

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | FRIDAY 2 | JULY 2021

WEATHER



Max: 35°C
Min: 26°C
Rainfall: 6%

ASTROGUIDE

Pilava: Aani 18
Tithi: Ashtami
Star: Uthrattathi
Rahukalam:
10.30 am to 12 noon
Yamagandam:
3 pm to 4.30 pm

PRAYERS

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

SUNSET TODAY 6.39 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.47 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 12.10 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 1.17 PM

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+42,759)	(+776)
3,04,53,527	4,00,265

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+4,481)	(102)
TN: 24,84,177	32,721

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

18,32,00,380

DEATHS

39,66,198

COUNTRIES,
AREAS WITH
CASES

219

worldometers.info

Modi likely to expand Union council on Sunday

New Delhi: The long-awaited expansion of the Union council of ministers is expected to take place on Sunday, July 4. For the past few days, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been meeting Union ministers, apparently to take stock of the work done by the government in the last two years and to discuss various issues. BJP president JP Nadda was present in most of the meetings held at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg,

India, Pakistan exchange list of prisoners

New Delhi: India on Thursday shared the list of 345 Pakistani prisoners in India including 271 civilians and 74 fishermen with the high commission for Pakistan in New Delhi. Pakistan simultaneously exchanged with India a list of 609 Indian prisoners, including 558 fishermen, lodged in the country's prisons. This exchange of information is in accordance with clause (i) of the Agreement on Consular Access between Pakistan and India, signed on May 21, 2008.

COUNTER

POINT



Don't worry... now, they want to legalise this!

IIT-Madras faculty resigns alleging caste discrimination

OP ARULN | DC
CHENNAI, JULY 1

An accomplished faculty member in the country's premier institution of higher learning Indian Institute of Technology- Madras (IIT-M) has quit citing caste discrimination in the department of humanities and social science. A letter he sent to his faculty members went viral in the social media and kicked up a

storm.

In the letter, assistant professor Vipin P. Veetil stated one of the primary reasons for his leaving the IIT-M is the caste discrimination he has faced at department since joining in March 2019. Individuals in position of power irrespective of their claimed political affiliations and gender were instrumental in meting out injustice to him, he said. "There were multiple spe-



cific instances of discrimination and I shall be pursuing appropriate actions to

address the matter," he said.

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

Suggesting to set up a committee to study the experiences of the SC and OBC faculty members, he said that such a committee shall have members of the SC/ ST Commission, OBC Commission, and psychologists. "I do believe people who face the discrimination may benefit by filing complaints with the grievance committee at the Institute and with courts. Societies

progress one small step at a time, or do they?" he said he is leaving for another institution. Dr Veetil completed post-doctoral studies at University of Paris in 2018, Ph.D in economics at George Mason University in the United States in 2016, masters in finance in Collegio Carlo Alberto, Italy in 2010, masters in law and economics, Erasmus Mundus programme, Erasmus

University, Rotterdam (The Netherlands), University of Bologna (Italy), and University of Aix-Marseille, (France) in 2008. He holds a bachelor of arts (honors) in economics from Hindu College, University of Delhi and International Baccalaureate Diploma, Shanghai American School in China in 2003. He has published several articles in several international journals.

Beijing, July 1: A defiant President Xi Jinping on Thursday asserted that the Chinese people will not allow any "foreign force" to "bully, oppress or subjugate" China and spoke of its military might to defend its sovereignty, as the ruling Communist Party celebrated its centenary with a massive colourful show at the historic Tiananmen Square here. Mr Xi was addressing a highly-choreographed ceremony from the balcony of Tiananmen Gate, which also adorns a giant size photo of 'Chairman' Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China. ■ **PS**



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Neymar back for Chile clash



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Vol. 17 No. 97 Established 1938 | 8 PAGES| ₹3.00

9 EU nations clear Covishield

■ **Travel clearance for those who have taken jab comes after India's warning**

DC CORRESPONDENT
WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, JUNE 1

A day after India flexed its muscle over discriminatory practice by the European Union with regard to Indian vaccines Covishield and Covaxin, nine EU countries gave their approval to the AstraZeneca vaccine for a "green pass", allowing free travel in the region of those vaccinated with Covishield. These nine countries are Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Spain, Estonia and Switzerland while more EU countries are expected to join in.

The European Union Digital Covid Certificate framework, or the Green Pass, to facilitate free movement during the Covid pandemic, came into effect on July 1 under which persons vaccinated with vaccines authorised by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) will be exempt from travel restrictions within the EU.

Individual member-states have the flexibility to accept vaccines that have been authorised at the national level or by the World Health Organisation. However, while AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria is approved by EU, the fate of its Indian version Covishield remains under suspense as the EMA has approved only four vaccines so far. ■ **P4**



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin goes around the Post-Covid Care Clinic and International Vaccination Centre at the King Institute, Chennai, after inaugurating it on Thursday.

Clinic to treat post-Covid ailments opened in city

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 1

A post-Covid care clinic and an upgraded international vaccination centre were declared open inside the premises of the King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Thursday.

The clinic, which is part of the Government Corona Hospital, will treat those who recovered from

Coronavirus for a variety of ailments relating to the heart, nervous system, kidney, stomach, intestine and eyes, besides diabetic and psychological problems.

The upgraded international vaccine centre, would have facilities for those travelling abroad to take the mandatory vaccinations for diseases like yellow fever and brain fever.

Mr Stalin also participated in the Doctor's Day

event at the MGR Medical University and gave an assurance that his government would strive for the welfare of the doctors.

He distributed certificates of appreciation to the doctors for their exemplary services during the Covid-19 crisis and also to the Nilgris district collector J. Innocent Divya for achieving 100 per cent vaccination of the tribals and estate workers of the hill district. — **PTI**



A worker carries LPG gas cylinder, in New Delhi, Thursday. The price of non-subsidised LPG cylinders has been hiked by ₹25 effective from July 1. — **PTI**

Army chief warns against easy availability of drones to all

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 1

Army Chief General M.M. Naravane said Thursday that the easy availability of drones to state and non-state actors has increased "the complexity and the challenges that we have to deal with".

"Well, the easy availability of drones – and in fact you can even make it at home, as a do-it-yourself

(DIY) project – definitely increases the complexity and challenges we have to deal with," said Gen. Naravane.

"We are seized of this problem and have put in place certain measures ... all our troops on the ground have been sensitised to this evolving threat. We are developing capabilities to deal with that, whether by state-sponsored (elements) or by

states themselves," he said.

The Army Chief said capabilities are being developed to deal with the drone threat, both in the kinetic and in non-kinetic realms.

"We are catering for both the offensive use of drones, (and) also focusing on defensive measures or the counter-drone systems or measures that we need to adopt to prevent any

attacks on critical facilities by drones and their use, whether by state or non-state actors," he said.

The Army Chief's remarks come in the backdrop of the first-ever drone attack on a military base on Indian soil, when two drones were used to drop low-intensity improvised explosive devices (IEDs) on the Jammu Air Force Station on the night of June 26-27.

WB POST-POLL VIOLENCE

SC notice to govt, EC on SIT probe

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 1

The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from the Union government, West Bengal government and Election Commission on a plea seeking an investigation team into the causes and reasons of post-poll violence in West Bengal.

A bench comprising Justice Vineet Saran and Justice and Dinesh Maheshwari sought responses from the Centre, West Bengal government and the poll panel on the plea which also sought compensation for the victims of post-poll violence and their families.

The plea, which also sought an SIT probe under the supervision of the top court, has also asked that the people responsible for the violence be identified and action be taken against them.

The plea filed by Hindu Front for Justice, advocate Ranjana Agnihotri and one Jitendra Singh has alleged that thousands of residents of West Bengal are being terrorised, penalised and tortured by workers of the Trinamul Congress (TMC) for supporting the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) during Assembly elections.



► **The plea sought an SIT probe under the supervision of the top court and action against people responsible for the violence.**

It further sought direction that the Central government and state government take steps for rehabilitation of the people who have been forced to migrate to Assam or any other place in India due to violence that erupted after May 2, when election results were announced.

It sought direction to the Central government and the State government to "take appropriate steps to protect the life, liberty, dignity and safety of religious places of Hindus as guaranteed under Article 14, 21 and 25 of the Constitution and reflected in the solemn declaration made in the Preamble of the Constitution."

GOGOI FREED AS COURT SLAMS MISUSE OF LAW

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, JULY 1

RTI activist and Assam MLA Akhil Gogoi was released on Thursday after languishing in jail for the past 18 months as an NIA court acquitted him and three others in a sedition case, along with several other charges.

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

The NIA court judge said in his order that it was necessary for the agency to note that the "ambit of sedition does not get stretched beyond permissible limits". The 120-page ruling by NIA Judge Pranjal Das had observations on sedition too.

NO BULLYING, XI WARNS AT MEGA CENTENARY SHOW

Beijing, July 1: A defiant President Xi Jinping on Thursday asserted that the Chinese people will not allow any "foreign force" to "bully, oppress or subjugate" China and spoke of its military might to defend its sovereignty, as the ruling Communist Party celebrated its centenary with a massive colourful show at the historic Tiananmen Square here. Mr Xi was addressing a highly-choreographed ceremony from the balcony of Tiananmen Gate, which also adorns a giant size photo of 'Chairman' Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China. ■ **PS**

OTHER STORIES

Dispel fears among public on vaccine: VP to med fraternity

Chennai, July 1: Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday called for the need to dispel fears among the public on vaccination and urged the medical fraternity to take a lead in creating awareness on the importance of getting the jabs.

After receiving the first copy of the book -- 'My Patients My God -- Journey of a kidney doctor', penned by noted nephrologist Dr Georgi Abraham, on the occasion of Doctors' Day, Naidu underlined the need to address vaccine hesitancy in some sections of the population, especially in the rural areas.

"There is a need to dispel fears in some sections and the vaccination drive should turn into a truly pan-India 'Jan Andolan'", he said, and urged the medical fraternity to take a lead in creating awareness on the importance of people getting vaccinated.

Emphasising the need to educate people on the importance of vaccination, Naidu urged all stakeholders to work collectively to achieve 'full vaccination' by year-end. Those having vaccine hesitancy should be made aware of the fact that they are putting their own lives and those of family members at an 'avoidable risk', he said.

Calling for Centre and States coordination to quicken the pace of the vaccine campaign, he appealed to film personalities, sportspersons and icons of various fields to come together and encourage people to go for vaccination.

Three arrested in job fraud

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 1

Three persons who duped people on the pretext of offering them jobs in the government sector have been arrested by the Crime Branch police.

The accused has been identified as Nandhini, her husband Arjunsaija, residents of Kamarajar Salai, Valasaravakkam and Reshma Davood, the state secretary of Tamilnadu Muslim league.

According to the police, the accused have cheated at least 85 job seekers in the guise of giving training and consequently getting government jobs in the Department of Printing and Stationery, TNEB, APRO, OA, Noon meal worker etc.

Police said Nandhini conspired together with his husband and collected a total of ₹4.15 Crores from 85 job seekers.

Nandhini reportedly handed over the amount after taking her share to the accused Reshma Davood, the mastermind of the cheating. The accused issued fake appointment orders to the victims.

The trio was arrested by the CCB on Wednesday. The Commissioner of Police, Greater Chennai Police appealed to the General Public not to approach these types of cheaters for getting Government jobs.

In a similar case, a VRS CRPF Jawan, who cheated Southern Railway Employee to get APRO posting was arrested.

The accused C. Alagiribalan (36) of Kulathur Taluk in Pudukottai District who served as Jawan in CRPF had cheated Rs.51 lakhs from Srinivas Nimmagadde, a Southern Railway Employee. He approached the former Jawan seeking a job for his son.

On a complaint from Srinivas Nimmagadde, the Inspector of Police, Central Crime Branch arrested the accused Alagiribalan on Wednesday and sent him for Judicial Custody.

Addicted to mobile gaming, graduate ends life near Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 1

A 21-year-old man on Wednesday ended his life by hanging himself in Sriperumbudur after losing in an online game 'Free Fire'.

The deceased was identified as, M. Sasikumar (21), a native of Cuddalore. He was a B Sc graduate and had been working at a private company in Vengadu, Sriperumbudur, for the last two months.

Police sources said he shared a room with five of his colleagues in the neighborhood, where he took his life on Wednesday.

According to his friends' version to the police, Sasikumar used to play 'Free Fire' on his mobile phone

According to his friends' version to the police, Sasikumar used to play 'Free Fire' on his mobile phone and had been addicted to the online game. He spent most of his time playing games. Sasikumar was upset for the

last few days as continuously lost to other players in the game. Even as his friends, con-



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REMEMBERING DOCTORS



Doctors participate in a candlelight vigil as mark of tribute to doctors who lost their lives during the Covid-19 pandemic at Government Omandurar Medical College and Hospital on Thursday in the city. — DC

Vector-borne epidemics to be thwarted with help of drones

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 1

The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) on Thursday launched drone-enabled vector control measures to avert the spread of vector-borne epidemics amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The GCC conducted a survey to study the malaria problem and larvae density across various zones in Chennai, covering about 140 km. The survey revealed that the cor-



poration has to implement effective vector-control measures to prevent vector-borne epidemics.

The survey was conducted in the water sources in the city including Buckingham Canal, Virugambakkam, Otteri

Nalla and Cooum and will continue till July 15. Three zones will be covered each day. After identifying the hotspots, the drones will spray anti-larval chemicals in the water bodies.

A day after spraying chemicals, a resurvey will be carried out to study the density. Following the assessment, the chemicals will be sprayed again in the same area to make sure larvae do not resurface in the area, said officials.

Should we cheer fall in TN Covid cases?



B. Vijayalakshmi

Viewpoint

With the Centre and experts alerting the state governments to be prepared about a possible third wave, Tamil Nadu has been staring at vaccine shortage for the last few days. 'No vaccine today' boards have been driving people to resort to flash protests in several parts of the city.

Chennai reported 249 fresh Covid cases and four deaths on Thursday and a drop in the test positivity rate to less than 1 per cent. Coronavirus slowing down in the state has brought in some cheer among people. However, the civic body has been continuing with containment measures and are ready with beds at Covid

care centres to handle sudden rise in cases.

Also, the Chief Minister this week sanctioned ₹100 crore from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund to buy oxygen for treating Covid patients in state-run medical facilities and to initiate precautionary measures to tackle the possible third wave.

But it is people's behaviour and vaccination that can prevent the third wave of the pandemic. Crowded shopping areas, roads and public places in Chennai only show people have not learnt their Covid lessons. Despite repeated awareness campaigns by authorities, various organisations and the media, there are people who still move

Lessons not learnt



A large number of youngsters gather without maintaining social distance to collect their hall ticket for Army recruitment exam at Fort St George, on Thursday. — DC

around without masks. Similarly, delaying a widespread vaccination

programme will not only cause a spike in cases but also higher casualties.

Vaccination drive



A mobile vaccination bus launched in Madurai on Thursday by the CII-Yi (Young Indians) along with the district administration and the city corporation. District collector Dr S Aneesh Sekhar flagged off the bus. — DC

The Centre must increase TN's vaccine quota and the state government must en-

sure it inoculates the maximum number of people a day.



To the rescue of fawns

The Tamil Nadu Forestry Training College, located near the Vaigai dam, in Theni district has initiated steps for the protection of deer population in the forest area near the reservoir. In the early 1990s, the place had only a few deer population but now there are 380 fawns. But the corona wave spread to this area too. The government took

preventive measures to protect the wildlife habitat of animals and birds, including from the predatory poachers. The Forestry Training College stepped in to protect the deer population near the dam. Individual care is taken for the health of each deer and their families. If any health issue is found in any deer, medical rescue teams immediately

swing into action. Veterinary doctors are also working for the protection and welfare of the animals. Proper sanitation and precautionary measures are taken under the leadership of the college principal. The entry of hunters is strictly monitored, which was widely applauded by the people of the area. — K. Manikandan

Centre mum on CM's IVC revival proposal

T. SUDHEESH | DC
CHENNAI, JULY 1

There is no response from the Union government even after a month since Chief Minister M.K. Stalin wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi offering to revive the defunct Integrated Vaccine Complex at Thirukazhukundram in Chengalpattu district for addressing the Covid-19 vaccine shortage.

Mr Stalin shot off a letter to the prime minister on May 27 requesting to hand over the complex on lease to the state government to produce Covid-19 vaccines. The Union ministry of health then sought a week's time to respond to the demand.

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Health minister Ma. Subrahmanian has confirmed there was no response from the Centre as yet. "It's important to revive the unit which has been defunct for over a decade as it will help not only address the shortage of state but also the demands of the entire country. We had sent the labour minister and mem-

bers of parliament from the state to Delhi to meet the concerned officials. Though they sought a week's time, the state has received no response from the Centre," said the minister.

In his letter, Stalin had made it clear that the state was ready to take over the facilities on lease without bearing any past liabilities. The letter also said the state could identify a suitable private partner to start vaccine production at the earliest and other issues including profit sharing and the current financial liabilities can be sorted out later.

The Union government's indifference on IVC comes at a time when the state is undergoing a shortage of

vaccines despite the Centre announcing it would procure vaccines for the state free of cost.

"The health minister on Wednesday said the state was expecting 71 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccines from the Centre in July and preparations were made across the state to vaccinate at least 8 lakh people a day. The vaccination can be run without disruption if the Centre ensures uninterrupted supply," he said.

Meanwhile, the health department said they had received 36,610 doses of Covaxin from Bharat Biotech on Thursday. So far the state has inoculated 1.45 crore people while it received 1.46 crore doses since January.

MAN FOUND DEAD INSIDE ATM KIOSK

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 1

A 44-year-old man who came to withdraw cash from the ATM was found dead inside an ATM kiosk on Pammal-Thirunermalai road on Thursday.

The police identified the deceased as Christopher (44), a resident of Anakaputhur in Pallavaram. On Thursday morning he left home to withdraw cash from the ATM.

Meanwhile, a few people who had come to the ATM noticed the man lying motionless. They informed the police, who shifted him to a nearby hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

It is suspected that Christopher might have died due to a heart attack. The body has been shifted for post-mortem and the reports are awaited to ascertain the cause of death, said the police.

A case of unnatural death has been registered by Shankar Nagar police.

JUVENILE ARRESTED FOR MURDER OF MINOR GIRL

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 1

A 17-year-old boy has been arrested by the police on the charges of attempt to rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl in Kalpakkam.

The deceased, a resident of Vengambakkam near Kalpakkam went missing on Tuesday evening. She went to a browsing center in the area to pay the electricity bill, after which she was not seen.

Meanwhile, the body of the girl was found with injuries in the area the next morning. The Sadras police registered a case and begun an investigation.

The police after a preliminary probe took in three suspects for an inquiry. Police said on Thursday, that one of three, a 17-year-old boy confessed to having murdered the minor girl.

The juvenile allegedly pulled the 11-year-old into a secluded place and attempted to rape her. When she raised her voice and resisted his attempt, he crushed her head with a stone. The minor girl died and panicked by this, he fled the spot.

The police lodged him at Juvenile correction home in the district.

The police after a preliminary probe took in three suspects for an inquiry. Police said on Thursday, that one of three, a 17-year-old boy confessed to having murdered the minor girl

OTHER STORY

Modi meets newly elected Pondy MLAs

New Delhi/ Puducherry, July 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met the newly elected BJP legislators from Puducherry and discussed about the Union Territory's all-round development.

A Namassivayam, recently sworn-in as Minister in the AINRC-led NDA government in Puducherry, and the party's UT chief V Saminathan were part of the delegation. This is the first time the BJP is part of a cabinet in the southern union territory, with two of its members- Namassivayam and A K Sai J Saravana Kumar- being inducted in the Chief Minister N Rangasamy (AINRC founder)-led cabinet. "Met a delegation of MLAs from Puducherry. Discussed the various efforts for Puducherry's all-round development," Modi said in a tweet and shared a photo of his with the MLAs.

Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal, the saffron party's Puducherry in-charge, was present during the meeting. All the six newly elected legislators belonging to the BJP, three nominated members of the party and as many independents called on the Prime Minister. In Puducherry, a BJP source said the MLAs urged the Prime Minister to expeditiously sanction developmental projects for the union territory. The state cabinet here has six members including the chief minister. The AINRC-led NDA had won the April 6 polls.

While Rangasamy was sworn in chief minister on May 7 the other five ministers- three from AINRC and two belonging to the BJP, were inducted in his cabinet on June 27.

However, the Ministers have not been allocated portfolios so far. —PTI

More Sasi tapes, more defections from AMMK

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, JULY 1

Effusing hopes of a change in the present situation, AIADMK's expelled general secretary V. K. Sasikala went on leaking more tapes of her conversations with party functionaries even as the Leader of the Opposition Edappadi K Palaniswami took stock of the situation with some prominent loyalists.

Palaniswami held a meeting at the party headquarters on Lloyds Road with some leaders from Chennai and its surroundings on Thursday, with party coordinator O. Panneerselvam conspicuous by his absence.

Three functionaries of AMMK, the breakaway faction led by Sasikala's nephew T T V Dhinakaran, joined the parent party when leaders like D Jayakumar, Valarmathi, Gokula Indira and Chinniah, besides some district secretaries devised their strategies for the upcoming local body elections.

They also deliberated on Sasikala's tapes that have become a daily feature with the tone and tenor of

the conversations taking a new turn with serious political overtures of late.

Sasikala, in one of the latest conversations – she releases at least two or three audio recordings a day though she is said to be talking to about 20 to 30 persons – is saying that she took a break from politics in the thick of the Assembly elections only because she trusted the AIADMK leaders' averments.

The AIADMK leaders had stated that they would win at least 150 seats in the 234 Assembly and she believed them, she says in a leaked audio. Now that the leaders had failed to accomplish what they promised to deliver, she would step in and rescue the party.

Sasikala, who reportedly spoke to eight former AIADMK MLAs on Wednesday, postures herself as a key political advisor to the late J Jayalalithaa since the beginning.

In a conversation she says that in 1988 when the V. N. Janaki faction merged with the Jayalalithaa faction after the split in the party in 1987, it was she (Sasikala) who advised Jayalalithaa to take in those considered

as 'betrayers.'

Her present aspiration was not to capture the AIADMK but to rehabilitate it. She claimed that in 2017 when there was a move to disqualify 18 MLAs of the AIADMK from the Assembly, she had spoken to the then Speaker Dhanapal and advised him not to disqualify them.

Since Dhanapal did not heed to her advice, the party now stood divided and lost the elections, she tells one of the 'cadre' over the phone, adding that it was her duty to save the party, nurtured by Jayalalithaa.

Speaking with a woman cadre from Tiruppur, Sasikala says the cadre should elect the leader as it happened during the times of MGR and Jayalalithaa and promises to meet them all (the cadre who are behind her) once the Coronavirus crisis blows over.

Apart from broadcasting the audio clips on Jaya TV, the conversations are also posted on WhatsApp groups of media persons to keep the tempo of her desperate bid to storm the AIADMK alive in the media narrative, thus confusing the average

AIADMK cadre.

At the ground level, posters continue to pop up at various places, welcoming her to the AIADMK. One poster, ostensibly printed by one Erode Balakrishnan and put up at Madurai and Chennai, has a photograph of Sasikala presenting a bouquet to Jayalalithaa and a legend that reads: 'Chinnama come to lead.'

The poster also describes Sasikala as a reincarnation of Jayalalithaa. Another poster printed by the Madurai East suburban district women's wing describes her as an embodiment of sacrifice and calls her to defeat the betrayers with a photograph of the AIADMK headquarters in the backdrop.

However, the meeting at the party headquarters on Thursday cautioned party leaders against letting any cadre switch over to Sasikala's side.

Though the leaders are in no way inclined to let Sasikala into the party again, they now seem to be a bit rattled by the conversations some cadre are having with her one after the other and want to keep their rank and file intact.



Coimbatore district collector G. S. Sameeran, Corporation commissioner Raja Gopal Sunkara inspect Suntharapuram vegetable market. —DC

M.Phil courses to continue

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, JULY 1

State Minister for Higher Education K Ponnudiy announced that M. Phil (Master of Philosophy) courses would be offered by all State Universities this year, dispelling the rumours that the Government was slowly moving towards implementing the contentious New Educational Policy (NEP) proposed by the Union Government.

A recent circular from the Madras University to its constituent colleges to stop calling for applications for the M Phil courses in various subjects had raised a storm in some academic circles with people pointing out that one of the suggestions in the NEP was to do away with the course.

Ponnudiy, who held a meeting with 13 vice chancellors of State Universities in the Secretariat on Thursday, told the media that the government would continue

offering the M Phil courses in all the universities.

Though it was said that there were no takers for the course, which only prompted the Madras University to decide on doing away with it from this academic year, the Minister had told the vice chancellors to offer the course whether anyone wanted to join or not.

Sources in the education circles pointed out that the demand for M Phil was lost after the UGC took away the recognition offered to the degree, which is one lesser than a PhD and above a post-graduation, as a qualification to join as a faculty member of a college or university and also for getting promotions.

With the UGC stipulating the UGC NET (national eligibility test) or SLET (state level eligibility test) or a PhD degree as a basic qualification for recruitment as faculty member some time back, M Phil degree lost its relevance in the academic circles

with students not opting for it.

After it was announced that M Phil would not be a criteria for promotions in the department, even serving faculty members stopped enrolling for the course.

However, now the State-run Universities would continue to offer the course irrespective of the response from the student community.

During the media interaction, Ponnudiy also said that admission for degree courses in colleges would begin in August as the results of 12th classes would be announced by July 31.

The admissions would be done on the basis of the marks awarded to the students by following the recently finalised formula and it would be through a single window system, he said.

Both admissions and also recruitment of faculty in all universities of the state would be a transparent process hereafter, the Minister said.

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A PIONEER OF PROGRESS

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2nd July, 1949



SHORT TAKES

MP MINISTER FALLS FROM DAIS DURING EVENT

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, JULY 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HC: JOURNALISTS NOT EXPECTED TO DRAMATISE NEWS

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

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

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

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

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

ACB RAIDS SR. IPS OFFICER'S PROPERTIES

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
RAIPUR, JULY 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DELHI HC SAYS STRAY DOGS HAVE A RIGHT TO FOOD

New Delhi, July 1: Stray dogs have the right to food and citizens have the right to feed community canines, the Delhi High Court has said while observing that in exercising this right care and caution should be taken to ensure that it does not impinge upon others and causes no harassment or nuisance.

The high court, while laying down guidelines regarding feeding of stray dogs, said every dog is a territorial being and it has to be fed and tended to at places within their territory which is not frequented by the general public.

Any person having compassion for stray dogs can feed them at their private entrance or driveway of their house or any other place not shared with other residents but no one can restrict the other from feeding of dogs, until and unless it is causing harm or harassment to them, it said.

Community dogs (stray/street dogs) have the right to food and citizens have the right to feed community dogs but in exercising this right, care and caution should be taken to ensure that it does not impinge upon the rights of others or cause any harm, hindrance, harassment and nuisance to other individuals or members of the society, Justice J.R. Midha said in a recent 86-page verdict.

The court's order came in a case of dispute between two residents of a locality on the issue of feeding stray dogs. One of them sought direction to restrain the other from feeding street dogs near the entrance of a property. Later, a settlement took place between the two and a designated place was fixed for feeding the canines.

The verdict also discussed dog categories based on the roles they play service, therapy, rescue, hunting, tracking, cadaver, detection, police, and cancer detection dogs.

The court formed a committee, comprising the Director of Animal Husbandry Department or his nominee, senior officers of all municipal corporations, Delhi Cantonment Board and certain advocates, to implement the guidelines and asked it to hold its first meeting within four weeks.

The court said there is a need to spread awareness that animals have a right to live with respect and dignity and asked the AWBI to carry out an awareness campaign in association with media.

Animals have a right under law to be treated with compassion, respect and dignity. Animals are sentient creatures with an intrinsic value. Therefore, protection of such beings is the moral responsibility of each and every citizen including the governmental and non-governmental organisations.

We have to show compassion towards all living creatures. Animals may be mute but we as a society have to speak on their behalf. No pain or agony should be caused to the animals. Cruelty to animals causes psychological pain to them. Animals breathe like us and have emotions.



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

— PTI

Modi urges IMA to undertake studies on benefits of Yoga

Prime Minister hails contribution of doctors in saving lives from Corona

New Delhi, July 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday hailed the contribution of doctors in saving lives from Coronavirus and said his government has given maximum thrust on augmenting the healthcare infrastructure in the country.

Losing even one life is saddening, Modi said in his address at an Indian Medical Association event on National Doctors' Day and then emphasised that India saved lives of lakhs of its people and has fared better than more developed and prosperous countries in terms of the Covid infection and mortality per lakh population.

A big credit for that goes to doctors, healthcare and frontline workers, he said.

On the occasion, he also urged the IMA to undertake evidence-based studies on the benefits of yoga in "mission-mode" and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Our government has given maximum priority

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

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

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

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

"Our government is committed to safeguarding our doctors. Last year, we brought in several provisions against crimes

against doctors," he said.

We are also providing free insurance cover to our Covid warriors, Modi added.

The way our doctors have served the country is an inspiration in itself, he said and expressed gratitude to all doctors on behalf of 130 crore Indians.

Today, when the country is fighting such a big war against Coronavirus, doctors have saved millions of lives by working hard day and night, he said.

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

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

North India has to wait longer for rains

New Delhi, July 1: The unending wait for rains and respite from searing heat in north India, including Delhi, is likely to stretch a bit longer as there are no favourable conditions for advancement of the Southwest Monsoon till July 7, the IMD said on Thursday, forecasting an overall normal precipitation in the country for July.

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

Although the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the coun-

try as a whole will receive normal rainfall in July, it has a forecast of below normal to normal rainfall probability over many areas of northwest India and some parts of south peninsula, central, east and northeast India.

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

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

— PTI

K'TAKA TO BUILD MEMORIAL FOR COVID WARRIORS

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

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

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

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

9 EU NATIONS CLEAR COVISHIELD

FROM PG 1

Pfizer-BioNTech's Comirnaty, Moderna's Covid vaccine, the AstraZeneca shot manufactured and sold in Europe as Vaxzervria, and Johnson & Johnson's Janssen.

India has already asked the EU member countries to individually consider allowing Indians who have taken Covishield and Covaxin vaccines and want to travel to Europe.

There has been apprehension in India that people who took Covishield and Covaxin jabs are unlikely to be eligible for travel to the European Union member states under its "Green Pass" scheme. The EU Digital Covid certificate or 'Green Pass' will be mandatory to travel to European countries and the document will serve as proof that a person is vaccinated against Covid-19.

ZOO KEEPER DIES AFTER BITTEN BY KING COBRA

Thiruvananthapuram, July 1: A 45-year-old reptile keeper at the Thiruvananthapuram zoo died on Thursday after being bitten by a King Cobra while cleaning its cage.

Harshad, who hails from Amboori panchayath in Kattakkada Taluk, was bitten by the reptile while cleaning its cage in the afternoon, police said.

The victim had moved the snake to a smaller cage while cleaning the main enclosure and when he went back to the smaller cage he noticed it was dirty and proceeded to clean it without shifting the serpent back and consequently, was bitten.

Harshad, who has been working at the zoo for the past four years, was alone in the enclosure when the incident occurred. —PTI

PANDEMIC | DEATHS

Minister says govt's top priority is to ensure that kin of Covid victims get compensation

Covid toll underreported, says Kerala Opposition

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JULY 1

Faced with criticism over alleged underreporting of Covid-19 deaths, Kerala health minister Veena George on Thursday said the government was willing to review Covid death toll in the state.

The health minister said her government's top priority was to ensure that families of Covid victims get the compensation announced by the SC. "We will take a stand that helps people to get any compensation that the government decides," she said.

George maintained that the government was following the protocol laid down by WHO and ICMR for determining and declaring Covid deaths. As of now the hospital confirms the death first through the duty doctor or medical superintendent. The data is provided online to the district authorities who consolidate the figures. "We are having a highly transparent mechanism. A software was developed for this purpose and staff was also trained," she said.

The minister said the government was willing to follow fresh guidelines, if any, issued by the ICMR or

WHO.

However, the Opposition challenged the government claim of complying with WHO and ICMR guidelines. It pointed out that many people with comorbidity who died of Covid were not reported as Covid related deaths. The actual death toll was much higher than what has been shown by the government.

Opposition leader V.D. Satheeshan asked the government to shed its false prestige. "The government is not responsible for the spread of Covid. Therefore they should not make it a prestige issue. The government should come out with

the exact number of Covid deaths. It should stop the practice of underreporting deaths to gain credit for infection containment," he said.

There are major discrepancies in Covid data compilation, he added.

Meanwhile, Kerala reported 12,868 new cases. The state continues to report the highest number of cases in the country. The state reported 124 Covid deaths on Thursday taking the death toll to 13,359.

The Centre has directed the chief secretary to scale up disease containment activities in at least five districts.

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, JULY 1

BJD vice-president Soumya Ranjan Patnaik on Thursday kicked off a storm in Odisha politics after he raised some serious questions over the number of Covid-19 related deaths in the state.

Patnaik, son-in-law of former chief minister

Janaki Ballav Patnaik, said that the data regarding the Covid mortality in the state has been fudged and concealed.

The senior BJD leader said that desperate race to be on the top and the attempt to cling onto past glory seem to have resulted in such factual death data manipulation.

Patnaik said that due to administrative failure and

negligence, a controversy has erupted over the Covid-19 toll in the state which is further affecting the image of the Odisha government.

Had the actual number of deaths been revealed, there would not have been much loss of face. The ill-attempt of hiding the data is ruining the sanctity of the administrative machinery, he said.

SHORT TAKES

BILL COSBY
RELEASED FROM
PRISON

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

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

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

No foreign force can bully China: Xi

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

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

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

Xi, who is also the General Secretary of the CPC and Chairman of the Cen-

● **CHINA HAS** repeatedly accused the US of trying to curb its "peaceful rise", amidst concern in the neighbourhood about the growing assertiveness of the Chinese military in the strategic Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere.

tral Military Commission, warned that any foreign force will be allowed to bully China, an apparent reference to the US.

China has repeatedly accused the US of trying to curb its "peaceful rise", amidst concern in the neighbourhood about the growing assertiveness of the Chinese military in the strategic Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere.

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

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

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

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

—PTI



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

—AFP

Delta shadow over EU Covid travel pass

Brussels, July 1: An EU-wide Covid certificate for easier travel came into force on Thursday, just in time for Europe's busy summer vacation period — but the highly infectious Delta variant is already threatening to curtail its use.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The World Health Organisation added to the une-

Double Covid jab seems to control Delta variant: EMA

The Hague, July 1: Two doses of Covid vaccine appear to provide protection against the rapidly spreading Delta variant of the coronavirus, the European Medicines Agency said on Thursday.

The upbeat assessment came as the World Health Organization warned that the variant first spotted in India could fuel a new wave of cases in Europe.

The EMA's head of vaccine strategy, Marco Cavaleri, said the Amsterdam-based watchdog was "aw-

● We should avoid travel bans" within the European Union.

— DIDIER REYNDERS
EU Justice Commissioner

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

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

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

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

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

— AFP

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

MARCO CAVALERI,
Head, European
Medicines Agency

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

"Right now it seems the

W.H.O.: VACCINATE AT LEAST 10% OF POPULATION IN EACH COUNTRY

London, July 1: Voicing concern over many countries failing to vaccinate their people, WHO chief Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Thursday called for vaccinating at least 10 per cent of the population of every country by September, at least 40 per cent by the end of the year, and at least 70 per cent by the middle of next year.

"Vaccine equity is not just the right thing to do. It's the best way to control the pandemic and reboot the global economy," the WHO chief said as he warned that "until we end the pandemic everywhere, we will not end it anywhere".

"Vast inequities in the access to vaccines are fueling a two-track pandemic. While some countries have reached a high level of coverage, many others don't have enough to vaccinate health workers, older people & other at-risk groups," the World Health Organisation Director General said at the virtual India Global Forum.

Asserting that when some countries cannot

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

"Emerging data from real world evidence are showing that two doses of vaccines are protective against the Delta variant." Four vaccines are currently approved for use in the EU: Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson.

—AFP

vaccinate, it's a threat to all countries, Ghebreyesus called for a global effort to vaccinate at least 10 per cent of the population of every country by September, at least 40 per cent by the end of the year, and at least 70 per cent by the middle of next year.

"Vaccine equity is not just the right thing to do. It's the best way to control the pandemic and reboot the global economy," the WHO chief said as he warned that "until we end the pandemic everywhere, we will not end it anywhere".

Globally, the Coronavirus has infected over 18.2 crore people and killed nearly 40 lakh, according to Johns Hopkins University. India has recorded more than 3 crore cases and registered 400,000 deaths.

—PTI

Russia booster shots amid spike

Moscow, July 1: Russian health authorities on Thursday launched booster vaccination for those who had been sick with Covid-19 or immunised more than six months ago, an effort that comes amid a surge in new infections and deaths.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said he had received a booster shot and urged city residents to follow suit. "In view of the difficult epidemiological situation today, doctors recommend having booster shots six months after vaccination,"

Sobyanin said on his blog. "I'm pleading with you not to miss a chance to get additional protection from the virus, which is particularly important amid the spread of a more aggressive delta variant."

Moscow health authorities on Thursday started offering booster shots with the domestically produced, two-shot Sputnik V vaccine and its one-shot Sputnik Light version. Other Russian regions are also starting to offer booster shots.

—AP

SOARING | PRICES Court had ruled government policy to freeze rents for five years as illegal

Berlin to vote on bid to combat housing crisis

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

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

said. Local officials must now set a date for the vote, which is widely expected to be held on September 26, the same day as elections for a new federal parliament and Berlin government. The "Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen & Co." initiative, named after Berlin's biggest property group, targets companies with more than 3,000 apartments in their portfolios.

The movement would like to see more than 240,000 homes placed under a public agency to be adminis-

tered "democratically, transparently and in the public interest".

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

Berlin's city-state government already moved to freeze rents for five years from 2020 in a bid to halt runaway gentrification, but the federal constitutional court ruled that policy to be

illegal in April. "Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen & Co." bases its claims on Article 15 of the German constitution, which stipulates that "land, natural resources and means of production may... be transferred to public ownership" in the public interest in return for compensation. Adopted in 1949 with the founding of the West German state, the article was long forgotten during the Cold War with its tensions between capitalist West and communist East.

Study: Viral load less in re-infected

TREATMENT FOR BLOOD CLOTS DUE TO VAX FOUND

Toronto, July 1: Scientists in Canada have found a new lifesaving treatment for people suffering from rare blood clots associated with Covid-19 vaccination.

The researchers at the McMaster University recommend a combination of anti-clotting drugs and high doses of intravenous immunoglobulin to combat vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT). VITT is a rare side effect of adenoviral vector vaccines against Covid-19. It occurs when antibodies attack a blood protein, which results in activation of platelets in the blood, causing them to clump together and form clots.

—PTI

were partially vaccinated, as well as in 156 unvaccinated participants. The research found that participants who were partially or fully vaccinated with the Pfizer and Moderna messenger RNA vaccines at the time of infection had a viral load that was 40 per cent less than that of unvaccinated participants.

—PTI

PARADIP PORT TRUST

e-Tender Call Notice
NO.TD/IT/GEN-235/Vol-V/21/1199
Dt. 29.06.2021

Name of the Work: "Allotment of 04 (Four) nos. of Mechanical Iron Ore/Iron Ore Pellet plots at IOHP".
License fee: ₹ 2,81,92,560/-, Wharfage Charge: ₹ 15,28,690/-. Last date & time of Bid Submission 19.07.2021, 1600 Hrs., Bid Opening Date and time: 19.07.2021, 1700 hrs. Refer our website for details <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>
Sr. Asst. Traffic Manager
PPT/PR/51/21-22 Dt. 31.07.2021

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala)
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813 | Website: www.pspcl.in
(Phone No.: Mobile 9646106022)

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

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

Note: Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>.
C-253/21 RO : 76155/12/338/2021/5678

NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement System

Dy. Chief Materials Manager, NRly. Store Depot Mech. Workshop, AMRITSAR for and on behalf of President of India, invited tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Item No.	Description	Qty.	Due Date
01	62205210C	1	MS Plate of size 2.5mm X 1250mm X 2500mm of Specification IS: 1079 Gr.HR-1.	71 MT	27.07.2021
		2	MS Plate of size 1.6mm X 1250mm X 3000mm of Specification IS: 1079 Gr.HR-1.	20.8 MT	

NOTE: Above tenders with detailed description are uploaded on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The firm who desires to participate against e-tenders, are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class III digital certificate form certifying Agencies authorized under IT Act 2000. By Govt. of India. Manual offers against e-tenders will not be accepted.

Tender Notice No. 11/2021-2022 Dated: 01.07.2021 1467/2021

Serving Customers With A Smile

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of India Undertaking)

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Chief Commercial Manager, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., invites Open tender in Two-packet Bid system through E-Tendering on IREPS portal from eligible parties for the following contract. **Tender Notice No.: CO-16/6/2015-COMM dated 02/07/2021.**

Name of Contract : Construction and Management of Pile Mounted Electronic Weighbridge at Kolded and Suratkhali stations. **Period of Contract :** Five years. **Closing Date/Time :** 03/08/2021 up to 15:00 hrs. for submission of online Offers/Bids. Manual offers shall not be accepted. Please visit <https://ireps.gov.in> portal for details / participation. Corrigendum / addendum, if any, will be uploaded on this portal only.

Rail Land Development Authority
(A Statutory Authority under Ministry of Railways, Government of India)
Unit No. 702-B, 7th Floor, Conductor Tower-II, DMRC Building, Ajmeri Gate, New Delhi-110002 Phone: +91-11-23232854, Fax: +91-11-23232835

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL THROUGH E-TENDER
(RFP Notice No. RLDA/RFP/CD/32 of 2021 Dated 29.06.2021)

GRANT OF LEASE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON PLOT OF APPROX. AREA 4296.83 SQM. OF RAILWAY LAND AT VICTORIA CRECENT, CHENNAI (TN) FOR 99 YEARS

Land	Area	FSI Offered	Bid Security	Reserve Price
Victoria Crecent adjacent to Ethiraj College, Chennai	4296.83 Sqm	1.5	Rs. 75.00 Lakh	Rs. 41.00 Crore

ONLINE PRE-BID MEETING ON WEBEX: 20th July, 2021 At 11:30 Hrs. (Online Pre-bid meeting details to be obtained from Manager/Project)
Last Date of Submission of E-bid Online: 02.09.2021 UPTO 15:00 HRS
For Further details of the project, please visit our website www.rlda.indianrailways.gov.in or on e-procurement Portal www.tenderwinz.in RLDA Under the heading 'e-tender'. For any clarifications, may please contact:-

Manager/Project M: 98994 68468 mrgp@rlda.gov.in rlda@rlda.gov.in	General Manager/CD M: 97171 10016 gm@rlda.gov.in rdamanager@rlda.gov.in	Project Engineer Construction/RLDA M: 96779 85778 ramanmurthy.murugesan@gmail.com	Consultant/RLDA M: Rajesh Gurnumurthy M: 98529 64296 rajesh.g@rlda.gov.in
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Note:- Any Corrigendum or Addendum shall be published only on RLDA's Website. Assistant Manager/Tender, (M) 87505 54811

CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION
1, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines, Prayagraj-211001
Website: www.core.indianrailways.gov.in
Fax No.: 0532-2408826, Email: ope1.core@gmail.com

CORRIGENDUM No.-2

Corrigendum Publish Date: 30.06.2021, 15:07

Tender No.: ELCORE-OHE-TSS-Gr308-Mod (Open Tender)

Closing Date/Time: 16.07.2021, 15:00

Name of Work: Design, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 25 KV, 50 Hz, Single Phase, AC, Electrification Works including OHE & TSS as Composite Electrical Work in Lumding (Excl)-Badampur Single Line Section Gr. 308 of Lumding Division of Northeast Frontier Railway under RE Project New Jalpaigudi, Total 171 RKM/225 TKM.

NIT Header:

Field Name	Existing Value	Modified Value
Tender Closing Date/Time	02.07.2021 15:00	16.07.2021 15:00

No. PR/61/2021 R.D. Adv **"Serving Customers with a Smile"**

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

OPEN TENDER

The following e-Tenders can be accessed under the link www.ireps.gov.in. Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the link www.ireps.gov.in → login → E-Tender Stores/Supply. Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or IREPS related information if any, Dy.CMM/HQ/CLW/Chittaranjan, 0341-2525594 or SMM/CON/HQ, 0341-2535631. **[A] NO. COS/CR/PUB/e-Tender/19/0162 Date: 29/06/2021, Sl. No. Tender No.; Brief Description of Item; Qty.; Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees); Tender Closing Date & Time (IST): [1]; 75213825; RUBBER STOP (LATERAL & VERTICAL); 771.000 Set; Nil; 21/07/2021 at 11:00 am. [2]; 83210365; Suspension Tube Bearing for WAG-9/ WAP-7 locos (Cyl. Roller Bearing DE/NDE); 2956.000 Set; 20,00,000.00; 06/08/2021 at 11:00 am. [3]; 75213824; 1)S.S. TUBE 10 mm O/D X 1mm. W.T. X 6 Mtr. LG (Weight/ mtrs = 0.22 Kg.), AS PER SPECN. NO. CLW/MS/3/029 ALT-9. 2) S.S. TUBE O/D 38.1 (1 1/2") X WT 3.404MM W.T. X6MTR LG (weight/mtrs = 2.93kg) AS PER SPECN. NO. CLW/MS/3/029 Alt-9. 3)S.S. TUBE O/D 25.4 mm (1") X 2.108 mm(WT) X 6MTR LG (Weight/mtrs = 1.22 Kg.), AS PER SPECN. NO. CLW/MS/3/029 Alt-9. 4)S.S. TUBE O/D 12.7 (1/2")X0.889 WT X6 MTR LG. (Weight/mtrs = 0.26kg) AS PER SPECN. NO. CLW/MS/3/029 Alt-9; 1)17726.00 Metre. 2) 32585.00 Metre. 3)30281.00 Metre. 4)3935.00 Metre; 20,00,000.00; 02/08/2021 at 11:00 am. [4]; 75213712; High Capacity Draft Gear; 1260.00 Numbers; 7,19,710.00; 06/09/2021 at 11:00 am. [5]; 91210180; Clip Assy. [Without Welding Plate]; 780.00 Set; Nil; 02/08/2021 at 11: am. [B] No. COS/CR/PUB/e-Tender/19/0162 Date: 29/06/2021, Sl. No.; Tender No.; Brief Description of Item; Qty.; Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees); Tender Closing Date & Time (IST): [1]; 81210265; 1)SILICON RUBBER COMPONENT ELASTOSIL RT-622A OF WACKER METROARK CHEMICALS OR EQUIVALENT. 2)SILICON RUBBER COMPONENT ELASTOSIL RT-622B OF WACKER METROARK CHEMICALS OR EQUIVALENT.1)11362.50 Kg. 2)1137.50Kg; 4,36,500.00; 06/08/2021 at 11:00 am. [2]; 81210176; POLYIMIDE FOIL [KAPTON] P1 F01, SIZE 0.125 X 510 MM. [IN ROLL CONTINUOUS ROLL OF 50 MTRS. SPECIFICATION NO. 4TMS.096.092, STR NO. CLW/TM/176 [REV.0] or Latest; 300.00 Metre; Nil; 22/07/2021 at 11:00 am. [3]; 81210169B ;NON ADHESIVE POLYIMIDE FILM TAPE, SIZE: 2MIL. THK. X 20 MM. WIDE [IN CONTINUOUS ROLL OF 50 M.], SPECIFICATION NO. 4TMS.096.029 ALT-4 or Latest, STR NO. CLW/TM/169 REV-0 or latest; 23400.00 Metre; Nil; 22/07/2021 at 11:00 am.**

Principal Chief Materials Manager, CLW/Chittaranjan

PR2-110

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DECCAN Chronicle

2 JULY 2021

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

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

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

The government's argument not only sounded specious but also revealed its disdain for the legal responsibilities when it comes to bringing succour to the most vulnerable sections of people during a national disaster. The government conveniently forgot the fact that it had invoked the appropriate sections of the Act while dealing with the pandemic but chose to ignore those that talked of compensation. The court refused to accept the government interpretation of the law dealing with compensation as "recommendatory"; it is instead mandatory and statutory, the court said.

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

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

Fuel price paradox

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

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

A study showed how the Centre could easily cut fuel price by ₹4 to ₹5 per litre and not suffer a dip in revenues as demand would climb when the economy takes off again with post-Covid consumption. However, low hanging fruits like liquor and fuel sales, with very few hazards for the treasury to mop up the money, are too tempting. Paradoxically, India raised taxes on fuel, of which it imports about ₹8 lakh crore worth annually, when international prices were hitting the bottom at \$30 per barrel last year but are now ruling at \$70. Consumption is being taxed whereas corporate taxes have been reduced. This is not an economic riddle so much as a disaster in waiting that will put our economic recovery in jeopardy.

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Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001
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Covid's impact, WFH has hit India's women harder



Patralekha Chatterjee

Dev 360

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

For millions of people in many parts of the world, things have not changed that much.

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

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

None of this should

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

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

Women's unpaid care work has emerged as a big issue among progressive economists in recent years. But millions of women in India, as in many other countries, are still socialised into accepting the notion that it is "natural" for women to be tasked with unpaid domestic work. And they should not complain.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Unpaid care work means entrenching the sexual division of labour, furthering gender inequalities and creating an intergenerational cycle, with all attendant consequences

centres, etc., during the pandemic has made things much tougher.

In an article in the *Economic and Political Weekly* in May 2020, Ashwini Deshpande, professor of economics at Ashoka University, presciently flagged these issues. "South Asia, India and Pakistan in particular, have among the most unequal norms of sharing domestic chores and housework. Will the WFH (work from home) regime, where middle class families have to manage without helpers, propel men to share the domestic work burden more equitably than they have done in the past? Will the pandemic shift the social norms of sharing of domestic work? Only time will tell."

"Going forward", wrote Prof. Deshpande, "we should use this crisis to overhaul the current system that prevents women from entering the workforce and when they do, by not rewarding them enough".

We can do this, she added, "by recognising the myriad facets of women's work, the need for adequate compensation, putting support structures in place that allow for an equitable sharing of domestic chores and care work, and most important, creating favourable opportunities for work and livelihoods within a conscious anti-discriminatory policy framework".

In India, less than a quarter of women are a part of the labour force. Globally, India has amongst the lowest rates of female labour force participation, with only parts of the Arab world lagging behind us. Worryingly, this trend shows scant signs of reversal. India's workforce continues to rapidly masculinise.

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

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

LETTERS

END THE MENACE

During chief minister M.K. Stalin's visit to north Chennai recently, some cattle came in the path of the convoy, causing anxious moments for a while. Since then, the traffic enforcement officers have been instructed to carry a five-meter-long rope in their vehicles to snare errant bovines for the purpose of CM's safety. Cattle straying onto roads have been responsible for many accidents, including fatal ones at times. For the free-ranging animals, the chief minister and the common man are one and the same. Let's hope that the new CM, who seems to believe in result-oriented measures, takes the stray cattle by the horns.

P.G. Menon, Chennai

NEET ISSUE

When the Supreme Court has already given a nod for the National-Eligibility-cum-Entrance-Test (Neet) for medical admissions in Tamil Nadu and the test is also being administered for quite some time now, the new government should not have appointed a committee to look into the impact of it in the state. This sends confusing signals to the students who are worried over their Class 12 marks and also about their future. Gullible children cannot be made victims of political gimmicks. Needless to say, litigations for and against the Neet now will consume a lot of time and energy which is absolutely avoidable.

S. Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai

SAD DEMISE

It is sad to note that K.V. Sampath Kumar, editor of Sudharma, the world's only Sanskrit daily, passed away a couple of days ago. Mr Sampath Kumar carried forward his father's legacy in running the daily with unflinching determination and grit in spite of lack of patronage from the newspaper and for the Sanskrit media as a whole. In fact, last year Sudharma celebrated its golden jubilee, and to mark the occasion, the daily held a series of cultural activities despite all the struggles it faced to stay afloat. It is a great honour that Mr Sampath Kumar and his wife Ms Jayalakshmi were selected for the Padma Shri award for their untiring efforts to keep the publication going for five decades against all odds. But, sadly Mr Sampath Kumar passed away before he could actually receive the award.

R. Sivakumar, Chennai

Zahid Hussain



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

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

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

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

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

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

The Taliban have overrun many

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

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

The Taliban's success in the north

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

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

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

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

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

By arrangement with Dawn

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	52,318.60	-0.31
Nifty 50	15,680.00	-0.26
S&P 500*	4,308.61	0.26
Dollar (₹)	4,305.76	0.19
Pound Sterling (₹)	1.466	0.022
Euro (₹)	88.38	0.004
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	46,310.526	1.13
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	75.76	1.53
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.039	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.456	0.012

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Special drive on to promote govt crop insurance

In a major outreach, the Centre has launched a special drive to enrol more farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). A week-long drive, starting July 1, will cover all notified areas under the kharif 2021 season with a special focus on 75 aspirational districts where crop insurance penetration is low. PMFBY, launched on Jan. 13, 2016, aims to give a comprehensive risk cover to farmers at low premium.

Printed & Published by K Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed & Published at Deccan Chronicle Presses situated at SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai. Editor: Kaushik Mitter, RNI Reg. No. TNENG/2008/25473 Air surcharge Re 1. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle is prohibited.

■ All sellers in the network have to register with DPIIT Registration must for direct selling players

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JULY 1

Direct selling entities like Amway, Avon, Herbalife and Modicare as well as millions of sellers operating in their networks will now have to register with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), as per the new rules proposed by the government. The entity should also have one physical location as a registered office in India.

The draft rules also says direct selling entities cannot charge entry or registration fee or the cost of equipment/ materials for sales demonstration from their agents.

As per the proposed Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021, notified by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs late



Wednesday, every direct selling entity which intends to operate in India and every direct seller operating in the network will need a registration number from the DPIIT. The rules define direct selling entity as an entity which sells or offers to sell goods or services through direct sellers but does not engages in a pyramid scheme or money circulation scheme. A direct seller is a person appointed or authorised by a direct selling entity. In India there are more

than 450 registered direct selling companies and several others which are not registered. As per the new rules, not just the entity, but the individual sellers who are part of the network also will have to register with the DPIIT. According to the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations, India had 5.7 million direct sellers in 2018-19. Rajat Banerjee, vice chairman, Indian Direct Selling Association (Idsa), welcomed the government's move. "However,

there are a few areas, Idsa needs to engage in discussion with the government," he said.

Aseem Sood, MD, Proveda Marketing India, said, "Registering with the DPIIT will increase the trust customers have with the company and individual participants."

No direct selling entity or direct seller should promote a Pyramid Scheme or Money Circulation Scheme in the garb of doing direct selling business. In such schemes there is transaction of money without sales of goods and services. The entity shall appoint a grievance officer as well as a chief compliance officer as a nodal contact person.

Also, anyone offers to sell any product of a direct selling entity on an e-commerce platform must have prior consent of the entity.

Cadila applies for Covid vaccine approval

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JULY 1

ZyCoV-D has applied for emergency use authorisation to the DCGI for its three-dose Covid vaccine, which has achieved primary efficacy of 66.6 per cent. Once approved by the Drug Controller General of India, it will be the second home-grown Covid vaccine and the fifth to be cleared for use in the country.

The company plans to manufacture 10-12 crore doses annually.

ZyCoV-D is a three-dose Plasmid DNA vaccine, which produces the spike protein of the Sars-CoV-2 virus when injected. Primary efficacy of 66.6 per cent has been attained for symptomatic RT-PCR positive cases in the interim analysis and 100 per cent accuracy for the third dose on moderate disease.

The company conducted the clinical trial for its vaccine in India in over 50 centres and has tested in adolescent population in the 12-18 years age group.

Around 1,000 subjects were enrolled in this age group and the vaccine was found to be safe and very well tolerated.

"As the first ever plasmid DNA vaccine for human use, ZyCoV-D has proven its safety and efficacy profile in our fight against Covid-19. The vaccine when approved will help not only adults but also adolescents in the 12 to 18 years age group," said managing director of the company Sharvil Patel. "We expect to produce 1

crore vaccine doses per month from August onwards and 5 crore doses by December this year. Our target is to produce 10-12 crore vaccine doses in a year," Patel said. Once the vaccine gets approval, the company plans to launch ZyCoV-D in 45-60 days.

The vaccine has to be stored at 2 to 8 degrees Celsius but has shown good stability at temperatures of 25 degrees for at least three months, says the company. "This makes it easier to transport and store."

VODA IDEA SEEKS MORATORIUM ON ₹8,200 CRORE SPECTRUM FEE

MOUMITA BAKSHI
CHATTERJEE
NEW DELHI, JULY 1

Cash-strapped Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) has approached the government to seek a one-year moratorium on payment of spectrum instalment of over Rs 8,200 crore, due in April 2022.

VIL, in a letter to the telecom secretary on June 25, has said it will be "unable to pay the instalment of Rs 8,292 crore due on April 9, 2022" due to "cash being used for payment of AGR (adjusted gross revenue) dues and the inability of the operations to generate the required cash in a predatory pricing situation".

As per the letter, seen by PTI, the company has requested the Department of Telecom to grant it another year of the moratorium to pay this instalment in April 2023 and has made it clear that "it is almost inevitable" that the firm will not be able to pay the amount in April 2022.

VIL has also said that while it is working on raising new funding for the last six months, "investors are not willing to invest in the company because they believe that unless there is a significant improvement in consumer tariffs, the health of the industry will not recover and they will incur a loss on their investment". —PTI

RBI Guv flags rising cyber-attacks as risk

Mumbai, July 1: The second wave of the pandemic took a "grievous toll" on India, but the dented economic activity has started recovering from late-May, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday.

In a first, Das flagged the rising data breaches and cyber attacks as a risk facing the economy, along with other risks like firming global commodity prices.

"The recovery that had commenced in the second half of 2020-21 was dented in April-May 2021, but with the wave of infections abating as rapidly as it had set in, economic activity has started to look up in late May and early June," Das wrote in his foreword to the bi-annual Financial Stability Report prepared by the RBI.

The report said the gross non-performing assets of banks have been stable at 7.5 per cent in March 2021—the same level as six months ago—but are expected to go up to 9.8 per cent in March 2022, as per its baseline scenario.

Das said the dent on balance sheets and performance of financial institutions in India have been much less than what was projected earlier, but was quick to add that a clearer picture will emerge as the effects of regulatory reforms fully work their way through.

He said capital and liquidity buffers at financial institutions are "reasonably resilient" to

BANKS TOLD TO TRACK RETAIL, MSME LOANS

Mumbai, July 1: The RBI on Thursday asked banks to monitor their exposures to the retail and small businesses, saying both the segments are witnessing high stress.

In its bi-annual financial stability report (FSR), the RBI also asked banks to shore up capital positions while favourable market conditions prevail, improve governance and remain vigilant in the context of global spillovers.

"The banking sector will be required to specifically guard against adverse selection bias while being alive to the credit demand from productive and viable sectors," the FSR said. —PTI

withstand future shocks.

The financial system is on the front foot to aid recovery, but the priority is to maintain and preserve financial stability, he said.

Domestic financial markets are also boosted by the strengthening signs of the pandemic's abatement, the growing pace and breadth of the vaccination drive and renewed hopes of the economy clawing back lost ground as it unlocks, he said.

COFFEE-BREAK

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



Aries: Attend to career matters that need your urgent attention today. Maintain a fast pace at work. A light task well attended will earn you handsome rewards.



Taurus: Your friends will be helpful today. Be patient. You may incur heavy expenditure due to a problem created by your close family members.



Gemini: Don't get distracted. Today you might be highly concerned about your life goals. You need to be more organized and efficient. Be dedicated to your duty.



Cancer: Today you will be more into pleasure and fun instead of self-discipline and hard work. Be careful with your expenditure. Avoid travelling and spicy food.



Leo: You will be competitive at work place. Your focus in creative endeavors will help you in giving presentations. You will make a progress in your career.



Virgo: Your everyday life will become more interesting, unusual or exciting. You'll enjoy the company of friends and family. It's time to trust in your own ideas about what is good for you.

You share your b'day with

Sonakshi Sinha is an Indian film actress and singer. After working as a costume designer for independent films, she made her acting debut portraying Rajjo Pandey in the action-drama film *Dabangg* in 2010.



Libra: Investment in mutual funds will enable you to meet monetary targets. Positive attitude and preventive care will bring you immense relief from ailments.



Scorpio: Be careful with your health. Verbal communication will be your biggest asset today. Make sure to remain neutral on the professional front today.



Sagittarius: You will have a pleasant day whether you're on holiday or at work. Freely express your creative talents. Family matters will be on your mind.



Capricorn: Seek help from those who are more experienced than you. It's a time for making choices. You need to sort out all the options and discuss them with your close ones and family members.

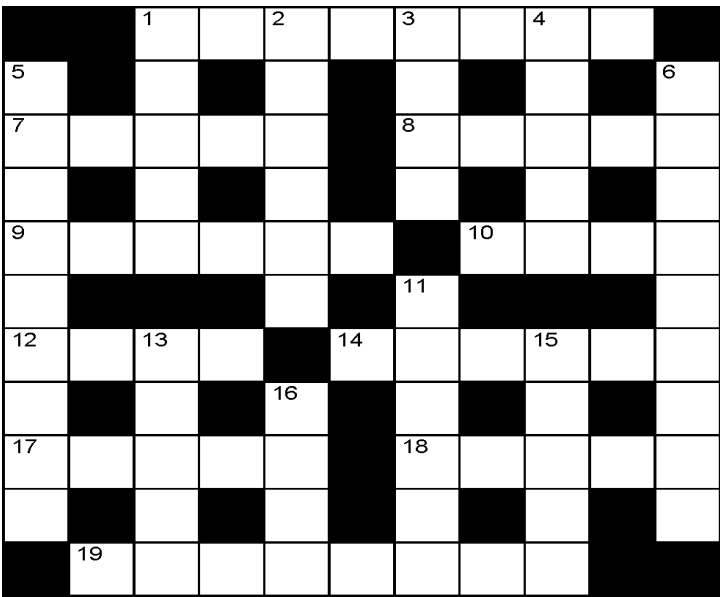


Aquarius: Financial questions have been growing. The day brings you confidence and self-doubt in equal quantities, which is an ideal combination to help you make the right decisions.



Pisces: Professional decisions, whether taken by you or your partner, must be taken after considering both financial and personal requirements to enhance the quality of your life.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- Likely (8)
- Stitched design (5)
- Elliptical course (5)
- Vital gas (6)
- Open tart (4)
- Ram down (4)
- Bodyguard (6)
- Flowing (5)
- Basketry willow (5)
- Sluggishness (8)

Down

- Trivial (5)
- Counterbalance (6)
- Eagerly expectant (4)
- Tag (5)
- So strip me (anag) (9)
- Travel plan (9)
- Energy (6)
- Walk affectedly (5)
- Flower (5)
- Fable (4)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Salvaged, 6. Expo, 7. Gasket, 9. Dregs, 11. Vigil, 12. Aroma, 13. Syrup, 16. Truism, 18. Echo, 19. Kangaroo.
Down: 1. Steadfast, 2. Lapse, 3. Gags, 4. Destiny, 5. Sue, 8. Telephoto, 10. Gimmick, 14. Recur, 15. Omen, 17. Rob.

Word Mine

Y
I
U
G
T
N
N
I
E

TODAY'S RATINGS: 5 AVERAGE; 6 GOOD; 8 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 only once. 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.

North ♦ A 9 ♦ 7 6 3 ♦ K 7 3 ♦ K 5 4 2	East ♦ J 8 6 5 4 ♦ K 5 ♦ J 9 8 4
West ♦ 10 3 ♦ A 10 8 4 3 ♦ 10 6 5 2 ♦ 6	South ♦ K 7 2 ♦ J 9 ♦ A 9 ♦ K 10 9 7
Dealer: South Vulnerable: Both	West North East INT Pass 2NT All Pass
Opening lead: ♠ 4	

jumble

BSILS
NFORT
RIOHAD
SLTEED

That was my favorite doll too! He won't be needing a bottle longer!
His son was learning how to bite, which made Dracula proud of his...
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.
(Answers Monday)

three. Do you see any chance for the defenders to defeat the contract? Judging from the point-count, West will have about a queen outside hearts. It doesn't look promising. But there is a chance if he has the club queen. Then, as long as declarer cannot win seven tricks in spades and diamonds, East can defeat the contract by discarding the club ace at trick three. Here, declarer must play on clubs for nine tricks. If

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CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



SHORT TAKES

Dunkley dazzles in England's win

Taunton: Skipper Mithali Raj's second successive fifty went in vain as Sophie Dunkley produced a fighting half-century after Kate Cross' five-wicket haul to help England Women register a five-wicket win over India Women and grab an unsailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series here on Wednesday. Chasing 222 for a win, England batswomen couldn't capitalise on their starts to lose five wickets for 133 in 28.5 overs but Dunkley and Katherine Brunt produced a 92-run partnership for the unconquered sixth wicket to take the team home with 15 balls to spare. — *PTI*

Brief Scores: India 221 (Mithali Raj 59, Shafali Verma 44; Kate Cross 5/34) lost to England 225/5 (Lauren Winfield-Hill 42, Sophia Dunkley 73 (not out), Katherine Brunt 33 (not out); Poonam Yadav 2/63).

12-yr-old Mishra is youngest GM

New Delhi: Indian-American prodigy Abhimanyu Mishra on Wednesday became the youngest ever chess Grandmaster after he scored his third GM norm in Budapest, Hungary, according to a report. The 12-year-old from New Jersey in United States became a GM from International Master, having crossed the required 2500 Elo rating barrier, chess.com website said. Mishra broke GM Sergey Karjakin's record that has stood for 19 years. On August 12, 2002, Karjakin, a world championship challenger in 2016, secured the Grandmaster title at the age of 12 years and seven months. Mishra, born on February 5, 2009, took 12 years, four months, and 25 days to obtain the highest title in chess, the website said. — *PTI*

Jhajharia rewrites own world record

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

Fifteen athletes qualify for Tokyo

New Delhi: Star sprinter Dutee Chand, javelin thrower Annu Rani and 400m hurdler M P Jabir qualified for the Tokyo Olympics through world rankings as 15 Indian athletes and two relay teams were confirmed for the Games by the sport's world governing body on Thursday. Twelve individual athletes, including star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, booked automatic quota for the Olympics by breaching the qualification mark, while the trio of Dutee, Rani and Jabir, as well as the men's 4x400m relay team made it to the Games through rankings. Dutee was 41st and 50th respectively in the list of 56 athletes to compete in both the 100m and 200m events, while Rani was at 18th (out of 32) and Jabir at 32nd (out of 40). The mixed 4x400m relay team had booked an Olympic berth after reaching the final of the World Athletics Championships in 2019. — *PTI*

Live on TV

EURO

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

COPA AMERICA

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

BELGIAN BAFFLE

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

Munich, July 1: Belgium are anxiously waiting on the fitness of stars Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard for their Euro 2020 quarter-final showdown against Italy on Friday. Thorgan Hazard fired Belgium into the last eight with the goal that knocked out holders Portugal, but the fitness of his brother Eden and De Bruyne is Belgium's main concern before facing the Azzurri in Munich. De Bruyne came off early in the second half against Portugal with an ankle knock, while Belgian captain Hazard injured a hamstring late in the game. Neither trained on Wednesday with the Belgium's medical staff working around the clock to get them fit to face Italy. Coach Roberto Martinez admits neither player will probably be 100 per cent in Munich, "but we will use every day to get them as fit as possible".

Manchester City midfielder De Bruyne is central to Belgium's hopes of reaching the semi-finals, where Spain or Switzerland would await next Tuesday. Martinez is assessing his alternative options in attacking midfield. Atletico Madrid's Yannick Carrasco could replace Hazard, while Napoli forward Dries Mertens may step in for De Bruyne. Martinez expects Italy to "attack from the very first second, they will be very structured", underlining the need for De Bruyne's presence to guide Belgium's counter-attacks.

Chelsea midfielder Jorginho, who faced De Bruyne's City in last month's Champions League final, has warned his Italy team-mates. "De Bruyne is a player who makes the difference. We have to stop him because he always finds space. He can be really dangerous," said Jorginho. With four dominant victories and three clean sheets so far at the Euro, the Belgians are living up to their billing as the world's top-ranked team. — *AFP*



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

50-50 CHANCE FOR KDB AND EDEN: COACH

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

Coach Roberto Martinez said both players were "50/50" to feature against Italy in Munich on Friday. "Italy will attack from the very first second; they will be very structured and dynamic. Every player knows his role. The game against Portugal was a game that could have been played a lot further down the line; usually players don't play these physical and intense games at this stage of the tournament," added Martinez.

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

Swiss eye another big scalp

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

Vladimir Petkovic's side recovered from two goals down to force extra time against much-fancied France and prevailed on penalties as 2018 World Cup hero Kylian Mbappe missed the decisive spot-kick.

Now the Swiss hope to spring another surprise against a Spain team that has scored 10 times in two

games after a slow start to the group stage.

Alvaro Morata's redemptive strike helped secure a 5-3 extra-time win over Croatia, but Spain will need to cut out the errors if they are to contend for a record fourth European Championship.

The Juventus forward and his family had been subjected to abuse by fans in Seville after he missed a series of chances in the group stage.

History is on Spain's side against Switzerland, having lost just once in 22 meetings, a 1-0 defeat in South Africa that sparked their run to the 2010 World Cup title.

Sergio Busquets, the Spain captain, is the lone survivor from that team, while the Barcelona midfielder and Jordi Alba are the only two players in the squad left from their Euro 2012 triumph. The win over Croatia was Spain's first in a knockout fixture since they beat Italy 4-0 to claim the second of back-to-back European crowns.

"The quarter-final depends on us not our rival. It wouldn't matter if it were France, the Swiss, Ukraine — we are here to win so we have to face and beat the best," said goal-keeper Unai Simon. The Athletic Bilbao

'keeper suffered an embarrassing lapse of concentration, allowing a Pedri back-pass to roll off his foot for an own goal, but recovered his composure to make a crucial save in extra time. "It was a miscontrol. I've seen it six or seven times now and I've got a bit worked up about it," said Simon.

"The sun's not bothering me and it doesn't bounce awkwardly. I think I tried to get the ball out of my feet by controlling it instead of stopping it.

"It's an accident and something that can be fixed," he added. — *AFP*

SANIA-BETHANIE UPSET 6TH SEEDS IN FIRST ROUND

London, July 1: Sania Mirza and her American partner Bethanie Mattek-Sands knocked out sixth seeds Desirae Krawczyk and Alexa Guarachi to move to the second round of the women's doubles event at the Wimbledon Championships, here on Thursday.

Sania and Mattek-Sands were a bit rusty at the start but once they got their rhythm they dominated the match and won 7-5 6-3 against the American-Chilean combination in one hour and 27 minutes. Pressure was put on the pair early in the match when Mattek-Sands served the third game that featured seven deuce points. — *PTI*

NOVAK, ROGER, NAOMI ON ENTRY LISTS FOR TOKYO

Wimbledon, July 1: Serbia's Novak Djokovic, Switzerland's Roger Federer, Japan's Naomi Osaka and Australia's Ash Barty are on the entry lists for the Tokyo Olympics that were announced on Thursday by the International Tennis Federation. As the ITF noted, though: "The entry lists are still subject to change." Federer, for one, said last weekend he would wait until after Wimbledon ends on July 11 to decide whether he will head to Japan.

Djokovic would like to pursue a Golden Slam, something only Steffi Graf has done: winning all major tennis tournaments and an Olympic singles gold medal in the same year. — *AP*

COPA AMERICA



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

Neymar back for Chile clash

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

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

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

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

The last memorable match between Brazil and Chile was in the Round of 16 at the 2014 World Cup. Regular time ended 1-1,

with goals by David Luiz and Sánchez. The Chileans almost beat the hosts in extra time, with a strike by Mauricio Pinilla hitting the bar in the last minute. But Brazil won on penalties, 3-2 — Pinilla also missed his from the spot. Thiago Silva, who could start on Friday, was marked by that match for his tears of tension during the shootout.

"I didn't programme myself to get emotional. It just happened," Silva told a news conference on Wednesday. "I was labelled negatively for that moment against Chile. It was very sad for me for a long time, but it was also a learning experience so I could prepare myself for other objectives, decisive matches."

Sánchez missed Chile's group-stage matches and his absence affected the team's production; La Roja only tallied three goals, with Eduardo Vargas scoring twice and Ben Brereton once.

Coach Martin Lasarte is yet to decide whether 32-year-old Sánchez will start against Brazil or come off the bench. — *AP*

HUMPY, PRANEETH JOIN RATNA NOMINEES LIST

New Delhi, July 1: Olympic-bound shuttler B. Sai Praneeth and Kidambi Srikanth have been nominated for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award by the Badminton Association of India, which has also recommended three players for the Arjuna award.

Praneeth, who won a bronze medal at the 2019 World Championship, is the only men's singles shuttler to have qualified for the Tokyo Games. Srikanth has been struggling of late but won four titles in 2017.

The Badminton Association of India (BAI) nominated HS Prannoy, Pranav Jerry Chopra and Sameer Verma for the Arjuna honour. The federation also sent

applications of S Muralidharan and PU Bhaskar Babu for the Dronacharya award. Leroy D'sa and PVV Lakshmi have been nominated for the Dhyan Chand award.

Reigning women's world rapid chess champion Koneru Humpy has been nominated for the prestigious Khel Ratna award by the All India Chess Federation (AICF). Humpy is already a recipient of the Arjuna award and Padma Shri.

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

2 UAE cricketers banned for fixing

Dubai, July 1: The ICC on Thursday banned two UAE players Amir Hayat and Ashfaq Ahmed for eight years after they were found guilty of trying to fix T20 World Cup qualifying round matches in their country, colluding with an Indian bookie.

While the ICC's Anti-Corruption Tribunal had charged both the Pakistan-born cricketers back on September 13, 2020, the backdated quantum of sentence was passed on the day.

"The bans are backdated to 13 September 2020, when they were provisionally suspended for corrupt conduct in relation to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019 in the UAE," the ICC release stated.

Both cricketers had taken 15,000 AED (United Arab Emirates Dirham totalling USD 4083 approx) from an Indian bookie, identified as Mr 'Y' in the ICC charge-

Both cricketers had taken 15,000 AED (United Arab Emirates Dirham totalling \$4,083 approx) from an Indian bookie.

sheet for fixing the qualifying round games. Hayat is a medium pacer while Ahmed is a batsman.

As per ICC's anti-corruption code, the duo has been charged on five counts which includes failure to disclose a corrupt approach, trying to improperly influence the outcome of a match, and accepting gifts worth more than \$750.

"In October 2019, the ICC ACU commenced an investigation into allegations that members of the UAE senior international team may have had dealings with a known corruption network controlled by an Indian man named," the release said. — *PTI*

Svitolina Polished off

London, July 1: No. 3-seeded Elina Svitolina became the latest upset victim in the Wimbledon women's draw when she lost in the second round on Thursday to Magda Linette of Poland, who earned the biggest victory of her career, 6-3, 6-4.

Eight of the top 11 players in the WTA rankings are out of the tournament due to defeat, withdrawal or injury.

Linette had 28 winners to just eight for Svitolina, a semifinalist at Wimbledon two years ago. Linette, ranked 44th, had never before beaten a top-15 player in a completed match.

French Open champion Barbora Krejickova extended her winning streak to 14 matches by beating Andrea Petkovic 7-5, 6-4. Krejickova seeks to become the first woman since Serena Williams in 2015 to win Roland Garros and Wimbledon back to back.

A former Wimbledon doubles champion, Krejickova is making her tournament debut in the singles draw.

In men's play, fourth-seeded Alexander Zverev hit 13 aces, lost only 12 points on his serve and advanced to the third round by beating Tenny Sandgren 7-5, 6-2, 6-3. Zverev was the U.S. Open runner-up in 2020 and a semifinalist at last month's French Open, but he has never been past the round of 16 at Wimbledon.

SCRAPPY BARTY INTO THIRD ROUND

Ashleigh Barty's bid to win the Wimbledon singles title on the 50th anniversary of fellow indigenous Australian Evonne Goolagong Cawley's first victory stayed on course on Thursday.



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

RESULTS

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

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

4-6, 6-2, 6-2; Anastasiya Sevastova (LAT) bt Marta Kostyuk (UKR) 1-6, 6-4, 6-3; Barbora Krejickova (CZE x14) bt Andrea Petkovic (GER) 7-5, 6-4; Magda Linette (POL) bt Elina Svitolina (UKR x3) 6-3, 6-4; Paula Badosa (ESP x30) bt Yulia Putintseva (KAZ) 6-4, 6-1; Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova (RUS x16) bt Kristyna Pliskova (CZE) 6-3, 6-3; Karolina Muchova (CZE x19) bt Camila Giorgi (ITA) 6-3, 5-7, 6-3; Shelby Rogers (USA) bt Maria Sakkari (GRE x15) 7-5, 6-4.

COCO MAKES ANOTHER RUN

Back on Centre Court, Coco Gauff beat an opponent twice her age to reach the third round at Wimbledon.

However, Barty produced a far from perfect performance in her 6-4, 6-3 win over Russia's Anna Blinkova as she progressed to a third round meeting with Czech Katerina Siniakova. "She pushed me incredi-

bly hard," said Barty. The 17-year-old American defeated 34-year-old Russian veteran Elena Vesnina 6-4, 6-3 to keep her on track for making another run into the second week at the All England Club. — *Agencies*

Regd. No. TNENG/2010/35692

Printed & Published by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited and Printed at Deccan Chronicle Presses situated at SP 3, Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032. RNI Registration No. TN ENR/2005/14987 Ph No: 22254747, 22254748, 22254750, 22254751 Editor: **KAUSHIK MITTER**