

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
VIJAYAWADA | THURSDAY | 8 JULY 2021

WEATHER

Max: 35.0°C
Min: 27.0°C
RH: 81%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy.
Max/Min temp.
35/27 °C

ASTROGUIDE

Plava: Uttarayana
Tithi: Jyeshtha Bahula Chaturdasi
till 5.16 am (Friday)
Star: Mrigasira till 8.55 pm
Varjyam: Nil
Durmuhurtam: 10.11 am to
11.03 am; 3.23 pm to 4.15 pm
Rahukalam: 1.30 am to 3 pm
HIJRI CALENDAR
Zeeqad 26,1441 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.15 am
Zohar: 1.30 pm
Asar: 5.15 pm
Maghrib: 6.52 pm
Isha: 8.30 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.40 AM
SUNSET TODAY 6.44 PM
MOONRISE TODAY 3.58 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 6.20 PM

COUNTER POINT



I shall discharge my duties, if any, without fear and favour...

SHORT TAKES

EX-MINISTER'S WIFE MURDERED IN DELHI

New Delhi, Jul 7: Kitty Kumaramangalam, the wife of the late Union minister P. Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, was smothered to death during an attempted robbery at her home in southwest Delhi's Vasant Vihar, police said on Wednesday.
She was 67 years old and a lawyer. She had been living alone since the demise of her husband a few years ago, they said.
The police said they suspect attempted robbery to be the motive behind the killing and have arrested a 24-year-old washerman, identified as Raju, and his 34-year-old associate Rakesh Raj and a driver.

■ Full report on Page 4

SC asks status of info commissions

New Delhi: The SC directed the Centre and states to file status reports in four weeks on compliance with its 2019 verdict for time-bound filling up of posts of Information Commissioners at CIC and state panels under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. The SC said the process must start two months before they arise.

Nandigram: HC judge recuses

Kolkata: Justice Kausik Chanda of the Calcutta High Court recused from hearing West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's petition challenging the election of the BJP candidate Suwendu Adhikari from Nandigram, while imposing a cost of ₹5 lakh for the manner in which his recusal was sought.

IT rules: Portals not immune

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday refused to grant any interim protection from coercive action to digital media portals as it adjourned their challenge to the new IT rules after being informed that a plea has been moved by the Central government to transfer them to the Supreme Court.



NATION | 4

Jaishankar meets new Iranian Prez

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WORLD | 5

Haiti president assassinated at home

SPORTS | 6

Federer falls in Wimbledon quarters



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Kishan elevated to Cabinet rank

● Reddy is culture, tourism minister ● Cabinet rejig guided by UP elections

YOJNA GUSAI | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

Keeping in mind caste equations and regional aspirations ahead of crucial Assembly polls, especially in Uttar Pradesh, and the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the much-awaited reshuffle and expansion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Council of Ministers finally took place on Wednesday with the induction of many new, young leaders, some expected promotions and at least three shocking departures.

A total of 43 leaders were administered oath of office by President Ram Nath Kovind, and the new faces included former Shiv Sena leader and a political heavyweight from Maharashtra's Konkani, Narayan Rane, former Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia, former Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, senior BJP leader Bhupendra Yadav, JD(U)'s R.C.P. Singh and LJP's Pashupati Kumar Paras, all getting Cabinet rank. Mansukh Mandaviya, Anurag Thakur, G. Kishan Reddy, Hardeep Puri, Kiren Rijiju, R.K. Singh and Purushottam Rupala, who were ministers of state, have been promoted as Cabinet ministers.

Later in the evening portfolios of ministers were announced with Mr Mandaviya getting the health portfolio, Anurag Thakur getting I&B as

● ANURAG THAKUR got I&B as well as sports and youth affairs, Hardeep Puri got petroleum, urban and housing, G. Kishan Reddy got culture, tourism and development of North-east, and Kiren Rijiju got law and justice.

● JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA got civil aviation ministry, which his father once had.

well as sports and youth affairs, Hardeep Puri getting petroleum, urban and housing, G. Kishan Reddy getting culture, tourism and development of North-east, and Kiren Rijiju getting law and justice.

Among the new entrant in the Council of Ministers, Sarbananda Sonowal got Ayush, port, shipping and waterways, Ashwini Vaishnav got Railways, communication and IT, Bhupendra Yadav got environment and labour ministries, Jyotiraditya Scindia got civil aviation, Pashupati Kumar Paras got food processing, Ashwini Vaishnav got Railways, IT and communications. Meenakshi Lekhi is MoS, external affairs and culture, while home minister Amit Shah will now be assisted by three MoS -- Nishith Parmanik, Ajay Kumar along with Nityanand Rai, who was inducted in 2019.

■ Page 4: Cooperation ministry for Amit Shah



Union minister G. Kishan Reddy with Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the swearing-in ceremony in New Delhi on Wednesday.

12 ministers quit posts ahead of Cabinet rejig

New Delhi, July 7: Four senior Union ministers — Ravi Shankar Prasad, Prakash Javadekar, Harsh Vardhan, Ramesh Chaudhury, Minister of State for Jal Shakti Rattan Lal Kataria, Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Pratap Chandra Sarangi and Minister of State for Environment Babul Supriyo also resigned.

Besides them, Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister D V Sadananda Gowda, Labour Minister Santosh

Gangwar, Minister of State for Education Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Women and Child Development Debasree Chaudhuri, Minister of State for Jal Shakti Rattan Lal Kataria, Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Pratap Chandra Sarangi and Minister of State for Environment Babul Supriyo also resigned.

■ Page 4: Ex-ministers change Twitter bio

VARDHAN OUT DUE TO POOR COVID SHOW

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first big Cabinet shakeup in his second term government saw the departure of three big names — health minister Harsh Vardhan, I&B minister Prakash Javadekar and information technology and law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

The apparent mishandling of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic finally cost the "good doctor", Harsh Vardhan, his portfolio. Dr Vardhan submitted his resignation from the Union council of ministers ahead of Wednesday evening's swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The second wave of the pandemic, that claimed over one lakh lives, damaged the image of the Prime Minister and his government both nationally and internationally. The second wave also exposed simmering cracks in the health infrastructure and the failure of the administration to provide basic healthcare like oxygen cylinders.

■ Page 4: Vax crisis also hit Vardhan hard

No curfew for 16 hours in 11 districts from today

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

In a big relief to people of all walks of the society, the 16-hour relaxation in Covid-19 curfew will come into effect on Thursday across the state, barring Godavari district. The curfew will continue for eight hours from 10 pm to 6 am.

Cinema theatres, eateries, restaurants, marriage halls and gyms across the state can start functioning with 50 per cent capacity following Covid-19 protocols. The government instructed the following of wearing masks, physical distance and using of sanitisers as mandatory. All commercial establishments can function up to 9 pm and one hour of time for closure would be given till 10 pm.

East Godavari and West Godavari districts, where Covid-19 positivity rate continued to be higher, will continue to have a curfew from 7 pm to 6 am. APSRTC has also decided

● All commercial establishments can function up to 9 pm by following all mandatory Covid-19 protocols and one hour of time for closure would be given till 10 pm.

● Cinema theatres, eateries, restaurants, marriage halls and gyms across the state can start functioning with 50 per cent capacity following Covid-19 protocols.

to increase bus services. RTC had incurred losses as buses had gone off the road during the lockdown. Now the RTC management is prepared to relaunch long-distance services from Thursday to Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Kurnool, Srisailem, Kadapa, Anantapur and other places.

The curfew was imposed on May 5 after Covid-19 infections surged in the

state. The government began relaxing curfew timings based on the gradual decline in Corona-virus infections.

AP Hotels Association joint secretary M. Madhusudhan Rao said hotels and restaurants are the worst affected businesses in the lockdown.

"There is a good response after the state government relaxed curfew. We expecting further boost now as relaxation was extended till 10 pm. We have informed our workers, who had gone back to their home towns in neighbouring states, to rejoin duties," Madhusudhan Rao said.

A commercial mall manager, N. Nagarjuna Rao, said footfall continued to be poor at malls and theatres as people continued to be apprehensive of spending money after the second wave. He said a majority of people are giving priority to essential items.

Schools will reopen from Aug. 16, teachers to get vax

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday said schools in the state will reopen from August 16 in view of declining Covid-19 cases. He also instructed officials to vaccinate teachers by August 15.

During a review meeting on Nadu-Nedu works in the CM Camp office at Tadepalli on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said workbook activities will be conducted for students from July 15 to August 15. "Teachers will correct those workbooks and give appropriate instructions for the children in those books."

He directed the officials to prepare the implementation of the Vidya Kakuka scheme in August and check if all items such as textbooks, bags, uniforms, notebooks, shoes and belts being provided under the Vidya Kanuka Scheme are ready for distribution.



Teachers should be available as per student-teacher ratio. No school in the state should be closed and no teacher should be laid off.

— Y.S. JAGAN MOHAN REDDY
Chief Minister

He also inspected the Oxford English-to-Telugu dictionary, which will be provided to the students under the Vidya Kanuka Scheme.

He asserted that Nadu-Nedu works, including the release of funds, should be

completed as per the schedule.

The officials informed the Chief Minister that they have mapped Anganwadi centres according to the proposals of New Education Policy. They said it is estimated that at least 21,654 new classrooms need to be constructed, which is in addition to Phase-1 and Phase-2 of Nadu Nedu works.

The Chief Minister said teachers should be available as per student-teacher ratio and that no school should be closed and no teacher should be laid off.

The officials said they planned to start the second phase of Nadu-Nedu works in August and complete them by March 2022 and added that the first phase of Nadu Nedu works will be completed by August. The Chief Minister will dedicate to the nation the schools revamped under the first phase of the Nadu-Nedu project.

Jagan wants projects under Krishna board

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday demanded that the Central government notify the jurisdiction of Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) and bring all reservoirs in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state under the board's control with CISF security.

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister said these measures will help in the effective operation and maintenance of reservoirs, in the interest of both the states and in compliance with the provisions of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014.

He stated that earlier he had highlighted the belligerent attitude of the TS in violation of the operational protocol of common reservoirs of AP and Telangana on the Krishna river on July 1. "But Telangana continues to blatantly violate norms and orders of the KRMB, depriving AP of water."

He said the intention of the TS government was to deprive the state of AP of its due share of allocated water as the draws will be delayed considerably.

■ Page 2: Jagan says TS is drawing extra water

LEGENDARY | JOURNEY 'Tragedy king' given stately sendoff

Dilip's death 'unites' India, Pak

SUPARNA SHARMA | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

Three generations of Indians and Pakistanis united on Wednesday to mourn the passing of Mohammed Yusuf Khan and to pay homage to an immortal actor and a legend as he was laid to rest at the Juhu kabristan.

Dilip Kumar, an actor, writer, occasional singer and intellectual, whose 65 films serve as milestones in the history of Indian cinema as well as in the making of a modern, Independent India, died on Wednesday at Mumbai's Hinduja Hospital after prolonged illness. He was 98



Dilip Kumar

and is survived by his wife, Saira Banu.

Khan, known simultaneously and, perhaps, prophetically, as India's Tragedy King and Nehru's hero, was given a solemn, stately send-off. Before his body was consigned to the earth, the Tricolour was draped around him.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and several Bollywood stars, including Shah Rukh Khan, Ranbir Kapoor, Karan Johar and Vidya Balan, visited the actor's Bandra residence to pay their last respects. Amitabh Bachchan attended the burial ceremony as a tearful Saira Banu looked on at the cemetery.

The passing of Dilip Kumar, who was born in 1922 in Peshawar and named Mohammed Yusuf Khan, leaves yet another solemn milestone in the history of India.

It marks the end of an idea that died on the celluloid and off it long ago, but

whose aura and promise lingered in the life and works of Dilip Kumar, and in the hearts of many Indians. It was the idea of an India that was shaped on ground by Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Ambedkar, but celebrated and reinforced on screen by India's film industry whose directors, writers and stars carried the sunshine and bounce of a newly-Independent India with the pledge of a secular, socialist state when they hummed, *Suhana hafar aur ye mausam sasein...*

■ Page 4: Bollywood's first Khan found at age of 19

SHORT TAKES

YSRC LODGES
PLAINT ON SOCIAL
MEDIA GROUPSDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

The YSRC Congress lodged a complaint with Andhra Pradesh CID, seeking action against abusive/fake news being spread against CM Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on various social media groups.

YSRC General Secretary and MLA Lella Appi Reddy and others filed a complaint with P. V. Sunil Kumar, ADG, AP CID, here on Wednesday. They alleged that a few social media groups were indulging in spreading hatred and fake news, along with morphed content, targeting CM Jagan Mohan Reddy. They requested stringent action against the admins of such groups, noting that these groups/accounts were repeatedly and intentionally indulging in such behaviour. They also sought suspension of all such social media accounts, which were in violation of social media community guidelines on spreading fake/abusive content.

NAIDU ALLEGES
CM FAILED ON
FARMERS WLFAREDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 7

Former CM N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday said that the YSRC government had failed to ensure remunerative prices for crops at a time when the farmers were facing severe financial problems because of the Coronavirus pandemic crisis.

Naidu said that the state government threw farmers' interests to the winds without trying to purchase the farm produce. New burdens were being imposed by fixing meters on agricultural motors and by mortgaging the river water rights of AP, he added.

The TD Chief demanded that the government should purchase the farmers' crops to ensure better prices for them and that fixing of meters on motors should be withdrawn with immediate effect. Over 70 percent of farmers suffered losses because of negligence in the e-crop bookings, he further said.

16 IPS OFFICERS
TRANSFERRED
AFTER RESHUFFLEDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

As many as 16 IPS officers were transferred in Andhra Pradesh after the state government ordered a reshuffle late Tuesday. The transfer orders, notified with immediate effect, were issued by Aditya Nath Das, Chief Secretary to the state government.

While Vizianagaram SP B. Rajakumari was promoted as DIG, Disha and administration, M. Deepika, superintendent of police (SP), DISHA, was transferred to the post of superintendent of police, Vizianagaram. Krishna, Nellore and East Godavari also got new SPs under the reshuffle.

Vijaya Rao, superintendent of police, Railways, Vijayawada, was transferred and posted as SP, Nellore to fulfil the existing vacancy. Krishna district SP, M. Ravindranath Babu, was transferred as SP to East Godavari, while Adnan Nayeem Asmi was transferred as group commander, Greyhounds.

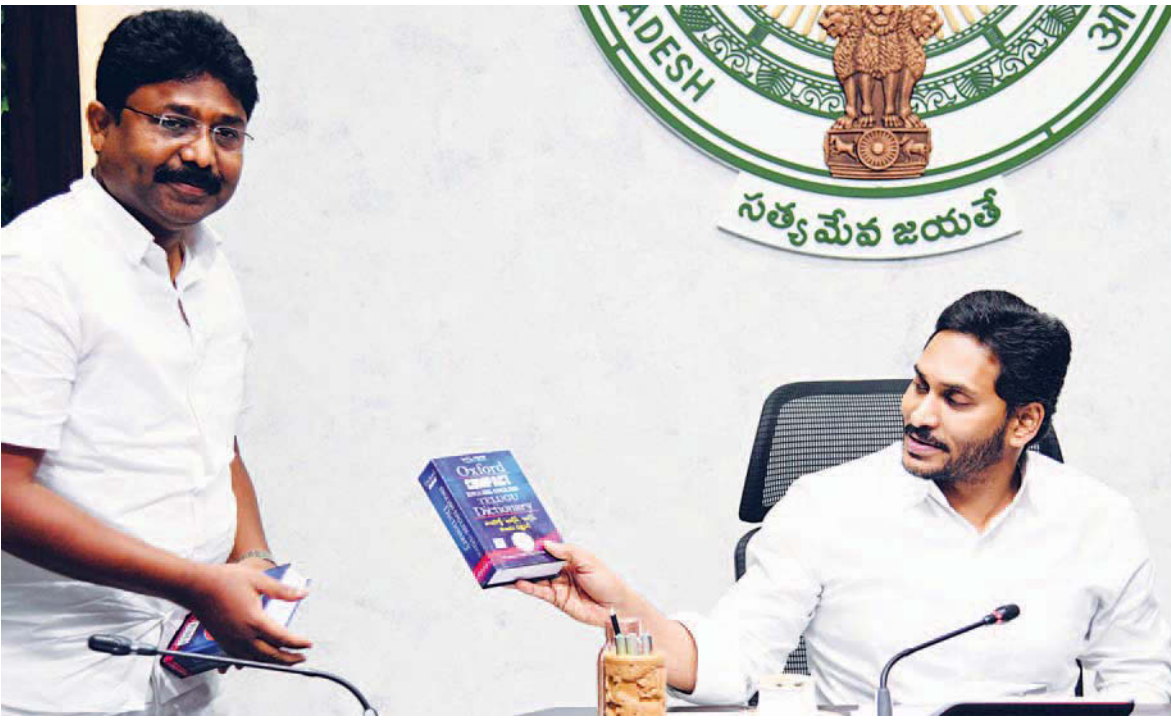
Prakasam district SP Siddharth Kaushal was posted as SP, Krishna district. Y. Rishanth Reddy, assistant superintendent of police (ASP), Special Enforcement Bureau, Chittoor, was transferred as ASP of Guntur Rural Admin. Additionally, S. Satish Kumar, special officer, Narsipatnam, and Chintapalli additional SP Vasana Vidhya Sagar Naidu were posted as ASPs, special enforcement.

Bindhu Madhav Garikapati, ASP, Rampachodavaram and Tuhin Sinha, ASP, Narsipatnam, were also posted as assistant SPs, special enforcement. Dr. V.B. Raj Kamal, deputy SP, was also moved from his current position.

Greyhounds assault commanders P. Jagadeesh and G. Krishnakanth were posted as ASP, Paderu, and ASP, Chintoor, East Godavari district, respectively.

Greyhounds assault commander V.M. Manikanta Chandolu was posted as ASP, Narsipatnam, while Krishna Kanth Patel was handed charge as ASP, Rampachodavaram. Tushar Dudi, Greyhounds' assault commander, was posted as ASP, Chintapalli. DSP S. Khader Basha was transferred as well.

Gift of Education Scheme



Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and minister A. Suresh watch the dictionaries which will be given to children as part of Gift of Education scheme, at CM's camp office in Tadepalligudem on Wednesday. — By ARRANGEMENT

Jagan to open farm
lab at Rayadurgam

10,000 Rythu Bharosa Kendralu to be inaugurated in AP

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, JULY 7

Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will inaugurate a seed testing and agricultural lab at Rayadurgam in Anantapur district on Thursday.

This will be among a series of programmes the CM will be attending as part of Rythu Dinotsavam celebrations being organised by the state government to mark the birth anniversary of late Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy.

The formal opening of the lab in Rayadurgam will herald setting up of at least 100 seed testing and agricultural labs in the state. The Chief Minister will also inaugurate 10,000 Rythu Bharosa Kendralu in AP by formally opening one such centre at Udegolam village in

All set for CM's Kadapa tour

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, JULY 7

All preparations have been made for the visit of Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to Kadapa district on Thursday and Friday.

As per the CM's itinerary, Jagan Mohan Reddy will participate in a YSR Rythu Dinotsavam in Anantapur district on Thursday morning. He will reach Pulivendula the same afternoon by a spe-

cial helicopter for attending various functions. Later, he will reach Idupulapaya by helicopter and visit YSR Ghat in the evening and pay tributes to his father. He will stay the night at Idupulapaya.

The Chief Minister will fly by helicopter to Badvel on Friday morning for attending various functions and address a public meeting. Thereafter, he will reach Kadapa by helicopter and inaugurate development programmes

at the CP Brown Library. Later, he will address a public meeting.

On Friday evening, he will reach Y. S. Raja Reddy Cricket Stadium at RIMS and unveil the statues of Raja Reddy and Rajasekhara Reddy. He will also place the foundation stone for the flood lights to be installed at the stadium. He will then reach Kadapa Airport by helicopter and return to Vijayawada by a special flight.

Rayadurgam mandal. In addition, he will declare open a Grama Sachivalayam and YSR Health Clinic in the same village. Anantapur SP Satya

Esubabu said all Covid-19 norms will be adhered to at the various functions being attended by the CM.

Meanwhile, Rural Development Trust (RDT) has been selected for the

YSR Award in the Lifetime Achievements category. Others selected for the award include writer Imam and former SKU professor Dr. Rachapalem Chandrasekhara Reddy.

YSR Lifetime Achievement
Awards announcedDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

The Andhra Pradesh Government on Wednesday announced the YSR Lifetime Achievement Awards for individuals and institutions for excellence in their chosen fields and amplifying the Telugu idiom and culture besides social service.

The YSR Lifetime Achievement Award carries a cash prize of ₹10 lakh and a memento while the Lifetime Achievement Award comprises ₹5 lakh

and a memento and will be presented in the second week of August.

Announcing the awards on the eve of Dr YSR birth anniversary, government Adviser (communications) G. V. D. Krishna Mohan said, "It was a difficult task to select the names in tune with the ideals of Dr Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy and philosophy of Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

The rural backdrop and down-to-earth nature was prominently considered along with picking the

common man for the uncommon talent and exemplary contribution in their respective field of work ranging from agriculture, to literature, social work and medicare.

There were wide range discussions with officials and all concerned in finalizing the names and unsung heroes were also considered in the categories we have finalized for the year. The Awards, numbering 63 were to be given earlier, but was delayed due to the pandemic and it will be an annual feature, he said.

YSR LIFE-TIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

INSTITUTIONS ● MSN Charities Trust (Kakinada), CP Brown Library (YSR Kadapa district), Saraswathi Nikethanam Library (Prakasam).

● Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust (Anantapur), RC Reddy Study Circle (YSR Kadapa).

● Rural Development Trust (Anantapur), Sri Gouthami Regional Library (East Godavari), Maharajas Government College of Music and Dance (Vizianagaram).

FARMERS:

● Palla Venkanna (phosthomus), founder of Kadiyam Nurseries.
● Mathota Farmer Producer Company (Srikakulam). MC Ramakrishnareddy (Anantapur), Kotyada Srinivasa Rao (Vizianagaram), Vigneshwara Farmer Producer Organisation (Krishna),

M. Balarami Reddy (YSR Kadapa), S. Raghavendra (Chittoor), Segge Kondalrao (Visakhapatnam), Andhra Kashmir Tribal Farming and Marketing Producer Company Limited (Visakhapatnam), Valluru Ravikumar (Krishna) and Shiva Abhiramreddy - (Nellore).

ARTISTES:

● Ponduru Textiles - Andhra Fine Khadi Association (Srikakulam).
● Folk Song - Vangapandu Prasadarao (posthumous) (Vizianagaram).

● Bobbili Veena - Sri Bobbili Veena Centrè (Achutha Narayana) (Vizianagaram).

● Dhimsa Dance - Killu Janakamma Dhimsa Dance Team (Visakhapatnam).

JOURNALISTS:

● Palagummi Sainath - (Chennai), ABK Prasad - (Krishna), Pothuri Venkateswara Rao - posthumous (Guntur),

● Sheikh Khaza Hussain (Devipriya) - posthumous (Guntur), K. Amarnath - posthumous West Godavari,
● Surendra - Cartoonist - (Kadapa), Telakapalli Ravi (Kurnool), Imam - Anantapur.

AUTHORS:

● Kalipatnam Rama Rao (Kara Master) posthumous (Srikakulam), Katti Padmarao - Abhyudaya Sahitya (Guntur), Rachapalem Chandrasekhara Reddy - Literature (YSR Kadapa), Bandi Narayanaswamy - Literature - (Anantapur), Kethu Viswanatha Reddy - Literature (YSR Kadapa),

● Konakaluri Enoch - Literature - (Guntur), Lalitha Kumari (Olga) - Literature (Guntur)

THEATRE ARTS:

● Ponnala Ramasubbareddy (Nellore).
● Surabhi Drama - Sri Vinayaka Natya Mandali (YSR Kadapa). Savara Paintings - Savara Raju (Srikakulam),
● Street Drama - Majji Srinivasa Rao - (Visakhapatnam),
● Disaster Management - Dharmadi Satyam (East Godavari), Harikatha - Sarvaraya Harikatha School (Women) - East Godavari.
● Burrakatha - Miriyala Apparao (West Godavari).
● Kondapalli crafts - Kurella Venkatachari (Krishna).

● Dappu Artist - Gochipata Galebu (Krishna).
● Venkatagiri Jamdani Sarees - G. Ramanaiah (Nellore).
● Kalamkari Paintings - Sivaprasad Reddy (Kurnool).
● Wood Carvings - Balaji Wood Carving Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies (Chittoor), Leather Puppetry - Dalavai Chalapathi - (Anantapur), Nadaswaram Dr. V. Satyanarayana - (Chittoor), Calligraphy - Poosapati Parameshwar Raju (Vizianagaram),
● Kuchipudi Dance - Siddhendra Yogi Kala Kshetra - Kuchipudi, (Krishna district).

COVID WARRIORS:

● Dr Nithichandra - Professor Pulmonology - Nellore.
● Dr. K. Krishna Kishore - Professor of ENT - Kakinada.
● Lakshmi - Staff Nurse - GGH. Vijayawada, K Jyotirmayi - Staff Nurse - Anantapur.
● Turubilli Tejaswi - Staff Nurse - (Visakhapatnam)
● M.Yobu - Male Nursing - (Nellore), Amma Charitable Trust - (Guntur), Aarti Homes - (YSR Kadapa).

HC issues notices on
civic bodies' mergerDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

Andhra Pradesh High Court on Wednesday has served notices to three senior AP officials, including special chief secretary and commissioner, municipal administration and development, to file counters on a petition challenging merger of Mangalagiri and Tadepalli municipalities and forming of Mangalagiri-Tadepalli Municipal Corporation in capital city area of Amaravati.

Hearing the petition filed in this regard by social activist S. Lalchand

and others, a division bench comprising Chief Justice A. K. Goswami and Justice N. Jayasurya said it would hear all the petitions on the issue of merging municipalities at the same time. However, the bench refused to issue any interim order.

Petitioners' counsel Vasireddy Prabhunath maintained that after the High Court issued a stay order on G. O. dealing with merger of eight capital region villages into Tadepalli municipality earlier, the government issued an ordinance merging gram panchayats into Tadepalli municipality. He submitted that though

the ordinance has been challenged in the High Court and the matter is still pending, the state government has issued GO 19 dealing with constitution of Mangalagiri and Tadepalli municipalities.

Special pleader for gt K. Jaganmohan Reddy submitted that Mangalagiri and Tadepalli municipal corporations have been functioning from March onwards. As no interim order has been issued, the petitioners are seeking stay on G. O. 19.

After hearing both the parties, the HC said it would take up hearing of all petitions put together on the matter.

LEADERS | PRIMACY

Massive plantation of 50,000 saplings to take place in Kadapa on YSR's birth anniv.

Ministerial aspirants use event to prove their allegiance to Jagan

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL JULY 7

YSRC leaders are gearing up to celebrate the 72 birth anniversary of former chief minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy. A massive tree plantation programme is being organised with 50,000 saplings here.

Several MLAs have designed programmes for the day also as they are having an eye on minister posts when there is a cabinet expansion.

Nandyal MLA Silpa Ravichandra Kishore Reddy said, "Since Dr YSR strived hard for farmers'

welfare, we are taking up programmes befitting farmer interests. We have lined up events to inaugurate Rythu Bharosa Kendras and will be visiting Agri Clinics to initiate farmers into new-age agriculture technologies."

S o f t - s p o k e n Ravichandra, a US-educated first-time MLA, has endeared himself to the people and is among the contenders for a berth in the state cabinet.

The district, which had returned all the 14 YSRC MLAs to the assembly and strengthened Jagan's hands now has two people in the cabinet — Finance

Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy from Dhone constituency and Gummanur Jayaram from Alur constituency. Buzz is that the reshuffle may have many surprises as the performance of the existing ministers was far from satisfactory.

While one minister courted controversy by running a gambling den, the other was also a problem in some respects. This has fuelled the aspirations of contenders for minister posts.

Six-time MLA Katasani Rambhupal Reddy representing Panyam constituency and Adoni MLA

Sai Prasad Reddy are also in the race.

The MLAs from reserved constituencies like Nandikotkur and Kodumur are also hopeful. Kurnool MLA Hafeez Khan, who is in the good looks of Jagan, was given a special task of procuring investment from Gulf countries and the Middle East.

When asked what programmes were lined up for YSR's birthday on Thursday, Adoni MLA Sai Prasad said his cadre was doing some services to the poor and caring for the sick and the disabled in hospitals.

Meanwhile, Kurnool

municipal corporation (KMC) has, for the first time, taken up a massive plantation programme by planting 50,000 saplings on a single day on Thursday.

The aim is to improve greenery and provide lung space in Kurnool city limits with a natural oxygen facility, said Kurnool mayor B. Y. Ramaiah.

He said the city has lost green cover during the previous rules but "we are now committed to improving it."

All the 52 municipal council wards of KMC have been roped in to take up this programme. Every lane and bylane will have

plantations from a wide variety of plants including oxygen-supplying and medical spices like Neem, Ashoka, Subale, Kanuga, Arjuna, Peepul and Banyan tree.

The Mayor called up on the people to take up this programme as a mass movement and voluntarily plant trees. There is a need to have natural oxygen-giving plants in view of the recent Covid-19, he added.

B. Y. Ramaiah said that he had promised during the recent municipal local body elections to give priority to greenery. He might take up this programme

now. He sought the cooperation of citizens in protecting the plants and helping them grow.

KMC commissioner DK Balaji said all arrangements have been made to plant 50,000 saplings on Thursday, marking farmers' day. The digging and shifting of saplings to various areas have been done. There will be the involvement of a large number of citizens.

Special teams have been deployed to protect all plantations by providing regular watering, erecting tree guards etc for the sapling, the KMC commissioner said.

SHORT TAKES

LOW PRESSURE
LIKELY TO FORM
ON JULY 11DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 7

A low-pressure area is likely to form over west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal off north Andhra Pradesh-south Odisha coasts around July 11, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Wednesday.

Under the influence of the system, several parts of the state may receive light to heavy rains for nearly three days since the beginning of the system, IMD added.

Farmers have also been advised to take necessary precautions to safeguard Kharif crops from the abnormal weather conditions.

On Wednesday too, under the influence of the active monsoon clouds, light to heavy rains were registered at several places including Vizag, which recorded nearly 50mm of rainfall. Jangareddigudem in West Godavari received the state's highest rainfall of 130mm.

Covid awareness drive



Volunteers and health workers take out an awareness rally on masks at Mutyalampadu area in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

— C. NARAYANA RAO

Rythu bharosa centres,
agri labs to start soon

‘Fertilisers and essential seeds must be provided to the farmers’

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, JULY 7

Panchayat Raj Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy informed that the state government will launch the newly built 187 Rythu bharosa centres and 5 Agri labs after the completion of ‘Rythu Chaitanya Yatra’, scheduled to be conducted from July 9 and July 22.

The Minister, along with Dy. CM K. Narayana Swamy, Housing Minister C. Sri Ranganadha Raju and officials of the district administration reviewed the District Agricultural Advisory Council and the housing projects under Navaratnalu, at the Srinivasa auditorium in Tirupati on Tuesday.

Speaking to media persons after the meeting, Peddireddy said that the ‘District Agricultural Advisory Council’ has

● **THE MINISTER**, along with Dy. CM K. Narayana Swamy, Housing Minister C. Sri Ranganadha Raju and officials of the district administration reviewed the District Agricultural Advisory Council and the housing projects under Navaratnalu, at the Srinivasa auditorium in Tirupati on Tuesday. Peddireddy said that the ‘District Agricultural Advisory Council’ has been set up for all the districts, and the board members, who are committed to create awareness on local crops, should constantly stand by the farmers.

been set up for all the districts, and the board members, who are committed to create awareness on local crops, should constantly stand by the farmers.

“The council should ensure that fertilizers and essential seeds are provided to farmers and that they should get supported prices for their harvested crops,” he added.

Meanwhile, Housing Minister Ranganadha Raju described the 17,005 Jagananna colonies, coming up in the state under the housing project,

without completion of construction, Raju claimed that the construction of these houses brings a wealth of ₹4 lakh crores. Additionally, it has also created employment opportunities, through which the state will be financially strengthened, he said.

Dy. CM K. Narayana Swamy said that CM Jagan has not only created Jagananna layouts, he also transformed them into towns by providing all the facilities and infrastructure.

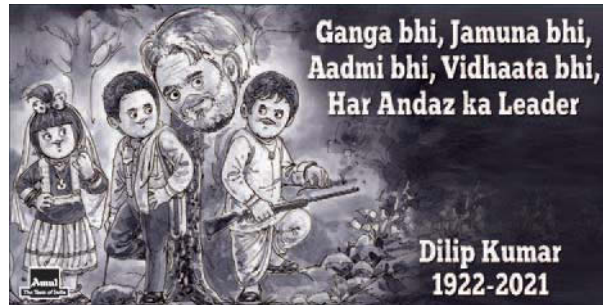
“In the constituency I represent, as many as 10,600 houses were damaged due to poor construction. When I took this issue to the then Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, he didn’t respond. But now, the situation has changed as Jagan has been building townships with all facilities,” he added.

AP REPORTS
3,166 COVID
CASES, 21 DEATHSDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

Andhra Pradesh registered 3,166 fresh Coronavirus infections and 21 deaths in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities reported here on Wednesday that out of 83,885 samples tested, 3,166 persons were found infected with the virus. Out of a total of 2,26,08,072 samples tested so far, 19,11,231 persons were found infected with the virus. While 18,65,956 people have recovered, 32,356 are still undergoing treatment for the virus.

Among the daily tally of cases, East Godavari continues to register highest number of infections at 664, followed by 431 in West Godavari, 375 in Prakasam, 337 in Chittoor, 259 in Nellore, 239 in Guntur, 221 in Kadapa, 191 in Krishna, 144 in Visakhapatnam, 103 in Srikakulam, 102 in Anantapur, 55 in Vizianagaram and 45 in Kurnool.

Three killed in
road accidentDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JULY 7

Three people were killed after the lorry they were traveling in hit road railings and turned turtle on the Chennai-Kolkata national highway, near Kesarapalli in Gannavaram mandal of Krishna district, during the wee hours on Wednesday. The victims, 29-year-old K. Srinivas Rao, his wife Rajya Lakshmi, 27, and their child Rohit, 2, were sitting on the top of the truck

when the mishap occurred. The three died on the spot after the lorry, which was headed to Bengaluru, turned over and rolled into the adjacent fields.

Gannavaram CI Sivaji and SI Ramesh, along with a team reached the spot on receiving information about the accident. The police say the mishap was a result of negligent driving by the truck cleaner. The police removed the truck with the help of a crane, and recovered the bodies.

NO HEADWAY IN
DRONE MYSTERY
AT SRISAILAMDC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, JULY 7

The identity of a drone, which was spotted over Srisaalam temple, continues to remain a mystery as police officials have been unable to make any headway in the case.

While several leads were being pursued by them, one among them was seeking technical help from the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and Shamshabad airport, said Atmakur DSP Y. Shruthi.

“As it was seen by people consistently for a few days, there are apprehensions that it could have been a low-flying aircraft. We are yet to establish whether Srisaalam was on the flight path of any aircraft from nearest airports such as Shamshabad, or even from an airstrip at Nagarjunasagar,” the DSP said.

The curious residents of Srisaalam did not find any flickering object in the sky on Tuesday night.

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e-procurement Tender Notice No.186 Dt.06.07.2021

The following tenders have been floated through e-Procurement. Tenderers are requested to visit the web-site www.ireps.gov.in and submit their offers. It may be noted that the offers submitted manually or on paper will not be accepted. Offers sent by post are not entertained:

S.No. 01 Tender No.: TMC2020054
Description: Procurement of Tool Kits, Gauges, Micrometer, etc., for the use of Track Machines **Due date:** 16.07.2021

S.No. 02 Tender No.: TMC2020063
Description: Procurement of Axle, Wheel Disc, Satellite Axle, etc., for the use of Track Machines **Due date:** 22.07.2021

S.No. 03 Tender No.: TMC2020064
Description: Procurement of Hydraulic Squeezing / Closing cylinders for the use of Track, Machines **Due date:** 28.07.2021

S.No. 04 Tender No.: TMC2020057
Description: Procurement of Lining PCBs, LED Current Control, Lifting PCB, Position indicator, etc., for the use of VPR Duomatic Machines **Due date:** 28.07.2021

S.No. 05 Tender No.: TMC2020062
Description: Procurement of PCBs, Relay, Potentiometer, Ampere meter, etc., for the use of Track Machines **Due date:** 30.07.2021

S.No. 06 Tender No.: TMC2020065
Description: Procurement satellite Roller Pin, Bolt, Bearing Bush, etc., for the use of Track Machines **Due date:** 30.07.2021

For complete details please refer www.ireps.gov.in

Dy.Chief Engineer/TM/HQ/Secunderabad

E- Tender Notice No. 02/2021 (Development of Goods sheds), Dt. 07.07.2021.

The Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), South Central Railway, Vijayawada Division for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-Tender through www.ireps.gov.in for development of Goods sheds with private participation for a period of five years at 2 (two) Goods sheds, i.e. **Bikkavolu and Manubolu** Goods sheds over Vijayawada division.

For more details, may login www.ireps.gov.in or visit the office undersigned on any working day.

Important dates:
Last date for submission of bids: Upto 15:00 Hrs on 29.07.2021
Opening of tenders: After 15:30 Hrs on 29.07.2021

Sr.Divisional Commercial Manager,Vijayawada

e-Tender Notice No.02/Dy.CSTE/C/SC/2021-22, Dated 07.07.2021

For and on behalf of the President of India, Deputy Chief Signal & Telecommunication Engineer (Construction-I) South Central Railway, Secunderabad, with the approval of the competent authority invites e-Tender (Open) for the following work up to 15.00 hours on 30.07.2021.

S.No. 01 Tender No.: No.C-SG-C-36/5-152-2021 Name of the work: MACLS Indoor and Outdoor works in connection with provision of Distributed Electronic Interlocking at Cherlapalli Station - Development of Satellite Terminal Facility at Cherlapalli Station of Secunderabad division of S.C.Railway. **Approx. value in (₹):** 10,76,21,177.75 **ps Completion period:** 12 Months

1) For bid document and other details, please login to Website <https://ireps.gov.in>

2) Tenderers can submit their offers online during tender submission period which is fifteen days period prior to closing of Tender.

3) Tenderers should watch for any corrigenda (issued online only) up to date of commencement of the Tender submission period.

Dy.Chief Signal & Telecomm. Engineer,(Construction-I), A0680 Secunderabad

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at <https://www.ireps.gov.in> or www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

SIMHACHALAM
TEMPLE LANDS
INSPECTEDDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 7

A team of officials from the Simhachalam's Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple management on Wednesday began an enforcement drive of inspecting temple's lands under the city limits.

The team was led by temple executive officer M.V. Suryakala.

They inspected the land under survey number 336 at Madhurawada. “Stern action will be taken against the trespassers of the temple's lands. We are taking measures to protect the lands and daily inspections will be carried out hereafter in a phased manner,” Suryakala said.

The drive was taken up following disputes between the revenue and endowments departments over the lands in recent times.

DPR for six-lane Vizag to
Bhogapuram road on cardsDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, JULY 7

The proposed six-lane road connecting Vizag port to the upcoming Bhogapuram international airport, along the Bay of Bengal, has once again come into the spotlight after a recent announcement sought the preparation of a detailed project report (DPR), by state government officials.

M.T. Krishna Babu, the road and buildings principal secretary, while recently reviewing the progress of various key projects related to Vishakapatnam virtually, instructed the officials of concerned departments — the Greater Vishakapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) and V i s h a k a p a t n a m Metropolitan Urban Development Authority (VMRDA) — to speed up the progress of preparation of the DPR for

● **IN THE** virtual review meet, GVMC commissioner G. Srijana is said to have explained the works related to the six-lane project, such as surveys, to principal secretary Krishna Babu, who instructed to prepare the project's DPR.

the road project, which has already received a green signal from Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

In the virtual review meet, GVMC commissioner G. Srijana is said to have explained the works related to the six-lane project, such as surveys, to principal secretary Krishna Babu, who instructed to prepare the project's DPR. On the other hand, VMRDA sources said that Krishna Babu held a similar meeting earlier in January to discuss the Vizag port-Bhogapuram six-lane road project.

The estimated cost of the project is said to be around ₹2000 crores. The project may include a bridge across the river Gosthani. The road may cover nearly 50 kms, according to preliminary estimates.

“Since the road can boost both industrial and tourism development in Vizag, which is projected as Executive Capital, the government is keen on completing the road project. It takes at least six months of time to complete pre-constructive works,” said a VMRDA source.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, state tourism minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao said that they also reviewed the progress of the project recently, and would also conduct another review meeting in the next 10 days.

The road is expected to significantly boost the tourism sector in the city.

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I, KATTA SOUJANYA (Old Name), W/o Katta Gopinath, R/o D.No.74-14-69/47, F-6, Gnanishta Residency, Mega Township, Opp. Ayappa Nagar, Vijayawada-520007, Krishna Dist. A.P. On behalf of my family remitter issue I changed my name from KATTA SOUJANYA (Old Name) to VAKA SOUJANYA (New Name). Here afterwards my name will be called and known as VAKA SOUJANYA (New Name) for all purposes.

Full-fledged trust
board in TTD soonDC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, JULY 7

State endowments minister Vellampalli Srinivas said the government of Andhra Pradesh will soon appoint a full-fledged trust board to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), which manages the affairs of world-renowned Tirumala temple, and 50 other odd temples in the country.

Speaking to media persons after offering prayers to Lord Venkateswara at the Tirumala temple on Wednesday, the minister complimented

the temple management for providing darshan of the Lord to nearly 18000 devotees every day, while strictly adhering to Covid-19 guidelines issued by the Centre.

“Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is on a mission to build permanent houses for nearly 31 lakh homeless poor, though there are many financial challenges before the government. I have prayed to Lord Venkateswara to bestow his blessing on the chief minister to be successful in his efforts to serve the State,” he said.

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SHORT TAKES

BOLLYWOOD'S FIRST KHAN FOUND AT AGE OF 19

From page 1

The first Khan of Bollywood was “discovered” at the age of 19 in Nainital by Devika Rani of Bombay Talkies while he was looking to buy fruits for his father’s business.

Though he dreamt of being a Test cricketer, he went to meet her in Bombay and was presented with three names to pick from — Jehangir, Vasudev and Dilip Kumar. He learnt later, from the posters of his first film, *Jwar Bhata*, what had been chosen on his behalf.

The film didn’t do well, but it launched a career that has served as the guiding spirit for the best and biggest stars since.

Kumar, who had impeccable Urdu and Hindi diction, remains a daunting, revered presence in the Indian film industry not just because of the awards and accolades he received for his acting, but because with almost every role he played, he created a template for that character.

From prince Salim defying his father for a kaneez (in K. Asif’s *Mughal-e-Azam*) to the dacoit Ganga (*Ganga Jamuna*, which he wrote), from the despairing, alcoholic lover Devdas to the trade union leader Sagina (*Sagina Mahato*), from the principled cop in *Shakti* to the role of separated-at-birth twin brothers *Ram Aur Shyam*, there is little left in that he hasn’t covered.

Kumar used silences, pauses and whispers to deliver his dialogue with such impact that they have become idioms for a state of being. After Kumar, there can only be amusing imitations of his perfect delivery of these immortal lines from Devdas: “*Kaun kambakht bardasht karne ke liye peeta hai? Main toh peeta hoon ki bus, saans le sakon.*”

A perfectionist who took his craft to heart and home, he was known to prepare intensely and for days for roles, and his finicky nature was on display even in his colour-coordinated wardrobe where the rule was, “White is white and off white is off white”.

But what he poured into his tragic roles seemed to come from a sadness within that had begun to cast a shadow. So Kumar consulted psychiatrists and made a conscious and very successful transition to lighter roles. His comic timing and crackling laugh were as joyous as his inimitable, inebriated sorrow was romantic.

Kumar, who worked with the stalwarts of Indian cinema — from Mehboob Khan and Bimal Roy to B.R. Chopra and K. Asif, giving Indian cinema its stunning magnum opus (*Mughal-e-Azam*) that remains unrivalled to date in its grandeur, scale and perfection — ended his acting career playing angry old men disappointed over crime passing without punishment.

A devout Muslim, and amongst those who chose to stay in India after Partition, Dilip Kumar was well-read, eloquent, played chess and bridge, played the sitar, the violin and took active part in the building of Nehru’s India.

Along with Raj Kapoor and Dev Anand, he would participate in fundraising drives for war widows and flood relief where, often, along with money, fans would hand him a comb to tame his incorrigible *zulfain*.

He was also called upon to campaign for V.K. Krishna Menon in the 1962 Lok Sabha elections, and was later appointed the Sheriff of Mumbai, a stint marred by his long absences from Mumbai. Amul went to town with “The Sheriff is out shootin’ posters.”

On and off screen Kumar carried the idea and ideals of Nehru’s modern, secular India with impeccable grace and candour, and that’s why the news of his secret second marriage to Asma Rehman was shattering for many. What was even more shocking was that when the story broke in 1981, his wife Saira, 22 years his junior, was clueless, though Asma had been living with Kumar’s sisters across the road from his and Saira Bano’s house on Pali Hill.

This, however, was not the first time his personal life had made it to the gossip columns. Kumar’s affair with a married Kamini Kaushal was much talked about, as was his romance with Madhubala that began with her presenting a rose to him on the sets of *Mughal-e-Azam* and ended in a courtroom drama where he declared his love for her.

But all these scandals faded from public memory and Kumar’s demigod stature was resurrected, in some part because of his wife’s unstinting support, but mostly because of the love of fans for the thespian.



President Ram Nath Kovind, First Lady Savita Kovind, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in a group photograph with the newly sworn-in Council of Ministers, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on Wednesday.

— PTI

Newly set up Cooperation ministry for Amit Shah

NDA has 27 OBC ministers, 12 SCs, 8 STs, 11 women, 5 minorities, 21 other castes

From page 1

While senior Cabinet ministers Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitaraman, S. Jaishankar and Narendra Singh Tomar continued holding their portfolio, home minister Amit Shah got the additional charge of the new cooperation ministry.

The reshuffle, which was preceded by 12 resignations, including of three heavy weights — Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan, information technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and information & broadcasting minister Prakash Javdekar — was also seen as weeding out ministers who may have turned into liabilities at a time when the Modi government has been under attack from the Opposition over mismanagement of the second wave of Covid-19 that led to an unprecedented number of deaths and devastated the economy. Some departures seemed to be an attempt by Prime

Minister Modi to end battles on a thousand fronts that were leading to more criticism than serving any purpose.

The overhaul also ushers in a generational shift in the ruling BJP, as the average age of the Union Council of Ministers has dropped to 58 years with 14 ministers now below 50 years of age.

Of the 43 leaders who were administered oath of office, from Uttar Pradesh — where the BJP is already in battle mode for coming Assembly polls — seven new members were inducted in Team Modi, while from West Bengal, where the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC retained power in the recently concluded Assembly polls, four new BJP leaders have been accommodated in the Council of Ministers.

Ally Apna Dal’s Anupriya Patel, who was an MoS in the last government and whose meeting with the Congress leaders, including Priyanka Gandhi ahead of last Lok Sabha polls is

said to be the reason for keeping her party out of the NDA government till now, also made it to Team Modi as an MoS. But her inclusion has left another ally from UP, Nishad Party, agitated. Another significant induction is that of Udupi-Chikmagalur MP, Shobha Karandlaje, who is considered close to Karnataka Chief Minister and Lingayat strongman B.S. Yeddiurappa. The Karnataka BJP is abuzz with rumours of a leadership change as voices of dissent are growing against the 78-year-old CM.

With Nishank resigning, Uttarakhand, another state that’s going to have polls soon, has been represented by Nainital-Udhamsingh Nagar MP, Ajay Bhatt in Team Modi.

In the current Council of Ministers, defense minister Rajnath Singh and minority affairs minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi are the only two who had also served in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.

Five representatives fr-

om Northeast, including Sarbanand Sonowal from Assam, Kiren Rijiju from Arunachal Pradesh, Rameswar Teli from Assam, Pratima Bhoumik from Tripura and Rajkumar Ranjan Singh from Manipur are now part of the NDA government.

After the reshuffle and expansion, the NDA government has 27 OBC ministers, 12 SCs, eight STs, 11 women, five minorities and 21 belonging to other castes.

Ahead of the expansion, 12 ministers resigned from their portfolios, including education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, who is recuperating from post-Covid complications, his deputy Sanjay Dhotre who is also unwell, health minister Dr Harsha Vardhan, law and IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, environment and information broadcasting minister Prakash Javadekar, Sadanand Gowda, Santosh Gangwar, Babul Supriyo, Rattan Lal Katariya, Pratap Sarangi and Debashree Chaudhuri.

While speculation is rife that non-performance was the reason why some of these ministers — excluding those who had asked to be kept out of the Union Council due to health reasons — were asked to resign, the ruling BJP was abuzz that some of the ministers including, Ravi Shankar Prasad and Prakash Javadekar, will now be the voice of the party and guide the party’s spokespersons ahead of Assembly and Lok Sabha polls. Prasad had been in the news lately for an escalating standoff between the Indian government and Twitter.

From West Bengal, which earlier had two ministers — Debashree Chaudhuri and Babul Supriyo — now four members (Nishith Pramanik, Shantanu Thakur, John Barla and Subhash Sarkar) are part of the NDA government. While Shantanu Thakur is from the Matua community, Mr Pramanik is from the Rajbangshi community.

Former ministers change Twitter bio

From page 1

In all, six Cabinet Ministers, one Minister of State (Independent Charge) and five Ministers of State have resigned.

After resigning, some of them changed their social media profile to reflect the change in status with Prasad’s Twitter bio, saying ‘Member of Parliament from Patna Sahib Lok Sabha, Bihar’ and ‘BJP worker’, while Javadekar’s profile stated ‘Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha’.

Law and IT minister Prasad’s resignation comes amid a row between micro-blogging platform Twitter and the government over various issues, including compliance with the new IT rules.

The resignations come after Prasad and I&B minister Javadekar announced sweeping regulations for social media firms like Facebook and Twitter, OTT

players as well as digital media.

Health Minister Vardhan, whose handling of the Covid-19 crisis had drawn flak from the opposition parties, resigned from the Union Council of Ministers, official sources said.

Vardhan, a doctor himself, had been in charge of the health ministry as well as the science and technology ministry as the Covid pandemic broke and then India worked to develop vaccines.

However, his various comments in the middle of the crisis were slammed by many as insensitive and ignorant of the ground reality, even as he strongly defended the government’s handling of the situation.

Vardhan had also hit out at the Opposition for its criticism of the government on the handling of the pandemic, often accusing former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi of politicising the pandemic crisis.

HC judge imposes ₹5L cost on Didi

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JULY 7

Slapping a fine of ₹5 lakhs on West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee for defaming him as a “BJP man”, Justice Kausik Chanda of the Calcutta high court on Wednesday recused himself from hearing the Trinamul Congress supreme’s election petition challenging her defeat to Suwendu Adhikari in the Nandigram Assembly election.

With his stinging remarks, Justice Chanda, from whom Ms Banerjee on June 18 sought her plea be transferred by acting Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal over bias to another judge, stated in his order: “The aforesaid chronology of the events... clearly suggests that a deliberate and conscious attempt was made to influence my decision before the recusal application was placed before me for judicial consideration on June 24.”

He observed: “The calculated psychological offensive and vilification adopted to seek recusal need to be firmly repulsed, and a cost of ₹5 lakhs is imposed upon the petitioner. Such cost should be deposited with the Bar Council of West Bengal

within two weeks from date, and upon such deposit, the Bar Council shall set aside the amount for the families of the advocates who had succumbed to the Covid-19.”

The judge noted: “I have no personal inclination to hear out the case of the petitioner. I had no hesitation in taking up the case either. It is my constitutional obligation and duty to hear out a case assigned to me by the Chief Justice neutrally and dispassionately. I have, however, decided to recuse myself from this case for a different reason. The imbroglio stemmed from the inception of the litigation was due to the assignment of this case before this bench.”

He elaborated: “Since the two persons involved in this case belong to the highest echelon of state politics, in the name of saving the judiciary, some opportunists have already emerged. These trouble-mongers will try to keep the controversy alive and create newer controversies. The trial of the case before this bench will be a tool to aggrandise themselves. It would be contrary to the interest of justice if such unwarranted squabble continues along with the trial of the case.”

Vax crisis hit Vardhan hard

from page 1

The vaccine crisis in the early phases of the second wave also hit Dr Vardhan hard. If the devastating Covid-19 second wave cost Dr Vardhan his job, the Twitter controversy over the new information technology rules sealed Mr Prasad’s fate.

Sources also said that the attempts to regulate the OTT platforms boomeranged for Mr Javadekar. While Dr Harsh Vardhan was reportedly told to put in his papers a day before the reshuffle, the move to drop him caught Ravi Shankar Prasad by complete surprise. The sources said Mr Prasad was sitting with some people in his office when he received “the call” at around 12 noon today. The mood in the room immediately changed and Mr Prasad swiftly “left for home”.

Armed with the new IT guidelines, Mr Prasad had set out to discipline the social media, particularly Twitter.

Following the farmers’ movement and the alleged “misuse” of the so-called toolkit, the Indian government had virtually locked horns with Twitter. The situation with the micro-blogging platform led to Mr Prasad’s account being temporarily blocked for a few hours, allegedly over complaints of a violation of the US Digital

● WHILE DR HARSH Vardhan was reportedly told to put in his papers a day before the reshuffle, the move to drop him caught Ravi Shankar Prasad by complete surprise.

Millennium Copyright Act.

Speculations is rife that information and broadcasting minister Prakash Javadekar had to go as complaints from the film industry poured in after he tried to regulate OTT platforms. Mr Javadekar had claimed that he received complaints that two Amazon Prime shows — Tandav and Mirzapur — had “hurt religious sentiments”. However, sources close to Mr Javadekar denied that this was the reason for his removal but did not give any further details.

As the Covid-19 situation worsened in India, the health ministry kept getting embroiled in controversies one after another. Dr Harsh Vardhan came under severe criticism from within the party and outside when he went after former Prime Minister

Dr Manmohan Singh. On April 18, the former PM had written a letter to Prime Minister Modi suggesting a few changes to the country’s vaccination strategy.

Remembering Stan Swamy



People hold candles to pay homage to human rights activist & Jesuit priest Father Stan Swamy during a condolence prayer meet in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

SHOCKING | CASE Kitty Kumaramangalam was 67 years old and a lawyer

Wife of late Union minister murdered

New Delhi, Jul 7: Kitty Kumaramangalam, the wife of the late Union minister P. Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, was smothered to death during an attempted robbery at her home in south-west Delhi’s Vasant Vihar, police said on Wednesday.

Kitty Kumaramangalam was 67 years old and a lawyer. She had been living alone since the demise of her husband a few years ago, they said.

Affairs on contract basis. The accused entered the house without any resistance as Raju has been known to the family.

Raju has been visiting the house for over five years now and was aware where valuables, including cash, jewellery and essential bank documents, were kept.

So, he hatched the conspiracy and roped in his two associates Rakesh and Suraj to execute the robbery, according to the police.

Based on preliminary investigation, it is suspected that the washerman had come to the house around 9 pm on Tuesday night, and when the house help opened the door, he overpowered her, dragged her to a room and restrained her.

He also tried to loot her ring. During the process, she was also beaten up while trying to restrain and sustained bruises on her neck, knees and face, they said. Rakesh and Suraj entered the house in the meantime and smothered Kumaramangalam with a pillow, the police said.

The house help, Mithila, later managed to raise an alarm. She immediately called her husband and brother-in-law and informed about the incident.

They reached the spot and took Mithila to Safdarjung Hospital. Her brother-in-law then made a PCR call, a senior police officer said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southwest) Ingit Pratap Singh said, “We

received a PCR call at around 11 pm on Tuesday. Teams were formed and the washerman was arrested from his residence. Based on his disclosure, one of his associates, Rakesh Raj, has also been arrested while our teams are working to nab the third accused in the case.

Police said they also found opened briefcases at the scene of the crime which suggest that the motive was attempted robbery. In her statement, Mithila said the accused took away valuables in two-three bags.

One of the bags stuffed with clothes was recovered from Raju, the officer said, adding that ₹60,000 in cash was seized from Rakesh.

The body has been handed over to the family.

6 MIGRANTS FROM PAK GET INDIAN CITIZENSHIP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JULY 7

Six Pakistani migrants, who have been living in Madhya Pradesh for decades, were on Wednesday granted Indian citizenship under Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), passed in the parliament in December 2019.

All the six people had migrated to India from Sindh province of Pakistan more than three decades back and have been living in Madhya Pradesh since then, an official spokesman of the state government said.

While two of them, Nand Lal and Hemant Kumar, have settled in Bhopal, four others, Arjundas Manchandani, Jai Ram Das, Narayan Das and Saushalya Bai, have been living in Mandsaur in MP for decades.

“The six Hindu migrants who fled Pakistan to India due to religious persecution in the neighbouring country were granted Indian citizenship. The MP government has completed the process and granted them Indian citizenship in MP under the Citizenship Amendment Act. They came to MP between 1988 and 2005”, state home minister Narottam Mishra said.

This was the first case of grant of citizenship to Pakistani migrants in Madhya Pradesh under Citizenship Amendment Act.

SHORT TAKES

ROCKETS TARGET
BASE HOSTING US
TROOPS IN IRAQ

Baghdad, July 7: Fourteen rockets were fired Wednesday at the Ain al-Assad air base which hosts American troops in western Iraq, a spokesman for the US-led coalition said.

The base was attacked by 14 rockets that “landed on the base & perimeter... At this time initial reports indicate 3 minor injuries. Damage is being assessed,” Colonel Wayne Marotto wrote on Twitter.

It was the latest in a spate of attacks targeting US military and diplomatic facilities in Iraq that have been blamed on pro-Iranian armed groups within a state-sponsored paramilitary force.

POPE HAD SEVERE
NARROWING OF
HIS COLON

Rome, July 7: Pope Francis’ recovery from intestinal surgery continues to be regular and satisfactory, the Vatican said Wednesday, as it revealed that final examinations showed he had a suffered a severe narrowing of his colon.

The Vatican spokesman, Matteo Bruni, said the 84-year-old Pope was continuing to eat regularly following his Sunday surgery to remove the left side of his colon, and that intravenous therapy had been suspended. Bruni said final examination of the affected tissue confirmed a severe diverticular stenosis with signs of sclerosing diverticulitis.

Francis underwent three hours of planned surgery Sunday. He is expected to stay in Rome’s Gemelli Polyclinic, which has a special suite reserved for popes.

27 KILLED IN
PROTESTS, SAYS
ESWATINI MIN

Johannesburg, July 7: Twenty-seven people died last week during pro-democracy protests in the southern African kingdom of Eswatini, a minister said on Wednesday.

“Unfortunately, yes, 27 people lost their lives,” Commerce Minister Manqoba Khumalo said in a phone interview, expressing regret that force had to be used to break up the protests. “It was not intended, but... the nature of the attacks that were happening was such that in some instances force had to be used, and in some instances gunfire had to be exchanged, and there were casualties,” he said.

“But in some cases people were trapped in buildings when those buildings were burned... This is very unfortunate.”

11 HARASSED TEEN
WHO DAMNED
ISLAM, CONVICTED

Paris, July 7: A French court on Wednesday convicted 11 of 13 people charged with harassing and threatening a teenager who harshly criticised Islam in online posts and ended up changing schools and receiving police protection to preserve her safety.

The verdict came in a trial in Paris that was the first of its kind since France created a new court in January to prosecute online crimes, including harassment and discrimination. The court sentenced the defendants to suspended prison terms of four to six months and fined them about \$1,770 each.

Social networks are the street. When you pass someone in the street, you don’t insult them, threaten them, make fun of them, the presiding judge, Michel Humbert, said.

DWARF COW IN
BANGLADESH A
BIG DRAW

Charigram, Bangladesh, July 7: Thousands of people are defying a nationwide Coronavirus lockdown in Bangladesh to see Rani, a 51-centimetre (20-inch) tall cow whose owners claim it is the world’s smallest. The 23-month-old dwarf cow has become a media star with scores of newspapers and television stations throwing the spotlight on the tiny bovine at a farm near Dhaka.

Pictures of Rani on social media platforms have set off a tourist frenzy.

Despite a nationwide transport shutdown because of record Coronavirus infections and deaths, people are flocking in rickshaws to the farm in Charigram, 30 kilometres southwest of Dhaka.

Rani weighs only 26 kilograms (57 pounds) but the owners say it is 10 centimetres shorter than the smallest cow in Guinness World Records.

Europe decries
Iran nuke move

Says Tehran violating commitments under the ’15 deal with world powers

Return to Vienna
for talks, says US

Washington, July 7: The United States on Tuesday warned Iran to stop nuclear “brinksmanship,” saying the West Asian country’s latest efforts to enrich uranium could complicate its return to talks aimed at restarting the 2015 nuclear accord.

ing more uranium than allowed. Uranium metal can also be used for a nuclear bomb, and research on its production is specifically prohibited under the nuclear deal. The IAEA already said in February that its inspectors had confirmed that Iran has begun the production of uranium metal.

The European foreign ministers said of Tehran’s latest step that “Iran has no credible civilian need for uranium metal (research and development) and production, which are a key step in the development of a nuclear weapon”.

“We continue to urge Iran to stop this brinksmanship, to return to Vienna prepared for real talks, and to be in a position to be prepared to finish the work that jump-started in April,” State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters.

They said it was all the more concerning given that no date has been set for the resumption of negotiations in Vienna aimed at bringing the US back into the nuclear deal and Iran back into full compliance, and that Iran has “significantly curtailed” IAEA access.

“We have repeatedly stressed that time is on no-one’s side, the statement said. “With its latest steps, Iran is threatening a successful outcome to the Vienna talks despite the progress achieved in six rounds of negotiations to date.

Afghan govt team meets
Taliban in Tehran: Iran

Tehr, July 7: An Afghan government delegation met with Taliban representatives in Tehran Wednesday, the Iranian foreign ministry said, as the Islamist militia pressed a lightning advance amid the pullout of US troops.

Opening the talks, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif welcomed the departure of its US foe from its eastern borders but warned: “Today the people and political leaders of Afghanistan must make difficult decisions for the future of their country.” Deputy chief negotiator Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai headed the Taliban delegation while former vice president Yunous Qanooni represented the government, the Iranian ministry said.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed Stanikzai’s visit to Tehran to “discuss issues of mutual interest”.

But he made no refer-

Taliban attacks
provincial capital

Herat, July 7: The Taliban launched a major assault on a provincial capital in Afghanistan on Wednesday, the first since the United States military began its final drawdown of troops from the country, as insurgents press on with a blistering offensive.

Fierce fighting erupted in the western city of Qala-i-Naw, the capital of Badghis, with the militants seizing police headquarters and offices of the

ence to any Afghan government delegation, saying only that Stanikzai was holding talks with “some Afghan personalities”. “They will discuss

country’s spy agency.

As news of the morning assault spread, social media was flooded with videos of clashes — with some showing armed Taliban fighters on motorbikes entering the city as onlookers cheered.

Afghanistan’s Defence Minister Bismillah Mohammadi said government forces were in a “very sensitive military situation”, adding that “the war is raging” with the Taliban.

and exchange opinions on the current situation of the country and finding a solution through talks,” Mujahid added.

Lanka gold coin on
China party century

Colombo, July 7: Sri Lanka on Wednesday issued its most expensive gold coin ever to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party, underscoring the close ties between the countries. The commemorative 1,000-rupee (\$5) coin will be sold for 222,000 rupees from Monday, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka said.

“The coins have been issued at the request of the government of Sri Lanka as an accolade for long-standing friendship and mutual trust between the two countries,” the

bank said. Sri Lanka has increasingly turned to China for financing and diplomatic support in recent years, prompting India and the United States to express concern.

One side of the 12-gram (0.42 ounces) coin marks the Chinese party’s anniversary while the other celebrates 65 years of diplomatic ties between the two nations and depicts a Colombo theatre built with Chinese financing.

Sri Lanka released its last gold coin to mark 50 years of independence from Britain in 1998.

Ever Given cruises Suez Canal



The Panama-flagged MV Ever Given container ship sails along Egypt’s Suez Canal near the canal’s central city of Ismailia. The 200,000-tonne container vessel was stuck in the Suez Canal during a sandstorm on March 23, causing major disruption to world shipping and the loss of millions in revenue for Egypt. The ship weighed anchor on Wednesday after Egyptian authorities and the Japanese owner agreed a compensation deal.

Haiti Prez Moïse assassinated

Port-au-Prince, July 7: Gunmen assassinated Haitian President Jovenel Moïse and wounded his wife in their home early Wednesday, inflicting more chaos on the unstable Caribbean country that was already enduring an escalation of gang violence, anti-government protests and a recent surge in Coronavirus infections.

Claude Joseph, the interim prime minister, confirmed the killing and said the police and military were in control of security in Haiti, where a history of dictatorship and political upheaval have long stymied the consolidation of democratic rule. While the streets of the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, were quiet Wednesday morning, some people ransacked businesses in one area. The country appeared to be heading for fresh uncertainty ahead of planned general elections later this year.

Moïse, 53, had been ruling by decree for more than a year after the country failed to hold elections and the opposition demanded he step down in recent months. Former President Michel Martelly, whom Moïse succeeded, said he was praying for first lady Martine Moïse, calling the assassination “a hard blow for our country and for Haitian democracy, which is struggling to find its way.”

Joseph said Martine Moïse, 47, was shot and in a hospital. He condemned the president’s killing as a “hateful, inhumane and barbaric act.” “The country’s security situation is under the control of the National Police of Haiti and the Armed Forces of Haiti,” Joseph said in a statement from his office.

“Democracy and the republic will win.” In the statement, Joseph said some of the attackers spoke in Spanish but offered no further explanation. He later said in a radio address

that they spoke Spanish or English. A resident who lives near the president’s home said she heard the attack. “I thought there was an earthquake, there was so much shooting,” said the woman who spoke on condition of anonymity because she fears for her life.

“The president had problems with many people, but this is not how we expected him to die. This is something I wouldn’t wish on any Haitian.” The US Embassy in Haiti said it was restricting US staff to its compounds and that the embassy would be closed Wednesday because of ‘an ongoing security situation’. The White House described the attack as “horrific” and “tragic” and said it was still gathering information on what happened. US President Joe Biden will be briefed later Wednesday by his national security team, spokesperson Jen Psaki said during an interview.

“The message to the people of Haiti is this is a tragic tragedy,” she during a previously scheduled interview on CNN. “And we stand ready and stand by them to provide any assistance that’s needed.” Haiti’s economic, political and social woes have deepened recently, with gang violence spiking heavily in Port-au-Prince, inflation spiralling and food and fuel becoming scarcer at times.



Jovenel Moïse

Study: Pfizer, Moderna
vax cut 91% virus risk

Washington, July 7: People who receive Covid-19 vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna are up to 91 per cent less likely to develop the disease, according to a US study which also suggests that the preventives reduce the severity of symptoms and duration in those who still get an infection. The research, published in the New England Journal of Medicine on June 30, is among the first to show the benefits of mRNA vaccines even among those who experience breakthrough infections — testing positive after immunisation.

The mRNA vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna contain genetic instructions for our cells to make the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2, which the virus uses to infect and enter the human cells.

Our immune system then builds an immune response against the spike protein, and learns how to fight off the Coronavirus if we encounter it in future.

“One of the unique things about this study is that it measured the secondary benefits of the vaccines,” said study co-author Sara Yoon, an assistant professor at the University of Utah, US. The study was

CDC says Delta is
dominant variant

Houston, July 7: The highly contagious Delta variant has become the dominant Coronavirus strain in the US, accounting for more than 51 per cent of Covid infections in the country, according to new data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The variant, also known as B.1.617.2, was first detected in India in December and is spreading quickly across the globe. In some parts of America, the Delta strain accounts for more than 80 per cent of new infections, including some Midwestern states like Missouri, Kansas and Iowa. It is already causing 74.3 per cent of infections in Western states, including

Utah and Colorado, and 58.8 per cent of infections in Southern states like Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma, according to CDC estimates. New Covid infections with the Delta variant now account for 51.7 per cent of the infections. The B.1.1.7 or Alpha variant makes up for 28.7 per cent cases.

designed to measure the risks and rates of infection among those on the front lines of the pandemic — doctors, nurses, and first responders.

“These are the people who are getting exposure to the virus day in and day

out, and the vaccine protected them against getting the disease. Those who unfortunately got COVID-19 despite being vaccinated were still better off than those who didn’t,” he added.

per quoted a resident as saying she heard five shots and went out to see what had happened.

She said she saw de Vries lying on the ground with a lot of blood on his face. She told the paper that he couldn’t speak but was still alive, and that she held his hand as they waited for emergency services.

At the scene of the shooting Thursday, shocked residents were laying flowers and lighting candles.

— AFP

WIDESPREAD | CONDEMNATION

Attack on our values of democracy, says EU chief Charles Michel

Dutch scribe fighting for his life after shooting

Amsterdam, July 7: Prominent Dutch crime reporter Peter R. de Vries was fighting for his life in a Dutch hospital on Wednesday after being shot multiple times, including in the head, in what the EU chief described as “an attack on our values”.

Amsterdam police chief Frank Paauw said three people had been arrested, among them the suspected shooter, but gave no details on the possible reasons for the attack.

De Vries, who first won fame for his inside reporting on the kidnapping of millionaire Freddy Heineken in 1983, was shot up to five times in front of shocked bystanders as he left a television studio in a busy Amsterdam street on Tuesday.

The attack sparked widespread condemnations, with Europe’s top official Charles Michel calling it a “crime against journalism and an attack on our values of democracy and rule

of law.” De Vries — a celebrity journalist in the Netherlands known for speaking on behalf of crime victims — was “fighting for his life”, Amsterdam mayor Femke Halsema told a news conference late on Tuesday.

Eyewitnesses told local media that the 64-year-old journalist and TV presenter was shot up to five times, including once in the head.

Dutch media reported Wednesday that De Vries,

known for his hard-hitting reporting, has been threatened several times in the past. Since last year, he has been acting as an advisor and confidante of the main prosecution witness in the case against Ridouan Taghi, described as the Netherlands’ most wanted criminal, whose organisation was described as a “well-oiled killing machine by prosecutors.”

Prime Minister Mark Rutte told a press conference in The Hague the

attack was “shocking and inconceivable”.

“It’s an attack on a courageous journalist and by extension an attack on the freedom of the press, which is so essential for our democracy and rule of law,” he said.

De Vries was shot at around 7:30 pm local time (1730 GMT) — still daylight at this time of year in Amsterdam — as he left a television studio after appearing on a talk show.

Het Parool daily newspa-

SHORT TAKES

Hockey icon Datt passes away at 95

New Delhi: A man of many talents but one passion. Keshav Datt was the last of connects to the golden era of Indian hockey which has attained mythical status over the years. A two-time Olympic gold-medallist (1948, London and 1952, Helsinki), the 95-year-old Datt died after battling age-related ailments in Kolkata on Wednesday, survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter, all of whom are based outside India. Aside from being excellent with a hockey stick in his hands, Datt was also a badminton player of credible ability and a professional tea taster in his time away from sports. Datt played alongside greats like the late trio of Balbir Singh Sr, Leslie Claudius, and Jaswant Singh Rajput among others. His demise marked the end of a glorious era in Indian hockey's history. — PTI

Shafali and Sneha in race for ICC award

Dubai: India's teen batting sensation Shafali Verma and all-rounder Sneha Rana were on Wednesday nominated for ICC women's 'Player of the Month' award for June following their standout performances in the ongoing series against England.

Besides the Indian duo, England's left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone has also been nominated for the honour in the women's category. The nominees among the men are New Zealand batsman Devon Conway and pacer Kyle Jamieson along with South Africa wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock. The 17-year-old Shafali, who had already impressed everyone in the shortest format of the game, made a stunning Test debut against England and was named Player of the Match in the Bristol match. — PTI

KL climbs to 6th position in ranking

Dubai: Indian skipper Virat Kohli retained his fifth position while wicketkeeper-batsman KL Rahul gained one spot to be in sixth place in the latest ICC T20I rankings. With 762 points, Kohli is behind England's David Malan (888 points), Australia white-ball skipper Aaron Finch (830), Pakistan captain Babar Azam (828) and New Zealand opener Devon Conway (774). Rahul, who has 743 points, and Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell have climbed a rung each to be placed sixth and seventh respectively. Rahul and Kohli are the only two Indians to feature in the top-10 among batsmen. No Indian features in the top-10 among bowlers and all-rounders in the latest T20I rankings. — PTI

Test Mace to go on tour in N. Zealand

Auckland: The victorious Black Caps squad will carry their ICC World Test Championship Mace on a week-long, nationwide tour of the country, starting July 26, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said on Wednesday. Kane Williamson and company won the inaugural WTC final, beating India by eight wickets in Southampton in a thrilling contest last month. The tour is set to start in Whangarei on July 26 and will cover Auckland, Tauranga, Hamilton, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill throughout the week. "It's quickly become apparent that Kiwis want an opportunity to be part of, and to share in this historic achievement," NZC chief executive David White said. — PTI

Paul powers Suns to lead in finals

Phoenix: Chris Paul waited 16 years to get to the NBA Finals, bringing with him a team starving for their first championship. The setting was entirely new. The performance was same of Chris Paul. "Just knew he's ready," Phoenix forward Mikal Bridges said. "He's prepared his whole life for this moment and it shows out there on the court." Paul had 32 points and nine assists in an NBA Finals debut that was well worth the wait, Devin Booker scored 27 points and the Suns beat the returning Giannis Antetokounmpo and his Milwaukee Bucks 118-105 on Tuesday night in Game 1. Paul scored 16 points during a sensational third quarter that had Phoenix fans who waited 28 years to see the NBA Finals again screaming in delight. — AFP



Italian players celebrate after beating Spain on penalties in the Euro semifinal at Wembley Stadium on Tuesday.

— UEFA

THIS IS ITALY

Azzurri in final; slow Spain finally pay penalty

London, July 6: Italy beat Spain 4-2 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in a magnificent Euro 2020 semi-final at Wembley on Tuesday, as Jorginho converted the decisive kick to take the Azzurri through to the final where they will face either England or Denmark.

Italy were not always on top though, with Spain the better side for long spells of an epic contest before Federico Chiesa, the Juventus forward, gave Italy the lead with a fabulous finish an hour into a match watched by a crowd of almost 58,000.

The much-maligned Alvaro Morata, who was dropped from the starting line-up, came off the bench to equalise with 10 minutes of normal time

left.

No further scoring in extra time meant penalties again for Spain, who had beaten Switzerland in a shoot-out in the quarter-finals.

They had also beaten Italy on penalties at Euro 2008, but this time misses from Dani Olmo and then Morata saw Spain give up the advantage they had been handed when Manuel Locatelli failed with the first kick in the shoot-out.

The Italians celebrated at the end with a large contingent of their UK-based supporters, and a team that has been rejuvenated under Roberto Mancini continues to dream of winning a first European Championship since 1968.

Italy 1

(Federico Chiesa 60)

Spain 1

(Alvaro Morata 80)
(Italy won 4-2 in shootout)

Now unbeaten in 33 games, they go through to Sunday's final to face either England or Denmark, who meet in Wednesday's second last-four tie.

"I have to thank the players because they believed right from day one that we could do something incredible," said Mancini. "We haven't yet done everything we need to though, there is still one step to go."

It is nine years since

Spain mauled Italy 4-0 in the Euro 2012 final in Kiev to win a third consecutive major tournament, and this was the fourth successive Euro in which these powerhouses had met.

Spain won the first two of those meetings, but the last two have now gone to Italy.

"It is not a sad night for me by any means," said Spain coach Luis Enrique. "We can go home knowing we competed and were among the best teams."

WE'LL BE BACK, SAYS BUSQUETS

Spain captain Sergio Busquets said the team will return stronger after gaining vital experience during their run to the Euro 2020 semi-finals. "It's a shame, we

would've have liked for our tournament not to end today but that's football," Busquets told Radio Marca.

"The team was very good, we were the better team for almost the whole match. We can be proud, I feel pride for my teammates. Everyone was making Italy favourites, but we showed we're better."

Alvaro Morata came off the bench to equalise late on for Spain at Wembley and cancel out Federico Chiesa's opening goal on the hour.

But Morata and Dani Olmo missed in the shoot-out after the match finished 1-1 following extra time, with Italy advancing to the final 4-2 on penalties.

— AFP

Roger: Over and out?

Federer crashes out to cast doubt on future

London, July 7: Roger Federer crashed out of Wimbledon in the quarter-finals at the hands of Poland's Hubert Hurkacz on Wednesday, potentially bringing down the curtain on the Swiss legend's All England Club career. Federer, the 20-time Grand Slam title winner who turns 40 next month, lost 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-0 to a player 15 years his junior. It was only the eighth-time Wimbledon champion's 14th defeat at the tournament in 119 matches and his first straight sets loss since an opening round exit against Mario Ancic in 2002.

Federer turns 40 next month and never was able to summon the serving and shot-making that have carried him to 20 Grand Slam titles overall. Hurkacz is a 24-year-old from Poland who had not made it past the third round at any major tournament until this one.

World number one and five-time champion Novak Djokovic reached his 10th Wimbledon semi-final and 41st at the Grand Slams.

Djokovic, chasing a record-equalling 20th major, defeated Hungary's Marton Fucsovics 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

He will face Canada's 10th seed Denis Shapovalov, who beat Russia's Karen Khachanov 6-4, 3-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-4, for a place in Sunday's final.

It was 34-year-old Djokovic's 100th career grass court victory.

Djokovic became only the third man to capture all four majors more than once with his second French Open victory last month. Now he is halfway to becoming the first man in the Open Era and only the third in history to complete a calendar Grand Slam of all four majors.

"I'm aware of certain stats, I love this sport



Poland's Hubert Hurkacz celebrates after winning a game against Roger Federer in the Wimbledon quarterfinal on Wednesday.

— Wimbledon

with all my heart, body and soul and have been devoted to it since I was four," he said. "Sometimes things do look surreal for me but I try to live in the moment and take every opportunity I have on the court."

"Going for history is a huge inspiration for me, let's keep it going."

Djokovic raced into a 5-0 lead in the first set before 29-year-old Fucsovics got on the board.

The world number 48, bidding to become the first Hungarian man since 1948 to make the semi-finals at Wimbledon, saved five set points. However, the rear-guard action was too late to prevent the champion edging ahead.

The top seed broke for the only time in the second set in the ninth game which was enough for a two sets lead.

Djokovic had spent three hours fewer than the muscular Fucsovics in getting to the last-eight and his freshness showed when he crucially broke in the first game of the third set and then fought off two break points in the sixth.

Shapovalov fired 17 aces and 59 winners past Russia's Khachanov to reach his first Grand Slam semi-final.

The Canadian will be a huge underdog against Djokovic having lost all six matches against the world number one.

SANIA-BOPANNA KNOCKED OUT

Rohan Bopanna stayed solid with his service games and net play but Sania Mirza's serve was consistently put under pressure as the Indian team was ousted from the Wimbledon following a

three-set defeat in the stop-start mixed doubles third round. The contest resumed with the 14th seed pair of Jean-Julien Roger and Andreja Klepac having a one-set lead and they finished on the right side of the result with a 6-3, 3-6, 11-9 scoreline.

Mirza has not played much competitive tennis post her comeback and is struggling to get her serve right. Serving to stay in the match at 5-6 in the decider, Mirza managed to hold after a few anxious moments.

— Agencies

Results: Men: Quarter-finals: Hubert Hurkacz (Pol x 14) bt Roger Federer (Sui, x6) 6-3, 7-6(7/4), 6-0; Novak Djokovic (SRB x1) bt Marton Fucsovics (HUN) 6-3, 6-4, 6-4; Denis Shapovalov (CAN x10) bt Karen Khachanov (RUS x25) 6-4, 3-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-4.

COPA | AMERICA

Argentina set up Brazil showdown

Brasilia, July 7: Goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez was the hero as Argentina defeated Colombia on penalties on Tuesday to set up a dream Copa America final against Brazil.

Argentina stopper Martinez saved three penalties in the shoot-out after a bruising 1-1 draw in Brasilia.

Hosts Brazil beat Peru 1-0 in Monday's first semi-final meaning their star forward Neymar will line up against Lionel Messi's Argentina on Saturday at Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium.

Two years ago a Brazil team missing the injured Neymar knocked out Argentina in the semi-finals before winning their ninth Copa title on home soil. For Messi, 34, time is running out to win a first major international title with his national team, having previously lost in three Copa finals and the 2014 World Cup final.

For once he wasn't his country's main hero, although he did create the opening goal for Lautaro Martinez on seven minutes, before Luis Diaz equalized just after the hour mark.

In the shoot-out, goalkeeper Martinez three times dived to his left to save penalties from center-backs Davinson Sanchez and Yerry Mina, as well as midfielder Edwin Cardona. And although Rodrigo De

Argentina 1

(Lautaro Martinez 7)

Colombia 1

(Luis Diaz 61)
(Argentina won 3-2 in shootout)

Paul skied his penalty for Argentina, Messi — who finished with blood seeping visibly from his left ankle — was amongst the scorers to give them a 3-2 victory on spot-kicks.

Saving penalties "is a question of luck and today it was my turn to be the glorious one," said Martinez.

"We said it the first day, we want to play the final and what better than playing Brazil on their pitch."

Despite the defeat, Colombia coach Reinaldo Rueda was feeling positive, saying their performance "invites us to dream, to think we're on the right path."

"We should lift our heads, look each other in the eyes and know we have nothing to reproach ourselves about," he added.

Messi produced some early magic to beat three players and cross for Martinez to head wide.

Colombia didn't heed the warning and on seven minutes, Giovanni Lo Celso found Messi in the box, the diminutive star held off the giant Mina and picked out Martinez to fire into the far corner. — AFP

Sreenidhi in football league



K. Rama Mohana Rao, IAS, chairman of Visakhapatnam Port Trust releases the team jersey during the launch of Sreenidhi Football Deccan Club (SDFC) flanked by SFC executive director K. Abhijit Rao (left) and Dr K. T. Mahhe, chairman of Sreenidhi Educational Group, in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. SDFC will represent Vizag in the All India Football Federation's I-league.

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