





## SHORT TAKES

## SABITHA SEEKS DISCHARGE IN MINING CASE

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Education minister P. Sabitha Indra Reddy filed a discharge petition before the CBI court in a case related to mining allotments to Penna Cements by the YS Rajasekhara Reddy government. She said the allotments were done following due procedure and based on officials' findings and suggestions. She said her name was not mentioned in the chargesheet filed earlier but the CBI had marked her as accused in the additional chargesheet without any evidence.

The court directed the CBI to file its stand. Sabitha Indra Reddy has been named as accused in three more cases pertaining to Dalmia Cements, Obulapuram Mining Company sand Indu Tech Zone.

## RAMESH CASE FINAL HEARING ON JULY 15

**Hyderabad:** The Telangana High Court on Tuesday said it would hold the final hearing of the petition over the citizenship of Vemulawada MLA Chennamaneni Ramesh on July 15. Justice Abhinand Kumar Shavili told Ramesh and his rival, Adi Srinivas, who challenged the MLA's citizenship, and the Union government to get ready.

The judge directed the registry of the High Court to furnish all the files and documents pertaining to the case before it as this issue has to be heard. Due to Covid-19, the registry is furnishing copies of affidavits and other material pertaining to various cases online. As this writ petition has to be heard finally, the judge directed the registry to place the entire record and the files for final hearing.

Dr Ramesh filed a writ petition seeking directions to set aside an order issued by the secretary, Union home ministry, dated 20-11-2019, declaring him as "not a citizen of India" under the Indian Citizenship Act, 1955. The Centre said he is holding German citizenship. On November 22, 2019, Justice Challa Kodandaram passed interim orders suspending the the order.

## PROMOTE SC, ST STAFF, SAYS BANDI

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar has urged Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao to immediately give promotions for SC and ST employees at the Secretariat as per a promise he gave them at the Dalit Empowerment meeting last week. He also urged the CM to reinstate the dismissed outsourcing employees at various hospitals.

On Tuesday, BJP SC Morcha national secretary S. Kumar and BJYM state leader Kalyan Naik took the issue to Sanjay and requested him to exert pressure on the government to give immediate promotions to SC and ST employees on seniority basis and in compliance with the Rule of Reservation.

Sanjay quickly wrote a letter to the Chief Minister, saying seven years after the formation of Telangana, the SC-ST employees are still waiting for promotions. "It is unfortunate that the judgment of the Supreme Court on December 11, 2018 in this case has not been implemented." He recalled the CM's statement at the Dalit meet he held at Pragati Bhavan that he would complete the promotion process for SC and ST employees within 15 days.

By another statement, the BJP chief criticised the government action of removing the outsourcing medical staff in Covid wards at Gandhi and other hospitals.

"The untimely dismissal of Gandhi Hospital outsourcing staff is unfortunate," he said and added that some 1,700 nurses were among the worst-affected. "Is this the award given by the government to the nurses and para-medical staff who have earned a reputation for serving patients night and day at the cost of their lives during the Corona period? I request that the government immediately take back the outsourcing staff and provide them with job security," he said.

## 'Bench hunting' disgusts CJ

CJ says both sides in Krishna river case looking for 'benches of choice'

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Chief Justice Hima Kohli of the Telangana High Court Justice on Tuesday expressed disgust over attempts of the TS government, TS Advocate-General's office and senior counsel Vedula Venkataramana to get the "benches of their choice" to hear a case filed by Andhra Pradesh farmers. The farmers had challenged the TS decision to fully utilise the water of Krishna river for 100 per cent power generation. Venkataraman was arguing counsel for the farmers of Andhra Pradesh.

CJ Kohli observed that both the sides had made attempts of bench hunting.

Pointing out the steps taken by counsels for the petitioners to hear the case urgently, CJ criticised Venkataraman by recollecting the manner in which he approached the High Court by filing the writ petition in the registry and seeking a house motion on a Sunday.

When the registry found some technical errors in the writ petition, the petitioner took one whole day

to rectify these errors. Then, without giving ample time to the registry to place the writ petition file before the CJ bench, senior counsel approached the division bench No. 2 comprising of Justice Ramachandra Rao and Justice Vinod Kumar and requested an urgent hearing.

Is this not "bench hunting," asked CJ Kohli. Disputes regarding inter-state river disputes are before the Chief Justice's bench and certain matters pertaining to state re-organisation are before the division bench No. 2. There is an overlapping of subjects.

In this writ petition, two issues are raised — viz inter state water disputes as well as re-organisation issues. To take a decision under such circumstances, the registry should be given ample time. Without giving such time, counsel for the petitioners approached the division bench No. 2, seeking an urgent hearing. "This is not in good taste," observed the CJ.

The CJ found fault with the charges made by the office of the Advocate-General of Telangana state towards the High

● **THE CJ found fault with the charges made by the office of the Advocate-General of Telangana state towards the High Court judge and insisting on a takeover of the matter from the bench of Justice Ramachandra Rao.**

Court judge and insisting on a takeover of the matter from the bench of Justice Ramachandra Rao. She questioned Advocate General B.S. Prasad as to how the roster could be decided by the AG office or the state government, whereas it was purely in the administrative jurisdiction of the High Court.

"You should have told the bench that it was not your roster, because it involved an inter-state water dispute. If the concerned bench did not take cognizance or it was ignored, then you should have approached the Chief Justice. On the contrary, you have asked the judge to recuse from the hearing. How could you do it?"

"Are you of the opinion that we would recuse ourselves from the hearing as per your wishes and choices? How will you make allegations against a

judge," Chief Justice Kohli asked the AG.

Suggesting that a conflicting attitude be avoided, CJ said judges do not have any personal interest in any case or matters. CJ said it was unfortunate and added that a date will be fixed in one or two days to hear the case filed by the Andhra Pradesh farmers. Before the observations of CJ Kohli, Prasad informed the CJ bench that as per the roster, the inter-state river dispute matters come under the CJ bench purview. Hence it should be heard by the CJ bench.

He informed the court that an interlocutory application has been filed before the CJ bench stating that Justice Ramachandra Rao is of Andhra origin. "In view of this, the writ petition filed by two farmers from Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, seeking suspension of the GO.Rt.34, through which TS Govt is utilising the irrigation water for generating hydel power should not be allocated to the division bench No. 2."

CJ directed the AG to withdraw the interlocutory application. Adhering

to the directions of the CJ, the AG withdrew the plea.

After completion of arguments before the CJ bench, the advocate general and Venkataramana appeared before the division bench 2 comprising Justice Ramachandra Rao and Justice T. Vinod Kumar.

Venkataramana informed the bench that the TS government has filed an interlocutory application before the CJ bench, praying it to hear the writ petition as it dealt with inter-state water dispute; that Justice Ramachandra Rao hails from Andhra Pradesh and hence this writ petition should not be allocated to him for hearing.

Justice Ramachandra Rao expressed surprise on the developments which occurred before the CJ bench because this writ petition was partly heard on Monday by division bench No. 2. Further, he observed, "It is unbecoming on the part of the Telangana state government and the AG is taking such a stand. It amounts to 'bench hunting'. This is in bad taste. If I may say so, such things are happening from the office of the advocate general."

## TOUGH BATTLES AHEAD, SAYS REVANTH

From Page 1

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle* on the eve of taking over the mantle after meeting his predecessor at his residence, Revanth Reddy said, "We have a huge challenge ahead. Tough battles are lined up. People have high expectations from us and we cannot afford to let them down. A government that betrayed the trust of the people has to be brought down in the next elections."

Named the next PCC president ten days ago, Revanth Reddy has been meeting party seniors, leaders and the cadre, besides key people and strategic social influencers.

"We need all the support from all sides of society who want the TRS to be defeated," he said, adding: "We will be bringing all voices and sections together to put up a combined fight. The BJP and TRS are allies pretending to be rivals, but people of Telangana state have seen through the game."

The immediate challenge will be the Huzurabad by-election and Revanth Reddy is left with little time to prove his mettle in an electoral battle that's perceived to be a face-off between Etala Rajendar donning the saffron colour and a pick of Chandrashekar Rao as the TRS candidate.

Uttam Kumar Reddy, a former Indian Air Force officer who was also posted at Rashtrapati Bhavan before joining politics, failed to lead the Congress to victory in the 2018 Assembly elections over the TRS.

Yet, taking charge of the PCC after the Congress failed to win the 2014 Assembly elections following the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh and creation of Telangana state, Uttam Kumar Reddy kept the party relevant in the state.

On his last day as PCC chief, Uttam Kumar Reddy thanked all party leaders, cadre and supporters for their work and effort, often against excruciating odds, to fight for the common people. Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, he said, "It has been an honour to serve the party and keep it strong these years. It has not been the best time in our 135-year-old history as a party but we have always seen our brightest days after the darkest nights."

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## Uttam thanks Sonia Gandhi, vows to continue fight for TS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Outgoing TPCC president Captain N Uttam Kumar Reddy on Tuesday alleged that the TRS government had indulged in excess estimates of irrigation projects and its leaders took 8 per cent commission from the contractors. He said he had been stating this on the record and would raise this issue in the Parliament.

Speaking to the media here on Tuesday, he said he would fight for the protection of interests of Telangana in the the Parliament session scheduled to be held from July 19. He thanked Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and former party president Rahul Gandhi for continuing him as president of the TPCC for six-and-a-half years.

He said the Congress in Telangana had a good presence because of the sweat, blood and tears of crores of ordinary workers over the last several decades.

"On the occasion of handing over the post of Congress president of Telangana state, I salute lakhs of Congress workers who have made huge sacrifices of lives and property and endured every type of government and police harassment over several decades in the earlier TDP and the present TRS gov-

ernments," he said.

Uttam Kumar Reddy said Telangana had been formed to have a rightful share in the river waters. He said more injustice was meted out to Telangana now than during the combined Andhra Pradesh period in sharing of river waters due to negligence of the TRS government.

He said Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao had failed to stop the works of Pothireddy Padu and Sangameswara lift irrigation projects and did not have the moral right to continue in the office. He said like nowhere in the country, Andhra Pradesh had been taking away about 11 tmc ft of water from the Krishna River which belonged to Telangana. He said due to AP's LIS schemes, the command area under Nagarjunasagar would go dry and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao would be responsible for that.

While the state is set to lose 11 tmc ft of water which flows through gravity without any cost, 3 tmc ft of water is lifted from Godavari at a cost of ₹ 1.18 lakh crore through Kaleswaram project. He said about ₹10,000 crore per year would be needed to maintain the project, adding that he would raise this issue in Parliament.

## INDIAN BANK, TSFC TIE-UP MOOTED TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Minister K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday proposed a tie-up between the TS Finance Corporation (TSFC) and Indian Bank to develop mechanisms to help micro, small and medium-scale businesses.

Inaugurating Indian Bank's new initiative, MSME Prerana, to mentor small businesses, the minister said the government would be interested in partnering with the bank to address the issue of collaterals that most of the MSMEs face when they try to raise a loan.

Requesting the bank to

step up its priority sector lending in the state, Rama Rao said the banks should exercise restraint in invoking the Sarfesi Act against MSMEs.

Earlier, Indian Bank managing director Padmaja Chunduru said the bank will channelise its resources towards empowering MSME entrepreneurs. "We look forward to equipping customers with relevant knowledge and enhance their confidence as well as decision-making abilities through MSME Prerana," she said. She said the programme, which would be in Telugu, was designed in collaboration with Poornatha and Co.



MA&UD minister K.T. Rama Rao with the construction worker Shivamma at the inauguration of Balanagar flyover in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — R. PAVAN

## Worker opens flyover in Hyd

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

In a surprising move, the Balanagar flyover, which was named after former defence minister Babu Jagjivan Ram, was inaugurated on Tuesday by construction worker Shivamma in presence of minister K.T. Rama Rao.

Shivamma hails from Wanaparthy district and had worked on building the flyover for over two years. Speaking on the occasion, Rama Rao expressed happiness that the traffic problem at this spot, which had not been addressed for 40 years, has been solved now. The flyover caters to needs of commuters travelling from Kukatpally and Quthbullapur constituencies.

With this, the minister said, the government has developed infrastructure projects worth ₹1,000 crore in Kukatpally constituency alone. He pointed out that Strategic Road Development Plan (SRDP) is a dream of Chief Mi-

nister K. Chandrashekar Rao. The government has so far spent around ₹6,000 crore in Phase I of the total ₹30,000 crore SRDP project.

The 1.13-km two-way flyover will ease traffic congestion from Kukatpally Y Junction towards Medchal Highway and Rajiv Rahadari.

Rama Rao said though the estimated cost of Balanagar flyover had been ₹387 crore but its width was decreased from 200 feet to 150 feet on the request of businesses along the stretch and this brought the cost down to ₹270 crore. He said the amount saved will be spent on developing roads underneath the flyover. The minister said some projects in northern part of the city, including two massive flyovers from Patny to Suchitra junction and JBS to Turkapally have hit a roadblock as the Centre has not responded to government's request for acquiring lands along the route.

## TECHNICAL TEAMS ARE BUSY, TS TELLS KRMB

From Page 1

Official sources said the issue of abstaining from the KRMB meeting was discussed. However, the CMO and irrigation officials remain tight-lipped on the decisions taken at the meeting.

The CM reportedly expressed anger over KRMB including only the issues raised by AP in the agenda of the July 9 meeting and ignoring the matters raised by TS. It was thus decided to abstain from the meeting unless the KRMB postponed it and included TS issues in the meeting agenda.

The KRMB has called the July 9 meeting to discuss ways for resolving the ongoing Krishna water sharing dispute between TS and AP after the AP government lodged a complaint against TS on July 1 over the latter taking up power generation at irrigation projects (Srisailem, Nagarjunasagar, Pulichintala) utilising Krishna water and causing irrigation and drinking water problems for AP.

Chandrashekar Rao, on July 3, urged the KRMB to postpone the July 9 meeting and hold it after July 20. Accordingly, irrigation special chief secretary Rajat Kumar sent a letter to the board on July 5 seeking postponement of the July 9 meeting and convening of a full board meeting any time after July 20.

## Doctors caution locals of dengue

KANZIA GARARI | DC  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Sporadic cases of dengue are reported in the city due to various reasons including water accumulation in tanks, garden pots and trays, animal feeder pots and plastics in garbage, according to experts.

Doctors in the city's children's hospitals say that they have one to four patients undergoing treatment for dengue. The problem has been identified in areas where residents store fresh water for drinking, usage and also

in flower pot trays that are not completely dried regularly. Dr M. Karuna, a senior paediatrician, says, "Reporting of confirmed cases by hospitals must be carried out and they must notify the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) about the disease. This will help them carry out fogging operations in the area. Dengue mosquitoes cannot travel more than 500 meters which makes it easy to carry out the operations."

In a recent drive by the GHMC in city areas, they found the breeding grounds in empty cement flowerpots, construction sites where water is stored for usage by labourers and also in water storage tanks kept outside for drinking water purposes.

Chief entomologist Dr Ram Babu says, "Regular activities of awareness are carried out in all divisions and larva in many places has been destroyed. In the awareness programmes, each division attends 3,500 houses ensuring dry day is emphasised." Garbage bins with left-over plastic bags, empty plastic bottles and other

small containers holding a few milliliters of water also cause mosquito breeding. In a recent incident in Ram Nagar near Uppal, it was found that water in these leftovers was the breeding ground for dengue mosquitoes.

Dr Vijay Anand, a senior paediatrician says, "There are a few cases of dengue now and they are not like that which was observed in 2019. We must be alert and follow the process of not allowing freshwater stagnation to prevent the disease."

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## Haribabu joined Jai Andhra stir as student

From Page 1

Haribabu worked as an associate professor at Andhra University College of Engineering for 24 years.

He resigned from the university to take part in active politics. He was elected as an MLA from the Vizag-I constituency in 1999 and became the BJP's floor leader in the AP assembly in 2003. He served as a Vizag MP between 2014 and 2019.

Active in student politics, Haribabu became sec-

retary of the students' union of Andhra University College of Engineering in 1972-73. He participated in the 'Jai Andhra' movement in the state alongside Tenneti Viswanadham, Sardar Gouthu Latchanna and the present vice-president M. Venkaiah Naidu.

He was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) during the Emergency and imprisoned for six months in Visakhapatnam central jail

and the Mushirabad jail. Haribabu defeated former mayor and Congress candidate Sabbam Hari to win the Visakhapatnam-1 assembly constituency in the 1999 elections and defeated high profile YSRC candidate Y.S. Vijayalakshmi, mother of chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy in the 2014 elections for Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha seat. Haribabu defeated her by a margin of 90,488 votes.

"I thank President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice-Presid-

ent M. Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Home Minister Amit Shah for choosing me for this position. The north-eastern state of Mizoram has its own peculiar issues and opportunities. I worked as a party in charge of Assam, but I could not visit Mizoram. I will understand the situation in Mizoram and I will strive to develop Mizoram in coordination with the state government," he said while talking to the media.



## SHORT TAKES

ONE DIES, 2 FAINT  
AFTER BEING HIT  
BY LIGHTNING

**Adilabad:** A woman agriculture laborer died and two others have fainted after being struck by lightning while working in the agriculture fields in Nipani village of Bheempur mandal on Tuesday evening. The deceased was identified as Yapala Ellamma, 30, died on the spot the other two were shifted to the RIMS, Adilabad for treatment.

DR KARUNAKAR  
APPOINTED AS  
CHIEF OF RIMS

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, JULY 6**

Director of Medical Education Dr K. Ramesh Reddy has issued orders appointing Prof. of Forensic Medicine Dr B. Karunakar, as in-charge to the post of Director of RIMS, Adilabad in place of Dr Banoth Balram Naik. The orders stated that Dr Banoth Balram Naik is relieved from his duties with immediate effect and requested to hand over the complete charge to Prof. Dr B. Karunakar.

TERROR SUSPECT  
HELD IN BODHAN,  
TWO MONTHS AGO

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
NIZAMABAD, JULY 6**

Terrorist suspect Tanvir (38), of Renjal Base in Bodhan town was arrested by Counter Intelligence sleuths two months ago. In connection with National Investigation Agency (NIA) searches in two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists' residences in Hyderabad, this incident came to light on Tuesday. According to police sources, Tanvir went Saudi Arabia in search of livelihood long ago. He had shared a room with a Pakistani national, who was believed to be an ISI agent.

Saudi Arabia police arrested the duo and after one and half year imprisonment, they were released. Allegedly, Tanvir disappeared from Saudi Arabia and reached his native Bodhan town. Following the alert from Saudi Arabian police, Intelligence Bureau and Counter Intelligence sleuths picked him up from Bodhan. Tanvir is one of three siblings in Bodhan.

CONTRACT TRANSCO  
STAFF DIES DUE TO  
ELECTROCUTION

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, JULY 6**

An employee who was working at a private contractor has died with electrocution while working atop of the electric pole in Mochigalli in the Adilabad town on Tuesday.

Advise was staged a protest in front of the Transco Office demanding the department to pay ₹25 lakh compensation and a government job to the family members of the deceased.

The deceased was identified as Kumra Chandrakanth of Mankapur of Gudihathoor mandal who was working as a contract worker at a Transco contractor as part of the Pattana Pragati programme.

Chandrakanth fell down from atop the electric pole after being electrocuted while working and suffered head injuries and succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment in RIMS, Adilabad.

TRS tricks don't work in  
Huzurabad, says Etala

TRS planning to spend ₹100cr to win by-poll alleges Rajendar

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, JULY 6**

"When an elephant walks, dogs bark at it. But the elephant doesn't care. Similarly, the ruling TRS is prompting many leaders to visit Huzurabad and talk against me. They can do nothing against me," said former minister and BJP leader Etala Rajendar at a BJP meeting in Kamalapur mandal of Huzurabad constituency on Tuesday.

Rajendar said his political career started from Kamalapur and he owned hundreds of acres of land before entering politics. "When I am thinking about the welfare of the people, the ruling party leaders are trying to devise a plot against me and playing cheap politics," he said.

"They targeted my minister post and challenged me to resign, but what are they doing? By allowing the MLAs from other parties to join the TRS, they killed democracy. I submitted my resignation. I have a lot of confidence and faith in the

people of Huzurabad," he said.

He said the entire Telangana is now looking at Huzurabad. "KCR is preparing to corner me from all sides. It is the time to teach him a fitting lesson and reduce his pride, his money and power, he said at the meeting.

During all these seven years, did any MLA or other leader of the TRS party bother about the problems of the people here? Now all the leaders are coming to Huzurabad. About the TRS party in-charge of Kamalapur mandal and Parkal MLA, Challa Dharma Reddy, Rajendar said he was aware how he made money. "He turned his school into a bar. He will be taught a fitting lesson in the coming days if he does not stop engaging in cheap politics," warned Rajendar.

Referring to Wardhannapet MLA Aroori Ramesh, Rajendar said he was roaming around Jammikunta and trying to "purchase" leaders for the TRS. "They can buy

leaders, not the people. Even KCR will not be able to purchase the people. The people of Huzurabad are fully aware of such moves. They do not care even about their lives when a question arises of their self-respect, he said.

"The TRS is purchasing leaders of its own party. Entire nation is feeling ashamed of this. The TRS party only knows that whenever there are elections, they have to spend crores of rupees. They are also planning to spend ₹100 crore in Huzurabad to win the bypoll in an undemocratic manner," he alleged.

Rajendar said officials of various departments, especially police, are facing a lot of problems as pressure is exerted by the ruling TRS party on them. They should not feel disappointed. The BJP is at their side and will teach the TRS and its leaders a befitting lesson in the coming days, he said.

He said that right from birth, the people of Telangana have started fighting against injustice. "When they started to speak, they started singing songs against those who tried to suppress them. They never led the life of slaves. The same blood is flowing in my body. It is my warning to all MLAs and ministers who are visiting Huzurabad to try and seek votes from the people in a democratic manner; that, if you try playing cheap politics, then all the people who support democracy will teach you all a fitting lesson," he warned.

The former minister said the people are unable to understand why the state DGP and the chief secretary are working like slaves.

"They must work as per law and not by taking patently wrong orders from TRS leaders. Be careful, do not try harass my followers and BJP activists. Those who try to harass

BJP men will not be spared. I am Etala Rajendar, my party is the BJP and my flag is the saffron flag, they must remember this," he said in Kamalapur.



Minister for the panchayat raj and rural development departments Errabelli Dayakar Rao interacts with the villagers of Habsipura in Jagtial district on Tuesday.

—BY ARRANGEMENT

Palle Nidra to focus on  
local issues: Errabelli

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, JULY 6**

Panchayat Raj and Rural Development minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao, as part of the Palle Pragathi, participated in the Palle Nidra programme in Habsipura village of Jagtial rural mandal and inspected the village in the past two days.

He interacted with the villagers and enquired about the problems they are facing in the village on Tuesday, after attending the Palle Nidra event the previous night.

The minister laid the foundation stones for construction of a BT road at a cost of ₹2.72 crore from Kalleda to Lakshimpur village via Gutrajipally village and also for the construction of a bridge at a cost of ₹4 crore.

The minister advised officials and local representatives to form village committees and organise developmental programmes with funds collected from donors.

He also told them to reconstruct the water tanks in the village that were damaged and set right the hanging electric wires over the habitations. "Install new electric poles where required," he said.

He asked officials to issue notices to land owners to clean the waste dumps in their open lands, or else the village panchayat could issue orders for takeover of their land to the village panchayat.

The minister explained the aim of palle nidra programme and said this is held as part of the ongoing palle pragathi programme to make the authorities understand the problems the people face in their village.

The state government had sanctioned ₹80 lakh for development of Habsipura village and also continued sanctioning of pensions, to help the poor in the Corona pandemic season. It also took steps for reducing the age for old-age pensions from 60 to 57.

To overcome the problems for burying of the dead in villages, the state government started construction of burial grounds in every village, he said.

He said the TRS government has also taken steps to provide pure drinking water via tap connections to every household in the village through Mission Bhagiratha.

He said that since it was unclear whether water from Maharashtra will be released for TS, chief minister KCR took up the Kaleshwaram project and completed it in a record time of three years.

"The government is supplying water to the needy for both irrigation and drinking needs," he said.

By introducing the programmes like haritha haram, palle pragathi and pattana pragathi, the TRS government is taking all required steps to shape the villages into green, healthy and clean ones, he added.

REVANTH INVITES  
CONG. SENIORS  
TO SWEARING  
CEREMONY

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6**

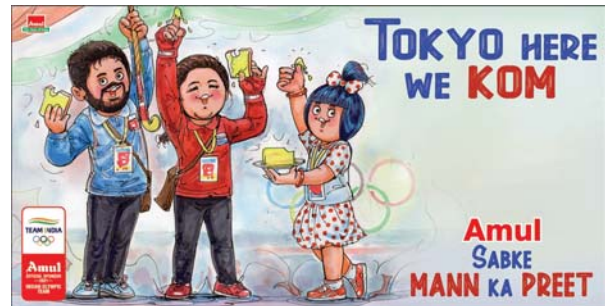
Ahead of the swearing in ceremony of the new office bearers of Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) on Wednesday, the newly-appointed TPCC chief and MP A. Revanth Reddy met party senior leaders on Tuesday and invited them to attend the programme. Interestingly, the party bigwigs, who had aspired to become the TPCC president, but could not, agreed to attend the programme and also called for unity among the rank and file of the Congress.

Revanth Reddy visited the house of Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday. Prior to Revanth's visit, TPCC senior vice president Mallu Ravi met Mallu Bhatti and discussed various issues. Ravi told the media that the TPCC and the CLP were equal in the state.

"Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka is my own brother, but I discussed with him party affairs and swearing in ceremony issues as a Congress leader," he explained. Meanwhile, Bhatti said they would work collectively to achieve real aims of a separate Telangana state. Vikramarka, addressing the media along with Revanth Reddy, said Congress chief Sonia Gandhi appointed Revanth Reddy as the TPCC president and his leadership would help the Congress be successful in the state.

The CLP leader accused TRS of disregarding the democratic values in Telangana and looting the resources of the state. "We will work together to achieve the real aims of Telangana state which Congress chief Sonia Gandhi wanted while granting the separate state," he said and added that all cadres of the Congress would work unitedly for the cause. AICC secretaries Bosu Raju and Srinivasan also met Vikramarka at his residence.

Meanwhile, Revanth Reddy visited the residences of Congress MLAs D. Sridhar Babu, T. Jayaprakash 'Jagga' Reddy, senior leader Marri Sashidhar Reddy and the outgoing TPCC president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy.

E-learning trend hits  
bookstore business

**PILLALAMARRI  
SRINIVAS | DC  
ADILABAD, JULY 6**

Closure of schools due to the Covid pandemic and subsequent online classes have kept students away from physical books as they are increasingly depending on PDF files and YouTube videos for learning.

E-learning is fast becoming the mode of education and printed books are slowly being distanced from students and teachers. Many educational technology companies have come up and are offering online classes to the students following the closure of schools.

However, educational experts say parents and teachers should inculcate the habit of reading hard copies of books among students, though online learning is a must for time being due to prevailing Covid pandemic, but this should not go far over.

They say that books are good friends of children which help them grow up in their lives and for their all-round development. Learning online is different from physically attending classes in school as it is an entirely different experience. There was a decrease in the sale of textbooks, storybooks and rhyme books that used to be read by the students. Parents also stopped buying books related to personality develop-

ment, storybooks and small novels for their kids during the Covid pandemic.

The book stall owners say that gradually students are shifting to online content and watch videos related to the content of textbooks and other books.

R. Vishwanath, owner of Venkateshwara Book of Adilabad, said the sale of textbooks, storybooks and jingle books had come down drastically and added that the Covid and subsequent online classes had hit the book business. He said only 30 percent of students had purchased textbooks and the remaining were just writing down notes while attending online classes. He said sales of notebooks and also school bags and pads were also hit hard due to closure of schools and subsequent online classes.

Vishwanath said they had stopped giving orders for textbooks from Hyderabad to sell them in Adilabad since there was a huge fall in the sale of textbooks.

M. Venkatesh, parent of a primary school student in Adilabad, said children stopped reading books after they had started attending classes online and now many children were spending more time on YouTube which became a major information source for various types of content and videos. Children were also depending on PDF files but not on books for their studies.

## Tribute to Jagjivan Ram



Congress city president Komatireddy Narender Reddy along with party leaders pays tribute to Babu Jagjivan Ram's statue on the occasion of his death anniversary day, in Karimnagar on Tuesday.

—DC

INDIAN INSTITUTES OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH  
(Autonomous Institutions under MoE, Government of India)

## CORRIGENDUM

## ADMISSION NOTICE 2021

5-YEAR BS-MS DUAL DEGREE AND  
4-YEAR BS DEGREE PROGRAMMES

The newspaper advertisement published in this newspaper on 4th of July 2021 erroneously mentions the date of closing of the application portal for the KVPY and SCB channels as 31st of July 2021.

The actual closing date stands unchanged at 31st August 2021. Inconvenience caused due to this error is deeply regretted.

For more details, please visit IISER admission website  
**www.iiseradmission.in**

## NEW | PARTY

YSR was Congressman, she should refrain using his name: Cong.

## Much ado over Sharmila's party name

**IREDDY SRINIVAS  
REDDY | DC  
HYDERABAD, JULY 6**

An interesting discussion is going on in political circles over the name of Y.S. Sharmila's party, which is similar to the YSRC of her brother and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

The full name of the AP CM's party is Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress. What is the expansion of YSRTP that will be launched on Thursday by Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy's daughter?

● IN POLITICAL discussions, YSR refers to the late Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy but some others read it as Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Telangana Party. Fact is they registered the party's name without any definition of YSR.

● Earlier, YSRC rebel MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju complained to the Election Commission saying the AP ruling party registered itself as Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress. After that, YSRCP is mentioned in its letterhead and it is expanded as Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party.

Sharmila's camp registered the party's name as YSR Telangana Party and her followers call it

YSRTP. In political discussions, YSR refers to the late Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy but some others read it as

Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Telangana Party. Fact is they registered the party's name without any definition of YSR.

Deccan Chronicle asked party senior leader Indira Shobhan about the expansion of YSR: Is it Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress or Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy? She replied that there is no definition for YSR as such. "It is only YSR, not like any of the cited names."

Earlier, YSRC rebel MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju

complained to the Election Commission saying the AP ruling party registered itself as Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress. After that, YSRCP is mentioned in its letterhead and it is expanded as Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party.

Meanwhile, several Congress leaders asked how Sharmila named her party after Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy. YSR was a Congressman and she should refrain from using his name for her party, they said.



## SHORT TAKES

## MAN RUN OVER BY K'TAKA DY CM'S SON'S CAR DIES

**Bagalkote, July 6:** A 56-year-old man died after being allegedly run over by a car owned by Karnataka deputy chief minister Laxman Savadi's son, at Hungund in the district. The victim's kin have alleged that Chidanand Savadi was behind the wheels and he even asked the locals to delete videos recorded at the site, from their mobile phones or face consequences, a charge denied by the latter.

According to police, the accident took place when Kudleppa Boli was returning home on his bike on Monday evening. The farmer was rushed to the hospital, where he succumbed to injuries.

A case has been registered against the driver of the car, who was present on the spot, based on a complaint from the victim's relative. "We have seized the car and taken the driver in our custody," District Superintendent of Police Lokesh Jagalasar said.

The SP said investigation is on into the matter. Meanwhile, Mangalappa, son-in-law of the victim, alleged that Chidanand was driving the car. He accused Savadi's son of not taking his injured father-in-law to the hospital on time. "My uncle sustained injuries in his head and back. He was lying there. They should have made some arrangements on finding his lying there, but they did nothing," he told the media here.

## PUJA, DARSHAN AT AMARNATH GO ONLINE

**YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, JULY 6**

The consortium of the Amarnath cave shrine has made darshan, puja, hawan, and prasad rituals at the revered place of worship accessible to the devotees in the virtual mode.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Singh, who is also chairman of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB), on Tuesday launched various online services of it "providing a personal experience to the devotees of the holy cave-shrine."

On June 21, Sinha had announced the cancellation of the Amarnath yatra for the second year in a row amid Covid pandemic. The 56-day annual pilgrimage to the cave-shrine at a height of 13,000 feet in lower Himalayas in south Kashmir was to begin from both traditional Pahalgam and shorter Baltal routes on June 28, coinciding with Ashaad Chaturthi, an auspicious day in Hindu calendar, and conclude on Shravan Purnima (Raksha Bandhan) on August 22.

"For millions of devotees who are unable to visit the holy cave of Shri Amarnathji this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the shrine board has brought darshan, hawan, and prasad facility under the virtual mode," a statement issued here on Tuesday said.

## WB ASSEMBLY PASSES VIDHAN PARISHAD PLAN

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JULY 6**

The Mamata Banerjee government's ad-hoc committee report to bring back Vidhan Parishad with the Members of Legislative Council (MLC) posts, five decades after it was abolished in West Bengal, was passed after discussion in the House on Tuesday with around two-third majority of votes by the MLAs.

While 196 TMC MLAs voted for the move, 69 BJP MLAs opposed it. The resolution will be sent to Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar for his approval. Once he gives his nod, it will be forwarded to the Union law ministry which will send it to the Parliament for its passage in both the houses before being presented to President Ram Nath Kovind for his assent.

So far only seven states Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Jammu and Kashmir have Vidhan Parishad in the country. West Bengal also had the same with 51 MLAs from June 5, 1952 before it was dissolved on March 21, 1969.

Though the Trinamul Congress supreme talked about setting up Vidhan Parishad in her 2011 election manifesto to come to power for the first time, it did not follow later. This time she had promised it again, if elected to power.



BJP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Jyotiraditya Scindia offers prayers at Mahakaleshwar temple during his visit in Ujjain on Tuesday.

— PTI

## Jyotiraditya visits RSS office before Delhi visit

BJP leader likely to be inducted into new Modi cabinet

**RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JULY 6**

A 'call from Delhi' during his visit to the famous Mahakal temple in Ujjain on Tuesday prompted senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member Jyotiraditya Scindia to cancel his programmes in the state and air dash to the national capital.

The purported call from the central BJP leadership came amid speculation on his induction in the Narendra Modi ministry at the Centre in the upcoming expansion of the Union cabinet.

Sources close to the scion of erstwhile royal family of Gwalior said Mr Scindia received a call from the Central leadership of BJP soon after he emerged from the Ujjain temple after paying obeisance to the presiding deity of the ancient shrine spurring him to rush to Delhi from Indore in the afternoon.

"I offered my prayer in the Mahakal temple. After

completing my visit to Ujjain, I am going to Delhi", Scindia told reporters after emerging from the shrine. He dropped at the local Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) office in Ujjain before proceeding to Indore to catch his Delhi flight.

Scindia who had been on a four-day visit to Madhya Pradesh since July three to attend various programmes in Malwa region in the state was scheduled to leave for Delhi on Wednesday.

He, however, cut short his visit to MP and left for Delhi following the "call from Delhi". Scindia had switched over to BJP from Congress in March, 2020 triggering collapse of the 15-month-old Kamal Nath government.

Later, he was elected to Rajya Sabha on a BJP ticket. He had ensured that all his loyalists who had resigned from the Assembly and subsequently from Congress to join BJP 15 months ago, were later re-elected to the house on BJP ticket.

## Goa gets full-time Gov. ahead of polls

**Panaji, July 6:** Over ten months after the then governor Satya Pal Malik was transferred out of Goa

and ahead of the Assembly elections due in February 2022, the coastal state has got a full-time governor with the appointment of P.S. Sreedharan Pillai.

Pillai was serving as Governor of Mizoram before he was shifted to the coastal state.

Maharashtra Governor B.S. Koshyari had been holding the additional charge of Goa after the then governor Malik was transferred within a year as governor of Meghalaya in August 2020.

Congratulations Shri P.S. Sreedharan Pillai ji, on his appointment as Governor of Goa. Looking forward to welcome him

in our beautiful state, Chief Minister Pramod Sawa tweeted.

Meanwhile, former Goa Speaker and BJP leader Rajendra Arlekar, who is appointed as Governor of Himachal Pradesh, told reporters that the BJP looks after ordinary workers of the party.

Arlekar, 67, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi informed him about the new responsibility on Monday.

"On Tuesday, I was informed about my appointment as Himachal Pradesh governor by President Ram Nath Kovind. A notification has been issued," he said.

Arlekar had served as the speaker of the Goa Legislative Assembly from 2012 to 2015. — PTI

## REMAINING JEE-MAINS TO BE HELD FROM JULY 20: MIN.

**New Delhi, July 6:** The pending editions of Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Mains will be conducted from July 20 to 25 and July 27 to August 2, Union education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' announced on Tuesday.

The results of the two editions, which were postponed in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, are likely to be announced in August.

"The third edition of JEE-Mains will be conducted from July 20-25 while the fourth edition will be held from July 27 to August 2. The exams will be conducted while following all Covid protocols keeping the safety of candidates in mind," Nishank said.

JEE-Mains for admission to engineering colleges is being conducted four times a year from the current academic session to offer flexibility to students and a chance to improve their scores amidst the second wave of the pandemic in India.

The first phase in February was followed by the second phase in March, while the next phases were scheduled for April and May.

But those were postponed after a spike in the number of cases of Coronavirus during the second wave of the pandemic.

The JEE-Advanced exam, which is conducted for admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the National Institutes of Technology (NITs), was also postponed. The exam was scheduled on July 3. — PTI

## Amarinder meets Sonia, says discussed govt. issues

**DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JULY 6**

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Tuesday met Congress president Sonia Gandhi in the national capital, but there was no clarity on what the outcome was. The meeting with Gandhi comes after more than a month of turmoil in the Punjab Congress which was precipitated after public utterances by disgruntled Congress legislator Navjot Singh Sidhu against the Congress government and the Chief Minister.

After the one-and-a-half hour long meeting with Gandhi, the Punjab Chief Minister said, "Whatever Sonia Gandhi decides about the party in Punjab will be acceptable to us and we will implement her will."

When asked if Navjot Singh Sidhu was discussed at the meeting, Captain Amarinder Singh said, "I do not know anything about Navjot Singh Sidhu. We discussed government and political issues. I dis-

Malikarjun Kharge, chairman of the AICC panel on Punjab, was called by Sonia Gandhi to the meeting. With just months to go for the Assembly polls, insiders claim that during their meeting, Captain Amarinder Singh and Gandhi were to work out a formula to end factionalism by accommodating all sections, castes and regions in the overhaul of the Punjab state unit of the party as well as the state Cabinet.

Insiders also claim that Capt. Singh has made it clear to the high command that the legislators are behind him.

When asked if Navjot Singh Sidhu was discussed at the meeting, Captain Amarinder Singh said, "I do not know anything about Navjot Singh Sidhu. We discussed government and political issues. I dis-

cussed only the government's developmental agenda and political issues related to Punjab. I told the party president that whatever she wants on the development front was being implemented."

In the last couple of weeks almost all legislators from Punjab and other leaders have appeared before the high-powered committee constituted by Gandhi to sort out the Punjab issue. They have also met senior leader Rahul Gandhi. Most of them have said that there is no alternative in Punjab apart from Captain Amarinder Singh. Several have gone ahead and suggested that if the will of the legislators is not taken into account and an 'outsider' is appointed to an important position, then unforeseen developments can take place.

The bench said that there is a finding given by the trial court and upheld by the High Court that they (eye witnesses) have seen the face in the light of the headlight of the motorcycle.

It told Roy, You are flogging a dead horse. You have done more than the duty of amicus curiae. There is a clear cut finding.

The top court was hearing an appeal filed by one Mukesh, currently lodged in Jaipur Jail, against the order of Rajasthan High Court passed on April 5, 2019 dismissing his petition against the conviction and life sentence

awarded to him by the trial court in a murder of fellow villager Gopal Lal on July 18, 2012.

In his appeal, Mukesh has contended that he was falsely implicated in the case and no case under section 302 of IPC, was made out against him.

The High Court while dismissing the appeal of the petitioner failed to appreciate that the incident took place in the dark night in an isolated place and there was no light near the place of occurrence, as such identification of the petitioner by the prosecution witness in such a dark night in an iso-

## NITISH DOESN'T RULE OUT JD(U) JOINING UNION GOVERNMENT

**Patna, July 6:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Tuesday did not rule out the possibility of his JD(U) joining the Narendra Modi government during its likely expansion but insisted it was the party's national president who will take a call on the number of berths acceptable to it.

Talking to reporters here, Kumar said expansion of the Union council of ministers was a prerogative of the Prime Minister and that he "did not have much information" about what was being offered to his party. "I relinquished the party's national president's post a few months ago. Current president RCP Singh has been authorised to take a call in the matter. Only he can share the details," the Chief Minister, the party's de facto leader, said with a smile playing on his lips.

When pointed out that he had disapproved of BJP's offer of "token representation" for allies in the government after the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Kumar quipped, "I was then the national president of the party, a post which I no longer hold."

Responding to a query as to whether his party was likely to stick to its previous stand of not joining the Union council of ministers, the JD(U) leader said, "I do not think at any point of time it has been said that our party will never join the Union Cabinet."

He deflected questions about speculation in the media that the JD(U), which has become the largest ally of the BJP after Shiv Sena's exit from NDA, was bargaining for three to four berths. "These are things you should be asking RCP Singh," he said.

Incidentally, Singh, a former IAS officer, has risen to the top position in the party within a decade of taking the political plunge, and is seen as a frontrunner for a Cabinet berth.

He also said he was all set to revive his public interaction programme 'Janata ke darbar mein mukhyamantri' from next week. "Of course, there will be some constraints in view of the corona pandemic. Citizens who appear on any given day with their grievances will be extended all facilities, including transport," Kumar said. — PTI

## Sonia, Oppn. write to Prez over Stan Swamy's death

**New Delhi, July 6:** Leaders of 10 Opposition parties including Congress chief Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday wrote to President Ram Nath Kovind expressing "outrage" at the death of Father Stan Swamy "under custody", and seeking his intervention in holding accountable those responsible for "foisting false cases" on the activist, his continued detention and "inhuman treatment".

The signatories also include NCP chief Sharad Pawar, former prime minister and JDS leader H.D. Deve Gowda and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee (TMC), Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin (DMK) and his Jharkhand counterpart Hemant Soren (JMM) have also signed the letter, besides D. Raja (CPI), Sitaram Yechury (CPI-M) and Tejashwi Yadav (RJD).

The 84-year-old priest-activist Stan Swamy, arrested under the anti-terrorism law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the Elgar Parishad case, died at a Mumbai hospital Monday in the middle of his fight for bail on health grounds.

"We the undersigned leaders of major opposition parties are writing to you in deep anguish expressing our intense grief and outrage at the death of Father Stan Swamy under custody," the Opposition leaders said in their joint letter.

"We are urging your immediate intervention as the President of India to direct your govern-

ment to act against those responsible for foisting false cases on him, his continued detention in jail and inhuman treatment," they said.

"They must be held accountable. It is now incumbent that all those jailed in the Bhima Koregaon case and other detainees under politically motivated cases, misusing draconian laws like UAPA, Sedition etc, be released forthwith," they said.

The leaders said the activist who championed the rights and causes of the adivasis in far flung areas of Jharkhand was jailed last October on "trumped-up" charges under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and was sought to be linked with the Bhima Koregaon case.

They have also alleged that he was denied treatment for his various ailments including the debilitating Parkinson's disease.

"Only after a nationwide campaign was conducted that even a sipper to drink liquids was made available to him in jail. The numerous appeals made to shift him out of the over-crowded Taloja jail that had seen a huge rise in Covid cases went unheeded.

"His appeals for bail and being sent home too were rejected. Thanks to the Bombay High Court's intervention he was admitted to a private hospital when his condition started deteriorating after he was infected with Covid. But it was too late to prevent his death in custody," they also claimed in their letter. — PTI



People hold posters next to candles outside a church holding memorial mass for the rights activist and Jesuit priest Father Stan Swamy in Mumbai on Tuesday.

— PTI

## SC: No 'rath yatra' at places other than Jagannath Puri

**PARMOD KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, JULY 6**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to permit holding of Lord Jagannath's annual Rath Yatra in Odisha except for the one that is taken out from Lord Jagannath's temple at Puri, and allowed holding of rituals relating to Yatra within the premises of other Jagannath temples across the state.

Endorsing Odisha government's order that permits taking out of the Rath Yatra with all precautions at Puri and allowing performing of rituals within temple

premises of all other Jagannath temples, Chief Justice N.V. Ramana heading a three judge bench said, "If Rath Yatra is permitted, it will be the devotees who could suffer and we don't want to take the risk."

Telling that he himself is a devotee of Lord Jagannath and wants to visit Lord's temple at Puri for last one and a half year but had to be content by offering prayers from a distance, Chief Justice Ramana said, "Sorry, we don't want to interfere with the Odisha government's decision."

The court also observed that compared to the first

spell of Covid pandemic that had hit India last year, more people had died in its second wave and people can't be exposed to risks.

Ramana said this as the Odisha government informed the court that it would be impossible to enforce the observance of Covid protocol inducing social distancing if Yatras are allowed as sought by the petitioners.

The court was told that there will be Yatras in every village and it will not be able to control the situation.

There are thousands of Lord Jagannath temples across Odisha.

## SURPRISE | REFERENCE SC dismisses appeal against conviction of a man in a murder case

## SC quotes Sherlock Holmes to uphold HC order

**New Delhi, July 6:** "You see, but you do not observe," the Supreme Court said quoting Sherlock Holmes as it dismissed an appeal against the conviction and life term awarded to a man in a murder case.

The top court rejected the submission of amicus curiae that it was not possible for the four eye witnesses to see at night the face of the man who had committed the murder.

A bench of Justices R.F. Nariman, K.M. Joseph and B.R. Gavai said in its order passed, we find no ground to interfere with the impugned order passed by the High Court. The

Special Leave Petition is, accordingly, dismissed.

During the hearing, advocate Pijush Kanti Roy, who has been appointed amicus in the matter, said it was a dark night in an isolated place and there was no way the four eye witnesses in the case could have seen the face of the petitioner.

Justice Nariman then said, it's like Sherlock Holmes telling Dr Watson, "You see, but you do not observe".

Roy said that his only endeavour is that an innocent should not get punished for the crime he has not committed.

The bench said that there is a finding given by the trial court and upheld by the High Court that they (eye witnesses) have seen the face in the light of the headlight of the motorcycle.

It told Roy, You are flogging a dead horse. You have done more than the duty of amicus curiae. There is a clear cut finding.

The top court was hearing an appeal filed by one Mukesh, currently lodged in Jaipur Jail, against the order of Rajasthan High Court passed on April 5, 2019 dismissing his petition against the conviction and life sentence

awarded to him by the trial court in a murder of fellow villager Gopal Lal on July 18, 2012.

In his appeal, Mukesh has contended that he was falsely implicated in the case and no case under section 302 of IPC, was made out against him.

The High Court while dismissing the appeal of the petitioner failed to appreciate that the incident took place in the dark night in an isolated place and there was no light near the place of occurrence, as such identification of the petitioner by the prosecution witness in such a dark night in an iso-

lated place remained questionable, as such evidence of the prosecution witnesses are not trustworthy, he has said in his appeal.

He said the high court ought to have appreciated the fact that there was no previous enmity between Mukesh and Gopal Lal and he had no intention to kill his co-villager.

Mukesh said that as per the prosecution the incident took place at the spur of the moment in course of their discussion and as such the case in hand at best could be a case under Section 304 Part-II and the order of conviction under

Section 302 IPC has resulted in serious miscarriage of Justice.

He submitted that there were three other persons at the site of crime but only he was made an accused and no charge sheet was filed against the other two persons.

According to the prosecution, on July 19, 2012, one Babulal had submitted a complaint at the police station that his younger brother on July 18, 2012 was coming from Bhanpur to their village at around 10-11 pm, when villagers informed him that Gopal Lal was being beaten by three persons. — PTI



## SHORT BRIEF

## 5 SUSPECTED MILITANTS KILLED IN PAK

**Quetta:** Security forces shot five suspected militants to death Monday during a raid on their hideout near Pakistan's southwestern city of Quetta, a spokesman for a counter-terrorism department said.

In a brief statement, it said there was an exchange of gunfire during the raid and officers seized weapons from the militant hideout after the successful operation.

Quetta is the capital of Baluchistan province, which has been the scene of frequent militant attacks and a long-running insurgency by small separatist groups that seek independence for the mineral- and gas-rich province bordering borders Iran and Afghanistan.

The Pakistani Taliban also have a presence there.

## THAILAND SEIZES 315 KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN

**Bangkok:** Customs officials in Thailand made their biggest seizure of heroin this year, about 315 kilograms (700 pounds) worth up to 944 million baht (\$29 million), bringing the total confiscated so far this year to 2 tons, officials said on Tuesday.

They did not say where the drugs originated, but the seizure came amid concerns that production may surge in neighboring Myanmar, the region's main supplier of illicit drugs, because of severe instability following the military's ouster of an elected government in February.

Customs Department Director-General Patchara Anuntasilpa said 134 shrink-wrapped packets of heroin, each weighing about 2.4 kilograms (5.3 pounds), had been concealed in a shipment of acrylic paint headed for Australia.

He said the drugs were discovered on Monday because the packets of heroin were placed in square plastic containers which stood out on X-rays of the paint buckets.

## UK COURT QUASHES 1972 ROBBERY CONVICTIONS OF 3

**London:** Britain's Court of Appeal has exonerated three Black men who were convicted of robbery nearly 50 years ago, the latest in a series of cases that have been overturned because they relied on the testimony of a corrupt police officer who later died in prison.

The court on Monday quashed the convictions of Courtney Harriot, Paul Green and Cleveland Davidson, who were aged between 17 and 20 when they were accused of trying to rob a plainclothes detective on a London Underground train. The men always maintained their innocence and claimed that they were framed by the officer before his career ended in disgrace.

"It is most unfortunate that it has taken nearly 50 years to rectify the injustice suffered by these appellants," Judge Julian Flaux said.

The case is one of several involving questionable arrests of Black men in the 1970s by a British Transport Police unit run by the late Detective Sgt. Derek Ridgwell.

## NZ RECORDS WARMEST JUNE ON RECORD

**Wellington:** New Zealand recorded its hottest June on record as temperatures continued to soar in a pattern consistent with global warming, a government scientific agency said on Tuesday (July 6).

Daily temperatures averaged 10.6 degrees Celsius — 1.9 degrees Celsius above average despite a cold snap late in the month, the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) said.

"It's huge. There's only been 13 times since 1909 that we've had such an anomaly," NIWA scientist Chris Brandolino told public radio.

"What's alarming is that over the past 10 years that's happened six times."

Brandolino said that while shorter-term factors such as warmer ocean temperatures helped heat the air over New Zealand, climate change was a constant underlying factor.

"We've had more north-easterly air flows than normal (from the Pacific), so they're coming from a warm place, and ocean temperatures are also warmer than average," he said.

## 6 kids among 9 held in alleged HK 'bomb plot'

Group was attempting to make the explosive TATP

## Big tech threaten to quit HK

**Hong Kong, July 6:** Nine people, including six secondary school students, were arrested in Hong Kong on Tuesday for allegedly plotting to set off homemade bombs in courts, tunnels and trash cans as political tensions rise in the city where China is tightening its grip.

Police said they were detained on suspicion of engaging in terrorist activity under a harsh national security law that Beijing imposed a year ago as part of a crack-down on dissent in the former British colony that has long enjoyed freedoms not seen on the Chinese mainland.

Hong Kong authorities have used the law, enacted in response to anti-government protests that rocked the city in 2019, to arrest many of the city's prominent activists. Others have fled abroad as a result.

If the allegations are true, the group appears to

**Hong Kong, July 6:** Hong Kong's leader on Tuesday brushed off a warning by major tech companies including Google, Facebook and Twitter that they may quit the financial hub if authorities push ahead with a new privacy law.

City authorities have

unveiled plans to pass a new law targeting "doxxing" — the act of publishing someone's private details online so they can be harassed by others.

But the broad wording of the proposed legislation has spooked major tech companies who fear they

could be held liable and their employees prosecuted for users' content.

They detailed their concerns in a letter sent to Hong Kong's government by the Asia Internet Coalition which includes tech giants such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Apple. — *AFP*

chemicals.

Nine people between 15 and 39 years old were arrested Tuesday, according to Senior Superintendent Li Kwai-wah of the Hong Kong Police National Security Department.

Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam said at a weekly news briefing that she hopes the members of the public will "openly condemn threats of violence." — *AP*



An Afghan soldier plays a guitar that was left behind after the American military departed Bagram air base, in Parwan province north of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Tuesday. — *AP*

## US quits Bagram in a mess at night, Afghan commander not informed

**Bagram, Afghanistan, July 6:** The U.S. left Afghanistan's Bagram Airfield after nearly 20 years by shutting off the electricity and slipping away in the night without notifying the base's new Afghan commander, who discovered the Americans' departure more than two hours after they left, Afghan military officials said.

Afghanistan's army showed off the sprawling air base Monday, providing a rare first glimpse of

what had been the epicenter of America's war to unseat the Taliban and hunt down the al-Qaida perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks on America.

The US announced on Friday it had completely vacated its biggest airfield in the country in advance of a final withdrawal the Pentagon says will be completed by the end of August.

"We (heard) some rumor that the Americans had left Bagram ... and finally by seven o'clock in the morning, we understood

that it was confirmed that they had already left Bagram," Gen. Mir Asadullah Kohistani, Bagram's new commander said. U.S. military spokesman Col. Sonny Leggett did not address the specific complaints of many Afghan soldiers who inherited the abandoned airfield, instead referring to a statement last week.

The statement said the handover of the many bases had been in the process soon after President Joe Biden's mid-April announcement that America

was withdrawing the last of its forces. Leggett said in the statement that they had coordinated their departures with Afghanistan's leaders.

Before the Afghan army could take control of the airfield about an hour's drive from the Afghan capital Kabul, it was invaded by a small army of looters, who ransacked barracks after barracks and rummaged through giant storage tents before being evicted, according to Afghan military officials. — *AFP*

## Plane wreckage found in E. Russia

**Moscow, July 6:** Search teams on Tuesday found wreckage of a passenger plane carrying 28 people that had disappeared in Russia's remote far eastern Kamchatka peninsula, but there was little hope of survivors.

Search and rescue operations were suspended after night fell and Russian news agencies quoted local sources as saying it appeared that all

the passengers and crew had died.

The An-26 plane was flying from Kamchatka's main city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky to the coastal town of Palana when it disappeared at 2:40 pm (0240 GMT).

The governor of Kamchatka, a vast peninsula popular with adventure tourists for its abundant wildlife and live volcanoes, said search

teams had found parts of the fuselage along the coast and in the Okhotsk Sea. "There was a catastrophe during the go-around approach for landing," Vladimir Solodov said in a video released on the government website.

Russia's aviation agency said in a statement that the plane's debris had been found at 9:06 pm local time (0906 GMT).

Officials said that com-

munication with the plane had been lost nine kilometres (5.5 miles) from Palana's airport and 10 minutes before its scheduled landing time.

Russian news agencies quoted local officials as saying most of the passengers were from Palana — which has a population of about 3,000 — including four local government officials and the town's head Olga Mokhiryova. — *AFP*

## COVID AT A GLANCE

Can avoid quarantine if jabbed or recovered

## Germany relaxes curbs on travellers from UK, India

## Israel, S. Korea agree vax swap

**Berlin, July 6:** Germany's health agency said on Monday five so-called virus variant countries would be reclassified as "high incidence areas", lifting a ban on entry for travellers from those nations who are not German residents or citizens.

The Robert Koch Institute (RKI) said India, Nepal, Russia, Portugal and the UK would be reclassified from on Wednesday, meaning any traveller will be able to enter as long as they observe quarantine and testing rules.

Germany introduced its "virus variant country" travel category in a bid to stop new Coronavirus variants that have not yet spread widely on home soil.

But Health Minister Jens Spahn said last week that the Delta variant was fast becoming dominant in Germany, meaning that bans on most travellers from countries hit by that variant may be lifted.

Given the increasing spread of Delta, which was first detected in India, and research suggesting vaccines are effective against it, "we will look at the situation in the next few days", Spahn said.

Chancellor Angela Merkel also hinted at a potential softening in Germany's stance towards travellers from Britain during a visit to London on Friday.

Last month, Merkel called for tough restrictions, including longer quarantine, for people travelling from Britain, where the Delta variant has caused a surge in cases. But she indicated that the stance could soften as travel advice was reviewed.

"We think that in the foreseeable future, those who have received double jabs will... be able to travel again, without having to go into quarantine," she said. Only citizens and residents of Germany are permitted to enter from a variant country and are subject to a two-week quarantine, regardless of whether they are fully vaccinated or can provide

**Jerusalem, July 6:** Israel agreed a Covid vaccine swap with South Korea on Tuesday, sending 7,00,000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech jab to Seoul "immediately" in return for the same number in coming months.

A statement from Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's office said the deal, the first of its kind for Israel, would allow more effective use of the vaccine stocks of both countries.

The statement added that Bennett had spoken to Pfizer chief executive Albert Bourla about the arrangement.

Israel received a huge supply of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine shortly after its approval last year following an arrangement with the producers to share data

about its impact.

That deal helped Israel roll out one of the world's fastest inoculation drives but has also raised concerns about unused stock expiring.

The Palestinian Authority last month cancelled a deal that would have seen a million jabs from Israel's inventory sent to the occupied West Bank.

The PA said the doses "were about to expire". Israel insisted they were "completely valid".

More than 80 per cent of Israel's adult population is fully inoculated against Covid-19 but cases are again rising, with officials raising concern about the surging Delta variant's ability to evade vaccine protection and cause mild illness. — *AFP*

## Cannes fest back after pandemic

**Cannes, France, July 6:** The famed Cannes Film Festival opens Tuesday, and despite social distancing subduing some of its signature glamour, excitement is rife for the first fully fledged film festival since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Last year's edition was cancelled over the health crisis, and although stars will be allowed to go maskless on the red carpet this year, a health pass is required for entrance and many of the glitzy after-parties that are the festival's calling card have been postponed because of distancing measures.

"Covid is still there, but

being here for the return of the festival, in the opening film... it's a huge sense of relief and excitement," US actor Adam Driver said.

Driver co-stars with French actor Marion Cotillard in the opening night film, "Annette", a musical directed by cult favourite Leos Carax.

Members of the jury — headed for the first time by a black man, US director Spike Lee — arrived Monday night and will give their traditional press conference on Tuesday afternoon, before embarking on their 24-film marathon. — *AFP*

a negative Covid-19 test. By contrast, anyone can enter from a high-incidence country as long as they provide a negative test on arrival. — *AFP*

## Israel ban on Arab unifications lapses

**Jerusalem, July 6:** Israel's Prime Minister Naftali Bennett accused his opponents on Tuesday of harming national security as his coalition failed to extend a ban on citizenship for Palestinian spouses from the West Bank and Gaza.

The ban first enacted in 2003 during the second Palestinian intifada, or uprising, has been justified by supporters on security grounds — but critics derided it as discriminatory toward Israel's Arab minority.

The ban has caused endless complications for Palestinians living across Israel and the territories it has occupied since 1967. Many of those affected live in annexed east Jerusalem, often with Israeli residency but not citizenship.

The failure to pass the ban's extension in a parliament vote early Tuesday highlighted tensions within Bennett's ideologically diverse

eight-party coalition that spans his far-right Yamina party to Raam, a conservative Islamist Arab faction.

It was also a success for Benjamin Netanyahu, who is now the opposition leader after Bennett ousted him following 12 straight years as premier.

"The opposition deliberately took a direct strike at the state's security, out of some sort of bitterness and frustration," Bennett fumed. "They ultimately harmed the good of the country."

In overnight talks, Bennett's coalition had sought a deal for nearly all of its members to back the ban's extension, including Jewish left-wingers and two Raam lawmakers.

In exchange, the government would have granted residency or citizenship rights to more than 1,500 Palestinians who have been living in Israel for many years. — *AFP*



Viktor Babaryko

## BELARUS OPPN FIGURE BABARYKO JAILED FOR 14 YRS

**Moscow, July 6:** One of Belarus's leading opposition figures was sentenced to 14 years in prison on Tuesday, the latest move in a months-long crackdown on critics of strongman leader Alexander Lukashenko.

Former banker Viktor Babaryko — considered one of Lukashenko's strongest opponents — was handed the sentence by the Supreme Court in Minsk.

His Twitter account, which is run by supporters, said he would serve the 14 years "in a maximum-security colony". The 57-year-old was arrested in June last year on fraud charges ahead of a disputed presidential election that sparked several months of protests.

He had planned to run in the election and was considered the strongest challenger to Lukashenko's almost three decade rule.

Babaryko was accused of receiving bribes and of money laundering when he was head of Belgazprombank, the Belarusian branch of a bank belonging to Russian energy giant Gazprom.

He was also ordered to pay 46 million Belarusian rubles (\$18 million, 15 million euros) in damages, according to local independent rights group Viasna. — *AFP*

**Washington, July 6:** Richard Donner, a prolific filmmaker who directed the first *Superman* movie, *The Goonies* and other blockbuster hits, died on Monday at age 91, US media reported.

Donner's other credits include the 1976 horror classic *The Omen*, the *Lethal Weapon* cop franchise with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover starting in 1987, *Scrooged* (1988) and his final movie in 2006, *16 Blocks*. He also directed episodes of iconic

20th century television shows such as *Get Smart*, *Perry Mason*, *Gilligan's Island* and *The Twilight Zone*, according to IMDb, and took on a producer role for blockbuster hits including *X-Men* and *Free Willy*.

The *Hollywood Reporter* cited Donner's assistant in confirming his death, while *Deadline* said there was no cause of death revealed by Donner's business manager or producer wife, Lauren Schuler Donner.



Richard Donner

"Richard Donner had the biggest, boomiest voice you could imagine,"

● "RICHARD DONNER had the biggest, boomiest voice you could imagine," *Goonies* star Sean Astin said on Twitter. Richard Donner, a prolific filmmaker who directed many a blockbuster hits, died on Monday at age 91. Donner was born in the Bronx and grew up in New York before attending New York University.

*Goonies* star Sean Astin said on Twitter: "He commanded atten-

tion and he laughed like no man has ever laughed before. Dick was so much fun. What I perceived in him, as a 12 year old kid, is that he cared. I love how much he cared," Astin tweeted about his time acting in the 1985 teen treasure hunt movie.

Fellow director Steven Spielberg, who wrote the story on which *The Goonies* was based, said in a statement that Donner had a "powerful command of his movies".

"Being in his circle was

akin to hanging out with your favorite coach, smartest professor, fiercest motivator, most endearing friend, staunchest ally, and — of course — the greatest Goonie of all," Spielberg said in the statement tweeted by his production company Amblin.

Donner was born in the Bronx and grew up in New York before attending New York University and joining the US military, according to the *Hollywood Reporter*. — *AFP*



# DECCAN Chronicle

7 JULY 2021

## Who has the credibility to probe Stan Swamy death?

The death of the 84-year old Jesuit priest Father Stan Swamy — who had emerged as one of India's foremost human rights defenders — in judicial custody in Mumbai on Sunday offers a great lesson in injustice. This death is a tragedy for India and the values it has cherished for centuries.

Clearly, the ruling dispensation is not likely to see it in this way. Its vicious representatives and spokespersons have offered crude and laboured justifications on television for the late activist's unwarranted incarceration and, further, the denial to him of the smallest consideration on grounds of medical condition, advanced age, and his eminence which derived from 55 years of dedicated service to the cause of the adivasis and dalits, namely the poorest Indians.

The death of this indefatigable champion of poor people's causes invites us to ponder over the nature of the present Indian State whose hallmark is to pander to the fatcats, bring about policies for the further impoverishment of the already marginalised sections of our fellow citizens, ingratiate itself with international capital and the political masters in the West, and at home spread divisive venom through carefully articulated economic and social religio-populism.

**The matter deserves to be raised in the Monsoon Session of Parliament in a collective voice by all sections of the House, including those on the treasury benches who have a conscience**

The rampant misuse of agencies and institutions of the State for political agendas, and the non-stop spread of disinformation to soften up the citizenry, also appear to be integral to the designs of many in authority. Even so, instances from 20th century European history may not be apt to find meaningful parallels with the present Indian regime. It may be more apt to think of patterns of behaviour of police states that operate within the framework of a perfectly democratic Constitution. But does there exist such an example, or is today's India really quite unique?

The late Fr Swamy's shocking demise brings into question the conduct and attitude of the National Investigating Agency (NIA), which reports to the Union home ministry and was created to investigate terrorism-related crimes but all too often happily doubles — along with some other agencies of the Centre — virtually as political police. Alas, it also raises doubts about the judiciary at the trial court level and, in this instance, the Bombay high court, too. Taken together these pretty much constitute the panoply of the justice system in its entirety.

Given the gravity of the situation, to which our attention has been drawn by the death of one of our most eminent citizens, and the negative international attention it has drawn, Fr Swamy's demise makes an impartial high-level inquiry imperative. But today which institution has the experience, and also its credibility intact, to carry out this onerous task?

The matter deserves to be raised in the Monsoon Session of Parliament in a collective voice by all sections of the House, including those on the treasury benches who have a conscience. This is all the more necessary because nearly a dozen noted intellectuals, lawyers, activists, with a lifetime's record of work for the poor, are also being made to rot in prison without trial in the Elgar Parishad case as the late Fr Swamy was — on the false pretext of their membership of banned organizations intent on violently destroying the sovereignty of India and assassinating the Prime Minister.

If there is transparent justice, these monstrous charges will not stick, but many of those in prison are elderly and suffer from severe health problems, much as Fr Swamy did. The tragedy that befell the country on Monday must not be permitted to play out again.

## Persecution with a quashed law

The Indian justice system is in focus after the death of the octogenarian rights activist Stan Swamy. The malaise, however, runs far deeper than just the highest courts of the land. The executive is constantly guilty of over reach when it comes to stifling dissent. The top court was flabbergasted recently when it came across many persons being arrested for posting dissenting opinions on social media under Section 66A of the IT Act which was struck off from the statute six years ago. It is apparent that police in some states are either unaware that the section is invalid or do not bother reading the footnote following an asterisk placed against Section 66 A in the law book.

The cause of such distressing and illegal action of police in going after dissent expressed on social media stems from the eagerness to please their political masters than any great desire to uphold the law. The usual logic behind such action is public order may be affected by the spread of restlessness. The social media is, however, known to host all kinds of rebellious, unconventional, outlandish or even outright cranky opinions but they have hardly wrought greater damage than cause a flutter. It is a well-known fact that posts against politicians are likely to draw the attention of netas ruling in states with Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan seen to be most active in using the inoperative Sec. 66A.

What is more distressing than the sheer unintelligence of the police in using non-existent provisions of the law to go after critics or rebels is the prevailing atmosphere of distrust and the extreme sensitivity of the ruling class tending to take umbrage at the slightest provocation. It is the harassment of citizens with contrary opinions that is the aim. The registering of cases, which often get thrown out by the courts, is aimed to draw the "accused" into a legal net and use just the process to persecute him. What is to be balked at is the intent more than the ignorance of the police.

### DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani



## China's hard talk: Sign of Xi's confidence or worry?

K.C. Singh



President Xi Jinping of China, after assuming office in 2012, declared twin goals for his country — a moderately developed China by the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) on July 1 this year and a fully developed, rich and powerful nation by 2049 — the centenary of the People's Republic of China. By most accounts he has been able to achieve the first.

However, China, by its stated ambitions and aggressive behaviour, has also concomitantly set off concerns of its neighbours and the developed nations. Thus, the meetings of the Group of Seven and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation the week before the Chinese kicked off the CPC's centenary celebrations, sounded the alarm. The Chinese behaviour, said Nato, presented "systemic challenges". US President Joe Biden, to the immense relief of America's European allies after his predecessor Donald Trump's dithering, committed the United States fully to the alliance, calling the mutual defence mandate a "sacred obligation". This was a win for Mr Biden as the European allies have earlier been chary of naming and shaming China due to their dependence on Chinese markets. For instance, in 2020, Germany's trade with China was \$256 billion, as that of the US topped \$559 billion.

The two summits also brought the focus back on China's gross abuse of human rights in Xinjiang and the forced assimilation of Hong Kong. Of course, China called all such debates and resolutions "slander". Chinese irritation was understandable as the criticism came on the very eve of their centennial celebrations. It was also a personal affront for President Xi Jinping as the post-2008 Chinese

assertiveness has his imprint on it. Slowly he has tightened the leash of the CPC and increased his centralised control over almost all levers of power. The personality cult and re-education evangelism is a reminder more of Mao Zedong than any of his successors, including the creator of China's economic miracle Deng Xiaoping.

It was therefore not surprising that President Xi's address on July 1 provided the response to the critique. Dressed in a grey Mao button-up assemblage, though his usual attire is a business suit, he spoke at Beijing's Tiananmen Square from the very platform and stage used by Mao. He delivered a stern message, warning that China would not tolerate any attempt by foreign powers at bullying, oppressing or subjugating them. He spun China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), seen by most of the developed world and India as a debt trap and a means of creating permanent dependence on China, as an instrument for China to share the fruits of its development with developing and underdeveloped nations. A strong nation needs a strong military and China is fulfilling that need, he said. President Xi was addressing not just the 95 million-odd members of the CPC, or indeed other citizens of China, but the entire neighbourhood and the world beyond. It was a clarion call that China had now fully arrived and willing and able to match its wits with the United States.

Just in case countries like India did not get the message, a running commentary was provided in English publications like *Global Times*. Coincidentally, the centenary fell soon after India marked one year of the bloody Galwan clash between the armies of India and China. For decades China has consid-

ered India as an inferior power, incapable of mounting a challenge to it. However, the rising profile of the "Quad", US President Joe Biden persisting with his predecessor's sceptical line on China and the BJP's consolidation of domestic political power has combined to irk China. India therefore began to get elevated in Beijing's perception as a strategic rival, if not yet a threat. This explains the sudden Chinese incursions in Ladakh and reluctance to vacate forward military ingress at a number of points. China has always used the unsettled border as a pressure point to condition India's strategic conduct.

It is also noteworthy that when the 19th Central Committee Politburo of the CPC met on June 25, the focus was on party affairs, foreign policy and security and military matters. Under previous Presidents, post-Mao, much greater attention was paid to economic issues. It is worth examining whether the jingoism and strong language, evoking the powerful imagery that foreign bullies will "face broken heads and bloodshed", is a sign of confidence or deep worry?

Although the Chinese economy has recovered faster and better than the economies of the developed world during the Covid-19 pandemic, its exports have performed better than domestic consumption growth. There is also the Chinese worry over demographics as their population growth continues to fall below sustainable levels. There may also be murmurs within the party about President Xi's confrontational foreign policy as China now faces the potential danger

**There may be murmurs within the party about Xi's confrontational foreign policy as China now faces the potential danger of antagonists restraining it through cooperation and coordinated response**

of antagonists restraining it through cooperation and coordinated response. The Quad, with its implicit membership criteria being based on democratic credentials, presents an imminent threat. The fact that G-7 invited Australia, India, South Korea and South Africa as dialogue partners for the summit in the UK again underscored an attempt to align the interests of democracies across all continents. The direct or implicit message is that China is the new danger that needs to be contained by all means, including hard and soft power.

The *Global Times*, the perennial tool for disinformation and propaganda, warned India that because it cannot afford a "long and high-intensity confrontation" it should not try siding with the US in any power games in Indo-Pacific. Reports have been discounted that India had moved more troops to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in response to China's troop deployment surge. President Xi's jingoism may be more for domestic consolidation than international browbeating as the neighbourhood has known Chinese high-handedness for many years. Thus, the rhetoric does not add to the reality of Chinese unilateralism in real and invented disputes.

India's concerns would be heightened by the new drone-based terrorism from Pakistan and the rapidly succeeding Taliban in Afghanistan. China appears less worried about the Afghan imbroglio than Russia, having the Pakistani assurances in hand. Iran has a new and more conservative President, leaving a question mark over Iranian interests in Afghanistan. Iran's priority would be to get the US sanctions lifted and its nuclear programme restored. India can only hope that China will moderate its "wolf warrior" diplomacy and move towards a genuinely stabilising role in South Asia. However, events appear to be moving in the reverse direction after the American exit from Afghanistan.

*The writer is a former secretary in the external affairs ministry. He tweets at @ambkcsingh.*

### LETTERS

#### STAN SWAMY

The news of the death of Father Stan Swamy, an aged Jesuit priest and human rights activist, has sent shockwaves across all sections (*Stan Swamy passes away awaiting bail, DC, July 6*). People speaking out against inhumane acts and human rights violations are not criminals. Their trial, after their arrest over suspicion, should be done in the court of law in a time-bound manner. It is the collective responsibility of the Executive and the Judiciary that the law of the land works judiciously.

**Rajendrababu G. Secunderabad**

#### TOBACCO RAIDS

Recently many raids were conducted on the local source of banned tobacco products. I suggest that instead of troubling small traders, paan shops., the government should plug the main sources and fields where such products are grown. Also, they must maintain tight vigil at the state's borders.

**Vaddeti Venunath Hyderabad**

#### PADAYATRA

Padayatras are to be performed for propagating party's policies and programmes if they come to power (*Bandi plans padayatras to expose TRS 'misrule', DC July 5*). New TS Congress Pradesh Committee president A. Revanth Reddy is also planning one. Who will win the favour of people in 2024 elections is a million-dollar question indeed.

**N.S.R. Murthy Secunderabad**

### 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

#### Jazz king dead

NEW YORK, July 6.

Louis Armstrong is dead. The satchel-mouthed, eye-rolling one-time waif who learned to love the trumpet in Louisiana school and blew and sang his way into the hearts of millions the world over, died today. He was 71 on Sunday. Armstrong spent ten weeks in both Israel Hospital after winding up date at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in late February.

That was long way from the Waifs' Home in New Orleans where a 13-year-old boy got his first coronet. He was sent to the home for shooting off a revolver on New Year's eve.

Wolfgang Münchau



## Merkel's legacy: German leader leaves behind an Europe in chaos

Perhaps the most absurd thing I ever said about Angela Merkel is that she was the de facto leader of the Western world. She has certainly been one of Europe's most successful politicians, if you define success as political survival. But as she nears the end of her 16 years in office, her luck is deserting her and the mess she created is becoming apparent. She leaves behind a split EU that isn't just unled but might be unleadable.

Humiliating reminders of Ms Merkel's imploded authority come regularly. Take her latest idea to keep British tourists out of the EU this summer. Germany is imposing a mandatory 14-day quarantine for UK arrivals, whether they are vaccinated or not, and Ms Merkel wanted other EU states to do the same. Malta and Portugal refused, saying only the unvaccinated should quarantine. Spain said it wouldn't quarantine anyone who came with a negative test.

Ms Merkel's ban failed as it wasn't really about the virus but about the German elections. The nightmare scenario for her Christian Democratic Union is a rise of infections after the

summer holidays but before the September polls. It's unclear how banning British tourists would help to suppress Covid. The Delta variant is moving fast through Europe. It makes up 20 per cent of cases in Spain and 40 per cent in Austria.

An even more stark sign of the deterioration of EU unity came last week when a Franco-German proposal for a summit with Vladimir Putin triggered one of the most ill-tempered disputes ever seen in European politics. Ms Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron were irked because US President Joe Biden had recently been to Geneva to meet Mr Putin and, like children, they didn't want to be left out. Ms Merkel's idea was for all 27 EU nations to hold talks with the Kremlin. Former Communist states, the Baltic ones in particular, which feel under threat from a resurgent Mr Putin, were appalled. They saw it as a push for a softer approach towards Moscow.

The Baltic states were united in opposition with Poland and Romania. Mateusz Morawiecki, Poland's PM, said that a dialogue with Russia can only happen after Mr Putin ends his

aggressive policies towards Ukraine. Even Dutch PM Mark Rutte drew the line, noting Russia's involvement in the missile attack on the Malaysia Airlines MH17 flight that crashed in Ukraine while en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur. Gustav Gressel from the European Council on Foreign Relations wrote that Ms Merkel had destroyed her legacy in 24 hours.

I think it is worse than that. What we are witnessing is the birth of a new breed of Euroscepticism. Not the nationalist sort that led to Brexit and the rise of various right-wing parties, but a principled one that supports democracy and human rights and refuses, on principle, to get close to Moscow. This all amounts to a moment of great danger for the EU.

Perhaps Ms Merkel's most consequential act was not a strategic choice, but a spontaneous executive act: her decision to open Europe's borders for refugees in 2015. She did not consult with the coalition partners, nor with other EU member states — many of which are still living with the political ramifications of her decision. Where

was the leadership? She didn't stop to think about where this would end. In her entire 16 years as Chancellor, she never picked a battle with a genuine strategic advantage.

Her lasting legacy will be a recognition that "Europe" as a political entity — the idea of European strategic autonomy — has been tried and that it has failed. If neither Ms Merkel nor Mr Macron can "lead" Europe, then who can? Look at the field of their potential successors in Germany and France. No one else is on the horizon. So, the EU's future depends on weaning itself off the illusion of Franco-German leadership.

The failed summit proposal ended another European delusion: the idea that the EU can decide foreign policy by majority voting. To many in the EU, this is crucial if Brussels is to issue pronouncements on foreign events. Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission president, had said in September she's tired of "simple statements on EU values being delayed, watered down or held hostage for other motives". Wouldn't it be easier if the EU decided such issues by holding a vote?

But if majority voting was in place

this time, a majority of 20 countries would have been able to back Ms Merkel's plan for talks with Mr Putin. So the Baltics will never give up their veto, especially if they see a fundamental conflict between their interests and those of countries like Germany.

The Merkel years will come to be seen as the last hurrah of a bygone, late-industrial era. When it ends, people will ask the uncomfortable questions they didn't ask during her time: why did a rich country like Germany fail to invest in new technologies? Why did she refuse to lay solid foundations for the eurozone? Why did she do business with Mr Putin and make her country dependent on Russia's natural resources? Why did she agree to climate change targets and then fail to implement them?

I concluded some time ago that Ms Merkel is the most overrated political leader of our time. If she really had been the leader of the West, she would have done what she could to create a strong, united EU. Instead, we see bedlam. And that will be Ms Merkel's lasting legacy.

*By arrangement with the Spectator*



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52,861.18	-0.04
Nifty 50	15,818.30	-0.10
S&P 500*	4,326.13	-0.60
Dollar (₹)	74.55	-0.30
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.21	-0.25
Euro (₹)	88.26	-0.01
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,762,389	0.83
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	74.45	-3.51
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.175	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.360	-0.072

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## British Airways settles class action over data

British Airways settled a UK class-action lawsuit involving hundreds of thousands of customers caught up in a 2018 data breach. The settlement, for an undisclosed sum, followed the leak of the personal data of 420,000 customers and staff, including bank details, contact information and addresses. The deal between iAG-owned British Airways and law firm PGMBM doesn't include any admission of liability by the airline.

## Wipro commits ₹1,000 cr more for Covid-19 relief



Wipro's philanthropic arm has committed an additional Rs 1,000 crore of grants over and above the Rs 1,125-crore support it had announced in the early days of the pandemic last year, its founder chairman Azim Premji said. The additional grant will be directed primarily on universal vaccination, Premji said while speaking at the foundation day event of the Bombay Chartered Accountants' Society.

## Malabar Gold on hiring spree, with 5,000 vacancies

Malabar Gold and Diamonds announced hiring to fill more than 5,000 vacancies across its retail operations in India. The current vacancies are mainly in retail jewellery sales, store operations and accountants across India, along with other functions. Half of these openings are set aside for deserving female candidates. Internships and traineeships are also being offered for fresh BTech/MBA entrants to learn jewellery sales.

## IIFL Home Fin's unsecured NCDs offer 10% interest

IIFL Home Finance, a subsidiary of IIFL Finance, announced the public issue of unsecured non-convertible debentures (NCDs) with coupon rates ranging from 9.60 per cent to 10.00 per cent per annum for a tenure of 7 years and 3 months (87 months). The issue with a base issue size of Rs 100 crore with an option to retain oversubscription up to Rs 900 crore, has been rated AA by Crisil Ratings and Brickwork Ratings.



## Talks collapse after UAE puts foot down Saudis up prices after Opec+ feud

SERENE CHEONG, SHARON CHO & ANTHONY DI PAOLA JULY 6

Saudi Arabia raised oil prices for buyers from Asia to the US for August after Opec+ talks broke down just as the market was clamouring for more supply.

The Saudis, along with Russia, sought over the past week to rally other members around a plan to unwind production cuts incrementally and to extend their accord through to the end of next year. The proposal collapsed when the United Arab Emirates balked at keeping in place what it says is an unfair production baseline for its quota for longer.

In its main market of Asia, Saudi Aramco increased the official selling price, or OSP, for Arab Light crude by 80 cents a barrel to \$2.70 above the regional benchmark. That's the biggest month-on-month increase since January, and suggests the oil giant won't raise supply next month even as it sees the market tightening.

"With domestic demand peaking around August, there will be less crude available for exports unless they draw down from the inventories," said Giovanni Staunovo, a commodities analyst at UBS Group AG. "As the market was looking for a slightly smaller OSP increase for Asia, Asian refineries can't expect additional vol-



umes from Saudi Arabia."

The kingdom sends more than 60 per cent of its crude exports to Asia, with China, Japan, South Korea and India being the biggest buyers. Last month, it shipped 5.7 million barrels a day globally, according to preliminary data compiled by Bloomberg.

Oil futures and physical markets have strengthened with widespread virus vaccinations supporting demand. The breakdown in Opec+ talks means current production limits will remain in place for August, likely leading to a deeper supply deficit.

Crude could rise to as high as \$90 a barrel with oil higher output, Fereidun Fesharaki, chairman of industry consultant FGE, said in a Bloomberg Television interview. He said a compromise between the feuding Opec nations was likely.

**Reuters adds from London:** Oil prices were heading towards three-year highs on Tuesday, towing petrocurrencies and bond yields with

them, after the world's main oil producers failed to agree on production plans.

Europe's stocks spluttered at the prospect of faster inflation. China had spooked its tech sector too with another high profile clamp down, but the main action was all around the black stuff.

The Opec+ were forced to abandon talks on Monday after the UAE had rejected an eight-month extension to output curbs.

Some Opec+ sources said there would be no oil output increase in August, while others said a new meeting would take place in the coming days and they believed there will be a boost in August.

Crude traders were not hanging around to find out. They pushed Brent up as far as \$77.66—the highest level since October 2018—and US crude to its highest since late 2014 at \$76.90 a barrel. Oil is up roughly 50 per cent this year and over 385 per cent since last year's Covid-driven slump.

## Govt plans to develop 10 'freight smart cities'

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JULY 6

The Centre has asked state governments to identify ten cities which can be developed as 'freight smart cities'.

Since final-mile freight movement accounts for 50 per cent of logistics costs in e-commerce supply chains in India, the commerce ministry has come up with a plan to develop freight smart cities, starting with 10 cities in the initial phase, with the ambition to scale it up to 75 cities in the next phase.

The focus of the cities should be on the quick-wins like developing peri-urban freight centres, night-time deliveries, creating truck routes, using Intelligent Transportation Systems and other modern technologies and promoting electrification of urban freight, parcel delivery terminals and the like.

The Centre has asked state governments to set up institutional mechanisms for the same by involving private stakeholders like logistics services providers, users and citizens.

On this, the Logistics Division of the ministry is working closely with Germany's GIZ under Indo-German Development Cooperation. Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India. A challenge could also be announced to encourage the participation in the initiative.

## After SBI, ICICI Bank too revises ATM charges

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, JULY 6



After State Bank of India, private lender ICICI Bank is all set to change rules and charges for cash withdrawals from ATMs, cheque books and other financial transactions for domestic savings accounts, including salary accounts. The revised charges would come into effect from August 1.

According to the bank's website, four cash transactions per month are free, after which the bank would charge Rs 150 per transaction. The cash transactions include both deposits and withdrawals at ICICI bank branches.

At the home branch, the value limit for ICICI Bank customers would be Rs 1 lakh free cash transaction per month, per account. To deposit or withdraw more than the fixed

amount, ICICI bank account-holders need to pay Rs 5 per Rs 1,000, subject to a minimum of Rs 150. For non-home branch, cash transactions up to Rs 25,000 per day is free. Above Rs 25,000, the bank would charge Rs 5 per Rs 1,000, subject to a minimum of Rs 150. For third party cash transaction, up to a limit of Rs 25,000 per transaction, the charge would be Rs 150 per transaction.

Customers will get three free cash withdrawals from non-ICICI Bank

ATMs in six metro cities (Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Hyderabad) in a month. In all other locations, first five transactions will be free. Beyond this limit, the bank will charge Rs 20 per financial transaction and Rs 8.50 per non-financial transactions.

Cheque book fee will be nil for 25 payable-at-par cheque leaves in a year; Rs 20 for every additional cheque book of 10 leaves.

For regular plus salary accounts, no charges will be levied for the first four transactions in a month; thereafter Rs 5 per Rs 1,000 or part thereof, subject to a minimum of Rs 150 in the same month.

A few days ago, State Bank of India introduced new rules and charges for cash withdrawals from its ATMs and bank branches from July 1.

## GST collections fall below ₹1 lakh crore

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, JULY 6

Hit by the second wave, GST collections for June slipped below the Rs 1-lakh crore mark after a gap of eight months.

The gross GST revenue collected in June stood at Rs 92,849 crore against Rs 1,02,709 crore in May. But the mop-up is 2 per cent higher than that of Rs 90,917 crore in June 2020.

GST collections have remained above Rs 1 lakh crore for eight months in a row since September 2020. The collections for June for

the business transactions made during May, when most of the states were under either complete or partial lock down. In May, only 3.99 crore e-way bills were generated compared to 5.88 crore in April, down by more than 30 per cent, the government said.

Further, taxpayers with a turnover of up to Rs 5 crore were given waiver and reduction in interest on delayed return filing for 15 days.

The government expects the collections to increase again from July. With the reduction in virus caseload

and easing of lockdowns, the e-way bills generated during June stood at 5.5 crore, indicating recovery of trade and business.

Despite declining to a 10-month low, the June 2021 GST collections provided a positive surprise, says Aditi Nayar, chief economist, Iera.

The collections were significantly higher for the April-June quarter. The GST collections in the June quarter are nearly twice as high as the same quarter last year, highlighting the narrower impact of the second wave, Nayar said.

## PINE LABS CLOSES \$600 MN FUND RAISING ROUND

SARITHA RAI JULY 6

Pine Labs Pvt Ltd, a payments platform for merchants, closed a \$600 million fundraising round with some of the world's largest investors, including Fidelity Management & Research Company and BlackRock Inc, as it targets a public offering within 18 months.

The Singapore-based startup, which offers solutions for in-store and online payments as well as prepaid, loyalty and "pay later" programmes, is valued at \$3 billion, CEO Amrish Rau said. Investors participating in the round included a fund advised by Neuberger Berman Group LLC and India's IIFL Finance Ltd. and Kotak Funds.

"It's a product from India that's succeeded in Malaysia and Singapore and is entering Indonesia and Thailand," Rau said in an interview via video call. "We've got a good, Ebitda-positive story as we plan our IPO in the next 18 months." The IPO will likely take place in the US, Rau said. — Bloomberg

## Sumitomo Mitsui to acquire Fullerton Credit for \$2.5 bn

FC BANKING BUREAU MUMBAI, JULY 6

In what is billed as the first entry into India's retail financial business by a Japanese bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group Inc (SMFG) on Tuesday reached an agreement with Fullerton Financial Holdings (FFH) to acquire a 74.9 per cent stake in the Indian firm's non-banking arm, Fullerton India Credit Company, in a reported

\$2.5 billion deal.

SMFG, Japan's second-largest lender, will eventually acquire 100 per cent of Fullerton India Credit Company (FICC).

Sources said Sumitomo will pay around \$2 billion for the 74.9 per cent stake in the first leg of the deal.

Fullerton Financial is a unit of Singapore's state investment fund Temasek Holdings Pte.

"This investment brings together SMFG's Asian push towards consumer

and MSME lending, with FICC's expertise in serving mass-market consumers and MSME customers in India," said a statement from Fullerton India.

"We intend to leverage our expertise in Japan market as well as capabilities of our franchisees across key emerging Asian markets," said Jun Ohta, president & group CEO of SMFG.

"India is one of our focus markets where we believe in its high growth potential

and want to build a deeper presence," added Ohta.

Faced with weak growth prospects at home, Sumitomo Mitsui has been allocating resources to Asia's emerging markets in recent years. The bank took control of Indonesian lender PT Bank Tabungan Pensiunan Nasional in 2019 after acquiring a minority stake earlier. Sumitomo Mitsui is looking for targets in Vietnam, the Philippines and India, Ohta said in December.

## DIAMOND: ALROSA ADDS TRACK AND TRACE FEATURE

YULIYA FEDORINOVA JULY 6

Russia's Alrosa PJSC is offering diamond buyers a new laser-marking technology that will allow customers to trace rough stones and polished gems from the mine to the jewelry store.

Alrosa applies a so-called nano mark to the atomic structure of the diamond, replicating a process that occurs in stones over millions of years, said Oleg Kovalchuk, a researcher at Alrosa's institute in Siberia. The physical mark is only visible with a special scanner, and differs from other modern tracing techniques based on keeping a digital copy of the gem, including with blockchain, or laser engraving, which can be polished off, Alrosa said.

"By purchasing jewellery with a diamond protected by a nano mark, the buyer can be sure that it is actually made by Alrosa," CEO Sergey Ivanov said.

The diamond industry has worked hard to reassure consumers that its stones aren't linked to the gems-for-weapons dealing that sullied its reputation in the wake of wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Angola. While so-called "blood diamonds" were addressed in the 2002 agreement known as the Kimberly Process, more recent trafficking in precious stones from countries such as Central African Republic have highlighted the need to trace the origin of gems. — Bloomberg

SMART | FOAM

New material allows robots to sense nearby objects

## Robots get ability to self-heal

TRAVIS TEO & LEE YING SHAN SINGAPORE, JULY 6



Singapore researchers have developed a smart foam material that allows robots to sense nearby objects, and repairs itself when damaged, just like human skin.

Artificially innervated foam, or AiFoam, is a highly elastic polymer created by mixing fluoropolymer with a compound that lowers surface tension.

This allows the spongy material to fuse easily into one piece when cut, according to the researchers at the National University of Singapore.

"There are many applications for such a materi-

al, especially in robotics and prosthetic devices, where robots need to be a lot more intelligent when working around humans," explained lead researcher Benjamin Tee.

To replicate the human sense of touch, the researchers infused the material with microscopic metal particles and added tiny electrodes underneath the surface of the foam.

When pressure is applied, the metal particles draw closer within the polymer matrix, changing their electrical properties.

These changes can be detected by the electrodes connected to a computer, which then tells the robot what to do, Tee said.

"When I move my finger near the sensor, you can see the sensor is measuring the changes of my

electrical field and responds accordingly to my touch," he said.

This feature enables the robotic hand to detect not only the amount but also the direction of applied force, potentially making robots more intelligent and interactive.

Tee said AiFoam is the first of its kind to combine both self-healing properties and proximity and pressure sensing. After spending over two years developing it, he and his team hope the material can be put to practical use within five years.

"It can also allow prosthetic users to have more intuitive use of their robotic arms when grabbing objects," he said.

— Reuters



## SHORT TAKES

## Mithali reclaims No.1 rank in ODIs

**Dubai:** India skipper Mithali Raj on Tuesday reclaimed the number one spot in the women's ODI rankings after more than three years following a stellar show in the three-match series against England. India lost the series 1-2 but the 38-year-old Raj hit a half-century in each of the contest. She struck 72 and 59 in the first two ODIs and then guided India to a four-wicket victory in the final match of the series with an unbeaten 75, gaining four spots to reach the top of the ladder. She last occupied the top spot in February 2018. The first time she reached number one position was in April 2005 after scoring an unbeaten 91 against New Zealand at the World Cup in Potchefstroom and the difference of more than 16 years at No.1 is the largest for any woman batter. — *PTI*

## Rashid to lead Afghan T20 side

**New Delhi:** Star leg-spinner Rashid Khan was appointed captain of Afghanistan's T20 team keeping the ICC T20 World Cup scheduled to be held in UAE from October 17 to November 14 in mind. Left-handed batsman Najibullah Zadran was appointed as the vice-captain of the team. "Rashid, one of the well-known global faces of the game, was selected by senior ACB leadership led by ACB Chairman Farhan Yousefzai, for the role considering his experience, brilliant performance as well as leadership skills with the National team over the years," Afghanistan Cricket Board said in a statement. Rashid, who is ranked world no 2 among bowlers, had earlier declined Afghanistan captaincy, saying that he believes he is more valuable as a player. — *PTI*

## Anand returns to action after a year

**Zagreb:** Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand will resume his storied rivalry with Russian legend Garry Kasparov in the Croatia Grand Chess Tour Rapid and Blitz tournament beginning here on Wednesday, returning to over-the-board action after more than a year. The Indian maestro's last over-the-board event was in March 2020. Anand will be featuring in both the rapid and blitz segments, while his long-time rival and former world champion Kasparov will take part only in the blitz event. Anand and Kasparov, who retired in 2005, have been involved in several memorable matches including the 1995 PCA World final in New York in 1995. — *PTI*

## Injured Hima vows to return stronger

**New Delhi:** Star Indian sprinter Hima Das on Tuesday vowed to make a strong comeback in the major events next year after missing the Tokyo Olympics due to an injury. "I will miss the Olympics due to untimely injury when I was close to achieve the qualification standard in my new event 100m and 200m," Hima said. "I would like to thank my coaches, support staff and my teammates for their continuous support. But I will make a strong comeback and looking forward to Commonwealth Games 2022, Asian Games 2022 and World Championship 2022." — *PTI*

## Australian Grand Prix cancelled

**Melbourne:** The Australian F1 Grand Prix has been cancelled after local organisers and Formula One couldn't come up with a compromise over Australia's strict travel and quarantine issues relating to the Covid-19 pandemic. The race was postponed from its original season-opening spot on March 21 and had been rescheduled for November 21. The 2020 Australian GP in Melbourne last March was called off at the last minute at the start of the coronavirus pandemic shutdown. — *AP*

## Live on TV

EURO

Semifinal-2: England vs Denmark from 12.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2

Printed and Published from Karimnagar by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited at Deccan Chronicle Press, H.No. 1-2/12/1, Cherlabhathkur Road, Mugdampur Village, Karimnagar - 505 166 Telangana State Regd. No. H/SP-2/2K RNI Registration No. APDNG/2001/04766 Ph: 9121181123 Gms: CHRONICLE Editor: Kaushik Mitter

## IN THE LIONS' DEN

## Denmark wander into Wembley, to take on England

**London, July 6:** England are shouldering rising expectations. Denmark are powered by resilience and recovery.

And emotions will be high at Wembley Stadium before their European Championship semifinal match even kicks off on Wednesday when there will be a moment to remember the tournament's most harrowing incident and the player who won't be playing for Denmark.

The England squad has signed a No.10 jersey emblazoned with Christian Eriksen's name that will be handed to Denmark captain Simon Kjær by England counterpart Harry Kane.

The England players were on a bus traveling to London from their training base to prepare for their opening game of Euro 2020 on June 12 when Eriksen collapsed on the field while playing against Finland. He had to be resuscitated with a defibrillator.

"We saw it on the screens. I was close with Christian. The most important thing is he is getting better," said England defender Kieran Trippier, a former teammate of Eriksen's at Tottenham.

Perhaps what is most remarkable is that while Eriksen recovers from his cardiac arrest, Denmark have managed to reach the semifinals for the first time since unexpectedly winning the European Championship in 1992.

After losing the opening two games, the Danes looked on the verge of elimination. But they got used to the formation switch from 4-2-3-1 to 3-4-3 and beat Russia in their final group game to advance before ousting Wales and the Czech Republic.

Kasper Dolberg has scored three goals, Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg has been excellent and Kasper Schmeichel has provided leadership even beyond his saves in goal. "We had to pinch ourselves in the arms sometimes to realise what we've achieved," midfielder Christian Norgaard said. — *AP*

## HUBERT HURRICANE

## Poland's Hurkacz knocks out second seed Medvedev

**London, July 6:** Hubert Hurkacz became just the fourth Polish man to reach the Wimbledon quarter-finals on Tuesday with a five-set win over Russian second seed Daniil Medvedev.

World number 18 Hurkacz triumphed 2-6, 7-6 (7/2), 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a match held over from Monday due to rain and will now face Roger Federer for a place in the semi-finals.

"For this sport, Roger is unbelievable, what he does, how he plays and the titles he has won throughout his career. He inspired so many people and it's going to be fun," said Hurkacz.

The Pole has only met Federer once — a straight sets loss at Indian Wells in the quarter-finals in 2019.

His run to the Wimbledon last-eight is impressive as he had won just one match on tour between his surprise Miami Masters title in March and the start of Wimbledon.

That dismal streak included defeat in the first round of the French Open to world number 154 Botic Van de Zandschulp and first-up losses in the grass court events at Stuttgart and Halle.

The defeat in Stuttgart was particularly painful as it came at the hands of Dominic Stricker, ranked a lowly 335 at the time.

## KERBER IN SEMIS

Former champion Angelique Kerber reached the Wimbledon semi-finals for the fourth time with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Karolina Muchova of the Czech Republic.

The German world number 28, who won the title in 2018, will face either top seed Ashleigh Barty or Ajla



England captain Harry Kane (right) warms up with teammates during a training session at St George's Park on Tuesday, ahead of their Euro semifinal against Denmark. — *AP*

## Fab five out to make mark

**London, July 6:** England manager Gareth Southgate has been able to regularly change his team, with a plethora of attacking talent at his disposal.

Here is a look at five England players who could make an impact off the bench if not named in the starting line-up:

## JACK GREALISH

The Aston Villa forward has impressed during the tournament despite seeing limited game time. The 25-year-old, who has been linked with a move to Manchester City, set up Raheem Sterling's winner on his only start in the final group game against the Czech Republic. "This is what I was born to do. I

can't wait," he said before the Last-16 match against Germany, when he came off the bench to claim another assist, for Harry Kane.

He did not feature in the quarter-final thrashing of Ukraine at the Stadio Olimpico, so will be fresh if called upon by Southgate this week.

## PHIL FODEN

The 21-year-old enjoyed a stellar season for Manchester City, scoring 16 goals in all competitions as Pep Guardiola's men won the Premier League and reached the Champions League final.

Foden was widely tipped to be one of the stars of Euro 2020, but after starting England's opening two

matches, has not played since.

## JADON SANCHO

When England were struggling to create chances during the group stage, Southgate was criticised by pundits and supporters for not giving a chance to Sancho, who made one late substitute appearance across the first four games. But he started in Rome and caught the eye with his dribbling skills and direct style of play.

## BUKAYO SAKA

The Arsenal teenager was a slightly surprising selection in the 26-man squad ahead of Jesse Lingard, but has more than played his part in England's run.

Saka shone against the Czech Republic and then kept his place in the starting line-up for the Germany match, only to miss out on the quarter-final with an injury. Southgate has the luxury of choosing between Foden, Sancho and Saka for a spot on the right wing.

## MARCUS RASHFORD

The most experienced player on this list is the only one yet to make a start at Euro 2020, although the winger is carrying foot and shoulder injuries and is expected to undergo surgery following the tournament.

Rashford has scored 12 goals in 45 international appearances. — *AFP*

## SURYA TO START FROM SCRATCH IN LANKA SERIES

**Colombo, July 6:** The high of a successful debut series behind him, Indian batsman Suryakumar Yadav on Tuesday said he would be looking to "start from the scratch" in the upcoming limited-overs assignment against Sri Lanka, eager to learn from "calm and composed" head coach Rahul Dravid. "It will be a great challenge and I am really looking forward to it," said the Mumbai batsman.

Asked if a successful debut series would help him cope better with the pressure, Yadav said, "Everytime you go in or play a different game, you start from scratch," he added. — *PTI*

## BHUVI RELISHES RESPONSIBILITY AS VICE-CAPTAIN

**Colombo, July 6:** Senior India speedster and vice-captain for the ongoing tour of Sri Lanka, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, says his role as Shikhar Dhawan's deputy would be to help other players in "improving their skills and mental health" during the upcoming limited-overs series.

"But I don't think things will change. I think being a senior player my role is to do things that help other players in improving their skills and mental health," Bhuvneshwar.

"I have played against Rahul Dravid (coach) and he was a part of the RCB team just when I got inducted into the team. When I got to the NCA, we did have some chats," he added. — *PTI*

## COPA | SEMIFINAL

## Paqueta powers Brazil past Peru

**Rio De Janeiro, July 6:** Star forward Neymar set up Lucas Paqueta to score the only goal as hosts Brazil beat Peru 1-0 on Monday to qualify for the Copa America final.

The semi-final was a repeat of the last final, two years ago, when a Brazil team shorn of the injured Neymar also triumphed on home soil.

The Selecao will play either Lionel Messi's Argentina or Colombia, who meet in Brasilia on Wednesday, in Saturday's final at Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium.

Brazil totally dominated the first half at the empty Nilton Santos stadium in Rio but had to survive some nervous moments after the break before securing a spot in the final.

They opened up Peru on eight minutes as Paqueta's pass sent Richarlison in behind the defense, but after beating goalkeeper Pedro Gallese to the ball, the forward tried to pull it back to Neymar who blazed high and wide under pressure.

Gallese spilled a fierce Casemiro free-kick from distance but gathered the loose ball before winger Everton could turn in the rebound.

Brazil were turning the screw and Everton cut in off the right flank but shot straight at Gallese. The Peruvian shot-stopper was the busiest player on the pitch in the first quarter and after saving another Casemiro piledriver from distance he made an incredible double point blank save from Neymar and then Richarlison.

And when Gallese suffered a rush of blood to the head and charged out of his area only to be beaten to the ball by Richarlison, Brazil couldn't capitalize as Peru's defenders threw themselves in front of Everton's shot.

Peru were non-existent as an attacking force and when they did manage to win a corner just after the half hour, they ended up playing the ball all the way back to Gallese. Brazil deservedly took the lead 10 minutes before halftime after Peru gave the ball away in midfield for the umpteenth time. — *AFP*



Lucas Paqueta (left) and Neymar of Brazil celebrate after the former scored the goal against Peru during a Copa America semifinal in Rio de Janeiro on Monday. — *AP*

## Olympic briefs

## Maiden Games berth for Mane

**U**dayan Mane on Tuesday officially booked himself a maiden Olympic berth, becoming the second Indian male golfer after Anirban Lahiri to be Tokyo-bound for the mega-event starting July 23. The 30-year-old Mane, currently the second-highest ranked Indian in the world at 356, was all set to make the cut after Argentina's Emiliano Grillo announced his withdrawal from the quadrennial event on June 24. The official announcement was made on Tuesday with Mane finding himself at the 60th spot in the Olympic golf ranking list which was made available on the International Golf Federation's (IGF) website.

## Coach Gopichand opts out

**C**hief National coach Pulella Gopichand, who guided India to two Olympic medals, has opted out of India's Olympic-bound badminton contingent to create space for Indonesian Agus Dwi Santosa, who trains singles shuttler B. Sai Praneeth. Gopichand, under whose guidance Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu claimed a bronze and a silver medal at London and Rio Games respectively, opted out after the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) cleared only five-members support staff, that includes three coaches and two physios.

## COVID | OUTBREAK

## England forced to pick new team

**London, July 6:** England were forced to select a completely new group of players and management on Tuesday for the one-day international series against Pakistan after the coronavirus infected three players and four members of staff.

The initially selected squad went into isolation following the results of tests taken on Monday, a day after the team's last ODI against Sri Lanka in Bristol. The names of those who tested positive have not been disclosed. The remainder of the group were identified as close contacts.

The three ODIs and three Twenty20s against Pakistan, starting on Thursday with the first ODI in Cardiff, were still going ahead and at the same venues.

Ashley Giles, director of England's men's cricket, said he was confident there

had not been a breach of coronavirus protocols in the squad but that it was a natural consequence of restrictions being slightly eased around the squad in line with general society, despite cases rising in England because of the delta variant.

The players, for example, have been staying in shared hotels as opposed to living in strict bio-secure bubbles like last summer.

"Given this variant, which is clearly more infectious, the risks of us catching an infection was going to go up," Giles said on a video call. — *AP*

**Revised squad:** Ben Stokes (captain), Jake Ball, Danny Briggs, Brydon Carse, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Lewis Gregory, Tom Helm, Will Jacks, Dan Lawrence, Saqib Mahmood, Dawid Malan, Craig Overton, Matt Parkinson, David Payne, Phil Salt, John Simpson, James Vince.