

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | SUNDAY 11 | JULY 2021

WEATHER



Max: 34°C
Min: 21°C
Rainfall: Nill

ASTROGUIDE

Pilava: Aani 27
Tithi: Pradhamai
Star: Pusam
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6.00 pm
Yamagandam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm

PRAYERS

Fajar: 4.25 am
Luhar: 12.16 pm
Asar: 3.37 pm
Maghrib: 6.38 pm
Isha: 7.57 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.40 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.49 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 6.43 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 7.55 AM

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+29,349)	(+354)
3,08,24,117	4,07,528

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,913)	(+49)
TN: 25,16,011	33,371

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

18,70,47,508

DEATHS

40,38,304

219

worldometers.info

Delta variant cases mark 32% weekly surge

London: UK health officials said the Delta variant of Covid-19 continues as the dominant strain of Coronavirus and marked a sharp increase in the UK with 54,268 more cases logged on Friday, which marks a 32 per cent increase over the previous week. Public Health England (PHE) said its weekly analysis shows the continued rise in infections is not followed by a similar increase in hospitalisations and deaths, which reflects a high protection offered by both doses of a Coronavirus vaccine. ■ **P5**

Two commandos injured in gunbattle with naxals

Bhubaneswar: At least two personnel of Odisha police's elite Special Operation Group (SOG) were on Saturday injured in an ongoing gun-battle with Maoists in forests bordering Boudh and Kandhamal districts, Director General of Police Abhay said. The condition of both the personnel is stable and they were air-lifted to AIIMS, Bhubaneswar, the DGP, said.

COUNTER

POINT



Happy population day... more population, more voters!

Los Angeles mayor Garcetti is US envoy to India

Washington, July 10: Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, nominated by US President Joe Biden as the country's ambassador to India, has said that he is honoured to accept the nomination and will bring the same energy, commitment and love with which he served the sprawling city to his new role in the world's largest democracy.

If confirmed by the Senate, Garcetti, 50, would replace Kenneth Juster, who served as the US ambassador to India during the Trump administration. "Today, the President

announced that I am his nominee to serve as US Ambassador to India. I am honoured to accept his nomination to serve in this role," Mr Garcetti, a Democrat, said in a statement on Friday soon after Mr Biden announced his nomination.

Mr Garcetti has been the mayor of the City of Los Angeles since 2013.

Mr Garcetti, in an interview to the *Los Angeles Times*, said the Biden administration raised the idea of the India post in the early spring. The White House called him Thursday to finalise his nomination,



Mr Garcetti said.

He has travelled several times to India, most recently as a councilman. In college, he spent a year studying Hindi and Urdu. "We can't get our climate

goals without India hitting its climate goals. We can't see the economy truly reopened to international commerce and tourism until Covid is under control," Mr Garcetti said on Friday.

He led the city's successful bid to return the 2028 summer Olympic Games to American soil for the first time in three decades.

Garcetti co-founded Climate Mayors and led more than 400 US mayors to adopt the Paris Climate agreement. He is the current Chair of C40 Cities – a network of 97 of the world's biggest cities taking bold cli-

mate action and has led the organisation's engagement and expansion in India as well as C40's global response to the Covid pandemic.

A Rhodes Scholar, he studied at Queen's College, Oxford, and the London School of Economics and Political Science. Mr Garcetti was selected as an inaugural Asia 21 Fellow of the Asia Society, and taught at Occidental College's Department of Diplomacy and World Affairs, as well as at the University of Southern California's School of International Relations. — *PTI*

and allowances and three per cent increase in the employer's contribution fund under national pension scheme."

A state population fund will be constituted for the purpose of implementation of the act. Listing the government's duties, the draft bill says that maternity centres will be established at all primary health centres. The centres and NGOs will distribute contraceptive pills, condoms, etc, spread awareness about family planning methods through community health workers and ensure mandatory registration of pregnancies, deliveries, births and deaths across the state. *PTI*

OPS ADVOCATES HARDLINE AGAINST DMK GOVT

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR, D. SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, JULY 10

The AIADMK should take a strident anti-DMK position by intensifying its protests against the gov-

ernment and its MLAs should keep off official functions as a matter of principle, party coordinator O. Panneriselvam has suggested.

Speaking at the district secretaries meeting at the

AIADMK headquarters on Friday, Mr Panneerselvam said he had attended an official function at Theni because the minister concerned had invited him personally. ■ **FULL STORY ON P3**

Yes, it's open

■ All business establishments, till 9 pm
Government recruitment tests

No, not yet

■ Cinema theatres, bars, swimming pools, zoos.
■ Schools and colleges
■ Public meetings
■ Entertainment, sports and cultural events
■ Inter-state bus service

Restricted

■ Marriages: 50 guests
■ Funerals: 20 mourners

TO STRENGTHEN: COVID-APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

till last week would remain in force.

By eateries, whose timing has been extended till 9 pm, the statement refers to restaurants, tea shops, bakeries, sweets and savouries vends and also roadside shops. All business establishments can remain open till 9 pm.

However, the Covid-appropriate protocols which include wearing of face mask, maintaining social distance, keeping sanitiser with dispenser at the entrance of all business establishments and checking body tempera-

States told to adhere to protocol: Centre

New Delhi, July 10: The Union government has informed the Delhi High Court that it has asked all states and Union territories (UT) to ensure strict compliance with the national directives for Covid-19 management and take necessary measures under the Disaster Management Act.

Order was also issued to them to consider the implementation of targeted and prompt actions for Covid-19 management until July 31, the government has said.

It also stated that while the opening of activities after a decline in Covid-19 cases was essential, the states and UTs must ensure that "the whole process is carefully calibrated".

The statement was made in a status report filed by the government in connection with the high court's suo motu proceedings on violation of Covid-19 protocols in various markets in the national capital.

The government has submitted that national directives for Covid-19 management include face coverings, social distanc-

ture should be continued, the statement said.

The restrictions imposed on shops to allow only 50 customers inside at a time

ing, not spitting in public places, work from home, staggering of work/business hours, screening and hygiene and frequent sanitisation.

"The MHA also directed state/Union territories that national directives for Covid-19 management shall continue to be strictly followed throughout the country," the report reads.

Clarifying that the decision to impose or ease restrictions has to be based on the assessment of the ground situation, the government added that state/UT authorities should ensure that there is "continuous focus on containment efforts" and "uniformity in implementing graded restrictions/relaxations".

The high court was also informed that the "framework for implementation of prompt and target action" was also shared by the union government with the states. The framework, the government said, speaks of a "five-fold strategy for effective management of Covid-19" i.e. test, track, treat, vaccinate and adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour. — *PTI*

and for eateries to let in only 50 per cent dine-in customers and keep windows open to allow flow of fresh air into would continue.

Heroin worth ₹2,500 crore seized in Delhi

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 10

The Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested four persons, including an Afghan national, and recovered a record quantity of 354 kg Afghan heroin worth over Rs 2,500 crore in international markets, officials said on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Rizwan Kashmiri, a resident of Ghitorni and native of Anantnag in J&K, Gurpreet Singh and Gurjot Singh, both residents of Jalandhar in Punjab, and Hazrat Ali, a native of Kandahar in Afghanistan, they said.

Police said recently it came to notice that Rizwan Kashmiri was involved in drug peddling in Delhi and other states like Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. "On Monday, information was received that Kashmiri was going to deliver contraband in Delhi's Ghitorni area," the official said. ■ **FULL REPORT ON P4**

STATE | 3

CM orders regularisation of temple staff, fill vacancies

SPORT | 8

England meet Italy in Euro final tonight



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Cooperatives ministry

Cong plans joint assault on govt

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JULY 10

The formation of the Union ministry for cooperatives by the NDA dispensation is set to be a point of opposition with the Congress saying it will talk to other parties to form a joint strategy to oppose the move. Several Congress leaders have termed the creation of the ministry as "an attack on federalism as cooperatives is a state subject" and a move to hijack the sector.

"The party will be speaking to other opposition parties so as to build a consensus on how to collectively take on the government over this issue," a senior Congress leader said.

As the monsoon session of Parliament is going to start at the end of July, the government can expect uproar over the creation of the new ministry in Parliament.

Congress leaders have questioned the need for the ministry when even the multi-state cooperative societies are already governed by a Central Act the multi-state Cooperative Societies Act of 2002.

Senior Maharashtra Congress leader and former chief minister Prithviraj Chavan questioned the need for carving out a separate ministry since there was already a department of cooperation. — *PTI*



It is only to control the cooperatives because they hold massive influence locally, said Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan

"Administratively it makes no difference," he said. "Cooperatives are important for Gujarat and Maharashtra primarily. Both states are very important for the BJP," and added that it's not clear in what way they will promote cooperatives. "It is only to control the cooperatives," because cooperative institutions hold massive influence locally," he said.

Several Opposition leaders feel that the move is to "hijack the cooperative movement" that currently falls under the state governments.

Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala said cooperatives is a state subject and wondered how the Union government can they create a ministry without legislative clearance.



Australia's Ashleigh Barty holds the trophy after defeating Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova in the Wimbledon women's final on Saturday. — *AFP*

Doyen of modern ayurveda Warriar passes away at 100

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 10

Doyen of ayurveda medicine Dr P.K. Warriar died at his residence in Kottakkal in Malappuram district on Saturday. He was 100.

Dr Warriar, who popularised ayurveda globally, had celebrated his 100th birthday on June 8. He was honoured by the nation with Padma Bhushan in 2010 and Padma Shri in 1999.

He became the trustee of the Aryavaidya Sala, one of the leading Ayurveda Healthcare chains in the country, at the age of 24 and remained its managing trustee till death.

Dr Warriar made huge



contributions to ayurveda sector and initiated several measures to make the alternative system of medicine accessible to the common masses. He also focused on extensive research and drug standardisation.

Many VVIPs including heads of state, former presidents and prime ministers besides celebrities

from different fields were among those treated by the celebrated ayurveda physician.

Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi expressed deep condolences over Dr Warriar's death. "Saddened by the passing away of Dr P.K. Warriar. His contributions to popularise ayurveda will always be remembered. Condolences to his family and friends," Mr Modi tweeted.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said Dr Warriar brought principles of ayurveda to the grassroots level. He was known for his secular and progressive ideas. Mr Vijayan had inaugurated the centenary birthday celebrations on June 8.

SHORT TAKES

Tension prevails in Mamallapuram waters as two fisher groups clash

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 10

Tension prevailed at Mamallapuram on Saturday after two fishermen groups were involved in an argument over fishing.

Fishermen from Choolerikadu, Nemmili, Devaneri, Pudhukalpakkam blocked the mechanised boats of the fishermen from Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and Karaikal, who ventured into the Mamallapuram waters for fishing.

The local fishermen argued that their livelihood has been hit as the fishermen from other districts venture into the sea in mechanised boats.

On receiving information about the clash, officials from the TN Fisheries department arrived there and held talks with the fishermen. Following this, both the groups dispersed.

Isro plans to launch geo imaging satellite on August 12

Bengaluru, July 10: The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) is getting back into launch activity fully at Sriharikota spaceport with the planned orbiting of geo imaging satellite G ISAT-1 on board GSLV-F10 rocket on August 12. It's going to be only the second launch of the Bengaluru-headquartered space agency in the Covid-19-hit 2021.

Isro successfully launched PSLV-C51 mission on February 28 with Brazil's earth observation satellite Amazonia-1 and 18 co-passengers, including some built by students, on board.

The 2,268-kg GISAT-1 was originally slated to be launched from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh's Nellore district, about 100 km north of Chennai, on March 5 last year but was postponed a day before the blast-off due to technical reasons. Thereafter the launch was delayed due to Covid-19-induced lockdown which affected normal work. It was scheduled for March 28 this year but a "minor issue" with the satellite forced its postponement. The launch was later expected in April and then in May but the campaign could not be taken up due to lockdown in parts of the country triggered by the second wave of the pandemic. "We have tentatively planned the GSLV-F10 launch on August 12, at 05.43 am, subject to weather conditions", an Isro official said on Saturday.

"With onboard high resolution cameras, the satellite will allow the country to monitor the Indian land mass and the oceans, particularly its borders, continuously," the official said.

Listing the objectives of the mission, Isro had earlier said the satellite would provide near real-time imaging of the large area region of interest at frequent intervals. It would help in quick monitoring of natural disasters, episodic and any short-term events. The third objective is to obtain spectral signatures of agriculture, forestry, mineralogy, disaster warning, cloud properties, snow and glacier and oceanography. —PTI

Huge crowds throng shopping hubs in city

Flouting of Covid-19 protocols worrisome

T. SUDHEESH | DC
CHENNAI, JULY 10

Though the state government has extended the lockdown with few relaxations, the non-compliance of people to Covid-19 protocols, including social distancing and wearing face mask, is still a concern.

Overcrowding and unruly wedding functions are still in vogue in various parts of the city despite the authorities launching crackdown on erring wedding malls and shops.

With the sit-in eateries allowed to function, many congested hotels are functioning with overcrowded consumers, including women and children, wearing no masks. The

shops and street vendors can also be seen selling their goods either without wearing masks or donning it improperly.

Meanwhile, a zonal official said that strict instruction had been given to the police to make sure people do not over-crowd in the city. "We have put up notices in all public places highlighting the importance of maintaining Covid protocol," the official said.

Kishore, a resident of Ramapuram, said he saw many eateries functioning overcrowded, especially in the evening, after the lockdown was relaxed. The Thiurvallur Salai and Kamarajar Salai roads are very congested. Crowding in the area without wearing a face mask creates a

huge risk of contracting the virus. The authorities should strictly implement the social distancing norm and standard operating procedures (SOPs) properly to avoid a fresh round of the Covid wave in the city, he said.

V. Rama Rao, convener, People's Awareness Forum, Nanganallur, said he witnessed many weddings during the lockdown flouting all norms. The authorities should come up with a strict time-specific system for shopping in big malls and textile shops.

Places like Renganathan streets are often crowded by shoppers. "I have seen weddings in our area attended by more than 1,000 people despite curbs. Since the third wave is not ruled

out, it is important to keep a tight vigil on the wedding parties," he warned.

With the relaxation of lockdown regulations, T Nagar has been witnessing heavy crowds especially during weekends. Though the government has prescribed SOPs, many shops do not follow the guidelines. The way-side vendors also do not take the guidelines seriously. Even common people do not follow the guidelines, by venturing out without masks.

The authorities should strictly enforce wearing of masks, especially on Usman Road and Ranganathan Street as they could become potential clusters of a third wave, said V.S. Jayaraman, a T Nagar resident.



Workers check vehicle speed levels in the city as per road safety action plan organised by the Greater Chennai Corporation under the smart city project.

—DC

NHAI can go ahead with its four-lane road project in Kanyakumari, says HC

J.STALIN | DC
CHENNAI, JULY 10

Decks have been cleared for the multi-crore four-lane road project of the NHAI from Villukuri to Kanyakumari district, with the Madras high court dismissing a batch of petitions, which challenged the land acquisition proceedings of the NHAI for the project.

Justice N.Anand Venkatesh dismissed the petitions filed by T.Sunil Ross, T.Justin Rani and three others.

According to petitioners, after they came to know that steps were being taken to acquire lands, they obtained information through RTI that there was an approved alignment in 2010 and they were informed that there will be no change in the approved alignment at Nattalam village. Based on the same, they had put up constructions by spending a lot of money in those portions. However, due to interference of an MLA and pressure from L.M.S.Church, the entire alignment was changed and their properties were sought to be acquired. The authorities have acted in favour of the church based on the interference made by the MLA and therefore, there was a legal malice which vitiates the entire acquisition proceedings, they added.

Quoting a judgment of the Supreme Court, Justice Anand Venkatesh said the apex court was expressing its anguish in the manner in which



acquisition proceedings were being stalled and delayed due to repeated interference made by courts at every stage of acquisition. The apex court held that without a strong infrastructure, this country can never make any progress. The Supreme court also sounded a word of caution, where it was held that acquisition proceedings would require interference where it was vitiated on account of non-compliance of legal requirements. The power under Article 226 of the Constitution should be sparingly exercised in land acquisition proceedings since it involves a larger public interest.

"This is yet another case where, the acquisition proceedings of a small extent has been stalled for the last five years and the government, having spent a huge amount of money of nearly ₹1,300 crore and after having completed a major part of the project, is not able to implement the project and put the highways into effective use, due to the pendency of these petitions," the judge added.

The judge said in so far as the allegation made

against the sitting MLA of the relevant constituency was concerned, this court does not find any ground to sustain this allegation. An elected representative keeps receiving various requests from the people belonging to his or her constituency and many times, they forward such requests to the authorities concerned, if they find it reasonable. After all a person gets elected as an MLA only based on the mandate of the people belonging to the constituency and therefore, it was natural that an MLA will always try to help persons belonging to the constituency when they come seeking for help. Therefore, just because an elected representative was approached by the Church and the request was forwarded by the MLA to NHAI, that does not automatically result in an assumption that there was a political pressure to change the alignment, the judge added.

The judge said admittedly, there was no re-alignment after the publication of the notification. Hence, there was no question of applying the principles of Promissory Estoppel in the present case. This court also finds that the petitioners were given sufficient opportunity and their objections were considered and therefore, there was no violation of the principles of natural justice as alleged by the petitioners, the judge added.

1,500 kg of PDS rice seized from AMMK functionary home

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 10

Around 1,500 kg of PDS rice was seized by the District Supply Officer from the house of an AMMK woman functionary in Kanchipuram district on Saturday.

Based on a tip-off, a DSO team and the local police rushed to the house of the accused, Mahalakshmi of Thenkarai near Vellakulam in Kanchipuram. Mahalakshmi was a functionary of TTV Dinakaran-led AMMK party's women wing.

The team at around 4 pm on Saturday began a raid at the house and found many gunny bags with ration rice meant for public distribution. 1.5 tonne PDS rice was seized by the officials.

Further investigations are underway.

13,120 doses of Covaxin for city private hospitals

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 10

Covaxin doses arrived at Chennai airport from Hyderabad for vaccination at private hospitals in the city.

According to airport sources, on Saturday morning, three parcels with 13,120 doses of Covaxin manufactured by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech arrived here in an Indigo airlines flight.

The vaccine doses were transported to a few private hospitals in the city. Tamil Nadu received 5.08 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccines till date for July month.

According to the Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma.Subramanian, the state was allocated 71 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccines for the month of July.

HC upholds life sentence awarded to father killer

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JULY 10

The Madras high court has upheld the life sentence awarded to an accused, who killed his father as he refused to give money to him for consuming alcohol in Coimbatore on April 2, 2012.

A division bench comprising Justices P.N.Praakash and R.Pongappan dismissed the appeal filed by the accused Kanagaraj, challenging the order of the III Additional District and Sessions Judge, Coimbatore dated July 31, 2015.

The case of the prosecution was that the deceased Mayilamy and the accused were father and son. The accused is married and has a daughter. The deceased Mayilsamy, his wife, the accused, his wife and daughter were living under the same roof. The accused was addicted to alcohol and he used to quarrel with his father demanding money for consuming alcohol. On April 1, 2012, the accused and his father had an argument, when the accused demanded money for consuming alcohol. Enraged by this, his father asked the accused to get out of the house

along with his wife and the child. The deceased Mayilsamy also told the accused that he will not spare even a single praise from his property to the accused. After this arguing, at around 9 p.m on the same day Dhanalakshmi, wife of the accused called her father Shanmugam to come and take her and her daughter as she was not willing to live with the accused. Shanmugam came to her house at about 6 a.m. on April 2, 2012, for taking her to his house. As the deceased Mayilsamy had left for his coconut grove by that time, Shanmugam and Dhanalakshmi went there to inform him before leaving. When they reached the coconut grove, they saw the accused chasing the deceased Mayilsamy with a spade and hitting him on his head.

According to them and Chinnippan, the defacto complainant and Kalidass, an eye witness, were close by and they too saw the incident. In fact, Chinnippan and Kalidass ran towards the scene of occurrence shouting at the accused. The accused, on seeking them, ran away from the scene of occurrence with

the spade. On a complaint given by Chinnippan, the police registered a case. Subsequently, the accused appeared before the VAO and gave a confession statement. After recording the extra-judicial confession, the VAO prepared a special report and handed over the accused to the Investigating Officer. After a full-fledged trial, the trial court found the accused guilty of the offence under section 302 IPC and convicted and sentenced him to life. Aggrieved over the same, the accused has preferred the present appeal.

Upholding the order of the trial court, the bench said the testimony of Dhanalakshmi, the wife of the accused and her father appears as cogent and trustworthy. Their evidence clearly proved the occurrence as during the relevant point of time, with an intention to kill his father, the accused by using the spade, attacked the deceased and caused multiple fatal injuries. The evidence given by the post mortem doctor in respect to injury sustained by the deceased also corroborates the said evidence, the bench added.



Members of Makkal Needhi Maiam protest against petrol price hike near Valluvar Kottam on Saturday.

—DC

CRYING FOR ATTENTION



A ration shop at Peravallur, Periyar Nagar, Chennai in a bad condition.

—DC

Metro train services extended till 10 pm

Chennai, July 10: In a bid to cater to the increased demand by passengers for extending of metro train services during night hours, CMRL has decided to extend its metro train services from 5:30 am to 10:00 pm from Monday, (12-07-2021) for weekdays (Monday to Saturday).

The peak hour services will be from 6:00 am to 11:00 am and from 05:00 pm to 08:00 pm with existing 5-minute headway during peak hours and 10-minute headway during non-peak hours. Metro train services will be on Sundays and government public holidays from 7:00 am to 09:00 pm with 10 minutes headway throughout the day. In addition, a penalty of Rs 200 is being imposed for not properly wearing face masks in metro trains and metro stations. So far a total of 40 passengers have been levied penalty from June 21 till July 9 for non-adherence and a sum of Rs 8,000 has been collected as penalty, according to a press release.

THE NOSTALGIA BEHIND WRITINGS ON THE WALL



G. Babu Jayakumar

Just spamming

Even as actor-turned-politician Kamal Haasan and many others in the film, intellectual and other worlds seethe with anger and spew angry words against the proposed amendment to the Cinematographic Act, not a whimper is heard on the Chennai Corporation's drive to remove all posters on city walls. The posters and its twin, the wall graffiti, which has already been banished, have been part of local culture from time immemorial. They were not

just samples of creative expression, which the Cinematograph Act allegedly seeks to curtail in the silver screen, but also served another useful purpose.

Inform, educate and entertain. These were three basic functions of journalism, we were taught aeons ago. Whether newspapers, magazines, television channels and the plethora of other media channels performed that prescribed duty or not, the posters and writings on the walls had been doing that unflinchingly. To put it

otherwise, it is not without a reason that someone stuck a poster on the wall, though many proud owners of whitewashed compound walls have been, since time immemorial, writing 'stick no bills.' Even those who painstakingly wrote whatever they had to on public walls and private walls facing the public space had something to convey, either inform or educate.

Otherwise how will people know where to go for treatment of piles and such diseases connected with the nether part of their bodies? How will people trace the whizkid who can fix their personal computers or laptops or the realtor selling housing plots facing the main road and to which one can drive in 20 minutes from some random spot a few hours away from the city if

there have been no posters? More importantly, how will the world come to know of the historic birthing of the particular emerging political leader in that obscure nook of a slum and who are all his hangers on if a poster is not printed with a hundred mugshots, even if it does not explain who is who.

Undeniably, wall posters gave us valuable information, besides educating us. To put it another way, staring at the city walls could make one return home with more knowledge than when one stepped out. Talking of education, even educational institutions informed people of their existence or an addendum to their facilities through the posters. They helped the so called IAS academics (they do not say that they train youth for the civil services) pass on infor-

mation like new faculty, starting of new programmes and special classes. In fact, wall posters educated people on educational opportunities.

Since messaging through walls has been in vogue much before Mark Zuckerberg's grandfather was born, there was a time when a good part of politics was played out through that means of communication. Even during the elections voters learnt about candidates, their parties and symbols by looking at their walls. Prior to the arrival of WhatsApp forwards, it was posters that informed us of political meetings and other events, including the circus playing in the city. Putting out posters was an industry on its own, where the last leg of operation saw a young man carrying a bucketful of

gum and a bundle of posters on his bicycle and traversing the streets at night or early morning.

For painters, who turned walls into information boards, it was the night that provided the ideal ambience. One, they did not have to suffer the scorching sun and then they had the advantage of solitude that let their creativity flow through their strokes. More than everything else, it was a surprise that they sprang on the onlooker 'one fine morning' with their message. Wherever those painters are today, their talent has lost its patrons after the drive to keep walls clean moved into top gear. Even during the past several elections, people in the urban areas faced only walls with their own inherent smudges and peeling paints but no

poll message emblazoned.

Also that drive to keep walls clean ran over the traditional method of informing people about new film releases. Of course there was a time when posters would appear even about film shooting inaugurations or even announcing the conceptualization of an idea with colourful visuals. That was one means of educating and updating oneself on the developments in the film world. Today, even if social media and Google searches can be used to gain access to such information on movies and stars, the charm of knowing things through wall posers was a different experience. For example, in a tense trip by the jam-packed bus, gripped by the fear of being late to class, one learnt of the Malayalam film running in the cinema,

not too far from college. That was when information flowed in, unsolicited, but was highly useful.

There were even times when you could learn about movies by just peering through the window of an airplane. Some of the cutouts for film actors and also top politicians reached out to the skies, sometimes turning out to be a hindrance for the free flow of traffic (no, not of airplanes but on the roads on which they were erected). They started off by felling those towering images. Then they went for other flex boards, flags on roadsides and defaced walls. Now they have come for the last scraps stuck to flat surfaces of no consequence, turning the 'stick no bills' warning by owners of private walls into an anachronism.



SHORT TAKES

Fight BJP move to isolate Kongu region: CPM

R. VALAYAPATHY I DC
PUDUKKOTTAI JULY 10

CPI(M) state secretary K. Balakrishnan has warned the BJP against its move to isolate the Kongu region of Tamil Nadu and form a union territory. He said the BJP's attempt to get into Tamil Nadu via the back door will face serious consequences.

Addressing a press conference at Pudukkottai on Saturday, Balakrishnan called upon all political parties of Tamil Nadu to defeat the BJP's move. He further said the cooperative department is purely a state subject but the BJP government at the Centre created a new cooperation ministry to snatch this subject from the state governments. The Union government's move to snatch the rights of the state governments is highly condemnable. Already several state subjects have been taken away by the central government, he added.

He welcomed Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's move to convene a meeting of all party members of the legislative council and said the Karnataka's claim that the proposed Mekedatu reservoir is only for drinking water purpose is a big lie. He said the Karnataka government is trying to woo the voters with an eye on the ensuing Karnataka assembly polls. Moreover, the scheduled tribes living in and around Mekedatu are opposing Karnataka's move, he added.

He also welcomed the extension of the lockdown by the state government with some relaxations and wanted the lockdown to continue until the eradication of Coronavirus. He appealed to the Tamil Nadu government to expedite the Cauvery-Kundarur-Vaigai rivers linking project.

He also wanted that the government to deal firmly on the complaints against the employees of the paddy direct purchase centres, to prevent the involvement of middlemen and to protect the farmers.

Vehicle-check intensified on TN-Kerala border

Coimbatore, July 10: The district administration on Saturday intensified vehicle-check on the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border following the Zika virus outbreak in that state.

Tight vigil was maintained at 14 strategic points and checkpoints at Walayar and Meenakshipuram, official sources said.

According to sources, e-pass mandatory was mandatory for those entering the district from Kerala since the spread of Covid-19.

—PTI

AIADMK to take strident stand against the DMK

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR
& D. SEKAR I DC
CHENNAI, JULY 10

Following in the footsteps of former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa, the AIADMK should take a strident anti-DMK position by intensifying its protests against the government and its MLAs should keep off official functions as a matter of principle, party coordinator O. Panneerselvam has suggested.

Speaking at the district secretaries meeting at the AIADMK headquarters on Friday, Panneerselvam said that he had attended an official function at Theni because the minister concerned had invited him personally but he was against participation of DMK MLAs.

Panneerselvam also said that he was not in favour of the 'single leadership' demand, which was actually made by his own supporters even as the delegates for the meeting were entering the premises and said he would like posts to

be distributed among many leaders in the party.

Despite the slogan raising prior to the meeting, a sense of bonhomie prevailed inside the meeting hall with the participants not being vocal in expressing their support to either of the two top leaders.

However, the 'one leadership' issue was raised by stressing on the need for a strong leadership and pointing out to the positions held by party founder MGR and then his successor Jayalalithaa.

Actually, it was acolytes of leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Edappadi K. Palaniswami who asked for the single strong leader, which was not taken further for discussion.

When the district secretaries were asked to explain the electoral debacle of the AIADMK in their respective regions, those in some southern parts of the State cited the granting of 10.5 per cent exclusive reservation

given for the Vanniyar community when the party was in power.

An allegation that the tie-up with BJP repulsed the minorities was countered by Palaniswami, who stated that in his constituency all communities had backed him in the election.

He told the party functionaries not to be bogged down by the electoral loss since the victory margin was just three per cent but not discuss in public about the alliance with other parties. We shall take a call when the time comes, he said.

That the AIADMK could muster so much support overcoming the anti-incumbency factor despite the DMK's strategy to go for local people as candidates and splurging a lot of money, indicated the people's preference for the party, he said.

The participants were told to ignore the audio tapes being leaked by V K Sasikala, reminding them of the decision by the party to take action

against those hobnobbing with her.

After the meeting, two former MLAs, P M Narasimhan and P Ilavazhagan were removed from the primary membership of AIADMK by both Panneerselvam and Palaniswami.

The party MLAs, who were all present in the meeting, were told about their responsibility to ramp up their opposition to the government inside the House.

The meeting also endorsed the AIADMK taking part in the all-party meeting called by Chief Minister M K Stalin to discuss the river water dispute with Karnataka in the context of the Mekedatu controversy.

A special resolution was also passed on celebrating the golden jubilee of the party by undertaking people's welfare programmes. Started by MGR with 16 lakh followers, the party was taken to a new height with 1.5 crore supporters by Jayalalithaa, the resolution said.

Daily infections in TN drop below 3,000

Chennai, July 10: Tamil Nadu on Saturday reported 2,913 new Covid-19 cases, which include those of five returnees from other States, the Health Department said. This pushed the total infected so far to 25,16,011, the department said.

Forty-nine deaths today took the toll to 33,371 till date, the department said. As many as 3,321 people got discharged during the day aggregating to 24,49,873 leaving 32,767 active infections, according to a bulletin.

The state reported its highest daily infection at 36,184 on May 21 and it has since been seeing a decline.

On May 30, it witnessed daily cases dropping below 30,000; on June 7 the numbers were below 20,000; and on June 17 they were less than 10,000.

As many as 29 districts reported new infections in double-digits. There were no new deaths in 16 districts, the bulletin said.

Chennai, the state capital, added 174 new infections aggregating to 5,34,819 till date. The number of COVID-19 related fatalities in the capital reached 8,256. Among the

● **Chennai, the state capital, added 174 new infections aggregating to 5,34,819 till date. The number of Covid-19 related fatalities in the capital reached 8,256.**

● **Among the districts, Coimbatore added the maximum number of new cases at 338 in the last 24 hours and Ramanathapuram was the least with six new infections.**

districts, Coimbatore added the maximum number of new cases at 338 in the last 24 hours and Ramanathapuram was the least with six new infections. The testing of RT-PCR samples stood at 1,50,412 in the last 24 hours, pushing the cumulative number of specimens examined so far to 3,43,98,110. Of 49 fatalities, 43 were in government hospitals while the remaining were in private ones.

Nine of the deceased were without any co-morbidity or pre-existing illness. One of them was a 29-year-old woman from Chennai who tested positive on May 24 and died on June 6 due to COVID-19 pneumonia, the bulletin said.

—PTI

IT ALL STARTED IN 1806



Vellore collector P. Kumaravel Pandian pays floral tributes to the memorial for Indian sepoys who lost their lives in the Sepoy mutiny on July 10, 1806, considered to be the first war of Indian independence. The memorial was built opposite the Vellore fort by the Tamil Nadu government in 1998 and tributes have been paid every year to mark the event.

—K.Senthil Nathan

Pondy adds 134 new cases, overall tally rises to 1,18,831

Puducherry, July 10: The union territory of Puducherry reported 134 fresh coronavirus cases during the last 24 hours, taking the overall tally to 1,18,831, a senior official of the Department of Health and Family Services said on Saturday.

The new cases were identified at the end of the examination of 6,045 samples, Director of the Department of Health S Mohan Kumar said. The Puducherry region alone accounted for 96 fresh infections while Karaikal registered 25, followed by Mahe (7) and Yanam (6). The Health department Director said a 68-year old woman succumbed to the virus in Karaikal in the last 24 hours ending 10 AM Saturday pushing the death toll to 1,769. The

number of active cases stood at 1,573 with 230 in hospitals and remaining 1,343 in home isolation, he added.

Mohan Kumar said 255 patients recovered and were discharged in the last 24 hours and added that the overall recoveries in the Union Territory stood at 1,15,489. He said that the test positivity rate was 2.22 per cent while fatality and recovery rates were 1.49 per cent and 97.19 per cent respectively on Saturday. The Health Department has so far vaccinated 37,509 healthcare workers and 22,926 frontline workers. He said 4,12,376 people coming under the category of senior citizens or those above 45 years with comorbidities have been inoculated so far. In all,

5,73,026 people have been vaccinated in the union territory.

Meanwhile, the health department on Saturday launched the three-day second vaccination festival inaugurated by Lt Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan at a health centre in the neighbouring coastal village of Veerampattinam. The first such festival was held for six days from June 16 and around one lakh people were inoculated under this special drive in June, a spokesperson of the Health Department said. Vaccination would be free of cost and would be done at all the primary health centres, government hospitals and designated centres, the spokesperson said.

—PTI

CM orders regularisation of temple staff, fill vacancies

DC CORRESPONDENT
SRIRANGAM, JULY 10

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has ordered regularisation of temporary employees of temples who have served for more than 5 years, besides filling the existing vacancies of temple staff.

HR&CE minister P.K. Sekar Babu, accompanied by Tiruchy Collector S. Sivarasu, HR&CE department joint commissioners

Kalyani, Sudharsanam and Mariaapan, told reporters after inspecting the Sri Ranganathaswamy temple at Srirangam on Saturday that the department is taking the details of the temples which need renovation and once it is completed efforts would be made to perform Mahakumbhaabishekams for the needy temples.

Sri Ranganathaswamy temple at Srirangam had 330 acres in the year 1866,

but now it has reduced to 24 acres and rest of the land is under the custody of private parties. If they apply in a formal manner, they will be treated as lease holders. The DMK government is committed to vacate the encroachments on temple lands through legal ways.

The minister also inspected a few other temples including Sri.Mariamman temple, Samayapura.

Justice with mercy: The last straw?



Sanjay Pinto



JUSTICE FOR ALL

It was a blow to human rights, particularly to three vulnerable sections of society – the disabled, the elderly who are infirm and under-trials, that Father Stan Swamy's tragic end has accentuated. And with it, a long list of troubling questions.

More prima facie veracity of charges is a ground for the denial of bail under Section 43D(5) of the draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) 1967. Now if the conviction rate under this law is reportedly 2 per cent, does it not call for a review especially since it bypasses crucial canons of criminal jurisprudence like 'bail not jail' and 'presumption of innocence'? For those acquitted after a considerable period and released from prison, who will restore the years spent in custody? Or undo the ruin caused to their families?

If barrier free access is a statutory right under Section 25(1)(b)(b) of the Disabilities Act, 2016 and the 84 year old Jesuit priest's Parkinson's disease was a recognised "chronic neurological condition", why was the barrier between his hands and his mouth not allowed to be bridged with a straw and a sipper to drink water? Wasn't it a cruel joke that when you can reportedly get drugs, booze and mobile phones inside prisons in our country, it took 4 weeks for the authorities to source a straw and

sipper, that too after he was forced to knock on the court's doors?

How was the doddering 84 year old who could not walk, eat or drink without help, a flight risk? What is the justification in keeping anyone of advanced age, with frail health and co-morbidities in a harsh prison environment during this deadly pandemic? What is the fate of Constitutional guarantees like the right to medical aid or the right to a speedy trial, both inherent in the Right to Life & Liberty under Article 21?

The usual refrain is 'the law must take its course.' But the law and that 'course' must be humane. It may be worthwhile tweaking Section 43D(5) of UAPA by introducing strict bail conditions, which apart from the usual steps like surrendering the passport, can provide for the use of technology like GPS anklets to monitor movements, a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) monitored medical examination of bail petitioners who

are above the age of 70 with serious health issues to decide on hospitalisation, the option of heavily guarded house arrest and a clear timeline to consider medical related requests like medicines, spectacles or other aids.

Another important aspect is the liability faced by professionals in the discharge of their duties. In an interesting case, the Supreme Court in State of Kerala Vs Raneef (2011) lucidly explained that "the respondent, being a doctor, was under the Hippocratic oath to attempt to heal a patient. Just as it is the duty of a lawyer to defend an accused, so also it is the duty of a doctor to heal. Even a dentist can apply stitches in an emergency. Prima facie we are of the opinion that the only offence is under Section 202 IPC for omitting to give information of the crime to the police, and this offence has to be proved beyond reasonable doubt." Section 202 IPC is a bailable offence. The Court quipped that "a doctor incarcerated for a long period may end up like Dr. Manette in Charles Dickens novel 'A Tale of Two Cities', who forgot his profession and even his name in the Bastille."

A civilised democracy should be capable of dovetailing national security with human rights. The Apex Court in Shaheen Welfare Association Vs Union of India (1996) delved into the root of the conflict. "While it is essential that innocent people should be protected from terrorists and disruptionists, it is equally necessary that terrorists and disruptionists are speedily tried and punished. In fact the protection of innocent civilians is depend-

ent on such speedy trial and punishment. The conflict is generated on account of the gross delay in the trial. This delay may contribute to absence of proper evidence at the trial such that the really guilty may have to be ultimately acquitted."

Legal provisions can be stiff but also reasonable. In a recent decision, the Supreme Court in Union of India Vs K.A.Najieb (2021) held that "statutory restrictions like Section 43 D (5) of UAPA per-se does not oust the ability of Constitutional Courts to grant bail on grounds of violation of Part III of the Constitution. Indeed, both the restrictions under a Statue as well as the powers exercisable under Constitutional Jurisdiction can be well harmonised."

Striking a balance, the Bench opined that at the "commencement of proceedings, Courts are expected to appreciate the legislative policy against grant of bail but the rigours of such provisions will melt down where there is no likelihood of trial being completed within a reasonable time...Such an approach would safeguard against the possibility of provisions like Section 43-D (5) of UAPA being used as the sole metric for denial of bail or for wholesale breach of the constitutional right to a speedy trial."

Law must quench our thirst for justice. If we need legal sippers, so be it. Otherwise, protecting human rights would be akin to clutching at straws.

(The writer is an advocate at the Madras high court, columnist & author)



Corporation Commissioner Raja Gopal Sunkara inspects Corporation High School for Hearing Impaired at R S Puram in Coimbatore on Saturday.

—DC

Noted Tamil scholar passes away

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY JULY 10

Eminent Tamil litterateur, popular orator and educationalist Prof So. Sathiyaseelan, 88, passed away after a brief illness at Tiruchy on Friday night.

He was also a member of the Tiruchirappalli district welfare committee and received several awards including 'Kalaimamani' and 'Sollin Selvar' award.

He was a former principal of Urumu Dhanalakshmi College,

Tiruchy and moderated more than 10,000 pottamandram and participated in hundreds of Tamil programmes in All India Radio, Doordarshan and other private TV channels.

He is survived by his wife and a daughter.

2 held for murder of VTP leader

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUVARUR, JULY 10

The police arrested two persons for their alleged involvement in the murder of Rajini Pandiyan (46), Tiruvarur district secretary of the 'Valarum Tamilagam Party', at Vada Sanganthi village near Thiruthuraiipoondi in

Tiruvarur district on Friday night.

Police said the deceased was attacked by an eight-member gang with deadly weapons. He was admitted to the government hospital Thiruthuraiipoondi where he succumbed to wounds.

Police said previous enmity was the reason behind the murder. Police arrested Mahadevan and

Rajesh of Edaiyur Sanganthi and further investigation is underway.

Meanwhile, some supporters of the deceased attacked a two-wheeler mechanic Veerakumar (38) with deadly weapons in front of the government hospital, Thiruthuraiipoondi, where the body was kept believing he was also behind the murder.

₹2,500 cr water scheme for Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, JULY 10

The Tamil Nadu Government has made a detailed plan costing ₹2,500 crore for prevention of drain water merging into the Buckingham, Adyar and Koovam rivers in Chennai, refine the drain water and to supply the same to the needy industrial concerns, according to urban development minister K.N. Nehru.

Nehru along with Tiruchy Collector S. Sivarasu and others inspected the Miyawaki forest scheme at Poonampalayam near Tiruchy on Saturday.

He told newsmen that after acquiring adequate financial resources, a detailed project report will be prepared and placed on the floor of the state assembly.

The government has mooted a scheme to extend areas of the Tiruchirappalli city corporation, other corporations and municipalities, to create more municipalities and to upgrade the higher income town panchayats as municipalities. A detailed report has been submitted to the Chief Minister for his approval.

SHORT TAKES

NIA RELEASES
LIST OF 20
WANTED NAXALSRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
RAIPUR, JULY 10

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), probing the killing of the local BJP MLA Bheema Mandavi in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Dantewada in April, 2019 by Maoists, on Saturday released a list of 20 wanted Naxals in the case.

The premier probe agency has issued a list of 20 Maoists including Nambala Keshav Rao alias Gagana alias Basavraj, Kottam Sudarshan alias Anand alias Mohan and Madvi Hidma, the commander of battalion number one of CPI (Maoist), declaring different bounties on them.

NIA has declared a reward of ₹10 lakh each on Basavraj and Mohan, while a bounty of ₹7 lakh has been announced on Hidma.

Barring Basavraj and Mohan, all the Naxals figured in the wanted list of NIA in the killing of the Dantewada MLA, have been active in insurgency-hit Bastar.

The NIA filed a chargesheet in the case in the NIA court in Jagdalpur in Bastar in March, 2020, naming 33 people as accused. Six of them have so far been arrested.

CPM TO PROBE
NON-COOPERATION
OF FORMER MINDC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 9

The ruling CPM in Kerala has decided to probe former minister and senior leader G. Sudhakaran's non-cooperation during the election campaign and the defeat of two prominent leaders of constituent partners in the recent polls.

A section of CPM leaders from Alappuzha district had accused Mr Sudhakaran of staying away from most part of the campaign in Ambalapuzha constituency. The party candidate H. Salam who won by a margin of 11,125 votes despite Mr Sudhakaran's defiance, had also raised similar allegations.

The state committee of the CPM which met in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday, took serious note of the issue and decided to constitute a two-member inquiry commission to probe the charges against Mr Sudhakaran and other drawbacks in Ambalapuzha constituency.

The former minister who won from Ambalapuzha in 2006, 2011 and 2016 was denied ticket this time as the party decided to strictly enforce two term norm for all sitting MLAs. Though Sudhakaran who also served two terms as minister, did not oppose the decision openly, he sulked throughout the campaign.

D.K SHIVAKUMAR
SLAPS MAN FOR
EMBRACING HIM

Bengaluru: Karnataka Congress President D. K. Shivakumar on Saturday allegedly slapped a man who attempted to put his arms around him, drawing criticism from the BJP and on social media.

In the video that has since gone viral, Shivakumar can be seen getting irritated by the action of the man, who tried to get close to him and pace along with him.

The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee Chief, who appeared to lose cool, can then be heard telling the man, said to be a party worker: "...you should be responsible...", before asking cameramen present there to delete the footage.

The incident took place during his visit to the district headquarters town of Mandya to inquire about the health of ailing veteran leader, former Minister and MP G Made Gowda.

Tweeting the video of the incident, BJP national General Secretary C. T. Ravi, asked Congress national leader Rahul Gandhi whether he had given "licence for violence" to Shivakumar, whom he referred to as a follower of Kotwal Ramachandra, one of the underworld dons of Bengaluru in the 1970s and 1980s.

"Karnataka Congress President @DKShivakumar Slaps his party worker in full public view. If this is how the 'former shishya' of Kotwal Ramachandra treats his party worker, one can imagine what he would do with Others. Have you given DKS the 'licence for violence', @RahulGandhi?" he asked.

J&K admin dismisses 11 staff

Sons of Hizb Mujahideen chief among employees sacked for aiding terror

Srinagar, July 10: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has sacked 11 more employees, including sons of Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin who has been designated a global terrorist by the US, for allegedly working for various terror groups, officials said on Saturday.

Earlier seven employees, including deputy superintendent of police Davinder Singh and an assistant professor, were dismissed by the Union Territory's administration.

The dismissals started in the last week of April and have been done under Article 311 of the Indian

Constitution under which the employees hold their office under the pleasure of the president and can be dismissed without an inquiry. Dismissed employees can only approach a high court for relief.

The decision to dismiss the 11 employees was taken at two meetings of the designated committee in Jammu and Kashmir for scrutinising such cases. In one of the meetings, three employees were recommended for dismissal and in another, eight were recommended for dismissal from government service.

The final decision was taken after considering the recommendation of the

findings of the meetings of the committee, the officials said.

The 11 employees, who have been dismissed, are from the Jammu Kashmir Police, the education, agriculture, skill development, power and health departments, and the Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS).

Among the employees, four are from Anantnag, three from Budgam, and one each from Baramulla, Srinagar, Pulwama and Kupwara districts, the officials said.

Syed Ahmad Shakeel and Shahid Yousuf, who are sons of the most wanted terrorist, Salahuddin, were

dismissed from service for allegedly being involved in terror funding, the officials said.

Salahuddin has been designated as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the United States.

One of them was working with SKIMS as a pharmacist and the other was in the agriculture department, they said.

The National Investigation Agency has tracked terror funding trails of both the persons. They were involved in raising, receiving, collecting and transferring funds through Hawala (non-banking) transactions for

terror activities of the banned Hizbul Mujahideen, officials said.

The three officials recommended for dismissal in one of the meetings included an orderly of the ITI in Kupwara, who was an overground worker (OGW) of terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba, they said, adding he was providing information to terrorists about the movement of security forces, and abetting and harbouring terrorists to carry out activities in a clandestine manner.

Besides him, there were two teachers from Anantnag who were found involved in anti-national activities. —PTI

People's plight



Police personnel detain Youth Congress activists during their agitation outside Governor House to protest against hike in the fuel and LPG prices in Kolkata, on Saturday.

ANANTNAG
GUNFIGHT: 3 LeT
MILITANTS KILLEDDC CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR JULY 10

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Saturday said that it along with the Army and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) killed three Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants in a fire fight that broke out in southern Anantnag district earlier during the day.

The police claimed that one of the slain militants was involved in the murder of a Territorial Army (TA) soldier in June 2019.

It said that the fighting broke out in Kwarigam village of Anantnag's Achabal area following a cordon-and-search operation was launched jointly by its counterinsurgency Special Operations Group (SOG), the Army's 19 Rashtriya Rifles and the CRPF to flush out militants.

The J&K police and Army officials said that when the joint teams zeroed in on the suspected hideout of the militants they opened fire, triggering the gun battle.

BJP claims win in UP local polls

Lucknow, July 10: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday claimed victory in the polls for the posts of the block panchayat chief, amid allegations of violence by the opposition parties.

The Opposition has slammed the state government over incidents of violence in the run-up to the polls. Reports of clashes had surfaced from several areas of the state with allegations that candidates backed by opposition parties were not allowed to file nomination papers.

However, claiming an outstanding show by the

people schemes. All party workers deserve congratulations for this win, he said.

The CM also praised the state Election Commission for the peaceful and fair polls.

Conducting such a massive election process peacefully, in a state where democracy was mortgaged before professional criminals and mafia on the basis of caste religion and sect, is praiseworthy, he told reporters at the BJP headquarters here.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday congratulated Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister

Yogi Adityanath and other BJP leaders for the party's victory in the elections to posts of block and district panchayat chiefs and said it happened due to people's faith in the state government's welfare programmes.

Adityanath said almost 85 per cent seats in the polls went in favour of the ruling BJP. "This grand victory of @BJP4UP in the Uttar Pradesh block chief election is a result of the public's faith in the welfare policies of the Yogi government under the guidance of Prime Minister @narendramodiji," Shah said on Twitter.

Earlier in this week, the MVA government in Maharashtra had introduced three amendment bills in the assembly in connection with agriculture, co-operation and food and civil supplies, in a move to counter contentious farm laws enacted by the Union Government that are facing stiff opposition from farmers in the Country.

The bills have provisions for higher than MSP rate for produce in farming agreement with traders, timely payment of dues and three-year jail term or Rs 5 lakh fine or both for harassment of farmers. It has also provisions to give power to the state government to regulate and prohibit production, supply, distribution and impose stock limits on essential commodities.

AIKSCC: Maha govt betrayed farmers

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC
MUMBAI, JULY 10

Farmers' union All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) of Maharashtra on Saturday alleged that the MVA government has betrayed the farmers by bringing three amendment bills in connection with the central farm laws. Despite giving assurance of passing a resolution in connection with revocation of all the farm laws, the MVA government has acted under pressure from the corporate lobby and the Union government, the AIKSCC said.

Dr Ajit Nawale of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) said that if the state government did not stop from implementing the proposed three bills, the farmers would protest in Mumbai on the lines of

the Delhi protests. Meanwhile, Maharashtra agriculture minister Dada Bhuse denied the allegation that the state government is working under anyone's pressure.

The bills were drafted after several rounds of discussion and deliberations, he said. "Accordingly, the bills were tabled in the state Assembly. The farmers' body can give their suggestions to the

proposed bills," the minister said. Earlier in this week, the MVA government in Maharashtra had introduced three amendment bills in the assembly in connection with agriculture, co-operation and food and civil supplies, in a move to counter contentious farm laws enacted by the Union Government that are facing stiff opposition from farmers in the Country.

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At the instance of Kashmiri, Gurpreet and Gurjot were arrested, he said.

Police recovered 166 kg and 115 kg heroin from two cars which were parked in the society. Later, 70 kg heroin was also recovered from the rented accommodation of the accused persons, police said.

Gurpreet and Gurjot revealed that they were operating the drug racket on the instructions of one Navpreet Singh, presently based in Portugal. Gurpreet met Navpreet in

WHO to decide on
Covaxin inclusion
within 4-6 weeks

New Delhi, July 10: The World Health Organisation (WHO) is likely to take a decision on including Bharat Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin in the emergency use list (EUL) within four to six weeks, Soumya Swaminathan, the global health body's chief scientist has said.

Speaking at a webinar organised by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) on Friday, Ms Swaminathan said the WHO is reviewing Covaxin as its manufacturer Bharat Biotech is now uploading its entire data on the health body's portal.

According to WHO guidelines, EUL is a procedure to streamline the process by which new or unlicensed products can be used during public health emergencies.

"There is a process to be followed for EUL and pre-qualification of vaccines under which a company has to complete phase 3 trials and submit the whole data to the regulatory department of WHO which is examined by an expert advisory group," Ms Swaminathan said.

"The completeness of the data, which includes safety and efficacy and also the manufacturing quality, standard is provided. So, I expect that Bharat Biotech has already submitted data and in four to six weeks there will be a decision on its inclusion," Ms Swaminathan added.

At present, the WHO has approved vaccines by

INDIA RECORDS
42,766 NEW
COVID-19 CASESDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI JULY 10

India on Saturday recorded 42,766 fresh cases and 1,206 fatalities, taking the total Covid-19 death toll to 407,145. With 455,033 active Coronavirus cases, India's share of global active cases now stands at 3.82 per cent (one in 26) and it is the fourth most affected country in the world.

Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla on Saturday sounded a note of caution against the blatant disregard of Covid-appropriate behaviour at hill stations and other tourist locations, stressing that the second wave of the pandemic is not yet over.

Amid the huge influx of tourists in Uttarakhand, newly-appointed chief minister of the state, Pushkar Singh Dhami, on Saturday said that the state government has issued an order restricting occupancy of hotels in Nainital and Dehradun, the two most visited tourist places in the state.

Pfizer/BioNTech, AstraZeneca-SK Bio/Serum Institute of India, AstraZeneca EU, Janssen, Moderna and Sinopharm for emergency use. —PTI

India, Georgia
to work jointlySRIDHAR
KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 10

Becoming the first Indian Foreign Minister to visit the strategically-located Caucasus nation of Georgia after its independence three decades ago, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar held talks with the Georgian leadership, even as India made a major goodwill gesture by permanently handing over a part of the Holy Relics of the revered 17th century martyred Georgian Queen St. Ketevan that had been preserved in Goa for centuries.

The move, on the directions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has generated enormous goodwill for India in the Caucasus nation that borders Pakistan's friend Turkey, estranged neighbours Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as India's time-tested friend

Russia.

But it is Georgia's troubled relations with Russia that has been viewed with a lot of interest by foreign policy watchers. Georgia claims that 20 percent of its territory comprising the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia has been illegally occupied by Russia. It is an issue on which India is expected to tread carefully, given New Delhi's close ties with Moscow, even though Georgia is understood to have thanked India for "strong and steadfast support" for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Georgia was part of the erstwhile Soviet Union that broke up in 1991.

After talks on Saturday with both Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili and Deputy PM and Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani, EAM Jaishankar said, "I come here in a sense with a sacred purpose".

SHIVRAJ, NATH
RIVALRY SPILLS
TO RAJ BHAVANRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, JULY 10

A day after Leader of Opposition (LOP) Kamal Nath met governor Mangubhai Chaganbhai Patel here to draw his attention to 'deteriorating' law and order situation in Madhya Pradesh, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday invited the latter for dinner at his official residence, taking his political rivalry with the Congress veteran to the Raj Bhavan.

Mr Chouhan visited the governor at the Raj Bhavan in the morning to extend his invitation for dinner at his official residence in Shyamla Hills here. Although, the dinner hosted for the governor is termed as a 'gesture of courtesy' and 'purely apolitical', sources said the chief minister was likely to apprise the governor of achievements of his government. The governor may be apprised of the law and order situation in the state on the sidelines of the occasion, sources said.

DRUG | PEDDLING

Afghan national among four arrested, 354 kg of drugs recovered

Delhi cops seize heroin worth over ₹ 2,500 cr

BHASKAR HARI
SHARMA | DC
NEW DELHI, JULY 10

The Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested four persons, including an Afghan national, and recovered a record quantity of 354 kg Afghan heroin worth over ₹2,500 crore in international markets, officials said on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Rizwan Kashmiri, a resident of Ghitori and native of Anantnag in J&K, Gurpreet Singh and

Gurjot Singh, both residents of Jalandhar in Punjab, and Hazrat Ali, a native of Kandahar in Afghanistan, they said.

Police said that recently it came to notice that Rizwan Kashmiri was involved in drug peddling in Delhi and other states like Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana.

"On Monday, information was received that Kashmiri was going to deliver contraband in south Delhi's Ghitori area. Thereafter, a trap was laid and the accused

was arrested when he was going to deliver a packet of one kilogram of heroin," deputy commissioner of police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said.

Kashmiri revealed that he works under the command of an Afghan national Isha Khan who recently left India for Afghanistan. Khan directed him to contact Gurpreet and Gurjot who were currently operating a drug racket from Faridabad Sector-65 in Haryana, the DCP said.

At the instance of Kashmiri, Gurpreet and Gurjot were arrested, he said.

Police recovered 166 kg and 115 kg heroin from two cars which were parked in the society. Later, 70 kg heroin was also recovered from the rented accommodation of the accused persons, police said.

Gurpreet and Gurjot revealed that they were operating the drug racket on the instructions of one Navpreet Singh, presently based in Portugal. Gurpreet met Navpreet in

Kapurthala Jail, Punjab, when they were in judicial custody in different NDPS cases, the DCP said.

At the instance of Kashmiri, Ali was also arrested from Gurgaon in Haryana and two kg heroin was recovered from his possession. Around 100 kg of different chemicals used for preparation of heroin was also recovered, Mr Kushwah said.

Police said that opium grown in parts of Afghanistan is concealed in different legitimate exports, i.e., talc stone, gypsum

powder, basil seeds, and in packaging material like gunny bags, cartons etc. Then it is transported in containers to Chabahar port of Iran and from there the consignments containing the contraband are shipped to Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Trust Mumbai, they said. Thereafter, the material is separated from the legitimate exports and sent to the makeshift factories based in Shivpuri, MP, for its further extraction and processing to get the final product heroin, police said.

SHORT TAKES

UKRAINIAN
SOLDIER KILLED,
THREE WOUNDED

Kiev, July 10: The Ukrainian army said on Saturday that a soldier had been killed and three others wounded in the country's pro-Russian separatist east, amid rising tensions in the conflict-torn region.

It was the fourth Ukrainian soldier killed in the past week. The wounded were being treated in hospital and their injuries not life-threatening. Ukrainian positions on the frontline had been targeted by artillery, mortars, grenade launchers and machine gun fire. The war, which has left more than 13,000 people dead, broke out in 2014 shortly after Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula.

TAJIKISTAN
QUAKE CLAIMS
FIVE LIVES

Dushanbe, July 10: An earthquake struck eastern Tajikistan on Saturday morning, killing at least five people, according to authorities in the mountainous Central Asian country. Tremors from the 5.9 magnitude quake could be felt in the capital of Dushanbe, 165 kilometres (100 miles) southwest of the epicentre.

"Dozens of houses were destroyed," the Tajik committee for emergency situations said.

"Power lines were also partly damaged" in three villages in the district of Tajikabad, where all the victims lived.

The quake struck at 7:14 am (0214 GMT) and at a depth of 10 kilometres, according to the committee and state news agency Khovar.

Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon has ordered a commission of inquiry.

MOGADISHU
BLAST: UNKNOWN
CASUALTIES

Mogadishu, July 10: A car bomb targeting a top police chief exploded in Somalia's capital Mogadishu on Saturday, causing an unknown number of casualties, police and witnesses said. "The commissioner is unharmed but there are other casualties the attack inflicted," said Somali police spokesman Sadiq Dudishe.

He said the bomber, using an explosive-laden vehicle, struck the convoy of Benadir region police commissioner Farhan Mohamud at a busy intersection in the capital.

"It caused huge devastation and casualties of both police and civilians," said Mire Adan, who was a few metres from the scene, adding that he counted six bodies.

Nobody immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing.

ZELDA GAME
CARTRIDGE SELLS
FOR \$870,000

New York, July 10: A sealed cartridge of "The Legend of Zelda" for the old Nintendo NES console has sold for a world record sum of \$870,000, auction house Heritage Auctions said in a statement Friday.

The cartridge, dated to 1987, is still in its original packaging and trumps the previous world record sale of a video game — \$660,000 for a 1986 "Super Mario Bros" cartridge sold in April — according to the auction house. The game was the "masterpiece" in a sale of 443 lots that runs until Sunday, Eric Bradley, spokesperson for the Dallas-based company, said. The auction house has not revealed buyer's identity.

Blending adventure, action and exploration in a magical universe, Zelda is one of the most significant titles in the history of video games.

REMOVAL OF
U.S. CAPITOL
FENCING BEGINS

Washington, July 10: More than six months after the deadly US Capitol insurrection, authorities on Friday began the process of dismantling fencing and barricades surrounding the iconic Washington building, although some access restrictions will remain in place.

Personnel were seen removing bars connecting sections of the eight-foot (2.4-metre) black metal fencing that had been erected in the days following the violent unrest at the citadel of American democracy.

Removal of the fence itself was to begin early Saturday, workers on the site said, with the operation expected to last through the weekend. Thousands of National Guard troops were stationed there following the attack, and a wide security boundary complete with razor wire turned the Capitol into a fortress for months.

EU hits goal of delivering
vaccines for 70% of adults

Brussels, July 10: The European Union has hit its target of delivering enough Coronavirus vaccine to cover 70 percent of the adult population, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Saturday.

The 27 EU member state governments are responsible for administering the vaccines to citizens — and some are working much faster than others — but von der Leyen stressed that: "The EU has kept its word." The EU joint vaccine purchasing scheme, run by von der Leyen's European Commission, has delivered 330 million BioNTech-Pfizer shots, 100 million AstraZeneca, 50 million from Moderna and 20 million Johnson & Johnson.

All but the J&J jab require two doses to achieve full efficacy, and the EU is home to an estimated 366 million adults.

"This weekend, we delivered enough vaccine to member states to fully vaccinate at least 70 percent of the adult population this month. By tomorrow, some 500 million doses will have been distributed to all regions of Europe," von der Leyen said.

"Covid-19 is not yet defeated. But we are prepared to continue supplying vaccines — also against new variants. Now the member states must do everything they can to ensure that vaccinations move forward. Only then will we all be safe." When the Coronavirus epidemic hit Europe last year, the European Commission — which previously had little role in health policy — stepped in to coordinate a joint buying programme for members.

This was criticised at first by some for having been slow to get into gear and to negotiate contracts with drug suppliers, and the plan was hampered later when some firms — notably UK-based AstraZeneca — fell short in deliveries. But, as industry raced to boost production of the newly developed vaccines, purchases started flowing in, and von der Leyen will see meeting the European Commission's self-imposed July deadline for 70 percent coverage as vindication.

"The EU is delivering," she said. "Our vaccination campaign has accelerated tremendously since the beginning of the year. The joint approach is a success. Only together can we come out of this crisis well."

— AFP



People wait in a queue to register for the Sinovac Covid-19 vaccine at a convention hall building in Banda Aceh on Saturday.

— AFP

Delta variant cases
mark 32% weekly surge

London, July 10: UK health officials said the Delta variant of Covid-19 continues as the dominant strain of Coronavirus and marked a sharp increase in the UK with 54,268 more cases logged on Friday, which marks a 32 per cent increase over the previous week.

Public Health England (PHE) said its weekly analysis shows the continued rise in infections is not followed by a similar increase in hospitalisations and deaths, which

reflects a high protection offered by both doses of a Coronavirus vaccine. In a separate study, PHE also found that all the vaccines being administered are as effective at preventing symptomatic

disease in the majority of people with underlying health conditions as the rest of the population.

The data continues to show that the sharp increase in cases that we are seeing is not being followed by a similar increase in hospitalisation and death, said Dr Jenny Harries, Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency.

This is because two doses of the available vaccines offer a high level of protection against the Delta variant.

Tencent game merger blocked
China to remove 25
Didi service apps

Beijing, July 10: China's financial regulator has blocked a merger of the nation's two largest video game live-streaming sites planned by tech giant Tencent over antitrust concerns, it said Saturday.

Beijing has launched a major crackdown on the biggest players in its tech sector after years of runaway growth and lax regulation, partly due to fears over their growing influence and the security of troves of sensitive consumer data.

Analysts have estimated the planned merger of live streaming services Huya and Douyu could have brought the combined platforms' domestic market share to between 80 to 90 per cent. "If Huya and Douyu merged, that would further strengthen Tencent's dominant position in the video game live-streaming market," Beijing's State

Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) said in an online statement. "This has the effect of eliminating or restricting competition, is not conducive to fair market competition ... and is not conducive to the healthy and sustainable development of the online gaming and video game livestreaming

market." The blocked merger comes shortly after regulators abruptly announced a cybersecurity review into ride-hailing app Didi Chuxing on the heels of a US IPO that raised \$4.4 billion.

Plans for the deal were initially announced by Tencent last October, but SAMR said it would undertake an antitrust review into the merger in December. The same month, it announced an antitrust investigation into e-commerce giant Alibaba, whose fintech arm Ant Financial's bumper IPO was shelved at the last minute by regulators in November.

The company was later slapped with a record 18.2 billion yuan (\$2.78 billion) fine for anti-competitive practices. Tencent currently has a majority stake in Huya and a 38 per cent stake in Douyu.

— AFP

G20 finance ministers endorse global tax reform

Venice, July 10: G20 finance ministers on Saturday gave their backing to a "historic" global deal to tax multinational companies more fairly and urged hold-out countries to sign up.

A framework for international tax reform, including a minimum corporate rate of 15%, was agreed this month by 131 countries. But the endorsement by the 19 biggest economies plus the European Union will

help ensure it becomes a reality following years of negotiations.

"After many years of discussions and building on the progress made last year, we have achieved a historic agreement on a more stable and fairer international tax architecture," the final statement said. "We endorse the key components of the two pillars on the reallocation of profits of multinational enterprises and an

effective global minimum tax." French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire was quick to hail the agreement, saying it was a once-in-a-century opportunity for reform. "There is no turning back. We are putting an end to the fiscal race to the bottom and the digital giants will now pay their fair share of taxes," he said.

The reforms aim to prevent countries competing to offer the lowest tax

rates to attract investment, which has often resulted in multinational companies paying derisory levels of tax.

Final agreement is not expected until the run-up to the G20 leaders' summit in Rome in October.

The 15% minimum tax rate was agreed on July 1 under the auspices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Kabul rushes
troops to border

Afghans try to retake Taliaban-held crossing

Kabul, July 10: Afghan authorities prepared Saturday to try to retake a key border crossing seized by the Taliban in a sweeping offensive that the insurgents claim has helped capture a vast swath of the violence-ravaged nation.

As US troops continued their withdrawal, the Taliban said its fighters had seized two crossings in western Afghanistan — completing an arc of territory from the Iranian border to the frontier with China. It now held 85 per cent of the country, a Taliban official said Friday, controlling about 250 of Afghanistan's nearly 400 districts — a claim impossible to verify, and disputed by the government. Beijing, meanwhile, which has criticised Washington for its hasty withdrawal, urged its citizens to leave the country "as soon as possible" after evacuating 210 nationals.

The "complex and severe domestic security situation" prompted the evacuation warning, the foreign ministry said, adding that 22 of those flown out tested positive for Coronavirus on arrival in China. On Friday Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said their fighters had captured the border town of Islam Qala on the Iranian frontier and the Torghundi crossing with Turkmenistan. Herat governor spokesman Jilani Farhad said Saturday the authorities were deploying fresh troops to retake Islam Qala post, the biggest trade crossing between Iran and Afghanistan.

"They will be sent there soon," he said. The Afghan government has repeatedly dismissed the Taliban's gains as having little strategic value, but the seizure of multiple border crossings and the taxes they generate will likely fill the group's coffers with new revenue.

In a clear sign fighting was getting closer to major urban centres, an official at one hospital in Kandahar — the country's second-largest city and the birthplace of the Taliban — said Saturday dozens of wounded had been admitted in the past 24 hours, including at least 15 service members. With the Taliban having routed much of northern Afghanistan

in recent weeks, the government holds little more than a constellation of provincial capitals that must largely be reinforced and resupplied by air.

The air force was under severe strain even before the Taliban's lightning offensive overwhelmed the government's northern and western positions, putting further pressure on the country's limited aircraft and pilots.

On Thursday President Joe Biden said the US military mission would end on August 31 — nearly 20 years after it began — but he admitted it was "highly unlikely" Kabul would be able to control the entire country. "The status quo is not an option," Biden said of staying in the country. "I will not send another generation of Americans to war in Afghanistan." Biden said the Afghan people alone should determine their future, but he acknowledged the uncertainty about what that would look like. — AFP

Cyberattack hits
Iranian ministry

Tehran, July 10: Iran's transportation ministry said Saturday a "cyber disruption" had affected its computer systems and website, while the country's national railway company denied reports of being hit by a cyber at-

ack. The disruption started before noon (0730 GMT), taking down the body's website and links associated with it, the ministry said in a statement reported by state news agency IRNA.

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS - TWO COVER - PERCENTAGE TENDER SYSTEM

IFB No. 01/FQ&M-Out sourcing of CWSS - JDO/2021 Dated: 07.07.2021

Name of work: Out sourcing of Operation and Maintenance of CWSS to Vellore Corporation, 11 Municipalities, 5 Urban Panchayats and 644 supply rural Habitats in Vellore District from Mullur-head works to Kadambur (Package - I) for the period from 01.08.2021 to 31.03.2022.

Approximate value of work Rs in Lakhs: 80.38

Bid security in Rs: 61,000/-

Eligibility class: Class - I and above.

Tender in-vite: The Superintending Engineer, TWARD Board, Vellore - Tiruvannamalai Circle No. 5, 15, East Main Road, Gandhi Nagar, Vellore - 620006.

Sale of Bid & Place of sale: 12.07.2021 to 22.07.2021 Rs 1000/- + GST 12%. Bids documents are required by post an amount of Rs 500/- + GST 12% is to be paid additionally. On the Executive Engineer, TWARD Board, Maintenance Division, Theoburn, Headworks Site, Mettur - 626405.

Website Downloading: www.tenders.in.gov.in and www.twardboard.tn.gov.in (Free of cost)

1 Date & time of Pre Bid Meeting: 20.07.2021 at 11.00 AM

2 Last date and time of downloading bid documents: 23.07.2021 upto 05.45 PM

3 Last date for Submission of Bids: 26.07.2021 upto 3.00 PM

4 Date & time for opening of Technical bid: 26.07.2021 at 3.30 PM

DISP: 2025 TENDER/2021 Superintending Engineer, TWARD Board, Vellore - Tiruvannamalai Circle, Vellore - 6.

SAVE WATER, CONSERVE WATER EVERY DROP COUNTS

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE No. 15/2021 Dated 09/07/2021

The undersigned on behalf of the President of India, invites to participate in E-Open Tender through IREPS only for supply of following items. Tender closing time: 14:00 Hrs.

Sl.	Tender No.	Description in brief	Qty.	Tender Due on
1	56215077	Electric point machine Non-Traillable type	110 Nos.	19.07.2021
2	30211242	Oil kit for DVS/IEK Escorts part No. EK (51 items)	1053 Sets	20.07.2021
3	33211069	Non asbestos based organic brake pad for LHB coaches	4894 Sets	20.07.2021
4	33211120	Emergency brake accelerator	84 Nos.	22.07.2021
5	33211052	Secondary spring (Hmer) to FIAT-SIG Drg. No. 1269513	249 Nos.	22.07.2021
6	38211398	Stack adjuster complete, type IRSA600 (No item 1 to 48)	273 Nos.	22.07.2021
7	56211035	Green aspect main LED signal 110V AC	318 Nos.	26.07.2021
8	33211053	Secondary spring for chair car to FIAT-SIG	311 Nos.	27.07.2021
9	17215003	Purchase of spring assembly rubber secondary	204 Nos.	08.08.2021

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/102AAALPRBSW/2021-22 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender for and on behalf of the President of India, P. CE, Northern Railway, Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001 invites the following tenders through E-Procurement System:

Tender no.	211-2674-2020-21-NR	Due on 02.08.2021
Description of Item	<p>Item (i) Fabrication and Supply of 1 in 8.5 Diamond Crossing (without slip) B.G. (1673 mm) for 60 kg (UIC) to RDSO Drg. No. T-6492 (as amended upto date) and IRS Specification T-10-2000 (as amended upto date), with CMS acute crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-4967 (as amended upto date) & CMS obtuse crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-6495 (as amended upto date) and with all parts listed in the sub-assembly drawings but excluding standard Fish Plate, Fish Bolts, ERC & Insulating Liners/Metal Liners.</p> <p>Item (ii) Manufacturing & Supply of 1 in 8.5 Diamond Crossing with Single Slip (Curved Switch) B.G. (1673 mm) for 60 kg (UIC) to RDSO Drg. No. T-6493 (as amended upto date) and IRS Specifications T-10-2000 and T-29-2016 (as amended upto date) with CMS acute crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-4967 (as amended upto date), CMS obtuse crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-6495 (as amended upto date) and 7000 mm OR Switches (curved) - with all parts listed in the sub-assembly drawings but excluding standard Fish Plate, Fish Bolts, ERC & Insulating Liners/Metal Liners.</p> <p>Item (iii) Manufacturing & Supply of 1 in 8.5 Diamond Crossing with Double Slip (Curved Switch) B.G. (1673 mm) for 60 kg (UIC) to RDSO Drg. No. T-6494 (as amended upto date) and IRS specifications T-10-2000, and T-29-2016 (as amended upto date) - with CMS acute crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-4967 (as amended upto date) & CMS obtuse crossings to RDSO Drg. No. T-6495 (as amended upto date) and 7000 mm OR Switches (curved) - with all parts listed in the sub-assembly drawings but excluding standard Fish Plate, Fish Bolts, ERC & Insulating Liners/Metal Liners.</p> <p>Item (iv) Manufacturing & supply of: 1 in 12 Scissors Cross Over with 10125mm Curved Switches & CMS Crossings (4725 mm Track Centre) B.G. (1673mm) for 60kg UIC to RDSO Drg. No. T-8109 (as amended upto date) and IRS specifications T-10-2000 and T-29-2016 (as amended upto date) - with CMS Crossings to RDSO Drawing No. T-8110, 8113, 8116 & 8119 (as amended upto date) and 10125 mm Curved 1 in 12 Switches for 60kg (UIC) rails-including Check Rails and all fittings but excluding Fish Plates, GRSP, Elastic Rail Clips, Insulating Liners, Plate Screws and Special Bearing Plates.</p> <p>Item (v) Manufacturing & supply of: 1 in 8.5 Scissors Cross Over with 6400mm Curved Switches & CMS Crossings (4725 mm Track Centre) B.G. (1673mm) for 60kg UIC to RDSO Drg. No. T-6092 (as amended upto date) and IRS specifications T-10-2000 and T-29-2016 (as amended upto date) - with CMS Crossings to RDSO Drawing No. T-8093, 6096, 6099 & 6102 (as amended upto date) and 6400mm Curved 1 in 8.5 Switches for 60kg (UIC) rails-including Check Rails & all fittings but excluding Fish Plates, GRSP, Elastic Rail Clips, Insulating Liners.</p>	
Tender Value	₹28,95,87,395.1	Tender Document Cost
Completion Period	12 Months	Time of Submission of Tender
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	on 02.08.2021 at 14:30 IST	Valid of offer
Note: The complete information of above E-Procurement tender is available on website www.ireps.gov.in and www.northernrailway.gov.in .		E-Tender Notice No.: 196-S/71/2020-21/Tender Notice/ISO-III/Diamond & Scissor X-over Dated: 09.07.2021 1541/21

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

DECCAN Chronicle

11 JULY 2021



Shashi Warriar

Off the beaten track

To keep power, redouble effort, hire triple agents

Murthy dropped in last week, the day I'd got a bottle of 12-year-old Irish whiskey. I don't know how he does it, but he invariably drops in — always without notice, mind you — just when I've got a bottle of something special that I want to keep for an occasion. But this time he drank my whiskey with a distracted air, staring out of the window at the grey drizzle falling outside. "What's up?" I asked.

"I need advice from a statistician," he said. "You know a lot of professors, and one of them might be good with statistical analysis, besides being able to keep a secret."

"Sure," I said, "I know a couple of guys. But why? You're into wheeling and dealing, not stats."

He evaded. "It's just some minor project that came up a few months ago, you know, after the recent state elections that took us all by surprise."

But I knew it was more than that, and, sure enough, a couple of whiskeys later, he got expansive. "Those elections," he said, "they're going to change the way elections are managed."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

He emptied his glass. After I poured him a refill, he continued. "I won't name any names," he said, "because all this is speculation. You know, during those last elections up in the east of the country, there was this local state-level party facing a national-level juggernaut. Every analyst predicted that the juggernaut, which had done very poorly thus far in that state, would give the local party a drubbing, or, if not that, at least a great fight. There were lots of people who said that the people hated the local party because it was corrupt and favoured some sections of the populace and so on."

"But when the results came, all that went up in smoke. The local party got a two-thirds majority, the juggernaut got half the seats they'd expected — and a third of what their leaders claimed they'd get — and everyone else got wiped out."

"Right," I said. Of course I remembered! "That was when all those MLAs who had deserted the local party for the juggernaut began to queue up to return... I don't remember seeing such a flood of sleaze ever before."

"You judge too quickly," he said. "It's human nature. You won't succeed if you sit around judging it instead of understanding it and using it."

"I'll do that when I can stomach it," I said, "but what's this all about?"

"Well, practically the only one who got it right was a hired advisor to the local party," he said. "He said that if the juggernaut got more than a hundred seats, he'd give up his career."

"Yes, I remember," I said.

"After the results came," said Murthy, "he quit the company that officially assisted the local party, the company that he founded, despite having called it right."

"So what?" I asked.

"Another state government that will be facing the juggernaut soon, and has dissent within its ranks, has hired him as an individual at an undisclosed fee... That fee must be stratospheric. So he has all the power and the money he wants but is accountable to no one. Brilliant!"

"So why are you looking for a good statistician?" I asked.

"Because I figured out what he did," he replied. "He figured out a way to beat all the pollsters and election-watchers. He's changed the way elections are managed. Permanently."

"You still haven't told me how," I complained.

"Ah, yes," he said, in his best superior manner. "Whenever there's an election, parties and candidates... Well, they offer voters money and booze to vote for them."

"Yes," I replied. "Part of the sleaze."

"Well, I think this guy took it a step further," he said. "He offered his flock the usual money to vote for his party, and a little extra to tell everyone that they were going to vote for the juggernaut."

"But why?" I asked. I'm a simpleton in these matters.

"Two things," he said. "It gave the juggernaut's people the wrong idea about how well they were progressing. Second, the poll analysts, too, thought the juggernaut would do better, and got thrown off."

"But that still doesn't explain why you need a statistician!" I said.

"I thought you'd understand," he said, disappointment in his voice. "This guy created a lie that's essentially a statistical bias, so I want to know if there's a statistical method to understand and neutralise it. The other thing is, the local party had limited cash. So the guy had to figure out a way to spend his money in critical constituencies in areas where it would have the most effect. There might be a mathematical way to do that."

"Well," I said, reaching for my phone, "I'll put you on to a couple of profs right away. You can speak to them directly."

"No thanks," he said, emptying his glass again. When I reached for the bottle, he waved it away. "No thanks for that, too. I've just figured out a possible solution."

"But you don't know any mathematics," I said.

"I don't," he said. "But this is politics and people, not mathematics. This guy we were talking about, he told people to lie: they did one thing and said another. Like double agents, sort of."

"Yes," I said.

"If you want to beat him and his double agents," he said, rising to leave, "you pay some of those double agents a lot of money to change who they vote for, but not what they say. You pay them to tell the truth about who they're voting for. You spread the rumour that you're willing to pay other double agents as well. It won't cost much, since you're working with rumours and confusion. So you create not double but triple agents, see?"

"Shashi Warriar has written fairy tales, thrillers, a semi-fictional biography, satires, and a love story. Besides writing, he teaches strategic communication at a business school."

Subhani



The method & madness of Modi's Cabinet shuffle



Pavan K. Varma

Chanakya's View

Reams have been written on the recent Cabinet reshuffle, as though it marked a major milestone in the Modi Sarkar. However, such mid-term reshuffles are fairly routine exercises, and the temptation to over-interpret them, or to derive substantive consequences from them, should be resisted.

Any shifting around of ministers in the current dispensation has little meaning because the actual focus of power has shifted so dramatically to the all-powerful Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Ministers are like elevated bureaucrats, tasked to implement a brief given to them from the PMO, with little scope for personal initiative in a system where both directive and monitoring powers are vested elsewhere. Such a form of functioning makes a mockery of the consultative process that is the very essence of a Cabinet form of government. To be fair, this is not the hallmark only of this government. It has been the case whenever the PM becomes the sole fountainhead of power in the system, and Narendra Modi certainly is one such.

There are many inexplicable factors in this round of the shuffling of the pack. For instance, Mansukh Mandaviya has been given charge of the crucial portfolio of health. Its importance can hardly be overstated during pandemic times. Glaring inadequacies have been revealed, and major restructuring is required in the health sector. Given this, one would have thought that Mansukhji would be dealing only with health. But, he has also been made in charge of chemicals and

fertilisers, major subjects in themselves. Why?

The way portfolios have been combined leaves one, frankly, flummoxed. Why should Sarbananda Sonowal be dealing with ports, shipping and waterways and Ayush? What is common between ports and Ayurveda? Similarly, the new blue-eyed boy Ashwini Vaishnav holds the railways portfolio. Anyone even remotely familiar with the functioning of government knows that railways is an empire in itself, requiring the full time and concentrated focus of the minister in charge. But, Vaishnav has also been given the electronics and information technology portfolio.

There will be those who say that there is an overlap between IT and electronics and railways. Maybe, but these are big portfolios in their own right, and a minister trying to deal with both may end not giving enough time to either. Other appointments also raise worrying questions. What is common between petroleum, and housing and urban affairs, which Hardeep Puri has been tasked to deal with? G. Kishan Reddy has been given culture, tourism, and development of Northeast region. Firstly, given that India is a civilisational entity of great antiquity and refinement, and has an abundance of neglected talent in the realm of the arts, culture should have merited a full time Cabinet minister, especially since this government never tires of paying tribute to our ancient past. The tremendous potential of tourism, and the consistent record of neglect it has suffered, should have made the PM think of giving this sector too to a full time Cabinet

minister. Now, the overwhelmed Shri Reddy, will end up doing effectively neither culture nor tourism, even as he struggles to deal with the affairs of the Northeast. He will be further surprised to find that his minister of state in the ministry of tourism is simultaneously dealing with ports and shipping!

Home minister Amit Shah has been saddled with a new ministry of "cooperation". Its task is to "provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country", and to streamline the processes for ease of doing business and enable development of multi-state cooperative banks. What has this brief to do with the home ministry will remain an eternal mystery, unless the idea is to improve the law and order situation in the functioning of cooperatives!

One feels sorry for the ministers who have been dropped, for they were but puppets — less or more agile — in a system where the strings were in the hands of the PMO. Harsha Vardhan, the health minister, needed to go for his terrible handling of the pandemic, but surely the blamegame should have also included those who are in charge of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)? The NDMA kicked in in March 2020 when the pandemic was declared a national disaster. All subsequent steps to handle it, including a

Mansukh Mandaviya has been given charge of the crucial portfolio of health. Its importance can hardly be overstated during pandemic times. But, he has also been made in charge of chemicals and fertilisers, major subjects in themselves. Why?

national plan devised for this purpose, were in the hands of the NDMA. The Prime Minister is the chairperson of the NDMA. Where should responsibility rest for the gross incompetence and lack of anticipation that was seen when the second wave hit us?

Ravi Shankar Prasad and Prakash Javdekar, more loyal than the king, faced the axe. I am sure they must be still wondering what they did wrong. Prasad could not have adopted his abrasive response to Twitter and social media without clearance from the PMO. Others have been equally culpable. Eighty-four years old and seriously unwell, Father Stan Swamy died in custody, begging for a straw sipper to drink water because he suffered from Parkinson's, while the National Investigation Authority (NIA), doggedly argued against his bail. There was justifiable national and international outrage over his death. The NIA is under the Home ministry, but its incumbent was not touched. On the other hand, Anurag Singh Thakur, who was seen on public video footage openly inciting a mob to kill during the anti CAA-NRC protests, has been promoted. What is the message?

Prime Minister Modi has been lucky so far. Very often his decisions, escape close scrutiny by the media and the public, because of his aura, and the ever-efficient publicity and propaganda departments of his party. But, that aura is severely dented today. It is time to ask the right questions, rather than be mesmerised by his ordained claim to invincibility. When such questions are asked, it will be seen that the much hyped Cabinet reshuffle was another routine and lacking exercise rather than the gamechanger it has been so assiduously projected to represent.

The writer, an author and a former diplomat, is in politics

LETTERS

ABOVE THE LAW

In 2017, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) had served a notice on actor Amitabh Bachchan asking him to part with a portion of his 'Prateekha' bungalow plot in Juhu for the widening of the adjacent lane. The BMC has almost completed the work but for the stretch in front of 'Prateeksha'. Although four years have since elapsed, the actor has not budged an inch. Had the house owner been an ordinary man, the civic body's bulldozer would have swung into action long ago. It is unfortunate that film celebrities are treated as demigods in India, which is probably why they have scant respect for the laws of the land.

P.G. Menon,
Chennai

VICTORY LOSS

The news item that Minister's fan sacrifices himself to fulfil a vow made sad reading. A retired employee of the TNSTC from Karur is reported to have taken this extreme step on the victory of the state electricity, prohibition and excise minister. Such an act is an irreparable loss to the family of the deceased. On the other hand, he should have lived to see the performance of the minister. Moreover he could have taken a vow to render service to the people of the society. Leaders should educate people about the futility of such acts and party cadre should be advised to serve the people.

Sravana Ramachandran,
Chennai

WTC POINTS CHANGE

This refers to ICC statement that during the next WTC there will be a change in the points system. Each Test match winner will get 12 points, tie 6 points and draw 4 points. This is a thoughtful change as the inaugural WTC tournament points system proved to be faulty. Likewise, the number of Test matches, per series, should be equal to all teams, say 3-match series. The last edition series of 5, 4, 3 & 2 matches proved to be beneficial to some teams. Moreover, a 3-Test match series would enable each team to play at least six to seven series within the next two years, to select the worthy two teams to meet in the final. Finally, the WTC finals should be best of 3 matches and the same should be played in a neutral venue on a rotation basis.

N.V. Krishnan,
Chennai

Anita Katyal
Political Gup-Shup



Amit Shah's secret of utmost 'cooperation'; Twitter & Puri

The creation of a new ministry, the ministry of cooperation, which is mandated to strengthen the country's cooperative movement, has led to considerable speculation about the real purpose behind this move. The fact that it is headed by home minister Amit Shah, the second-most important leader in the Narendra Modi government, is a sure sign that the new ministry is politically important for this dispensation. It is said the new ministry is aimed at checkmating state leaders like Sharad Pawar, who derive political clout from these cash-rich cooperatives. Mr Shah is not new to this game. He has had a long association with the Ahmedabad District Cooperative Bank which was embroiled in a controversy post-demonetisation when RTI replies revealed it had received the highest deposits of banned old currency notes. Mr Shah has been a director with the bank and also served as its chairman in 2000. He even fought a bitter court battle to gain control of the bank. Tushar Mehta, the present solicitor general of India, was his lawyer. CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury has already sounded

alarm bells, saying cooperative societies are a state subject that the new ministry will be encroaching on their rights.

It clearly pays to be visible on social media. The newly-promoted petroleum and urban affairs minister Hardeep Puri can testify to that. Mr Puri was hyperactive on Twitter in the run-up to the Cabinet reshuffle. While he took care to amplify Prime Minister Narendra Modi's messages, speeches and articles, describing him as "Karmayogi PM" and his writings as brilliant, Mr Puri was equally busy trolling his opponents, especially those who dared to criticise the Central Vista redevelopment project. Mr Puri even persuaded friendly media-persons and former bureaucrats to pen articles praising the project and castigating those who dared to quiz the government on the need to line the three-kilometre stretch on Rajpath with aesthetically questionable concrete structures. Mr Puri's efforts clearly paid off as he was rewarded with an upgrade as a Cabinet rank.

While health minister Harsh Vardhan's exit from the Cabinet did not come as a surprise given how the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic was mismanaged, Ravi Shankar Prasad and Prakash Javadekar's resignation was a bolt from the blue. Mr Prasad, who was heading the law and information technology ministries, assumed it would be business as usual for him. He believed he had successfully filled the vacuum created by Arun Jaitley's death as he was often called upon to take on the Opposition and defend the government and the party. It was, therefore, a shock for Mr Prasad when he received a phone call on Wednesday morning asking him to put in his papers. No one, not even Mr Prasad, knows why he was shown the door. It is being assumed that his running battle with Twitter cost Mr Prasad his job but it is well known that in this government, a minister cannot go so far without permission from top bosses.

Stung by criticism that there is a talent deficit in the Modi government, its media managers were at pains

to point to the educational qualifications of the Prime Minister's ministerial team, including the foreign universities they attended. But a study of the list of ministers shows the talent deficit persists as Mr Modi has entrusted key ministries to leaders who are not from the BJP ranks. The all-important civil aviation ministry is headed by Jyotiraditya Scindia, a recent entrant to the BJP. Ashwini Vaishnav, a former career civil servant, is in charge of the ministries of railways as well as information technology. Kiren Rijiju, now promoted as law minister, is originally from the Congress and Maratha strongman Narayan Rane, the new MSME minister, was with the Shiv Sena and had a brief stint in the Congress before he joined the BJP. Not to forget S.Jaishankar, Hardeep Puri and Raj Kumar Singh, all former bureaucrats, who head the important ministries of foreign affairs, petroleum and power, respectively. Even the Janata Dal (United) nominee RCP Singh, the new steel minister, is a former bureaucrat.

The inclusion of Uttarakhand's Ajay Bhatt in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet and the appointment of Pushkar Singh Dhami as CM of the hill state has baffled many people. Both Mr Bhatt and Mr Dhami hail from the Kumaon region while the BJP has its base in the Thakur-dominated Garhwal region which has shown a marked preference for the saffron party. It was expected that leaders from Garhwal would be accommodated to send out the right message before next year's crucial Assembly election. But the BJP leadership in Delhi apparently believes the Thakurs are loyal to the party and will not desert the saffron camp. It, therefore, decided to focus on the Kumaon region to take on Congress leader and former chief minister Harish Rawat who, in BJP's reckoning, needs to be countered as he is the Opposition's only tall leader in Uttarakhand. Time will tell if the BJP's change of tactics will pay electoral dividends.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

INDIAN TOP 10
BESTSELLERS

NON-FICTION

- SACH KAHUN TOH**
Neena Gupta
Penguin, ₹599
- INDIA AND ASIAN
GEOPOLITICS: THE
PAST, PRESENT**
Shiv Shankar Menon
Penguin, ₹699
- NEHRU, TIBET AND
CHINA**
A.S. Bhasin
Penguin, ₹699
- THE POWER OF
GEOGRAPHY**
Tim Marshal
Simon & Schuster, ₹699
- INDIA'S POWER ELITE**
Sanjaya Baru
Penguin, ₹699
- INDIA VERSUS CHINA**
Kanti Bajpai
Juggernaut, ₹599
- RUMOURS OF SPRING**
Farah Bashir
HarperCollins, ₹499
- REMNANTS OF A
SEPARATION**
Aanchal Malhotra
HarperCollins, ₹599
- HOSTILITY: A
DIPLOMAT'S DIARY ON
PAKISTAN INDIA
RELATIONS**
Abdul Basit
HarperCollins, ₹799
- THE LIGHT OF ASIA**
Jairam Ramesh
Penguin Viking, ₹799



FICTION

- AT NIGHT ALL BLOOD
IS BLACK**
David Dipo
Pushkin Press, ₹399
- WHEREABOUTS**
Jhumpa Lahiri
Penguin, ₹499
- A GAMBLING MAN**
David Baldacci
Pan Macmillan, ₹699
- SOOLEY**
John Grisham
Hachette, ₹699
- A GAMBLING MAN**
David Baldacci
Pan Macmillan, ₹699
- HOMELAND ELEGIES**
Ayad Akhtar
Hachette, ₹1,050
- TURN A BLIND EYE**
Jeffrey Archer
Pan Macmillan, ₹450
- THE BEGUM AND
THE DASTAN**
Tarana Husain Khan
Tranquebar, ₹499
- THE LAST QUEEN**
Chitra Banerjee
Divakaruni
HarperCollins, ₹599
- THE DANGERS OF
SMOKING IN BED**
Mariana Enriquez
Granta, ₹599

Bahrison's, New Delhi

FAST FACT

Widely regarded as South Africa's greatest playwright, **Athol Fugard** (89) celebrated his birthday last month. His plays are highly political. They



are known for their authentic and revealing dialogue. *Blood Knot* (1961), his most famous play, deals with the secret animosity between two half-brothers of different skin tones springing from race, while *Tsotsi*, which was adapted in 2005 into an Oscar-winner by the same name, is his best read novel.

'Many of us drift into friendships, but Ram takes his very seriously'



David Gilmour

excerpt

My first impression of Ram Guha was that he was like an intellectual of about sixty or seventy years ago. With his rough tweed jacket and baggy trousers, his tousled hair, his round-lensed spectacles and his rather shambling gait, he looked like a figure of the 1930s; underneath his jacket he wore a patterned jersey that might have been knitted for George Orwell. Furthermore, he talked in the way that bhadrakol scholars used to talk, rapidly and excitedly on a very wide range of subjects.

Yet, I soon realised, he was not really garrulous — an adjective much used by British rulers to denigrate Bengali intellectuals — he was simply more interested and better informed than almost anyone else. About twenty years ago we went to Trent Bridge to watch a cricket match, I in my stripy blazer, he in his tweed jacket and Orwell's jersey. We travelled to the ground with Sunil Khilnani and my son in a motor car, a rather ropey old vehicle that Sunil had recently bought from a friend. It was a day-night match, an one-day international (ODI) between Australia and Pakistan, and as we returned to the car park shortly before midnight, Sunil suggested that, as he had only recently passed his driving test and had never driven in the dark, it might be better if I drove

home. Reluctantly, I agreed, and, while I navigated the outskirts of Nottingham and set off on the long dreary journey down the M1 to London, Ram in the back seat kept up an inquisition that lasted two hours. Had I read the current issue of the *New York Review*? Did I agree with so and so's piece in the latest *Times Literary Supplement*? What did I think of a denunciatory article in the *London Review of Books*? He is sometimes a difficult chap to keep up with.

Over the last twenty years I have known Ram in various guises, but there are earlier incarnations that I could not know. I never knew Ram the anthropologist, Ram the trainee sociologist or Ram the nearly-Marxist, the Calcutta student who gave away his cricket books in order to find room on his shelves for a Marxist library that included the ninety volumes of Lenin's collected works. Nor, more regrettably, have I seen much of Ram the ecologist, although we have similar views on the environment — we have been on expeditions into the Nilgiris, and we have enjoyed good country walks in Britain, in the hills of lowland Scotland and southern England.

The first Rams I was acquainted with were Ram the fledgling biographer, then struggling through several drafts of his biography of Verrier Elwin, and Ram the historian of Indian cricket, a subject he found easier

to write about and which resulted in what I consider his most enjoyable book, *A Corner of a Foreign Field*. Yet, whatever difficulties he had with Elwin — with an Indian editor (helpful though he happened to be), with Western publishers (unhelpful though they were) and with his own problems in making the transition from anthropology to biography — *Savaging the Civilized* is a wonderful book. Not the least of the book's charm is the way that it is amiably sprinkled with cricketing metaphors, with how Elwin might be 'stumped' or forced 'onto the back foot', and how some Indian minister would go 'out to bat' on his behalf.

The next Rams I knew were the Rams that everyone knows, Ram the biographer of Gandhi and Ram the chronicler of modern India. These are great books, which I read in draft form, but I do not think there is much point in my talking about them to an

audience, which knows so much more about these subjects than I do. Instead, I would like to say something about Ram the essayist and political journalist because his articles reveal more about his mind and his character than anything else he writes.

An English journalist once said of my father, Ian Gilmour, a left-wing Tory who was a minister in Ted Heath's government and briefly (until he criticised her) in Margaret Thatcher's, that he was a man of 'liberal views, illiberally held'. Much the same could be said of Ram, who liked — and was liked by — my father, and who once described himself as a moderate who sometimes expressed his views in 'an extreme fashion'. I think that one of the best decisions he ever made was to refuse a professorship in Delhi, which would have made him part of the 'academy'. I am someone who rejected academic life because I wanted to write about different subjects and different countries, but Ram had more serious reasons. He wanted to be independent, not to be part of any 'school', not to have to defer to colleagues or to the prevailing fads of a particular department. He is not an intellectual of the seminar or the café table but a scholar of the archives and his own desk. He rejected the academic fervour of Delhi for what, in intellectual terms, is the backwater of Bangalore.

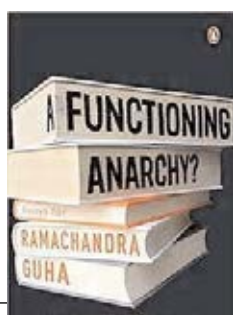
Ram's independence has allowed him to attack, at some personal risk, targets in all areas of the particular spectrum. He will assail with equal vehemence both the enthusiasts of Hindutva and the communists of West Bengal. Yet he will also criticise those parties and their representatives that might be closer to him in ideological terms but have failed to perform

their duties, whether because they are corrupt, stupid or merely incompetent. If I were Rahul Gandhi and I had read Ram's articles, I would long ago have disappeared from public life.

I will end on that most personal note, that of friendship. Ram is someone who takes friends seriously. Many of our generation seem to regard friendship as a rather fluid phenomenon, something that prospers with the help of proximity and occasion and which tends to fade when faced by distance or unavailability. Ram will have none of this. Friendship is friendship, whatever distant continents the friends might live in.

Many of us drift into friendships, after rather liking someone at a dinner or a cocktail party; it is often a casual, take-it-or-leave-it affair, something that doesn't really matter whether it works out or not. Ram is different, in this respect as in so many others. If he wants someone as a friend, he will travel hundreds of miles to ensure that the friendship is kept flourishing. I will never forget how twenty years ago he came to do some research in Edinburgh, where I then lived, and, following an introduction from a mutual friend, turned up at my doorstep in tweed jacket, baggy trousers and Orwell's jersey. He was at his wittiest and most irrepressible, perhaps even 'garrulous'. Afterwards, he summed up the encounter in a sentence that may not have been his most stylish but which perfectly described the episode, 'I felt that we hit it off first ball.'

Excerpted with permission from A Functioning Anarchy? Essays for Ramachandra Guha, chapter titled The Many Rams of Ramachandra Guha



**A FUNCTIONING
ANARCHY? ESSAYS FOR
RAMACHANDRA GUHA**
Edited by SRINATH
RAGHAVAN and
NANDINI SUNDAR
Penguin Random
House, ₹699, pp. 370

RESURRECTING, IN MIND'S EYE, A LIVING RED FORT



Indranil Banerjee

review

The Red Fort which broods over the older parts of India's capital, New Delhi, is today considered a symbol of the country's magnificent past. It is from the ramparts here that successive Prime Ministers address the nation every Independence Day. Each year thousands of curious Indians come to admire its red sandstone walls towering over the old city and the remains of the Mughal courts inside. This monument is viewed as an enduring achievement of India's once powerful rulers, whose fame had spread to all corners of the earth.

Yet, not all of the Fort's history is exemplary or admirable. Much of it is sordid. A lot fascinating. And most of it, tragic. Author and amateur historian, Debasish Das, has painstakingly researched and resurrected the fort's many-faceted histories and produced a book rich in anecdotes, facts, trivia and stories.

"The Red Fort, where resided the Mughal rulers till the very end is now an empty shell," Das observes. "Its Hayat Baksh garden, where emperors strolled in the perfumed air and where moonlight functions were held, is all but a soulless grassed land." "Today, as we join hundreds of others pouring into the skeletal remains of the monument to

gawk at its beauty, all we can find are shards of fragile memories of an age long forgotten — an age of grandeur and opulence that we can only witness in our mind's eye," the author writes.

The book, therefore, seeks to resurrect the past, tell us how the Red Fort came to be and how the fortunes of successive Mughals, their courtiers, numerous wives, children and supplicants were inextricably tied to it. One focus is on the extravagance, opulence and sheer wastefulness of Mughal lifestyles.

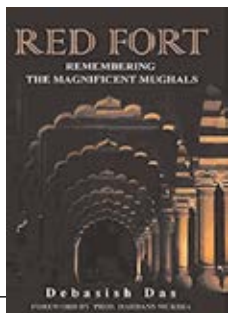
We are told that Inayat Khan in the *Shah-Jahan-Nama* wrote of how the emperor conceived of the idea of the Red Fort on the banks of the Yamuna much further upstream from Agra, the original Mughal capital. Shah Jahan wanted "a pleasant site, distinguished by its genial climate, where he might find a splendid fort and delightful edifices, agreeable to the promptings of his generous heart, through which streams of water should be made to flow, and the terraces of which should overlook the river".

And so the fort was built: "From 1648, the Qila-Mubarak, Qila-i-Surkh, Qila-i-Shahjahanabad, or Qila-i-Mualla, as it has been variously known over the ages, saw not only the golden age of the Mughal Empire flourish under its founder but also the very decline and decimation of the same great Empire."

The book follows the vicissitudes of the Mughal lineage and adds numerous little sections on the habits, customs, and delights of the Mughals. Apart from the architectural influences that defined the monument and descriptions of its principal components like the Diwan-e-Aam, Diwan-e-Khaas, its gates and gardens, the book makes sudden forays into matters such as the eating habits of the Mughals, their intoxicants, costumes, jewellery, pastimes and pleasures.

The book at times seems eclectic and unstructured. Here, one is tempted to heed the warning of professional historians against the amateur Dilettantes, historians aver, with little understanding of nuances and limited academic discipline can do more harm than good. So, it is with a little trepidation that one must approach a work such as this one, put together not by a historian but by a telecom professional.

However, where the professional historian would fuss about sources, ponder long on academic debates and stress a point over lengthy pages, amateur historian Das is fresh, energetic and overflowing with stories about the strange days and ways of the Mughals of the Red Fort. His book will serve as a fascinating guide for the lay reader and visitors to the Fort, if for nothing else, its exuberance.



**RED FORT: REMEMBERING
THE MAGNIFICENT MUGHALS**
By DEBASISH DAS
Become Shakespeare,
₹499, pp. 406

While much of the book and its many short sections tend to be somewhat disjointed and faltering, as we approach the end, things change. The narration of the battle in 1858 between the Indian rebels holding Delhi and the British forces is recounted masterfully. The thrill of battle, the tragic mayhem that followed and the pitiful end of a magnificent empire are well conveyed.

Here the amateur excels. Where a formal historian would have been conservative and measured, this book's author is flamboyant and truly captures the mood at the time of the momentous defeat of the Indian force and the fall of the Fort: "In the Red Fort, British troopers with their hands soiled black with gunpowder, threw open drawers containing Mughal trinkets, tore down illuminated Persian manuscripts, and in the zenana still heady with fragrances of rose ittar, they tore down curtains, turned and flung away rich fabrics and carpets. Even General Wilson could not resist the temptation to sit on the Mughal throne for a while."

The end was the complete and abject defeat of the once magnificent Mughals. The last emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and his wife were exiled in Rangoon while all their children were systematically murdered by the British so that no Mughal heir remained. The Red Fort itself was saved though most of its buildings were razed to the ground. The book, in the ultimate analysis, is a refreshing compendium and a story well told.

The writer is an independent commentator on political and security issues

Free speech, fake news & Indian press' part in the conversation



Sucheta Dasgupta

review

Incarcerations, FIRs, dismissals, spiking of stories, sensationalism, fake "breaking news" and the compulsion to not miss a trick in the rat race against the Joneses. Lack of resources or intent to devote them to newsgathering from the heartlands. Selling the narrative before finding the story.

These form a brief glimpse of the challenges facing the media, the freedom of which has come under a question mark since the 1990s, the author posits, rather than in the past septennial, but which looms larger, if it were possible, during the pandemic. Hence this overdue analysis of the Indian media business' shortcomings. For the sake of authenticity, the

author, a newspaper industry veteran, restricts his scrutiny to the print media.

There are two critical differences between the first amendment of the Indian Constitution and its opposite number: The American law distinguishes between freedom of speech and freedom of press but, in India, both freedoms are encapsulated in Article 19(1)(a). More importantly, while the US first amendment makes these freedoms an absolute condition for all lawmaking, the first amendment of the Indian Constitution restricts the scope of this freedom.

The question then arises, what influenced Prime Minister Nehru to pass this amendment? The answer — the spectre of Hindu-Muslim riots and a court case involving a little-known Bengali pamphlet called *Sangram*. Borrowing from works of published poets heavily and out of context, its ambitious writer issued through it an unsophisticated call to arms against "injustice, oppression or wrong". The

Bihar government found it objectionable under Section 4(1) of the colonial-era Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act, 1931, which cited public order and foreign relations as reasonable curbs on press freedom. The printers moved court in 1949; the law was declared ultra vires (*The State of Bihar v. Shailabala Devi*, Patna high court, October 1950). This judgment was later (May 1952) struck down by the Supreme Court but by then it was too late. The first amendment passed in 1951 had already brought back these curbs — in the form of Article 19(2) of the Indian Constitution.

It is the courts in our country that have been the great champions of press freedom. The evidence? Romesh Thapar (1950), Brijbhushan (1950) (each from

opposite ends of the Left/Right political spectrum), Sakal Papers (1962), The Indian Express Newspapers (1985). The crowning moment came during Emergency (1975-77) in the *Freedom First* (Minoo Masani) and *Bhoomiputra* cases (each representing a side of the libertarian/authoritarian divide). Unfortunately, both these papers had been non-mainstream publications. With the honourable exception of the *Indian Express* and the *Statesman*, all other national dailies surrendered to the Establishment.

The Shah Commission report of 1978, a valuable resource for researchers, categorises these papers as "friendly", "neutral" and "hostile" in a list prepared at the behest of then information and broadcasting minister V.C. Shukla for use in the framing of the Indira government's advertisement policy. Those considered friendly were rewarded and those deemed hostile punished. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* was paid far more than the prevailing rates for advertisements.

The impulse to cater to the lowest common denominator rather than nurture, or even create, at the very least a discerning niche is what dumbs down the media, but more critically, cancels original commentary and important coverage. Typically, in deciding the content, the editor/proprietor adduces this denominator in the form of a presumption of their putatively "middle-class" audience's tastes to hide the reality that their own vested interest is aligned with the guilty party's. The presumptions usually take the form of deterministic interpolation of their own biases into populations without a voice (in some contexts, this is referred to as "colonial consciousness"). All this is couched in the language of glib neoliberalism to get the employee on board.

The author cites the excessive coverage of the 1990 Mandal Commission protests in comparison to the scant attention devoted to L.K. Advani's rathayatra to make his point. In so doing, he calls out a well-known newspaper for achieving a 9:1 ratio in terms of dividing

that space. He also flags the arrival of fellowships in 1992 in order to relegate reportage on social issues to notified corners of the paper. But the most insidious development of that decade, he observes, is the appearance of contracts and individual bargains to replace the Wage Boards.

The other shoe has fallen. The Working Journalists Act of 1955, unlike the contract system, did not allow barons to close down editions and send journalists out of a job, as was seen in the wake of Covid-19, the author writes. The contract system has also promoted editorial frailty even though the law does not give the business owner the right to dictate what news should be printed and what should not be, nor the manner it should be presented. Most of all, it has led to a preference for the young and the passionless, over the seasoned and the committed reporter; analyst and editor.

The reader is left looking for a closer interrogation of the state of the media industry in today's times.

A global Indian's view of the best world has to offer...



Usha Uthup

review

In September 2016, I was invited to Vatican City for the canonisation of Mother Teresa. It was there that I probably had my most memorable time with Sundeep Bhutoria. We were staying in the same hotel, and to meet someone from my country — that too someone that I knew so well — so far away from home, was wonderfully reassuring. Sundeep, as usual, had organised a sumptuous dinner with the who's who of Rome and Vatican City in attendance. It was another example of how whatever Sundeep does, he does it *shaan se*!

I have known Sundeep for 25 years now, during which time we have developed a seamless professional relationship as well as a deep personal bond. Sundeep is one of those friends with whom you can pick up from where you left off. Impeccably dressed, incurably passionate about his projects, and possessing that unteachable touch of class, he is a thorough gentleman. He keeps a beautiful home, loves his food and travel, and is always keen to do something or the other that enhances culture for the benefit of his native Kolkata.

Sundeep's writings encapsulate his best qualities — cultural consciousness, curiosity for and acceptance of diversity and, above all, an unbreakable connection to his roots. These are also the qualities that make him a quintessential "global desi".

Having made Kolkata my *karma bhoomi*, I have seen how the city has grown and evolved over the decades. For me, Kolkata is, and will forever remain, magical — a mesmerising city that knows how to share and get the best out of its inhabitants. The presence of people like Sundeep have ensured that Kolkata carries on with its rich legacy of cultural cosmopolitanism, as a place that never fails to open its heart for those eager to experience its charms.

At the same time, it devastates me when I see the levels of poverty and deprivation on the streets of Kolkata. I am glad that as a cultural commentator, these sordid aspects of our civilisation do not escape the notice of Sundeep, who has never shied away from addressing issues of social relevance in his work.

During my travels around the world, I have seen the architecture of Kolkata reflected in several corners of London; I have seen Italians live life with the same verve and enthusiasm as so many Calcuttans do; I have seen people of Indian origin in Kenya and South Africa celebrate our cultural norms with as much dedication as the people back home. My journeys across the globe have reiterated my faith and my love for Indianness, and it gives me great pleasure to encounter that same faith and love in this beautifully crafted book by Sundeep.

The past year has been extremely tough on all of us. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us that every industry is vulnerable, not least mine, of entertainment. It is my sincere hope that, alongside the stellar endeavours he is engaged in, Sundeep also spearheads the integration of technology and culture in the times to come, so that more virtual events can be organised, unaffected by the problems posed by Covid-19.

The sky is the limit for Sundeep, and given his vision, adaptability, and perseverance, I am certain that he has a whole lot more left to achieve. *The Global Desi: Reflections on Home and Away* is not just a compelling account of what Sundeep stands for; it is also a celebration of the values that make our culture one of the oldest and most glorious known to humankind.

I am sure you will thoroughly enjoy this book, just as I have, and dwell on the multifarious insights that underline the very best that the world has to offer through a uniquely Indian lens.

Usha Uthup is a well-known Indi-pop, filmi, jazz and playback singer



**THE GLOBAL DESI:
REFLECTIONS ON HOME
AND AWAY**
By SUNDEEP
BHUTORIA
Macmillan, ₹599,
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SHORT TAKES

England beat India via D/L method

Northampton: England all-rounder Nat Sciver smashed a record-equalling half century before the bowlers put the struggling Indian batters under pressure to ensure an 18 run-win for the hosts via D/L method in the rain-curtailed first T20I against here. Put in to bat, England rode on Sciver's 27-ball 55, that included eight fours and a hit over the fence, and wicketkeeper Amy Jones' 43 off 27 balls to reach 177 for seven in 20 overs. Sciver's sensational fifty was England's joint fastest in the format. England now lead the three-match series 1-0 and 8-4 in the multi-format points system having lifted the ODI trophy. — *PTI*

Brief scores: England 177/7 (Danni Wyatt 31, Nat Sciver 55, Amy Jones 43; Shikha Pandey 3/22) bt India Women 54/3 (Smriti Mandhana 29, Harleen Deol 17 (not out); Sarah Glenn 1/6) by D/L method.

Injured Pope likely to skip India series

London: England batsman Ollie Pope was on Saturday rendered a doubtful starter for the opening Test against India after suffering a thigh injury during his stint for Surrey in the Vitality Blast. The 23-year-old wicket-keeper-batsman sustained a thigh muscle injury on July 2 during Surrey's match against Kent in the domestic T20 tournament. "Pope has been ruled out until England's LV= Insurance Test Series against India after suffering a left thigh muscle injury," England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said in a statement. "The ECB and Surrey fitness teams will work together to deliver Pope's rehabilitation with a focus for him to be available to return for the first Test against India." That first Test starts at Trent Bridge on August 4. — *PTI*

Mahmudullah to retire from Tests

Dhaka: Senior Bangladesh all-rounder Mahmudullah has made a sudden decision to stop playing Test cricket, a day after recording a career-best 150 in the ongoing one-off Test against Zimbabwe in Harare. According to a report in *Cricbuzz*, Mahmudullah informed his colleagues that he is not willing to continue his Test career anymore, leaving the team management shocked. "Yes, he (Mahmudullah) had informed that he does not want to prolong his Test career after this game. But he did not inform us anything officially and we have to see whether it's an emotional outburst or not," the website quoted a top Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as saying. — *PTI*

McCoy, Walsh give Windies 1-0 lead

Saint Lucia: Obed McCoy and Hayden Walsh combined for seven wickets to trigger a stunning Australian collapse as the West Indies pulled off an 18-run victory in the opening fixture of the five-match T20I series at the Darren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia on Friday. Seamer McCoy and leg-spinner Walsh turned the match on its head as the tourists, replying to the home side's total of 145 for six, lost their last six wickets for 19 runs to be dismissed for 127 off 16 overs. — *AFP*

Brief scores: West Indies 145/6 (Andre Russell 51; Josh Hazlewood 3/12, Mitchell Marsh 2/26) bt Australia 127 (Matthew Wade 33, Mitchell Marsh 51; Obed McCoy 4/26, Hayden Walsh 3/23).

Chennaiyin rope in Bozidar as coach

Chennai: Two-time ISL winners Chennaiyin FC on Saturday roped in Bozidar Bandovic as head coach ahead of the 2021-22 edition of the lucrative league. The 51-year old from Montenegro will take charge of the club on a one-year contract, a CFC press release said. Bandovic takes over from Czaba Laszlo, who was at the helm in the previous season of the ISL. He was quoted as saying, "I am ready and I cannot wait to start. After our conversations, I realised that this club is very special. I was very impressed." — *PTI*

HOME OR ROME?

England, Italy jostle for glory as Euro final looms

London, July 10: England and Italy are holding their collective breath as the clock counts down to Sunday's Euro 2020 final showdown which will be watched by around 65,000 fans at Wembley and millions more on television. The anticipation is great in England, as the hosts sense that this is their time to end a 55-year wait to add a second major trophy to their 1966 World Cup.

The anticipation is great in England, as the hosts sense that this is their time to end a 55-year wait to add a second major trophy to their 1966 World Cup. Wembley was the venue for that final and will be again on Sunday as Gareth Southgate's England seek to complete the job after edging out Denmark 2-1 in extra time in front of 64,950 supporters in Wednesday's semi-final.

England began the tournament as one of several contenders to lift the trophy but have taken advantage of playing most of their games at home. The final will be their sixth match at Wembley out of their seven. "It's huge, with the final being at Wembley as well it's even more special, something we could have only dreamt of at the start of the tournament," defender John Stones said on Friday.

"We've got this far now and we've grown through-out the tournament and not put too much pressure on ourselves. We've overcome some tough tests over the last few years." England have never beaten Italy at a major tournament, although meetings between the nations have been few and far between. Italy triumphed in a penalty shoot-out in the quarter-finals of Euro 2012 in Ukraine and won 2-1 when they met in the group stage of the 2014 World Cup, although both sides ended up being eliminated in the first round.

Both teams have been transformed since then. The Azzurri have lit up Euro 2020 ever since beating Turkey 3-0 in the opening game a month ago. They are on a national record 33-match unbeaten run under coach Roberto Mancini, who has spent time in England both as a player and as a manager. This will be their third game of the tournament at Wembley, where they beat Austria 2-1 in extra time in the last 16 and Spain on penalties in a brilliant semi-final on Tuesday.

"Playing at their home does not scare us," Italy's veteran defender Leonardo Bonucci said. "We are looking forward to taking to the field even though most of the fans present will be English. We want to do something historic, have a great performance and then we'll see how it ends." Italy had the backing of around 11,000 UK-based fans at the semi-final and their supporters will once again be there for the final. — *AFP*

London, July 10: Ashleigh Barty won her first Wimbledon title on the 50th anniversary of fellow indigenous Australian Evonne Goolagong Cawley's maiden crown, beating Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-3 in the final on Saturday.

The 25-year-old Australian — who wore a specially-designed dress in tribute to Cawley's iconic scallop one she sported in 1971 — adds the Wimbledon crown to her 2019 French Open title. "It took me a long time to verbalise, to dare to dream it and say it," said Barty, who was also fulfilling a childhood dream. "I didn't sleep a lot last night, I was thinking of all the what-ifs. I hope I made Evonne proud."

It was the first women's Wimbledon final to go to three sets since 2012 when Serena Williams beat Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska. Barty had looked like cruising to victory after soaring into a 4-0 lead over her opponent — the Australian's start so blistering that she won the first 14 points.

However, 29-year-old Pliskova steadied herself while Barty faltered when she served for the match at 6-5 in the second set. The Czech broke and then swept the tiebreaker to take the final into a decider. Barty got the break for 2-0 in the final set and despite one or two wobbles she got herself over the line sinking to her knees, her hands over her face in disbelief. — *AFP*



England's Harry Kane is challenged by Jude Bellingham during a training session ahead of their Euro 2020 final against Italy on Sunday. — *AP*

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London, July 10: England captain Harry Kane expects Sunday's Euro 2020 final against Italy to go down to the wire because the teams are so evenly matched. Kane believes either team would be fitting champions, but he is confident England have enough quality to win the European Championship for the first time.

"It's a real 50-50 game I think. Of course Italy have a better history than us in terms of winning tournaments, but a lot of us in our team now have had experience at club level of playing in the biggest games, the biggest finals," Kane said.

"It's a real tough game. From our point of view we have full belief in what we have been doing and how we have been setting up, and of course we believe we can win the game."

"But we also know it will be very tough. They've got some great players, some great experience. "In any final, in any big game, you have to be on it on all aspects. We know that's the case on Sunday and hopefully we can swing it in our favour."

Asked if he had allowed himself to imagine lifting the trophy at Wembley in front of 60,000 England fans, Kane said: "For sure, as players you think of that moment, you dream of that moment."

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Live on TV

EURO FINAL
England vs Italy from 12.30 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

HEAD TO HEAD

● **Matches:** 27. Italy won: 11. England won: 8. Drawn: 8.
● **LAST 5 MATCHES:**
Italy won: 2. England won: 1. Drawn: 2.

● **EURO MEETINGS**
1980: Italy won 1-0.
2012: Italy won on penalties 4-2.

● Italy are unbeaten in their last 33 matches in all competitions, scoring 86 goals and conceding 10 during the run. This is their longest unbeaten stretch of matches.
● England have won 15 of their last 17 matches at Wembley, scoring 46 goals and conceding five in that run. They are unbeaten in their last 12 matches in all competitions.

— S. PERVEZ KAISER

COVID | SCARE

Lanka series to begin on July 18

New Delhi, July 10: The Indian team's six-match limited-overs series in Sri Lanka will now start from July 18, BCCI secretary Jay Shah said on Saturday, a day after a Covid-19 outbreak in the home team camp forced the postponement.

The series, which was originally scheduled to start with the three ODIs on July 13, had to be rescheduled after Sri Lanka's batting coach Grant Flower and data analyst G T Niroshan tested positive for the dreaded virus on their return from the UK tour.

It also meant an extended quarantine period for the squad members.

While the tentative date that was originally being discussed was July 17, but Shah confirmed that it will start from July 18.

"India-Sri Lanka ODI series to start on July 18 due to Covid-19 outbreak in home team camp," Shah said.

The three ODI matches will now be held on July 18, 20 and 23 at the Premadasa Stadium followed by the T20 Internationals, starting on July 25.

The last two T20Is are set to be played on July 27 and 29, respectively, at the same venue.

"We understand that circumstances are extraordi-

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nary, but the BCCI would like to extend its full support to Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) during these tough times for the smooth conduct of the upcoming series," Shah said in a statement, issued by the BCCI.

"Our medical team is in constant touch with the team of doctors at SLC and together following all safety protocols that will help the series to get underway. We are confident that both nations will put up a spirited show in the days to come and we are in for some exciting cricket," Shah assured.

Sri Lanka Cricket secretary Ashley De Silva expressed his gratitude towards BCCI for standing by them during hour of crisis.

"We are grateful to the BCCI for understanding the situation and agreeing to cooperate with us at this moment of time, as it has done on numerous occasions, during our long-standing relationship." — *PTI*

Olympic briefs

More women shooters in fray

The number of women participants will, for the first time ever, exceed the total strength of their male counterparts in the individual shooting events of the Olympic Games. Because of double starters, the number of registered entries in individual women's events exceeds for the first time the number of expected participants in individual men's events — 239 and 208 respectively. The largest number of participants is expected in 10m air pistol women and 10m air rifle women events — 53 and 49 respectively.

Long wait in immigration

IOA President Narinder Batra on Saturday highlighted fresh concerns that India's Olympic-bound athletes may face on arrival in Tokyo, including spending long hours in immigration without food and water. Batra was informed of the inconveniences the athletes from other countries are facing on landing in Tokyo by the Indian Chef De mission on Friday. He has raised the issue to the Games' organisers ahead of the Indian contingent's departure. "Important issues brought to my notice from Chef De Mission meeting on July 9. Same issue was highlighted in the meeting by different countries including Czech, those who arrived at Narita airport," Batra said in a statement.

Mindset has changed: Kaur

Olympic-bound forward Navneet Kaur feels the Indian women's hockey team's mindset has changed in the past few years, adding that the side now doesn't panic playing against top teams. "A lot has changed in the mindset of our team in the past few years, we don't fear the stronger opponents anymore," Kaur said in a Hockey India release. "Earlier, when we used to play against the Netherlands or Great Britain, we used to panic. That's not the case now. We fight until the final whistle. It's not over until it's over."

Anand trumps rival Kasparov

Zagreb, July 10: Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand trumped former world champion Garry Kasparov in the much-awaited contest of the Croatia Grand Chess Tour here on Saturday.

Playing with white pieces, the Chennai-based maestro took down Kasparov in 30 moves in a Sicilian Najdorf variation game in the fourth round of the Blitz event.

The Indian ace, however, went down to Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi, the top-seed here, in round five.

He was placed sixth after five rounds with 11.5 points.

Anand had started the Blitz competition with a defeat at the hands of Dutch GM Anish Giri before bouncing back with a win over Jan-Krzysztof Duda of Poland.

He then shared points with French GM Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in the third round.

The former world champion had ended up at seventh spot after the Rapid section with nine points.



Viswanathan Anand

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over-the-board action after March 2020 and resumed his rivalry with Kasparov who is playing the Blitz event alone here. — *PTI*

Results: Blitz: Fourth round: Viswanathan Anand beat Garry Kasparov; Anton Korobov lost to Jan-Krzysztof Duda; Shakriyar Mamedyarov lost to Alexander Grischuk; Anish Giri drew Peter Van Foreest; Ian Nepomniachtchi drew with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.

Djokovic eyes 20th Slam

London, July 10: Novak Djokovic admits "it will mean everything" to capture a sixth Wimbledon title and record-equalling 20th Grand Slam on Sunday but he will have to overcome Matteo Berrettini, the Italian slugger with the build of a heavyweight boxer. Djokovic will move level with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on career majors with victory and also go three-quarters of the way to the first calendar Slam in more than half a century.

The 34-year-old is in his seventh Wimbledon final and 30th at the Slams.

Only Federer, with 31, has appeared in more championship matches at the majors but the fading Swiss star is more than five years older.

"It would mean every-

thing. That's why I'm here, That's why I'm playing," said Djokovic who has already captured a ninth Australian Open and second French Open in 2021.

The victory in Paris made him just the third



Novak Djokovic

man to win all four majors more than once. "I imagined myself being in a position to fight for another Grand Slam trophy prior to coming to London.

"I put myself in a very

Djokovic vs Berrettini		
1	Seeding	7
1	ATP ranking	9
2	Head-to-head	0
84	Singles title	5
1	Doubles title	2
19	Grand Slams	0

● Berrettini wanted to be a biologist although at school history was his preferred topic — appropriate for a man who has made history for Italian tennis.

good position. Anything is possible in the finals. Obviously experience is on my side."

Djokovic needed all that experience and famed iron will to see off Denis Shapovalov in the semi-finals where he saved 10 of 11 break points.

Shapovalov was so distraught at the failure of his all-out assault that had pushed Djokovic to the brink that he left Centre Court in tears.

"There is no holding back once you step out on the court, particularly in the later stages of an event that I always dreamt of winning," said Djokovic.

"The dream keeps going. I am trying to take out the maximum of my own abilities every single match and see what happens. Giving up is never an option." — *AFP*