

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 13 | JULY 2021

## WEATHER



**Max:** 31°C  
**Min:** 22°C  
**Rainfall:** 4%

## ASTROGUIDE

**Pilava:** Aani 29  
**Tithi:** Thirithiyai  
**Star:** Magam  
**Rahukalam:** 3 pm to 4.30 pm  
**Yamagandam:** 9 am to 10.30 am

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 4.29 am  
**Luhar:** 12.19 pm  
**Asar:** 3.39 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.39 pm  
**Isha:** 7.58 pm

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+30,536)	(+534)
3,09,04,452	4,09,326

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,652)	(36)
TN:25,21,438	33,454

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

18,78,82,148
<b>DEATHS</b>
40,52,664
<b>COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES</b>
219

woorldometers.info

## Retail inflation remains high at 6.26%, IIP soars

**New Delhi:** Retail inflation remained above the RBI's comfort level for the second consecutive month despite slipping slightly to 6.26 per cent in June while the factory output recorded a growth of 29.3 per cent in May, mainly on account of the base effect, the government data showed.

## CCEA clears LIC disinvestment

**New Delhi:** The Union Cabinet has cleared disinvestment of the country's largest insurer LIC and a panel headed by the finance minister will now decide on the quantum of stake dilution, a senior official said on Monday.

## COUNTER POINT



It's unfair... we have the same number of cases but you were made Cabinet minister and I am only a minister of state!



## NATION | 4

**Islamic State 'conspiracy': NIA raids continue in Kashmir**



## WORLD | 5

**Appoint Deuba PM: Nepal SC**

## SPORT | 8

**I believe, I am the best: Djokovic**



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# TN all party meet united in opposing K'taka dam

## ■ Prepared to make a strong statement to New Delhi

**G BABU JAYAKUMAR & D SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, JULY 12**

Reflecting the collective sentiments of the people of Tamil Nadu, an all-party delegation would go to New Delhi and put pressure on the Union Government to refrain from giving permission to Karnataka to build a dam across the Cauvery River at Mekedatu.

A meeting of leaders of all legislative parties in the State passed a resolution to that effect, besides extending support and cooperation of the government in all its efforts to stop Karnataka from going ahead with its plans on building the dam and also expressing their united opposition to the project.

The first of the three resolutions urged the Centre not to give permission for the Mekedatu project as it would impinge the share of Cauvery water for the farmers of the State and had also thrown a big challenge to the Constitution.

Attended by leaders of all political parties having representation in the Assembly, the meeting expressed concern over Karnataka attempting to



**The united stand and opposition to Karnataka's bid to build the dam at Mekedatu should be conveyed not just to Karnataka but also to the Union Government, — M.K. Stalin, TN CM**

build the dam when the Supreme Court had made it clear that no work on the river system could be undertaken without permission from the riparian States.

Of the three sources of water flow into Tamil Nadu, only one did not have the control of Karnataka government and that was from the catchment area downstream of both the Kabin and Krishnarajasagar dams, Stalin said in his address at the meeting.

It was in that route of the river, after the rivers of

● An all-party delegation would go to New Delhi and put pressure on the Union Government to refrain from giving permission to Karnataka to build a dam across the Cauvery River at Mekedatu.

● Three resolutions were passed unanimously by all parties including the Congress, BJP, AIADMK, PMK, MDMK, CPM, CPI, VCK, MMK, TVK, Kongunadu Makkal Desiya Katchi and Puratchi Paratham.

● The State had absolute rights over the waters of the Cauvery River that flowed for a longer distance within Tamil Nadu territory than in Karnataka but even now the State was not getting its due share as mandated by the Cauvery Water Management Authority, CM said

Shimsha, Arkavati and Sornavati converged, that Karnataka now proposed to build Mekedatu dam, Stalin pointed out, adding that the other two sources were the opening of the Kabin and Krishnarajasagar reservoirs that the government had full control. Through those two means of water release, Karnataka let out only excess water after storing whatever it wanted, he said.

Making it very clear that the State had absolute rights over the waters of the Cauvery River that

flowed for a longer distance within Tamil Nadu territory than in Karnataka, the Chief Minister said that even now the State was not getting its due share as mandated by the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA).

If the Mekedatu dam was built, Karnataka would not release water as per the orders of the CWMA, he said, recalling the long and tortuous journey undertaken by the State government in asserting its rights over the waters. ■ P3

## KONGU NADU

# BJP scotches talk of dividing TN

**G BABU JAYAKUMAR & D SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, JULY 12**

A raging controversy over an alleged bid by the Union Government to bifurcate Tamil Nadu and carve a Kongu Nadu out of it was put to rest on Monday by the State BJP unit, which clarified that there was no such plan.

'Kongu Nadu is not BJP's idea. A prosperous Tamil Nadu and a strong India is the BJP's goal,' the party's State media unit president, A.N. S. Prasad said in a statement, urging party members not to express their personal views at party meetings, media interviews and social networking platforms.

But much muck raking had already happened during the weekend with many media channels and social networking sites going gaga over the proposed Kongu Nadu that would comprise a few districts in the western region of the State in which

the BJP had a good support base, with many State political leaders, too, chipping in with their viewpoints. Though the chimer, Kongu Nadu, had earlier been projected by fringe political outfits with not popular support, that it suddenly barged into the political discourse with a bang after a vernacular print media outlet putting out a big story speculating on the idea being toyed by the powers that be was surprising.

The speculation gained more credence — some people claim that it all began with that — since the brief bio-data of L Murugan, who took over as a Union Minister of State in the recent reshuffle, released by the authorities mentioned that he hailed from Kongu Nadu.

Elsewhere, the story triggered explosive reactions, first on social networking sites with people raving and ranting about the alleged proposed move and then in political circles. ■ P4

## TALIBAN CAN TARGET INDIAN ASSETS, WARNS ADVISORY

■ REPORT ON PAGE 4

## FLASH FLOODS WREAK HAVOC IN DHARAMSHALA

**Dharamshala (HP), July 12:** Flash flood triggered by heavy rains swept away buildings and cars at tourist spots as bad weather also led to the closure of the airport here.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has rushed three teams to conduct rescue-and-search operations in the flash flood-affected regions in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

The teams were sent after heavy rains hit many parts of the district and several people were reported stranded near Boh and Tatwani villages, an official spokesperson said. ■ P4

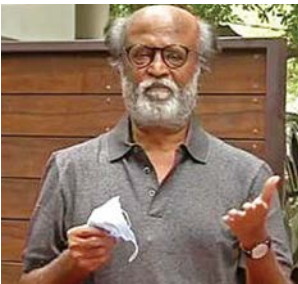
# Rajini says 'no' to politics forever, dissolves fan club

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JULY 12**

Actor Rajinikanth, who reneged on his plans to launch a political party at the eleventh hour just before the Assembly elections, said that he would not enter politics in future, too, on Monday and dissolved the Rajini Makkal Mandram (Rajini People's Association).

The Mandram was formed as a prelude to the political party that was on the anvil and several office bearers were named at the State and district levels, besides forming subsidiary organisations. Work was also in full swing with the office-bearers preparing the ground for facing elections.

All those office bearers would go back to the Rajinikanth Fans Service



■ All those office bearers would go back to the Rajinikanth Fans Service Club, which was actually converted into the Mandram in the first place to play a precursory role to the formation of the party.

Club, which was actually converted into the Mandram in the first place to play a precursory role to the formation of the party. The role of the Mandram was different to that of the previous fan club of the actor. Now that there is no purpose behind the running of the Mandram, it would revert to being the fan club, Rajinikanth told a meeting of the Madram's office-bearers.

He said a big question remained in the minds of all about the fate of Mandram because he could not enter politics due to various circumstances and hence he wanted to clear the doubts by announcing its dissolution.

Thanking all his supporters and fans, he said the fan club would continue to do the public services that it had been doing since the beginning.

# NEET UG exam to be held on Sept 12

**New Delhi, July 12:** The medical entrance exam NEET, which was scheduled for August 1, will now be conducted on September 12, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced Monday.

"The NEET-UG 2021, will be held on September 12 across the country following Covid-19 protocols. The application process will begin from 5 pm tomorrow through the NTA website," Pradhan said in a series of tweets.

"To ensure adherence to COVID-19 protocols, face mask will be provided to all candidates at the centre. Staggered time slots

during entry and exit, contactless registration, proper sanitisation, seating with social distancing etc. will also be ensured," he said.

The Education Minister further said that in order to ensure social distancing norms, the number of cities where examination is conducted will be increased from 155 to 198. The number of examination centres will also be increased from 3,862 used in 2020. The test will be offered in 11 languages — English, Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Odia, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. — PTI

## Dominica HC allows Mehul Choksi to return to Antigua

**New Delhi, July 12:** The Dominica High Court has granted bail to fugitive diamondaire Mehul Choksi, allowing him to travel to Antigua and Barbuda for treatment of his neurological condition, local media there reported.

The high court has granted a consent order permitting Choksi to go to Antigua, where he has been staying as a citizen since 2018 after he left India, after depositing Eastern Caribbean Dollars 10,000 (approximately ₹2.75 lakh as per exchange rate) as bail money, Antigua Breaking News reported. — PTI

# Italian renaissance: Euro cup goes to Rome

**Rome, July 12:** Italy's team returned home in triumph Monday after beating England in a tense penalty shootout to win Euro 2020 at Wembley, plunging the host nation into despair and prolonging their 55-year wait for a second major title.

Giorgio Chiellini, the 36-year-old Italy captain, and coach Roberto Mancini lifted the gleaming trophy aloft after the team's plane touched down in Rome just hours after the victory in London on Sunday night.

There was elation among a group who got up early — or never went to bed — to greet the Azzurri as they arrived back in the Italian capital, chanting "We're the champions of Europe!" fronted by Chiellini wearing a crown.

Mancini's men recovered from the shock of conceding the quickest goal ever in a



Italian players celebrate after edging out England in a thrilling penalty shootout in the Euro 20 final at Wembley on Sunday. — UEFA

European Championship final to equalise and held their nerve to claim a 3-2 shootout victory after a 1-1

draw following extra-time, sparking scenes of delirium from the players and the small pocket of Italian fans.

## YOUNG ENGLISH TRIO SUBJECTED TO RACIAL ABUSE

The three England players

— Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka — who missed penalties were subjected to a stream of racial abuse online from their own and other supporters.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson led condemnation of the "appalling abuse", saying: "This England team deserve to be lauded as heroes."

It is the second time Italy have been crowned European champions and marks a remarkable turnaround under Mancini after the team failed to even qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

They were invited to meet with Prime Minister Mario Draghi on Monday evening and also with President Sergio Mattarella, who himself was at Wembley to watch the match. ■ More on Pg 8

**BREAK IN CASE OF CONSTIPATION**

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## SHORT TAKES

## Over 600 take part in Fatima College virtual alumnae meet

**Madurai:** The Fatima College Alumnae Association (FCAA) organised its virtual annual alumnae meet on July 10. The programme began at 8.30a.m. with a prayer song. Dr. S. J. Kala, president of FCAA, welcomed the gathering and introduced the chief guests and alumna Dr. Bharathi Sankara Rajulu, Lecturer, Tamil & Telugu, Department of South & Southeast Asian Studies, University of California – Berkeley, California, USA and Ms. Tanvi Kapadia, CEO & Founder, INCORPORAN INC., New York City, USA. Dr R. Velankanni Matharasi, secretary of FCAA, presented the annual report of 2020 – 2021. The Fatima family paid homage to tribal rights activist Stan Swamy.

The Principal, Rev. Dr. Sr. G. Celine Sahaya Mary offered her felicitations. Her talk was punctuated with anecdotes that underscore the importance of women as multiple role-takers. ev. Dr. Sr. M. Francisca Flora, secretary of the College, gave a special message and blessed the alumnae. The virtual fete provided opportunities for alumnae to showcase their talents through various performances. Around 600 alumnae across the globe took part in the fete. Dr. P. Shyamala, head of the MBA department and executive committee of the FCAA, proposed the vote of thanks, according to a press release.

## Amudha takes charge as Regional Employees Provident Fund Commissioner

**Chennai, July 12:** Senior official C. Amudha has assumed charge as Regional Employees' Provident Fund Commissioner, Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), Regional Office, Chennai North.

Amudha joined the Organisation as Assistant Fund Commissioner in 1999. She served in various capacities at Regional offices, Coimbatore, Tambaram, Salem and Pudukcherry. Before the assumption of charge, she held the post of Regional P.F. Commissioner, Grade I at Regional Office, Bengaluru, a release stated.



CM M.K. Stalin at the public grievances day meet in the secretariat on Monday. A large number of people including physically challenged, elders and patients, gather in front of secretariat to submit their petitions to the CM. —DC

## HC rejects plea to reconvey the lands acquired to build law college in Tiruchy 30 years ago

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

Pointing out that when an acquired land has already vested with the state and the compensation has also been paid to the claimant, the claimants thereafter are not entitled to restitution of possession on the ground either the original purpose has seized to be in operation or the land could not be used for any other purpose, the Madras high court has dismissed a petition, which sought to reconvey the land acquired 30 years ago for constructing a law college in Tiruchirappalli, to the legal heirs of its original owner.

Justice N. Anand Venkatesh dismissed the petition filed by R. Rajathi, challenging an order of the government, rejecting the request of the petitioner to reconvey the land acquired from her father-in-law in 1982.

The case of the petitioner was that her father-in-law Balakrishnan Pillai was the owner of the property situated at S.No.182/1, Nagamangaam village, measuring an extent of 7.68 acres. This property, along with the properties belonging to other individuals, were sought to be acquired for the purpose of constructing a law college. A notification was issued for acquiring the land and thereafter an award was passed. Subsequently, the



award amount was also paid to the father-in-law of the petitioner on September 23, 1986 and he received a sum of ₹37, 405. However, the government decided to withdraw from the process of acquisition of lands belonging to all other owners except the land belonging to the father-in-law of the petitioner. From the year 1991 onwards, the father-in-law of the petitioner started making representations seeking for reconveyance of the lands. After her father-in-law and her husband died in the year 1991 and 2009 respectively, she filed a petition and this court directed the government to consider her request. Pursuant to which, the impugned order was passed, she added.

The judge said a division bench of this court, after analysing all the earlier judgments held that the question of transfer of lands to the original land owner would arise only in case, the government was satisfied that the land was not required for the purpose for which it was

acquired or for any other public purpose. It was further held that there was no right to compel the government to reconvey the land, the judge pointed out.

Citing judgments of the Supreme Court and another division bench of this court, the judge said the above judgments stand in the way of this court from granting the relief sought for by the petitioner. This court was not able to cross the hurdle since both conditions were satisfied in this case, namely, the land has vested with the government and the father-in-law of the petitioner has already received the compensation amount, the judge added.

The judge said section 48-B of the Land Acquisition Act does not confer any right to the parties to claim reconveyance. This provision merely empowers the government to reconvey, provided, the conditions specified in the said section were fulfilled. The government has now come up with a stand that the House Site Patta was going to be issued to the persons belonging to BC and MBC and proceedings have also been initiated in that regard. "Once such a stand is taken by the government, the request made by the petitioner pales into insignificance and section 45-B of the Act becomes inoperational," the judge added.

13.5 sovereigns stolen  
Two men conned elderly woman

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

Unidentified men conned an elderly woman and escaped with her gold jewels worth 13.5 sovereigns in Kolathur on Monday.

According to police, the victim has been identified as G Saratha (70) of Thirumurugan Nagar in Kolathur. On Monday morning, Saratha was on her way to Kanniamman temple in Srinivasa Nagar, when she was intercepted by two men on Makkaram Garden main road.

They allegedly told her

that there was some quarrel in the nearby street and asked her to remove the jewels to safeguard them. Then they offered to help her keep the jewels in her purse. Believing them, she gave her six bangles weighing 9 sovereigns and a chain weighing 4.5 sovereigns to them.

When she reached home, she found that the jewels were missing. Based on her complaint, Rajamangalam police have registered a case and launched a hunt to nab the miscreants.

## Woman arrested on charges for bludgeoning daughter

**Coimbatore, July 12:** A 47-year-old woman was arrested on Monday on charges of bludgeoning her daughter to death with a grinding stone at Karamadai, about 35 km from here, police said.

Both the women were reportedly habitual drinkers, the police said.

Nagamani was upset as her widowed daughter Mahalakshmi was talking over the phone most of the time instead of looking after her teenaged daughter and son, they said.

Suspecting an illicit affair, Nagamani scolded her daughter, who was drunk, on Sunday and a quarrel ensued, the police said.

Early next day, Nagamani threw the grinding stone on Mahalakshmi's head while she was sleeping and she died, they said. On learning this, police arrested the woman. —PTI

● Nagamani was upset as her widowed daughter Mahalakshmi was talking over the phone most of the time instead of looking after her teenaged daughter and son, they said. Suspecting illicit affair, she killed her daughter after a quarrel.

## AMMK functionary's car damaged in petrol bomb attack in Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

Unidentified men on Sunday allegedly hurled petrol bombs at the house of a local AMMK functionary in Madipakkam damaging his parked car, police said. Police sources said that no casualties have been reported.

According to police, the petrol bomb attack happened at the house of Jayamurugan in Rajarajeshwari Nagar in Madipakkam. He is an advocate by profession and also affiliated to the AMMK party.

Police said the incident happened around 9: 30 pm, when a few men, as captured by CCTV cam-

era, could be seen moving around the area before hurling petrol bombs at the car that was parked in the parking lot.

A few locals first saw the fire and alerted Jayamurugan. With the help of neighbours, he put out the fire, and called Madipakkam police.

After being alerted by Jayamurugan, the Madipakkam police rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area. The city police examined the place and collected evidence.

A complaint has been lodged at the Madipakkam police station by Jayamurugan. Further investigations are underway.

## Ensure drinking water supply in Salem district is maintained: HC

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

The Madras high court has requested the authorities to ensure that the drinking water supply to the relevant region in particular (Tharamangalam Town) in Salem District is maintained and augmented if possible.

The first bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy closed a suo motu proceedings initiated pursuant to a letter sent by one S.Sakthivel.

The bench said the suo motu petition was instituted in public interest to deal with a complaint

issued by way of a letter. Subsequently, S.Sakthivel, the author of the letter also participated in the virtual proceedings. A status report has been filed by the Salem District Collector indicating the measures taken. It was evident that a field inspection was conducted on June 9, 2021 with the Sub-Collector, Mettur, the Executive Engineer, Salem Corporation, the Assistant Director of Town Panchayat, Salem Zone and several other officials. According to the status report of the District Collector, Salem Corporation has an area of 91.34 square kilometre and it has 60 wards and about

135 LPCD was supplied on a regular basis as part of the drinking water scheme under the National Drinking Water Programme. The report also speaks of the proposal to construct an additional overhead tank with a capacity of 2 lakh litres from the general fund of the Tharamangalam Town Panchayat in the current calendar year. "Since it appears that the issue raised by the citizen has been looked into and immediate appropriate steps taken, the suo motu proceedings need to be closed. Accordingly, the petition is closed", the bench added and made the above observation.



A Greater Chennai Corporation worker engaged in fogging exercise to destroy mosquitoes at Kotturpuram Housing Board on Monday. —DC



## Zika virus: Flyers from Kerala screened at Chennai airport

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

In view of Zika Virus Disease (ZVD) in neighboring Kerala, the Airports Authority of India on Monday started screening domestic passengers arriving from Kerala at the Chennai airport.

The thermal screening process began at 2 pm on Monday, checking the passengers arriving from Kannur, Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode and Kochi. Officials said the screening commenced following the state government's recommendation to AAI recently.

The Tamil Nadu government has intensified checking on the bor-

ders with Kerala following the Zika virus outbreak. Passengers travelling from Kerala via trains were also screened at the railway stations in the state, sources said.

Airport officials said that seven domestic flights fly from Kerala to Chennai, with 500- 600 passengers in a day. All these passengers are being scanned for Zika virus infection.

Zika virus is spread through the bite of the Aedes mosquito, with symptoms such as fever, skin rashes, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain. India also saw Zika outbreaks in 2017 and 2018, with hundreds of cases reported in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.

## Researchers at IIT-Madras develop AI-based algorithm to identify cancer-causing alterations

**Chennai, July 12:** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, on Monday said its research team has developed an Artificial Intelligence based mathematical model to identify cancer-causing alterations in human cells.

The algorithm uses a relatively unexplored technique of leveraging DNA composition to pinpoint genetic alterations that were responsible for progression of cancer, a press release said.

The team was led by professor B Ravindran, head, Robert Bosch Centre for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (RBCDSAI), IIT Madras and Karthik Raman, faculty member, RBCDSAI, IIT Madras.

"One of the major challenges faced by cancer researchers involves the differentiation between the relatively small number of 'driver' mutations that enable the cancer cells to

grow and the large number of passenger mutations that do not have any effect on the progression of the disease", Ravindran said.

Researchers hope that the driver mutations predicted through their 'mathematical model' would ultimately help discover potentially novel drug targets and advance the notion of prescribing the 'right drug to the right person at the right time'.

"Our model could distinguish between well-studied drivers and passenger mutations from cancer genes with an accuracy of 89 per cent", Ravindran said.

The next step for the team includes developing an easy-to-use web interface to enable cancer researchers get predictions on preferred set of variants and further studies on the context of the mutations, among others, the release added. —PTI

## Mandatory gold hallmarking in 24 Tamil Nadu districts

**New Delhi, July 12:** Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Maharashtra are the top-3 states where the most number of districts have been identified for the first-phase implementation of mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts, according to the consumer affairs ministry.

Mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts came into force from June 16 in a phased manner, and the first phase will cover 256 districts. So far, gold hallmarking, a purity certification of the precious metal, has been voluntary in nature. According to a notification issued by the ministry, the government has identified 256 districts from 28 states and Union territories for Phase-I implementation of gold hallmarking. Among the list of the states, a maximum of 24 dis-

tricts have been identified from Tamil Nadu for the implementation of mandatory gold hallmarking, followed by Gujarat (23 districts) and Maharashtra (22 districts). About 19 districts each have been identified in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh for compulsory gold hallmarking. Whereas, seven districts each in Delhi and Telangana, while in Andhra Pradesh and Punjab (12 districts each), Kerala (13 districts), Karnataka (14 districts) and Haryana (15 districts) have been identified, the notification added. Jewellers in 256 districts have been allowed to sell only 14, 18 and 22 carats of gold jewellery with mandatory hallmarking marks.

Last month, the government relaxed mandatory hallmarking of gold for certain players in the jewellery sector after

extensive consultation with stakeholders. For instance, the government has exempted jewellers with an annual turnover of up to ₹40 lakh from mandatory hallmarking. It has also been exempted on those who export and re-import jewellery as per the government's trade policy, jewellery meant for international exhibitions as well as for government-approved B2B domestic exhibitions.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has been running a hallmarking scheme for gold jewellery since April 2000. Around 40 per cent of gold jewellery is being hallmarkled currently. India has around four lakh jewellers. Out of this, only 35,879 are BIS certified. According to the World Gold Council, India imports 700-800 tonnes of gold annually. —PTI

## Off-centre

## THANJAVUR DT'S WORRY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

Though 30 districts in Tamil Nadu record less than 100 Covid-19 cases daily, Thanjavur district is not yet out of danger, registering over 210 cases, leading to a worried state government sending an alert to the district administration.

Thanjavur collector Dinesh Ponraj Oliver, in order to bring down the tally, makes frequent inspection of shops, fish and vegetable markets, buses etc and slaps fines on protocol violators. But the public has to take a serious view on the issue.

On Monday, hundreds of farmers came to the collectorate in vans and minibuses to take part in an agitation, with 90 per cent of them not wearing masks and not keeping physical distance. The police tried to streamline them but in vain.

## BIDDERS TURN TO FISTICUFFS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
OOTY, JULY 12

The commuters as well as pedestrians on busy Sim's Park Road in Coonoor town last week witnessed two bidders of an auction at the horticulture office exchanging blows and rolling on the road bringing traffic to a halt. The bidders, hailing from Mettupalayam in Coimbatore district, took part in the auction for harvesting Durian and Mangostan fruits being grown in the horticulture farms in Burliar and Kallar. After a clash of interests, they entered into a verbal duel in the horticulture office, which spilled over to the street dangerously. Finally, the cops rushed in, dispersed them and restored traffic.



Narikuravars gets vaccinated at a special camp for them at Kotturpuram on Monday. —DC

## +ve cases fall below 100 in Pondy

**Puducherry, July 12:** Puducherry on Monday reported less than 100 new coronavirus cases in a single day after a gap of four months with the union territory logging 81 infections. Two more people-one each from the Puducherry and Karaikal regions- succumbed to the virus in the last 24 hours ending 10 AM Monday, taking the toll to 1,771, Director of Department of Health and Family Welfare Services S Mohan Kumar said. The Puducherry region added 81 fresh cases followed by Mahe (11), Karaikal (6) and Yanam (one). The Health department Director said the union territory reported less than 100 cases in a single day after a gap of nearly four months. It had reported 86 new cases on March 25. The fresh infec-

tions were identified at the end of the examination of swabs of 4,214 people. Among the two deceased was a 89-year old person who did not have any comorbidity. Mohan Kumar said there were 1,413 active cases in the union territory with 246 of them in hospitals and the remaining 1,167 in home isolation. While 171 patients recovered and were discharged from healthcare facilities in the last 24 hours, the overall recoveries in the union territory stood at 1,15,873, he added.

The Department of Health has examined so far 13,90,973 swabs and it was found that 11,88,204 of them were negative. The test positivity rate today was 1.82 per cent while fatality and recovery rates were 1.49 per cent and 97.33 per cent respectively. The

Health department Director said that 37,530 healthcare workers and 22,942 frontline workers have been inoculated so far. He said 4,23,271 people coming under the category of either senior citizens or those above 45 years without comorbidities have been vaccinated since March 1. In all, 5,92,907 persons including those who received the second dose have been covered under the vaccination programme. The Health Department is holding a vaccination festival for the second time in the union territory for three days from July 10. The effort of the department is to achieve cent per cent coverage and ensure that Puducherry emerged a totally vaccinated union territory by August 15, official sources said. —PTI



## SHORT TAKES

## Collector inspects govt orphanage

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THANJAVUR, JULY 12

Thanjavur Collector Dinesh Ponraj Oliver inspected the government orphanage on Monday. He interacted with a boy and girl, who were rescued from duck rearing at Orathanadu.

According to revenue officials, Gangadurai, son of Ganesan from Ganguli village in Krishnagiri district, involved the nine-year-old boy and six-year-old girl in duck rearing at Orathanadu. The children hail from Kurungupalli village in Krishnagiri district. The Orathanadu tahsildar, who found the children during his field visit, rescued and handed over them to the district child welfare committee, which in turn put them in the orphanage. The collector also inspected Saraswathi Mahal's library and art gallery.

## Transwoman held for attacking man

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

A 32-year-old man was attacked by a transwoman after he failed to repay her ₹3000.

The victim identified as Murugan (32), a resident of Anakaputhur near Pallavaram is a coolie worker. He had allegedly borrowed Rs 3000 from a Trans Woman, Shreya (26), who lives in the same area.

However, recently when Shreya asked Murugan to repay the money, he refused to pay back the money. Irked by this, Shreya took away Murugan's bike in exchange for the money he had to pay her. However, on Sunday night without informing Shreya he rode his bike back home. Learning about this, Shreya and his friend, Ramkumar (20), went to Murugan's house and attacked him. Shreya allegedly cut his neck and hand with a blade and fled the spot. Murugan was taken to the Chromepet GH for treatment. Based on his complaint, Shreya and Ramkumar were arrested. They were both remanded, the police said.

## Call for new district with HQ at Mannargudi

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC  
MANNARGUDI, JULY 12

All political parties and service organisations of Mannargudi in Tiruvavur district have appealed to the Tamil Nadu government to form a new district with headquarters at Mannargudi to achieve the 25-year-old demand of Mannargudi people.

A resolution to this effect was adopted at a joint meeting of all parties and service organisations of Mannargudi held

here on Sunday night under the presidency of Nesakkaram president Cauvery S. Ranganathan.

Ranganathan said the integrated Thanjavur district has now bifurcated as four districts namely Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Tiruvavur and Mayiladuthurai. As per norms, six districts can be formed with a population of 10 lakh per district which will help in easy administration, he said and added that the Thanjavur district can be

bifurcated to form a new district with headquarters at Mannargudi.

The new district will have Mannargudi, Needamangalam, Thiruthurai, Koothanallur and Muthupettai taluks besides creating new taluks with headquarters at Madukkur and Vadaseri, he added.

The meeting also decided to take up the issue with the government through Mannargudi MLA T.R.B. Raja after having another round of

talks with the representatives of all political parties and service organisations.

Among others, former municipal chairman Siva. Rajamanickam, V.S. Rajendran, Sudha Anbuselvan, former DDMK town secretary Raja Bhobalan, DDMK leaders Soma Elangovan and Murugaiyan, district Jayalalitha pravaai secretary Vasukiraman, union secretary Tamilvelan (AIADMK), Mannai of

Congress, MDMK's district secretary Balachandran, MDMK's town secretary Sun Saravanan, CPI(M) town secretary Raghupathi, Ramani of VCK, Kailai Umaithurai of DK, Abdul Kareem of Islamiya Ikkiya Jamat R.V. Anand, A.P. Ashok, president and general secretary respectively of chamber of commerce, Kumatti Thidal Govindaraj of Lions Club, Dr. Balakrishnan, Rotary Club president, participated in the meeting.



## 5 more held in VTP leader murder case

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUVARUR, JULY 12

The police arrested five more persons in connection with the murder of Rajini Pandiyan, the Tiruvavur district secretary of the 'Valarum Tamilagam Party', at Vada Sangenthi

village near Thiruthuraiipoondi in Tiruvavur district on last Friday. Police arrested Mahadevan and Rajesh of Edaiyur Sangenthi and based on their information, five more persons were nabbed in the wee hours of Monday.

## Farmers protest for crop insurance compensation

G. SRINIVASAN | DC  
THANJAVUR, JULY 12

Farmers of Thanjavur district staged a demonstration in front of the collectorate here demanding payment of crop insurance compensation under the prime minister's crop insurance scheme during 2020-21.

R. Sukumaran, state vice-president, Vivasaya Sangangalin Koottu Iyakkam, who led the agitation, said that farmers paid a premium to the tune of Rs 19,000 crores. But they have not got the compensation for the crops that were damaged in rain during 2020-2021 December-January. The Tamil Nadu government paid a relief of Rs 8,000 per acre. But farmers are yet to get the compensation under the prime minister's crop insurance scheme, Sukumaran said.

They also appealed to the central government to prevent the Karnataka government from constructing a dam across the Cauvery at Makedatu. They also asked the central government to intervene and get the due share of Cauvery water as per the Supreme Court order from Karnataka.

They also demanded the opening of a direct purchase centre at Sathanur in Thiruvudaimaruthur taluk. They presented the charter of demands to the district revenue officer.

S.P.Jayabal, district president of Thamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, and D. Sakthivel, district secretary, participated in the agitation.

## UNANIMOUS OPPOSITION TO KARNATAKA'S BID TO BUILD DAM

From P1

It all began with a 'son of the Cauvery River bank' M Karunanidhi initially taking up the issue as PWD Minister in the first DMK government and then seeking the Union Government's mediation in the dispute with Karnataka on September 5, 1969, as chief minister, Stalin said.

Karunanidhi then made the demand for the tribunal on February 17, 1970, and then it became a reality on June 2, 1990, through his persistent fight to establish the rights of the State over the river water, he said.

Welcoming the leaders of the various parties, both the DMK's allies and those in the opposition camp, Stalin said that he was glad to note that all of them shared the same views on the Cauvery issue. The united stand and opposition to Karnataka's bid to build the dam at Makedatu should be conveyed not just to Karnataka but also to the Union Government, he said.

D. Jayakumar, one of the AIADMK representatives at the meeting, told the media that the DMK government should follow the AIADMK's footsteps in fighting for the State's rights unfailingly. He stressed on a legal as well as a political fight. Jayakumar also said that Karnataka government's action was unacceptable and also amounted to contempt of court. The interests of the State, that of Cauvery and that of the delta region was paramount, he stressed.

The resolutions were passed unanimously by all the parties including the Congress, BJP, AIADMK, PMK, MDMK, CPM, CPI, VCK, MMK, TVK, Kongunadu Makkal Desiya Katchi and Puratchi Paratham.



(Top) As authorities attempt to remove encroachments from a waterbody at Bibikulam based on the order of Madurai Bench of Madras High Court, more than 500 people stage a protest against eviction at Bibikulam junction on Monday.

—DC

(Left) Corporation Commissioner Raja Gopal Sunkara inspects new road laying work at ward 55 in Coimbatore on Monday.

—DC

## COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



**Aries:** Your financial position indicates improvement. However, activities with financial stakes must be handled with utmost care. Loss of authority is possible.



**Taurus:** Creative and original thinking can help you achieve success. Heavy expenditure can cause stress. Avoid taking loans. Postpone lawsuits.



**Gemini:** Those suffering from chronic ailments must be very careful. Expenditure can exceed income. Postpone new ventures. Do not react in tense situations.



**Cancer:** You are likely to make an investment in order to achieve financial security. Managers must use innovative methods to encourage their staff.



**Leo:** Today there will be a progress after a long halt in business. You are likely to experience a sudden fall in income. Your lover might deceive you.



**Virgo:** Urinary ailments and the health of your spouse can cause some concerns. The day will bring some relief. Long pending debts may get cleared now. Guard against dangerous situations.



**You share your b'day with**

Harrison Ford is an American actor and pilot. In 2019, the U.S. domestic box office grosses from his films were over \$5.1 billion, placing him at No. 4 on the list of highest-grossing domestic box office stars of all time.



**Libra:** Today the unemployed are likely to find good job opportunities. Marriage prospects are expected to bloom for those who are single.



**Scorpio:** Postpone new contracts. The ailments of chronic patients can aggravate. Guard against accidents. Health of your spouse can cause a concern.



**Sagittarius:** If you are too generous with your time, others will take advantage of you. A friend can prove treacherous. Your fears can rob your mental peace.



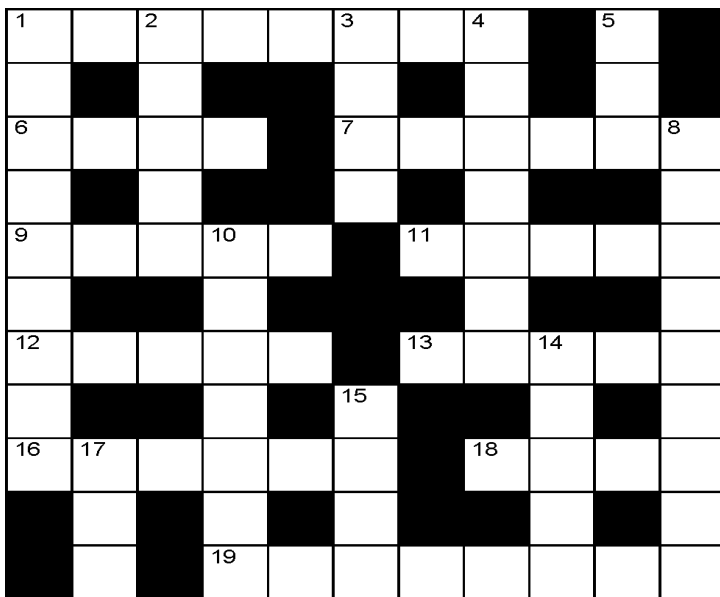
**Capricorn:** Finance and property related matters will take up most of your day. Don't disclose about your love affair to anyone because it could put your budding affair in jeopardy.



**Aquarius:** Some of you will feel neglected by their loved ones. You must understand that others are struggling with their own problems and do not have sufficient time to give you.

**Pisces:** You are reaching an important point in your life now and everything depends on the direction you choose. Today you will be able to utilize a few of your ideas by mixing them together.

## QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- Stage scenery curtain (8)
- Lazy (4)
- Mystery (6)
- Eats quickly, greedily (5)
- Search (5)
- Yellow earthy pigment (5)
- Thin biscuit (5)
- Exertion (6)
- Sudden bump (4)
- Small telescope (8)

Down

- Sulphur (9)
- Musical instrument (5)
- Coral bank (4)
- Flowering plant (7)
- Poorly lit (3)
- Irish tart (anag) (9)
- Very angry (7)
- Region's plant life (5)
- Support (4)
- Put right (3)

## YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

**Across:** 6. Breakwater, 8. Nasty, 10. Panic, 13. Mantelpiece, 14. Sharp, 17. Merit, 19. Transcribe.

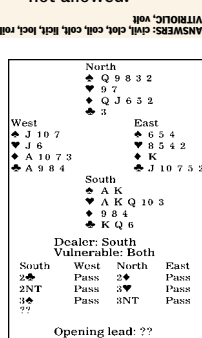
**Down:** 1. Pros, 2. Wavy, 3. Swap, 4. Stunt, 5. Procreate, 7. Animosity, 9. Tutor, 11. Arise, 12. Elm, 15. Ajar, 16. Posy, 17. Murk, 18. Rubs.

## Word Mine

L  
I  
O  
R  
V  
C  
I  
T  
I

TODAY'S RATINGS: 7 AVERAGE; 8 GOOD; 10 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.



## Jumble

SKRIB  
LTUFE  
GRANJO  
TWAULO

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Jumbles: GOURD CLICK INNING ODDSET

Yesterday's Answer: The band's outdoor performance was ready to start, but the weather was — DISCONCERTING

(Answers tomorrow)

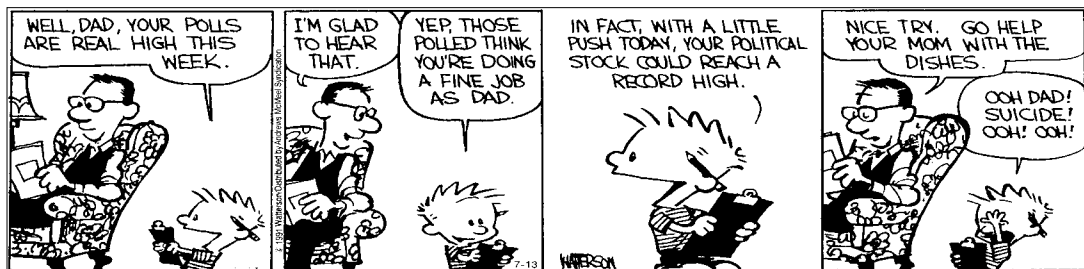
spades unbeatable.

So, when I faced an identical problem in this deal, I ran to four spades.

Note that if I had passed out three no-trump, West probably would have led the diamond three. East would have shifted to the club jack, and I would have gone down. (Even after a club lead, I fail if, after cashing my spades and leading a diamond, West has the courage to play low.) Four spades goes down if West leads the diamond ace

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CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli &amp; craig boldman



BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN | STAN LEE

bridge  
PHILLIP  
ALDER

HOW  
VALID  
IS THIS  
THEORY?

Stephen Hawking said in an interview with The Guardian newspaper in England, "If human life were long enough to find the ultimate theory, everything would have been solved by previous generations. Nothing would be left to be discovered."

I guess it is true that if Neanderthal man had had a life expectancy of, say, 120 years, civilization would have progressed much quicker. But on a far less weighty sub-

ject, I have a theory about this deal. Look at the South hand. You open two clubs and rebid two no-trump. North transfers into spades, then bids three no-trump. What would you do now?

At least 40 years ago, I faced this same predicament. Worried that I would never get to my partner's hand in no-trump, I retreated to four spades, despite holding only ace-king doubleton. This worked perfectly. Three no-trump was hopeless and four





## SHORT TAKES

## SC TO HEAR BIHAR'S PLEA ON SENARI MASSACRE

PARMOD KUMAR | DC  
NEW DELHI, JULY 12

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to hear Bihar government's appeal challenging the Patna High Court verdict acquitting all the 13 accused — allegedly linked to banned Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) — who were convicted by the trial court for their involvement in 1999 Senari massacre in which 34 upper caste people were killed.

A bench comprising Justice S. Abdul Nazeer and Justice Krishna Murari while admitting the appeal by Bihar government against High court order asked it to serve notice on all 13 acquitted accused persons. The High Court in May 2021 had set aside the judgment of a lower court while acquitting the 13 accused and ordered their immediate release.

In 1999, extremists allegedly linked to the MCC executed 34 people belonging to an upper caste in the open field in Senari. On November 18, 2016, the Jehanabad district court had sentenced 10 persons to death and awarded life imprisonment to three others. The district court had acquitted 23 others for lack of evidence.

## JAISHANKAR TO ATTEND SCO MEET IN TAJIKISTAN

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JULY 12

With Afghanistan descending into chaos and anarchy following the withdrawal of US troops, India on Monday said external affairs minister S. Jaishankar would visit Tajikistan on July 13-14 to take part in the meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Foreign Ministers and would also attend the SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan that will meet on July 14 with the participation of the Afghan Government.

As reported by this newspaper last week, the meeting is expected to be attended by Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi as well. Both neighbours along with Russia, China, and most of the Central Asian Republics are members of the SCO. The meetings in the Tajik Capital Dushanbe are expected to discuss the fluid situation in Afghanistan.

In a statement, the MEA said, "The meeting will discuss the achievements of the organisation as it celebrates the 20th Anniversary of its formation in this year. It will also assess the preparation for the upcoming SCO Council of Heads of States on 16-17 September 2021 in Dushanbe and exchange views on current international and regional issues."

## BJP PULLS UP ITS COIMBATORE UNIT

FROM PG 1

Some news channels on the social networking platforms even explored the plausibility of such a move and came up with a conclusion that it was possible. They went to the extent of comparing it with Kashmir that was splintered and the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, from which Telangana was carved out.

To bolster the conjecture that the BJP government was working on the proposal, someone even recalled Vanathi Srinivasan, MLA from Coimbatore South, mentioning the word 'Kongu Nadu' in the context of her allegation that the region was being neglected by the DMK government.

Even as many political leaders expressed their anger over the alleged proposal by the Union Government to form a new State, the BJP's Coimbatore North District unit added fuel to fire by making an open demand to that effect on Sunday.

The executive committee of the district unit passed a resolution saying Kongu Nadu should be carved out through an administrative process to uphold the honour and self-respect of the region and also to protect the people's livelihood among other things.

Since that resolution confirmed the speculative story in the vernacular media outlet, raising more anger among the common people, Prasad's made the request to BJP members not to give room for forces inimical to Tamil Nadu's interest to twist and misinterpret the good intentions, thoughts and views of the party to create confusion in the people's mind.

## VACCINE DRIVE NOT HELD IN 25 RAJ. DIST. DUE TO SHORTAGE

Jaipur, July 12: Covid-19 inoculation sessions were not conducted in at least 25 of Rajasthan's 33 districts on Monday due to vaccine shortage, an official said.

"The state had only 10,000 doses on Monday. So, vaccination sessions could not be conducted in about 25 districts of the state," health secretary Siddharth Mahajan said.

Rajasthan will receive eight lakh doses on Monday night and this will be consumed in the next two days, he said.

Mahajan said that the state had demanded 1.5 crore anti-Covid vaccine doses for July, but the Centre allocated 65 lakh doses. The officials said that a large number of people need to be vaccinated for the second dose in July for which adequate supply is required.

Rajasthan has also written to the Centre to give the vaccine doses allocated to private hospitals to the state government, Mahajan said.

According to the health department, from June 21 to July 8, the state had received 31.63 lakh vaccine doses from the Centre.

During this period, 48 lakh people were vaccinated against the coronavirus and among the doses administered, were also those which the state had purchased on its own expense.

On July 9, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot in a letter to the Union health minister had urged the Centre to not only increase vaccine allocation, but also to allocate Rajasthan's full quota, which also includes vaccines for private hospitals, to the state government.

Currently, daily vaccination is limited to the extent of supplies received from the central government, he had said.

The daily average of vaccine doses received, since the start of the vaccination drive for 18 years and above, has been around two to three lakh only, Gehlot said.

In Rajasthan, over 2.63 crore people have already received their first dose, and out of these, over 46 lakhs have received the second dose. — PTI

## Different strokes



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's son Raihan Rajiv Vadra during his first exhibition 'Dark Perception: An Exposition of Light, Space and Time', at Bikaner House in New Delhi on Monday. The 20-year-old said, "I would never say yes or no to anything. But photography is going to be definitely one of the things that I would like to do for a long time." — PTI

## Cars, buildings swept away as flash floods hit Himachal

Three NDRF teams rushed to flash flood-affected regions of Himachal

**Dharamshala (HP), July 12:** Flash flood triggered by heavy rains swept away buildings and cars at tourist spots as bad weather also led to the closure of the airport here.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has rushed three teams to conduct rescue-and-search operations in the flash flood-affected regions in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. The teams were sent after heavy rains hit many parts of the district and several people were reported stranded near Boh and Tatwani villages, an official spokesperson said.

The district administration also instructed tourists to postpone their visit to Dharamshala in view of the heavy rains.

A drain near Bhagsu Nag in upper Dharamshala adjoining Mcleodganj changed its course owing to heavy rains, sweeping away four cars and several bikes, video clips showed.

A government school building at Bhagsunag was also damaged and adjacent hotels there were inundated, it showed.

"Due to inclement weather and heavy rains, all incoming flights to Dharamshala airport at Gaggal have been cancelled," said airport's traffic in-charge Gaurav Kumar.

Owing to flash flood at Manjhi Khad area adjoining Dharamshala, two buildings were swept away while several others were reported to be damaged, the video clips.

The flash floods also

● **THE DISTRICT** administration is making elaborate arrangements for the safety of the tourists staying in Dharamshala and its surrounding areas.

damaged a bridge on the Mandi-Pathankot highway after which traffic was stopped on both sides, leading to a traffic jam.

In a tweet, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, "The situation in Himachal Pradesh due to heavy rains is being closely monitored. Authorities are working with the State Government. All possible support is being extended. I pray for the safety of those in affected areas."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur

on Monday to take stock of the situation arising due to the floods in several districts of the state and assured him all possible help from the Centre.

Thakur also expressed concern over the losses due to heavy rain and directed the administrations of various districts to ensure speedy relief and rescue operation in the affected areas.

He also urged the local people and tourists to refrain from going near the river banks to avoid any untoward incident.

Deputy Commissioner Dr Nipun Jindal said, "All the tourists visiting Dharamshala have been instructed to postpone their tour so that they do not face any kind of inconvenience."

He said the tourists who

have already arrived in Dharamshala and its surrounding places have also been advised to stay where they are as roads etc. have also been damaged due to heavy rains, which may cause problems in their movement.

The district administration is also making elaborate arrangements for the safety of the tourists staying in Dharamshala and its surrounding areas, he said. In case of any problem, they can contact the toll free number 1077 of the disaster control room, he said.

"Instructions have also been given to people to not go to sensitive places prone to landslides. Some people have also been shifted to safer places due to flood conditions in some areas of the district."

## Islamic State 'conspiracy': NIA raids continue in Kashmir

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC  
SRINAGAR, JULY 12

The NIA on Monday detained three more persons during fresh raids carried out by its sleuths in Jammu and Kashmir's southern Anantnag district in connection with a 'jihadist terrorism' case involving cadres of Islamic State or IS. It has also formally arrested three other persons for allegedly being active IS cadres.

The NIA and J&K police sources said that after searching a private house in Sofi Mohalla locality of Anantnag's Achabal area

owned by one Ghulam Nabi Sofi, the sleuths took his two sons Aqib Ahmed alias Nadim and Arif Muhammad into custody. Another person identified as Arif Hussain Qadiri was detained for questioning following a raid at a private printing press in the neighbouring Ganjwar area. A laptop in his use was also seized, the sources said.

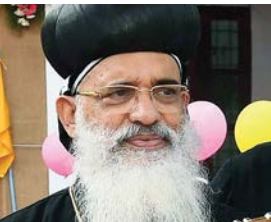
The NIA had on Sunday conducted raids at seven locations in Srinagar and Anantnag and detained six persons including the head of an Islamic seminary for questioning in connection with the case

registered by it in New Delhi in June under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The case, it claimed, pertains to a "conspiracy of the ISIS (Islamic State) to radicalize and recruit impressionable youth in the country to wage violent jihad against the Indian state."

The agency in a statement issued here on Monday said that after preliminary investigations three persons Umar Nisar, Tanveer Ahmad Bhat and Rameez Ahmad Lone - all from Anantnag.

## Head of Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church passes away at 74

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 12

Moran Mor Baselios Marthoma Paulose

Supreme head of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church Moran Mor Baselios Marthoma Paulose passed away at Parumala in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala early on Monday after a prolonged illness. He was 74.

The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church said the Catholicos breathed his last at a private hospital in Pathanamthitta at 2.35 am. He was undergoing treatment for lung cancer

since December 2019.

According to hospital authorities, the Catholicos had contracted Covid-19 infection in February which had aggravated his lung condition. Though he recovered from Covid, his

overall condition especially lung complications took a turn for the worse.

The mortal remains of the Catholicos was kept for ceremonial public exhibition at the Parumala Church till 7 pm. The funeral ceremony would be held at Devalokam, the headquarters of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Catholic Church in Kottayam at 5 pm on Tuesday.

Baselios Mar Thoma Paulose II was the eighth Catholicos of the East in Malankara and 91st Primate on the Apostolic Throne of St Thomas. He was enthroned as the

Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan in November 2010.

Baselios Marthoma Paulose was born on August 30, 1946 as K.I. Paul to Kollannur Iype and Pullikkottil Kunjeetty at Kunnammkulam.

He did his post-graduate from CMS College Kottayam.

After completing his schooling at government school in Pazhanji and higher education at the St Thomas College, he enrolled at the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Kottayam for theological studies in 1969.

## LOW-KEY | FESTIVITIES

Around 500 servitors of the temple along with the security personnel pulled the 3 chariots

## 9-day Rath Yatra starts on colourful note sans devotees

AKSHAYA KUMAR  
SAHOO | DC  
PURI, JULY 12

Lord Jagannath's annual nine-day Rath Yatra festival on Monday began on a colourful note, despite the absence of lakhs of devotees who throng the pilgrim city during this period every year to participate in the grand event.

As the devotees stayed away due to Covid-19 restrictions and watched the festival on television screens for the second year in a row, hundreds of servitors of Srimandir, the abode of Lord Jagannath pulled the chariots of the deities.

All the servitors had undergone strict Covid-19 tests to check infection in the city. "We cannot express the pain in our

heart as the Covid-19 situation keeps lakhs of devotees away from Lord Jagannath. The Rath Yatra is meant for devotees who gather here to see the deities on the chariots with a belief that such a darshan will pave the way for Moksha or liberation of soul from rebirth. It is also meant for people of other sects and faiths who on normal days do not have access to Srimandir for darshan. They come here to see the deities but also pull the chariots," said Pandit Suryanarayan Rath Sharma, a priest at Srimandir and Jagannath cult researcher.

The process of the Rath Yatra began with the priests conducting all the morning rituals after which Lord Jagannath and two His siblings — elder

brother Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra — were led on a procession to the chariots amidst playing of drums cymbals.

After the deities were mounted on the chariots, Sankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati offered his prayers following which Gajapati King Dibyasingha Deb performed the customary Chherapahanra or cleaning of chariots with a gold-coated broomstick.

Around 500 servitors of the temple along with the security personnel pulled the three chariots — Nandighosha of Lord Jagannath, Taladhwaaja of Lord Balabhadra and Darpadalan of Devi Subhadra — to Gundicha Mandir, a temple located at distance of two km from Srimandir. Gundicha Mandir is the

house and birthplace of the deities. During their nine-day sojourn at Gundicha temple, the deities also offer darshan to common people. However, as prohibitory order has been issued on the entry of people from outside to the city during the festival, there shall be no congregation at the place this time.

Earlier in the morning, President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik extended warm greetings to the people of the country, seeking blessings of the Holy Trinity for healthy and prosperous life to all.

The President, in a tweet in Hindi, extended Rath Yatra wishes to every Indian. He also sought blessings of the Almighty

for healthy life during the time of the pandemic.

Modi tweeted, "Greetings to everyone on the special occasion of the Rath Yatra. We bow to Lord Jagannath and pray that His blessings bring good health and prosperity in everyone's lives. Jai Jagannath!"

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, while wishing the citizens of the state, shared a message through a video clip. In his tweet, he stated "May the state be Covid-free with the blessings of Lord Jagannath."

Patnaik had earlier appealed to the people of Odisha to celebrate the mega festival in strict adherence to Covid protocols, thereby setting an example of a disciplined and sacred life before the world.

## No Rath Yatra in J'khand this year

**Ranchi, July 12:** Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has requested people in the state to worship Lord Jagannath at their homes as Rath Yatra will not be taken out this year due to the prevailing Covid-19 situation.

Soren said that Rath Yatra could not be allowed for the second consecutive year as the Coronavirus threat is still looming large in the state.

"It pains me to not allow Rath Yatra but many stern steps have to be taken to

secure our tomorrow. Celebration of many festivals had to be subdued due to Coronavirus pandemic. Seek blessings of Lord Jagannath from the safety of your homes," the Chief Minister said in a statement issued late on Sunday night.

Meanwhile, Jharkhand's Coronavirus tally stands at 3,46,279, of which 423 are active cases, while 3,40,737 people have recovered from the disease and 5,119 patients have succumbed to the infection to date. — PTI



## SHORT TAKES

ARMED ATTACK  
NEAR NIGER-MALI  
BORDER KILLS 49

**Niamey, July 12:** Five civilians, four soldiers and 40 armed attackers were killed Sunday in a clash in Niger's restive southwest region near the border with Mali, the government said. Around 100 heavily armed "terrorists" riding motorcycles attacked the Tchoma Bangou village, Niger's Ministry of Defence said in a statement read on public television that did not identify who it suspected was behind the incident. The "prompt and vigorous reaction" by the Defense and Security Forces, "made it possible to repel the attack and inflict heavy losses on the enemy", the ministry said.

PRO-EUROPEANS'  
RESOUNDING POLL  
WIN IN MOLDOVA

**Chisinau, July 12:** Moldova's main pro-European party has won a resounding victory in parliamentary polls, results showed Monday, strengthening the hand of President Maia Sandu as the former World Bank economist pushes to reform her ex-Soviet country.

Sunday's snap election — called by Sandu in April to shore up her position against pro-Russia forces — saw her centre-right Action and Solidarity (PAS) party take 52.80 per cent of the vote. PAS will get 63 seats in the 101-seat parliament for four-year terms, according to the Central Election Commission. A coalition of socialists and Communists, led by former Kremlin-backed president Igor Dodon, came second with 27.17 per cent, the commission said Monday, with all votes counted.

MYANMAR VIRUS  
CASELOAD HITS  
SUU KYI TRIAL

**Naypyidaw, July 12:** Myanmar's spiralling coronavirus count struck the trial of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Monday, her lawyers said, with a witness for the prosecution failing to testify after becoming infected. Cases are spiking in Myanmar, with the State Administration Council reporting more than 3,400 new cases Sunday, up from fewer than 50 per day in early May.

Suu Kyi was deposed by the military in February, sparking a mass uprising and a brutal crackdown. More than 890 civilians have been killed by the junta's forces.

A second witness gave testimony on the same charges, and the court also heard evidence on separate charges that Suu Kyi illegally imported and possessed walkie talkies, he said.

EGYPT UPHELDS  
LIFE SENTENCES  
FOR 10 ISLAMISTS

**Cairo, July 12:** Egypt's highest appeals court on Sunday upheld the life sentences of 10 leaders of Egypt's outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, including the group's head, the state-owned MENA news agency reported. In 2019, a Cairo criminal court had convicted all 10, including the group's leader, or supreme guide, Mohamed Badie, of charges related to killing policemen and organising mass jail breaks during Egypt's 2011 uprising.

That revolt culminated in the ouster of longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak. The defendants were found guilty of helping around 20,000 prisoners escape, and of undermining national security by conspiring with foreign militant groups — the Palestinian Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah.

Meanwhile, the Court of Cassation acquitted eight middle-rank leaders of the nation's oldest Islamist organization, who were sentenced earlier to 15 years in prison. All of the sentences, which the court considered on appeal, are final. Sunday's rulings upheld the latest of several life sentences for Muslim Brotherhood leaders.

## Appoint Deuba PM: Nepal SC

Apex court reinstates the lower house second time in five months

**Kathmandu, July 12:** In a landmark verdict, Nepal's Supreme Court on Monday directed President Bidya Devi Bhandari to appoint Nepali Congress chief Sher Bahadur Deuba as prime minister by Tuesday and reinstated the House of Representatives for a second time in five months.

A five-member Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana issued the verdict stating that President Bhandari's decision to dissolve the lower house upon a recommendation of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli was an unconstitutional act, delivering a major blow to the veteran Communist leader who was preparing for snap

polls. The bench issued a mandamus to appoint Deuba as the Prime Minister by Tuesday. Deuba, 74, has served as the prime minister on four occasions; first from 1995 to 1997, then from 2001 to 2002, again from 2004 to 2005, and from 2017 to 2018.

Currently, he is the Leader of the Opposition in the House. The court also ordered summoning a new session of the House of Representatives at 5 PM on July 18.

Chief Justice Rana also said that the bench has concluded that party whip does not apply when lawmakers take part in the voting to elect new Prime Minister as per Article 76(5) of the Constitution. The bench comprising four other senior most jus-

● **A CONSTITUTIONAL Bench of the Supreme Court stated that President Bhandari's decision to dissolve the lower house upon a recommendation of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli was an unconstitutional act.**

tices — Dipak Kumar Karki, Mira Khadka, Ishwar Prasad Khatriwada and Dr Ananda Mohan Bhattarai — had concluded hearings in the case last week.

President Bhandari had dissolved the 275-member lower house for the second time in five months on May 22 at the recommendation of Prime Minister Oli and announced snap elections on November 12

and November 19.

Last week, the Election Commission had announced the schedule for mid-term elections despite the uncertainty over polls. Welcoming the apex court verdict, senior leader of the Nepal Communist Party-UML Madhav Kumar Nepal said that the judgement was commendable.

"The Supreme Court has done a commendable job. This has saved the political system that is in place. Since the court has directly asked to appoint Deuba as new prime minister, we have no role to play now," he said.

Under Madhav Nepal's leadership, 23 lawmakers of UML had put their signature in favour of Deuba's claim to the prime ministership.

Madhav Nepal also said that Parliament will now take all the decisions.

"Parliament has been reinstated. We will now go to Parliament. All the decisions will be taken from Parliament now," he said. "The court's verdict has also raised moral questions on Oli's actions."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Oli's supporters, including youths and students affiliated to the ruling CPN-UML, took to streets here to protest against the apex court's verdict against the 69-year-old Communist leader. Cadres of the National Youth Force affiliated to CPN -UML gathered in Maitighar Mandal near the court premises chanting slogans against the verdict.

— PTI

Boris to confirm  
unlocking is on  
course in England

**London, July 12:** British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is set to confirm Monday that all remaining lockdown restrictions in England will be lifted in a week's time while urging people to remain cautious amid a huge resurgence of the Coronavirus. Johnson is expected to say at a news conference that masks and all social distancing measures will be lifted in England on July 19.

However, given the sharp rise in new cases, he is also likely to downplay talk of "Freedom Day." The UK as a whole has seen infections soar in recent weeks as a result of the Delta variant. Daily infection levels are running at over 30,000, their highest rates since January. Most infections have largely occurred among younger people, many of whom have yet to receive a first dose of vaccine.

Though the government has warned that daily case numbers will rise further, potentially hitting 100,000 at some point this summer, it is pressing on with the unlocking because of the rapid rollout of vaccines. As of Sunday, 69% of the population has received at least one vaccine dose while

S. KOREA CLAMPS  
DOWN AMID  
COVID-19 SPIKE

**Seoul, July 12:** South Korea has reported more than 1,000 Coronavirus cases for the sixth straight day as the greater capital area entered stringent social distancing restrictions to slow transmissions.

The 1,100 new cases reported by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency were the highest ever for a Monday, when the daily increase is usually smaller because of reduced tests during the weekends. More than 780 of the cases were from capital Seoul and nearby Incheon and Gyeonggi Province, areas where officials have enforced the country's strongest social distancing measures starting Monday. Private social gatherings of three or more people will be prohibited from 6 p.m., nightclubs and churches will be shut down, and visitors will be banned at hospitals and nursing homes. — AP

52% have had two. — AP

EU puts digital  
tax plan 'on hold'

**Brussels, July 12:** The European Commission said Monday it would delay its plan to propose an EU digital tax in order to not jeopardise efforts to secure a global deal on fairer taxation.

After an "extraordinary" breakthrough at G20 talks on Saturday, "we have decided to put on hold our work on a propo-

sal for a digital levy", an EU spokesman said, a day after Washington asked Brussels to delay its tax plan. Meeting in Venice, G20 finance ministers on Saturday endorsed a plan agreed by 132 countries to overhaul the way multinational companies, including US digital giants, are taxed.

— AFP

## Digging up the past in Israel



Israeli students excavate at the site of Khirbat er-Rai near the southern Israeli city of Kiryat Gat on Monday, where a 3,100-year-old pottery fragment bearing a rare inscription was found. It dates from around 1,100 BCE. — AFP

## 2 Jordanians jailed over coup

**Amman, July 12:** A Jordanian state security court on Monday sentenced two former officials to serve 15 years in prison over an alleged plot against the Western-allied monarchy involving the half-brother of King Abdullah II.

Bassem Awadallah, who has US citizenship and once served as a top aide to King Abdullah II, and Sharif Hassan bin Zaid, a member of the royal family, were found guilty of sedition and incitement charges.

They are alleged to have conspired with Prince Hamzah, the king's half-brother, and to have sought foreign assistance. They denied the charges, and Alaa

● **BASSEM AWADALLAH, who has US citizenship and once served as a top aide to King Abdullah II, and Sharif Hassan bin Zaid, a member of the royal family, were found guilty of sedition and incitement charges.**

al-Khasawneh, a lawyer for Sharif, said they would appeal the verdict. He declined to comment further. They two men were swept up in a wave of arrests in April and Hamzah was placed under house arrest.

The rare public rift at the highest levels of the monarchy sent jitters across the region, with coun-

tries racing to express support for Abdullah.

Hamzah denied the allegations in video statements released in April after he was placed under house arrest, saying he was being silenced for speaking out against corruption and poor governance by the ruling system.

The palace drama exposed deep-rooted economic and social challenges in the country, which has long been seen as a bastion of stability in a volatile region.

The royal family says it resolved the dispute with Hamzah, whose exact status is unknown but was never formally charged. Awadallah's US lawyer says his client alleged he was

tortured in Jordanian detention and fears for his life. Abdullah is expected in Washington on July 19, when he will be the first Arab leader to meet with President Joe Biden at the White House.

Jordan is a close US ally in the Middle East and is seen as a key partner in eventually reviving the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Lt. Col. Muwafaq al-Masaed, a military judge, announced the verdict following a closed-door trial that consisted of just six hearings. The two were sentenced to 15 years for each of two felonies, but the judge said only one sentence would be imposed on them. — AP

## Rare anti-govt protests erupt in Cuba

## HEAR PROTESTERS, BIDEN URGES CUBAN AUTHORITIES

**Havana, July 12:** Thousands of Cubans took part in rare protests Sunday against the communist government, chanting "Down with the dictatorship" as President Miguel Diaz-Canel called on his supporters to confront the demonstrators.

The anti-government rallies started spontaneously in several cities as the country endures its worst economic crisis in 30 years, with chronic shortages of electricity and food. Several hundred protesters marched through the capital Havana chanting,

"We want liberty," with a heavy military and police presence deployed after demonstrators massed outside the Capitol building.

Police used tear gas to disperse crowds, and at least 10 people were arrest-

ed, while officers used plastic pipes to beat protesters, AFP journalists witnessed.

Several thousand protesters — mainly young people — also took to the streets of San Antonio de los

Banos, a town 30 kilometres (20 miles) southwest of Havana.

Security forces arrived soon after the protests began, and Diaz-Canel later visited the town himself surrounded by party

ban people and their clarion call for freedom and relief from the tragic grip of the pandemic and from the decades of repression and economic suffering to which they have been subjected by Cuba's authori-

tarian regime," Biden said in a statement. "The United States calls on the Cuban regime to hear their people and serve their needs at this vital moment rather than enriching themselves." — AFP

activists as residents heckled him, according to videos posted online.

The president lashed out in a television address, saying: "The order to fight has been given — into the street, revolutionaries!" "We call on all revolutionaries of the country, all communists, to go out in the streets where these provocations occur, from now on and in the next few days, and to face them in a decisive, firm and courageous way." — AFP

Government supporters held some counter-demonstrations in Havana.

## NORMS | BREACHED

## Concern as changes will give FB access to more information on users

## WA faces EU consumer complaint over privacy

**London, July 12:** Facebook's WhatsApp faces a complaint from European Union consumer groups who say the chat service has been unfairly pressuring users to accept a new privacy update in what it calls a breach of the bloc's regulations.

The European Consumer Organisation, or BEUC, filed a complaint Monday over the way WhatsApp has brought in changes to

its terms of service and privacy policy, saying they aren't transparent or easily understood by users. Many WhatsApp users switched to other chat apps like Signal and Telegram because of privacy concerns when the update was rolled out earlier this year because of concerns the changes would give Facebook access to more information on users.

"WhatsApp has been

bombarding users for months with aggressive and persistent pop-up messages to force them to accept its new terms of use and privacy policy," BEUC Director General Monique Goyens said.

"They've been telling users that their access to their app will be cut off if they do not accept the new terms. Yet consumers don't know what they're actually accepting," BEUC

and consumer rights groups from eight member countries filed the complaint to the EU's executive Commission and the bloc's network of consumer authorities. WhatsApp said the complaint is based on a misunderstanding of the update's purpose and effect and would welcome the opportunity to explain it to the BEUC.

"Our recent update explains the options people

have to message a business on WhatsApp and provides further transparency about how we collect and use data," WhatsApp said in a prepared statement.

"The update does not expand our ability to share data with Facebook, and does not impact the privacy of your messages with friends or family, wherever they are in the world." — AP

They've been telling users that their access to their app will be cut off if they do not accept the new terms. Yet consumers don't know what they're actually accepting.

MONIQUE GOYENS,  
Director General,  
European Consumer  
Organisation

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD INVITATIONS FOR BIDS - TWO COVER - PERCENTAGE TENDER SYSTEM			
IFB No.	3 / IF. Tender/Notice/DO/2021/DT : 09.07.2021		
Eligibility	Civil Class II & above Contractor for SI.No.1 and Civil Class I Contractor for SI.No.2 & 3 work.		
Invoice	The Superintending Engineer, TWAD Board, MDT Circle, Opp.to Dr.M.G.R. Bus Stand, Ganesh Nagar, Madhavaram, Madurai-625 007.		
Sale of Bid & Place of Sale	12.07.2021 to 26.07.2021 upto 545 PM at the Executive Engineer, TWAD Board, Project Maintenance Division, Madurai by cash or Demand Draft payable at Madurai for Rs.1120/- each. Rs.250/- additional for sending through post.		
Downloading	www.tenders.tn.gov.in and www.twadboard.tn.gov.in. (Free of Cost)		
Pre-Bid meeting	19.07.2021 at 11.00 AM at the office of the Tender Invites		
Bid Submission & opening	28.07.2021 upto 3.00 PM & opening @ 3.30 PM of same date at the office of the Tender Invites		
Sl. No.	Name of work	Approximate value of work (Rs.in Lakhs)	Bid security (in Rupees)
Outsourcing of Operation and Maintenance of Melur CWSS in Madurai District for the period from 01.08.2021 to 31.03.2022			
1	Melur Union and Melur Municipality components - Package - V	67.95	68,000/-
2	Madurai-West Union Part, Paravai TP and Villagudi TP components - Package VI	95.67	97,000/-
3	Vadipatti Union & Madurai West Union Part components - Package - XI	99.16	99,500/-
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, TWAD BOARD, M.D.T. CIRCLE, MADURAI		DIPRI 2021 TENDER/2021	

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client intends purchasing lands totally measuring 21.20 Acres (8.58.00 Hectares) situated at Selakkarichal Village, Sullur Taluk, Coimbatore District as detailed below:-

Old Survey Nos.	As per Patta - No.1075 New Survey Nos.	Extent in Ac. Cents	Extent in Hec. Ares
168 Part	168/5	8.97	3.63.00
176/1	176/1	9.99	4.04.50
174	174	2.24	0.90.50
Total		21.20	8.58.00

from Mr.K.Duraiarasan, Mr.PShannmugam & Mr.PGnanasekar.

It is observed from the records produced that Mr.R.Sampathkumar (one of the legal heirs of late Mrs. Thayarammal) was the sole and absolute owner of the entire lands in Survey No.168 i.e. an area measuring 13.10 Acres, as and from 25.04.1997, vide Doc. No.82/1997, registered with SRO Sullur, by virtue of the Release Deed executed by Mrs.D.Rajeswari, Ms.D.Anitha, Ms.D.Kavitha, Mr.D.Balaji, Mrs.N.Rajeswari, Mrs.S.Jayalakshmi, Mrs.R.Chandrakantha & Mrs.R.Chitra (remaining legal heirs of late Mrs. Thayarammal). Mr. R. Sampathkumar also became the owner of Survey No.174 measuring 2.24 Acres, after exchanging a portion of land in Survey No.168, vide Deed of Exchange on 01.09.2008, bearing Doc. No.8997/2008, registered with SRO Sullur, he retained land measuring 8.97 Acres comprised in Survey No.168 Part, presently Survey No.168/5.

Mrs.N.Rajeswari and Mrs.S.Jayalakshmi became the absolute owners of land measuring 9.99 Acres comprised in Survey No.176/1, they having obtained the same under a Settlement Deed dated 30.09.1970, vide Doc. No.3543/1970, registered with SRO Sullur.

As absolute owners, Mr.R.Sampathkumar, Mrs.N.Rajeswari and Mrs.S.Jayalakshmi jointly sold the above referred lands viz., Survey No.168/5 (8.97 Acres), Survey No.176/1 (9.99 Acres) and Survey No.174 (2.24 Acres) to Mr.N.Kulandaisamy, Mr.M.Karuppusamy, Mr.K.Duraiarasan & Mr.PShannmugam under a Sale Deed dated 28.02.2012, vide Doc. No.2980/2012, registered with SRO Sullur.

Mr.N.Kulandaisamy & Mr.M.Karuppusamy sold their respective shares in the above lands to Mr.PGnanasekar under a Sale Deed dated 21.12.2020, vide Doc. No.14470/2020, registered with SRO Sullur.

Thus Mr.K.Duraiarasan, Mr.PShannmugam & Mr.PGnanasekar became the absolute owners of lands admeasuring 21.20 Acres referred above.

According to the owners, these lands are absolutely free from any encumbrance whatsoever.

If anyone has any right, title, interest, claim or demand of any nature whatsoever on these lands, can lodge the claim with us along with supporting documents within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of receipt of this publication at the below mentioned address, failing which it is strictly presumed that these lands are absolutely free from any encumbrance and our client cannot be held liable for any claim arising thereafter.

M/s.SAMPATHKUMAR & ASSOCIATES  
Advocates & Notary,  
No.315 (Old No.152), 1st Floor,  
Thambu Chetty Street, Chennai - 600 001.



# DECCAN Chronicle

13 JULY 2021

## Make space accessible to all as a new age dawns

The safe conduct of a flight for space tourists, including Virgin Galactic boss Richard Branson, to the edge of space and back is another triumph of the spirit of human endeavour. This opens up an opportunity for ordinary people who are not trained astronauts to be able to handle microgravity, high G forces and Mach 3 speeds in the sky. They can travel in a capsule while detached from the mother aeroplane to be fired by a hybrid rocket engine to 86 km above the earth in order just to gaze at our home planet and its curvature and then glide back to the ground.

Man has always been fascinated by heights, be it Mount Everest or flying at altitude and much like Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, who were the first to climb to the roof of the world. Virgin's septuagenarian Branson will be best remembered for beating the world's richest man Jeff Bezos by nine days to go to space first. After spaceship VSS *Unity*'s flight we may be a baby step closer to man's ultimate dream of colonising the moon or even Mars someday if only because Planet Earth might become too hazardous to reside in considering how its resources are being depleted and inviting climate change catastrophe.

It is possible to be cynical about rich patrons paying up to ₹1.82 crore for a ticket for about three minutes of weightlessness before floating back to their seats near the threshold of space. It can be argued that a few million people on the ground are starving while the rich enjoy space in joyrides. The human race cannot be considered a form of life intelligent enough to explore the limits of wondrous possibilities without science and engineering being harnessed with such precision to satisfy man's unquenchable curiosity and test the limits of ingenuity.

The perils of technology going wrong cannot, however, be discounted as Virgin's own experience portrayed when it lost a flight with the plane breaking apart during a test flight with disastrous consequences in 2014, leaving at least one co-pilot dead. *The Unity*'s "feathering" twin tails have been designed to swing upwards at 60 degrees to create drag and make the capsule drift down to Earth. Branson joked that like James Bond he had a "licence to thrill", which might be true considering the adventurous life he has led. It is in advancing this dawn of space tourism that he has contributed most to the human race.

Aeronautical engineer and researcher Sirisha Bandla, with roots in Andhra's Guntur, was on the pioneering flight on merits whereas 600 budding space tourists have been queuing up with tickets for seven years for the space experience. There is more to come from the world's tech billionaires of the new economy as Bezos' Blue Origin intends sending space tourists beyond the Karman line, which is said to lie 100 km above Earth and Elon Musk's SpaceX which will keep tourists in space for days but at ticket prices running into millions of dollars. Bezos and Musk's flights will be based on space capsules being lifted by rockets unlike Virgin's reusable space plane.

## Tennis greatness personified

Chasing Grand Slam tennis titles is his calling in life. The Serbian star Novak Djokovic is already being spoken of as the greatest in tennis history, the world's best ever hard court player with an envious Wimbledon record of six golden trophies on grass and a couple of French Opens. With 20 Grand Slam titles, he is abreast of his contemporary greats Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, whose votaries rate them as supreme all-time greats. At 34, age favours Djokovic, and he is feeding his insatiable hunger in his golden year of 2021 when a US Open triumph and a calendar slam can put him on an even higher pedestal than yesteryear greats Don Budge and Rod Laver.

A curious aspect of Djokovic's all-court game is he can suffer extreme anxiety as the weight of history seems to sit on his shoulders. He lost the opening set to a rising grass court star in the Italian Matteo Berrettini, who was adopted by the Wimbledon crowd with a strong anti-Djokovic bias. But the Serb, who as a kid was whisked away to Germany when bombs were falling round their home, is not the one to try and win popularity contests. His extraordinary skills come wrapped in a unique understanding that his best game will come together when he most needs it. Returning Berrettini's 240 kmph serves is itself a challenge but Djokovic broke his serve six times to show who is the champion.

The absence of Naomi Osaka had thrown open the distaff side of the draw. Emerging champion with a powerful game backed by craftiness and a spirit of competition to match was the Australian Ashleigh Barty, who as a woman of indigenous heritage from the Ngaragu tribe, wins one for diversity. To make it even more memorable, Barty wore a replica of Evonne Goolagong's dress from the 1980 final. The two native Aussies are not just title winners in a sport dominated by whites. There were slices of history too in young Samir Banerjee of USA, born to Indian parents, winning the boys title in just his second attempt at a major tournament and Marija Cicack becoming the first woman in 144 years to officiate in a men's singles final.

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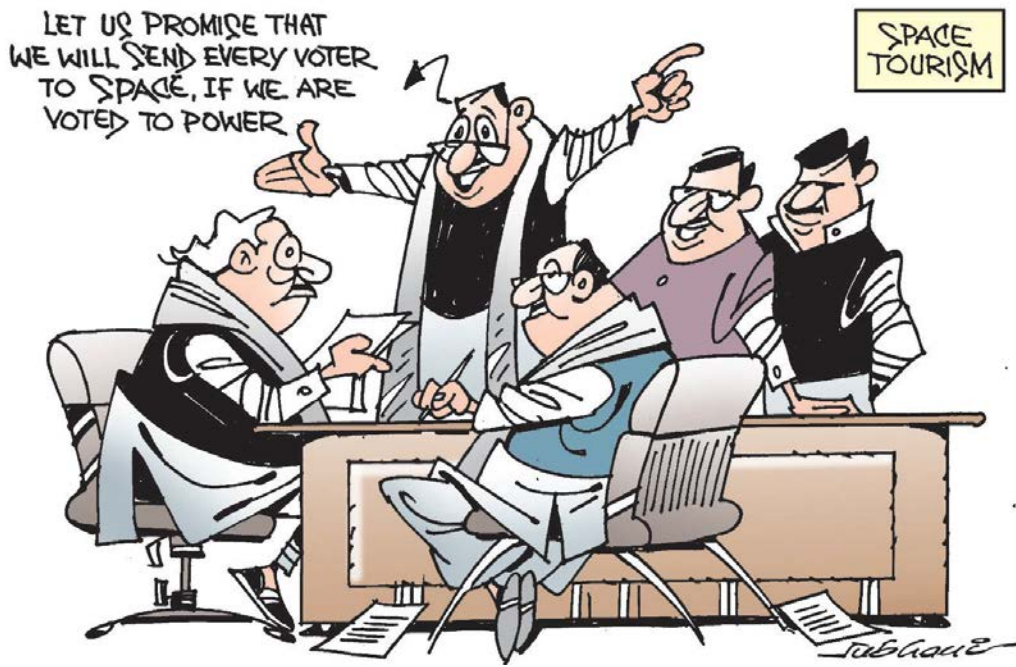
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Subhani



## Liberty and rights for all: Myth of the Magna Carta



Mohan Guruswamy

We now take our liberties and rights for granted, and the way of life it guarantees us as inherent. But what we now have has come after a long process of evolution, and many a time they flowed out of something else quite unintended. The Magna Carta is a case in point. In June, the entire English-speaking world celebrated the 806th anniversary of the Magna Carta, or Great Charter, that is synonymous with the fundamental rights and rule of law which are considered the cornerstones of modern democracy. Much of the world now believes that the Magna Carta came out of an eruption of a long-suppressed yearning among the common people for protection against the caprices of the monarch and the nobility. But it is not so.

It came out of an intraclass struggle between 40 barons and their King. England's King John had emptied the royal treasuries in a fruitless war with France, and the barons were no longer willing to meet his demands for higher taxes. The consequence was the Magna Carta to protect the barons from the King's demands.

The demand to be judged by their peers was another protection. It was not meant for the ordinary people, but only for the barons. Thus, the Magna Carta was not quite a grand demand for equality, the basic freedoms and rule of law but just a narrow demand for restricting the ruler's powers to ring fence the interests of the elite.

But the myth of the Magna Carta has endured, and it is often invoked whenever and

wherever people struggled against injustice and freedom.

Mahatma Gandhi invoked it in South Africa when he fought for racial equality, and emancipators and freedom fighters like Nelson Mandela, Jawaharlal Nehru, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro and Martin Luther King Jr have invoked it when they were being tried for sedition by oppressive rulers. Like those English barons, they too were arguing for limiting the oppressive and unjust powers of oppressive regimes, but now not just for themselves and their peers, but for all their fellow citizens. The story of modern democracy is about the long journey from the rights of a few to the rights of all.

Another myth that endures is that the twin notions of "democracy" and "the rule of law" somehow originated with the Magna Carta and its acceptance. The fact is that the King rejected the Magna Carta soon after it was presented to him. But King John avoided the consequences of the barons' indignation by helpfully dying and thereby perpetuating the myth.

The first democracies long preceded the Magna Carta of 1215. Even as early as the sixth century BC, several "independent republics" existed in India as "sanghas" and "ganas". The main characteristics of these sanghas and ganas were a raja, elected or hereditary, and a deliberative assembly. These assemblies met regularly and passed laws pertaining to finances, administration and justice. The raja and other officials obeyed the decisions of these assemblies. While these assemblies were mostly comprised of the nobility and

landowners, in some cases they included all free men. But the Brahminical system prevailed in the sense that the monarch always had to be a Kshatriya. While the Lichavis, who held sway over the Kathmandu Valley in present-day Nepal and a major part of northern Bihar, were governed by an assembly of about 7,000 rajas who in turn were the heads of all the major families, others like the Shakyas, the clan to which Gautam Buddha belonged, had assemblies open to all people, rich or poor, and noble or common.

The greatest contribution to the evolution of democracy as a philosophy was in Athens, where great philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle lit up the public discourse with their brilliance and original thinking. Socrates and his pupil, Plato, deliberated and expounded on the role of a citizen within a community and laid down the foundations of the political philosophy that flourished in Athens and spread to most of the world over the next two and a half millennia. Aristotle, who counted among his students Alexander the Great, dwelt more on systems of government and who first qualified liberty as the fundamental principle of democracy.

This principle that "whatever is decided by the majority is sovereign" has always had to contend with the rights of the individual. In the United States of America, which was formed after a great debate among the founding fathers as a democracy, it was by majority will

**The first democracies long preceded the Magna Carta of 1215. Even as early as the sixth century BC, several "independent republics" existed in India as "sanghas" and "ganas".**

that slavery had flourished till the Civil War. It took another century before equal rights for black people became the majority will. This constant struggle for individual rights against the will of the collective has been the central story of the evolution of the modern democratic state.

Free India by contrast provided for all these rights and liberties from the beginning in its Constitution. The Magna Carta, because it sought to limit the powers of the ruler, perhaps still has a place in our hearts and minds, because of just that. To most of us citizens in democratic states, our life is also a constant struggle against the assertion of collective will to trample individual liberties or the rights of smaller groups.

The rise of democratic and elected parliaments in England and Scotland just 50 years after the Magna Carta is not a coincidence but the consequence of that demand to share power. It is from the Magna Carta that the English writ of habeas corpus evolved, safeguarding individuals and their freedoms against unjust and unlawful imprisonment with the right to appeal. It is from this emergence of petitions for the production of the body that parliaments in due course became to be increasingly used as a forum to address all the concerns and grievances of ordinary people.

Thus, whatever be the first intent of the Magna Carta, its consequences greatly expanded over the centuries into a charter, which guarantees individual liberties, equality and justice to all, irrespective of their race, religion and class. But that struggle is far from over. It goes on and only its forms change as human values and means change.

*The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.*

### LETTERS

#### POLICE PUNISHED

Tiruchy superintendent of police, P. Moorthy, is reported to have ordered the transfer of 16 police personnel attached to Lalgudi police station, after he found improper maintenance of registers and on-duty police personnel were absent during a surprise inspection. While this is what is expected of from the higher officials to keep the personnel of police stations coming under the jurisdiction of the former under a tight leash, had this been resorted to more often, the death of the father-son duo while in custody in Sathankulam police station and such other issues would never have occurred. Police personnel posted in stations located in far-flung areas behave as if they are a law unto themselves as there are no checks by the higher officials. Periodical surprise visits by the higher officials to the stations for regularisation.

V.S. Jayaraman, Chennai

### BACK NATO

Apologies your editorial, India must make clear its Afghan role after US exit. No doubt India has helped in many spheres to develop infrastructure etc. in Afghanistan but it cannot stay put further in Kabul risking its forces and losing resources. With the Taliban having captured almost three-fourths it may run roughshod defeating the Afghan army and the warlords fighting along with it. The danger signal is the wolf Pakistan may support the dragon which is waiting to capitalise on the Afghan imbroglio, expand its influence to counter India and NATO nations which may tacitly support Taliban courtesy Islamabad. Its larger interest is to bolster business with its expansionist design to dominate Asia. For India, it is better to quit altogether, or else rope in Russia and NATO nations to outwit Pakistan.

A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai

### DUTY-CONSCIOUS DRIVER

It is with a heavy heart we read the news that Selvaraj, a driver of the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation, suffered a heart attack collapsed and died while driving a bus to Perundurai with 28 passengers but not before halting the bus at a safe place sensing his health status and averting a major accident. One dreads to think of the calamity that would have befallen the 28 passengers if only the driver has not thought about the safety of the passengers as his prime duty and halted the bus before collapsing. The driver's selfless act should be rightly recognised by the government with compensation commensurate with the value of 28 precious lives besides his and must take care of the needs of his family. Not only the government is duty bound to support the bereaved family but also the families of all the 28 passengers saved are duty-bound to do their mite for the poor family that has lost its head and breadwinner.

Tharcius S. Fernando, Coimbatore

Aakar Patel



## The weak case that kept Stan Swamy in jail, where he died

Stan Swamy, who died around a week ago after being denied bail in the Bhima Koregaon case, was a Tamil priest who spent decades working with adivasis in Jharkhand. Before that he was director of the Indian Social Institute in Bengaluru. Why was he in jail for an event in Pune? The Bhima Koregaon case is five separate and unrelated things. The first was an event called Elgar (or Yalgar, meaning battle cry) Parishad on December 31, 2017 in Pune. The speakers there included former high court judge B.G. Kolse-Patil and P.B. Sawant, a former Supreme Court judge, Jignesh Mewani, Independent MLA from Gujarat, and JNU activist Umar Khalid also spoke. Members of Kabir Kala Manch, who are artists-activists, participated too.

The second event was next day, January 1, 2018. This was the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Koregaon Bhima, a Pune suburb on Bhima river, where on January 1, 1818, the British defeated the remnants of the Maratha empire. The British side had many dalit Mahar soldiers who overpowered a larger army led by the Brahmin Peshwa.

Since 1927 when B.R. Ambedkar visited the village to speak of the vic-

tory, hundreds of thousands of dalits came to Koregaon Bhima each year to gather at the obelisk raised to mark the battle. But in 2018, there had been tension due to events in the neighbouring village of Vadhu Budruk. This had to do with who had cremated Sambhaji, Shivaji's son, who was executed by Aurangzeb in 1689 near Koregaon Bhima. The Mahars claimed it was one of them, Gopal Govind, who cremated the Maratha in defiance of Aurangzeb's orders. This offended the Marathas, who claimed two of their community had performed the rituals. Govind's tomb in Vadhu Budruk was in the same village square as Sambhaji's. On December 28, a board was placed over Govind's tomb, claiming the feat of his cremation of Sambhaji. The next day Govind's tomb was desecrated — the board was removed and the umbrella structure over the tomb was damaged. A complaint was filed by dalits under the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act. The Koregaon Bhima panchayat asked its residents to boycott the January 1 event and called for shops to remain shut. That morning violence erupted between dalits, who said they were attacked by a group carrying saffron flags, and

the local Marathas, who said they were attacked by dalits. One Maratha was killed. The violence spread to other towns in western Maharashtra and 300 dalits, including children, were held by the Mumbai police.

The third event was a police complaint, filed a few days later, by a man who said the Elgar Parishad's agenda was "to mislead the dalit community, to convert them to Maoist thought... and adopt the path of violence", and that "through their publications, books and speeches, they wanted to increase enmity in society". The man who filed the complaint, Tushar Damgude, said he followed a "simple" rule for his Hindutva: "We should keep things which are helpful for Hindus; the rest should be abandoned".

It was on the basis of this complaint that the police began arresting the activists, many of whom had nothing to do with, and weren't present in Bhima Koregaon. The fourth event was a report produced by an RSS outfit called the Forum for Integrated National Security, whose secretary general, Seshadri Chari, was on the BJP's national executive committee. This report said there was a Maoist strategy to lure people into joining "mass organisations" concerned

about issues like caste, justice and equality, which would then help the Maoists recruit for the final armed struggle against the State. This report was released on March 9, 2018.

Another report by the same author was submitted to Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnis in April. In May, the UAPA law was added to the Bhima Koregaon case. On June 6, the Maharashtra police arrested five people including Dhawale of the Republican Panthers, lawyer and dalit activist Surendra Gadling, scholar Mahesh Raut, who worked on adivasi rights, assistant professor of English at Nagpur University Shoma Sen and Rona Wilson of JNU, who worked with the Committee to Release Political Prisoners. They were described by the police as the "top brass of the urban Maoists".

The police claimed it found a letter in Wilson's house dated July 2017 which said: "Comrade Kisan and few other senior comrades have proposed concrete steps to end Modi Raj. We are thinking along the lines of another Rajiv Gandhi-type incident."

On the basis of this, the police arrested Sudha Bharadwaj, who studied mathematics at IIT Kanpur and gave up her US citizenship at age

18; Gautam Navlakha, who also wrote for *Economic and Political Weekly*; Anand Teltumbde, assistant professor at Goa Institute of Management and married to a granddaughter of Ambedkar; Arun Ferreira, a lawyer defending the accused in this case; Vernon Gonsalves, a professor of business management and economics at Ruparel College and HR College of Commerce and Economics; Varavara Rao, an author and poet who was a lecturer on Telugu literature; Hany Babu, a professor of linguistics at Delhi University. Three members of the Kabir Kala Manch — Sagar Gorkhe, Jyoti Jagtap and Ramesh Gaichor — were arrested, and Father Stan Swamy, 83-year-old Jesuit and theologian.

None of them had anything to do with the Bhima Koregaon violence, and weren't even present there. The case is said to be sensitive because of the assassination plot allegation, but the trial hasn't started.

Last year, the BBC carried a report on Stan Swamy headlined: "The oldest person to be accused of terrorism in India".

*The writer is a columnist and a senior journalist*



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52372.69	-0.03
Nifty 50	15692.60	0.02
S&P 500*	4,377.84	0.19
Dollar (₹)	74.58	0.08
Pound Sterling (₹)	103.35	-0.36
Euro (₹)	88.39	0.09
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,796✓169	0.36
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	74.77	-1.03
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.220	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.365	0.009

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## Biz activity back to pre-2nd wave levels: Nomura

Business activity has rose to the pre-second wave levels, with the seventh consecutive week of surge in levels as new Covid infection cases fall. The Nomura India Business Resumption Index accelerated to 95.7 for the week ending Sunday, from 91.0 the previous week, it said, adding that it is only 4.3 percentage points below the pre-pandemic levels of March 2020 and back to pre-second wave levels from mid-March.

## Maruti hikes prices of Swift, all CNG models



Maruti Suzuki India said it has hiked prices of hatchback Swift and CNG variants of other models by up to Rs 15,000. The price change for Swift and all CNG variants is owing to an increase in various input costs, Maruti Suzuki aid in a regulatory filing. "Increase in ex-show-room prices (Delhi) is up to Rs 15,000 on the above models. The new prices are effective from today i.e. July 12," the filing further said.

## Airtel records over 1,000 Mbps speed in 5G trial

Bharti Airtel recorded a speed of over 1 gigabit per second during a 5G field trial in Mumbai using Nokia's network gear, sources said. Airtel is running a live 5G trial in Mumbai's Phoenix Mall in Lower Parel. "Airtel is conducting the trial in the 3500 MHz band using 5G gear from Nokia as per DoT guidelines. The trials have delivered speeds of over 1 Gbps with ultra-low latency," one of the sources said.

## MobiKwik files draft papers for ₹1,900-crore IPO

Digital payments startup One MobiKwik Systems filed preliminary papers with the Sebi to raise Rs 1,900 crore through an initial share sale. The IPO comprises fresh issuance of shares worth Rs 1,500 crore and an offer for sale of up to Rs 400 crore by promoters and existing shareholders, says its draft red herring prospectus. Those offering shares include promoters Upasana Rupkrishan Taku and Bipin Preet Singh.



## ■ Q1 preview: Expect a better quarter YoY A consolidation phase for banks

**FALAKNAAZ SYED**  
MUMBAI, JULY 12

The second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with localised lockdowns, is likely to impact the asset quality performance of banks, but to a lesser extent compared to the first lockdown.

Analysts expect bad loan formation for the April-June quarter (Q1FY22) to remain moderate—also reflected in the lower cheque bounce rate of 30 per cent versus a peak of 38 per cent last year—partly offset by restructuring and the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS).

Within retail loans, stress remains elevated, mainly in commercial vehicle loans, personal loans, loan against property, two-wheeler loans and microfinance loans, which should lead to higher stress formation for banks with higher exposure to these segments such as HDFC Bank, IndusInd Bank, RBL Bank, Bandhan Bank, AU SFB and Ujjivan, analysts said.

Bad loans in credit cards could be limited as banks and customers have explored the EMI option. Similarly, SME stress could largely be suppressed via ECLGS/restructuring option. Overall credit cost too could be elevated due to upfront stress recognition, partly offset by some contingent provision buffer usage by select banks.

“We expect overall pre-



provisioning operating profit (PPoP) growth to be soft due to subdued growth/continued softness in Net Interest Margins accentuated by non-NPA recognition, moderate treasury support, and lack of large one-off gains such as recovery from Bhushan Power in Q4 (though partly offset by recovery from Kingfisher Airlines). Among large banks, we expect ICICI to report healthy profitability, led by better NIMs/moderate credit cost, while Axis may have the option to claw back provisions to boost profitability. HDFC Bank's growth trajectory remains moderate, but it should be able to deliver around 20 per cent YoY profit growth. IndusInd, RBL should report slightly weaker numbers,” said Anand Dama, analyst at Emkay Global.

“IndusInd Bank, in particular, may look to strengthen provisioning buffers, leading to elevated credit cost. Bandhan should continue to reel under MFI pain. PSBs, in general, may report moderate PPoP due to soft

treasury performance, but limited credit cost and lower tax incidence for select banks (Indian, Union Bank) should boost profits. SBI and Indian Bank will be outliers,” added Dama.

The momentum in recovery gained over 4QFY21 was impacted by the second Covid wave, with the asset quality outlook deteriorating once again. Business activity was impacted by the second wave over April to May 2021. As a result, systemic growth moderated to 5.8 per cent as of June 18, 2021 (1 per cent decline over FY22 year-to-date).

While economic activity has started to pick up since June, business growth may remain modest over 1QFY22, said Motilal Oswal in a report.

According to Gaurav Jani of Centrum, “Midcap banks could see loan growth at 6.8 per cent year-on-year, largely led by Federal Bank and City Union Bank. Being SME-focused, asset quality impairment could be more pronounced for City Union Bank and DCB Bank.”

## RETAIL INVESTORS CAN SOON BUY GOVT BONDS FROM RBI

**FC BANKING BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, JULY 12

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday issued a 'RBI Retail Direct' scheme, which is a one-stop solution to facilitate investment in government securities by individual investors.

Under the scheme, retail investors (individuals) will have the facility to open and maintain the 'Retail Direct Gilt Account' (RDG Account) with the RBI, the central bank said.

Also, the RDG Account can be opened through an 'online portal' provided for the purpose, it said. The 'online portal' will also give the registered users facilities like access to primary issuance of government securities, the RBI said, adding, the date of commencement of the scheme will be announced at a later date.

No fee will be charged for opening and maintaining 'Retail Direct Gilt account' with the RBI. However, a fee for payment gateway, as applicable, will be borne by the investor.

Non-Resident retail investors eligible to invest in government securities under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 can also invest under the scheme.

The RDG account can be opened singly or jointly with another retail investor who meets the eligibility criteria, the RBI said.

## Walmart's Flipkart investment more than doubles in value

**SANGEETHA G**  
CHENNAI, JULY 12

Ahead of a proposed IPO, Walmart-owned Flipkart has raised \$3.6 billion from a group of investors at a valuation of \$37.6 billion. Japanese SoftBank, which had sold its stakes to Walmart in 2018, has once again invested in the company.

The investment values the group at \$37.6 billion post-money, which is 130 per cent higher than the \$16 billion valuation it got during Walmart's acquisition of the home-grown e-com company in 2018.

Flipkart Group had raised \$1.2 billion from investors and its parent Walmart in July last year. The valuation of the company then stood at \$24.9 billion.

Flipkart Group has raised \$3.6 billion in the latest funding round participated by global investors, including sovereign wealth funds and private equity funds as well as Walmart.

The funding was led by



Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPP Investments), SoftBank Vision Fund 2 and Walmart. Sovereign funds DisruptAD, Qatar Investment Authority, Khazanah Nasional Berhad and marquee investors Tencent, Willoughby Capital, Antara Capital, Franklin Templeton and Tiger Global also participated.

CPP Investments later said it has invested \$800 million (about Rs 5,968 crore) in the Flipkart Group.

SoftBank had sold its 20 per cent stake in the company in 2018. SoftBank's first Vision Fund had

invested \$2.5 billion in Flipkart in August 2017. Flipkart will use the funding to invest in new categories and leverage made-in-India technology to transform consumer experiences and develop a world-class supply chain, said Kalyan Krishnamurthy, CEO of Flipkart Group.

According to Walmart officials, Flipkart might get listed in the bourses, most probably next year.

Flipkart is also offering buyback of employee stock options worth about Rs 600 crore.

In an e-mail to employees, Krishnamurthy said the group will buyback 5 per cent of the past three years' vested options.

## INFLATION REMAINS HIGH, IIP JUMPS ON BASE EFFECT

**FC BUREAU**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 12

Consumers have reason to worry as the country's retail inflation as measured by Consumer Price Index or CPI remained high at 6.26 per cent in the month of June as compared to 6.09 per cent reported in the year-ago period. While industrial output, as measured by the Index of Industrial

Production (IIP), recorded 29.3 per cent growth in the month of May as compared to 88.4 per cent in the year-ago period, the two separate government data showed on Monday.

Though the retail inflation eased slightly to 6.26 per cent from 6.3 per cent in June, it still remained above the Reserve Bank's comfort level of 6 per cent for the second straight month. During the month,

prices of eggs, edible oils, fruit, pulses accelerated in double digits. Fuel inflation also grew 12.7 per cent with rising petrol and diesel prices.

The sharp rise in factory output was due to the base effect, as the country was under a strict lockdown in May last year. Six out of the eight core sectors that constitute 40 per cent of the whole IIP recorded positive growth in May.

## Brokers see listing gains from Zomato IPO

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD**  
MUMBAI, JULY 12

While retail investors are enthused about Zomato's initial public offering for the high visibility the food delivery firm enjoys, brokerages are not very upbeat about the issue considering the high valuation. However, they do believe that the equity shares may offer listing gains to investors.

The Zomato public issue is opening on July 14.

The mega public issue of Rs 9,375 crore will allocate only 10 per cent shares to

the retail individual investors and 15 per cent to high net worth investors, with 75 per cent going to the institutional investors, including mutual funds and insurance companies.

However, the IPO priced in the price band of Rs72 to Rs 76 per equity share of Re 1 face value is seen as a risky bet given the company is the first of its kind, with no peer to compare its valuation, and is yet to turn profitable.

Retail investors have to keep in mind that at Rs 10 face value, the share would cost between Rs 720 and Rs

760 per share.

"The company is financially making losses, which remains a concern however the management has strong growth plans going ahead which will aid revival. Considering its financial performance, it would be prudent to wait for a meaningful turnaround to change the long-term stance. However, investors may consider subscribing for the listing gains," Ajit Mishra, VP-research, Religare Broking said.

"Subscribe for listing gains," said Motilal Oswal

Financial Services in its review, adding, "Strong consumer brand equity with widespread network: Zomato enjoys the first mover advantage and has built a strong brand name and recall across India."

ICICI Direct, in a report, cautioned investors that "Demand for a food delivery platform is highly sensitive to a range of factors, including, delivery charges charged by delivery partners, incentives given to delivery partners and the commissions charged to restaurant partners."

## Kitex chief blasts Kerala govt, hails Telangana approach

**Kochi, July 12:** Dubbing the Kerala Industries Department as a 'frog in the well', unaware of the investor friendly atmosphere in other states, Kitex Group chairman Sabu Jacob on Monday said Telangana has offered many incentives for his venture and promised him freedom from inspections.

The Telangana government has offered cheap land, water and electricity for investors, which was

unlike the attitude of the Kerala Industries Department, he told reporters here. "They are like a frog in the well and unaware of the investor-friendly atmosphere in other states," he said.

On apprehensions of inspections, like 11 carried out in his units in Kerala in 30 days, he said the Telangana government assured him that no official would trouble any industry with inspections.

Inspections would be held once in two or three years and that too with the knowledge of the principal secretary or the minister concerned, he was told.

"Even that will be informed well in advance after getting our permission and as per our convenience only," Jacob said.

He was told that even if any lapses were found during the inspection, steps would be taken to rectify it at the governmental level

and not publish it to "defame and let the business run into losses".

Jacob termed his discussions with Telangana industries minister K. T. Rama Rao as "like a talk with the CEO of the state".

Jacob said the main allegation against his business was that it was a polluting industry. But the Telangana minister told him not to worry about waste water treatment, as the state would handle it. —PTI

**COSTLY | NET-ZERO**

**Adequate climate finance needed for India to meet clean energy goals**

## India wants rich nations to pay more for green shift

**VRISHTI BENIWAL & RAJESH KUMAR SINGH**  
JULY 12

India can't prioritise eliminating greenhouse gas emissions without sufficient financing from richer nations to help offset the high cost of transitioning to clean energy, according to a senior government official.

In laying out its position ahead of key global climate talks later this year, the top bureaucrat in India's environment ministry also said the country doesn't plan to tighten its emissions goals unless more money is promised from developed economies under the United Nations-sponsored climate change agreement.

"Every policy decision has a cost to the economy. Going net-zero or using less carbon also has a cost," environment secretary Rameshwar Prasad Gupta said in an interview at his New Delhi office. "We are not anti-net-zero. But without adequate climate finance being definitively available, we can't commit on that part."

The stance by India, the world's third-biggest emitter, highlights a top challenge global leaders will face when they meet at the UN Climate Change Conference, which starts in late October in Glasgow. While cutting net global carbon emissions to zero by 2050 is key to meet the goals of the Paris



Agreement, aimed at avoiding catastrophic damage from climate change, figuring out how to pay for the transition toward clean energy has been a sticking point.

Gupta also said the current \$100 billion-a-year pledge by richer nations to help developing nations -- a target they haven't even met yet -- is insufficient to

make the shift.

"We have our own developmental imperatives," Gupta said. "If you want that I don't emit carbon, then provide finance. It will be much more than \$100 billion per year for developing nations."

As well, until negotiations are finalised around funding help, India likely won't upgrade the emissions targets it committed to in 2015, known as a Nationally Determined Contribution, which under the Paris Agreement were expected to be revised by 2020.

"This is not the final decision, but most probably we won't file a revised NDC," he said. "Let there be a decision on climate finance first."

While the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed setting a 2050 net-zero emissions goal earlier this year, policy makers have resisted, citing the outsized role fossil fuels play in powering its growing population out of poverty, and the progress it's made on earlier climate commitments. But India risks looking like an outlier among other developing economies. While still seeking more funds from richer states, more than 100 countries including large emerging economies like Mexico, as well as neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh, have publicly committed to zero carbon by mid-century. —Bloomberg

## CCEA green signals LIC disinvestment

**New Delhi, July 12:** The Union Cabinet has cleared disinvestment of the country's largest insurer LIC and a panel headed by the finance minister will now decide on the quantum of stake dilution, a senior official said on Monday.

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (Dipam) had in January appointed actuarial firm Milliman Advisors LLP India to assess the embedded value of LIC ahead of the initial public offering, which is touted to be the biggest public issue in Indian corporate history.

The Budget amendments to the LIC Act has been notified and the actuarial firm is expected to finalise the embedded value of the life insurer. Under the

embedded value method, the insurance company's present value of future profit is also included in its present net asset value.

"The Cabinet Committee for Economic Affairs last week cleared the proposal of initial public offering of LIC. The alternative mechanism on disinvestment will now decide on the quantum of stake to be divested by government," the official said.

The government expects to come out with the LIC IPO by the end of current fiscal, the official added.

Up to 10 per cent of the LIC IPO issue size would be reserved for policyholders. The government has already brought in legislative amendments in the LIC Act for the proposed IPO. —PTI



## SHORT TAKES

## Thakur chairs review meeting

**New Delhi:** Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Monday chaired the first review meeting after taking charge of his ministry as he took stock of India's preparation for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics. The meeting of the high-level committee was also attended by his deputy Nisith Pramanik and the officials of the sports ministry, Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Indian Olympic Association (IOA). — PTI

## Sports awards could be delayed

**New Delhi:** The process of picking this year's national sports awards winners is set to be postponed until after the Olympic Games to ensure that medal winners in Tokyo are duly considered by the selection panel, which is yet to be instituted. "The dates of nominations are closed. But in our last meeting we have discussed about including Olympic medalist, if any, for consideration in this year's awards," a sports ministry source said. — PTI

## Bucks trim Suns' lead in NBA finals

**Milwaukee:** Giannis Antetokounmpo powered Milwaukee to a crucial 120-100 victory over Phoenix on Sunday in the NBA Finals, reviving the Bucks' chances to win their first title in 50 years. The 26-year-old Greek forward scored 41 points and grabbed 13 rebounds to spark the Bucks, who pulled within 2-1 in the best-of-seven championship series ahead of game four at Milwaukee. — AFP

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# MAN WITH A PLAN

## Crowning moment for Italy's coach Mancini

**Rome, July 12:** Roberto Mancini marked the crowning moment of his career on Sunday by winning the European Championship title with an Italy side transformed from the dark days of their 2018 World Cup qualifying fiasco.

The four-time world champions beat England 3-2 on penalties as the Euro final finished 1-1 after extra time with Italy claiming their second Euro crown, and first since 1968.

"It has not sunk in yet but we are delighted for the Italian public because they really deserve this after what has been a trying period. This is great joy for us," said Mancini.

It was his 14th trophy as a manager and first with Italy after falling short as a player with the national team between 1984 and 1994.

"I was very fortunate to play in a great side in 1990 and fortunate to play in a terrific under-21 team in 1988 but despite the fact we were the best team we didn't win it and lost both times on penalties, so I was due this."

In May 2018, few were in a hurry to take over from Gian Piero Ventura, after Italy failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time in 60 years.

First choice Carlo Ancelotti politely declined before Mancini, then coach of Zenit Saint Petersburg, landed his "dream" job.

Mancini had been coaching for 17 years, winning trophies with Fiorentina, Lazio, Inter, Manchester City and Galatasaray.

But his coaching career seemed to have lost a sense of purpose since leaving City in 2013 before the Azzurri hotseat became vacant. His first job was to restore confidence in a demoralised side. — AFP



Italian coach Roberto Mancini (left) and captain Giorgio Chiellini hold the Euro trophy as they arrive in Rome. — AFP

## Worst feeling in world: Kane

**London, July 12:** England captain Harry Kane admitted his side's penalty shoot-out defeat in the Euro 2020 final against Italy on Sunday was "the worst feeling in the world".

Along with Harry Maguire, Kane was one of only two England players to score from the spot as Italy won the shoot-out 3-2 after a 1-1 draw following extra time at Wembley.

"Penalties is the worst feeling in the world when you lose," Kane told ITV.

"Anyone can miss a penalty. Penalties is penalties. We went through a



English fans go on a rampage after the Euro final on Sunday.

process. The boys did everything they could, it just wasn't our night."

Tottenham striker Kane conceded England had played into Italy's hands

by adopting a cautious approach in a failed bid to preserve their lead.

"We were playing against a very good side. We got off to the perfect start. Maybe dropped a little too deep sometimes. They had a lot of the ball," Kane said.

"We looked fairly in control, they didn't create too many chances. They got their breakthrough from the set-piece."

Kane insisted England would bounce back from the agonising loss.

"We win together, we lose together. We'll learn and grow from it." — AFP

## KEY STATS

- \$40.4million — prize money Italy earned for winning the Euro.
- \$36 million — prize money England, the runners-up, earned.
- \$11 million — money will be given to the 24 teams.
- 5 goals & 1 assist — Cristiano Ronaldo finished as the top scorer at the Euro.
- Gianluigi Donnarumma — became the first goalkeeper to win player of the tournament.
- Italy are the fourth side to win multiple Euro titles after Germany (3), Spain (3) and France (2). The 53-year gap between their titles is the longest in Euro history.
- Italy are the first side to win two penalty shoot-outs at a single Euro finals tournament.
- Shaw's opener was clocked at 1:56, the fastest goal in a Euro final and fifth quickest in tournament history.
- This was the seventh Euro final to go to extra time (after 1960, 1968, 1976, 1996, 2000 and 2016) and the second to go to a shoot-out (1976).
- Italy are 34 matches unbeaten, dating back to September 2018.
- Bonucci (34 years and 71 days) is the oldest player to score in a Euro final.
- Bonucci also made his 18th Euro finals appearance, an Italian record.

## Messi dedicates Copa to country

**Buenos Aires, July 12:** Lionel Messi has dedicated Argentina's Copa America triumph over Brazil to his family, his country and also late idol Diego Maradona.

"I want to dedicate this success to my family, who have always given me the strength to continue, to my friends whom I love so much, to all the people who support us and above all to 45 millions Argentinians who have suffered so with this dreadful virus," Barcelona megastar Messi wrote on Instagram.

Messi, 34, also paid tribute to the memory of Maradona, who died aged 60 last November, saying



Lionel Messi

that "Diego was surely urging us on wherever he is".

Messi had been desperate to lead the side to glory after a series of disappointments both at World Cups and the Copa. — AP

## I believe, I am the best: Novak

**Wimbledon, July 12:** Novak Djokovic said on Sunday he considers himself the "best player" after winning a record-equalling 20th Grand Slam title but refuses to anoint himself as "greatest of all time".

If he wins a fourth US Open in September, he will become the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to complete the calendar Grand Slam and just the third in history.

"I consider myself best and I believe that I am the best, otherwise I wouldn't be talking confidently about winning Slams and making history," said Djokovic.

"But whether I'm the greatest of all time or not, I leave that debate to other people."

### '50-50' ON PLAYING OLYMPICS

Even with a chance to complete a so-called "Golden Slam," Djokovic isn't sure he'll be playing at the



Novak Djokovic with coach Goran Ivanisevic.

Tokyo Olympics.

The lack of fans and the tight coronavirus restrictions in Tokyo means Djokovic remains on the fence about traveling to Japan.

"I'll have to think about it. My plan was always to go to Olympic Games. But right now I'm a little bit divided. It's kind of 50-50 because of what I heard in the last couple days," he said. — AFP

**MARUTI SUZUKI**

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