

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 13 | AUGUST 2020

WEATHER



Max: 32°C
Min: 23°C
Rainfall: Nil

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Aadi 29
Tithi: Dashami
Star: Rohini
Rahukalam:
1.20 pm to 3 pm
Yamagandam:
6 am to 7.30 pm

PRAYERS

Fajar: 4.41am
Zohar: 12.20 pm
Asar: 3.28 pm
Maghrib: 6.34 pm
Isha: 7.49 pm

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+67,012)	(+950)
23,95,417	47,138

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+5,871)
TN: 3,14,520 | 5,278

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

2,06,68,653

DEATHS

7,49,013

COUNTRIES,
AREAS WITH
CASES

213

worldometers.info

Medico from Nilgiris commits suicide in Italy

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC OOTY, AUG. 12

A youth from Kilkotagiri in Nilgiris, who was studying medicine in Italy, reportedly committed suicide there due to suspected Covid-19 curfew stress. The BJP unit in Nilgiris, on the request of his parents, has approached the union external ministry to make arrangements to bring his body to India. Sources said that S.Pratiksh (20), son of Sadanad, hailing from Thuneri village in Kilkotagiri near here was studying medicine at Naples University in Italy. His elder brother Sujith is working in a private concern in Fermo, Italy. “Since curfew was imposed in Italy since March after the corona outbreak, Pratiksh was staying alone in an apartment and continuing his studies online. He is said to have developed some psychological problems due to curfew-related stress. After sometime he joined his elder brother in Fermo and underwent treatment for stress. Pratiksh spoke to his parents a couple of weeks ago and expressed his wish to come back to India as he was not able to focus on studies. But, on Monday he committed suicide by jumping down from his fourth floor apartment,” sources added.Ms. Innocent Divya, Collector of Nilgiris, said that his parents who are now living in Mysore have informed her that they will receive his body in Mysore.

COUNTER POINT



Those are all free phones from BSNL for MPs!

IAF riled by negative projection in Netflix’s ‘Kargil Girl’

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, AUG. 12

Indian Air Force (IAF) has protested that the movie “Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl” starring Janhvi Kapoor portrays the work culture in the Air Force in a “negative light” and being discriminatory towards women officers.

The movie is inspired by Flight Lieutenant Gunjan Saxena, India’s first female Air Force officer to fly in a combat zone during the Kargil war. The movie is right now being streamed

on Netflix.

IAF has written to Dharma Production, Netflix and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

“IAF as a service has always ensured that the organisation is gender neutral and has always provided an equal opportunity to both male and women personnel,” said IAF in a letter to CBFC.

Sources said that the letter mentions that as per initial understanding, Dharma Productions had agreed to represent air

force with authenticity and make all efforts to ensure that the film helps to inspire the next generation of IAF Officers, said sources. It said that certain scenes and dialogues in the movie and its trailer, which were forwarded to IAF for viewing, have been found to portray the IAF in an undue negative light. “In the aim to glorify the screen character of ‘Ex-Fit Lt Gunjan Saxena’, Dharma Productions presented some situations that are misleading and portray an inappropriate work culture especially

against women in the IAF,” said the letter.

It said that the Production House was informed about the objectionable portion of the movie and was advised to delete or modify them.

A still from the movie “Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl” which was scheduled to be released on Netflix, in New Delhi, Wednesday. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has written a letter to the Censor Board objecting to its ‘undue negative’ portrayal in the movie. — PTI

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CM calls for organ donation



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Pranab continues to be critical

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CSK want MSD to play till 2022



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BENGALURU RIOTERS TARGET POLICE

Three killed after mob attacks MLA’s house

Bengaluru, Aug. 12: Charred vehicles, shards of glass from broken windows, stones and bricks lay strewn on deserted roads in Pulakeshinagar here as the area resembled a war zone on Wednesday after an unruly mob went on a rampage.

The house of Congress MLA Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy also bore the brunt of the mob fury over a ‘communally sensitive’ social media post allegedly put up by one of his relatives.

Three people were killed in police firing and scores of others, including at least 50 police personnel, wounded, in the violence that erupted in the city on Tuesday night and continued till the wee hours of Wednesday.

The rampaging crowd set on fire police vehicles and ransacked the DJ Halli police station on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and damaged property. Scores of gutted two-wheelers and four-wheelers lined up the roads in the area, bearing testimony to the violence unleashed by the mob.

The crowd has torched the house which is now in ruins with doors, windows, furniture and other goods virtually reduced to ashes while cracks could be seen in the walls.

“No material inside the house is intact. No one can imagine that barely 24 hours before, this was one of the finest buildings in the area,” commented a man who lives in the locality as people gathered in front of the house this morning. Fortunately, the MLA and his family were not at home when the mob targeted his house. “We were not at home when all this happened,” Jayanthi, the MLA’s sister, said weeping inconsolably. — PTI



Charred remains of vehicles vandalised by a mob over a social media post, allegedly by a relative of a Congress MLA, in Bengaluru, on Wednesday. — PTI

CRPF being deployed in violence-hit areas: Karnataka home minister

Mangaluru, Aug. 12 Karnataka home minister Basavaraj Bommai on Wednesday said six companies of the Central Reserve Police Force are being dispatched to the violence-hit areas of Bengaluru.

Three companies from Hyderabad and three from Chennai will be deployed in DG Halli and KG Halli police station limits where disturbances occurred Tuesday night, after which three people died in police firing, he said in an interaction with reporters at Udupi before leaving for Bengaluru.

He said efforts to vitiate the atmosphere in society through hooliganism

which will not be tolerated. Restoration of peace is the priority of the government and strict action will be taken against such elements, he said. Several police personnel were also injured in the clashes.

The minister said police had to resort to firing as a last resort.

A total of 110 people have been taken into custody in connection with the violence.

He said the situation is now under control and additional police forces are deployed in the area.

Rapid action force and the ‘Garuda’ force are also being deployed, the minister added. — PTI

TN: 119 more die from Covid

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, AUG. 12:

The spread of Coronavirus was unabated as the State recorded 5,871 fresh infections on Wednesday when the death toll was at 119.

Though Chennai’s new cases remained below 1,000 – at 993 – the adjoining districts continued to report high numbers. Chengalpattu 439, Kanchipuram 371 and Thiruvallur 407. Other districts that had high infection rates were Coimbatore 254, Cuddalore 339, Ranipet 254, Theni 282 and Virudhunagar 292.

However, Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar claimed that the pandemic was well under control. Coronavirus spread was at 23 per cent last month and it had come down to 7 per cent in August, he told reporters after reviewing the Covid-19 related work in Royapuram.

Meanwhile, the State government has exempted all physically disabled employees for government office from attending office till August 31 as both public transport has not been allowed to ply due to the lockdown.

● **Fisheries minister D Jayakumar claimed that the pandemic was well under control. Coronavirus spread was at 23 per cent last month and it had come down to 7 per cent in August, he added**

Total fresh cases on Wednesday 5,871

Chennai 993

Number of deaths on Wednesday 119

AP, Karnataka see new highs in coronavirus cases

Chennai, Aug. 12: Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday crossed 2.50 lakh overall cases of Covid-19, while Karnataka reported its highest single-day spike of 7,000-plus infections.

Kerala and Telangana continued to record in excess of 1,000 cases.

Andhra Pradesh had incidentally touched the two lakh mark just five days ago on August 7.

From its maiden case on March 12, AP’s Covid-19 graph has peaked to over 2.5 lakh cases in just about 154 days, thanks to the heavy virus loads witnessed in the recent days.

The state had reported over 10,000 plus cases on many days recently, reaching the third spot in the country behind Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

On Wednesday, the state added another 9,597 to its tally and its infection positivity rate continued to spiral, reaching 9.59 per cent. — PTI



FROM the US

'Matter of pride for all Indians settled in USA'

As persons of Indian origin and with a democratic mindset, we are excited about Kamala Harris' nomination. It should be a matter of pride for all Indians settled in USA, irrespective of their political leanings. Having followed her since her Presidential run last year, we have been impressed by her questioning during the Senate hearing of AG William Barr. I think a win in November for Biden-Harris combo will be a major boost for the African-American community who have been victim to racial injustice and a strong endorsement of racial equality.

— **Arun and Aarthi**
(Reside on the outskirts of Boston Massachusetts and work in the FinTech industry)

'SHE IS THE RIGHT CANDIDATE'

It's the need of the hour after racial unrest swept the nation recently. It also reaffirms that in Democratic America there's place for every immigrant to succeed no matter who they are or where they come from or what they look like. Historically black women presidential candidates have received no real support from any segment of American voters. However, this move will change lives and livelihood of the country and help battle racism and sexism. I strongly believe, after Obama, this will help Biden to tackle the real challenges America faces right now.

— **Meena Kannappan**
(Resides with her family in California for the last 18 years)

— **As told to B. Vijayalakshmi**

Bike-borne gang attacks, robs civil engineers at night

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

A four-member bike-borne armed gang has been arrested by the police after they attacked and robbed two civil engineers near Somangalam on Tuesday night.

According to the police, the engineers have been identified as Suresh (35), a resident of Sriperumbudur, and Parthasarathy (37) from Chennai. They were returning to Mudichur on a two-wheeler at night after visiting a construction site in Somangalam. Four men in bikes overtook and stopped them. They asked the duo to part with their wallet and when the latter refused, they attacked the engineers with a knife and snatched their wallet and mobile phone.

Soon after the attack, Suresh and Parthasarathy rushed to the hospital and managed to treat their injuries. They also informed the police and gave them the necessary information about the attack.

With the mobile phone tower, the Somangalam police managed to arrest the robbers. The accused have been identified as Neelagandan, 23 of Guduvancheri, Akash, 27 of Porur, Murugesan, 23 and Dheena Kumar, 28 of Perambur.

Bikes and the knife used in the arrack have been seized and the mobile phone and cash were recovered, said a police officer.

A case of robbery and robbery with an attempt to cause death or grievous hurt has been registered against both the accused. The Somangalam police have registered a case and further investigation is on.

Chennai excited over Kamala's nomination

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR | DC
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

The nomination of Kamala Harris as the running mate of US Presidential aspirant Joe Biden has created a lot of excitement on social media with people going gaga over the fact that her maternal grandparents were from Chennai and even politicians congratulating her.

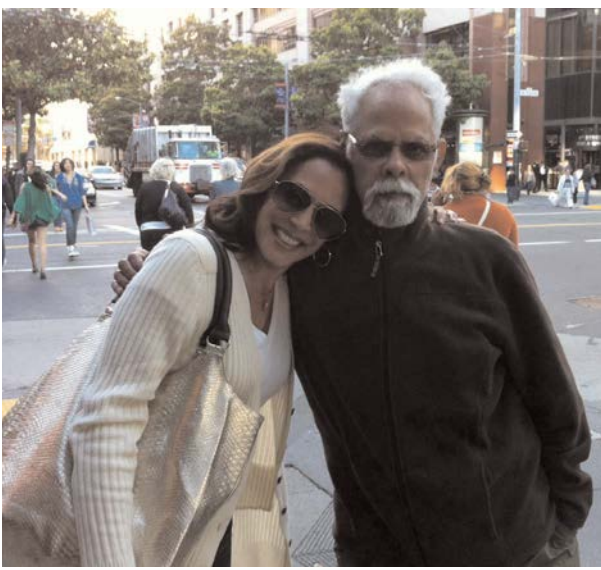
"It is a moment of pride for Indians and Tamil Nadu especially," tweeted Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam, conveying his 'hearty wishes.'

DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi was glad to see the 'inclusiveness' in the Democratic Party Presidential candidate picking a woman that too of Indian origin as his running mate. She wished Harris all the best in a tweet.

But it was the people of Chennai who were more excited over one of their own (Namma Kamalava!) getting the high profile nomination, though there was one Facebook user who said that he would not support her since her views about India were bad.

However as the day broke, the news of Harris spread through messages on social media. 'Besant Nagar connection,' mentioned a WhatsApp alert. Soon a Facebook user said, 'I am told there is a tussle between Adyar and Besant Nagar over #KamalaHarris. Mylapore of course is of the view that everyone came from there only.'

Harris of course has a Besant Nagar connection. An old picture of 'Kamala



Kamala with her uncle Balachandran in San Francisco. —Photo from family album

"It is a moment of pride for Indians and Tamil Nadu especially," tweeted Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam

Devi and Maya Lakshmi,' the daughters of Shyamala Gopalan, visiting their grandparents P V Gopalan and Rajam (both in traditional attire) at the Besant Nagar house appeared in Twitter. But no one threw light on what could have been the possible Adyar connection, while some one said that he thought it was Nanganallur.

But soon another message came in 'Just when I thought the battle was between Adyar & Besant Nagar, Gopalapuram has thrown in the claim. It

seems Gopal thatha was from Gopalapuram.' It was a right claim for Gopalan had lived there before settling down in Besant Nagar after retirement.

Then of course there were the jokes, wondering why no teacher had come out to say the usual things about the little girl who was in her class once upon a time. And there was another one saying that the name is Kamala Harish. It became Harris due to the white man's inability to pronounce Harish properly.

Jokes apart, a woman journalist recalled a famous cooking video of Harris making masala dosa with Mindy Kaling to remind all that the US Vice Presidential candidate had said 'all South Indians are vegetarians.'

Indian-Americans thrilled with Joe pick

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Indian-Americans are thrilled. "What an electric moment for the community. Indian Americans are now truly a mainstream community in the national fabric," said M.R. Rangaswami, founder of Indiaspora in the US. The powerful Indian Americans from tech and other industries are aiming to host Kamala Harris soon at an event on the West Coast at which they are hoping to raise at least \$4 million in an evening to support the Biden-Harris ticket.

In California, the Bluest of Blue states, there may not be dearth of support for the presumptive Democratic nominee and his deputy to the Presidential election slated for November 3. And Kamala, whose mother Shyamla Gopalan, went from Chennai after education in New Delhi to the US to pursue science, has raised millions of dollars already for the Biden campaign after she gave up early on her own presidential ambitions by dropping out of the Democratic race last December.

When Indiaspora got in touch last week with the Biden campaign team for a date to host a fundraiser, Democratic insiders told them to hang on as Kamala Harris could become the VP candidate, in which case they would have a headliner from right amongst them

Mom's advice: Don't sit around and complain about things, do something

This was the mantra given to Kamala Harris by her mother Shyamala Gopalan, born in Chennai and immigrated to the US to attend a doctoral programme at UC Berkeley. Her mother told her growing up, "Don't sit around and complain about things, do something," which is what drives Kamala every single day, according to the Biden-Harris joint campaign website. "

'Nothing progressive, just common thinking'

From P1 Probably, he must have kindled Kamala's interest in public service.

He also recalled his elder sister Shyamala's grit and determination who went to UC Berkeley at a very young age of 19 in 1958. "She was bold and independent. Managed it all by herself, all alone in the US. She broke new ground," he

for a gala event. The tech czars saw more than a hint that Kamala could be the final choice as Biden considered over a dozen women candidates.

With an estimated 1.3 million Indian-Americans to vote in the election, including nearly 2,00,000 in Pennsylvania and 1,25,000 in Michigan, both must-win battleground states, Indian-Americans are an influential voting group in the 2020 election. Many of them will be lining up behind the Biden-Kamala ticket. In 2016, some 77 per cent of

adds. He also remembers Shyamala bringing her two daughters to Zambia decades ago where his father was posted then.

He signs off saying, "It is common thinking, not progressive thinking or being liberal, that will take you places. All human beings are equal regardless of their colour, gender, race or nationality.""

Indian-Americans voted for the Democratic Party's presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton. And Kamala would be bringing the Democratic presidential candidate Biden not only campaign funds but also votes from Blacks and Indian-Americans.

Kamala's aunt, who lives in Chennai and practises as a gynaecologist, has been quoted as saying that Kamala has always been "a courageous and progressive" person. Chennai city can trace with pride the blazing trail that led one

'Mother knew she was raising 2 black daughters'

Kamala says that her mother adopted black culture and immersed her two daughters - Kamala and her younger sister Maya - in it. Harris grew up embracing her Indian culture, but living a proudly African American life. She often joined her mother on visits to India. "My mother understood very well that she was raising two black daughters," she wrote in her autobiography *The Truths We Hold*. "She knew that her adopted homeland would see Maya and me as black girls and she was determined to make sure we would grow into confident, proud black women."

from here to go out to the USA in the 1950s as a student and soon even join demonstrations for racial equality and justice for Blacks. Shyamala was to marry her fellow demonstrator - an Afro-Caribbean economist from Jamaica - and after divorcing him when their daughter was just five, had been the leading influence on Kamala's life and career.

High court quashes order discharging granite barons in illegal mining case

J. STALIN | DC
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

The Madras high court has set aside the orders of the Judicial Magistrate, Melur, dismissing the complaints preferred by the then Madurai district collector against illegal mining in the district, thereby acquitting the granite barons P.R.Palanisamy and his son P.Suresh Kumar in the illegal granite mining case.

Allowing the petitions and appeals filed by the then Madurai district collector Anshul Mishra and the state government, Justice B.Pugalendhi remitted the matter back to the trial court, namely, the Principal Sessions Court, Special Court constituted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, Madurai, for the limited purpose of examining the complainant/District Collector, Madurai, and to decide the issue.

The judge said the complainant, namely, the present District Collector, Madurai, shall appear before the trial court within two months from the date of receipt of a copy of this judgment, by informing the specific date to the respondents/accused through the Assistant Public Prosecutor, for enabling the respondents/accused to cross examine the complainant/District Collector, on the same day. Thereafter, the trial court, after affording opportunity to both sides, shall decide the case, on its own merits and in accordance with law, with the existing evidence, within a further period of two months, the judge added.

The judge also expunged the observations made by the Judicial Magistrate, Melur, against the then Madurai District Collector and the Special Public Prosecutor.

Justice Pugalendhi said in the course of hearing on August 7, 2020, State Public Prosecutor A.Natarajan and the respective counsel for the respondents have agreed that the only remedy in these appeals was to remand back the matter for fresh consideration. The complaints were dismissed without even hearing the complainant/District Collector. A District Collector was in charge of the entire district. By his position, he was also serving as a District Magistrate. As a complainant before the court of law, no doubt, he was duty bound to give evidence. At the same time, the Judicial Magistrate ought to have considered his nature of work that he cannot avoid a public grievance

Why my speech doctored to get away from case, asks judge

J. STALIN | DC
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Expressing dissatisfaction over the manner in which his speech at a school function was doctored to intimidate the court to get away from the cases relating to alleged illegal mining in Madurai District, Justice B.Pugalendhi of the Madurai Bench of the Madras high court has said, "As a judge, we are expected to be aloof from the society. But, at times, on the request of some respectable persons, we are accepting certain invitations, and similarly I accepted and participated in that school annual day programme. Now, I realize, how even this motivational speech can be doctored to the convenience of certain parties and can be projected in such a way".

Justice Pugalendhi made the observations while setting aside an order of the Judicial Magistrate, Melur, dismissing the complaints filed by the then Madurai District Collector for his non-appearance and acquitted the accused PRP

day or any other law and order issue, the judge added.

The judge said the appeals were arising out of an order passed under section 256 Cr.PC for the non-appearance of the complainant. The grievance of the State in the appeals was without providing an opportunity to adduce evidence, the Judicial Magistrate adopted a shortcut method to acquit the accused. The grievance of the petitioner (Anshul Mishra) was that without hearing him, certain wild allegations were made against him for having discharged his duty. The appeals were pending for three years and the original petitions were pending nearly for four years. The counsel for the respondents/accused have fairly conceded before this court to remand back the complaint for fresh consideration. They also admitted that they have availed 'N' number of similar such reliefs in the complaints, initiated under section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act, which were dismissed for the absence of the complainant. But, even then, in the original petitions and in the appeals, different coun-



Granites and PRP Exports proprietor P.Palanisamy and his son P.Suresh Kumar from the charges in the alleged illegal mining case.

Recalling the earlier two attempts made by the counsel for the respondents/accused, seeking adjournments and requesting the judge to recuse himself from hearing the case on the ground that as a Special Government Pleader and as Additional Advocate General, the judge had earlier appeared and argued some cases against the respondents/accused, the judge referred to the letter written by P.Suresh Kumar, son of granite baron P.Palanisamy, on August 6, 2020 addressed to the Registrar (Judicial), in which he requested the Registry to post the matter before any

sel were engaged by the respondents/accused though the issue in both matters were one and the same, the judge added.

The judge said the rosters were changed every three months and if a particular day was convenient for the appellant/s/petitioner's counsel, it was not convenient for any one of the respondent's counsel and thus, the cases were adjourned. The parties, who were enjoying favourable orders, will not come forward to proceed with the case and the other side were the ultimate sufferer. Even before this court, the parties could have easily evaded from conducting the case by referring to the present Covid-19 pandemic, or any other reason. But, instead, they have chosen to throw some baseless allegations and therefore, this court proceeded by answering those allegations, the judge added.

The judge said the District Collector was vindicated for having discharged his duty diligently. He was waiting for justice for the past four years. But the petitions could not be taken up for hearing, one way or the other. The order of the Judicial Magistrate has not

other judge citing several reasons including his non-recusal in spite of appearing against them in a number of cases in the capacity of SGP and AAG and addressing in public forum that his elevation as Judgeship was delayed by five years because of granite lobby.

The judge said this was the third attempt made on behalf of the respondents/accused to intimidate this court to get away from these cases. This complaint dated August 6, 2020 was also made with the very same averments raised on behalf of the respondents/accused on July 30, 2020. But, on those allegations, this court passed detailed orders. In addition to the grounds raised earlier, the respondents/accused have referred to a speech addressed by him in an annual day programme in a school at Madurai on February 8, 2020. "In fact, initially, I refused to accept the meeting, but, since the request was made from a respectable member from

the Bar, I accepted to give a speech in the meeting and gave a motivational speech to the students of the school. In the said function, while the Principal was referring to my works in his introduction speech mentioned certain wrong particulars on the cases conducted by me and for correcting the same, I referred about the number of granite cases, I appeared before the Madurai Bench. As a SGP and as an AAG, I appeared in a number of petitions on granite issues before the Madurai Bench as well as before the Principal Seat at Madras. The Madurai District Administration has not only initiated action against the firms of the respondents/accused, but against almost all lessees". He appeared as a SGP and as an AAG on a G.O in the petitions filed before the high court. To his remembrance, he did not appear in the criminal complaints filed by the district collector and on these appeals pending before this court, the judge added.

The judge said the order of the Judicial Magistrate, Melur, by referring the provisions under the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Illegal Mining, Transportation and Storage of Minerals and Mineral Dealers Rules, 2011 when the complaint itself was filed for taking

cognizance under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, was not proper. Therefore, both on merits and on violation of principles of natural justice, the impugned order cannot be sustained. In so far as the petitions were concerned, as rightly pointed out by State Public Prosecutor A.Natarajan, once the impugned order passed by the Judicial Magistrate was set aside, then the observations made therein as regards the District Collector and the Special Public Prosecutors automatically goes. Moreover, the District collector signed the complaint only in his official capacity on July 4, 2013. Admittedly, on that date, the petitioner was the district collector, Madurai. It was not even the case of the respondents/accused that the complaints were signed antedated. Not even a suggestion was made to the official witnesses, examined before the trial court. While so, this court was unable to understand on what basis and on what materials placed on record before the court, the Magistrate arrived at such a conclusion, the judge added.

Danger ahead



The precarious condition of EB posts on Korattur Road in the city poses danger to motorists and residents.

— DC

Two foreign parcels seized in Chennai's biggest drug haul

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

In one of the biggest narcotic hauls in the city, the Chennai Air Customs has seized two foreign parcels that arrived from Belgium and the Netherlands, which had large quantities of narcotic drugs.

The first parcel which originated from Belgium contained an artificial leopard fabric and other items. On unwrapping the fabric nine black pouches were found inside. Orange colour ecstasy (MDMA) pills with markings "Red Buli" and "Heineke" were found concealed inside the pouches. A total of 4,060 ecstasy pills valued at ₹1.2 crore were recovered and seized under the NDPS Act, 1985.

The parcel was addressed to a person in a village in Kancheepuram district. As a follow-up action a search was carried out at the consignee address which was found to be fake.

The second parcel which came from the Netherlands contained inflatable pool, snack and gummy bear packets. Skull-shaped ecstasy pills with marking "MY BRAND" were found concealed inside. Further, two pouches containing MDMA crystals and Methaqualone powder were found concealed inside the inflatable pool. Total 1150 ecstasy pills, 100 grams of MDMA crystals and 1 gram of Methaqualone powder valued at ₹45 lakh were recovered and seized under the

NDPS Act, 1985.

The parcel was addressed to a person in Andhra Pradesh. As a follow-up action, a search was carried out at the address and it was found linked to a person who had already been arrested in an offence of drug smuggling by the Chennai Air Customs.

Total 5,210 ecstasy pills, 100 grams of MDMA crystals and 1 gram of Methaqualone valued at ₹1.65 crore were recovered and seized under the NDPS Act, 1985. Further investigation is in progress.

Customs officials said that this is the biggest drug haul they have had in the city recently. "Drugs from European countries are much preferred due to their high quality and this is the first time that we are seizing drugs that have arrived from Belgium. The value of one tablet seized is around ₹5,000," officials said.

It may be noted that since March 2020, there is an increase in the import of foreign postal parcels containing narcotic substances. The spike is due to the lockdown. The pills seized are popularly known as party drugs among the youth.

During the lockdown period, people have to stay at home and these longer stays at home are creating anxiety. It was observed that the availability of these drugs decreased locally and the addicted people were trying to procure these drugs directly from abroad.

SHORT TAKES

Centre against Nalini making intl calls

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Pointing out that further investigations in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case are being conducted by the Multi Disciplinary Monitoring Agency to look into the larger conspiracy, the Union government has informed the Madras high court that if S.Nalini and her husband Murugan, serving life sentence in Vellore prison for their involvement in Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, are allowed to make international audio/video calls, such conversation may be detrimental to the ongoing investigations. Arun Sobti, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs stated this in an affidavit filed through Assistant Solicitor General G.Karthikeyan, in response to the Habeas corpus petition filed by S.Padma, mother of Nalini, before a division bench comprising Justices N.Kirubakaran and V.M.Velumani. In her petition, Padma sought a direction to the authorities to permit her son-in-law Murugan and her daughter Nalini, to make video call to Somani Ammal, mother of Murugan residing in Sri Lanka and Raji, elder sister of Murugan residing in London for about 10 minutes daily. The bench posted to August 19, further hearing of the case.

BJP expels member caught with narcotics

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

The Tamil Nadu BJP expelled Luvango P. Adaikalaraj, an executive member of the party's OBC wing caught smuggling narcotics near Tiruchi, from all posts and the primary membership in the party and advised all functionaries and members not to have anything with him.

The expulsion was announced by Karu Nagarajan, BJP state general secretary. He said Adaikalaraj was being dismissed from the party for breach of party discipline and indulging in acts that brought a bad name to the party.

Sellur Raju holds meeting with Nabard officers

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Cooperative minister Sellur K. Raj held a meeting with officials of Nabard and Tamil Nadu State Apex Cooperative Bank with a view to increase the potential of Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies by converting them into multi-faceted service centres on Wednesday.

The effort aimed at improving the income of farmers was done at the behest of the Centre. Among the demands made at the meeting was for Nabard to increase the refinance loan from Rs 600 crore to Rs 1000 crore. Nabard was also urged to enable MSMEs get loans through the Cooperative department by going about the necessary processes, among other things.

Ex-min Elumalai succumbs to Covid-19

Puducherry: Former Local Administration Minister of Puducherry A Elumalai succumbed to COVID-19 in centrally administered JIPMER on Wednesday. Elumalai (53) had tested positive for the infection and was admitted to JIPMER on Tuesday. Director of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar told. Elumalai is survived by wife and three sons. He was Local Administration Minister in the Congress Ministry headed by the then CM N Rangasamy in 2001.

Are AIADMK-BJP ties breaking?

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Will the alliance between the AIADMK and the BJP continue in the 2021 Assembly elections? This is the question that many people have started asking after leaders in both the parties have started giving indications of a strain in the relationship.

On Wednesday, the new vice president of state BJP, V. P. Duraisamy, told reporters that the BJP being a national party

On Wednesday, the new vice president of state BJP, V. P. Duraisamy, told reporters that the BJP being a national party should lead the electoral alliance in the state for the next elections

should lead the electoral alliance in the state for the next elections.

He went on to say that the fight in the state was between the DMK and the BJP, suggesting that the AIADMK would have to

play a secondary role to the BJP. He also said that the BJP should not be taken for granted as no one would be able to form the government without its support.

Refusing to reply to him, DMK senior leader and fisheries minister D. Jayakumar said that he would not like to take the state vice president's words seriously. "Let the national leaders or the state leadership speak out on this," Jayakumar challenged the BJP.

He made it clear that the

AIADMK would win the elections in 2021 and all announcements related to the electoral contest would come at the right time.

It is said the BJP is undecided on continuing the alliance though it had not gathered the courage to come out of it, while the general mood in the AIADMK was not in favour of being with the national party, whose popularity in the state was in the dumps.

Recent developments like Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami speaking

vociferously in favour of continuing with the two-language formula in school education in the context of the three language scheme being pushed by the Centre through the new National Education Policy had indicated that the AIADMK might not face the next election in the company of the BJP.

However, both the sides might not do anything drastic to upset the alliance now and would continue being together till the elections are called, sources say.

CM'S CALL FOR ORGAN DONATION

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami exhorted people to come forward to donate organs and give life after death, marking the observation of World Organ Donation day, falling on August 13.

Recalling that Transtam, the Transplant Authority of Tamil Nadu was launched on December 12,



2014, and mentioning that the state had been the pioneer in organ donation and organ transplant in the country, he stressed on the importance of organ donation.

CISF REJECTS KANIMOZHI'S CHARGES

New Delhi, Aug. 12: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will undertake "enhanced efforts" to deploy more personnel at airports who know the local language following an incident where DMK MP Kanimozhi recently alleged that a force personnel questioned her if she was an Indian as the law maker didn't speak Hindi.

A senior officer in the airports guarding central paramilitary force rejected the charges made by the MP quoting the women official's preliminary questioning on the incident. He said the lady official who interacted with the Member of Parliament on August 9 at the Chennai international airport told senior officials during inquiry that she "did not utter the words as alleged by the concerned passenger but just said that Hindi is also an Indian or official language."

CISF officials said the lady official posted at the Chennai airport has been "counselled about her conduct and the soft skills and basic language courtesies the force personnel need to extend to the passengers, as taught to them during training." The lady official, they said, hails from a south Indian state and had interacted with Kanimozhi for a routine security process to be followed, in Hindi. "She told the inquiry team that she never questioned the passenger about her being an Indian for not knowing Hindi but just said that Hindi is an Indian or official language," a senior CISF officer said. — PTI

The lady official, they said, hails from a south Indian state and had interacted with Kanimozhi for a routine security process to be followed, in Hindi

Admission blues



People crowd near a bank for taking a demand draft (DD) for college admission in Chennai on Wednesday.

— DC

I translated Devi Lal's speech: Ex-IAS officer

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR | DC
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

BJP leader H. Raja's statement that DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi had translated the Hindi speech of the Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal into Tamil has been debunked by the very man who did the translation in 1989.

Retired Chief Secretary of Haryana M. G. Devasahayam, clarified through a statement on Wednesday that it was he who translated Devi Lal's 'Hindi speeches heavily tinged with Urdu into Tamil' when he visited

Tamil Nadu.

"Ch Devi Lal was earlier my Chief Minister... Since I was living in Chennai at that time after taking VRS, he requested me to accompany him to his meetings/functions. I did so and translated his Hindi speeches," Devasahayam said.

He recalled: "Ch Devi Lal took over as Deputy Prime Minister in the first week of December, 1989.. He came to Tamil Nadu in the third week of December for two reasons. To participate in a farmer's rally near Coimbatore to commemorate the death anniversary

of farmer leader Narayanasami Naidu and discuss with Chief Minister Kalam Karunanidhi the matter regarding additional allotment of foodgrains to the state on an urgent basis."

Issuing the statement after the controversy pertaining to Ms Kanimozhi MP translating the Hindi speech of Ch Devi Lal in to Tamil, when he was Deputy Prime Minister has been brought to my notice, he said, "I am told that some anti-social elements are spreading this false information to gain political capital".

Left, right, left ...



Police personnel take part in Independence Day rehearsal by wearing masks at AR Ground in Madurai on Wednesday.

— DC

Breadwinners die of corona: PIL seeks compensation

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

A Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Madras high court to direct the Tamil Nadu government to provide compensation/ex-gratia amount of Rs 5 lakh to the deceased family, who lost their breadwinner due to corona disease, to facilitate them to recover from the financial crisis.

The Public Interest Litigation filed by Makkal Paniyil Makkal represented by its chief co-ordinator P.Asokan, is likely to come up for hearing early.

In his PIL, Asokan submitted that the Corona virus affects all corners of the world. Currently, there is no available/proven vac-

cine or specific anti-viral treatment for Covid-19. The management involves the treatment of symptoms, supportive care, isolation, and experimental measures. The World Health Organization declared the 2019-20 corona virus outbreak, a public health emergency of International concern on January 30, 2020, and a pandemic on March 11, 2020, he added.

He said the number of infected persons has been increasing every day. In Tamil Nadu, the number of corona affected confirmed cases are 2, 63, 222. Despite adequate measures taken by the state government to control the disease, it keeps increasing every day due to ignorance of the general public. At this point of

time, the inventing attempt of anti-viral drug on process, since it was under trial. Hence, the state has to protect its citizens from the disease and improve good health.

As per Article 47 of the Constitution of India, the state has to provide measures to improve public health. Admittedly, the government has taken measures to improve health by spending huge money, despite the economic slowdown.

The government has to consider the family, who lost their breadwinner due to Corona virus. Many families lost their bread winners and were unable to come out from the financial crisis. If the government fails to provide adequate measures such as

financial aid to those families, then the future of the descendants will be doomed to suffer. Otherwise they may involve in any other illegal/unlawful way to meet their livelihood and consequently become anti-social elements, he added.

He said the Disaster Management Act provides for payment of ex-gratia to the person who lost their life due to disaster. Further the state has to maintain the state disaster fund for operational work.

The government has already issued orders for payment of compensation to the frontline workers like doctors, nurses, police etc., Hence the same benefit has to be extended to the death of the general public, he added.

Stalin tells people not to depend on govt

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

DMK president M. K. Stalin called up the people of the State to find their own means of protecting themselves from the coronavirus and not depend on the government, which, he alleged, had failed in all aspects in controlling the spread of the disease.

Giving statistics to prove what he called a gross failure of the government to combat the pandemic despite putting the State under lockdown, Stalin, in a statement on Wednesday, said that 1224 deaths had been reported in the last 10 days with the daily figure at 100.

Covid-19 infections had been growing at a rate of 163 per cent and deaths at a rate of 228 per cent in the last one month, when the death ratio had also gone up by 23 per cent, he said. Spread of the virus was growing at a rate of 14 per cent with daily 6000 fatalities being reported with



1000 of them in Chennai alone, he said.

Accusing the government of enacting a drama by opening everything else other than educational institutions, public transport and places of worship and calling it a lockdown, Stalin said the government had failed the people of the state.

Urging the people to take precautions on their own in preventing the spread of the virus, Stalin said the government was in a coma state incapable of using anything at its disposal to combat the spread of the disease.

Tangedco teams brave bad weather to restore power

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, AUG. 12

A team of Tangedco linemen and engineers were the unsung heroes during the Southwest Monsoon fury last week as they sweated out in hostile weather and terrain to restore the battered power lines across the four taluks in Nilgiris.

Ooty, Kundah, Gudalur and Pandalur taluks bore the brunt of the monsoon fury as the uprooted trees and electric poles and damaged power cables made life tough for the hill residents.

But, the gritty Tangedco linemen and engineers rose

According to the new guidelines, the travellers may seek exemption from institutional quarantine by submitting a negative RT PCR test report on arrival

to the occasion. They braved the inclement weather to restore the power supply in around 400 places. They did a commendable work in the town limits to restore power supply by last weekend itself, though it took a couple of more days for them to

restore power supply in the rural limits.

Lauding the Tangedco- Nilgiris for its excellence in executing the power restoration works, Mr.G.Janardhanan, president of the Ooty Town Public Awareness Association, said the Tangedco team proved their mental toughness while responding to a tough job amidst pounding rains and chilly weather. The hill residents should salute their hard work and commitment and the administration should honour them suitably, he said.

Sharp rise in online searches for service categories: Study

T. SUDHEESH | DC
CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Internet service providers, packers and movers, home appliances, placement consultancies and job training were the top services searched most online by Chennai residents during unlock2.0 in July, finds an online study.

A study carried out by Sulekha.com, an artificial intelligence-driven tech platform for expert services, based on the visits and searches by nearly 5,49,000 users across the cities in the country, has found that the new phenomenon takes place in the city as majority of people got work-from-home option and mass layoffs caused by the pandemic. The top three service categories that have seen a spike in online searches across the country are Internet service providers, job training and placement consultancies.

While 1,472 searches were found for Internet service providers, packers and movers got 1,216 searches.

Home appliance and services secured 1,083 searches followed by placement consultancies and job training with 1,051 and 940 searches respectively.

Mr. Satya Prabhakar, founder, Sulekha.com, said that unlock 2.0 had unveiled some interesting trends in demand for services as the government is easing more restrictions. "Due to the current job market scenario, we have witnessed a sharp increase in online searches for service categories such as job training and placement consultancies. This is indicative of users who are either searching for a new job or looking to upskill themselves to become more employable", he said.

The study, however, has also pointed out that similar to unlock 1.0, job training continues to retain its spot as one of the top searched services. The top 5 cities that are leading in online searches across service categories are Chennai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

Comparing the growth in online searches for service categories from April – July, packers and movers grew by 745 percent, furniture dealers or rentals services by 590 percent and work at home job providers by 139 percent.

Delhi reached the top spot in the overall category with 4,408 searches for Internet service providers, 3,765 for placement consultancies, 2,921 for domestic help services, 2,291 for job training and 1,959 for massage centers.

When it comes to Bengaluru Internet service providers topped with 2,247 searches, packers and movers were searched 1,593 times, placement consultancies got 1,465 followed by domestic help services (1,323) and job training (960).

In Mumbai, Internet service providers got 2,004 searches while job training secured 1,423 followed by placement consultancies (1,416), massage centers (1,140) and domestic help services (1,055).

Testing the track



Workers checking railway track keeping pace with technology. Chennai division of Southern Railway has adopted OMS, a state-of-the-art system, to detect the condition of tracks. Oscillation Monitoring System (OMS) is an advanced portable instrument which continuously measures vertical and lateral accelerations at any desired location on the floor of a carriage while in motion. In connection with increasing speed of trains in Chennai-Arakkonam-Renigunta sections, Chennai division has proposed to conduct frequent speed trials, with high speeds even up to 143 kmph, in these sections.

— DC

SHORT TAKES

60,963 FRESH CASES, RECOVERY RATE 70%

New Delhi, Aug. 12: India's Covid-19 tally went past 23 lakh on Wednesday with a single day increase of 60,963 cases, while the recoveries surged to 16,39,599 pushing the recovery rate to 70.38 per cent, according to data by the Union Health Ministry.

The total Coronavirus cases in the country have mounted to 23,29,638, while the death toll climbed to 46,091 with 834 new fatalities being reported in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The case fatality rate has declined to 1.98 per cent.

There are 6,43,948 active cases of coronavirus in the country at present which comprise 27.64 per cent of the total caseload.

India had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 2,60,15,297 samples have been tested up to August 11 with 7,33,449 samples being tested on Tuesday.

Of the 834 new deaths reported, 256 are from Maharashtra, 118 from Tamil Nadu, 87 from Andhra Pradesh, 86 from Karnataka, 56 from Uttar Pradesh, 49 from West Bengal, 32 from Punjab, 23 from Gujarat, 18 from Madhya Pradesh, 16 from Bihar, 12 from Jammu and Kashmir and 11 each from Haryana and Rajasthan, the data showed.

Ten fatalities have been reported from Odisha, nine from Telangana, eight from Delhi, six from Goa, five each from Chhattisgarh and Kerala, four each from Assam and Jharkhand, two each from Puducherry and Uttarakhand while Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh and Manipur have registered one fatality each.

Of the total 46,091 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 18,306, followed by 5,159 in Tamil Nadu, 4,139 in Delhi, 3,398 in Karnataka, 2,695 in Gujarat, 2,203 in Andhra Pradesh, 2,176 in Uttar Pradesh, 2,149 in West Bengal and 1,033 in Madhya Pradesh, according to the Union health ministry data.

JD(U) LEADER SHOT DEAD IN BIHAR

Madhepura, Aug. 12: A 50-year-old JD(U) leader was shot dead in Bihar's Madhepura district, police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place around 8 pm on Tuesday, when Ashok Yadav, JD(U)'s Gamhariya block president, was standing near a shop in his Jogbani village, Madhepura Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Washi Ahmad said.

Two persons, who came on a motorcycle, opened fire at him from a close range and fled from the spot, he said.

Yadav was rushed to the Supaul Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him brought dead. His body has been sent to the Madhepura Sadar Hospital for post-mortem.

The two men, who fired at him, are yet to be identified, the police officer said, adding that search operations are on to arrest them.

Asked about the motive behind the killing, the SDPO said it is difficult to say anything as of now as police are investigating the matter.

INDIA-BHUTAN BORDER TRADE VIA WB HALTED

Alipurduar (WB), Aug. 12: Trade across the India-Bhutan border through Jaigaon in West Bengal's Alipurduar district was suspended after a lockdown was imposed to curb the rise in Covid-19 cases in the Himalayan kingdom, an official said on Wednesday.

The border gates between India's Jaigaon and Bhutan's Phuentsholing were closed after the total lockdown came into force in the neighbouring country on Tuesday, an Alipurduar district official said.

"Border trade through Jaigaon has stopped completely," he said.

Even though three districts of West Bengal — Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri and Kalimpong — share a border with Bhutan, the major chunk of trade with the Himalayan kingdom takes place through the Jaigaon-Phuentsholing section.

Jaigaon serves as a major gateway for Bhutan to the rest of India through Siliguri that lies around 150 km west of the border town.

Riot-hit areas resemble war zone

Charred vehicles, shards of glass from broken windows, stones lie strewn over deserted roads

Bengaluru, Aug. 12: Areas under Pulakesh-inagar assembly constituency here resembled a war zone on Wednesday, hours after an unruly mob went on a rampage torching vehicles, irked over a 'communally sensitive' social media post allegedly by put up by a relative of a Congress MLA.

Charred vehicles, shards of glass from broken windows, stones and bricks lie strewn over the deserted roads of the violence-affected localities.

Earlier, three people were killed in police firing and scores of others wounded, including at least 50 policemen in the violence and arson that erupted in the city on Tuesday night and continued till the wee hours of Wednesday.

Property of Congress legislator Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy and his family members were targeted after a 'communally sensitive' social media post uploaded online by one of his relatives enraged a section of people.

"We were not at home when all this happened," Jayanthi, the MLA's sister said weeping inconsolably.

"The only solace is that my brother and his family are safe," she said.

The violent crowd set on fire police vehicles and barged into DJ Halli police station on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and damaged the property.

Police have arrested about 110 people on charges of rioting.

Terming the violence in the city as a 'well-planned act,' Karnataka Revenue Minister R. Ashoka on Wednesday said the 'traitors,' who perpetrated the riots would be dealt with an iron hand and steps would be taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur.

Speaking to reporters after meeting Murthy at Vidhana Soudha here, Ashoka said, "The manner in which the riots were perpetrated shows that it was a well-planned act and was intended to spread to other parts of the city. These are traitors and we will subdue them."

The Minister said the lawmaker's house was completely damaged and belongings including, sarees and jewels were



Residents gather outside the residence of a Congress MLA in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

— PTI

The manner in which the riots were perpetrated shows that it was a well-planned act and was intended to spread to other parts of the city. These are traitors and we will subdue them

—R. ASHOKA, Karnataka Revenue Minister

looted while the rest was set on fire.

"It is clear from the intensity of vandalism that the intention was to attack and finish off Srinivasa Murthy."

It has to be investigated whether any anti-social elements from within the state and outside were involved," Ashoka said.

Claiming that the violence was planned to terrorise the people of Bengaluru, Ashoka said government will send across a strong message so that no one would ever

dare to take law into their hands again.

He also said he met the Chief Minister and apprised him of the ground situation.

The Minister added that steps would be taken to rein in anti-social elements as vandalism was carried out in a manner that communities were identified to target them.

"Whether Popular Front or SDPI is behind it, we will not bother. These people must be arrested. We will hunt them wherever they are holed up,"



Locals help move burnt vehicles at Devar Jeevana Halli in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

— SATISH B.

BJP accuses Congress of not being 'vocal' against rioters in Bengaluru

New Delhi, Aug. 12: The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in Karnataka on Wednesday accused the Congress of not being "vocal" against rioters who attacked a legislator of the Opposition party in Bengaluru, saying "appeasement" seemed to be its official policy.

The BJP also said Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa must make the rioters pay heavily for destruction of properties.

"Shameful n disgusting! Karnataka Congress is silent on yesterday's vandalism in Bengaluru. Pseudos are also not vocal against this riot! Freedom from fear of riots is what B'luru needs now. Sri B.S.

Yediyurappa must make rioters pay heavily for destruction of properties. #SaveBengaluru," BJP general secretary P. Muralidhar Rao tweeted.

Rao is the BJP's in-charge for Karnataka affairs. BJP general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh alleged that the Congress was maintaining "dead silence".

He noted that rioters had attacked the house of Congress MLA Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy, a Dalit.

"Total support for right to riot. For them appeasement is the only official party policy," he said.

"After 14 hours

Karnataka Congress wakes up to blame Naveen for Facebook post & police for delay in taking action. One straight question. Does your party support rioters like this? Why Congress hesitates to condemn riots by minority groups? #C-ongSupportsRiots," he said in a tweet (sic)

Karnataka Congress leader Dinesh Gundu Rao hit back at Santhosh, accusing him of using the incident to gain political mileage.

His statement is a crude attempt to communalise the issue & divide on caste lines, Rao said, calling it "pathetic and deplorable".

— PTI

Ashoka said.

Addressing the media after meeting the minister, Murthy said he wanted the government to provide him protection.

"We were not at home when nearly 3,000 people

with petrol bombs, clubs, came and burnt the vehicles, damaged our house. I need protection from the government after this incident," a visibly shaken MLA said.

He said for the past 25

years he has been living with the Muslim brethren but never faced such a problem.

He demanded a CBI or CID inquiry into the matter to bring out the facts. Asked about his relative

Naveen, whose alleged social media post sparked violence, Murthy said, "Naveen is not my relative. For the past 10 years we have not been in touch with him."

— PTI

Sushant's kin sends legal notice to Raut

Sharad Pawar says Parth is 'immature'

Patna, Aug. 12: A Bihar MLA and close relative of Sushant Singh Rajput sent a legal notice to Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Wednesday, threatening action over a piece written by him in the party mouthpiece about the deceased actor's strained relations with his father, his lawyer said.

In his column for *Saamana* a few days ago, Raut had alleged that the actor, whose death is being probed by the CBI, was not on good terms with his own family and had strained relations with his father after his second marriage.

"Sanjay Raut is an honorable member of Parliament and a responsible spokesman of the party. My client Neeraj Kumar Bablu has contended that he should apologise within 48 hours for his baseless comments. If he does so, we will proceed no further. If he does not, we will seek legal remedy, Anish Jha," the BJP MLA's counsel, said here.

Bablu, who is a cousin of Rajput, had rubbished the

allegation that the actor's septuagenarian father, Krishna Kishore Singh, had tied the knot again after the death of his wife in 2002.

Singh had lodged an FIR at a police station in Patna last month, nearly 40 days after his son was found hanging from the ceiling at his Bandra residence.

In the FIR, Singh had accused actress Rhea Chakraborty and her family members of abetting his son's suicide besides cheating him financially.

Chakraborty has, since, been slapped with a money laundering case by the Enforcement Directorate.

Her petition, questioning the Bihar police's jurisdiction in the matter and seeking transfer of the case from Patna to Mumbai is pending before the Supreme Court.

The matter was taken over by the CBI following a recommendation by the Nitish Kumar government at the request of Rajput's father.

While the Bihar police

had swung into action after registering an FIR on July 25, the development was received with indignation by the Uddhav Thackeray government in Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, NCP leader Majeed Memon on Wednesday said actor Sushant Singh Rajput was not as famous during his lifetime as he is after death, a remark which did not go down well with his party which quickly distanced itself from it.

The NCP said it was Memon's personal opinion and not of the party. Memon, who is a former Rajya Sabha member and a prominent lawyer, also said the media space that the late actor is occupying nowadays is perhaps more than India's Prime Minister and US President.

As reactions came in on the social media following his post, Memon said his comments do not insult the late actor in any way. Rajput, 34, was found hanging at his apartment in Bandra area in Mumbai on June 14.

— PTI

DC CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI, AUG. 12

Calling Ajit Pawar's son Parth "immature", NCP president Sharad Pawar on Wednesday said he gives "absolutely no importance to his grand-nephew's recent demand for a CBI probe into the case of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death."

The NCP chief also said that he has full faith in Maharashtra and Mumbai police. However, he would not oppose if someone still wants the central agencies to probe the case.

Parth Pawar, who lost last year's Lok Sabha election from Maval seat in Maharashtra, demanded that the case be handed over to the CBI.

On July 27, Parth met state home minister Anil Deshmukh demanding

that the case of Rajput's death be handed over to the CBI or a Special Investigation Team (SIT) be formed with forensic experts to probe the case.

"We attach absolutely no importance to what my grand-nephew says. He is immature. I have clearly said that I have 100 per cent trust in the Maharashtra police and Mumbai police but if someone still wants a CBI probe into it, then there is no reason to oppose that, too," the NCP chief told reporters here after a meeting with Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut at YB Chavan Centre in South Mumbai.

He was asked about the demand for a CBI probe in the case being made against some people, including by his grand-nephew Parth.

FORGET AND FORGIVE, GEHLOT TELLS UPSET MLAS

Jaisalmer/Jaipur, Aug. 12: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday said resentment among the Congress MLAs is natural after the return of dissident legislators to the party-fold but asked them to forgive, forget and move on.

But with just two days to go before the Assembly session, the party is taking no chances, deciding to keep them together at a resort in the state capital.

The MLAs in the Gehlot camp were on Wednesday flown back to Jaipur from Jaisalmer, where they were together at another hotel.

They were taken straight from the airport to the Fairmont hotel on the outskirts of the city, where they had stayed before being moved to Jaisalmer. The MLAs mostly from the Congress and some allies are expected to remain there till the Assembly meets on August 14.

The Congress crisis in Rajasthan appears to have ended with the intervention of the top leadership of Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra who met rebel leader Sachin Pilot earlier this week.

Pilot had openly rebelled against Gehlot last month along with 18 other Congress MLAs. He was then sacked as deputy chief minister and the party's Rajasthan chief.

— PTI

IAF protests its negative portrayal in Gunjan Saxena

PAWAN BALI | DC

NEW DELHI, AUG. 12

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has protested that the movie *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl* starring Jhanvi Kapoor portrays the work culture in the Air Force in a "negative light" and being discriminatory towards women officers.

The movie is inspired by Flight Lieutenant Gunjan Saxena, India's first female Air Force officer to fly in a combat zone during the Kargil war. The

movie is right now being streamed on Netflix.

The IAF has written to Dharma Productions, Netflix and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). "The IAF as a service has always

ensured that the organisation is gender neutral and has always provided an equal opportunity to both male and women personnel," said the IAF in a letter to the CBFC.

Sources said that the letter mentions that as per initial understanding,

Dharma Productions had agreed to represent Air Force with authenticity and make all efforts to ensure that the film helps to inspire the next generation of IAF officers.

It said that certain scenes and dialogues in the movie and its trailer, which were forwarded to the IAF for viewing have been found to portray the IAF in an undue negative light. "In the aim to glorify the screen character of Ex-Fit Lt Gunjan Saxena, Dharma Productions pre-

sented some situations that are misleading and portray an inappropriate work culture, especially against women in the IAF," said the letter.

It said that the production house was informed about the objectionable portion in the movie and was advised to delete or modify them.

"However, the production house has not deleted the scenes but had proposed a media plan in the run up to the release and inserting a disclaimer in

the movie," it said.

The IAF said that it considers that a mere media plan and disclaimer would not be adequate to prevent the presentation of incorrect facts about the IAF.

Last month, the defence ministry had written to the CBFC, Information Technology ministry and Broadcasting to advise production houses to obtain "no objection" certificate from ministry of defence before the telecast of any film, documen-

tary, web series on the Indian army theme.

Defence ministry in a letter to the CBFC said that producers may also be advised to ensure that any incident which distorts the image of the defence forces or hurts their sentiments may be prevented.

"It has been brought to the notice of this ministry that some production houses making films on Army theme are using content which is distorting the image of the Army," the letter said.



Reactions..



It is a moment of pride for Indians and Tamil Nadu especially, as Kamala Harris, the first Indian senator, whose mother hails from Tamil Nadu has been nominated as the Vice Presidential candidate by the US Democratic party. My hearty wishes to her.

O. PANNEERSELVAM,
State deputy
chief minister



I'm thrilled to welcome @KamalaHarris to a historic Democratic ticket. She's already proven herself to be an incredible public servant and leader. And I know she'll be a strong partner to @JoeBiden. Please join me in having her back and getting her elected.

HILLARY CLINTON



@KamalaHarris will be a great partner to @JoeBiden in making our government a powerful force for good in the fight for social, racial, and economic justice.

ELIZABETH WARREN

Kamala pick to intensify China row

Senator had flayed China for the mass detention camps of Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang

Beijing, Aug. 12: China on Wednesday officially declined to react to US Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's move to pick Indian-origin Senator Kamala Harris as his running mate but the official media here said that her nomination will add "fuel to fire" to the current conflict between the two sides given her strong stand on human rights issues relating to Xinjiang and Hong Kong.

Biden on Tuesday picked Harris as his running mate, recognising the crucial role coloured voters and Indian-Americans could play in his bid to defeat Trump in the US presidential election in November. Harris in the past called for increasing pressure on China for human rights violations against Uighur Muslims of Xinjiang and the crackdown against the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong.

But she also rejected President Donald Trump's tariff war on China, saying that it would hurt the business of California for which she was the Senator and increase the prices of consumer goods. Asked for his reaction at a media briefing here on Wednesday to Biden nominating Harris to be his vice-presidential nominee, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian declined to comment. "The Presidential election in the US is an internal affair. We don't have the interest to interfere," he said, apparently referring to US official's allegations that China, Russia and Iran may try to influence the US Presidential poll in November this year.

William Evanina, head of the National Counterintelligence and Security Centre (NCSC), in a statement last week said China "prefers that President Trump — whom Beijing sees as unpredictable — does not win re-election" and has been "expanding its influence efforts" ahead of the vote.

While Zhao was guarded in his reaction, state-run Global Times quoted Chinese observers as saying that Harris' nomination won't help end the two parties' playing of the China card. Harris once gave herself a Chinese name, He Jinli, which translates to "intricate and beautiful," while the surname means "celebrate." But this should not be misinterpreted as goodwill



Harris' nomination will only add fuel to the fire of the two parties' competitive playing of the China card, and to acting tough on China during their election campaign.

ZHANG TENGJUN,
Assistant research fellow at the
China Institute of International
Studies

toward China. The senator has been vocal in her criticisms of China on multiple issues, including Xinjiang and Hong Kong, it said. She criticised China last year for the mass detention camps of Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang and

said Beijing failed to respect the rights and autonomy of Hong Kong's people.

She jointly launched the Uighur Human Rights Policy Act in 2019, and urged several US investigation agencies to probe China's "suppression" of the Uighurs. In October 2019, she announced her support for the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act. "Harris' nomination will only add fuel to the fire of the two parties' competitive playing of the China card, and to acting tough on China during their election campaign," Zhang Tengjun, assistant research fellow at the China Institute of International Studies, told the paper.

— PTI

Being tough may backfire on her

Los Angeles, Aug. 12: Joe Biden's choice of Kamala Harris as his running mate was hailed on Tuesday as a historic for first woman of colour, but some warn her record as a tough prosecutor could dent her appeal with two key constituencies — coloured voters and liberals.

Harris, the first woman of colour attorney general in the history of the Golden State, portrayed herself as a progressive reformer during her own presidential bid, but some have cast doubts on that claim.

"Time after time, when progressives urged her to embrace criminal justice reforms as a district attorney and then the state's attorney general, Ms Harris opposed them or stayed silent," law professor Lara Bazelon wrote last year in an op-ed for *The New York Times*.

"Harris turned legal technicalities into weapons so she could cement injustices," added Bazelon, a former director of the Loyola Law School Project for the

Innocent in Los Angeles. Before serving as attorney general, the 55-year-old Harris was the district attorney in San Francisco. She was elected to the Senate in 2016.

"Kamala Harris had a reputation in California as a prosecutor and attorney general who waited rather than led, who moved on controversial issues only once she saw what was politically viable," the daily Sacramento Bee wrote in a June editorial.

As concerns police brutality — a subject very much in the news following the death of George Floyd, whose killing at the hands of police in May sparked nationwide protests — Harris has also been criticised for failing to intervene in cases involving police violence.

While serving as attorney general in 2016, for example, she opposed a bill to investigate deadly police shootings following the death of a stabbing suspect — shot 21 times by police — that sparked huge protests. — AFP

Biden, Harris to make unusual campaign debut in virus era

Wilmington (US), Aug 12: Joe Biden is making his first appearance with newly chosen running mate Kamala Harris on Wednesday, betting that the California senator's historic profile and confrontational style against President Donald Trump will boost Democrats' efforts to oust the Republican president amid cascading national crises.

The former primary rivals will appear at a high school in Biden's Delaware hometown to discuss their shared vision for how to defeat Trump and then lead the country through a pandemic, its economic fallout and a long-simmering reckoning with systemic racism. Harris and Biden then will sit down together for an online fundraiser designed to let even small donors get a fresh glimpse of what the Democratic presidential ticket will look like together.

A reflection of coronavirus guidelines, there will be no adoring throngs that would greet a new running mate in a routine campaign and certainly one with Harris' historical significance. The daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants, she is the first Black woman and first person of Asian descent to join a major party presidential ticket. But the 55-year-old former prosecutor will have to put her animated public style — often a contrast to the folksier 77-year-old Biden — to use in television and online streaming formats without voter interaction or feedback. The Biden campaign has said it plans a rollout that blends the historic nature of Harris' selection with the realities of the 2020 campaign and the gravity of the nation's circumstances. — AP

● Harris and Biden then will sit down together for an online fundraiser designed to let even small donors get a fresh glimpse of what the Democratic presidential ticket will look like together.

WHO IS KAMALA HARRIS

● Kamala Devi Harris was born on October 10, 1964 in Oakland, California. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, was a Tamil breast cancer scientist who emigrated from India in 1960 to pursue a doctorate in endocrinology at the University of California, Berkeley. Her father, Donald Harris, emigrated from Jamaica in 1961 to study at UC Berkeley and was a professor at Stanford University. She has a younger sister, Maya, who is now a close political adviser.

● Harris received her undergraduate degree at Howard University, where she was a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. Her sorority, known as AKA, has an influential political network. Harris received her law degree from University of California, Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco.

● Harris married Doug Emhoff in 2014. Emhoff has two children from a previous marriage. Harris' long career as a prosecutor may be a boon for Biden, although critics have raised concerns about her record as a district attorney and California attorney general. After graduating law school in 1990, Harris was hired as a deputy district attorney in Alameda County, California. She also served on the Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board and later the California Medical Assistance Commission.



DEMOCRACY JUST cannot flourish amid fear. Liberty cannot bloom amid hate. Justice cannot take root amid rage. America must get to work. . . . We must dissent from the indifference. We must dissent from the apathy. We must dissent from the fear, the hatred, and the mistrust."

KAMALA HARRIS, The Truths We Hold: An American Journey

Biden's V-P choice surprises Trump

Washington, Aug. 12: US President Donald Trump said he is surprised that his Democratic Party challenger for the presidential elections Joe Biden has named Indian-origin Senator Kamala Harris as his running mate despite knowing how "nasty" and "disrespectful" she has been towards him.

Biden on Tuesday named Harris as his vice-presidential running mate, making history by selecting the first woman of colour to compete on a major party's presidential ticket.

Harris, 55, whose father is an African from Jamaica and mother an Indian, is currently the US Senator from California.

"We'll see how she works out. She did very, very poorly in the primaries as you know. She was expected to do well. She ended up at right around two per cent," Trump said.

"She had a lot of things happening and so I was a little surprised that he (Biden) picked her. I've been watching her for a long time, and I was a little surprised," Trump said, offering his first reaction to Biden's pick of Harris.

Harris had launched her presidential campaign in January 2019. Her campaign could not take off and by the end of the year, she withdrew from the race.

Harris is the first person of colour to be

selected as a vice presidential candidate and also only the fourth woman and first-ever African American and Indian American to be running for the second highest political position in the country.

Responding to questions, Trump told reporters that Harris has been nasty to Biden.

As far as Kamala is concerned, she's a big tax raiser. She's a big slasher of funds for our military. And she's got a lot of difficult things that she's going to have to explain. Plus she was very, very nasty — one of the reasons it surprised me — she was probably nastier than even Pocahontas (Senator Elizabeth Warren) to Joe Biden. She was very disrespectful to Joe Biden, Trump said, referring to the Democratic Party debates.

"It's hard to pick somebody that's disrespectful. When she said (those) things during the debates — the Democrat Primary debates — that were horrible about sleepy Joe. I would think that he wouldn't have picked (her)," Trump said. Commenting on Vice President Mike Pence, Trump said he has been fantastic at his work.

"I will take him over Kamala and the horrible way she, again, treated Justice Brett Kavanaugh. That was a horrible event. I thought it was terrible of her. I thought it was terrible for our nation. I thought she was the meanest, the most horrible, most disrespectful of anybody in the US Senate, Trump said. — PTI

Biden 'nailed this decision' in picking Harris: Obama

Washington, Aug. 12: Former US president Barack Obama has joined top Democrats, including Hillary Clinton, to praise Indian-American Senator Kamala Harris' selection as the party's vice presidential candidate in the November election, saying Joe Biden has "nailed this decision".

Presumptive Democratic party presidential nominee Biden on Tuesday named 55-year-old Harris as his vice presidential running mate, making history by selecting the first woman of colour to compete on a major party's presidential ticket. Harris, whose father is from Jamaica and mother an Indian, is currently the US Senator

from California.

"Choosing a vice president is the first important decision a president makes. When you're in the Oval Office, weighing the toughest issues, and the choice you make will affect the lives and livelihoods of the entire country — you need someone with you who's got the judgment and the character to make the right call," Obama said in a statement.

Obama, who served in the White House with Biden for two terms, said the former vice president "nailed this decision" and by choosing Harris he "underscored his own judgment and character" — attributes that are "requirements of the job"

of president. Obama said that he has known Harris for a long time.

"She is more than prepared for the job. She's spent her career defending our Constitution and fighting for folks who need a fair shake," he said. Harris is the first woman of colour and the first South Asian woman to be picked as a vice-presidential candidate for a major party in the US.

Prior to being a Senator, she served as California's attorney general and was the district attorney in San Francisco. She herself was a presidential aspirant until last year before she dropped out of the race because of lack of popular support. — PTI

THE INSPIRING STORY OF MANY FIRSTS

● Indian-origin Senator Kamala Devi Harris scripted history when she became the first woman of colour to be appointed as running mate by Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden in the November presidential elections.

● The 55-year-old California senator becomes just the third woman to be selected as the vice president on a major party ticket. Then-Alaska Governor Sarah Palin in 2008 and New York Representative Geraldine Ferraro in 1984 were the other two.

● Harris is known for many firsts. She has been a county district attorney; the district attorney for San Francisco — the first woman and first African-American and Indian-origin to be elected to the position. She would be several firsts in her role as vice president also: the first woman, the first African-American woman, the first Indian-American and the first Asian-American.

● Harris grew up embracing her Indian culture, but living a proudly African American life.



● In her nearly two terms in office as attorney general, Harris gained a reputation as one of the rising stars of the Democratic Party. She was elected as California's junior US senator in 2017.

● It is believed that Harris' nomination will stop Indian-American voters in key battleground states from shifting away from the opposition Democratic Party in the direction of Trump.

DECCAN Chronicle

13 AUGUST 2020

PM ‘mantra’ old hat, should fund state fights

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the nation what he called a new mantra to defeat the coronavirus: testing, tracing, isolation and treatment. The Prime Minister also said if the 10 states that account for 82 per cent of the number of Covid patients are able to contain it, then India will win the war against the pandemic. He has asked the chief ministers of West Bengal, Gujarat, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Punjab to step up testing.

It is welcome that the Prime Minister is seen to be taking an active interest in the war against the virus but the mantra he has given is by no means new. This formula — to test all the people who could have been in contact with infected people, trace all their contacts and isolate or quarantine them, and treat all those who have been infected — has long been employed successfully across the world. Several Indian states have aggressively pursued this path and have been able to contain the virus. Even Delhi, once considered the corona capital, and Dharavi, the slum in Mumbai, have employed this mantra successfully. The World Health Organisation has been talking of increased number of tests from the very start of the campaign against the virus.

The Prime Minister’s advice comes at a time when India’s daily caseload has crossed 60,000; of late, we are ahead of even the United States and Brazil on this count. At present, India with over 23 lakh infections is at the third position in the list of the worst affected nations. With a doubling rate of 22.7 days, India is projected to overtake Brazil in a couple of weeks. The only silver lining is case fatality rate of 2.1 per cent, which is lower than the global average of 3.75 per cent. However, the number of deaths has shown an alarming trend with the figure touching 1000 on some days. India’s number of tests per million of population is low compared with other severely affected nations: 18,300 per million against 1,99,803 of the US and 62,200 of Brazil. India’s test positivity rate is higher than these two countries, too. An early rollout of the mantra across the country when it was under lockdown would have stopped India from coming to such a pass. However, it is always better late than never.

Apart from the new mantra, what the states who are in the frontline of the “war” want is money. Most states are now exhausted in terms of their financial and human resources. The increasing cost of the corona fight and the decreasing economic activity stare them in their faces. The suggestion of Tamil Nadu chief minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami that the PM-Cares fund meet at least half of the testing cost merits the Centre’s serious consideration. The government must also drop its reported move to renege on its statutory obligation to offset the shortfall in GST collection. It must open its coffers and help the states instead so that India emerges a winner as Mr Modi suggested.

Educating courts, citizens

All fair-minded Indian citizens have occasion to be grateful to the judiciary today — it has done its job well of reading the law right and settling all ambiguities — whether intentional or wishful — concerning the landmark 2005 amendment to the 1956 Hindu Succession Act. Clearcut in nature, the amendment had nevertheless seen several challenges involving its interpretation — especially with respect to whether the karta or head of the family was alive on the date it had been passed — in the present case, the Court settled seven special leave petitions alongside the main matter involving siblings Vineeta and Rakesh Sharma’s share of family property.

The Hindu Succession Act lays down a uniform system of inheritance that applies to persons governed by Hinduism’s Mitakshara (northern India) Dayabhaga (West Bengal, Assam), Murumakkattayam, Aliyasantana and Nambudri (southern India) laws. The amendment expands women’s rights within this law. According to its Section 6, which, the Court pointed out, applies retroactively, rather than retrospectively, daughters are equal coparceners in a Hindu undivided family property irrespective of their date of birth or, alternatively, the date of death of the father, provided there has been no partition or devolution of the property in question before December 20, 2004. This judgment thus ensures that a woman can no longer be denied her share on the ground that she is born prior to the enactment of the law on September 9, 2005, or that her father was not alive on that date.

The judgment is a reminder of another progressive judgment in the same context — on December 22, 2015, the Delhi high court ruled that the eldest female member of a Hindu undivided family can be its karta. However, another critical issue still lies open regarding this very law. It is to do with the daughter’s progeny and lineal descendants. Do they have the same rights as the son’s descendants? Section 15 of the law pertains to the circumstances of a woman dying intestate. It does not give her parental and marital heirs equal rights of inheritance to her property, scrutinising it and returning it to its originator and his heirs, as if she has added no value to it on her part. A reform, thereby, is the need of the hour.

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Subhani



Make India stronger in order to take on China



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray
Reflections

As Australia draws closer to the US in the name of national security and pursues trade diversification, it risks alienating China, its largest trading partner by far with a crucial role in its economic recovery.” Australia could be replaced by India in that sentence from a recent article in Hong Kong’s *South China Morning Post* newspaper by Yuan Jiang, a Chinese Ph.D. student at Australia’s Queensland University of Technology. In neither case is there a lucid articulation of why precisely China is feared.

Some of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent actions might suggest he would like to ban all business with China but lacks the confidence to do so. Restrictions on investment from neighbouring countries — as if Pakistan would put money into India or Nepal has any to do so — are too thinly veiled to fool anyone. Exhorting Indian businessmen to take advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic to lure foreign investors away from China annoys Beijing while ignoring the reasons (weak infrastructure, poor work ethic, bureaucratic stranglehold and all-pervasive corruption) why investors shunned India in the first place.

At the same time, Mr Modi glosses over China’s territorial incursions in Ladakh for reasons that may not be very creditable. Some of his critics suggest that China alone welcomed him when Britain and the United States refused him visas because they disapproved of his attitude to Muslims as the chief minister of Gujarat. As the Congress’ Ahmed Patel remarked,

Mr Modi has paid nine official visits to China whereas no other Indian Prime Minister has gone there more than twice.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was even more cutting, and pointing to Mr Modi’s obsession with the gigantic statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, he added: “It will be the world’s tallest statue but it will be ‘Made in China’, like our shoes and shirts.” It was an unkind cut for two reasons. First, like Shelley’s Ozymandias, Mr Modi hankers to impress future generations with massive creations. Second, much to the embarrassment of all thinking Indians, the fetish has led him straight into China’s embrace. Only China’s Jiangxi Toqine Metal Crafts Corporation, allegedly the world’s largest foundry, could produce the 7,000 or so bronze plates and panels that the \$430-million, 600-ft figure needed.

The dependence is evident in other more vital spheres. As China’s *Global Times*, a daily tabloid published under the Chinese Communist Party’s auspices, noted smugly: “India’s rapid progress in catching up with China when it comes to attracting foreign investment shows its potential to become a global economic powerhouse, but whether India will be the next China in terms of economic growth depends on many factors, and how much help and investment it gets from China may be one of the first and foremost.”

The patronising tone is easily explained: leaving aside the 1962 border war, although both countries have roughly the same population, India’s GDP is only \$2.5 trillion, compared with China’s \$12.2

trillion. High mobile penetration among 1.3 billion Indians owes much to Chinese Internet platforms, which know from their domestic experience how to translate demographic dividends into consumption power to attract more foreign investment. Among Chinese Internet companies active in India, Alibaba recently invested \$45 million in India’s e-commerce platform Paytm.

As the former Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, has always reiterated, the Asian ecosystem has ample space for India and China both to grow together. There are enough consumers and sources of raw material and investment capital for two burgeoning economies. There are also signs that the Indian tortoise may not be crawling too far behind the Chinese hare.

While foreign corporate launches, mergers and acquisitions in China amounted to nearly \$41.6 billion last year, India did not do too badly, with \$40.6 billion in foreign direct investment. Walmart’s \$16 billion stake in Flipkart meant a 64 per cent year-on-year jump. Moreover, India’s \$79 billion remittances from abroad exceeded the \$67 billion that the overseas Chinese sent back. As a result, while India’s GDP grew 8.2 per cent in the second quarter, China’s economy grew 6.7 per cent.

However, one of the most important of the several factors that stand in the way of India’s robust growth is the obsession with spectacle instead of development. Mr Modi

squanders money on architectural extravaganzas like the Ayodhya temple to Ram that is now being built, reinventing Delhi and gigantic statuary instead of investing in liveable housing, potable water and a creaky healthcare system that is incapable of coping with Covid-19. China, meanwhile, never ceases to advertise itself as the only one among the world’s top five healthcare markets with double digit growth.

Another yardstick is that while India is inordinately proud of its nine Nobel laureates, their success is really happenstance. China’s eight prize-winners are the products of the solid primary and secondary school system that has been built up throughout the country.

Standing up to China sounds undeniably patriotic. But we must know the threat in order to repulse it. If the goal had been conquest, China would not have walked away after Bomdila in 1962. If it was economic domination, the Chinese would not have wanted to invest in infrastructure (highways, railways, ports and airports) as well as manufacturing to reduce India’s trade deficit and realise Mr Modi’s “Make in India” dream.

Of course, the Chinese have a strategy and the purpose is to help China, not India. But the way to counter that is not empty bombast and blowing hot and cold, but to build up India’s own economic strength, bargain hard over trade terms to increase India’s exports, and to cooperate in economic and development projects that help both countries.

Like Australia, India too cannot contain China in the South China Sea. It would only diminish itself by becoming another Tibet, Xinjiang or now Hong Kong in America’s anti-China armoury.

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

LETTERS

INC AS OPPN

Apropos your editorial *Truce in Raj Cong. But rift needs solution* (Aug. 12). Regional satraps of Congress had for long come to vest authority on the ‘high command’ to end perennial infighting. The dynasty came in handy and the arrangement functioned till its president produced results. The older generation understands Congress well, the younger generation now needs to be tutored on the value of patience. A singular fixation is needed to sink differences and anoint an able captain and be back to winning ways. It would ensure the one vital backstop to our democratic investment of seven plus decades a capable and animated Opposition.

R. Narayanan
Chennai

VACCINE FOR COVID

AT THIS CRITICAL time when scientists the world over are working very hard day and night to develop most effective vaccines for the Covid-19 at the earliest, it is difficult to understand why some scientists seem so very cynical when Russia claims to have successfully fast-tracked its efforts and developed its ‘Sputnik V’ vaccine which is reportedly ready now. Of course, all the mandated vaccine trial processes and other protocols would have to be necessarily gone through, like any other nation, by the Russians too before getting final approval by WHO. This is also the crucial time when the scientific community needs to come together to destroy a deadly virus which has now become a big threat to humanity itself.

A. Mohan
Chennai

POSTAL SERVICE

INDIAN POSTAL department’s new service of delivering cash to homes across the country during the lockdown has been a huge hit despite the fact that the department itself has been facing limitations. The department has heroically stepped in to deliver medicines and PPE kits to health workers in the absence of private transportation facilities.

R. Sivakumar
Chennai

Saeed Naqvi
Wide Angle



“Mut ranja kar kisi ko, ke apne to aeteqaad,
Jee dhaaye ke jo kaaba banaya to kya kiya?”

— Mir Taqi Mir
We will lose Turkey, if Istanbul is lost.” This statement by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan returned to plague him when his Justice and Development Party lost Ankara, Istanbul and five major cities in 2019’s local elections. This may be one reason why he swiftly transformed the Hagia Sophia museum into a mosque on July 24.

From the Bosphorus, the Istanbul skyline is exactly like picture postcards, a skillful contrast of domes and minarets, slim as thermometers. The brooding Ayasofya Museum stands apart. The greatest Byzantine cathedral, built at the edge of Europe in 537, was designed to dominate the panorama of the Marmara Sea and the Asian mainland beyond.

The first Arab probe of Sindh by Mohammad bin Qasim was in 711 AD, exactly the date when Tariq Ibne Ziad crossed over from Morocco to set up station at what he called Jabal al Tariq, or the Rock of Tariq, which the British renamed Gibraltar in 1704 after the famous Spanish-British naval engagements, including the “Spanish Armada”.

Before the Iberian Peninsula turned into a cauldron of intra-European conflict, 800 years of Muslim rule was somewhat unevenly spread across Spain. To flavour this phase of history, one has to read Maria Rosa Menocal’s masterly *Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain*. The title itself tells the story. It is astonishing that in the past three decades of gruelling Islamophobia, not one of our liberals has referred to phases in history when robust multiculturalism thrived under Muslim rule. After Reconquista in 1492 by Christians, the Inquisition was much harsher on the Jews who found refuge in Morocco and later in the Ottoman Empire.

The glory of the greatest Eastern Orthodox Cathedral came under partial eclipse when the Roman Catholic Church occupied it for six decades. But it was Sultan Mehmet’s establishment of the Ottoman Empire in 1453 that caused the cathedral to face a predictable total eclipse. It was then transformed into a mosque.

From the debris of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, Mustafa Kemal Pasha “Ataturk” resurrected what is modern Turkey. He was determined to take his country from “backwardness” into “modernism”.

In other words, he turned his back on “Muslim traditionalism” and dreamt of a secular Turkey, custom made for Europe. He replaced the Arabian alphabet with the Roman script in the Turkish language. He banned the “fez” cap, brought the practice of Islam under a department of religious affairs under the Prime Minister, and so on. Little wonder the texture of life in Istanbul and Ankara was more European than Islamic, rather like North Tehran under the Shah of Iran. But what was the ingredient that made Turkey’s secularism comparatively more durable? It was the Turkish Army, which became the guarantor of the republic’s secularism. Ataturk divined, and quite rightly too, that Hagia Sophia mosque would be an eyesore for Europe, in perpetuity. With one executive order in 1934, it was reinvented as a museum of Byzantine history.

It was Western callousness that, in the ultimate analyses, made Turkey’s secular edifice vulnerable. Western, mostly American, and Israeli hostility to Arab socialism (Egypt), Ba’athism (Iraq, Syria) and Libya’s cradle-to-grave welfare system (details of the Afghan tumult are only slightly different) promoted Islamism on an unspeakable scale.

The details of Turkey’s upheaval

must be explained. With the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, Serbian and Croatian nationalisms turned upon Bosnian Muslims with vicious brutality. Srebrenica is only one chapter in that shoddy history. Briefings by Gen Sir Michael Rose, the UN military commander, were laden with more gruesome detail by the day, particularly in the four-year siege of Sarajevo. The Balkans, the turf for continuous conflict throughout history between the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian Empires, became an open killing field when Belgrade couldn’t hold Yugoslavia together. The helplessness of Bosnian Muslims was unbelievable. Europe’s reason for not intervening rang hollow. Its intervention, it was said, would cause individual countries to take sides in a conflict where World War II adversaries Serbia and Croatia were fighting each other over the Bosnian spoils.

A Europe sucked into the Bosnian war carried the risk of undermining the very purpose for which the EU was forged: to avoid conflict between member states. This was sophistry, said Salman Rushdie. Reverse the religious affiliations of the combatants, and European troops would be in Bosnia within a day.

Mornings, evenings and afternoons, Turks watched the brutalisa-

tion of Bosnia and Sarajevo, both an evocative part of Turkish historical memory. A powerful anti-West Islamist party, Refah, or Welfare, took shape and spread like prairie fire. Necmettin Erbakan, founder of Refah, became Prime Minister. Citing the secular Constitution, the Army swiftly dethroned the “Islamist” Prime Minister.

Erbakan’s protégés Abdullah Gul and Recep Tayyip Erdogan dismantled “Refah” and reappeared in a secular garb as leaders of AK, or Justice and Development Party. As evidence of their secular credentials, they kept alive their EU membership application, despite European callousness. In fact, French President Giscard d’Estaing virtually slapped Turkey across its face, saying: “European civilisation is Christian civilisation.” After his mishandling of Syria, misreading of Europe, the US and Russia, his popularity in serious question, Mr Erdogan has fallen back on the oldest trick in the politician’s book: religious extremism. “Look”, he will address Islamists, “like Mehmet, the conqueror, I have restored for your supplications a great mosque.”

The writer is a senior journalist and commentator

Will Erdogan’s Islamist play at Hagia Sophia rescue his govt?

SHORT TAKES

India gets special Olympics grant

New Delhi: India will be among six countries to benefit from a \$25 million grant commissioned by the UAE under the Unified Champion School worldwide programme with an aim to empower intellectually disabled children, the Special Olympics Bharat announced on Wednesday.

Special Olympics Bharat founder Air Marshall Denzil Keelor announced the grant made for the programme by the Crown Prince of the UAE, which will also benefit his organisation.

"The Crown Prince (of the UAE) has granted \$25m for the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools programme worldwide which will be used in six countries, including India. This 4-year programme will help build an inclusive society," Air Marshall Keelor said on the grant.

Besides India, the grant will also support the Unified Champion School programme in countries such as Argentina, Egypt, Rwanda, Romania and Pakistan.

— PTI

Serena, Simona are stretched

Los Angeles: A rusty Serena Williams made a winning return from her six-month Coronavirus hiatus on Tuesday, defeating lowly ranked Bernarda Pera in three sets to advance to the second round of the WTA Top Seed Open tournament in Kentucky.

Williams, who before Tuesday had not played a competitive game since a Fed Cup appearance in February, was forced to come from behind to defeat world number 60 Pera 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 in two hours and 15 minutes at the Top Seed Tennis Club in Lexington.

Meanwhile, top-seeded Simona Halep had to fight hard to advance to the second round of the Prague Open in beating unseeded Polana Herczeg 6-1, 1-6, 7-6 (3) on Tuesday.

It was the first competitive match for Halep since she won the Dubai Championships in February for her 20th career WTA title. Before the Wimbledon champion recovered from a foot injury she sustained in Dubai, the Coronavirus pandemic forced a five-month break. — Agencies

CWG Village to be a multi-site affair

Birmingham: The Covid-19 pandemic has forced the organisers of the 2022 Commonwealth Games to opt for a multi-site athletes village instead of building single accommodation facility for players and officials.

According to the Games organisers, the athletes and team officials will now be housed in three campus villages at The University of Birmingham, The University of Warwick, and The NEC Hotel Campus. The 500 million pound village was being constructed on the former Birmingham City University site in Perry Barr and was set to provide accommodation to 6,500 athletes and team officials.

However, the organisers scrapped the idea after sensing that it could not be delivered on time. The new campus model will see 1,600 athletes and officials housed at the NEC Hotel Campus, 1,900 at The University of Warwick, and the principal village with 2,800 at The University of Birmingham.

— PTI

RIDERS BRACE FOR AUSTRIAN GP IN RAIN

Spielberg, Austria: Forecasts are predicting a wet and wild Austrian Grand Prix at the Red Bull Ring as Alex Marquez and Stefan Bradl look to launch a rejuvenated challenge.

The MotoGP World Championship arrives in Austria for the first of two races at the Red Bull Ring off the back of the Czech GP. Both riders are ready to focus on adapting their machines.

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COVID HITS IPL

Rajasthan Royals fielding coach tests positive

New Delhi, Aug. 12: Rajasthan Royals' fielding coach Dishant Yagnik has tested positive for Covid-19, the IPL team announced on Wednesday, making it the first such case among the league franchises ahead of their departure next week to this year's tournament venue, the UAE.

The 13th edition of Indian Premier League is set to take place in the UAE from September 19 to November 10. The event was moved out of India due to Covid-19 cases.

"Rajasthan Royals would like to inform that their fielding coach Dishant Yagnik has tested positive for Covid-19," the franchise said in a statement.

"The test was undertaken keeping in mind that the team members need to assemble in Mumbai next week for their flight to the UAE. The franchise implemented an extra test for all players, support staff and management travelling to the UAE in addition to the two tests recommended by BCCI," the statement added.

This is the first case among the IPL contingent. Yagnik is currently in his hometown Udaipur and has been advised to get admitted to a hospital for the mandatory 14-day quarantine.

After the completion of the two-week quarantine, Yagnik will be undergoing two tests as per the BCCI's Covid protocols and will be allowed back into the team only after his reports return negative.

After his arrival in UAE, Yagnik will have to stay in self-isolation for the next six days and will also undergo three more Covid-19 tests.

— PTI



Dishant Yagnik, fielding coach of the Rajasthan Royals, in this file photo.

FRESH BID FOR SPONSORS

New Delhi, Aug. 12: Education technology company Unacademy, which is already one of IPL's sponsors, is eyeing the league's title sponsorship rights now and is set to submit its bid to replace Chinese mobile phone company Vivo this season.

A BCCI official confirmed that Unacademy has picked up the bid papers but refrained from making any comments beyond that. "I can confirm that Unacademy has shown interest and picked the bid papers. I have heard they will be submitting a bid and are pretty serious. So Patanjali if they bid, will have competition," the senior official said.

The BCCI is now looking at a lesser value — between ₹300 to ₹350 crore — for a period of four months and 13 days.

— PTI

England out of Stokes for second Test vs Pak

Southampton, Aug. 12: England may have won the series opener against Pakistan but the absence of Ben Stokes leaves them with arguably the bigger selection headache going into Thursday's second Test at Southampton.

Pakistan were much the better side for much of last week's first Test at Old Trafford and, despite a second-innings collapse, were still favourites to win when they reduced England to 117-5 in pursuit of a target of 277.

But a sixth-wicket partnership of 139 between Chris Woakes (84 not out) and Jos Buttler (75) turned the tide as England went 1-0 up in a three-match series on Saturday.

Since England won with more than a day to spare in Manchester, it has been announced that star allrounder Stokes will miss the rest of the series as a result of travelling to New Zealand to be with his ill father.

A quad injury meant that the end of England's

Live on TV

SECOND TEST

England vs Pakistan
from 3.30 pm on Sony SIX

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUARTERFINAL

Lepizig vs Atletico Madrid
from 12.30 am (Friday)
on Sony Ten 2

2-1 series win over the West Indies last month — a campaign that marked international cricket's return from the Coronavirus lockdown — and the first Test against Pakistan saw vice-captain Stokes effectively deployed as a specialist batsman by skipper Joe Root.

Stokes, however, still took two important wickets on the third evening against Pakistan.

The obvious move for England would be to recall batsman Zak Crawley, who has missed out on the last two

● **Hosts are left with a selection headache with star allrounder Ben Stokes out of the Southampton Test.**

● **Stokes has left for New Zealand to be with his ailing father and will miss the remainder of the series.**

matches while an extra bowler has been deployed because of Stokes' injury problems.

Buttler underlined his skill in a run-chase last week but the wicketkeeper, by his own admission, had a poor match with the gloves. England do have the option to recall Ben Foakes, widely regarded as a better keeper, and play Buttler as a specialist batsman.

England are in the middle of a sequence of six Tests in seven weeks, a gruelling schedule that has seen them adopt a policy of rotating their quicks.

— AFP

SHAKIB WILL RETURN FOR LANKA SERIES

Dhaka, Aug. 12: Serving a ban for not reporting corrupt approaches, Bangladesh's premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is likely to return to the national fold for a tour of Sri Lanka later this year, with his suspension ending on October 29.

The southpaw was banned for two years, one year of it was suspended, for failing to report corrupt approaches by an alleged Indian bookie during the Indian Premier League.

Bangladesh's tour of Sri Lanka is more or less confirmed and given the schedule, Shakib could feature in the proposed three-match T20 series.

— PTI

CSK want MSD to play till 2022

New Delhi, Aug. 12: Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Vishwanathan feels their talisman Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who has not played any competitive cricket since last year's World Cup semifinal, will be part of the franchise in 2021 and 2022 IPLs.

The 39-year-old Dhoni is set for a return to competitive cricket in the upcoming IPL, to be played in the UAE from September 19 to November 10.

"We can expect MS Dhoni to be part of both (IPL 2020 and 2021) and probably for even the next year 2022," Vishwanathan was quoted as saying by an Indian news media outlet.

"I am getting updates through the media only, saying he has been training in Jharkhand in indoor nets. But we don't have to worry about the skipper, boss. We don't worry about him at all. "He knows his responsibilities and he will take care of himself and the team," he added.

N. Srinivasan, the vice-chairman and managing director of India Cements, owners of the CSK franchise, in January said that Dhoni would be retained by the team for the 2021 IPL mega-auction.

Speculations were rife about Dhoni's future since the 2019 World Cup as he failed to get a central BCCI contract.

— PTI

LANKA, UAE KEPT AS BACKUP FOR T20 WORLD CUP

New Delhi, Aug. 12: Sri Lanka and United Arab Emirates are the two back-up countries being zeroed in on by the ICC, in case India is unable to host next year's T20 World Cup.

While there is still one year to go before the mega event which was set to be held in Australia this year but got postponed due to rising cases of COVID-19 and inability of the host country to manage 16 teams. According to a report in *ESPN Cricinfo*, "Sri Lanka and the UAE are among the back-up venues for the 2021 men's T20 World Cup, should the Covid-19 pandemic make India an untenable host."

The ICC confirmed last week that India will host next year's tournament as scheduled in the original Future Tours Programme while this year's postponed edition in Australia goes ahead in 2022.

However it is a standard protocol to have back-up venues listed for any global event. "Identifying potential back-up venues is standard practice for every ICC event," the report added.

— PTI



A file photo of Eli Sabia posing with Chennaiyin FC fans.

ISL | SEASON 7

Brazilian Eli Sabia extends CFC stay

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, AUG. 12

Chennaiyin FC on Wednesday announced that Brazilian defender Eli Sabia has extended his contract with the club.

"I am delighted beyond words to continue my time at Chennaiyin FC. The love that my family and I have received from the club, fans, and the city of Chennai is unmatched," Sabia said in a statement released by Chennaiyin FC from his Santa Catarina residence in Brazil.

"We have unfinished business from last season after we fell just short in the final. We go again in the new season with renewed hope and determination to bring a third ISL title to Chennai," he added.

Experienced center-back Eli started in 19 of Chennaiyin's 21 games last season as they put together a stunning run to the final. An eight-game unbeaten run to qualify for the semis required CFC to be resolute at the back, and Eli played an instrumental role in ensuring that with his calming and reliable presence.

He also contributed at the other end with a goal and assist, the former an important strike in the 4-1 semi-final first leg win over FC Goa.

CFC co-owner Vita Dani said, "Eli (Sabia) is the embodiment of hard work, determination and consistency at Chennaiyin. We are glad he has extended his stay with us and we look forward to him continuing to excel in Chennaiyin blue."

With 59 appearances for CFC in all competitions so far, Sabia is preparing for a fourth season with the Marina Arena club by focusing on his fitness currently back home in Brazil. He had his first stint at Chennaiyin in 2016 and after having returned to Brazil for a short spell at Sertaozinho FC before switching to Al Raed in Saudi Arabia. He re-joined the two-time ISL champions ahead of the 2018-19 season.

With 59 CFC appearances in all competitions to his name already, Eli is preparing for a fourth season with the Marina Arena club by focusing heavily on his fitness, currently back home in Brazil.

ATM hope to be on the money

Madrid, Aug. 12: Atletico Madrid's triumph over Liverpool in March was a throwback to a more celebrated past under Diego Simeone but five months on and the Champions League offers them a very real opportunity in the present.

Knocking out the holders at Anfield may prove to be the first glimpse of a new era under Simeone, where the likes of Joao Felix, Marcos Llorente, Jose Gimenez and Jan Oblak push Atletico to challenge for major honours again.

Or it could be a last hurrah for the Simeone project, which some believe will never again scale the heights of their incredible Spanish league title win in 2014 or their runs to the Champions League finals in 2014 and 2016.

Either way, few believed Llorente's two goals in extra-time would be the start of something even more surprising, namely Simeone lifting the cup in May.

Certainly nobody anticipated football shutting down completely the following week, as nervousness turned to indignation about Atletico fans travelling to Anfield, before matches behind closed doors became matches postponed indefinitely.

And yet when football



Lyon's Memphis Depay controls the ball during a training session at the Groupama Stadium Training Centre in Decines-Charpieu, near Lyon, on Wednesday, eve of their UEFA Champions League quarterfinal match against Manchester City.

— AFP

returned in June, Atletico were transformed. They went unbeaten in the 11 games after the resumption, to dispel concerns they could miss out on La

Liga's four.

They won seven matches and drew four; one of them against Barcelona at Camp Nou, which helped Real Madrid clinch the title.

● **Atletico Madrid play for a spot in the Champions League semifinals when they take on Germany-based RB Leipzig.**

● **Diego Simeone's men had earlier lost to Real Madrid twice in the final in the 2014 and 2016 seasons.**

They scored 20 goals and conceded six. If the season had started when the league restarted, Atletico would have finished second.

"We did well and we know we're on a really good streak but the Champions League is a different competition," said Diego Costa last week.

Atletico face Leipzig in Lisbon on Thursday as one of the form teams still standing, in a tournament that has gifted them the significantly kinder half of the draw.

If they beat Leipzig, who laboured to a third-place finish in the Bundesliga, they will face either Atalanta, the tournament's minnows or Paris Saint-Germain, who have played two games in almost half a year.

— AFP

Portland edge past Mavericks

Orlando, Aug. 12: Damian Lillard exploded for 61 points on Tuesday as the Portland Trail Blazers roared towards a place in the NBA playoffs with a thrilling 134-131 win over the Dallas Mavericks.

Lillard — who had scored 51 points in a victory against the Philadelphia 76ers on Sunday — once again led from the front for Portland, who are now within touching distance of a postseason berth.

The Blazers' talisman nailed a clutch three-pointer in the closing stages to level the score at 130-130 and then provided the assist that saw Portland take a 132-130 lead with just

under a minute remaining. The win vaulted Portland above the Memphis Grizzlies into the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference standings with 34 wins and 39 defeats.

The eighth — and ninth — placed teams in the West will advance to an elimination game this weekend to determine who claims the final postseason berth from the conference.

Lillard's 61-point effort made him only the second player in NBA history to score 60 points or more in three games during a single season, putting him alongside Wilt Chamberlain.

— AFP



D. J. Wilson of the Milwaukee Bucks goes for a basket during their NBA game against the Washington Wizards in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Wednesday. The Bucks won 126-113.

— AP