody for the last 18 months, the NIA court on Thursday acquitted him and three others in a sedition case along with other charges.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday had filed an additional chargesheet against Gogoi who has been booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, (UAPA) for his alleged role in violent anti-CAA protests and possible links with the Maoist elements.

The NIA court judge, however, in its judgment observed that it is necessary for the NIA to note that the ambit of sedition does not get stretched beyond permissible limits.

The 120-page judgment of the NIA judge Pranjal Das had some observations on sedition too.

Under the sub-title 'Some General Observations' the court stated, "Though the law of sedition continues in our statute book, its colony (colonial) legacy cannot be overlooked."

He made reference to a 1950 case, Tara Singh v/s State where it was stated, "India is now a sovereign democratic State. Governments may go and be caused to go without the foundations of the State being impaired. A law of sedition thought necessary during a period of foreign rule has become inappropriate by the very nature of the change which has come about."

He also observed, "Nevertheless, as long as it remains on the statute book in the present form, for enforcing the law on sedition, it is desirable for the investigating authorities to be continually trained to conform to the parameters of the law of sedition laid down by the Supreme Court."

Gogoi, newly elected from the Sivasagar constituency, had been in jail for the last 18 months. More than 12 cases were slapped on him by Assam police following protests led by Gogoi and his organisation, the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, against the Citizenship Amendment Act in 2019.

Two of these cases were taken over by the NIA which accused him of having 'Maoist' links and being involved in 'seditionist activities'.

Gogoi who was released from judicial custody, soon after the order of the court on Thursday said that the judgement of the NIA court has reaffirmed public faith in the judiciary.

It remains to be seen whether or not the BJP's another ally from Bihar — LJP, which is witnessing heavy infighting — finds representation in the Modi government.

Speculation is rife that a couple of BJP ministers could be sent back to the organisation. Ever since the second wave of Covid-19 started ebbing, a series of physical meetings have taken place between the PM, senior Cabinet minis-



Doctors celebrate National Doctors Day at Masina Hospital in Mumbai on Thursday.

## KTAKA TO BUILD MEMORIAL FOR COVID WARRIORS

Bengaluru, July 1: A first-of-its-kind grand Covid Warrior Memorial in honour of doctors and paramedical staff who 'martyred' themselves in the fight against Coronavirus would be built in Bengaluru, Karnataka health minister Dr. K. Sudhakar said on Thursday.

"We will build a memorial to pay homage to those doctors who laid down their lives due to Covid while rendering their services on our Arogya Soudha premises. I believe this is the first memorial in the country," Sudhakar said during a function to celebrate National Doctors' Day.

The minister said his department has decided to build it in a unique way in memory of doctors and paramedics, which will be on par with the War Memorial in New Delhi where anyone can go and pay their respects.

The memorial will be a place where everyone can come and pay tribute, he added.

## IIT-M PROFESSOR ALLEGES CASTE DISCRIMINATION

O.P. ARULN | DC

CHENNAI, JULY 1

An accomplished faculty member in the country's premier Indian Institute of Technology-Madras cited caste discrimination in the Department of Humanities and Social Science at the institute. A letter sent by him to his faculty members went viral in the social media and kicked up a storm.

In the letter, Assistant Professor Vipin P. Veetil stated that "One of the primary reasons for my leaving the IIT-M is the caste discrimination I have faced at Department of Humanities and Social Science since joining in March 2019".

The discrimination came from individuals in position of power irrespective of their claimed political affiliations and gender. There were multiple specific instances of discrimination and I shall be pursuing appropriate actions to address the matter."

One of the curious phenomena I have observed at the Institute is that the Bayesian prior among many is that caste-discrimination is a rare occurrence. However, my own experience, and conversations with members of SC and OBC communities, suggests that the Bayesian prior is far from true".

Suggesting to set up a committee to study the experiences of the SC and OBC faculty members he said that such a committee should have members of the SC/ ST Commission, OBC Commission, and psychologists. "Furthermore, I do believe people who face the discrimination may benefit by filing complaints with the grievance committee at the Institute and with courts. Societies progress one small step at a time, or do they?", He wrote while saying that he is leaving for another institution.

Normal rainfall is most likely to be experienced over parts of central India and adjacent areas of peninsular India and Gangetic plains, it said.

IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said rainfall is not expected to be good in the first week of July and the precipitation activity is likely to pick up in the second half of the second week of the month.

— PTI

## Modi urges IMA to undertake studies on benefits of Yoga

Prime Minister hails contribution of doctors in saving lives from Corona

New Delhi, July 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday hailed the contribution of doctors in saving lives from Corona

commended the medical fraternity for spreading awareness about its helpful role in dealing with post-Covid complications.

The Prime Minister said work for its propagation that should have been done in the last century is being done now.

He also suggested that studies on yoga could be published in international journals.

Noting that there is not much documentation available about the last century's pandemic, he urged doctors to undertake research and studies in their dealing with Covid and its various aspects, including benefits of vaccines, early diagnosis and various treatments.

Highlighting "limitations" of the medical infrastructure that was created in the country over several decades and

how it was neglected in earlier times, he added, "In our country, population pressure makes this challenge even more difficult. But despite this, India's per lakh population rate of infection and death rate has still been manageable compared with more developed countries."

"Losing the life of even one person is very saddening but India has also saved the lives of lakhs of its people from coronavirus. A big credit for it goes to our hard working doctors, healthcare workers and front line workers," he said.

Noting that the virus is new and is mutating, the prime minister said India's doctors, with their knowledge and experience, are fighting the challenges posed by the virus.

"Our government has given maximum priority

to healthcare. Last year, during the 1st wave, we had allotted ₹15,000 crore to improve our health infrastructure. This year, allocation of budget for healthcare is over ₹2 lakh crore," he said.

Till 2014, where there were only six AIIMS in the country, work on 15 new AIIMS has already started in the last seven years, he pointed out.

The number of medical colleges has also increased by about one and a half times, he said.

Now the government has come up with a Credit Guarantee Scheme of ₹50,000 crore to strengthen the health infrastructure in such areas where there is a lack of health facilities, he said.

Modi also paid tributes to doctors who lost their lives while combating the Covid pandemic and expressed condolences to their families.

Doctors' Day is observed in the honour of noted doctor and former West Bengal chief minister Bidhan Chandra Roy, whose birth and death anniversaries fall on July 1.

## JD(U), AIADMK too may join Modi team

From Page 1

The BJP's ally JD(U) could also see two of its leaders in Team Modi while the AIADMK could also see a representation in the Modi government.

Gogoi who was released from judicial custody, soon after the order of the court on Thursday said that the judgement of the NIA court has reaffirmed public faith in the judiciary.

It remains to be seen whether or not the BJP's another ally from Bihar — LJP, which is witnessing heavy infighting — finds representation in the Modi government.

Speculation is rife that a couple of BJP ministers could be sent back to the organisation. Ever since the second wave of Covid-19 started ebbing, a series of physical meetings have taken place between the PM, senior Cabinet minis-

ters and BJP president J.P. Nadda, giving rise to speculations of a rejig in the Modi government.

Parliament's Monsoon session is likely to begin from the third week of this month and the expectation is that the Cabinet reshuffle could take place before that.

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Normal rainfall is most likely to be experienced over parts of central India and adjacent areas of peninsular India and Gangetic plains, it said.

The IMD has also cautioned that the break in the monsoon could impact agricultural operations like sowing and transplantation of crops, irrigation scheduling, power requirement.

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# DECCAN Chronicle

2 JULY 2021

## SC nudge on Covid ex gratia exposes govt sloth, red tape

The Supreme Court's directives to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to frame guidelines for paying ex gratia compensation to victims of Covid-19 and to the governments to simplify the process of certification of deaths due to the pandemic have come as a big relief for a large number of people. The directives also expose the sloth that has become part of the character of the government even in the face of a national crisis and the love for red tape while dealing with the lives of worst-affected people in a given point of time.

The court's decision has come against the government's position that it did have the money but its focus is on providing food, medical care, oxygen, vaccination and on supporting the economy and not to pay compensation to the kin of four lakh odd people who have lost their lives due to the pandemic. The court, however, did not buy the argument and told the government that the relevant section of the National Disaster Management Act, 2005, says that the NDMA shall recommend guidelines for the minimum standards of relief to be provided to persons affected by disaster, which shall include ex gratia assistance on account of loss of life. The government cannot run away from its responsibility, the court reminded it.

The government's argument not only sounded specious but also revealed its disdain for the legal responsibilities when it comes to bringing succour to the most vulnerable sections of people during a national disaster. The government conveniently forgot the fact that it had invoked the appropriate sections of the Act while dealing with the pandemic but

chose to ignore those that talked of compensation. The court refused to accept the government interpretation of the law dealing with compensation as "recommendatory"; it is instead mandatory and statutory, the court said.

The judges who chastised the NDMA, the statutory body headed by the Prime Minister and vested with the power and responsibility to form a national strategy to face disasters, saying it failed to perform its duty but refrained from fixing the quantum of the compensation and instead left it to the wisdom of the executive. The court, in fact, limited itself to interpreting the law and reminding the government of its duty; it did not transgress the boundaries that separate the two branches of government.

The court's direction to streamline the process of certifying Covid deaths has not come a day earlier. Several state governments have been following a pattern that did not count a death as a Covid death if it comes after the victim tested negative for the virus. This is in fact not in conformity with the international practice and has two inimical impacts. One is that several deaths, which had indeed been caused by the virus, would not be counted, resulting in the denial of compensation to the relatives. The second is that it would deny the decision-makers the advantage of reliable and accurate data to analyse and take decisions on the ways to resist the pandemic. A simplified and transparent death certification process would hopefully reverse the practice.

## Fuel price paradox

A minister remarked facetiously in relation to rising fuel prices that cycling is good for health. The middle and lower classes may wish to send him by bullock cart to a school of economics so that he may understand what damage high fuel taxes can inflict on the economy that is just about to emerge from the depths of a Covid-hit slump. While petrol is selling at above ₹100 a litre and diesel is inching to those heights in multiple regions, the price of cooking gas is hitting the roof too, raised as it was by ₹25 per cylinder on Thursday.

The cascading effect of the fuel price rise is reflected in price escalation in goods as milk to cement prices spiral and services. The effect was visible in retail inflation ruling at six per cent, which helps explain somewhat the sharp rise in cost of living. For governments, at the Centre and in the states, fuel is a weapon to raise revenues at a time of a sluggish economy as lockdowns are technically still in force in many parts of India. In the last 12 months, the government's take from fuel tax was a phenomenal ₹5.6 lakh crores, with the Centre taking a lion's share as most recent increases were in the form of cess and surcharge among many other levies.

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A study showed how the Centre could easily cut fuel price by ₹4 to ₹5 per litre and not suffer a dip in revenues as demand would climb when the economy takes off again with post-Covid consumption. However, low hanging fruits like liquor and fuel sales, with very few hazards for the treasury to mop up the money,

are too tempting. Paradoxically, India raised taxes on fuel, of which it imports about ₹8 lakh crore worth annually, when international prices were hitting the bottom at \$30 per barrel last year but are now ruling at \$70. Consumption is being taxed whereas corporate taxes have been reduced. This is not an economic riddle so much as a disaster in waiting that will put our economic recovery in jeopardy.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER

Editor

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax: 040-27805256  
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284; Telefax: 0866-2555234  
Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-2552333; Fax: 0891-2552334  
Rajahmundry: Venagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208  
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904  
Kurnool: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433  
Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Buranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580  
Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-2254747/ 48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325  
Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Rammagai, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255  
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K. SUDHAKAR  
Printer & Publisher

Zahid Hussain

## Civil war looms: Taliban to take Afghans back to mess of 1990s

With the revival of armed regional militias to stop the Afghan Taliban offensive, Afghanistan is edging towards a new civil war. Headed by old mujahideen warlords, these armed bands are fighting along the Afghan government forces in some areas, but in many cases they are defending their own regional fiefdoms.

It appears that we are returning to the 1990s following the downfall of the Najibullah government when several mujahideen groups fought each other, plunging Afghanistan into a devastating civil war and killing thousands of Afghans. Those events saw the rise of the Taliban movement, which swept away warlord rule and established the so-called Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. But the warlords returned to power after the American invasion. The withdrawal of the foreign forces and the looming threat of a Taliban takeover compelled them to raise their

own forces. They don't seem to have much faith in government security forces to protect them. Some three decades later, the same former mujahideen commanders are again arrayed against their old nemesis.

Most prominent among them are Abdul Rashid Dostum, Ismail Khan and Ata Muhammad — the same old faces that symbolise four decades of conflict in Afghanistan. The Taliban offensive in northern Afghanistan in recent weeks has been a major reason behind the revival of the militias representing different ethnic groups, particularly the Tajik and Uzbeks.

Over the past weeks, the insurgents have achieved some spectacular successes in the region that has never been considered their stronghold. The Taliban are generally seen as a Pashtun-dominated movement, with eastern and southern Afghanistan as their main support base. The Taliban have overrun many

northern districts and have besieged some major towns. They now control major roads leading to Mazar-i-Sharif. In many areas, Afghan government soldiers have abandoned their posts without any fight. In some cases, the soldiers have joined the insurgents. The Taliban now control the main border crossing with Tajikistan, a main trade route. While these militia movements have helped reinforce the government forces fighting the Taliban in many northern districts, they have also strengthened the warlord fiefdoms, thus weakening the authority of the government in Kabul.

Some analysts, however, contend that these militias may eventually serve as the last line of defence, with the security forces unable to counter the Taliban onslaught. But there is also the question of whether these ragtag armed groups can stand their ground against a more committed enemy. The Taliban's success in the north

has not come as a surprise. While consolidating their military and diplomatic gains, the Taliban have also sought to secure the support of communities it had fought in the past in order to present themselves as a national movement. The Taliban had traditionally relied on ethnic Pashtuns, but made a clear shift to recruit members of other ethnic groups with a view to expanding their area of influence.

Over the years, the insurgent group made significant inroads into the non-Pashtun belt in northern Afghanistan and inducted several Tajik and Uzbek commanders in its ranks, giving them more operational autonomy. The non-Pashtuns assumed important positions in the Taliban leadership and held key posts in the provinces.

The changing ethnic profile of the group was evident in the fact that non-Pashtuns now constituted a quarter of the Taliban leadership council and its various commissions. Members of eth-

nic minorities were also handed out senior positions as provincial and district shadow governors and zonal commanders. By inducting Shia Hazaras, the Taliban wanted to make themselves more acceptable by presenting themselves as a multiethnic, multi-sect force. As an example, the Taliban appointed a Shia ethnic Hazara as its shadow district chief before the intra-Afghan peace talks. The hard-line Sunni Taliban had been previously blamed for persecuting the minority group during its stint in power. The Hazaras largely inhabit the central Afghan provinces.

The Taliban also leveraged the peace deal with the US to their advantage in order to woo regional ethnic groups. With the withdrawal of US forces, joining the Taliban had once again become a serious option for many people and groups in Afghanistan.

By arrangement with Dawn

Subhani



## Covid's impact, WFH has hit India's women harder

Patralekha Chatterjee  
Dev 360

**W**hat does being a homemaker and a mother really mean for the vast majority of Indian women? In an essay in *The Atlantic* last year, Helen Lewis, journalist and author of *Difficult Women: A History of Feminism in 11 Fights*, pointed out some home truths which resonate with millions of women across the world. "When people try to be cheerful about social distancing and working from home, noting that William Shakespeare and Isaac Newton did some of their best work while England was ravaged by the plague, there is an obvious response: Neither of them had child-care responsibilities."

Everyone, including Bollywood, pays tribute to motherhood. Think of Shashi Kapoor's iconic line from that 1975 blockbuster *Deewar* — "Mere paas Ma Hain". A noble sentiment. But pedestalising mothers can lead to motherhood being rarely unpacked in terms of the extra hours of unpaid work in the popular discourse.

Women's unpaid care work has emerged as a big issue among progressive economists in recent years.

But millions of women in India, as in many other countries, are still socialised into accepting the notion that it is "natural" for women to be tasked with unpaid domestic work. And they should not complain.

But when we talk about women's "natural" role in the context of unpaid work, what is traded off, and at what cost?

In India, the situation is particularly stark as a new analysis from the Centre for Global Development reconfirms. The Global Childcare Workload from School and Preschool Closures During the Covid-19 Pandemic, by Charles Kenny and George Yang of the US-based think tank, estimates that women aged six years and above, around the world each provided as much as an additional 173 hours in childcare for free during the pandemic. This is about three times more than men (59 hours). The figures from India are even more extreme.

According to the study, which draws on published data from multiple sources including Unesco and OECD, the estimated additional unpaid childcare burden per woman because of pandemic-related care burdens between January and October 2020 in India was 360 hours. The corresponding figure for men was 33 hours. The unpaid childcare burden per woman in India in a "normal" year is estimated to be 2,380 hours.

None of this should

come as a huge surprise to anyone in India not totally removed from ground realities.

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The first-of-its-kind pan-India time use survey (TUS), released by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation last year, tossed up some telling data. The survey, that covered 4.5 lakh persons aged six years and above, across 1.4 lakh households in India, offers valuable information about the activities performed by every individual and the time spent in each of these activities during January-December 2019. The respondents were asked to recall what they did during the last 24 hours of the day of the survey.

Unsurprisingly, Indian men were found to have spent a lot more time in remunerated work. Their participation in paid employment was found to be around 57.3 per cent, compared to women, whose participation rate was only 18.4 per cent.

However, when it came to unpaid work such as cooking, cleaning or unpaid caregiving, looking

after children or adults, women were way ahead. Every day, women spent nearly five hours in unpaid domestic work; for men, the corresponding figure was one hour and 37 minutes.

Sona Mitra, a feminist economist, associated with the Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE), has drawn attention to related troubling issues in her public presentations: according to OECD (2014) data, women in India spent an average of 5.6 hours a day in unpaid work, compared to 52 minutes a day for men (same source); ILO 2018 shows on an average women in India spent 297 minutes per day on unpaid care work, as against 31 minutes by men (in paid work, women spend only 160 minutes, compared to 360 minutes by men).

Ms Mitra points out the multiple implications of unpaid care work for women — it means increased stress and less time for many other things which women may want to do; it means reduced income earning potential, missed opportunities for upgrading skills, education, socialisation, and also leisure and entertainment.

Most important, it means entrenching the sexual division of labour, furthering gender inequalities and creating an intergenerational cycle of "unpaid work" for girls and women. The bottomline — it leaves women with fewer options and choices in life, with all attendant consequences.

While working from home may open up more opportunities for a small section of middle class and upper middle class women, for millions of others, including large numbers of not-so-poor women, the closure of schools and childcare

This must change, so that not only Indian women, but India realises its true potential. We must have an honest discussion about what being a mother and homemaker really mean in the India of 2021.

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com

## LETTERS

### TRACTOR SCHEME

As most of our state population is dependent on agriculture, the state government is providing so many sops to farmers. It is highly appreciable that the government purchased nearly 16,000 tractors for each village to plough for free as small farmers end up paying approximately ₹1,000 every single time to private persons. Farmer need to plough a minimum of four times a year. If this scheme starts, the government can provide employment to 16,000 drivers.

K. Murali Mohan  
Visakhapatnam

### COVAXIN DEAL

Ever since Covaxin got emergency use authorisation before completing the mandatory three phase testing, it has attracted controversy within the country and abroad (*Brazil suspends Covaxin deal, DC, July 1*). Yet a lot of people all over the country are administered this vaccine without any significant side effects. However, by suspending the deal, Brazil did the right thing under the circumstances. The probe should throw light on all aspects of the deal and either prove or disprove the allegations.

Govardhana Myneedu  
Vijayawada

### WATER DISPUTE

It is disconcerting and unsettling to read the water dispute between Telangana state and Andhra Pradesh. Water issues have always been sensitive and give rise to strong emotions. Instead of resorting to blame games, the Chief Ministers or their representatives must sit together and make an earnest effort to resolve the issue amicably. Putting the ball in Centre's court will lead to rigmarole and zilch.

Dr C. Ghanshyam  
Visakhapatnam

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle  
China can make 40 N-bombs

NEW DELHI, JULY 1. China is now capable of producing about 40 nuclear bombs of 20 kilo ton capacity annually, according to "an estimate" the Defence Ministry said today in its annual report for 1970-71.

The report did not disclose the origin of the estimate.

It said China may now have stockpiled about 150 nuclear bombs and a small number of thermo-nuclear bombs.

nic minorities were also handed out senior positions as provincial and district shadow governors and zonal commanders. By inducting Shia Hazaras, the Taliban wanted to make themselves more acceptable by presenting themselves as a multiethnic, multi-sect force. As an example, the Taliban appointed a Shia ethnic Hazara as its shadow district chief before the intra-Afghan peace talks. The hard-line Sunni Taliban had been previously blamed for persecuting the minority group during its stint in power. The Hazaras largely inhabit the central Afghan provinces.

The Taliban also leveraged the peace deal with the US to their advantage in order to woo regional ethnic groups. With the withdrawal of US forces, joining the Taliban had once again become a serious option for many people and groups in Afghanistan.

By arrangement with Dawn

**SHORT TAKES**  
**BILL COSBY  
RELEASED FROM PRISON**

New York, June 30: US comedian Bill Cosby was freed from prison Wednesday, in a blow to the #MeToo movement after a US court overturned his conviction for drugging and sexually assaulting a woman 17 years ago. The 83-year-old flashed the V sign outside his home near Philadelphia after leaving jail following a Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling that he had been denied a fair trial. He did not answer reporters' questions. Cosby, who shattered racial barriers with his Emmy-winning role on "I Spy" in the 1960s, was convicted in 2018 of assaulting Andrea Constand at his Philadelphia mansion in 2004.

But the judges wrote in a 79-page decision that a non-prosecution agreement between a former district attorney and Cosby over evidence he gave in a civil case meant the actor should not have been charged.

"Cosby's convictions and judgment of sentence are vacated, and he is discharged," they wrote. Cosby left SCI Phoenix, a state jail 35 miles northwest of Philadelphia, just before 2:30 pm (1830 GMT).

**F-16 COLLIDES WITH BUILDING AT DUTCH AIR BASE**

The Hague, July 1: A Belgian F-16 fighter jet collided with a building at a Dutch airbase Thursday morning as it prepared to take off, injuring two people, Dutch and Belgian authorities said.

Belgium's defence ministry said in a statement that the incident happened at the start of an F-16 mission and the pilot had to use his ejection seat.

There was no fire or explosion following the incident at Leeuwarden military airbase, the Dutch air force said.

The air force said the cause of the incident was unclear and was being investigated.

Further details were not immediately available.

**PAK INDUCTS CHINA-MADE VT-4 BATTLE TANKS**

Islamabad, July 1: The Pakistan Army has formally inducted the first batch of the China-made VT-4 battle tanks into its armoury. Produced by Chinese state-owned armoured vehicle manufacturer, Norinco, the delivery of VT-4 tanks from the manufacturer began in April last year. Pakistan is the third country to have bought these tanks from China after Thailand and Nigeria.

The Army's media affairs wing in a statement said that Commander Mangla Corps, Lieutenant General Shaheen Mahmood, on Wednesday visited the Armoured Division and inspected the first batch of VT-4 tanks. Major General Rashid Mahmood briefed the commander about ongoing post shipment inspections of the first batch of tanks.

**DEADLY HEAT WAVE SLAMS CANADA, U.S.**

Vancouver, July 1: Millions of people in western Canada and the northwestern United States were under heat alerts Wednesday as the region baked in record-breaking temperatures and police reported scores of deaths likely linked to the scorching conditions.

The heat wave has stretched emergency services, with at least 134 people dying suddenly since Friday in the Vancouver area and hundreds more across British Columbia, according to Canadian police and the local coroner. "The temperatures recorded this week are unprecedented — lives have been lost and the risk of wildfires is at a dangerously high level," said Canadian PM Justin Trudeau.

**TRUMP'S CFO SURRENDERS TO FACE CHARGES**

New York, July 1: The chief financial officer of Donald Trump's company surrendered Thursday to New York authorities planning to indict him, possibly with tax-related offences, US media reported.

The indictment of Allen Weisselberg, Trump's long serving and loyal CFO, has been expected for days as part of an almost three-year investigation by the Manhattan district attorney into alleged fraud at the Trump Organisation. Weisselberg, 73, could be charged with evasion of taxes on fringe benefits, according to sources quoted by The New York Times and Wall Street Journal.

The district attorney's office did not immediately confirm these reports.

# No foreign force can bully China: Xi

Ruling Communist Party celebrates centenary with show of strength at Tiananmen Square

Beijing, July 1: Any "foreign force" trying to "bully" China will encounter a "great wall of steel" erected by over 1.4 billion Chinese people and its powerful military, President Xi Jinping warned on Thursday, as the ruling Communist Party celebrated its centenary with a massive show of strength at the historic Tiananmen Square here.

In his keynote address at a highly-choreographed ceremony from the balcony of Tiananmen Gate, which also adorns a giant size photo of 'Chairman' Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China, Xi also underlined that the "reunification" of Taiwan with the Chinese mainland is a "historic mission" and an "unshakable commitment" of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Xi, who is also the General Secretary of the CPC and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, warned that any foreign force will be allowed to bully China, an apparent reference to the US. China has repeatedly accused the US of trying to curb its "peaceful rise", amidst concern in the neighbourhood about the growing assertiveness of the Chinese military in the strategic Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere.

Both former US president Donald Trump and his successor Joe Biden have pursued a hardline policy towards China, targeting it on several fronts including trade, human

rights and the origins of the Covid-19, which first emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan before becoming a pandemic. "We Chinese are a people who uphold justice and are not intimidated by threats of force. We have never bullied, oppressed, or subjugated the people of any other country, and we never will," Xi said.

"By the same token, we will never allow any foreign force to bully, oppress, or subjugate us," the 68-year old leader said. "Anyone who would attempt to do so will find themselves on a collision course with a great wall of steel forged by over 1.4 billion Chinese people," he said.

Over 70,000 carefully vetted party workers and schoolchildren who took part in the event cheered Xi's over an hour-long speech which was telecast live. About 71 aircraft participated in the flypast.

— PTI



Balloons fly during the celebration marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China in Beijing on Thursday. — AFP

# Delta shadow over EU Covid travel pass

## Double Covid jab seems to control Delta variant: EMA

## Study: Viral load less in re-infected

## TREATMENT FOR BLOOD CLOTS DUE TO VAX FOUND

Gholamhosseini Mohseni Ejehi

**IRAN GETS NEW HARD-LINE JUDICIARY CHIEF**

Dubai, July 1: Iran's supreme leader on Thursday appointed a hard-line cleric sanctioned by the West as the country's new judiciary chief, state media reported, replacing the president-elect who previously held the powerful post.

The new chief, Gholamhosseini Mohseni Ejehi, 64, takes the reins from Ebrahim Raisi, who will ascend to the country's highest civilian position after his election victory earlier this month.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the final say on all state matters in Iran, announced Ejehi's appointment, urging him to advocate for justice and fight corruption. In a decree, he praised Ejehi's valuable experience, shining records and legal competence.

Ejehi takes over a judiciary widely criticised by international rights groups for being one of the world's top executioners, as well as conducting closed-door trials of dual nationals and individuals with Western ties.

Raisi, the previous judiciary chief and a protege of Khamenei, was sanctioned by the US in part over his involvement in the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988, as well as over his tenure at the judiciary.

Thursday's announcement was widely expected as Ejehi, considered close to Khamenei, had served as deputy judiciary chief after a long history in the branch, including as prosecutor general. In that post, he pushed to further limit access to the internet and popular social media apps, sparking worries among his opponents over the rise of social oppression.

From 2005-2009, during the first term of hard-line populist former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Ejehi served as intelligence minister, following decades of deep involvement in the services dating back to his role as head of the ministry's recruiting office in the 1980s.

The conservative cleric landed on the US Treasury Department and European Union sanctions lists over allegations of severe human rights abuses.

That vote, considered rigged by the reformist opposition, sparked massive Green Movement protests and a sweeping crackdown in which thousands of people were detained and dozens killed.

— AP

The grassroots petition campaign fuelled by anger over surging housing costs submitted 183,711 valid signatures, "more than the total required" of around 172,000 to put the question to a general ballot, the Be-

The EU document — essentially a QR code available on smartphones or on paper — shows whether the bearer is vaccinated with one of the EU's approved jabs (from BioNTech/Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson), or whether they have recovered from an infection or recently tested negative.

The EU law, the certificate is meant to do away with the need for quarantines or further testing when travelling between the EU's 27 countries or four associated European nations (Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein). All EU member states were connected to the digital certificate system on Thursday except Ireland, which was hit by a cyber-attack targeting its health service in May and plans to have it operational on July 19.

But a surge in the Delta variant, first detected in India and now quickly gaining ground elsewhere, could trigger an "emergency brake" provision suspending the certificate's acceptance.

Already Germany has a ban on incoming travellers from Portugal, where the Delta variant has become dominant. Only its own citizens or residents are allowed in from Portugal, and they must quarantine for two weeks upon arrival. Berlin's decision has raised Brussels' ire, with EU Justice Commissioner Didier Reynders saying on Wednesday that "we should avoid travel bans" within the EU and stressing that Germany should have consulted with its partners first.

The starting rise in Delta cases in former EU member Britain, with a rolling two-week infection rate more than seven times that of the bloc, is generating deep concern on the continent.

This week, Portugal, Spain and Malta all abruptly increased restrictions for travellers from the UK, although the three said they would accept fully vaccinated Britons.

The World Health Organisation added to the une-

**RIGHT NOW** it seems the four vaccines approved in the European Union are protecting against all the strains circulating in Europe, including the Delta variant," he said.

MARCO CAVALIERI, Head, European Medicines Agency

are of concerns caused by the rapid spread of the Delta variant."

— DIDIER REYNDERS EU Justice Commissioner

ase by warning Thursday that Covid case numbers in Europe were on the rise once again, up 10 percent after two months of decline, because of a loosening of social restrictions and increased travel.

The darkening context could limit the effects of the EU certificate.

"There is no doubt that the tourist industry could do with a boost in time for the summer season," economic research consultancy Capital Economics said in a note.

But it forecast the EU certificate "will have very little impact on European tourism this year", observing that "most adults are not fully vaccinated and the Delta variant is making people and governments more cautious".

Airlines grouped together in an umbrella lobby group, A4E, have expressed worries that an "inconsistent approach" among EU countries in vetting the EU Covid certificate could create lengthy lines in airports with the potential to "create new health hazards". They called for the certificates to be checked online before travellers even arrived at the airport. There were scenes of problems at Brussels' airport early Thursday as the first day of school summer vacation in Belgium, an airport strike in neighbouring France.

— AFP

Sputnik Light version. Other Russian regions are also starting to offer booster shots. Health Minister Mikhail Murashko told a government meeting Tuesday that the ministry has issued guidelines allowing those who contracted Covid-19 to get vaccinated six months after they recovered, and those who have been immunised to get booster shots six months after their first vaccination. Health authorities said that the more conta-

gious Delta variant of the virus has accounted for the bulk of recent new infections in Moscow and some other regions. The nation's chief sanitary doctor, Anna Popova, confirmed Tuesday that the authorities also registered the first contagion with the Delta Plus variant. The new guidelines come as infections in Russia soar and vaccination rates lag behind many other nations.

— AP

## Court had ruled government policy to freeze rents for five years as illegal

## Berlin to vote on bid to combat housing crisis

Berlin, July 1: Berliners are to vote on a referendum to force major property companies to sell thousands of their flats to the city, officials said Thursday as the election-year issue of high rents grows more charged.

A grassroots petition campaign fuelled by anger over surging housing costs submitted 183,711 valid signatures, "more than the total required" of around 172,000 to put the question to a general ballot, the Be-

rlin election supervisor said. Local officials must now set a date for the vote, which is widely expected to be held on September 26, the same day as elections for a new federal parliament and Berlin government.

The "Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen & Co." initiative, named after Berlin's biggest property group, targets companies with more than 3,000 apartments in their portfolios.

The movement would like to see more than

240,000 homes placed under a public agency to be administered "democratically, transparently and in the public interest".

In a city of 3.7 million residents where more than 80 percent rent their homes, the capital's attractiveness to investors and structural lack of housing sent prices soaring by nearly 85 percent between 2007 and 2019.

Berlin's city-state government already moved to freeze rents for five years

from 2020 in a bid to halt runaway gentrification, but the federal constitutional court ruled that policy to be illegal in April.

"Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen & Co." bases its claims on Article 15 of the German constitution, which stipulates that "land, natural resources and means of production may... be transferred to public ownership" in the public interest.

It sharply criticised the initiative's aims as counterproductive "because it doesn't create a single

square metre of additional living space".

"We need more housing built to ease the market pressure, that is why we will be stepping up building in the coming years in Berlin," a company spokesman said.

The city's Social Democratic mayor Michael Mueller has also rejected the referendum, arguing that he would prefer "partnerships with the private sector" to develop more housing.

— AFP

## SHORT TAKES

**Humpy nominated for Khel Ratna**

**New Delhi:** Reigning women's world rapid chess champion Koneru Humpy has been nominated for the prestigious Khel Ratna award by the All India Chess Federation. Humpy is already a recipient of the Arjuna award and Padma Shri. Olympic-bound Shuttler B. Sai Praneeth and Kidambi Srikanth have been nominated for the Khel Ratna award by the Badminton Association of India, which has also recommended three players — HS Prannoy, Pranav Jerry Chopra and Sameer Verma — for the Arjuna award. Praneeth won a bronze medal at the 2019 Worlds.

Also, seven other players — Vedit Gujrathi, B. Adhikar, S. P. Sethuraman, M. R. Lalith Babu, Bhakti Kulkarni and Padmini Rout have been nominated for the Arjuna award, chess federation secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan said. — PTI

**12-yr-old Mishra is youngest GM**

**New Delhi:** Indian-American prodigy Abhimanyu Mishra on Wednesday became the youngest ever chess Grandmaster after he scored his third GM norm in Budapest, Hungary, according to a report.

The 12-year-old from New Jersey in United States became a GM from International Master, having crossed the required 2500 Elo rating barrier, chess.com website said.

Mishra broke GM Sergey Karjakin's record that has stood for 19 years. On August 12, 2002, Karjakin, a world championship challenger in 2016, secured the Grandmaster title at the age of 12 years and seven months. Mishra, born on February 5, 2009, took 12 years, four months, and 25 days to obtain the highest title in chess, the website said. — PTI

**Jhajharia rewrites own world record**

**New Delhi:** India's greatest Paralympian, javelin thrower Devendra Jhajharia, rewrote his own world record once again as he punched his ticket for the Tokyo Paralympics during a national selection trial here. The 40-year-old, who has won two gold medals in the men's F-46 category at the Paralympics, sent the spear to a distance of 65.71m during the trial here on Wednesday. With that effort, he not only sealed a spot for the Tokyo Paralympics but also bettered his own world record of 63.97m, set at the Rio Games in 2016. "Today at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Delhi, I qualified for the Tokyo Paralympics by setting a new world record of 65.71, breaking my older record of 63.97 in a recording event," Jhajharia tweeted in Hindi. — PTI

**Fifteen athletes qualify for Tokyo**

**New Delhi:** Star sprinter Dutee Chand, javelin thrower Annu Rani and 400m hurdler M. P. Jabir qualified for the Tokyo Olympics through world rankings as 15 Indian athletes and two relay teams were confirmed for the Games by the sport's world governing body on Thursday. Twelve individual athletes, including star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, booked automatic quota for the Olympics by breaching the qualification mark, while the trio of Dutee, Rani and Jabir, as well as the men's 4x400m relay team made it to the Games through rankings.

Dutee was 41st and 50th respectively in the list of 56 athletes to compete in both the 100m and 200m events, while Rani was at 18th (out of 32) and Jabir at 32nd (out of 40). Long jumper M. Sreeshankar, shot putter Tajinder Pal Singh Toor, discus throwers Kamalpreet Kaur and Seema Punia qualified for the Olympics this year. — PTI

**Live on TV**

## EURO

**Quarterfinals:** Spain vs Switzerland from 9.30 pm; Belgium vs Italy from 12.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2

## COPA AMERICA

**Quarterfinals:** Peru vs Paraguay from 2.30 am (Saturday); Brazil vs Chile from 5.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2

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# BELGIAN BAFFLE

**Mystery remains over Belgian duo's fitness as Italy tie looms**

**Munich, July 1:** Belgium are anxiously waiting on the fitness of stars Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard for their Euro 2020 quarter-final showdown against Italy on Friday.

Thorgan Hazard fired Belgium into the last eight with the goal that knocked out holders Portugal, but the fitness of his brother Eden and De Bruyne is Belgium's main concern before facing the Azzurri in Munich.

De Bruyne came off early in the second half against Portugal with an ankle knock, while Belgian captain Hazard injured a hamstring late in the game.

Neither trained on Wednesday with the Belgium's medical staff working around the clock to get them fit to face Italy.

Manchester City midfielder De Bruyne is central to Belgium's hopes of reaching the semi-finals, where Spain or Switzerland would await next Tuesday.

Martinez is assessing his alternative options in attacking midfield. Atletico Madrid's Yannick Carrasco could replace Hazard, while Napoli forward Dries Mertens may step in for De Bruyne.

Martinez expects Italy to "attack from the very first second, they will be very structured," underlining the need for De Bruyne's presence to guide Belgium's counter-attacks.

Chelsea midfielder Jorginho, who faced De Bruyne's City in last month's Champions League final, has warned his Italy teammates.

With four dominant victories and three clean sheets so far at the Euro, the Belgians are living up to their billing as the world's top-ranked team. — AFP



Italy's Francesco Acerbi during a training session with his teammates ahead of the Euro 2020 quarterfinal against Belgium. — Twitter

## Swiss eye another big scalp

**St. Petersburg, July 1:** Switzerland will try to follow up their shock elimination of world champions France at Euro 2020 against Spain on Friday after reaching the quarter-finals of a major tournament for the first time in 67 years.

Vladimir Petkovic's side recovered from two goals down to force extra time

against much-fancied France and prevailed on penalties as 2018 World Cup hero Kylian Mbappe missed the decisive spot-kick. Now the Swiss hope to spring another surprise against a Spain team that has scored 10 times in two games after a slow start to the group stage.

Alvaro Morata's redemptive strike helped secure a

5-3 extra-time win over Croatia, but Spain will need to cut out the errors if they are to contend for a record fourth European Championship.

The Juventus forward and his family had been subjected to abuse by fans in Seville after he missed a series of chances in the group stage. History is on Spain's side against

Switzerland, having lost just once in 22 meetings, a 1-0 defeat in South Africa that sparked their run to the 2010 World Cup title.

Sergio Busquets, the Spain captain, is the lone survivor from that team, while the Barcelona midfielder and Jordi Alba are the only two players in the squad left from their Euro 2012 triumph. — AFP

## Poland's Linette shocks Svitolina in straight sets



Poland's Magda Linette plays a shot against Ukraine's Elina Svitolina during their second round match at the Wimbledon Championships on Thursday. — AP

anniversary of fellow indigenous Australian Evonne Goolagong Cawley's first victory stayed on course on Thursday.

However, Barty produced a far from perfect performance in her 6-4, 6-

3 win over Russia's Anna Blinkova as she progressed to a third round meeting with Czech Katerina Siniakova.

"She pushed me incredibly hard," said a relieved Barty. — Agencies

### THE RESULTS

**Men's singles: Second round:** Christian Garin (CHI x17) bt Marc Polmans (AUS) 7-6 (7/3), 6-2, 6-7 (7/5); Roberto Bautista Agut (ESP x8) bt Miomir Kecmanovic (SRB) 6-3, 6-7 (3/7), 3-6, 6-3; Aljaz Bedene (SLO) bt Yoshihito Nishioka (JPN) 6-1, 6-0, 6-2; Alexander Zverev (GER x4) bt Tennys Sandgren (USA) 7-5, 6-2, 6-3; Cameron Norrie (GBR x29) bt Alex Bolt (AUS) 6-3, 6-1, 6-2

**Women's singles: Second round:** Katerina Siniakova (CZE) bt Coco Vandeweghe (USA)

## 50-50 CHANCE FOR KDB AND EDEN: COACH

**Brussels, July 1:** Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard on Thursday were both absent from Belgium's final training session before their Euro 2020 quarter-final against Italy.

Coach Roberto Martinez said both players were "50/50" to feature against Italy in Munich on Friday.

"Italy will attack from the very first second; they will be very structured and dynamic. Every player knows his role. The game against Portugal was a game that could have been played a lot further down the line; usually players don't play these physical and intense games at this stage of the tournament," Martinez added.

Midfielder Thorgan Hazard said: "Italy will be the toughest opponent. They've had a good run of wins and it will be a nice challenge for us to end that sequence. Their style may suit us more than Portugal. — Agencies

## COPA AMERICA



Brazilian star Neymar during a training session ahead of the Copa America quarterfinal. — Twitter

## Neymar back for Chile clash

**Rio de Janeiro, July 1:** Defending champion Brazil and Chile will have their star players back in action when they meet in the Copa America quarter-finals on Friday.

Neymar will return for Brazil and Alexis Sanchez has recovered from a calf muscle injury ahead of the encounter at the Nilton Santos Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

The Selecao spared a group of regular starters in the 1-1 draw with Ecuador on Sunday, resting Neymar, defender Thiago Silva and striker Gabriel Jesus. Others, including Casemiro, entered as substitutes in that game.

Brazil, with three wins in four Copa America matches, are the clear favourites to win. Chile's only win in the group stage was against Bolivia and they are lacking the kind of form that inspired their back-to-back championship wins in 2015 and 2016.

The last memorable match between Brazil and

— AP

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