

SHORT TAKES

Laxmi Nagar market allowed to reopen

New Delhi: The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Friday allowed the Laxmi Nagar market to reopen, two days after being ordered to be closed till July 5 for violating Covid protocol. The DDMA has also directed officials to place a mobile testing van in the area, organise vaccination drives for shopkeepers, vendors and keep a strict vigil in the market. In an order issued on Tuesday, Sonika Singh, chairperson of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (east district), had said the market association and shopkeepers in the main bazaar of Laxmi Nagar were "unable to ensure Covid protocols (compliance) on last Sunday (June 27) due to large footfall."

— PTI

Cops to hold public hearing camps every Saturday

New Delhi: Public hearing camps will be held at police stations here every Saturday between 4 pm and 6 pm, officials said on Friday. The 'Jan Sunwai' camps will be organised by all assistant commissioners of police (ACPs) on commissioner Balaji Shrivastava's directions to ensure speedy redressal of public grievances, they said. After taking charge as the police commissioner, Shrivastava held an agenda-setting meeting with the top police brass at police headquarters. He discussed priority areas and the road map for Delhi Police in the coming days, officials said. Street domination to curb street crime, direct public interface at the district level for grievance redressal, ensuring women safety, welfare of the personnel and initiating anti-terror measures are among the priority areas, they said.

— PTI

New building's foundation laid by medical ward boys

New Delhi: Ward boys, dressers and junior staff laid the foundation stone for new building complex of Shanti Mukund hospital in east Delhi at their premises in Karkadooma area. Dr S.K. Saggarr, CEO of the hospital said: "The foundation was laid by seven employees who have been working with the hospital from the beginning and belong to the category of ward boy, dressers and the junior-most staff. By doing this, we are actually showing our gratitude to them. We deliberately didn't asked any dignitary as we are indebted to our employees for their selfless work to the hospital."

Delhi records 93 new Covid cases, 2 deaths

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Delhi recorded two more Covid related deaths and 93 new cases on Friday with a positivity rate of 0.13 per cent, according to a health department bulletin. The number of active cases in the city decreased to 1,041 from 1,357 on Thursday.

As many as 407 patients recovered from the disease in the last 24 hours and the recoveries again outnumbered the new cases. The national capital had recorded four more Covid-19 related deaths and 91 cases on Thursday with a positivity rate of 0.12 per cent.

A total of 73,565 Covid-19



People wait to receive Covid-19 vaccine in Gurgaon on Friday.

— PTI

Pvt schools can collect fees on monthly basis

Students can't be prevented from ongoing activities and names cannot be struk off if parents fail to pay fees due to current hardships: Delhi govt

New Delhi, July 2: Private schools in the national capital can collect fees on a monthly basis with a 15 per cent reduction in lieu of facilities that could not be utilised by students during the lockdown period, the Delhi government announced on Thursday.

The government also said that the school management shall not prevent a child from participating in any ongoing activities or strike off his or her name if parents are unable to pay the fee due to the current hardships.

In order to clear the confusion and give much-needed relief to parents, the Delhi government has issued an order to private schools to charge

► **IN ORDER** to clear the confusion and give much-needed relief to parents, the Delhi government has issued an order to private schools to charge fees on a monthly basis under approved heads only but with a 15 per cent deduction in the fees for academic year 2020-21, the government said in a statement

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"To illustrate, if the monthly fee of the school in FY 2020-21 is ₹3,000, the schools are entitled to

collect ₹2,550 per month after a deduction of 15 per cent. If the school has collected the fee in excess of the direction referred above, the same shall be refunded to the parents or adjusted in the subsequent month of fee to the parents," it added.

The Directorate of Education (DoE) noted that the order to cut the fees by 15 per cent, as directed by the Delhi high court, has been carried out to prevent profiteering and commercialisation in times of Covid-19.

"This order by the Delhi government is applicable to all the 460 schools who had petitioned the high court. The reduction of fees will be a respite for all

the students and parents during the time of Covid-19," it said.

When a nationwide lockdown was announced last year in view of the Covid-19 outbreak, the Delhi government had directed the schools that no fee, except tuition fee, will be charged from parents during the lockdown period.

The tuition fees were to be collected on a monthly basis as opposed to lump sums, such as on a quarterly or annual basis. The order had also stated that annual and development charges can be charged from parents on a pro rata basis only on a monthly basis after the lockdown is over.

— PTI



A youth clicks his selfie while riding a bicycle during rain in New Delhi on Friday.

— PTI

Delhi's peak power demand scales new high of 7,323 MW

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

As a heatwave scorched the national capital for the fourth day in a row, Delhi's peak power demand scaled a new high of 7,323 MW on Friday afternoon with chief minister Arvind Kejriwal saying that despite the sharp rise, electricity supply remained uninterrupted.

The season's earlier peak of 7,026 MW was registered on Thursday which in turn broke the previous day's record of 6,921 MW. According to real-time data of Delhi State Load Dispatch

Centre, the peak power demand reached 7323 MW at 3.16 pm on Friday.

Kejriwal took to Twitter to say that the city managed to meet the peak demand without any power cuts. "Despite a sharp increase in electricity demand, Delhi has managed it well. No power cuts. Uninterrupted power supply," he tweeted.

"Delhi successfully met its highest electricity peak demand of 7323 MW today. Heartiest congratulations to Delhi power sector for this achievement," power minister Satyendar Jain tweeted. Last year, the peak

power demand of the city was 6,314 MW on June 29.

BSES discoms — BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL), BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) — successfully met the peak power demand of 3,079 MW and 1,640 MW, respectively, in their areas, a spokesperson of the power utility said.

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited successfully met the peak power demand of 2,104 MW, the highest so far this season, on Friday afternoon without any network constraint and power outage, a TPDDL spokesperson said.

English, maths digital school workbooks at affordable price

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Covid-19 has brought a major change in the education sector, especially schools. The traditional chalk and board has given way to digital learning.

Digital platform <https://www.gradelto6.com/class1to12/> has been launched with the aim of offering English and maths workbooks (PDF) for students of Class 1 to Class 12 covering the CBSE, NCERT and SCERT syllabuses. The workbooks can be used by all CBSE schools, state government schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas, Army Public Schools and of course each and every

school in India. The workbooks focus on strengthening the fundamentals and basics in mathematics and English.

Most workbooks are between 100 to 200 pages and can be downloaded for ₹10 each. The website offers workbooks up to Class 7 now and very soon will have workbooks till Class 12. The objective of the website is to provide the highest quality practice exercises for children of domestic helps or millionaires, giving them the same opportunity to learn.

The books can be bought by logging on to <https://www.gradelto6.com/class1to12/> from any PC or smartphone.

SIM card dealer arrested for forging Aadhaar details

New Delhi, July 2: A 27-year-old SIM card dealer was arrested from south Delhi in connection with a forgery and cheating case, police said on Friday. The accused has been identified as Naushad Khan, a resident of Tughlakabad Extension, they said.

According to police, one Rohan, a resident of Dakshinipuri, lodged a complaint that someone had got a SIM card issued in his name fraudulently by using his Aadhaar card and also alleged that he was not using the SIM.

During investigation, it was revealed that only half of the Aadhaar card details attached

■ Will fight for farmers, poor, says 86-yr-old INLD leader

Ex-Haryana CM Chautala released from Tihar jail

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Former Haryana chief minister Om Prakash Chautala, who was serving a 10-year prison term in a teachers recruitment scam case, was released from the Tihar Jail on Friday after completing due formalities. Chautala told Indian National Lok Dal workers that he will continue to fight for farmers and the poor.

After his release from the jail, Chautala was taken to his Gurgaon residence by his grandson Karan Chautala. As his car reached the Delhi-Gurgaon border, INLD workers welcomed him, showering flower petals and dancing to the beats of a dhol and distributed sweets.

The 86-year-old Chautala, who was already out on parole, reached Tihar on Friday to complete formalities after which he was released from jail. Last month, the Delhi government had passed an order granting a six-month special remission to those who have served nine-and-half years of their 10-year prison sentence to decongest jails in view of the



Former Haryana CM and INLD supremo Om Prakash Chautala after his release from Tihar jail on Friday. — PTI

Covid-19 pandemic. According to officials, since Chautala has already served nine years and nine months of his sentence, he was eligible to get out of prison. Chautala was jailed in 2013 in connection with the teachers recruitment scam case.

ties after which he was released from jail. Last month, the Delhi government had passed an order granting a six-month special remission to those who have served nine-and-half years of their 10-year prison sentence to decongest jails in view of the

61-year-old man kills wife, hangs self in Vasant Kunj

New Delhi, July 2: A 61-year-old man allegedly killed his wife and later hanged himself following a heated argument between the two in Southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area, the police said on Friday.

The couple used to fight often but the exact reason behind the quarrel that triggered the incident is not known yet and the matter is being investigated, it said.

No suicide note has been recovered from the house, the police said.

According to the police, the incident took place on Thursday evening. A heated argument broke out between Jahid Ali and his 53-year-old wife Nazneen over some issue which led to a fight. In a fit of rage, he hit his wife on her head with a blunt object and killed her. Later, he hanged himself from a ceiling fan.

The couple's 16-year-old son, a Class 12 student, was studying in another room when he heard the commotion and came out to check on his parents, a senior police officer said.

He was afraid and informed his neighbour about the incident, who then made a PCR call at around 7.25 pm after which a police team went

to the spot, he said.

DCP (Southwest) Ingit Pratap Singh said, "We got a PCR call at around 7.25 pm on Thursday. Preliminary investigation suggested that the man killed his wife using a blunt object and later hanged himself. But no suicide note was recovered from the spot. The couple often fought, but the exact reason for their quarrel on the day of the incident is being investigated."

The bodies will be handed over to the family members after post-mortem and based on the autopsy report legal action will be taken in the matter, he said.

The weapon of offence has not been recovered yet, he added.

The two shared a strained relationship and fought often. Ali's wife had also lodged a case of domestic violence against her husband in a court here some years ago, the police said.

Jahid Ali, a native of Odisha, was unemployed and met his financial needs with the money he got from his property back in his hometown while his wife's family, who are based in Delhi, helped them with ration, it added.

— PTI



Delhi BJP leaders protest against ₹5,000 crore scam in buses purchase at Delhi Secretariat on Friday. — G.N JHA

NORTHERN RAILWAY				
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system				
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items :-				
S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	07210118	FOOT REST MULTISTAGE ARRANGEMENT FOR LHB	4677 NOS	29-07-21
02	04200032	OPTIMOL OPTIGEAR 220 OIL FOR GEAR BOX	4376 LTR	30-07-21
03	04210067	SUPERIOR KEROSENE OIL (SKO) NON DOMESTIC.	108000 LTR	02-08-21
04	08211021A	MAGNETIC TELEPHONE WITH ELECTRO DYNAMIC	4062 NOS	05-08-21
05	07210463	OVER HAULING KIT FOR BRAKE CYLINDER	1356 SET	06-08-21
06	07210245	FLEXIBLE HOSE 500 MM	13257 NOS	06-08-21
07	09212545	FLAP DOOR FRAME	798 SET	06-08-21
08	09212529	PACKING DRG.NO.: WD-91074-S-1.	6589 NOS	10-08-21
09	08211510	LOW MAINTENANCE LEAD ACID STATIONARY SECONDARY CELL 2V/ 200 AH	9040 NOS	12-08-21
10	07210464	OVERHAULING KIT FOR MANIFOLD MOUNTING	2296 SET	13-08-21
11	10210054	GOLD PLATED SILVER MEDAL	4433 NOS	16-08-21
12	03212217	VINYL COATED UPHOLSTERY FABRIC ARTIFICIAL LEATHER	63630 MTR	16-08-21
13	03212226A	DECORATIVE THERMOSETTING SYNTHETIC RESIN	31603 NOS	16-08-21
14	03210999A	FLEXIBLE POLY VINYL CHLORIDE (PVC)	49093 MTR	23-08-21
15	07211107	HANGER BLOCK FOR BOLSTER SUSPENSION	27047 NOS	09-09-21
16	02211756	CONDENSER FAN MOTOR	370 NOS	09-09-21
17	09212546	REPAIR KIT-A	2937 SET	16-09-21
NOTE :- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details. 2. No Manual offer will be entertained. Tender Notice No. 24/2021-22 Dated: 02.07.2021				1481/2021
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE				

SHORT TAKES

Night curfew lifted in rural areas of MP

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh government on Friday lifted night curfew in rural areas in the state following improvement in the coronavirus pandemic situation. State home department issued a notification declaring withdrawal of night curfew in rural MP and relaxation of night curfew in urban areas. Accordingly, the night curfew in urban areas will remain in force from 11 pm to three am. Earlier, the night curfew was in force from 10 pm to six in the morning. The state government has started the unlocking process in the state on June one by allowing the gyms, shops and malls to resume their operation following the decline in the new coronavirus positive cases and positivity rate. However, cinema halls and education institutions have still remained closed. Madhya Pradesh on Thursday reported 40 new cases and 12 deaths. Thirty seven out of total 52 districts in the state have reported no new cases, while 14 others have recorded new cases in single digit.

Fema: Yami Gautam summoned by ED

New Delhi: Actor Yami Gautam has been summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning in a case related to alleged contravention of the foreign exchange law, official sources said on Friday. They said the 32-year-old actor has been asked to appear before the central probe agency next week on July 7 at the office of the central probe agency in south Mumbai. She has been summoned earlier too but she could not depose, the sources said. The case, they said, pertains to transactions of about ₹15 crore deposited in a private bank account. The investigation is being done under the civil proceedings of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), the sources said. Gautam has worked in a number of Hindi films apart from a few made in Tamil and Telugu. Last month, she got married to filmmaker Aditya Dhar. — PTI

Woman with heroin worth ₹56cr held

Bengaluru: A South African woman has been arrested with eight kg of heroin worth ₹56 crore in the international market, a Customs official said on Friday. The 35-year-old foreigner was caught at the Kempegowda International Airport here on June 30, said the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI). The passenger had concealed the drug in a false bottom of the suitcase, it said in a statement. "The passenger had landed in Bengaluru by an early morning flight connecting one of the Middle-Eastern transit hubs. The heroin has been seized and the passenger arrested under the NDPS Act," the DRI officials said. — PTI

MUMBAI: WOMAN JUMPS TO DEATH FROM 18TH FLOOR

Mumbai: A 38-year-old woman, who was suffering from a mental illness, allegedly jumped to death from the 18th floor of a housing society in the eastern suburb of Bhandup here on Friday, police said. The incident took place around 9.45 am, when Rupali Prashant Nandvilkar jumped out of the balcony of her flat, when the rest of her family was busy with work at home, an official said. The victim's husband was busy with office-related work, and the couple's two school-going daughters were also at home, he said. When the husband noticed the victim's absence and heard a shout from the ground floor, he rushed downstairs and found his wife lying in a pool of blood, the official said. The victim was rushed to the civic-run Rajawadi Hospital, where she was declared dead, following which a case of accidental death was registered, he said. Nandvilkar had been undergoing treatment for mental illness for the last five years and was allegedly fed up of her condition, the official added. — PTI

India becomes 3rd country after US, Brazil to cross 4 lakh Covid deaths
Pregnant women can get vaccinated

SHWETA SINGH and SANJAY KAW
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Pregnant women in India are now eligible to get vaccinated against Covid with the Union health ministry Friday giving the approval based on recommendations of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI). The decision empowers pregnant women to make an informed choice on taking the Covid vaccination, the ministry said, adding these women can now register on CoWIN or walk into the nearest Covid vaccination centre to get themselves inoculated. The decision has been

communicated to all the states and union territories to implement it under the ongoing national Covid vaccination programme, it said in a statement. India's Covid vaccination program incorporates recommendations of the foremost experts in the field of immunization, public health, disease control and information technology. Based on scientific and epidemiological evidence, the programme gives priority to strengthening the country's healthcare system by protecting the professionals, health and frontline workers, manning it, as well as protecting the most vulnerable population groups, the ministry said. With 853 deaths in the



Family members and relatives perform burial of a Covid victim at a graveyard in Karad on Friday. — PTI
last 24 hours, India on Friday became the third country in the world to witness a total of over 4 lakh fatalities due to Covid-19 after the USA and Brazil. The country's total death toll stands at 4,00,312 behind the USA's 6.05 lakh and Brazil's 5.2 lakh. For effective management of the pandemic, the Central government has rushed six-high level multi-disciplinary public

health teams to six states reporting a high number of infections. These teams will assist the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Kerala, Odisha, Tripura, Chattisgarh and Manipur in Covid control and containment measures. The two-member high-level team consisting of a clinician and a public health expert will gather a first-hand understanding of the challenges and issues being faced by the respective states and strengthen their ongoing activities by removing bottlenecks. They will also be supporting the respective states in their efforts for targeted Covid response and management for effective tackling of the pandemic.

NGT puts on hold MP diamond project

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY
BHOPAL, JULY 2

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Madhya Pradesh government to ensure that no trees are cut in Buxwaha forest in Chhatarpur district in the state where a diamond mining project is mullied, till the project gets forest clearance. In its interim order, the NGT here late on Thursday asked the state principal chief conservator of forest to executive the order and directed the state government to reply to the petitions filed in the tribunal in this regard within four weeks. The ₹2500 crore-diamond mining project was being undertaken by Essels Mining Industries Limited. Two petitions were filed in the NGT opposing the project over environmental concerns. The petitioners contend-

▶ IN ITS interim order, the NGT asked the state principal chief conservator of forest to executive the order and directed the state to reply to the petitions filed in the tribunal in this regard within four weeks

ed that the project would have a serious adverse impact on the environment of the parched Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh. The petitioners claimed that around four lakh trees would be cut for the project, causing devastation to the ecology of the region which has been identified as a perennial drought prone area following massive deforestation over the years. The project, cleared during the Kamal Nath government in 2019, proposes to mine diamonds in 364 hectares in the Bunder diamond block.

Charred body of project associate found in IIT-M

AGE CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 2

The charred body of a project associate working at IIT Madras was found on the campus on Thursday evening. The deceased has been identified as Unnikrishnan Nair, a native of Ernakulam in Kerala who was recruited by IIT Madras this April after he had got his M.Tech. Police suspect it to be suicide as he had left behind an 11-page suicide note which allegedly talked about stress at the workplace. According to police sources, the half-burnt body was spotted on Thursday evening at around 6 pm when a sports officer of the campus came to the hockey field with the players. The institute alerted the Kottupuram police, who rushed to the spot and recovered the body and

sent it to a hospital for post-mortem. A police team went to his residence in Velachery, from where they retrieved the suicide note. The police have registered a case under CrPC Section 174 (enquire and report on suicide). Unnikrishnan's family was informed of his death and the police are awaiting post-mortem results to decide on the course of the investigation. IIT Madras in a statement released on Friday said that it was an unfortunate and tragic incident. The statement read: "The project staff whose body was found had joined the institute in April 2021 and was living outside the campus. We are shocked and deeply grieved, and convey our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of the departed soul. The police are

investigating the incident and the Institute is fully cooperating with the authorities." Unnikrishnan's alleged suicide comes a day after Assistant professor Vipin P. Veetil of the department of humanities and social sciences had resigned from IIT Madras alleging multiple instances of discrimination. The email of Vipin announcing his resignation has gone viral. In the resignation letter, he suggested that the institute set up a committee to study the experience of the SC and OBC faculty. In November 2019, Fatima Lateef, a student of Humanities at IIT Madras took her life in a hostel room alleging that she was discriminated against due to her religion. In her suicide note, she had named a professor of IIT Madras regarding discrimination.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



PINKI KOLI

General Public is hereby informed that one girl **Namely:** Pinki Koli, D/o: Suresh Koli, R/o: H.No. 1340/7, Block-L, 1st Sangam Vihar, New Delhi, Age: 17 Years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Normal, Wearing: Black Colour Suit and Salwar has been missing/kidnapped since 09.06.2021 from the area of P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi. In this regard **FIR No. 233/21, U/s 363 IPC, Dated 09.06.2021**, has been lodged at P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing/ kidnapped girl please inform the undersigned.

Phone: 011-23014046 (Direct), 011-23015229 & 23015218 extn. 210
Web-site : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-Mail ID: clc@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
DP/577/SD/2021

SHO
P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi

Ph.: 011-29551326, 29551597 & 8750870835

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In continuation to the Notice "Special Trains-2021" which was published in various Newspapers on 01.07.2021. Following amendments are being issued:-

- **Special Train No. 04559** Kochuveli-Chandigarh Kerala Sampark Kranti Superfast Express Special will run on **Monday & Wednesday** instead of Monday & Saturday.
- **Special Train No. 04564** Chandigarh-Madgaon Sampark Kranti Superfast Express Special will run on **Tuesday & Sunday** instead of Monday & Saturday.

Note: For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table & Stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website: <https://enquiry.indianrailways.gov.in> or NTES App.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in
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APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Namely:** Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o : Unknown, Age : about 60 year, Height : 5'3", Complexion : Wheatish, Built : Thin, Face : Long, Wearing : White colour shirt, White pajama has been found dead in the jurisdiction of police station

Delhi Cantt., New Delhi on 01.06.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No 23A dated 01.06.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Delhi Cantt., New Delhi. The dead body has been preserved in Safdarjung Hospital Mortuary, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this dead found person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO :
P.S. Delhi Cantt., New Delhi
South West Distt., Delhi
Tel. No. 011-25693161, 25694136

DP/714/SW/2021

RESTORATION OF TRAINS

It is notified for the information of all concerned that the Railways have decided to restore the following Special Trains as per details given as under:-

Train No. & Name	Days of run	Dates of Restoration
02985/02986 Jaipur-Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Jaipur Special	Daily	05.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
02464 Jodhpur-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Special	Thursday	08.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
02463 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Jodhpur Special	Wednesday	07.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
02439 Hazur Sahib Nanded-Shri Ganganagar Special	Sunday	11.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
02440 Shri Ganganagar-Hazur Sahib Nanded Special	Friday	09.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
04811/04812 Sikar Jn.-Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Sikar Jn. Spl.	Wed, Fri	07.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
04739 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Bikaner Jn. Special	Fri, Sun	09.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
04740 Bikaner Jn.-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Special	Tue, Sat	06.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
04753/04754 Bathinda Jn.-Shri Ganganagar-Bathinda Jn. Special	Daily	05.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
04755 Bathinda Jn.-Shri Ganganagar Special	Daily	06.07.2021 to Till Further Advice
04756 Shri Ganganagar-Bathinda Jn. Special	Daily	05.07.2021 to Till Further Advice

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

Visit RailMadad website
www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in
Download RailMadad app.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

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CIN:L85110KA198PLC008699

POSSESSION NOTICE
(for immovable property)
[Rule 8(1)]

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Can Fin Homes Ltd. under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of the powers under the said Act and Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice on the below mentioned dates calling upon the following borrower(s)/co-borrowers/guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice with further interest at contractual rates till date of realization within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below, against each borrower, in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on dates mentioned hereinafter.

S. No.	Name of borrowers and guarantors	Description of the property	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession	Amount Outstanding
1.	Mrs. Suman W/o Mr. Pradeep (Borrower) Mr. Pradeep S/o Mr. Eman Vail Prakash (Co Borrower) Mr. Sandeep Tiwari S/o Mr. Eman Vail Prakash (Guarantor)	Property No. 1/4058, Khasra No. 417, Third Floor, Ram Nagar Extn., Shadara, Delhi - 110032, North: Other Property, South: 15 Ft Road, East: Plot No. 1/4057, West: Plot No. 1/4059	07.04.2021	28.06.2021	Rs. 10,26,510/-
2.	Mr. Farhad Ahmed S/o Mr. Farid Ahmed (Borrower) Mr. Farid Ahmed S/o Late Mr. Abdul Rashid Ahmed (Co Borrower)	Flat No. UG-5 Upper Ground Floor Plot No. 656 Shakti Khand-4 Indrapuram Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh - 201014, North: Flat No. UG-4, East: Other Property, South: Plot No. 655, West: Entry	07.04.2021	28.06.2021	Rs. 33,77,343/-
3.	Mrs. Anu P W/o Mr. Rajeev Anirudhan (Borrower) Mr. Rajeev Anirudhan S/o Mr. Anirudhan (Co Borrower) Mr. Ebin Thankachan S/o Mr. Thankachan (Guarantor)	Flat No. 101 First Floor (RHS Front Side) Property No. RZ-220 & RZ - 221 Gali No. 7 Mahavir Enclave Delhi - 110045, North: Road, East : Part Of Property, South: Flat No. 102, West: Entry To Building	07.04.2021	28.06.2021	Rs. 42,33,432/-
4.	Mrs. Aarti W/o Mr. Deepak Kumar (Borrower) Mr. Deepak Kumar S/o Mr. Shri Chand (Co Borrower) Mr. Harish Chand Sharma S/o Mr. Rajkumar Sharma (Guarantor)	Entire Second Floor, Plot No. 1/3056, Gali No 18 Khasra No 793/604 Ram Nagar Shadara Delhi - 110032, North: Part Of Plot No 1/3056a, South: Gali, East : Other Property, West: Road	07.04.2021	28.06.2021	Rs. 12,95,301/-
5.	Mr. Alam Qureshi S/o Mr. Kafil Qureshi (Borrower) Mrs. Shabnam Qureshi W/o Mr. Alam Qureshi (Co Borrower) Mr. Abdul Khalid S/o Mr. Kapeel Mohammad (Guarantor)	Flat No. F1-6 First Floor Plot No. A-36 Shalimar Garden Main, Ghaziabad, U.P. - 201005, North: Flat No. F1-4, South: Service Lane, East: Plot No. A-37, West: Flat No. FF-5	07.04.2021	28.06.2021	Rs. 21,35,427/-

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of CFHL for the amount mentioned against each property along with further interest thereon till the date of realisation.

Date: 02.07.2021
Place: Delhi

Authorised Officer
Can Fin Homes Ltd.

Plea seeking action against V.K. Singh rejected by SC

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

The Supreme Court, on Friday, junked a PIL seeking action against Union minister General (Retd) V.K. Singh after he allegedly made certain remarks about India having crossed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) more often than China.

The LAC is a line demarcating the border between India and China. Refusing to entertain the plea, Chief Justice N.V. Ramana, heading a bench also comprising Justice A.S. Bopanna and Justice Hrishikesh Roy, said that it is for the



V.K. Singh

Prime Minister to remove a minister, the court cannot interfere. PIL petitioner Chandra Sekaran Ramasamy, who is a social activist, had argued that the government doesn't spare ordinary citizens for making

such comments and a minister should not be accorded special treatment. V.K. Singh, on February 7 this year, in an interaction, had said: "Let me assure you, if China has transgressed 10 times, we must have done it at least 50 times."

China had termed the statement "an unwitting confession" by India. The plea claimed that Mr Singh's comment was in breach of his oath as a minister. Besides weakening India's position globally, it gave China an opportunity to justify its transgressions into the Indian side of the territory.

Biju Babu's iconic Dakota plane to return

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO
BHUBANESWAR, JULY 2

The Odisha government has already initiated process to bring back the iconic aircraft of former Odisha chief minister Biju Patnaik which is lying in a dilapidated condition at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose (NSCB) International Airport in Kolkata.

Biju Babu had once used his favourite plane to rescue erstwhile Indonesian Vice President Muhammad Hatta and Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir from enemy clutches in July 1947.



"The process for bringing the plane has already been initiated and the public work department has been assigned to float the tender in this regard," state transport minister Padmanabha Behera said on Friday. After the aircraft is brought back, it will be kept beside the statue of Biju Babu in front of the airport at Bhubaneswar

for public view. "The state government has written to the Centre seeking permission for the installation of the plane near Biju Babu's statue at Bhubaneswar airport. It will be kept there for public view in the memory of the legendary leader," Mr Behera said. The DC-3 aircraft has been lying in a neglected

corner of NSCB International Airport, Kolkata as a piece of scrap.

"The Dakota aircraft is not only a prize possession of Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik's father, but also bears importance for the people of the state. Bringing back his favourite craft would be a fitting tribute to Biju Babu who was well known for his piloting acumen," historian and researcher Anil Dhir said.

The aircraft was a part of the fleet of 18 Dakota planes of Kalinga Airlines which was formed by Biju Patnaik.

SHORT TAKES

Darbhangha blast: 2 sent to NIA custody

Patna: Two Lashkar-e-Taayyaba (LeT) militants arrested for their alleged involvement with the parcel bomb blast case at Darbhanga railway station have been remanded for seven days in NIA custody. The NIA had arrested Imran Malik and his brother Nasir Khan from Hyderabad on June 30 in connection with the case. The investigation agency had also carried out searches at their rented house in the Mellepaly area of Hyderabad. On Friday, the investigation agency reached Patna along with both the accused and was taken to the ATS office where they were questioned for around three hours. They were later produced before the special NIA court. “The accused will be shifted to Beur central jail. They will be sent to police remand from July 3 till July 9 (seven days),” advocate Manoj Singh told reporters.

Rape accused shot tries to flee, shot at

Guwahati: Assam police on Friday shot at and injured a 65-year-old cleric, who was arrested on charges of raping and murdering a 9-year-old girl in Assam’s Morigaon district on Saturday, while trying to flee from police custody during the recreation of rape and murder scene. Special DGP GP Singh in his social media post said, “Syed Ali, accused of rape and murder of a minor girl at Bhuragaon, Morigaon district while being taken for reconstruction of scene of crime tried to escape under the garb of answering nature’s call.” He further said, “Morigaon police had to use minimum lawful force to prevent escape. He has been injured with bullet injuries in the knee and taken to hospital for treatment.” The police on Friday shifted the cleric to Guwahati medical College and Hospital for treatment.

4 held as J&K cops foil ex-filtration bid

Srinagar: The J&K police on Friday claimed to have foiled an ex-filtration bid through the Uri sector of the Line of Control (LoC) by arresting four persons. “They were intercepted by the Baramulla police while on their way to the LoC for crossing over to PoK via Gowhallan in Uri. They were received at Gowhallan by one Parvaiz Ahmad Hajam, a local resident and a guide,” a police spokesman said. A team of the Baramulla police rushed to the area, intercepted the group, and arrested the guide along with these three local youths. They have been identified as Muhammad Shafi Bhat, Reyaz Ahmad Bhat (both residents of Sheeri Mirhar, Baramulla) and Yasir Bhat (a resident of Chatloora, Sopore).

Make in India



First production lot of 12 short span bridging system-10 m, designed and developed by DRDO, has been inducted into the Army in the presence of Chief of the Army Staff General M.M. Naravane (unseen) during a ceremony held at Cariappa Parade Ground, Delhi Cantt, on Friday. The SSBS-10 m plays a crucial role of bridging the gaps up to 9.5 m as a single span providing a 4 m wide, fully decked roadway, ensuring faster movement of the troops. — PTI

Deshmukh terms CBI probe on him illegal

SHAHAB ANSARI
MUMBAI, JULY 2

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

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

Advocate Desai argued before the division bench of Justice S.S. Shinde and Justice N.M. Jamadar this absence of sanction made the inquiry against Deshmukh, on the charges of corruption and misconduct, illegal.

The bench was hearing the petition filed by Mr Deshmukh challenging the FIR registered by the Central agency against him in the aftermath of corruption allegations made against him by former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh.

MANOJ ANAND
GUWAHATI, JULY 2

Amidst the charges of encroachment of land border, tension prevailed between Assam and Mizoram once again on Friday after two makeshift huts erected by Mizoram police at the disputed area were allegedly damaged by their counterpart in Assam on Thursday. Mizoram’s Kolasib district deputy commissioner H. Lalthlangliana said that three makeshift camps were erected at the trouble-torn area by the state police following the mutual agreement on Wednesday, which allowed the deployment of forces by both states on either side of the borders.

Pointing out that a district magistrate-level talks between the two states had mutually agreed to deploy their own forces on either side

CHIEF SECRETARY-level talks will be held on July 9 to defuse the pre-vailing tension along the Mizoram-Assam border

of the border with a promise not to make confrontation he claimed that his counterpart in Assam rejected his proposal to withdraw the security forces by both the states. He alleged, “Two of the three makeshift camps erected by the Mizoram police were damaged by the Assam police during a face-to-face confrontation between the two forces on Thursday.” However, there were no casualties.

It is significant that the problem escalated once again this week after Mizoram accused Assam of encroaching upon its land in the Kolasib district, while Assam officials in Hailakandi district and local legislators accused Mizoram of

building structures and planting betel nut and banana saplings allegedly ten kilometres inside Assam.

This came days after Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that he was working to bring about settlements with all bordering states following some “give and take” formula.

Earlier on Wednesday, Kolasib district SP Vanlalfaka Ralte claimed that over a hundred officials and policemen led by Assam’s Hailakandi district deputy commissioner and SP entered Mizoram’s territory and have been camping there since Tuesday.

Chief secretary-level talks will be held on July 9 to defuse the prevailing tension along the Mizoram-Assam border, a Mizoram government official said. The meet will be held in Delhi on July 9.

Pawar denies links with firm under ED lens

Pune, July 2: Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar on Friday said he did not have any connection with Guru Commodity Services Pvt Ltd which is under the ED scanner, though a sugar mill owned by the company is being run by one of his relatives.

The agency, which has attached Jarandeshwar Sahkari Sugar Karkhana in Satara district in connection with the alleged State Cooperative Bank scam, claimed on Thursday that a company linked to Mr Pawar and his wife was involved in the case. — PTI

Pak role in drone strike can't be ruled out: DGP

‘Use of armed drones by terrorists a very serious threat’

Jammu, July 2: The involvement of Pakistan in the drone attack on an Air Force station here cannot be ruled out as the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), a terrorist group based out of that country, is strongly suspected to be behind it, Jammu and Kashmir police chief Dilbag Singh said on Friday.

Mr Singh said the use of armed drones by Pakistan-based terrorists is a very serious threat to the security system and there was a need to have a relook at the security of vital places and persons.

“We have got very serious and strong suspicion that LeT is involved in this case.... Since LeT is involved and the outfit is run from Pakistan, so in a way Pakistan’s involvement cannot be ruled out,” the police chief told reporters on the sidelines of a function in Kathua district. To what extent Pakistani agencies are involved would be known only when the investigation proceeds further, he added.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken over the investigation into the first-of-its-kind drone attack on the Indian Air Force (IAF) station at Jammu airport on June 27.

Two bombs were dropped from drones, causing minor injuries to two airmen. The first blast



A security personnel outside the IAF station in Jammu in Friday. — PTI

BSF DG: Drones dropping bombs very serious, dangerous threat

New Delhi, July 2: The recent incident of drones dropping bombs on the Indian Air Force base in Jammu is “very serious and very dangerous”, and there is an urgent need to develop technology to counter this challenge, BSF chief Rakesh Asthana said on Friday.

He said the force, which guards over 6,300 kms of India’s land border with Pakistan in the west and

ripped off the roof of a single-storey building at the technical area of the Jammu airport manned by the IAF. The second one was on the ground. A cocktail of explosive material, including RDX, is believed to have been used.

Referring to the seizure of a 5.5-kg improvised explosive device (IED) in Jammu hours after the

Bangladesh on the east, is faced by four main challenges on the security front.

These are detection of underground tunnels along the international border with Pakistan, presence of electronic devices used by anti-national elements in the frontier areas, emergence of drones and issues of poor mobile connectivity in remote areas. — PTI

IAF Chief terms attack at base in J&K act of terror

PAWAN BALI
NEW DELHI, JULY 2

Calling the drone attack at Jammu airbase a terrorist act, Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria said on Friday that IAF is in the process to boost its anti-drone capability to counter such attacks. He said that the Jammu airbase did not have the advanced anti-drone system and it did not house any critical asset.

“What happened at Jammu was essentially a terrorist act which attempted to target our assets there... that attempt failed, our assets were not damaged. There were two explosives used,” he said. Air Chief Bhadauria said that one of the explosives was “fragmentation in nature, more meant to kill people if they were to come on to that scene.” Two personnel suffered minor



R.K.S. Bhadauria

injuries during the attack. In the first-ever drone attack on Indian soil, two drones were used to drop low-intensity IEDs on Jammu airbase on the intervening night of June 26-27.

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

“All those issues have been looked at and many of these projects were already undertaken and

some have already been fielded and it is from the indigenous industry especially the soft kill options are already in the field. This particular base did not have critical assets and we did not have that system fielded in there,” said Air Chief Marshal Bhadauria. He said that there are standard operating procedures at such bases to deal with drone threats “but this happened on a night when there was no visibility”.

The Air Chief said that the IAF has also worked extensively with DRDO for a hard-kill anti-drone system. “They have a nearly functional system. It is under trial. Some improvements need to be done in order to achieve the kind of distances we need to effectively target such activities. It’s just a matter of time before we finish the trials and put it into production so that element will also come in,” he said.

U'khand CM resigns, BJP will meet today to pick new leader

Continued from Page 1 mismanagement issues during the Kumbh Mela and corruption allegations, and with the Congress in a resurgent mode, a third CM in its five-year tenure will only add to its already existing worries. Earlier, its decision to change Trivendra Singh Rawat in March, less than a year ahead of polls, had put a question mark on its rule and gave enough ammunition to the Opposition party.

A BJP legislature party meeting will take place Saturday where central observers, including Union minister Narendra Singh Tomar, will oversee the process of choosing Mr Rawat’s successor.

While a “constitutional crisis” was cited for Mr Tirath Singh Rawat’s exit, speculation was rife that it would not

be easy for Mr Rawat to win the bypolls — in case the EC agreed to hold them — if he was not fielded from a party stronghold. Two Assembly seats are now vacant — Gangotri and Haldwani — after the death of sitting MLAs, including Congress stalwart Indira Hridayesh, who represented Haldwani Assembly constituency.

What made matters complicated for him was the EC’s decision to defer the holding of some Lok Sabha and Assembly bypolls due to the pandemic. The poll panel had said it would not be appropriate to hold the electoral exercise till the pandemic situation improves significantly.

Observers said with the Assembly’s term coming to an end in less than a year, the EC was under no compulsion to order bypolls for vacant

seats. Scathing criticism by the courts of the string of elections held during the pandemic may have also contributed to the EC’s decision on the Uttarakhand byelections.

Section 151A of the Representation of the People Act 1951 mandates the Election Commission to fill vacancies in Parliament and state legislatures through bypolls within six months from the date of occurrence, provided that the remainder of the term of the new member is one year or more. The term of Uttarakhand Assembly is due to end in March.

Political observers said the Centre might also not press for holding byelections in Uttarakhand as these are also due in other parts of the country and the hill state cannot be made an exception.

IAF erupts as CDS calls it Army’s ‘supporting’ force

Continued from Page 1 They have an air defence charter and supporting the ground forces in times of operations. This is the basic charter which they have to understand,” he said.

Air Chief Marshal Bhadauria said “it is not a supporting role alone” that the Air Force plays. “Air power has a huge role to play in any integrated battle area. It is not an issue of support alone, and there are a whole lot of things that go into any air plan that is made,” the IAF Chief added.

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

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

AIR CHIEF Bhadauria said it is not a supporting role alone that the Air Force plays. Air power has a huge role to play in any integrated battle area.”

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

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

TMC asks Modi to sack S-G

Continued from Page 1 Union home minister Amit Shah.”

According to the Trinamul Congress, in the Narada case, Mr Adhikari was “seen taking bribes in a sting operation”, and that was “publicly circulated by the BJP”. Mr Mehta is representing the CBI in the Narada case in the Supreme Court and Calcutta high court.

In the Saradha Chit fund scam case, also being probed by the CBI and ED, the three TMC MPs claimed that Sudipta Sen, the prime accused, “had written multiple letters levying grave allegations against” Mr Adhikari, and that “Mr Mehta has advised and appeared for the CBI” in that case as well.

The Trinamul Congress noted, “Such meeting between an accused in grave offences, with the

solicitor general who is advising such investigating agencies by whom the said accused is being investigated, is in direct conflict of interest with the statutory duties of the solicitor general. We have, therefore, reasons to believe that such a meeting has been organised to influence the outcome of matters where Mr Adhikari is an accused, using the high offices of the solicitor general.”

It told the Prime Mnimster, “...the act of the solicitor general to provide an opportunity of audience to Mr Adhikari not only reeks of impropriety but also raises the question of integrity, and taints the post occupied by the solicitor general. In order to avoid any doubt in the mind of the public at large, as to the integrity and neutrality of the office of the solicitor gen-

eral, we approach you to initiate necessary steps for removal of Mr Mehta from the post of the solicitor general.”

Mr Mehta, however, stated that Mr Adhikari “did come to my residence cum office yesterday at around 3:00 pm, unannounced. Since I was already in a pre-scheduled meeting in my chamber, my staff requested him to sit in the waiting room of my office building and offered him a cup of tea. When my meeting was over and thereafter my PPS informed me about his arrival, I requested my PPS to convey to Mr Adhikari my inability to meet him and apologise as he had to wait. Mr Adhikari thanked my PPS and left without insisting to meet me. The question of my meeting with Mr Adhikari therefore did not arise.”

Pak drone spotted over Indian mission

Continued from Page 1 June 27 when two drones with explosives had attacked the Indian Air Force Station in Jammu. While no major damage was inflicted, Pakistan-based terror outfits are suspected to be behind the incident, according to reports. Drones from Pakistan have also reportedly been dropping some weapons and drugs into Punjab from across the

border in the past few years.

Meanwhile, in response to queries about Pakistan remaining on the grey list of global anti-terror watchdog FATF, and also Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan’s repeated assertions demanding the rollback of the Indian government’s decision two years ago to revoke Article 370 that ended the special status of the erst-

while state of Jammu and Kashmir, New Delhi on Friday asked Pakistan to bring the perpetrators of the 26/11 attack on Mumbai and the Pathankot terror attack to justice, and also asked Islamabad to take “credible, verifiable and irreversible” action against cross-border terror and terror outfits operating from the territory under Pakistan’s control.



THE ASIAN AGE

3 JULY 2021

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

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

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

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

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

China's leader also declared that his country will not tolerate any power trying to "bully" or "subjugate" it. Any attempt to do so will be "on a collision course with a great wall of steel". It needs to be clarified that while some of the international news reporting on the centenary event in Beijing speaks of Mr Xi warning of "broken heads" and "bloodshed" if there is a bid to bully China, the official English language version of the speech circulated by the Chinese news agency Xinhua (and carried on the portal of Nikkei Asia) carries no such reference. If the official English version has been duly edited under the Party's guidance to soften the original, then India should take note. It is broken heads and bloodshed that was headline news from Galwan in June 2020.

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

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

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

Subhani



Drones as weapons: India is facing a new challenge



Syed Ata Hasnain

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

rorists and Pakistan's Deep State had established in J&K. By its relentless actions against inimical elements and a successful programme of cultivation of international opinion, the government made all these supposed stakeholders irrelevant to the people of J&K.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Did the Jammu incident and the subsequent sightings of drones have a specific purpose? I call these 'relevance operations', desperate efforts at the revival of relevance.

LETTERS

DEMOCRATIC VIEW

Assam peasant activist and Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi, who spent nearly 19 months in captivity, walked free on Thursday after a special NIA court in Guwahati acquitted him. Mr Gogoi, who won the recently concluded election representing his newly formed party Rajjor Dal, had been booked under the draconian UAPA for his alleged role in violent anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in the state in December 2019. Mr Gogoi holds the nuanced position that the CAA will nullify the 1985 Assam Accord, which provides for deportation of all illegal migrants, irrespective of religion, who had entered the state after March 1971.

Bidyut K. Chatterjee
Faridabad

NOT ENOUGH SHOTS

IT IS DISTURBING to note that India's Covid-19 vaccination drive shows signs of running out of steam. Following the June 21 high, when the new regime kicked in for the first time, the vaccination numbers have plummeted from 91 lakh doses to just 17.5 lakh. Moreover, the numbers continue to drop each day. At this rate, the government would find it a tall order to meet its ambitious December 2021 target of vaccinating all adults. We can attribute the slump in daily jabs to vaccine hesitancy and shortage of vaccines.

N.J. Ravi Chandar
Bengaluru

LEAVE STRAYS ALONE

THE DELHI HIGH court put it nicely when it said that "stray dogs have the right to food and citizens have the right to feed them". While strays are also territorial just like humans, they don't deserve to be treated with cruelty. It's the social as well as moral responsibility of everyone to take care of strays, adopt the ones in need of shelter or food. The court's ruling could not have come sooner.

Mohit Rawal
Ujjain

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.

THE ASIAN AGE

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THE ASIAN AGE office is located at:
New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone: (011) 23211124.
Published and Printed on behalf of and for:
Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002 at BFL Infotech Ltd., C-9, Sector-III, Noida -201301.
London: Quickmarsh Ltd, 8th Floor, Block 2, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NQ.
RNI Registration number: 57290/94

Farrukh Dhondy
Cabbages & Kings



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ms Leadbeater is openly lesbian and that, in an advanced democracy such as Britain — in contrast to, shall we say, an election in Iran — ought not to matter one jot. There are several gay and lesbian MPs in the British Parliament as the population, by and large, doesn't concern itself with the sexual orientation, or even the adulterous behaviour, of the candidates when casting their votes.

But perhaps not in Batley. For why? Enter George Galloway. This maverick is a professional Scottish politician who was once a member of the Labour Party but was thrown out of it for turning up in Iraq when Britain was fighting a war there and virtually bending the knee to Saddam Hussein. He has since made himself an advocate of "Islamic" causes, mainly international support for Palestine and virulent criticism of Israeli domestic policy which veers, though Mr Galloway is adamant in his denial of it, into blatant anti-Semitism.

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

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

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

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

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

When, one evening, the writers piled

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

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

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

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

SHORT TAKES

SYRIA SEEKS AID TO REHABILITATE IS-LINKED MINORS

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

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

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

FALL OF TIGRAY CAPITAL MARKS NEW PHASE

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

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

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

MURDERED MP'S SISTER ELECTED IN KEY UK VOTE

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

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

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

6MN EU CITIZENS APPLY TO STAY IN UK AFTER BREXIT

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

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

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

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

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

US troops leave Bagram airbase

US committed to paying \$4 billion annually until 2024 to finance Afghani security forces

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

The airfield was handed over to the Afghan National Security and Defence Force in its entirety, they said on condition that they not be identified because they were not authorised to release the information to the media.

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

Miller met Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Friday and according to a Dari-language tweet by the Presidential palace the two discussed "continued US assistance and cooperation with Afghanistan, particularly in supporting the defence

and security forces."

There were no specifics but the US is already committed to paying nearly \$4 billion annually until 2024 to finance the Afghani national security forces.

While no one was calling Miller's visit a farewell, in the backdrop of the evacuation of Bagram Airfield it had the hallmarks of a goodbye.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan's district administrator for Bagram, Darwaish Raufi, said the American departure was done overnight without any coordination with local officials, and as a result early Friday dozens of local looters stormed through the unprotected gates before Afghan forces regained control.

"They were stopped and some have been arrested and the rest have been cleared from the base," Raufi said, adding that the looters ransacked several buildings before being arrested and the Afghan National Security and Defence Forces (ANDSF)

took control.

"Unfortunately the Americans left without any coordination with Bagram district officials or the governor's office," Raufi said. "Right now our Afghan security forces are in control both inside and outside of the base."

The deputy spokesman for the defense minister, Fawad Aman, said nothing of the early morning looting. He said only the base has been handed over and the "ANDSF will protect the base and use it to combat terrorism."

The Taliban too welcomed the American withdrawal from Bagram Airfield. In a tweet by spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, they called it a "positive step," urging for the "withdrawal of foreign forces from all parts of the country."

The previous U.S. administration had signed an agreement with the Taliban promising to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan.

— PTI



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

—AFP

Turkey withdraws from treaty protecting women

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

— AFP

Oz tightens border controls to curb risk of virus variant

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

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

The government will charter more airliners to repatriate Australians, but the reduced limit on commercial passenger arrivals could continue until next year.

"If medical advice changes between now and then, if medical advice suggests that we can alter that, then of course the National Cabinet has always been receptive to that advice and we'll continue to monitor that," Morrison told reporters, referring to his decision-making meetings with the state and territory leaders. "We wouldn't want to keep those caps in place any longer than we had to," he added. Almost half the Australian population locked down since last week due to clusters mostly of the delta variant of the Coronavirus that is thought to be more contagious. — AP

UAE bans travel to 14 countries including India

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

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

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

— PTI

Germany vows no lockdowns for vaccinated

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHO now believes PCR or rapid antigen tests should be given even in the absence of symptoms among students and staff.

"The summer months offer a valuable window of opportunity for governments to put in place the right set of measures that will help keep infection rates down and avoid resorting to school closures," Hans Kluge,

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

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

France denies Pacific nuke tests cover up

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

A two-day roundtable meeting called by French President Emmanuel

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

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

ogy from France.

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

Using statistical modelling and help from academics and specialists, it

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

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

CYBER | SECURITY

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

NSA discloses hacking methods used by Russia

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

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

In a statement,

Cybersecurity Director Rob Joyce said the campaign was "likely ongoing, on a global scale." Brute force attacks involve the automated spraying of sites with potential passwords until hackers gain access.

The advisory urges companies to adopt methods long urged by experts as common-sense cyber hygiene, including the use of multi-factor authentication and mandating strong passwords. Issued during a devastating wave of ransomware attacks on governments and key infrastructure, the advisory does not disclose specific targets of the campaign or

its presumed purpose, saying only that hackers have targeted hundreds of organisations worldwide.

The says GRU-linked operatives have tried to break into networks using Kubernetes, an open-source tool originally developed by Google to manage cloud services, since at least mid-2019 through early this year. While a "significant amount" of the attempted break-ins targeted organisations using Microsoft's Office 365 cloud services, the hackers went after other cloud providers and email servers as well, the said.

The US has long accused Russia of using and toler-

ating cyberattacks for espionage, spreading disinformation, and the disruption of governments and key infrastructure.

The Russian Embassy in Washington on Thursday "strictly" denied the involvement of Russian government agencies in cyberattacks on US government agencies or private companies. In a statement posted on Facebook, the embassy said, "We hope that the American side will abandon the practice of unfounded accusations and focus on professional work with Russian experts to strengthen international information security."

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

He said it appears to overlap with Department of Energy reporting on brute force intrusion attempts in late 2019 and early 2020 targeting the U.S. energy and government sectors and is something the US government has apparently been aware of for some time. Slowik said the use of Kubernetes "is certainly a bit unique, although on its own it doesn't appear worrying." — AP



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a Security Council meeting at the Kremlin, in Moscow, Russia, on Friday.

— AP

quick BITES

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

* As of 8:30 PM IST

India joins global deal on minimum tax

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

50% price hike in ranitidine, ibuprofen allowed



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

In talks with investors for fund raise: VIL

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

Laurus Labs gets DRDO licence to make 2DG

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

Printed & Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at BFL Infotech Ltd, C-9 Sector 3, Noida-201301. Published at 219, N D Tiwari Bhawan, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Editor: Kaushik Mitter, RNI Registration number 30074/09, Air surcharge Re 1. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle ® is prohibited.

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

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JULY 2

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

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

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



Nitin Gadkari

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In order to be categorised as MSME, these traders will have to register on the Udyam Registration portal. "This landmark decision will have a structural impact for the sector, helping it get formalised," said Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, Retailers Association of India.

Urban Indians prefer job to cash handout: LSE study

JAIVEER SHEKHAWAT
JULY 2

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

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

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

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

enrolment for the programme.

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

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

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

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

—Bloomberg

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

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JULY 2

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

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

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

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

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

Unicorn Cars 24 nears \$250 mn deal with DST

SARITHA RAI
JULY 2

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

pricing and the condition of the vehicle.

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

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

—Bloomberg

IOC works on aluminium battery to take on Li-ion

DEBJIT CHAKRABORTY
& RAJESH KUMAR SINGH
JULY 2

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

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

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

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

India is among the top 10 bauxite producers. It has some 600 million tonnes of the ore in proven reserves, according to the US Geological Survey, though India's mining ministry estimates that untapped resources may be many times that amount.

Moreover, the country has invested heavily in production of aluminium over the years to become the world's second-biggest smelter of aluminium. "Clearly the special consideration here is that aluminium is in better supply than lithium," said James Frith, head of energy stor-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Amara Raja Batteries Ltd, India's largest producer of lead-acid cells, is examining existing lithium-based technologies as a "next growth engine," though also sees scope for alternatives to be developed, Vijayanand Samudrala, the firm's president of new energy, told a BNEF summit on Tuesday.

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

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

—Bloomberg

IDP to acquire British Council's IELTS biz

FC BUREAU
CHENNAI, JULY 2

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

OLA ELECTRIC SCOOTER REVEALED

MICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, JULY 2

Ola Electric is gearing up for the launch of its first electric scooter.

The firm is expected to announce price of its e-scooter later this month. The new electric scooter from the company is expected to be priced around Rs 1 lakh and it will take on rivals like Ather Energy's 450X.

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



Virgin Galactic plans Branson space trip before Bezos blasts off

JUSTIN BACHMAN
JULY 2

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

Virgin Galactic's VSS Unity spacecraft will also carry three other company employees and two pilots from the launch site in New Mexico, according to a company statement Thursday. Bezos is planning a trip to space July 20 from nearby West Texas aboard a rocket made by

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

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

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

Virgin Galactic soared

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

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

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

—Bloomberg

New Role

POONAM GUPTA
JOINS NCAER AS DG

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

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

LEYLAND GETS ASTON MARTIN MAN TO HEAD EV

Ashok Leyland said it has appointed former Aston chief

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

SANJAY MADAN IS REGIONAL ED, NTPC SOUTH

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



SHORT TAKES

India look to avoid the English sweep

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

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

Bravo blazes as WI level SA series

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

Hamilton fastest in Austria F1 practice

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

Bucks a win away from NBA finals

Los Angeles: The Milwaukee Bucks showed they are more than a one-man show on Thursday, using a balanced attack to dominate the Atlanta Hawks 123-112 in game five of the Eastern Conference finals. Brook Lopez had a season-high 33 points, Jrue Holiday had 25 points and 13 assists and Khris Middleton finished with 26 points and 13 rebounds for the Bucks, who grabbed a 3-2 series lead and are one win away from reaching the NBA finals for the first time since 1974. Milwaukee won despite playing without two-time NBA MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo, who is injured. — *AFP*

Arjuna slams SL over 'India B' tour

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

Live on TV

COPA AMERICA

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

Published by K. Sudhakar for and on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited at Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002. And Printed by him at BFL Infotech Limited, C-9, Sector - III, Noida - 201301.
Editor — Kaushik Mitter, RNI Registration number 57290/94, Price in Nepal - Nep.Rs. 20.00 per copy.

Lions on the move

Roaring England off to Rome to take on Ukraine in quarters

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

— *Twitter*

Denmark dream of '92 repeat

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

The Danes were in danger of an early exit after group-stage losses to Finland and Belgium, the first of which was overshadowed by star player Christian Eriksen suffering a cardiac arrest on the pitch. But, roared on by a raucous Copenhagen crowd, they thrashed Russia 4-1 to finish second in Group B, before travelling to Amsterdam to

thump Wales 4-0 in the last 16. Denmark have not reached a major tournament semi-final since lifting the trophy 29 years ago, when they initially failed to qualify but were late replacements for Yugoslavia.

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

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

The Scandinavians have gone from strength to strength in the tournament and know victory in Azerbaijan would set up a

Live on TV

EURO

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

last-four meeting with either England or Ukraine at Wembley.

Youngster Mikkel Damsgaard has shone since taking the place of Eriksen in the second group match, scoring a wonderful opening goal against Russia. "The match against Wales was the biggest of my career," he said.

"The next match will be the biggest match I have

ever played, so it's getting even crazier all the time for me."

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

The last time Denmark reached a major quarter-final was at Euro 2004, where they were beaten 3-0 by a Czech Republic side inspired by Pavel Nedved and two goals for Milan Baros. "I had a really bad experience watching the match at Copenhagen Town Hall Square," Danish defender Mathias Jorgensen told *uefa.com*. — *AFP*

ASHWIN DEFENDS KOHLI ON WTC FORMAT OPINION

London, July 2: Coming to the defence of Virat Kohli, ace Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin said the skipper only expressed his opinion that the WTC final should be a best of three series rather than a one-off Test but never demanded the format to be changed.

India were handed an eight-wicket defeat in the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) final by New Zealand in Southampton earlier this month.

After the loss, Kohli had said that the best Test team in the world should be decided by a best-of-three final and not a one-off game like it was in the inaugural edition.

"I happened to hear people saying that Virat Kohli asked for three Tests to be played for the WTC final but it is ridiculous. After the match got

over, (former England player and renowned cricket writer) Michael Atherton had asked what he could have done differently in the WTC.

"Virat replied in a particular context that if three matches are played, then adaptability and comeback for a team are possible. But he never demanded something," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel.

The Indian players, who were part of the WTC squad, are currently on a three-week break before they reassemble in the UK on July 14 for the five Tests against England beginning in Nottingham from August 4.

Ashwin feels this break is very important for the players.

"We were in the bubble throughout. So, after a long time, we are able to get some fresh air and step out." — *PTI*

India hit the ground running in Colombo

Colombo, July 2: The Indian cricket team on Friday underwent their first training session ahead of the limited series against hosts Sri Lanka from July 13.

India, who have picked a second-string squad for the series with the Test team currently in the UK, had arrived in Sri Lanka on Monday following which they the players quarantined in their room for three days.

The side is being led by senior batsman Shikhar Dhawan and coached by NCA head Rahul Dravid.

The series is India's last before the T20 World Cup in October-November. The squad has as many as six uncapped players including Chetan Sakariya, K Gowtham, Nitish Rana,



Rahul Dravid (left) and Shikhar Dhawan during a training session in Colombo.

— *Twitter*

Devdutt Padikkal, Varun Chakaravarth and Ruturaj Gaekwad.

It is also an important assignment for the likes of Prithvi Shaw, Ishan Kishan, Sanju Samson

and Suryakumar Yadav who are looking to secure their place in the World Cup squad.

India play three ODIs and as many T20Is. — *PTI*

Sweet sixteen for Sabalenka



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

— *AP*

BOPANNA-MIRZA WIN ALL-INDIA CLASH

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

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

RESULTS

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

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

Grand Slam tournament.

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

Ukraine ready for dream game

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guided by Andriy Shevchenko, Ukraine have matched their run to the last eight of the 2006 World Cup and are hoping to reach a first semi-final at a major tournament.

very well in defence but I think there are no perfect teams, every team has weaknesses," he said.

Ukraine scraped through to the knockout phase as the lowest-ranked of the four third-placed teams to advance, having lost two of their three group games to the Netherlands and Austria.

"We fully understand who we will be playing against tomorrow. I think (England) are one of the best teams, and at this Euro one of the most balanced teams. They have amazing players," said Shevchenko.

"Tomorrow will be the hardest game for us. I know how difficult it will be for us, but I know our players have character and we'll try to show it."

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

Olympic briefs

Maana gets quota place

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

Mariyappan to carry flag

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

Sindhu to get recovery system

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

Malik's Tokyo hopes dashed

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

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

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

His 'B' sample was opened on June 30 and expectedly that also provided the same result.

A specified substance was found in Malik's sample, though, the 2018 Commonwealth Games gold-medallist had said that he only took painkillers to manage right knee niggle.

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



Sumit Malik

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

Sources close to Rohtak-based Malik said they will soon take a decision.

"We are discussing the matter with our lawyer," said the person who is interacting with Malik on the matter.

The general opinion in WFI is that Malik should challenge the sanction since it was not a steroid but a stimulant that was taken inadvertently.

Malik has been nursing a knee injury that he suffered during the national camp before the Olympic Qualifiers began at different venues. — *PTI*