

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | SATURDAY 31 JULY 2021

## WEATHER



**Max:** 32°C  
**Min:** 22°C  
**Rainfall:** 3.5 mm

## ASTROGUIDE

**Pilava:** Aani 19  
**Tithi:** Navami  
**Star:** Revathi  
**Rahukalam:** 9 am to 10.30 am  
**Yamagandam:** 1.30 pm to 3 pm

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 4.27 am  
**Luhar:** 12.18 pm  
**Asar:** 3.38 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.39 pm  
**Isha:** 7.58 pm

**SUNSET TODAY** 6.49 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 6.04 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY** 1.00 AM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW** 2.14 PM

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+41,099)	(+695)
3,04,98,648	4,01,041

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+4,230)	(97)
TN: 24,88,407	32,818

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

18,36,67,267

### DEATHS

39,75,135

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

219

worldometers.info

### China building over 100

### ‘nuclear’ missile silos: Report

**Beijing:** China has begun construction of over 100 new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles in a desert near the country’s northwestern city of Yumen, signalling a major expansion of its nuclear capabilities, a leading American daily has reported citing satellite imagery. The silo construction project could provide China -- which celebrated its 100th anniversary on Thursday at the Tiananmen Square -- a means of concealing its nuclear weapons, The Washington Post reported on Thursday.

### HC asks Bengal to preserve

### intel on poll violence

**Kolkata:** The Calcutta high court on Friday, after perusing the interim report of the National Human Right Commission (NHRC) on alleged post poll violence in West Bengal, directed the state’s chief secretary to ensure preservation of the correspondence of the special branch or intelligence branch of the state police.

## COUNTER

## POINT



**Relax, sir... those are mangoes from Didi!**

## STATE | 3

**Valluvar Kottam to be refurbished**



## NATION | 4

**UAE bans travel to 14 countries including India**

## SPORT | 8

**Wrestler Sumit gets 2-year ban for doping**



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# Lockdown norms made uniform in all districts

■ **Dining-in allowed but ban on interstate travel to stay**

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR, D. SEKAR / DC**  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

Ushering in a single norm lockdown for the entire Tamil Nadu, the state government on Friday permitted all eateries to offer dine-in facility from 6 am to 8 pm and done away with e-registration or e-pass for travel within the state from Monday.

Announcing the new lockdown restrictions and relaxations that would be in force till July 12 and common for all the districts, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said hotels, lodges, guest houses and dormitories would open their doors for guests but with 50 per cent occupancy.

While most of the relaxations announced for the 27 districts with less Coronavirus spread will now be applicable for the remaining 11 that are now under strict restrictions, it would be strict no for interstate bus service, international travel, theatres, bars, swimming pools, social and political gatherings. ■ **P4**

## Central teams to help 6 states with high nos

**New Delhi, July 2:** The Union government on Friday deputed multi-disciplinary teams to Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Manipur in view of the high number of Covid-19 cases being reported by these states.

Teams will be supporting the states in their efforts to carry out a targeted Covid response and management, and effectively tackling the pandemic, a Union health ministry statement said.

The two-member high level team to these states comprises a clinician and a public health expert, the statement said.

The teams will visit the states immediately and monitor the overall implementation of Covid-19

management, especially in testing, including surveillance and containment operations; Covid Appropriate Behaviour and its enforcement; availability of hospital beds, sufficient logistics including ambulances, ventilators, medical oxygen etc., and vaccination progress.

The teams will monitor the situation and also suggest remedial actions, the statement said.

The teams will assess the situation and suggest remedial actions on public health activities to the respective state governments.

They will interact with the state and UT authorities and get a first-hand understanding of the challenges and issues being faced by them. — **PTI**

## INDIA’S COVID DEATH TOLL CROSSES 4 LAKH

**New Delhi, July 2:** India saw a single-day rise of 46,617 new coronavirus infections, taking the tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,04,58,251, while the national recovery rate has crossed 97 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Friday.

The death toll due to Covid-19 rose to 4,00,312 with 853 daily fatalities.

Over 34 crore vaccine doses have been administered under the nationwide vaccination drive so far, it said.

The active cases have further declined to 5,09,637, comprising 1.67 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has improved to 97.01 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed.

## PREGNANT WOMEN CAN NOW TAKE JAB

**New Delhi, July 2:** Pregnant women in India are now eligible to get vaccinated against Covid with the Union health ministry Friday giving the approval based on recommendations of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI).

The decision empowers pregnant women to make an informed choice on taking the Covid vaccination, the ministry said, adding these women can register on CoWIN or walk-in to Covid vaccination centres to get themselves inoculated. — **PTI**

# Bypoll unlikely; Rawat resigns as U’khand CM

**DC CORRESPONDENT WITH AGENCY INPUTS**  
NEW DELHI/DEHRADUN, JULY 2

With just over seven months left for the Assembly polls in Uttarakhand, the ruling BJP’s Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat on Friday resigned, citing a “constitutional crisis”, it is learnt.

Mr Rawat handed over the resignation letter to Governor Baby Rani Maurya past 11 pm, hours after returning from Delhi where he was summoned by the top BJP leadership on Wednesday.

The Uttarakhand BJP legislature party will meet Saturday to elect its new leader, who will be later sworn in as chief minister of the state where assembly elections are due in March next year.

Mr Rawat had replaced Trivendra Singh Rawat on March 10 after he was similarly asked by the party to step down.

The Constitution required Mr Rawat, who is an MP, to get elected as a member of the state assembly within six months to continue as chief minister.

But there seemed increasing uncertainty

over the Election Commission holding bypolls for the two vacant seats in the state when there is less than a year to go before the next assembly elections.

Mr Rawat met party president J.P. Nadda and Union home minister Amit Shah in Delhi, amid speculation of another leadership change in the hill state. He later returned to Dehradun and submitted his resignation.

The poll panel had said it would not be appropriate to hold the electoral exercise till the pandemic situation improves significantly.

**SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI / DC**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

India has lodged a strong protest with Pakistan over a serious breach of security after a drone was spotted over the premises of the Indian high commission in Islamabad a few days ago. New Delhi has demanded that Islamabad investigate the incident and prevent any such security breach in the future.

At his weekly briefing on Friday evening, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said: “A drone was

spotted over the premises of the Indian high commission in Islamabad on June 26 this year. This has been taken up officially with the Government of Pakistan. We expect Pakistan to investigate the incident and prevent the recurrence of such a breach of security.”

The incident is understood to have taken place during an event on the evening of June 26 at the high commission reportedly held in connection with “India@75”, the forthcoming 75th anniversary of India’s Independence.

## DRONE ATTACK A TERROR ACT: IAF

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Calling the drone attack at Jammu air base as a terrorist act, Indian Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria said on Friday that Air Force is in the process to boost its anti-drone capability to counter such attacks.

The IAF chief said the Jammu airbase did not have the advanced anti-drone system and it did not house any critical asset.

## JAWAN, 5 LET ULTRAS KILLED

**Srinagar, July 2:** Five Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including a district commander, and an Army jawan were killed in an encounter between the ultras and the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pulwama district on Friday, police said.

A soldier who was injured in the exchange died at a hospital here.

■ **REPORT ON PAGE 4**

## CHAUTALA OUT AFTER SERVING JAIL TERM

**New Delhi/ Chandigarh, July 2:** Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) chief Om Prakash Chautala walked free from Delhi’s Tihar jaon il Friday after serving a 10-year sentence in a recruitment scam, his party workers welcoming him with flower petals and drum beats at the capital’s border with Haryana.

The former Haryana chief minister told party workers that he will continue to fight for farmers and the poor.

Mr Chautala (86), who was already out on parole, reached Tihar jail on Friday to complete formalities after which he was released, prison officials said.

Last month, the Delhi government had passed an order granting a six-month special remission to those who have served nine-and-half years of their 10-year prison sentence to decongest jails in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Chautala, his son Ajay Chautala, and 53 others, including IAS officer Sanjiv Kumar, were convicted and sentenced in the case of illegal recruitment of 3,206 junior basic teachers in 2000. Mr Chautala was jailed in 2013 was on emergency parole since March 26, 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. — **PTI**

**PAWAN BALI / DC**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

The military turf war over the “theaterisation” of the armed forces heated up on Friday. As the Air Force expressed concern on the proposals, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat on Friday called the Indian Air Force “a supporting arm” of the military, specifically the Army, just like the artillery and engineering services.

However, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria countered this, saying the Air Force is not just a supporting arm but has a wider role.

“The Air Force is required to provide support to ground forces. Do not forget that the Air Force continues to remain a supporting arm to the armed forces, just as the artillery supports or engineers support the combat units in the Army,” said Gen. Rawat. “They will be a supporting arm. But they have a charter. They have an air defence charter and supporting the ground forces in times of



First production lot of 12 Short Span Bridging System (SSBS)-10 m, designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has been inducted into Indian Army, in the presence of Chief of the Army Staff General MM Naravane (unseen) during a ceremony held at Cariappa Parade Ground in New Delhi. — **PTI**

# India protests drone over mission in Pak



Safdarjung Hospital nursing staff protest outside Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan’s residence in New Delhi, Friday.

— **PTI**

# Court can’t order action on min’s statement: SC

**New Delhi, July 2:** The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea that alleged that union minister V.K. Singh committed a breach of oath by giving statements with regard to India’s official position on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, saying “if a minister is not good it is for the Prime Minister to take care, courts can’t do anything”.

A bench of Chief Justice

N.V. Ramana and Justices A.S. Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy dismissed the plea filed by petitioner Chandrasekaran Ramasamy, a Tamil Nadu resident who claims to be a scientist.

At the outset, the bench said, “If you don’t like a statement by a minister then does it mean you will file a petition and ask him to be removed.”

The bench told the petitioner “it appears you are

a scientist, then you must use your energies to do something for the country”.

“We are dismissing it”, it said.

The plea has sought a direction to the Centre to “declare that Union minister Gen (ret’d) V.K. Singh committed a breach of his oath” by his alleged remarks on India’s position on the border row with China along the LAC. — **PTI**

# US military vacates key Afghan base

**Kabul, July 2:** After nearly 20 years, the US military left Bagram airfield, the epicentre of its war to oust the Taliban and hunt down the al-Qaida perpetrators of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on America, two US officials said Friday.

The airfield was handed over to the Afghan National Security and Defense Force in its entirety, they said on condition they not be identi-

fied because they were not authorised to release the information to the media.

One of the officials also said the U.S. top commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Austin S. Miller, “still retains all the capabilities and authorities to protect the forces.”

The withdrawal from Bagram airfield is the clearest indication that the last of the 2,500-3,500 US troops

have left Afghanistan or are nearing a departure, months ahead of President Joe Biden’s promise that they would be gone by Sept 11.

It was clear soon after the mid-April announcement that the US was ending its “forever war” that the departure of US soldiers and their estimated 7,000 NATO allies would be nearer to July 4, when America

celebrates its independence day.

Most NATO soldiers have already quietly exited as of this week. Announcements from several countries show that a majority of European troops has now left with little ceremony—a stark contrast to the dramatic and public show of force and unity when NATO allies lined up to back the US invasion in 2001. — **AP**



## SHORT TAKES

**Prayaas: Initiative to release pension on day of superannuation**

Chennai, July 2: P. Senthilkumar, Regional P.F. Commissioner-I, Regional Office, Tambaram, handed over the Pension Payment Orders (PPO) on Wednesday to retiring employees registered under the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 in respect of Sri Ramachandra Medical College Research Institute, Porur, and Titanium Equipment and Anode Manufacturing Company Private Limited, Vandalur as a part of Prayaas — an initiative to release pension on the day of superannuation. The Regional PF Commissioner-I has appealed to employers to extend their cooperation for successful implementation of the initiative by duly following the pre-requisites required such as KYC of employees, filing e-nomination, advance payment of EPF/EPSS contribution due for the retiring month and submission of pension claim in Form10-D along with the additional documents as deemed necessary, according to a press release.

**When right to life is threatened, right to practise religion can take a backseat: HC**

Chennai, July 2: The right to practice religion can take a backseat when right to life is under threat, the Madras High Court said on Friday.

"The right to practice religion is certainly subservient to the right to life and when the right to life is threatened, the right to practice religion can only take a backseat", the first bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy said. The court cannot interfere in such matters unless it finds that the state's action is utterly arbitrary or completely without basis, the bench added.

The court was disposing of a PIL petition praying for a direction to the Tamil Nadu government to reopen all places of worship in the state, without any restriction, which had been originally closed due to the lockdown arising out of Covid-19 pandemic. The state government, however, had ordered reopening of temples from June 28, subject to certain Covid-19 safety restrictions. —PTI

**Three persons killed in two separate accidents on ECR**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

Three persons were killed in two separate accidents on the East Coast Road on Friday evening.

In an accident reported on Tiruchy -Chennai National Highway on Friday, two men riding on a two-wheeler were crushed to death under the wheels of a lorry.

They have been identified as Karthik (32) of Vallam and Parthiban (33) of Kalpakkam. The deceased had been working in a private company. The duo was heading from Chengalpet to Tambaram on Trichy - Chennai National Highway and when they were near Maraimalai Nagar, a speeding lorry knocked and ran over them.

Karthik died on the spot as the bus crashed into his head. Based on the alert, the Maraimalai Nagar police rushed to the spot and sent Parthiban to Chengalpet gov-

ernment hospital for treatment, however, he passed away on the way.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem. A case has been registered and the police have launched a manhunt for the driver who fled the spot.

In another incident, an unidentified woman riding pillion on a motorbike died after a car knocked down the duo on East Coast Road on Friday. They were travelling towards Chennai on a two-wheeler.

When the duo was making a turn to proceed on ECR from Therukupattu village, a speeding car heading towards Puducherry knocked down the vehicle. The duo was thrown off the vehicle and suffered severe injuries. The woman died on the spot.

Police said the man is undergoing treatment at Rajiv Gandhi government hospital. The Mamallapuram police registered a case.

**Fisherman's son drowns as boat capsizes**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

A 14-year-old boy drowned after the boat capsized in the strong waves off the East Coast.

The deceased has been identified by the police as, Mukesh (14), son of Sekar, a fisherman of Kasimedu Kuppam.

According to the police, Mukesh was part of a five-member group, including his father that set off for fishing in the boat early on Friday morning. A few minutes after launching the boat, they were hit by a huge wave. In the impact, the boat capsized and the fishermen were thrown into the sea.

They were all pulled out of the water by fishermen on other boats nearby. Sources said Mukesh was brought alive to the shore. However, he passed away shortly.

The Mamallapuram police registered a case and sent the body to Chengalpet GH for post-mortem. Investigations are underway.

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

Ravaged by the raging waves of Covid-19, subsequent stringent lockdowns, travel restrictions and strict social distancing, the tourism sector in Tamil Nadu is banking on an early opening up for its survival.

The tourism department convened a meeting the other day with the representatives of the sector to assess the situation. But the officials have not given any indication on reopening.

M. K. Ajit Kumar, spokesperson, South India MICE Association (SIMA), who attended the meeting, said the government should lift the restrictions on conference and banquets (MICE business) as vaccination drives are

gathering pace across the country.

"The hotels and convention centre owners are fully conscious of Covid-19 protocols and have put systems in place. If the government removes the restrictions on numbers, the MICE business will pick up. MICE business is tied up with sectors like hotels, airlines, transport operators, travel agents, event managers, entertainment and handicrafts.

We have submitted a proposal to the government highlighting points including financial aid, debt restructuring, working capital, publicity and transportation. We have also suggested to the government to tie up with the IRCTC for micro-financing to encourage domestic tourism. But there is no reply from the govern-

ment so far," he said.

P. Asoka, president, Approved Tour Guides' Association (ATGA), Chennai, said the state and Union governments should take steps to enable some domestic tourism activities now. "The sector is reeling under extreme stress since March last year. Tourist guides do not get even a single penny as income. Many have given up the job, started language classes and became domestic workers. We were asking for Rs 30,000 income support per month or Rs 5 lakh as a lump sum grant for approved guides. But nothing happened so far. We hope the government will open up the sector soon. There is no point in opening some temples and monuments. The authorities should lift curbs on MICE tourism to

give a momentum to the sector. As tourism guides, we are always looking out for international tourists. If international tourists have to visit India, the government should ramp up vaccination to instil some confidence among foreign governments," he said.

As per Economic Survey 2019-20, the share of tourism in the state's overall employment is 15.97 percent. Tamil Nadu was one among the top three states in attracting domestic and foreign tourists.

Meanwhile, the tourism department officials said the government is ready to lift the restrictions subject to the decision by a high-level committee appointed by the government to monitor the Covid-19 situation in the state.

**Madras HC: Give due consideration to representation relating to online games**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

The Madras high court has asked the Union and Tamil Nadu governments to give their due consideration to the matter relating to online games, to which the young adults and children are allegedly addicted these days.

The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy disposed of a Public Interest Litigation filed by E.Martin Jayakumar, which sought a direction to the Union and Tamil Nadu governments to ban all the online and offline video games and to bring appropriate mechanism to check track the PC/Laptop, Mobile Phones etc, the device which are used for Online classes.

The bench said the petitioner says that since mobile phones have completely taken over our lives and even children and minors crave for and obtain mobile phones, they were exposed to being lured by unscrupulous business enterprises and, particularly during the lockdown when

schools and educational institutions were closed, many children and young adults were hooked to the online games. The petitioner perceives the addiction to be devastating and life-threatening in the sense that it destroys the career-building phase of a young adult and may even lead to suicidal tendencies and extreme anger against parents and elders seeking to check the habit, the bench added.

The bench said there was no doubt that children and young adults these days were addicted to their phones and their worlds appear to revolve around their mobile phones. Oftentimes, a family could be together and sitting at a table but each member using the phone, even if to describe the dish that he may be having or the quality of food at the moment.

However, even constitutional courts should be slow in entering into such areas and dealing with such matters on the personal sense of morality of the individual complainant or of the judge or judges concerned. There was no doubt that when there was some illegal

action or something which was detrimental to larger public interest, constitutional courts intervene; but in the matters of the present kind, especially when elected governments were in place, such matters of policy should be left to the wisdom of those representing the people and having their mandate instead of the court issuing dictat. It was only upon the failure of the executive to act and, thereupon, the court perceiving the matter to be a danger to society, that the court ought to step in. At least at the initial stage, the duty of the court was to direct the complainants to the executive for a more wholesome and studied policy decision to be taken by the executive than what may be possible before any court, the bench added.

The bench said accordingly, the petition was disposed of by permitting the petitioner to make representations to the Union of India through its ministry of women and child development and to the state through the department perceived to be the most appropriate by the petitioner.



Public waiting to get vaccinated at Nungambakkam corporation school on Friday.

—DC

**Plea to wind up inquiry panel probing Jaya's death**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

Contending that the taxpayers money is being wasted, a Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Madras high court, to direct the state government to wind up Justice A. Arumughaswamy Commission of Inquiry, appointed to inquire into the circumstances and situation leading to the hospitalization of former Chief Minister late J.Jayalalithaa and subsequent treatment provided to her till her demise.

The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy before whom the PIL filed by advocate Thondan Subramani came up for hearing, ordered notice, returnable by six weeks, to the state government.

Posting to August 13, 2021, further hearing of the petition, the bench said, "The state should

indicate why the relevant commission should not be directed to file its final report and wind up its business within the next three months".

In his petition, Thondan Subramani submitted that as per the GO dated September 25, 2017, the commission will complete its inquiry and submit its report to the government within three months. However, the state government was granting periodical extensions to the Commission on various dates by issuing GOs, he added.

He said originally, the Apollo Hospitals, where Jayalalithaa underwent treatment, challenged the 2017 GO appointing the one-man commission and this court had on April 4, 2019, disposed of the petition with an observation that the commission will confine its inquiry strictly within the scope and ambit of terms of reference made by the govern-

ment. Subsequently, the Apollo Hospital went to the Supreme Court and obtained an interim order on April 26, 2019. But the state government had not initiated any steps to vacate the interim stay granted by the Apex Court. There was no progress in the inquiry from the year 2019 for more than 2 years. The commission has become defunct from the year 2019 till date. However, the taxpayers money was wasted on the establishment of the commission. There was no sign of submitting the report by the commission in the near future, as the government had not taken any faithful, earnest and effective steps for vacating the interim order of stay and if things were allowed, it was not clear as to when the litigation will come to an end at the instance of Apollo Hospital, which was pending before the apex court, he added.

**History-sheeter hacked to death**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

A 26-year-old history-sheeter was hacked to death in Uthiramerur by a gang, allegedly due to previous animosity. Police have launched a manhunt to nab the suspects.

The victim has been identified as Tamilvendan of Kaavithandalam, Uthiramerur. He gained notoriety after a series of murder, attempts to murder cases. He had criminal cases against him at Madurantakam, Salavakkam and Guduvanchery police stations.

Police said on Thursday night Tamilvendan left his house to take a walk. While he was walking near farmland in the village, a gang with deadly weapons waylaid him and attacked him. Even as he tried to flee the place, the gang continued to attack him and he died on the spot.

Police recovered his body and have begun an investigation. Kanchipuram Superintendent of Police, Sudhakar formed two special teams to nab the murderers.

► The victim has been identified as Tamilvendan of Kaavithandalam, Uthiramerur. He gained notoriety after a series of murder, attempts to murder cases.

**107 live spiders from Poland seized in Chennai**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

Customs officials at Chennai international airport, found 107 live spiders from a parcel that came from Poland.

Based on information Chennai Air Customs intercepted a postal parcel that arrived from Poland at foreign post office on suspicion of containing some arthropod/invertebrate species.

The parcel was addressed to a person in Arupukottai, Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu. When it was cut open, a thermocol box was found in which 107 small plastic vials wrapped in silver foil and cotton were found. On examination, live and 'dangerous' spiders were found inside each vial.

Following this, Wild Life Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) officials & scien-

tists of the Zoological Survey of India (SRC) were called to identify the species. Based on morphological examination they suspected the spiders to be of Genus Phonopelma and Brachypelma which are CITES listed Tarantulas, a native of South, Central America, and Mexico.

They said the spiders were very dangerous ones. The animal quarantine officials recommended deporting the parcel containing the spiders to country of origin as the said import is illegal as there was no DGFT license and health-related documents of import into India.

The spiders were seized under the Customs Act 1962 read with FT (D&R) Act. The parcel containing the spiders were handed over to postal authorities to deport to Poland the country of origin. Further probe is on.

**HC orders ₹5L compensation to man who lost wife due to lack of ambulance**

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

The Madras high court has directed the state government to pay a compensation of ₹5 lakh to a man, whose wife died after delivery due to heavy bleeding and there was delay in bringing the Ambulance from outside to admit her in Government Medical College in Kanyakumari district, since the PHC, Rajakamangalam, Kanyakumari district, does not have ambulance at the

hospital. Justice N.Anand Venkatesh gave the directive while allowing the petition filed by T.Rajagopal, whose wife Kalaiselvi died after delivery, which sought compensation for negligence on the part of the hospital authorities including the doctor and the nurse.

The case of the petitioner was that his wife was admitted for delivery before a Primary Health Centre on June 25, 2012, at 6 p.m. The petitioner's wife gave birth to a girl child on June 26,

2012, at about 4 a.m. After delivery, there was excessive bleeding suffered by the wife of the petitioner. The doctor inspite attending the wife of the petitioner and administering her with necessary drugs, found that the victim required a blood transfusion and hence, recommended for shifting the wife of the petitioner to Medical College, Asaripallam. There was no ambulance available in the Primary Health Centre and hence, the staff nurse had to call a 108 ambulance at

about 5.15 am. Ultimately, the ambulance reached the Primary Health centre at 5.45 am. The wife of the petitioner reached the Medical College, Asaripallam, at about 6.30 am. She was admitted and thereafter, she was declared dead. The cause of death was attributed to 'potpar-tum haemorrhage'. According to the petitioner, he lost his wife only due to delay caused due to the non-availability of the ambulance and by the time his wife reached the medical

college, the situation became very serious and she was declared dead.

The judge said the counter affidavit filed by the doctor shows that the doctor had administered necessary drugs as a first aid to the petitioner's wife and attempts were made to bring the situation under control. This process was undertaken between 4.45 a.m. to 5.15 a.m. In spite of the same, the bleeding never stopped and therefore, the doctor had advised the victim to be shifted to

the Medical College, Asaripallam for blood transfusion. This was where the entire problem started. There was no ambulance available at the Primary Health Centre and the staff nurse belonging to the Primary Health Centre was desperately attempting to get an ambulance by calling 108 and the ambulance reached the Primary Health Centre only around 5.45 p.m. In this process nearly 30 minutes of precious time was lost. Thereafter, the petitioner's

wife was shifted to the Medical college only at about 6.30 p.m. By then, nearly one hour and 15 minutes had passed. Unfortunately, when she was tested by the doctor at the medical college, they declared her dead. It was clear from the above that there was a delay in shifting the deceased from the Primary Health centre to the Medical College. When it comes to saving life, every second counts and delay by even a few minutes can cause the death of a person.

"Therefore, when it comes to a medical emergency, delay can never be condoned like how leniently we condone in courts. Every Primary Health Centre is supposed to have an ambulance readily available to shift patients in case of emergency. It is an admitted case that the PHC was regularly dealing with delivery cases and they have to expect an emergency at any time and they cannot afford to run a Centre without an ambulance, the judge added.







## IN BRIEF

### DESHMUKH CLAIMS CBI PROBE ILLEGAL

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, JULY 2

Terming the CBI inquiry against him as illegal, Anil Deshmukh, the former Maharashtra home minister, on Friday complained to the Bombay High Court that he is facing inquiry over corruption charges in breach of legal procedure while even 26/11 terrorist Ajmal Kasab got the benefit of the rule of law.

Raising the question of prior sanction to book Deshmukh being a government servant senior counsel Amit Desai on behalf of Deshmukh contended before the court that even though preliminary inquiry against applicant was initiated on the orders of this court but the central probe agency didn't seek prior sanction from the Maharashtra government to prosecute the NCP leader, who was at the time a public servant.

Advocate Desai argued before the division bench of Justice S.S. Shinde and Justice N.M. Jamadar this absence of sanction made the inquiry against Deshmukh, on the charges of corruption and misconduct, illegal. The bench was hearing the petition filed by Deshmukh challenging the FIR registered by the CBI against him in the aftermath of corruption allegations made against him by former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh.

Advocate Desai said section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act mandated that the police or any other investigating agency procure a prior sanction to prosecute a public servant. The bench, however, pointed out that section 17A protected an officer's conduct that was in discharge of his or her official duties.

### NOW, PETROL CROSSES ₹100 IN CHENNAI

**New Delhi, Jul 2:** Petrol price on Friday crossed the ₹100-per-litre mark in Chennai as well as in some places in Punjab and Kerala after fuel prices were hiked yet again.

Petrol is priced at over ₹99 a litre in Delhi and Kolkata - the only metro cities which haven't seen the ₹100 mark yet.

Petrol price was hiked by 35 paise per litre on Friday but there was no change in diesel rates, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

On Thursday, the price of domestic cooking gas (LPG) was hiked by ₹25.50 per 14.2-kg cylinder. A subsidised and non-subsidised cylinder now costs ₹834.50 in Delhi. The increase in petrol price - ₹33rd in two months - took rates across the country to fresh highs.

In Chennai, the petrol price rose to Rs 100.13 a litre.

### MORE NATIONS OKAY INDIAN VACCINES

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, JULY 2

A total of 12 European Union (EU) member-nations have till now decided to give Indian nationals vaccinated with Covishield exemptions from travel restrictions in their countries, government sources said on Friday, with the Netherlands joining the bandwagon as well.

These nations are Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Spain, Switzerland, Estonia, Netherlands, Latvia and Finland, sources said.

Estonia, meanwhile, has in addition decided to give exemptions to Indians vaccinated with Covaxin as well, sources said.

Meanwhile, at his weekly briefing on Friday, external affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "The EU has now instituted a digital covid certificate for exempting restrictions on the movement of vaccinated people. Our expectation is that Indians who have been vaccinated through our domestic vaccination program would be treated at par with those vaccinated in the EU and CoWin vaccination certificate would be recognised by the EU on a reciprocal basis. Such CoWin vaccination certificates can be authenticated on the CoWin website itself. We are in touch with EU member states in this regard for reciprocal acceptance. I understand that a number of EU countries have already taken positive steps in this direction."

### TAMIL NADU EATERIES CAN OFFER DINE-IN FROM MONDAY

FROM PG 1

Entertainment, sports and cultural events, schools and colleges and zoos.

The same old rule for marriages and funerals would continue with only 50 guests and 20 mourners allowed to take part.

Some of other relaxations are permission for business to business exhibitions with strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols, including mandatory RT-PCR test, IT sector offices to function with 50 per cent attendance and opening of clubs, gyms and sports facilities.

Liquor shops will be open from 10 am to 8 pm, buses will run within the State with no air conditioning, research scholars can attend to their work, tea shops can entertain 50 per cent clientele.

Though the spread of Coronavirus had been brought under control, the restrictions announced were imperative to keep a watch over the situation and manage the pandemic, the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister stressed on the importance of business establishments and individuals taking precautions and following the norms set for preventing the spread of Covid-19 like wearing of masks, provision of hand sanitizers, maintaining social distance and so on.

The relaxations would not apply to containment zones, where people are not allowed to step out of their homes for any reason other than a medical emergency. The Chief Minister also warned violators of the disaster management rules of serious action.

### THEATRE COMMAND MOVE TRIGGERS MILITARY TURF WAR

FROM PG 1

Air Chief Marshal Bhaduria said the integrated theatre command is a much more complex matter. "There are issues in terms of some of the options that are being discussed," he said, adding: "We must get it right. It is the most important reform that has an impact on war fighting."

"There are many issues when you set up to integrate theatre commands and many of those issues should be upfront looked at very clearly. We should clearly understand how we are going to structure it. Sort out the principle and sort out important issues and thereafter implement it," he added.

The defence ministry has set up a high-level committee which includes the three vice-chiefs of the armed forces and the Chief of the Integrated Defence Staff to thrash out differences on theatre commands among the three services and other ministries. The different theatre commands will integrate the assets of the Army, Air Force and Navy in a domain under one commander to give punitive response to any external threat.

The IAF, however, has concerns over dividing its limited number of aircraft among different commands. Air Chief Marshal Bhaduria said that every service has its own doctrine and has the best knowledge of how to employ the capabilities and capacities to get the desired results. "Whenever we have a system, which is integrated we must look at that entire doctrine. The abilities of the services must be brought in, and it must be a synergised result," he said.

### Crucial visit



Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy during a visit to the BSF Frontier headquarters in Jammu. After the visit, the minister tweeted, "Had the opportunity to interact with several officers across ranks, serving in this distinguished CAPF. Always an enriching experience to spend time with our personnel". (sic)

- PTI

## Ruckus forces Dhankhar to cut short inaugural address

### BJP MLAs protest lack of mention of post-poll violence in Assembly speech

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JULY 2

A huge ruckus by West Bengal BJP MLAs forced governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday to leave the Assembly without finishing his inaugural address to the House for the first budget session of the third Trinamul Congress government.

The turn of events that unfolded on Friday afternoon was not only unprecedented in the state legislature's history, but also was rare in the relations between the governor and the BJP. At 2 pm, Mr Dhankhar rose to deliver his speech in the

House. He was, however, greeted by angry BJP MLAs, headed by Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, who shouted slogans at him from the Opposition benches. Soon they went to the well of the House and burst into noisy protests there as well.

All of them were carrying posters and placards of persons they claimed were their party workers who became victims of the post-poll violence unleashed by the ruling Trinamul Congress in the state after coming to power on May 2.

They were furious after finding no mention of the

post-poll violence on their party workers in the state in the copies of the governor's address, which is customarily drafted by the state government, which were given to them.

Disrupted by the stir, an anguished governor stopped his speech for a minute and apparently expressed his displeasure to Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee, who spoke to chief minister Mamata Banerjee. Mr Dhankhar then resumed his address, which was however hardly audible due to the BJP MLAs' loud demonstration.

After four minutes, a disappointed governor cut

short his speech and tabled it in the House. Escorted by the Speaker and the CM, Mr Dhankhar then walked out of the Assembly and left for Raj Bhavan.

Mr Adhikari said, "With awe and wonder we found that the governor's address scripted by the state government lacked any mention of the post-poll violence. It also claimed that there have been no atrocities since May 2 and what is referred to as post-poll violence is false, apart from blaming the Election Commission for the anarchy during its rule in the state for the Assembly polls. That is

why we protested."

On the disruption of the governor's speech, the Nandigram BJP MLA added: "He is a very sensitive person. Our protests perhaps compelled him to cut short his address suddenly."

Lashing out at him, parliamentary affairs minister Partha Chatterjee said: "The way the Leader of the Opposition bragged about his party MLAs' protest has turned out to be a balloon... Their aim was to create indiscipline and obstruct the proceedings of the House in front of the governor, whose door they knock on otherwise."

## TMC asks PM to remove S-G over meeting Suvendu

**Kolkata, July 2:** The Trinamool Congress on Friday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking the removal of solicitor-general of India Tushar Mehta over his meeting with West Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari in Delhi.

The letter, written by TMC MPs Derek O'Brien, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy and Mahua Maitra, stated that the meeting between Mr Adhikari and the solicitor-general "reeks of impropriety" as the BJP MLA is an accused in the Narada and Saradha cases where investigations are underway.

According to the letter, the meeting "curiously" took place subsequent to Mr Adhikari's meeting with home minister Amit Shah.

The TMC MPs claimed that Mr Adhikari was accused in various cases of cheating, bribery and

illegal gratification, related to Narada and Saradha.

The solicitor-general is appearing for the CBI in the Narada case in the Supreme Court and the high court, besides advising the investigation agency in the Saradha chit fund scam, they said.

The meeting between Mr Adhikari and the solicitor-general "not only reeks of impropriety, there is a direct conflict of interest and also taints the position of the second highest law officer of the country, the solicitor-general," they added.

To maintain the "neutrality and integrity" of the office of the Solicitor General of India, necessary steps be taken for the removal of Mehta from the post, the TMC MPs said in the letter to the prime minister.

Mr Mehta, however, denied meeting the BJP legislator.

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Calling the drone attack at Jammu air base as a terrorist act, Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhaduria said on Friday that Air Force is in the process to boost its anti-drone capability to counter such attacks.

He said that the Jammu airbase did not have the advanced anti-drone system and it did not house any critical asset.

"What happened at Jammu was essentially a terrorist act which attempted to target our assets there... that attempt failed, our assets were not damaged. There were two explosives used," he said.

The Air Chief Marshal said that one of the explosives was "fragmentation in nature, more meant to kill people if they were to come on to that scene." Two personnel suffered minor injuries during the attack. In the first ever

● The Air chief said that the Air Force has also worked extensively with DRDO for a hard-kill anti-drone system.

drone attack on Indian soil two drones were used to drop low-intensity improvised explosive devices (IEDs) on Indian Air Force's Jammu air base on the intervening night of June 26-27.

"We have gone over this subject in terms of the implications of this kind of capability in the hands of non-state actors and the kind of effect the drone capability and the armed drone capability would have on even future conflicts," he said.

"All those issues have been looked at and many of these projects were already undertaken and some have already been fielded and it is from the indigenous industry especially the soft kill options are already in the field. This particular base did not have critical assets

and we did not have that system fielded in there," said Bhaduria.

He said that there are standard operating procedures at such bases to deal with drone threats "but this happened on a night when there was no visibility." "In terms of our ability to counter such (drone) its already, some ability has already come and much more is coming. In fact another month from now deliveries will start for another such system from indigenous sources," he said. (sic)

The Air chief said that the Air Force has also worked extensively with DRDO for a hard-kill anti-drone system.

"They have nearly functional system. It is under trial. Some improvements need to be done in order to achieve the kind of distances we need to effectively target such activities and that it's just a matter of time before we finish the trials and put it into production so that element will also come

### DOMINICA PM SAYS GOVT. NOT BEHIND CHOKSI ABDUCTION

**New Delhi, Jul 2:** Dominica Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has termed "total nonsense" the claims that his government was involved in alleged abduction of diamondaire Mehul Choksi, wanted in ₹13,500 crore scam in Punjab National Bank, from neighbouring Antigua and Barbuda, local media there reported.

In his weekly "annou palay" show, Skerrit said his government will allow the court to carry out its process regarding Choksi and gave the assurance that his rights and obligations will be respected, *Dominica News Online* reported.

Skerrit refuted the allegations of a plot between India and Dominica government to kidnap Choksi from neighbouring Caribbean country Antigua and Barbuda, where he was staying since 2018 as a citizen, after fleeing from India, and bring him to Dominica, the news portal reported. - PTI

### U'KHAND BJP MLA ACCUSED OF RAPE

**Dehradun, Jul 2:** BJP's Jwalapur MLA Suresh Rathore has been accused of rape by a former party colleague, according to police here.

A case of rape was lodged against the MLA at the Bahadarabad police station of Haridwar on Thursday night after a lower court's order. Rathore is the second BJP MLA from Uttarakhand after Mahesh Negi against whom such serious charges have been levelled.

Rathore has been accused of rape and criminal intimidation by the complainant.

## IAF chief: Jammu airbase didn't have advanced anti-drone system

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"They have nearly functional system. It is under trial. Some improvements need to be done in order to achieve the kind of distances we need to effectively target such activities and that it's just a matter of time before we finish the trials and put it into production so that element will also come

in," he said.

The Air Chief Marshal said that the Air Force is looking to have some anti-drone systems in place even at those bases which don't have critical assets. "so it is a question of how we deploy our limited system at the moment but very soon we will have enough and we will target... will find a way of tackling these threats," he added.

Meanwhile, the military turf war over the "theaterisation" of the armed forces heated up on Friday. As the Air Force expressed concern on the proposals, Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat on Friday called the Indian Air Force "a supporting arm" of the military, specifically the Army, just like the artillery and engineering services. However, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhaduria, countered this, saying the Air Force is not just a supporting arm but has a wider role.

### BIG LOSS Army soldier killed and another wounded in the fierce gunfight in Valley

## LeT commander among 5 militants gunned down

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, JULY 2

Five suspected Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants including a district level commander and an Army soldier were killed and another wounded in a fierce gunfight which broke out in Hanjin village of Jammu and Kashmir's southern Pulwama district on Thursday night and continued through Friday afternoon.

The police officials identified the slain commander as Nishaz Husain Lone alias Khitab and said that among the four other LeT cadres killed with him was

a Pakistani national Abu Rehan alias Tawheed. The other three slain militants are Danish Manzoor Sheikh, Amir Wagay and Mehran Manzoor- all local Kashmiris.

Hawaladar Kashiray B. of the Army's 44 Rashtriya Rifles laid down his life while fighting the militants, said an official.

The injured soldier has been admitted to a military hospital in Srinagar, he said.

The police said that the fighting started when its counterinsurgency Special Operations Group, the 44 Rashtriya Rifles and Central Reserve Police

Force (CRPF)'s 182 and 183 battalions together launched a cordon-and-search operation at Hanjin in Rajpora area of Pulwama to flush out militants, dead or alive. It said that the militants holed up in the village after the troops moved in, however, turned down repeated surrender offers from the latter.

The police said that due to darkness the operation was suspended late Thursday night, but the cordon remained intact through the night. The fighting resumed at first light on Friday "after the militants once again

refused to surrender and instead opened a barrage of gunfire injuring two soldiers one of whom succumbed later.

The Army said that two AK-47s, one SLR, two pistols and "other war like stores" were recovered from the encounter site.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range), Vijay Kumar, termed the killing of militants as "another big success".

Meanwhile, the J&K police on Friday claimed foiling an ex-filtration bid through the Uri sector of the Line of Control (LoC) by arresting four persons.



Locals inside a house that got partially damaged during an encounter between security forces and militants, at Rajpora in Pulwama district on Friday. - PTI



## SHORT TAKES

## SYRIA SEEKS AID TO REHABILITATE IS-LINKED MINORS

**Beirut:** Syria's Kurds on Friday urged international help to set up rehabilitation centres for minors linked to the Islamic State group, after charges they were holding "hundreds of children" in adult prisons.

Acknowledging that some jihadist-linked minors were being held in adult prisons, separate to the many more in camps, senior Kurdish foreign affairs official Abdelkarim Omar said around 30 teenagers have lately been transferred out of one overcrowded camp.

He spoke just days after the International Committee of the Red Cross said "hundreds of children — mostly boys, some as young as 12 — are detained in adult prisons" in northeast Syria.

## FALL OF TIGRAY CAPITAL MARKS NEW PHASE

**Addis Ababa:** Rebel fighters in Ethiopia's war-hit Tigray stunned the world this week by retaking the regional capital Mekele, sparking boastful statements by their leaders and rowdy street celebrations by their supporters.

It came exactly seven months after those same fighters were driven out by the army of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, a Nobel Peace Prize winner who now finds himself mired in an ugly war.

Abiy's government has since announced a unilateral ceasefire, while the rebels have gone on to seize most of Tigray, the northernmost region of Ethiopia. As the UN Security Council is expected to hold its first public meeting on Friday on the conflict, world leaders are mulling what comes next — and whether worst-case humanitarian scenarios can be avoided.

## MURDERED MP'S SISTER ELECTED IN KEY UK VOTE

**London:** Labour leader Keir Starmer breathed a sigh of relief on Friday after the party eked out victory in a special election in one of its northern strongholds, easing discontent after a series of poor showings by Britain's main opposition party.

Starmer praised Kim Leadbeater's 323-vote triumph in the election to represent the Batley and Spen district of West Yorkshire in the House of Commons as a "fantastic result." While the margin of victory was far below the 3,525-vote cushion Labour achieved in 2019, polls had suggested the party could lose the seat it has held since 1997.

Starmer, who has led Labour since April 2020, is under pressure after the party posted dismal results in local elections in May, then lost a special election in Hartlepool, which it had held for 62 years. The party is seeking to stop the momentum of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives, which made inroads in Labour's traditional working class strongholds during the 2019 parliamentary elections. Leadbeater is the sister of Jo Cox, who was the Labour lawmaker for the district when she was murdered in 2016.

## 6MN EU CITIZENS APPLY TO STAY IN UK AFTER BREXIT

**London:** More than six million EU citizens have applied to stay in the UK after Brexit, the government said Friday, nearly twice the number thought to be living in Britain before it left the bloc.

There was a late flurry of applications ahead of a June 30 deadline for the settlement scheme, designed to allow EU citizens residing in the UK to retain the same rights as they enjoyed before Brexit.

But since the end of the Brexit transition period on January 1, EU citizens wishing to settle or stay have faced tougher tests to secure residency and employment.

The final figure of 6.02 million applications, with 5.1 million grants of status, is far higher than the 3.7 million EU nationals originally estimated to be in the country when the scheme launched in March 2019.

More than 4,00,000 applications were made in the final month before the scheme ended, the Home Office said, adding that those who had missed the deadline on "reasonable grounds" could still make a late application.

## 'China building over 100 'nuclear' missile silos'

**Washington, July 2:** China has begun construction of over 100 new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles in a desert near the country's northwestern city of Yumen, signalling a major expansion of its nuclear capabilities, a leading American daily has reported citing satellite imagery.

The silo construction project could provide China — which celebrated its 100th anniversary on Thursday at the Tiananmen Square — a means of concealing its nuclear weapons, The Washington Post reported on Thursday.

The 119 nearly identical construction sites, that could potentially house powerful weapons capable of reaching the American mainland, are similar to those seen at existing launch facilities for China's arsenal of nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles, the report said.

It said that commercial satellite images obtained by researchers at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in California show work underway at scores of sites across a grid covering hundreds of square miles of arid terrain in Gansu province, some 2,100 km from Beijing.

The acquisition of over 100 new missile silos, if completed, would represent a historic shift for China, a country that is believed to possess a stockpile of 250 to 350 nuclear weapons, the report said.

The actual number of new missiles intended for those silos is unknown but could be much smaller. China has deployed decoy silos in the past.

The construction suggests a major effort to bolster the credibility of China's nuclear deterrent, said researcher Jeffrey Lewis, an expert on China's nuclear arsenal and part of a team that analysed the suspicious sites, first spotted by colleague Decker Eveleth as he scoured photos taken by commercial satellites over northwestern China.

Lewis described the scale of the building spree as incredible. "If the silos under construction at other sites across China are added to the count, the total comes to about 145 silos under construction," Lewis, director of the East Asia Nonproliferation Program at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, part of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, said in a summary of his findings provided

ed to The Washington Post.

"We believe China is expanding its nuclear forces in part to maintain a deterrent that can survive a US first strike in sufficient numbers to defeat US missile defences," he said.

The discovery of over 100 silos follows recent warnings by Pentagon officials about China's rapid advances in nuclear capability.

Admiral Charles Richard, who commands US nuclear forces, said during a congressional hearing in April that a breathtaking expansion was underway in China, including an expanding arsenal of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBMs) and new mobile missile launchers that can be easily hidden from satellites.

Lewis said the silos are probably intended for a Chinese ICBM known as the DF-41, which can carry multiple warheads and reach targets as far away as 9,300 miles, potentially putting the US mainland within its reach.

Major excavation work on the sites began early this year, although preparations were probably underway for months, Lewis said.



Women demonstrators clash with Turkish police as they protest against Turkey's decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, in Istanbul. Police fired tear gas at protesters in Istanbul demonstrating against Turkey's controversial exit from a treaty combatting femicide and domestic abuse. —AFP

## Turkey withdraws from treaty protecting women

**Istanbul, July 2:** Turkey formally withdrew on Thursday from a landmark international treaty protecting women from violence, and signed in its own city of Istanbul, though President Recep Tayyip Erdogan insisted it won't be a step backward for women.

Hundreds of women demonstrated in Istanbul later Thursday, holding banners that said they won't give up on the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention. "It's not over for us," one read. Similar protests were held in other Turkish cities.

Erdogan ended the country's participation in the convention with a surprise overnight decree in March, prompting condemnation from women's rights groups and Western countries. A court appeal to stop the withdrawal was rejected this week.

Erdogan announced his "Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women" on Thursday, which includes goals such as reviewing judicial processes, improving protection services and gathering data on violence.

"Some groups are trying to present our official withdrawal from the Istanbul convention on July 1st as going backwards," he said. "Just like our fight against violence towards women did not start with the Istanbul Convention, it won't end with our withdrawal."

In March, the Turkish Presidency's Directorate of Communications issued a statement saying the Istanbul Convention was "hijacked" by those "attempting to normalise homosexuality — which is

incompatible with Turkey's social and family values." Erdogan emphasized traditional family and gender values Thursday, saying combating violence against women was also a fight to "protect the rights and the honor of our mothers, wives, daughters."

US State Department spokesperson Ned Price tweeted that Turkey's withdrawal was "deeply disappointing and a step backward for the international effort to end violence against women." Women, LGBT groups and others have been protesting the decision. They say the convention's pillars of prevention, protection, criminal prosecution and policy coordination, as well as its identification of gender-based violence, are crucial to protecting women in Turkey. —AP

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## Oz tightens border controls to curb risk of virus variant

**Canberra, July 2:** Australia plans to halve commercial passenger arrivals due to virus risks as parts of the country emerged from lockdowns on Friday. Australia will reduce its cap on arrivals from 6,000 passengers a week to 3,000 by July 14 to reduce pressure on hotel quarantine, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said after a meeting with state and territory leaders.

Australia already has some of the world's tightest border restrictions aimed at keeping Covid-19 out of the country. The new restrictions add to obstacles faced by 34,000 Australian citizens and permanent residents stranded overseas and registered with the government as wanting to come home.

The government will charter more airliners to repatriate Australians, but the reduced limit on commercial passenger arrivals could continue until next year. "If medical advice changes between now and then, if medical advice suggests that we can alter that, then of course the National Cabinet has always been receptive to that advice and we'll continue to monitor that," Morrison told reporters, referring to his decision-making meetings with the state and territory leaders.

"We wouldn't want to keep those caps in place any longer than we had to," he added. Almost half the Australian population locked down since last week due to clusters mostly of the delta variant of the Coronavirus that is thought to be more contagious. —AP

## UAE bans travel to 14 countries including India

**Dubai, July 2:** The UAE government on Friday prohibited its nationals from traveling to 14 countries, including India and Pakistan, in a major step to arrest the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC) and the National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority (NCEMA) announced that its citizens are prohibited from travelling to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Namibia, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, South Africa, and Nigeria.

"Exempt from the decision are the UAE diplomatic missions in the aforementioned countries; emergency treatment cases; official delegations and previously authorised business and technical delegates," they said in a statement released to the UAE's official news agency WAM. —PTI

## Germany vows no lockdowns for vaccinated

**Berlin, July 2:** Germany's health minister on Friday said people who are vaccinated against Covid will not have to go into full lockdown again and will enjoy more freedoms than unvaccinated people in case of another virus resurgence.

"As long as there are no mutations that impact the protection from vaccines... then being fully vaccinated means that restrictions of the kind we saw last winter will not be necessary, needed or legally appropriate," Jens Spahn told reporters in Berlin.

Germany currently has very low infection numbers and has relaxed most of its virus curbs, but concerns are growing about the spread of the more contagious Delta variant and the likelihood of cases climbing again because of summer travel.

Spahn reiterated pleas for Germans to roll up their sleeves to prevent a fourth pandemic wave this autumn. —AFP

## Covid tests must in schools to avoid 'harmful effects': WHO

**Copenhagen, July 2:** The World Health Organisation said Friday that Covid-19 tests should be carried out in schools — even when no cases have been detected — to avoid the "harmful" effects of remote learning.

Screenings in schools had previously only been recommended if a cluster of coronavirus cases has been identified, but the

WHO now believes PCR or rapid antigen tests should be given even in the absence of symptoms among students and staff. "The summer months offer a valuable window of opportunity for governments to put in place the right set of measures that will help keep infection rates down and avoid resorting to school closures," Hans Kluge,

WHO's regional director for Europe, said in a statement issued together with UNICEF and UNESCO.

He added that closing schools "as we have seen, have such a harmful effect on the education, social and mental well-being of our children and youth." "We can't allow the pandemic to rob children of their education and development," said Kluge. —AFP

## France denies Pacific nuke tests cover up

**Paris, July 2:** The French government denied any cover up on Friday over radiation levels in the Pacific following its nuclear testing in the region, as discussions were held in Paris about the legacy of the explosions.

A two-day roundtable meeting called by French President Emmanuel

Macron in April began on Thursday following fresh allegations that the testing between 1966-1996 caused hidden atmospheric and ground pollution.

"There was no state cover up," Genevieve Darrieusq, junior defence minister, said in a brief comment on the sidelines of the event where she has ruled out any official apology from France.

In March, online investigation site Disclose created waves when said it had analysed some 2,000 pages of French military documents declassified in 2013 about the nearly 200 tests carried out around French Polynesia.

Using statistical modelling and help from academics and specialists, it

concluded that "French authorities have concealed the true impact of nuclear testing on the health of Polynesians for more than 50 years."

The roundtable discussion, which Macron attended on Thursday without making any public comment, has met with a mixed response from Polynesian politicians. —AFP



Activists hold placards reading 'Patents kill', 'Free vaccine' and 'Waive patents' during their march to European Union mission in Kiev on Friday in a rally in support of vaccination action called, 'Vaccinate our world'. Participants urge EU members to support the proposal to waive patent protection for life-saving Covid-19 vaccines. —AFP

## CYBER | SECURITY

## Rogue networks used Kubernetes, an open-source tool originally developed by Google

## NSA discloses hacking methods used by Russia

**Washington, July 2:** US and British agencies disclosed on Thursday details of "brute force" methods they say have been used by Russian intelligence to try to break into the cloud services of hundreds of government agencies, energy companies and other organisations.

An advisory released by the US National Security Agency describes attacks by operatives linked to the GRU, the Russian military intelligence agency, which has been previously tied to major cyberattacks abroad and efforts to disrupt the 2016 and 2020 American elections.

In a statement, Cybersecurity Director Rob Joyce said the campaign was "likely ongoing, on a global scale." Brute force

attacks involve the automated spraying of sites with potential passwords until hackers gain access. The advisory urges companies to adopt methods long urged by experts as common-sense cyber hygiene, including the use of multi-factor authentication and mandating strong passwords. Issued during a devastating wave of ransomware attacks on governments and key infrastructure, the advisory does not disclose specific targets of the campaign or its presumed purpose, saying only that hackers have targeted hundreds of organisations worldwide.

The says GRU-linked operatives have tried to break into networks using Kubernetes, an open-source tool originally developed

by Google to manage cloud services, since at least mid-2019 through early this year. While a "significant amount" of the attempted break-ins targeted organizations using Microsoft's Office 365 cloud services, the hackers went after other cloud providers and email servers as well, the said.

The US has long accused Russia of using and tolerating cyberattacks for espionage, spreading disinformation, and the disruption of governments and key infrastructure.

The Russian Embassy in Washington on Thursday "strictly" denied the involvement of Russian government agencies in cyberattacks on US government agencies or private companies. In a statement posted

ed on Facebook, the embassy said, "We hope that the American side will abandon the practice of unfounded accusations and focus on professional work with Russian experts to strengthen international information security."

Joe Slowik, a threat analyst at the network-monitoring firm Gigamon, said the activity described shows the GRU has further streamlined an already popular technique for breaking into networks.

He said it appears to overlap with Department of Energy reporting on brute force intrusion attempts in late

2019 and early 2020 targeting the U.S. energy and government sectors and is something the US government has apparently been aware of for some

time. Slowik said the use of Kubernetes "is certainly a bit unique, although on its own it doesn't appear worrying." —AP

மாண்புமிகு உயிர்த் திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி அறிக்கை எண்: 58/ 2021-2022

திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி மாநகராட்சி, பொது நிதி-2021-2022ன் கீழ் பூர்த்தியாகக் கொள்ளப்படும் ஆற்றாங்கரை பகுதியில் அமைந்துள்ள நேற்று நிலையங்களில் உள்ள தாளியங்கி கருவிகளுக்கு தேவையான சோடியம் ஹைபோ குளோரைட் கிருமிநாசினி திரவம் வழங்கி, தாளியங்கி குளோரினேட்டர் கருவிகளை பராமரிப்பு செய்யும் பணிப்பினை ரூ. 95.00 இலட்சம் மதிப்பீட்டிலும் மேற்கொள்வதற்கு 23.07.2021 அன்று நடைபெறும் ஒப்பந்தப்புள்ளியில் பங்கேற்க விரும்பும் ஒப்பந்தக்காரர்கள் மின்னணு முறையில் <http://tenders.gov.in> இணையதளத்தின் மூலமாகவும், நேரிழும் 23.07.2021 மாலை 03.00 மணிக்குள் சமர்ப்பிக்கும் ஒப்பந்தப்புள்ளிகள் அன்று மாலை 04.00 மணிபுள்ளில் திறக்கப்படும்.

மேற்கண்ட பணிகளுக்கான ஒப்பந்தப்புள்ளி நிறுத்தனைகள் மேற்குறிப்பிட்டுள்ள இணையதளத்தில் உள்ளது. மேலும் விவரங்களுக்கு மாநகராட்சி மைய அலுவலகத்தில் உள்ள பொறியியல் பிரிவில் அலுவலக நாட்களில் அலுவலக நேரத்தில் கேட்டு தெரிந்து கொள்ளலாம்.

ஆணையர், (இ/4456/2021 (மையம்) செமதொ/1/336/ஒப்பந்தப்புள்ளி/2021 திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி மாநகராட்சி



# DECCAN Chronicle

3 JULY 2021

## Take note of grim signals, warnings in Xi's speech

If the founding of the Communist Party of China in Shanghai in 1921 in the shadow of the Russian revolution of 1917 — *Ten Days that Shook the World* — as the title of a famous contemporary book by an American journalist put it — was an event that would hardly have been noticed, CPC's July 1 centenary would be analysed around the world. This is chiefly on account of the speech of Xi Jinping, who is CPC general secretary and President of his country for life.

It is a speech that sets out China's vision of the next one hundred years to build a mighty military machine. This seems an eerie recall of Hitler's resolve as he went about building the Third Reich. In his hour-long address, Mr Xi noted that "on the journey ahead" the country and the Party "should always be prepared for potential dangers" and "balance development and security imperatives".

For India, which has come to share a border with China in its Himalayan north and east after the obliteration of Tibet's national status and China's militarist push through Aksai Chin into Indian Ladakh, the special address brings home the fact that India will be face to face with a national security state where the people's military will be the driving force in securing China's vision of the next one hundred years.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the "people's military" will be the "strong pillar" of strengthening socialism. China, Mr Xi warned, won't accept "sanctimonious preaching" from "those who think they have a right to lecture us". This is no doubt upbraiding the US (which is in the habit of pointing fingers at those that don't show it love and affection). China's leader also declared that his country will not tolerate any power trying to "bully" or "subjugate" it.

Any attempt to do so will be "on a collision course with a great wall of steel". It needs to be clarified that while some of the international news reporting on the centenary event in Beijing speaks of Mr Xi warning of "broken heads" and "bloodshed" if there is a bid to bully China, the official English language version of the speech circulated by the Chinese news agency Xinhua (and carried on the portal of Nikkei Asia) carries no such reference. If the official English version has been duly edited under the Party's guidance to soften the original, then India should take note. It is broken heads and bloodshed that was headline news from Galwan in June 2020.

Mr Xi's special address collapses the Communist Party, the Chinese state, and the Chinese people, making clear China's intention to perpetuate its one-party State. It opens with the sentence that July 1 was a "great and solemn day in the history of the CPC and the Chinese nation."

China's strongman says that "socialism with Chinese characteristics" "transformed" the country, through "reforms", from being a "highly centralised planned economy" to becoming a "socialist market economy". It is this which had made China "a moderately prosperous society in all respects" and the country is on course to becoming a "great modern socialist country in all respects" in the next one hundred years.

Evidently, the Vietnam Communists paid greater attention to the military state aspect and did not send Mr Xi's felicitations on the big day, but the CPI(M) and the CPI did. Both noted China's success against the pandemic. CPI highlighted the need for peace on the border while the CPI(M) eulogised CPC's history.

Subhani



## Drones as weapons: India is facing a new challenge



Syed Ata Hasnain

It is not something really unexpected. Whenever a serious initiative is taken by the establishment in India towards normalisation of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir or a filip is given to a process which is otherwise languishing, there invariably comes a dampener in the form of an unexpected high-profile event. Such events become trendsetters or an element of transformation in the conflict situation, both in the military and political fields. Former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's famous Lahore Yatra ended with the Kargil intrusion in 1999. Narendra Modi's effort to give India-Pakistan relations a touch of informality with his surprise visit to Nawaz Sharif's family home outside Lahore in December 2015 was met a week later by the Pathankot attack on the first day of 2016. The successful campaign "Operation All Out" launched by the Indian security forces through 2017-18 triggered the Pulwama attack in early 2019; the aim was to send home a message on the relevance of the proxies. Given this backdrop, as soon as the top Indian leadership invited 14 leaders of J&K's mainstream political parties for talks and consultations to break the ice after the two-year disquiet, an initiative dampener designed to take away attention from the positives was expected. In the context of our current times, such an expectation should also have been because of the relative frustration among those who are opposed to the Indian narratives over J&K. In the two years since the constitutional decisions, the Indian government broke the stranglehold that separatists, ter-

rorists and Pakistan's Deep State had established in J&K. By its relentless actions against inimical elements and a successful programme of cultivation of international opinion, the government made all these supposed stakeholders irrelevant to the people of J&K. Was the drone attack serious enough to be classified as a spectacular event which could prospectively have an effect on the J&K situation? We have had mass casualty events earlier which acted as trendsetters and had the potential of being gamechangers. The 2016 Uri attack and 2019's Pulwama were two such events. Both acted as sparks with the message of extant proxy capability and to convey that the battle was still on. So, unlike conventional operations, this is a typical characteristic of hybrid conflict; it rises and falls in intensity and manifestation. After the successful run of counter-terror operations through the 1990s, the proxies adopted the so called "fidayeen" tactics of suicide attacks on Indian forces' camps and government installations. This forced the deployment of an out-of-proportion ratio of troops to secure billets, camps and facilities. For some time, it did create fair consternation in the forces' ranks. The run of such attacks lasted for about five years, by when the forces found solutions to reduce their impact. But making suicide attacks impossible could never be achieved.

There is another interesting analogy which deserves recall. We were hit hard by the improvised explosive devices used by the LTTE in Sri Lanka. That threat came back to hit us in Kashmir too in the 1990s. It was supposed to be crude technology which should have been

countered by sophisticated neutralisation through the electronic spectrum, especially when the trigger system moved on to the remote mobile type. For a long time, the Army tried a plethora of neutralisers, but the IED has continued to remain a threat till as late as Pulwama. The United States was hit by car bombs in Afghanistan and Iraq; no credible counter to that has yet been developed. What I am alluding to is the fact that counters to an emerging technology or even a crude antiquated one may not always be found. One has just to learn to minimise the impact if the device gets past all security and manages to strike. This is exactly what the threat from drones may end up as. We are just witnessing the advent of drone tactics in the field, in the terrorist domain in our environment and there is unnecessary finger pointing alleging tardiness by the military. In the armed forces, a lot of effort has been going on in the past decade to study the threat from drones, but more in the domain of conventional warfare employing armed fixed-wing drones. The use of the quad and hexa helicopters of a smaller variety have also been under the scanner ever since logistics drops from across the border were seen in Punjab and parts of Jammu division. The feasibility of the use of these to drop lethal payloads or be employed as rammers from the sky was anticipated. Now that the nature of threat becomes more focused, the specific measures to counter them will be refined progressively. Besides technology, which is the obvious answer,

there will have to be awareness training and specific reporting procedures developed for the civilian population too as the threat is of a nature that can proliferate rapidly. It will not be restricted to military targets alone, but also to a wider variety which will have an effect on society at large; recalling the basics of the terrorist mantra.

Did the Jammu incident and the subsequent sightings of drones have a specific purpose? I call these "relevance operations", desperate efforts at the revival of relevance. The Lashkar-e-Tayyaba is under pressure with Hafiz Saeed serving a jail sentence due to his involvement in terror financing. Recently, blasts have occurred outside his house in Pakistan with reported casualties. The LeT's capability to be of significance in Kashmir has taken a beating and it is desperate to get back to business, especially since the Deep State in Pakistan will want it to keep the resistance alive even as they worry about Afghanistan. That task may manifest itself in different ways; perhaps a drone threat is one way, the innovative one.

Lastly, a question that is being frequently asked in several quarters is whether a drone attack on an Air Force base is an act of war? It is best to parry that question for now, more due to the regional geopolitical environment and the developing internal dynamics in J&K. Specific answers to this question will not be available as the issue remains rooted in the grey zone. It's not as if we are giving Pakistan any leeway. It's just that we are recognising the world has moved far beyond the either/or labelling of events which might require specific responses. Our response too may be in the realm of pragmatic realism, which is awaiting the right opportunity.

*The writer, a retired lieutenant-general, is a former GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 ("Chinar") Corps*

### LETTERS

#### SUICIDE NOT SOLUTION

The news item that a mom ends life after her daughter spends more time on the phone made sad reading. Now that the pandemic has locked schools for over two years, students are being asked to attend online classes. They use mobile phones and so it has become a habit. People, irrespective of their age, use the gadget most of the time. It is not good for health. Students must devote some time to play which is good for their health. First the parents and teachers must encourage and counsel wards about the evils of using mobile phones for long hours. It affects the eyes besides the brain. The suicide by the young mom is tragic. Suicide does not solve any problem. It only aggravates the situation.

**Sravana Ramachandran, Chennai**

#### MAMOO NEVER ENDS

Apropos report, *No honest tahsildar in India: Raj min*. It is surprising as well heartening to hear that the Tahsildars and patwaris still stick to their 2 per cent *mamool* or bribe despite the ever-increasing corruption rates in all spheres where our netas receive huge amounts as kickbacks or terminal benefits or cuttings. When compared to the big sharks in politics who embezzle 20 or 30 per cent while granting new private sector projects and a few swallow huge amounts sanctioned for bitumen roads and laying them only on paper, the Tahsildars and patwaris looks like small fish who are living in contentment. Imagine if our netas and babus emulate the Tahsildars and standardise the bribe amount at only 2 per cent, India would become a most prosperous country.

**A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai**

#### FACEBOOK FALLS IN LINE

Social media giant Facebook announced that it will publish its first monthly transparency report in July, as mandated by the new intermediary and media guidelines, and provide information on the amount of content it removed between May 15 and June 15. While an interim report will be released on July 2, Facebook will provide in a final report details of the complaints. The action taken report will be released on July 15. This is a step in the right direction after the initial resistance. Facebook has learned how to be part of social media and is living up to its reputation. The service provider should not cross limits and should act within Indian laws.

**C.K.R. Nathan, Chennai**

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Farrukh Dhondy  
Cabbages & Kings



*"The essence of democracy Is that every citizen feels free Where no one's a minion And every opinion Can be expressed quite openly."*

— From **The Sound and Akoori**, by Bachchoo

Ugly are the ways of democracy in which all manner of prejudice, idiotic belief, irrational allegiance, self-righteous opinion and perceived individual material benefit guide the hand as it hovers above the ballot box. But OK, that being said, gentle reader, I suppose one has to agree with Winston Churchill when he said it's the best worst system of being ruled.

The byelection for a Member of Parliament in the Yorkshire constituency of Batley was a paradigm of this ugliness. These towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire were developed as the manufacturing base of textiles in the nineteenth century. Indian historians record the sale of Lancashire cotton to the subcontinental colony and the boycotting of these by the Independence movement in favour of Swadeshi fabric and khadi.

After the Second World War, these mills suffered an acute shortage of labour. None of them could recruit workers for the night and even for some hard-pressed day shifts. This chasm of dearth was filled in the 1950s and 1960s through the import of immigrant labour, in main from Mirpur in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Hence the population of Batley is, despite the closure of the mills in the era in which Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister, still 25 or so per cent immigrant and Muslim. This immigrant population traditionally supported the Labour Party in every election for the last several decades. *Mais plus ca change!*

Its last MP, Tracy Brabin, was a Labour member and she resigned to contest and take up the mayoralty of West Yorkshire. The MP before her was one Jo Cox, who was stabbed to death on the streets of Batley by a maniac who claimed to be a white supremacist Nazi. Now, with the resignation of her successor, the byelection was called. Jo Cox's sister, Kim Leadbeater, stood as the Labour candidate. And before I tell you the result, gentle reader, let me sum up the nastiness of the campaign.

Ms Leadbeater is openly lesbian and that, in an advanced democracy such as Britain — in contrast to, shall we say, an election in Iran — ought not to matter one jot. There are several gay and lesbian MPs in the British Parliament as the population, by and large, doesn't concern itself with the sexual orientation, or even the adulterous behaviour, of the candidates when casting their votes. But perhaps not in Batley. For why? Enter George Galloway. This maverick is a professional Scottish politician who was once a member of the Labour Party but was thrown out of it for turning up in Iraq when Britain was fighting a war there and virtually bending the knee to Saddam Hussein. He has since made himself an advocate of "Islamic" causes, mainly international support for Palestine and virulent criticism of Israeli domestic policy which veers, though Mr Galloway is adamant in his denial of it, into blatant anti-Semitism.

Mr Galloway parachuted himself into the Batley byelection standing for a fantasy outfit he founded called The Workers Party. His object wasn't to get elected and represent the constituency, but to take Muslim immigrant votes

away from Labour so that the Conservatives could take the seat. His object was to demonstrate that the Labour Party can't continue to be led by Sir Keir Starmer. His campaign posters in the town declared that Sir Keir Starmer must go.

I must admit, gentle reader, that I know this George Galloway and while I can concur with his support of Palestine against Israeli policy and its murderous attacks, I don't have much time for him. I came across him in the 1970s and 1980s, through left-wing events.

Then, when my daughters were of secondary school age, they were accepted by an ex-grammar school even though we lived outside the catchment area. Mr Galloway's daughter also lived outside the area and he got her in after arduous appeals and pulling strings.

He recalled this as an injustice when we met in Karachi at a literary festival some years ago. Myself and other writers were surprised to see billed as the chief guest and speaker at the festival, the non-literary, non-writer George Galloway, invited we suppose for his stance on Iraq.

When, one evening, the writers piled

into a coach taking us to a British Council party, the organiser boarded the bus saying: "Farrukh, George Galloway wants you to ride with him in his chief-guest limo." The entire coach began to derisively jeer. I was embarrassed, but for politeness' sake rode with George to the party.

In Batley, Mr Galloway courted the Muslim vote through support for those Muslims who disapproved of Kim Leadbeater for being a lesbian and shouted at her as she campaigned, saying she will support the spread of lesbian and gay "propaganda" in their children's schools. Mr Galloway also accused her of having an anti-Palestinian and pro-Israeli stance. None of this is true. But it's politics and nastiness, prejudice and lies are par for the course.

Despite all this, Ms Leadbeater won the seat for Labour with a narrow majority of 326 votes. The disturbing fact, however, is that Mr Galloway polled 21 per cent of the vote, which is approximately the percentage of the Muslim population of the constituency.

Mr Galloway, perhaps in a feeble imitation of Donald Trump, has now declared that he will go to the courts to challenge the result.

## Why democracy often turns ugly: Prejudice & hate as Batley votes...



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52,484.67	0.32
Nifty 50	15,722.20	0.27
S&P 500*	4,338.16	0.42
Dollar (₹)	74.75	-0.22
Pound Sterling (₹)	102.78	-0.06
Euro (₹)	88.38	0.00
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,615.251	0.53
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	75.92	0.11
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.065	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.451	-0.029

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## India joins global deal on minimum tax

India has joined the global deal on endorsing global minimum tax on multinational companies. It expects a consensus to be reached by October. Around 130 countries on Thursday had adopted a statement outlining a consensus on taxation. The deal calls for a global minimum tax of 15 per cent. Under it, countries could tax their companies' foreign earnings up to 15 per cent if they go untaxed through subsidiaries in other countries.

## 50% price hike in ranitidine, ibuprofen allowed



The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority said it has allowed a one-time increase of 50 per cent in the ceiling prices of nine scheduled formulations of three drugs, carbamazepine, ranitidine and ibuprofen to ensure their availability. While carbamazepine is an anti-epileptic drug, ranitidine is used for the treatment of ulcers of the stomach and intestines and ibuprofen is used to relieve pain from various conditions.

## In talks with investors for fund raise: VIL

Cash-strapped Vodafone Idea (VIL) said it is in active talks with potential investors for fund raising, and asserted that 'floor price' remains the "best and most preferred" fix for industry's woes arising from tariff-related issues. VIL confirmed that it has approached government to extend moratorium on spectrum instalments. VIL highlighted that sector's biggest pain point comes from pricing issues.

## Laurus Labs gets DRDO licence to make 2DG

Laurus Labs said it has received the licence from Defence Research and Development Organisation to manufacture and market Covid-19 treatment drug 2-Deoxy-D-Glucose (2DG). 2DG has been given emergency approval by the Drugs Controller General of India for use on Covid-19 patients. On June 28, Dr Reddy's Lab had announced the commercial launch of 2DG.



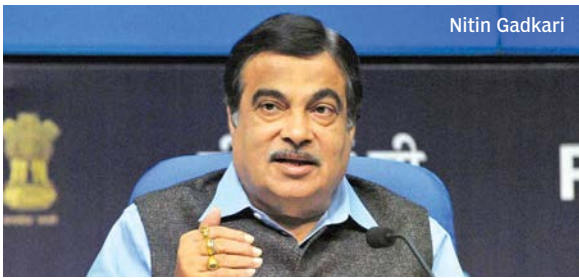
# Shops now eligible for priority loans, stimulus Retail, wholesale trade granted MSME status

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

The government has recognised retail and wholesale trade as MSME, making them eligible for the benefits like priority sector lending and pandemic stimulus packages.

MSME minister Nitin Gadkari said the government has revised the guidelines for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to include retail and wholesale trade under the category.

"Retail and wholesale trade were left out of the ambit of MSME, now under the revised guidelines, retail and wholesale trade will also get the benefit of priority sector lending under RBI guidelines," Gadkari said.



Apart from priority sector lending, traders will also be eligible for all the benefits provided to MSMEs, including the stimulus packages and Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme announced for the pandemic-hit enterprises.

All those enterprises which have a turnover of less than Rs 250 crore will be eligible to be considered

as MSMEs. The expanded definition of MSME will benefit 2.5 crore retail and wholesale traders, the government said.

But the Confederation of All India Traders (Cait) says there are more than 6.5 crore retailers and wholesale traders who will benefit from this decision.

"These traders have been providing employment to about 40 crore people and

generating an annual turnover of Rs 115 lakh crore. The pandemic-hit traders will now be able to restore their businesses by obtaining necessary finances which were earlier denied by banks and other financial institutions," said Praveen Khandelwal, secretary general of Cait.

This could throw a lifeline to lakhs of traders who have either shut shop or are on the verge of closure due to the pandemic.

In order to be categorised as MSME, these traders will have to register on the Udyam Registration portal.

"This landmark decision will have a structural impact for the sector, helping it get formalised," said Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, Retailers Association of India.

## Urban Indians prefer job to cash handout: LSE study

JAIVEER SHEKHAWAT  
JULY 2

A majority of urban Indians left unemployed by the coronavirus pandemic want the government to guarantee them jobs like it does for people in rural areas, says a study by the London School of Economics.

An overwhelming 82 per cent of respondents surveyed for the report 'City of dreams no more, a year on: worklessness and active labour market policies in urban India' favoured job guarantees offered by 16 per cent for cash transfers.

Even most of those who had received cash handouts from the government in the wake of the pandemic preferred having job protection over financial assistance, wrote Swati Dhingra and Fjolla Kondirolli, the authors of the report.

The central government currently guarantees at least 100 days of employment in a financial year to every household in rural areas. Budget allocation for the programme was stepped up last year amid the pandemic, and authorities reported as much as a 50 per cent increase in

enrolment for the programme.

The study re-contacted respondents in India covered in an earlier survey following the first wave of the pandemic. Unlike last year when Prime Minister Narendra Modi imposed a sweeping nationwide lockdown to stop the virus's spread, movement curbs this time around were localised with limited economic fallout.

Still, the study found 40 per cent of re-contacted workers had no work or pay, 10 months on from the first lockdown months. "Younger individuals, in

the bottom half of pre-Covid earnings, experienced higher levels of worklessness," the authors wrote, based on responses from 4,763 individuals between January and March this year in three lower-income states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Some other findings of the survey are: Urban individuals have been unemployed for the last six months on average; and the share of employed individuals who had a full year's work has halved from the previous year.

— Bloomberg

## EXPORTS RISE 47%, TRADE DEFICIT AT \$9.4 BILLION

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

Merchandise exports in June stood at \$32.46 billion, 47 per cent higher than the same month last year and 30 per cent higher than June 2019. From surplus in June last year, trade balance moved to a deficit of \$9.4 billion.

At \$32.46 billion, exports grew from \$22 billion in June 2020 and \$25 billion in June 2019. On a sequential basis too, exports grew from \$32.27 billion in May 2021 and \$31 billion in April 2021.

Major commodity groups that recorded growth in June 2021 included rice, other cereals, iron ore, organic and inorganic chemicals, petroleum products, plastic and linoleum and engineering goods.

Merchandise imports in June stood at \$41.86 billion —96.33 per cent up over \$21.32 billion in June 2020 and 2 per cent over \$41.03 billion in June 2019.

India had a trade deficit of \$9.4 billion in June against a trade surplus of \$0.71 billion in June 2020. But the deficit narrowed down by 41.26 per cent over the \$16 billion deficit in June 2019.

## Unicorn Cars 24 nears \$250 mn deal with DST

SARITHA RAI  
JULY 2

India's Cars24 Services Pvt Ltd is in talks with Yuri Milner's DST Global and other investors for a funding round that could double the used-vehicle site's value to \$2 billion, a person familiar with the discussions said.

India's biggest online marketplace for pre-owned cars is set to raise \$200 million to \$250 million from existing backers including DST, which may lead the round, said the person, who asked not to be named discussing a private deal.

Other investors including Moore Capital Management could join the deal, which could close in a few weeks, the person added. The pact could value Cars24 at \$1.6 billion to \$2 billion, up from about \$1 billion in November, when it closed a Series E round, the person said.

Used-vehicle sales are booming in India because consumers are shunning mass transit systems to avoid catching Covid-19. While the pandemic has



stymied sales of new autos, pre-owned cars are in demand as cost-conscious buyers seek value for money.

Cars24 and DST Global representatives declined to comment. Moore representatives didn't respond to emails seeking comment.

The startup, based in Gurgaon on the outskirts of New Delhi, was founded in 2015 by Vikram Chopra, Mehul Agrawal, Ruchit Agarwal and Gajendra Jangid to make the used-vehicle trade smoother.

Buying and selling cars in India has long been an anxiety-ridden, bumpy process dominated by street-corner mom-and-pop sales yards, with consumers distrustful of the

pricing and the condition of the vehicle.

Cars24 aims to make the purchase of a pre-owned vehicle as easy as buying a refrigerator or a smartphone online. It prices vehicles based on AI algorithms and uses data to determine which car would give the new owner least trouble. The vehicles are refurbished in the company's reconditioning facilities before being listed on its platform. Cars24 has a seven-day no-questions-asked return policy and provides a six-month warranty. It also sells pre-owned motorcycles and scooters and offers financing.

The startup said earlier this month it has expanded to Australia and the United Arab Emirates and plans to enter other markets in the Middle East and Southeast Asia this year. In November, Cars24 said its website traffic had increased by four times since the start of the pandemic. Its existing investors include Sequoia Capital India, Exor Seeds, Kingsway Capital Partners and others.

— Bloomberg

## IOC works on aluminium battery to take on Li-ion

DEBIT CHAKRABORTY  
& RAJESH KUMAR SINGH  
JULY 2

A drive to reduce dependence on imported materials and technology, especially from China, is pushing India to invest in a battery technology that uses aluminium rather than lithium as the key ingredient.

Indian Oil Corporation, the nation's largest oil refiner, has teamed up with startup Phinergy Ltd to develop the Israeli company's aluminium-air battery.

India has few exploitable options to produce lithium, the key metal for the current generation of electric-vehicle batteries, but its eastern jungles hold large reserves of bauxite, the ore used to make aluminium.

"Lithium is scarce in the country and we started scouting for an element which is abundantly available as a natural resource," said Indian Oil R&D director S.S.V. Ramakumar.

India is among the top 10 bauxite producers. It has some 600 million tonnes of the ore in proven reserves, according to the US Geological Survey, though India's mining ministry estimates that untapped resources may be many times that amount. Moreover, the country has invested heavily in production of aluminium over the years to become the world's second-biggest smelter of aluminium.

"Clearly the special consideration here is that aluminium is in better supply than lithium," said James Frith, head of energy stor-

age at BNEF in London. "But with the ever-falling prices of lithium-based systems, developers will be under pressure to find niche applications where aluminium-oxygen can gain a foothold."

An aluminium-air battery could win advantages over its lithium-ion rival in three other crucial ways, Ramakumar said: It's potentially cheaper, vehicles using it would have a longer range, and it's safer.

The battery works by tapping electricity generated when aluminium plates react with oxygen in the air. It has one of the highest energy densities for a battery. But the system has a number of drawbacks that have kept it from wide-scale use since it was first proposed in the 1960s.

Chief among them is the cost of materials that need to be added to the battery to prevent the power from dropping and the fact that the cells can't be recharged. Instead, Phinergy's plan is for users to be able to quickly swap in a new battery and send the used one to a recycling facility.

It takes just three minutes to replace the battery, about the time it takes to fill up at a gas station, Ramakumar said. The fuel retailer plans to use its network of filling stations as swapping points.

In comparison, lithium-ion batteries often contain hazardous materials that can be toxic if not disposed of correctly, making them harder to recycle. By 2035, the world will have accumulated about 4 million tonnes of Li-ion bat-

teries that have reached the end of their lives, according to a BloombergNEF estimate.

Lithium is already entrenched in the EV market and absorbs most of the research dollars, with many potential challengers based on sodium, magnesium or aluminium focused on smaller segments such as backup power systems, energy storage or low-power transport, like forklifts.

Yet demand both from electric transport and renewable energy storage means India could provide a market big enough for aluminium-air batteries to find a role. Battery demand will rise to as much as 185 gigawatt hours by 2035, according to BNEF.

Amara Raja Batteries Ltd, India's largest producer of lead-acid cells, is examining existing lithium-based technologies as a "next growth engine," though also sees scope for alternatives to be developed.

Vijayanand Samudrala, the firm's president of new energy, told a BNEF summit on Tuesday.

"I don't think there's a final word on the maturity of the technology, I can see at least two or three generations of technology shift happening in the batteries area in the next 10 years," he said.

Indian Oil made a strategic investment in Phinergy in early 2020, and the Indian firm's 30,000 service stations can "serve as the infrastructure for the deployment of Phinergy's technology," the Israeli company said in an e-mail.

— Bloomberg

## IDP to acquire British Council's IELTS biz

FC BUREAU  
CHENNAI, JULY 2

The British Council will sell its business of conducting English language test IELTS in India to IDP Education Limited, an international organisation offering student placement in various countries. IDP will acquire the Indian business for 130 million pounds.

IDP and British Council have been partners in conducting the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) globally. British Council employees working on IELTS in India will become part of the IDP team and the transaction is expected to be completed in August.

IELTS is the world's most popular English language test for study and migration and is trusted by more than 10,000 organisations. It is recognised for school and university entrances in many English speaking countries, including the UK and the US, Canada and Australia. It is also required for visa and citizenship purposes in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK.



This sale to its partner IDP will ensure that the continuity of the tests remains. The proceeds of the sale will enable the British Council to improve its financial position which has been impacted by Covid-19, said Kate Ewart-Biggs, interim CEO of the council.

The British Council is a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. It received 179 million pounds in grant funding from the UK government in 2021-22. The council has been present in India for 73 years now.

Andrew Barkla, CEO of IDP, said, "This agreement marks the start of a new chapter for IELTS in India."

Australia-listed IDP has operations in more than 50 countries.

In 2019, four million IELTS tests were held globally, said IDP. It did not share national-level numbers.

## OLA ELECTRIC SCOOTER REVEALED

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, JULY 2

Ola Electric is gearing up for the launch of its first electric scooter. The firm is expected to announce price of its e-scooter later this month.

The new electric scooter from the company is expected to be priced around Rs 1 lakh and it will take on rivals like Ather Energy's 450X.

Bhavish Aggarwal, chairman and group CEO at Ola Electric, on Friday posted a video of him riding the Ola Electric scooter on Twitter, hinting that the scooter is now ready for a market launch.



## Virgin Galactic plans Branson space trip before Bezos blasts off

JUSTIN BACHMAN  
JULY 2

Richard Branson plans to fly to space on July 11, days before a similar trip by fellow billionaire Jeff Bezos. The shares of Branson's Virgin Galactic Holdings Inc surged.

Virgin Galactic's VSS Unity spacecraft will also carry three other company employees and two pilots from the launch site in New Mexico, according to a company statement Thursday.

Bezos is planning a trip to space July 20 from nearby West Texas aboard a rocket made by

Blue Origin, the Amazon.com Inc. founder's space company.

Branson will evaluate the "private astronaut experience," the company said, as Virgin Galactic prepares to offer space-flights to well-heeled customers in 2022.

"After more than 16 years of research, engineering, and testing, Virgin Galactic stands at the vanguard of a new commercial space industry, which is set to open space to humankind and change the world for good," Branson said in the statement.

Virgin Galactic soared

23 per cent to \$53.20 after the close of regular trading in New York.

The trip will be Virgin Galactic's fourth flight to space with crew members. Joining Branson will be Beth Moses, the company's chief astronaut instructor, who has flown previously; Colin Bennett, an operations engineer; and Sirisha Bandla, vice president of government affairs.

Virgin Galactic executives have said they intend to resume ticket sales after Branson's flight. It suspended sales after a 2014 crash killed a test pilot.

— Bloomberg

## New Role

POONAM GUPTA  
JOINS NCAER AS DG

Poonam Gupta has joined the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) as its new director general.

Gupta is the first woman DG of the council. She succeeds Shekhar Shah. Before joining NCAER, Gupta was lead economist, global macro and market research at International Finance Corporation; and lead economist for India at the World Bank. Her earlier roles include the RBI chair professor at National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, professor at Icrier, associate prof, Delhi School of Economics; and economist at the IMF.

## LEYLAND GETS ASTON MARTIN MAN TO HEAD EV

Ashok Leyland said it has appointed former Aston Martin chief

Andy Palmer as executive vice chairman and CEO of its electric vehicle arm Switch Mobility from July 1. The unit combines the electric commercial vehicle operations of Ashok Leyland and its British arm Optare.

## SANJAY MADAN IS REGIONAL ED, NTPC SOUTH

Sanjay Madan, regional executive director (Western Region -II) has taken

additional charge as RED (South) from Friday. A graduate in Mechanical Engineering from Bhopal University, Madan joined NTPC as executive engineer trainee in 1983. In his 38-year career in NTPC, he worked in various capacities at NTPC-Vindhyachal, NTPC-Dadri, SRHQ and Corporate Centre.





## SHORT TAKES

## India look to avoid the English sweep

**Worcester:** An under-fire Indian women's team would be desperate to address vice-captain Harmanpreet Kaur's prolonged lean patch as they seek to stop a marauding England side from completing a 3-0 sweep in the final ODI here on Saturday.

Having lost six out of the last seven ODIs, the Mithali Raj-led side are finding it difficult to stem the rot as they face the ignominy of another one-sided series defeat after being thrashed by the South African women on home soil. While the bowlers did up their game in the second ODI with a much-improved performance, the batting has left the team down yet again with skipper Mithali left to do all the heavy lifting, which is also affecting her game. — PTI

## Bravo blazes as WI level SA series

**Grenada:** Dwayne Bravo's career-best T20I figures of four for 19 led the West Indies to a successful defence of a modest total as the home side pulled off a series-levelling 21-run victory over South Africa in the fourth match of the five-game series on Thursday. Set a target of 168 after captain Kieron Pollard belted an unbeaten 51 off 25 balls with five sixes and two fours to lift the West Indies to 167 for six, the Proteas relied heavily on the consistent Quinton de Kock in their quest to clinch the contest ahead of the final match on Saturday. **Brief scores:** West Indies 167/6 (Lendl Simmons 47, Kieron Pollard 51 (not out); Tabraiz Shamsi 2/13, George Linde 2/16) bt South Africa 146/9 (Quinton de Kock 60; Dwayne Bravo 4/19, Andre Russell 2/30).

## Hamilton fastest in Austria F1 practice

**Spielberg:** Mercedes found welcome speed as rain fell at the Austrian Grand Prix on Friday, with Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton leading a damp second practice ahead of teammate Valtteri Bottas. The conditions proved less to the liking of championship leader Max Verstappen. The Red Bull driver topped the leaderboard early on but then drifted down to third place as the track became wetter. Hamilton was 189 ahead of Bottas and 217 clear of Verstappen on Red Bull's home track. It was a positive sign for Mercedes that the drivers in fourth and fifth — Aston Martin pair Lance Stroll and Sebastian Vettel — were using Mercedes engines. — AP

## Bucks a win away from NBA finals

**Los Angeles:** The Milwaukee Bucks showed they are more than a one-man show on Thursday, using a balanced attack to dominate the Atlanta Hawks 123-112 in game five of the Eastern Conference finals. Brook Lopez had a season-high 33 points, Jrue Holiday had 25 points and 13 assists and Khris Middleton finished with 26 points and 13 rebounds for the Bucks, who grabbed a 3-2 series lead and are one win away from reaching the NBA finals for the first time since 1974. — AFP

## Arjuna slams SL over 'India B' tour

**Colombo:** Sri Lanka's World Cup-winning skipper Arjuna Ranatunga on Friday slammed the island's sports leaders for agreeing to a tour by a "second level" India side. Ranatunga, 57, said the tour undermined the country's "dignity" as he attacked Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa and Sri Lanka Cricket. "The Indian squad that came to Sri Lanka is not their best, it is a second level team," Ranatunga said. — AFP

## Live on TV

## EURO

**Quarterfinals:** Czech Republic vs Denmark from 9.30 pm; England vs Ukraine from 12.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

## COPA AMERICA

**Quarterfinals:** Uruguay vs Colombia from 3.30 am (Sunday); Argentina vs Ecuador from 6.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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## Lions on the move

## Roaring England off to Rome to take on Ukraine in quarters

**London, July 2:** England have Raheem Sterling to thank for their trip to Rome on Saturday for their Euro 2020 quarter-final against Ukraine, and they are now favourites to go on and reach a European Championship final for the first time.

The Manchester City star is already playing in his fourth major tournament but his talent, until now, had not been fully appreciated by the England support.

A precocious young player when England crashed out at the group stage of the 2014 World Cup, Sterling was one of the fall guys two years later as Roy Hodgson's side exited Euro 2016 against Iceland.

On social media, Sterling branded himself "The Hated One" during that tournament and he had to deal with negative stories in the press about his perceived lavish lifestyle and other issues.

He did not forget that treatment. In 2018, months after helping England reach the semi-finals of the World Cup despite failing to score, Sterling was racially abused while playing for Manchester City away to Chelsea.

Sterling took to Instagram to challenge media organisations for their portrayal of young black players, claiming it was fuelling "racism and aggressive behaviour".

At just 26, he is a senior figure in a youthful England squad with 65 caps already to his name and represents a fearlessness and social conscience that have made Gareth Southgate's side respected on and off the field.

In the face of booing from some of their own support, England's players have continued to take the knee before each match. — AFP



England players during a training session ahead of the Euro quarterfinal against Ukraine.

— Twitter

## Denmark dream of '92 repeat

**Baku, July 2:** Denmark will be dreaming of following in the footsteps of the side who claimed a shock European title in 1992, but standing in their way of a semi-final place at Euro 2020 on Saturday are the Czech Republic, who have sent them packing before.

The Danes were in danger of an early exit after group-stage losses to Finland and Belgium, the first of which was overshadowed by star player Christian Eriksen suffering a cardiac arrest on the pitch.

But, roared on by a raucous Copenhagen crowd, they thrashed Russia 4-1 to finish second in Group B, before travelling to Amsterdam to thump Wales 4-0 in the last 16.

Denmark have not reached a major tournament semi-final since lifting the trophy 29 years ago, when they initially failed to qualify but were late replacements for Yugoslavia.

"It's a chance that we might never have again," coach Kasper Hjulmand said ahead of Saturday's last-eight match against the Czechs in Baku.

"It's many years' work for lots of people. We want to make the most of this chance."

The Scandinavians have gone from strength to strength in the tournament and know victory in Azerbaijan would set up a last-four meeting with either England or Ukraine at Wembley.

Youngster Damsgaard has shone since taking the place of Eriksen in the second group match, scoring a wonderful opening goal against Russia.

"The match against Wales was the biggest of my career," he said. "The next match will be the biggest match I have ever played, so it's getting even crazier all the time for me."

Hjulmand is expected to have a full squad to choose from, with the exception of Eriksen, although RB Leipzig forward Yussuf Poulsen may only be fit enough to play for an hour.

The last time Denmark reached a major quarter-final was at Euro 2004, where they were beaten 3-0 by a Czech Republic side inspired by Pavel Nedved and two goals for Milan Baros.

"I had a really bad experience watching the match at Copenhagen Town Hall Square," Danish defender Mathias Jorgensen told uefa.com. "At the time, we all believed we would easily get past them. And that turned into an awful and, as I remember, rainy day in Copenhagen."

— AFP

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— AFP

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— AFP

## Ukraine ready for dream game

**Rome, July 2:** Oleksandr Zinchenko said Ukraine will need to play the "game of their lives" to beat England in Saturday's Euro 2020 quarter-final in Rome.

The Manchester City player scored and then set up Artem Dovbyk's last-gasp winner as Ukraine beat Sweden 2-1 after extra time in the last 16.

Ukraine have matched their run to the last eight of the 2006 World Cup, when coach Andriy Shevchenko was the team's star striker, and hope to reach a first semi-final at a major tournament.

"We will try to surprise them. Of course we realise that to get through everyone will probably need to play the best game of their lives," Zinchenko told Friday's news conference.

England defeated old rivals Germany in a knockout tie for the first time since the 1966 World Cup final, and Gareth Southgate's team are looking to end a 55-year wait for silverware.

Zinchenko could come up against a number of his City team-mates at the Stadio Olimpico, including Raheem Sterling who has scored three of England's four goals so far.

"The numbers speak for themselves. The fact that England haven't conceded a goal yet... they've played

very well in defence but I think there are no perfect teams, every team has weaknesses," he said. Ukraine scraped through to the knockout phase as the lowest-ranked of the four third-placed teams to advance, having lost two of their three group games to the Netherlands and Austria.

"We fully understand who we will be playing against tomorrow. I think (England) are one of the best teams, and at this Euro one of the most balanced teams. They have amazing players," said Shevchenko. "Tomorrow will be the hardest game for us. I know how difficult it will be for us, but I know our players have character and we'll try to show it."

Shevchenko also confirmed captain Andriy Yarmolenko, of Premier League club West Ham, would be fit for the game after he was replaced by Dovbyk during extra time on Tuesday. — AFP

## Olympic briefs

## Maana gets quota place

Indian woman swimmer Maana Patel's participation in the Tokyo Olympics has been confirmed through 'Universality quota', the Swimming Federation of India (SFI) said. Maana will take part in the 100m backstroke at the Tokyo Games and is the third Indian swimmer to have qualified after both Srihari Nataraj and Sajjan Prakash achieved Olympic Qualification Timing (OQT) A level recently. The Universality quota allows one male and one female competitor from a country to participate in the Olympics, provided no other swimmer from the same gender qualifies for the Games or receives a FINA invite based on his or her Olympic Selection time (B time).

## Mariyappan to carry flag

Top para high-jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu was on Friday named the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent in the Tokyo Paralympics, which begins on August 24. Thangavelu, who is defending the T-42 gold he had won in 2016 Rio Paralympics during the August 24 to September 5 showpiece in Tokyo, was picked for the honour. "Mariyappan will be the flag-bearer of the Indian contingent at the Tokyo Paralympics. The decision was taken at the executive committee meeting of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)," Parathletics chairman R. Satyanarayana said.

## Sindhu to get recovery system

Acting on world champion P.V. Sindhu's request, the government on Friday sanctioned the purchase of an advanced recovery equipment, which will help her remain in best physical shape ahead of the upcoming Tokyo Olympics. The approval came within 24 hours of the 2016 Olympic silver-medallist Indian shuttler's request, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said. One of India's biggest medal hopes in Tokyo, Sindhu was thrilled. "I am happy that it did not take even a day for the Sports Authority of India to approve my request for the recovery system," Sindhu said upon receiving the administrative sanction to procure the game ready recovery system.

## Malik's Tokyo hopes dashed

**New Delhi, July 2:** His hopes of competing in the Olympics over, Indian wrestler Sumit Malik was on Friday banned for two years by the sport's world governing body UWW after his B sample also returned positive for a prohibited stimulant.

The 28-year-old has one week to decide if he would accept the sanction or challenge it.

Malik was handed a provisional suspension last month for failing a dope test during the World Olympic Qualifier event in Sofia, where he had qualified for the Tokyo Games in the 125kg category.

His 'B' sample was opened on June 30 and expectedly that also provided the same result. A specified substance was found in Malik's sample, though, the 2018 Commonwealth Games gold-medallist had said that he only took painkillers to manage right knee niggle.

"Sumit Malik's B sample has given the same result and the UWW has banned him for two years from June 3. He has a week to



Sumit Malik

respond. He can call for a hearing or accept the sanction," a source in the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) said.

Sources close to Rohtak-based Malik said they will soon take a decision. "We are discussing the matter with our lawyer," said the person who is interacting with Malik on the matter.

The general opinion in WFI is that Malik should challenge the sanction since it was not a steroid but a stimulant that was taken inadvertently. Malik has been nursing a knee injury that he suffered during the national camp before the Olympic Qualifiers began at different venues. — PTI



Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus plays a shot against Colombia's Maria Camila Osorio Serrano during their third round match in the Wimbledon on Friday.

— AP

## BOPANNA-MIRZA WIN ALL-INDIA CLASH

The experienced pair of Rohan Bopanna and Sania Mirza defeated the brand new combination of Ramkaumar Ramanathan and Ankita Raina 6-2 7-6

(5) in the historic all-Indian mixed doubles first round match at the Wimbledon here on Friday. It was the first time in open era that two Indian teams competed against each other at a

## RESULTS

## Men's singles: Third round:

Novak Djokovic (SRB x1) bt Denis Kudla (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (9/7); Christian Garin (CHI x17) bt Pedro Martinez (ESP) 6-4, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4; Andrey Rublev (RUS x5) bt Fabio Fognini (ITA x26) 6-3, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2; Karen Khachanov (RUS x25) bt Frances Tiafoe (USA) 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

## Women singles: Third round:

Karolina Pliskova (CZE x8) bt Tereza Martincova (CZE) 6-3, 6-3; Liudmila Samsonova (RUS) bt Sloane Stephens (USA) 6-2, 2-6, 6-4; Iga Swiatek (POL x7) bt Irina-Camelia Begu (ROM) 6-1, 6-0; Elena Rybakina (KAZ x18) bt Shelby Rogers (USA) 6-1, 6-4; Aryna Sabalenka (BLR x2) bt Maria Camila Osorio Serrano (COL) 6-0, 6-3.

Grand Slam tournament.

The contest finally brought a Grand Slam debut for Ramkumar, who has made 21 attempts to qualify for the singles main draw of a tennis major. — Agencies