

Govt to appoint 11k teachers

The appointment of teachers was to be completed by April 2022, but got delayed due to a number of issues including reshuffle of the State Cabinet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: The Odisha government will appoint 11,000 teachers by the end of this month, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash informed here Tuesday. He said that CM Naveen Patnaik will hand over the appointment letters to the new teachers at a function here in the third or fourth week of June. He also informed that immediately after the modernisation of the high schools, the government will start the uplifting of primary schools in the state.

It should be stated that the CM had handed over appointment letters to a record 6,131 school teachers December 16, 2021. A big function was organised at Kalinga Stadium for the appointees to receive their letters. A decision was



taken then only that 11,000 more teachers will be appointed shortly. However, due to various issues the process got delayed.

It was an all-time record in the field of recruitment to hand over appointment letters to more than 6,000 teachers in a single day.

The minister also informed that after government finishes the trans-

formation of high schools, they will start focusing on uplifting of the primary schools. "The Odisha government will renovate primary schools in the second phase," Dash told mediapersons here.

"To raise the level of education, the state government will transform 8,000 high schools in the first phase following which primary

schools will get a facelift. Besides, efforts are on to sort out discrepancies related to the teacher recruitment," the minister added.

Dash gave detailed information on the plans regarding transformation of high schools. "Out of the 8,000 high schools, transformation of 5,000 will be carried out first. The government will host a programme June 10 in Jajpur district to mark beginning of the renovation," Dash informed.

Das also said that approximately 1,700 teachers will be recruited for the Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas (OAVs). He further said that Class XI will be made operational in 40 OAVs where students can study still Class X till now. "As of now 250 OAVs are functioning. The remaining 64 will become functional from June 17 this year," he said

SEEKING JUSTICE



Children and people from various walks of life take part in a rally from Ram Mandir Square to Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar demanding the eradication of child labour in Odisha, Tuesday
OP PHOTO

HC QUASHES PLEA TO CANCEL INDIA-SA GAME

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 7: The Orissa High Court (OHC) quashed Tuesday a petition seeking cancellation of the India-South Africa T20I scheduled to be played at the iconic Barabati Stadium here June 12. The PIL had been filed by Sanjay Nayak of Bhuban area in Dhenkanal district. In it, the petitioner had stated that since the Barabati Stadium lacks adequate fire safety measures, the court should cancel the match.

The Odisha government, BCCI, OCA and 12 others were made parties in the case. However, with OCA secretary Sanjay Behera stating that adequate fire safety arrangements will be made at the stadium to avoid any untoward incident during the match, the court allowed the game to go on as scheduled and quashed the plea.

Meanwhile offline sale of tickets for the game began Tuesday. Schools, colleges, clubs and committees affiliated to the OCA picked up their tickets that were available at counters set up at the OCA conference hall here. A total of 8,000 tickets will be available for the organisations and educational institutions.

Officials said offline tickets for the general public will be available at different counters of Barabati Stadium June 9 and 10. So far 5,000 tickets have been sold online for the game.

It should be stated here that CM Naveen Patnaik had bought the first ticket of the game at a function in his house Monday. Behera and OCA officials visited him to hand over the ticket and discussed in details the arrangements for the game.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Trouble saying things like 'we respect all religions' is that voters might believe it and make us suffer in polls

‘Mentally ill’ Excise official seeks leave

■ This is not the first case of a junior being censured for speaking out. Many government officials face the same fate for protesting against illegal activities within their own respective departments

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, June 12: A day after alleging an unhealthy nexus between the police and illegal liquor and other

contraband dealers, Excise inspector Sanjay Panda has asked for a seven-day leave Tuesday citing 'mental and physical' health problems.

The decision by Panda should not come as a surprise as he may have been asked to do so 'forcibly'. It is a known fact that not only in Odisha, but also in many other states of India, police regularly take bribes from miscreants dealing in such nefarious activities. The juniors allegedly collect the money but most of the police department, including seniors benefit from it.

Anybody who tries to prevent such 'illegal' dealings is immediately censured and can even face 'departmental' procedures. So it is of no surprise that Panda has said that he is 'mentally ill'.

Panda in the leave application written to Puri Excise Superintendent Amarendra Jena has said that he needs leave from June 9 to 15 to treat his mental health condition which has deteriorated post his Covid-19 infection. However, his 'mental health' did not come to the fore when he made the allegations Monday.
Contd...P4

NEWS IN BRIEF

Centre amends CDS selection criterion

New Delhi: Any serving or retired Lt General, Air Marshal and Vice-Admiral under 62 years will be eligible for appointment to the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) with the government effecting changes to the rules to widen the selection pool. The three-star officers are now eligible to become the CDS along with serving chiefs of the three services, according to the changes made to the Army, Air Force and Navy Acts. The post of CDS has been vacant since the death of Gen Bipin Rawat in a helicopter crash December 8 last year. **P7**

Johnson survives confidence vote

London: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson survived Monday evening a vote of confidence in his leadership, as 211 Conservative Party members of the Parliament voted in favour of him staying on as their leader. The vote was held through secret ballot, with 180 being the cut off for Johnson to win the challenge – given the halfway mark of the Tory parliamentary party membership of 359, if abstentions are not taken into account. Johnson said he was happy the way things turned out. **P10**

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FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
A lot of material progress will be made today. And, says Ganesh, you will want to shower your family with abundance. You anyway need to pay more attention to your family. You will also feel like meditating and will be grateful to the lord for his generosity.

TAURUS
This day you are going to be very creative, very imaginative in all that you do. Ganesh assures you that your skills and talents will be amply recognized and rewarded. Your colleagues and superiors are going to be pleasantly amazed at the way you perform today.

GEMINI
You will face conflicting emotions today on account of burying your emotions deep in your heart. You could fly into a rage on account of this and take some hasty decisions. You will express your opinions harshly on vital matters.

CANCER
It is highly likely that today, a sudden turn of events will change the course of your life, foretells Ganesh. At workplace, a lot of work and running around is on the cards. Later in the day, belief and faith will exert a pull on you, and you will spend most of your evening meditating.

LEO
Today, you will think with your heart, not with your mind, says Ganesh. While that is a good thing sometimes, it may blur your analytical logic. If you happen to be in the business of money-lending, you can be assured of a fantastic afternoon wherein you will rake in profits.

VIRGO
Lady Luck is your date for the day today. Good tidings bear their way to you from distant lands, and may be across the seas too. Chances are you make take an initiative to let the cat of love out of the bag. Your outlook will be free of confusion today, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Optimism and a positive mindset are second to your nature today, says Ganesh. So carry it with you wherever you go. You may tend to be slightly overcautious at work, but that will only protect you. Today seems to be one of those days when you can't stop worrying about your career prospects. But everything shall happen in due course, reminds Ganesh.

SCORPIO
The itch of love will spread like a rash today. Passion will set you ablaze, says Ganesh. At work, the course of things may shift to being better than before. However, in love relationships, cold logic will rule over intense emotions. But sweat not in the heat of love, and find the poignancy hidden within, advises Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Logic and reasoning will shape your day today. You remain confident of better things to come in the future. Your cubicle may offer stress and tension, but all of that will be swept away by the showers of love and affection of your dear ones.

CAPRICORN
You will love to play God today, and may make use of every tactic of the power game to yield the desired results, says Ganesh. A clear thought process and non-judgemental attitude will show you a new direction to life, but you will have to be focused to meet success.

AQUARIUS
Today is reserved for outlining projects that will ultimately shape your future. You may want to chalk out a plan for your education, job, or even a relationship. Later in the day, you may get lucky with sudden and unexpected profits. If you're a professional, there are rewards galore, expects Ganesh.

PISCES
A day where you will be on your toes, you will find yourself constantly on the move, keeping up with the numerous demands of the workplace in your quest to control the workings of your department or business.



BORAT STAR BAKALOVA JOINS GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 3

Borat star Maria Bakalova has joined the Marvel Cinematic Universe. The Bulgarian actor has been cast in *Guardians of the Galaxy 3*, starring Chris Pratt as Star-Lord, Zoe Saldana as Gamora, Vin Diesel as Groot and Dave Bautista as Drax the Destroyer, reports *Variety*.

JOHNNY DEPP JOINS TIKTOK AFTER AMBER HEARD TRIAL

Pirates of the Caribbean actor Johnny Depp has joined TikTok and amassed almost two million followers in one day. Depp - who recently won his multi-million defamation case against ex Amber Heard - launched an account on the social media platform this week and describes himself as an 'occasional thespian'.



Nushratt's tips on taboo topics

Mumbai: Talking about sex or educating the kids on the subject is still taboo in many households. Parents still find it really hard to give the 'bees and birds' talk to their children. However, actress Nushratt Bharuccha strongly believes that it is important that the children get the right information from their parents.

The *Dream Girl* actress explained how she will deal with this matter when she becomes a parent. "Modern kids are so curious and they have so many questions. Kids are like sponges, they find information from different places and they absorb it. You can be under the impression that your kid hasn't seen something or didn't notice something, but things do leave an impression on their minds."

"The best way to go around is to let them know that whatever question they have they can ask us freely. The question can be as silly as possible, it doesn't matter," she added.

"They can even ask you why the flower is made this way. You can answer that with love from a young age, that too in a sensible way. Don't kill their inquisitiveness. For me, it will be the biggest win, whenever I have a kid, he or she comes to me for anything that he or she wants to ask, or if there's anything that's bothering them or they are in trouble. At least I will be the first one to shield them or teach them," expressed the actress.

AGENCIES



Zaheer makes relationship with Sonakshi Insta-official

Mumbai: Zaheer Iqbal took to his Instagram handle to share a belated birthday post for Sonakshi Sinha where he has confessed his love for the Dabangg actress.

Zaheer shared a video where Sonakshi and he are seen goofing around on a flight. He captioned the video, 'Happy Birthday Sonzzz Thank You for not killing me I Love You Here's to a lot more food, flights, love and laughter. Ps - This video sums up the entire time we've known each other.'

Dressed in a black tee, and a black-and-white printed jacket, Sonakshi looked stylish as ever. She completed her look with a black cap.

Zaheer, on the other hand, looked dapper in a white t-shirt.

As soon as he shared the post, comments started pouring in from all sides.



Their friends and colleagues like Tara Sutaria, Rohan Shrestha, Patralekhaa, Varun Sharma, Raghav Juyal and others dropped heart emoticons on the post. Sonakshi too commented on the post and wrote, 'Thaaankkkk uuu ... love uuu ... now im coming to kill uuuuuuuu'

Reports are now rife that the couple will be getting married this year. However, there has been no official confirmation about the same as yet.

For the unversed Zaheer Iqbal, son of actor Salman Khan's childhood friend Iqbal Ratansi, is an actor who made his Hindi film debut in 2019 with *Notebook*. Reportedly, Salman Khan is said to have played Cupid for Sonakshi and Zaheer.

AGENCIES

PC poses with Hathaway, Lisa

Paris: Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas was all smiles as she shared a picture posing with Hollywood star Anne Hathaway and girl K-pop superband *Blackpink*'s Lisa.

Priyanka took to Instagram, where she shared a picture with the two stars. She is seen dressed in a shimmering brown outfit with a plunging neckline for the event held in Paris. Hathaway and Lisa, on the other hand, chose bright yellow outfits.

Priyanka captioned the image: "And then there was us.. girls just wanna have fun! @bulgari @lalalalisa_m @annehathaway."

In other news, the Indian actress welcomed her first child with her



American pop star husband Nick Jonas via surrogacy earlier this year. The couple has named their baby girl Malti Marie. On

the work front, Priyanka will next be seen in Farhan Akhtar's *Jee Le Zaraa*. She is also a part of upcoming web series *Citadel*.

FIANS

Taapsee Pannu talks fashion, social media

New Delhi: Actor Taapsee Pannu has delivered a message to the youth so far as fashion

is concerned. She also talks about streaming platform and social media on the sidelines of promoting an eyewear brand.

"I always prioritise comfort over everything. I love wearing cotton outfits and mostly prefer wearing layered looks. You would often spot me in western outfits but the Indian saree will always be my absolute favourite," says Pannu of her summer fashion style, adding, "Additionally, I also love pairing all my outfits with a pair of statement sunglasses, as they add all that jazz to it."

When it comes to OTT, Taapsee feels that "The medium has made movie watching more convenient, accessible and affordable amongst the audience all across. It's solved the need of the hour during the times of Covid-19 and kept us going as the viewers consumed more and more content."

She also feels, "Social media is an ever-growing space and has given us immense power to build and form opinions. Hence we should be treading carefully with every move we make. Our comments may or may not impact someone's confidence. I do spend considerable time on social media wherein I have had moments where doubts set in due to the numerous number of trolls."

FIANS



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

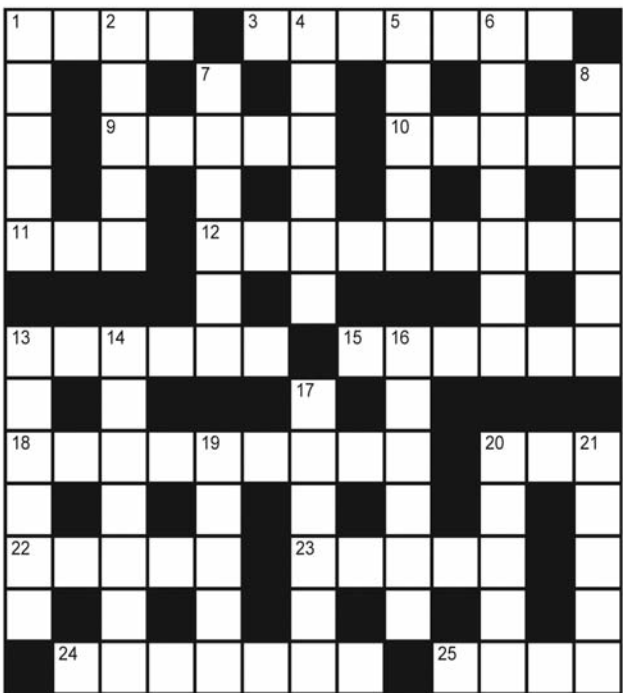


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

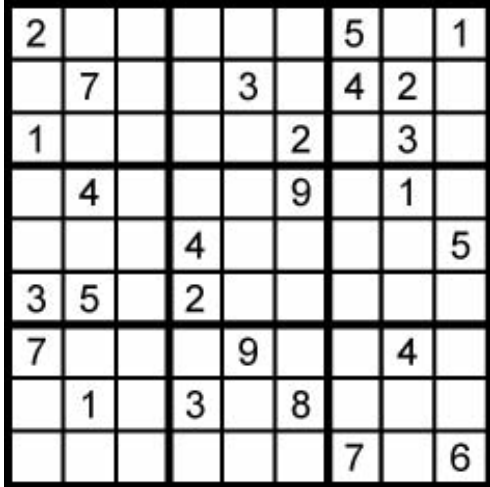
- 1 Lymph bump
- 3 Actor's goal
- 9 Playing card
- 10 Words to a lazy child (3,2)
- 11 Longing
- 12 Orange kin
- 13 Latin dance (3-3)
- 15 Pop Art painter
- 18 Homeless felines (5,4)

Down

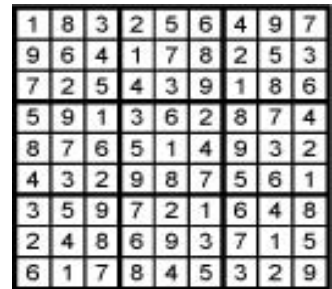
- 20 Egg cells
- 22 Glove material
- 23 Wine barrels
- 24 Recording places
- 25 Catch sight of
- 5 Scoundrel
- 6 Leather source
- 7 Drawing
- 8 Urgent request
- 13 Elegant
- 14 It's sickening
- 16 Help out
- 17 Argentine cowpoke
- 19 Concede
- 20 Desert sight
- 21 Ticked off

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Nod to ₹531 crore worth micro irrigation action plan



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: The state government Tuesday approved Rs 531 crore worth micro irrigation action plan for 2022-23 fiscal.

The state-level sanctioning committee on micro irrigation, led by Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, approved the action plan under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

The fund would be used for promotion of vegetables, fruits, pulses, oilseeds and coconut cultivation over one lakh hectare of high and medium land using micro irrigation sprinkler, drip HDPE pipe and pump sets methods of irrigation, said an official.

In 2021-22, the state had spent around Rs 62 crore for prompting sprinkler and drip methods of irrigation with 31,038 hectares of medium and high land being brought under irrigation. Sprinkler irrigation was found to be more popular among the

THE STATE-LEVEL SANCTIONING COMMITTEE ON MICRO IRRIGATION, LED BY CHIEF SECRETARY SURESH CHANDRA MAHAPATRA, APPROVED THE ACTION PLAN UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI KRISHI SINCHAYEE YOJANA

THE FUND WOULD BE USED FOR PROMOTION OF VEGETABLES, FRUITS, PULSES, OILSEEDS AND COCONUT CULTIVATION OVER ONE LAKH HECTARES OF HIGH AND MEDIUM LAND USING MICRO IRRIGATION SPRINKLER, DRIP HDPE PIPE AND PUMP SETS METHODS OF IRRIGATION

farmers, added the official. Sources said PMKSY is being implemented in the state with funding from both the Centre and state government.

“Substantial subsidy on the cost of the micro irrigation equipment is available for farmers. The

subsidy varies from 60 to 80 per cent depending on the social category of the farmers—ST and SC, small and marginal, and general,” said the official.

During the meeting, Mahapatra asked the officials to study the production and requirement of fruits and vegetables like mango, guava, papaya, lemon, onion and tomato in Odisha.

He also asked the Directorate of Horticulture to enhance production of these crops through definite action plan and popularisation of micro irrigation.

The directorate was also asked to work in tandem with Water Resources department for intensifying micro-irrigation interventions in ayacut areas of different irrigation projects.

Mahapatra asked the Horticulture officials to promote sprinkler, drip and HDPE pipe schemes among the farmers having land near borewell, deep-well and minor irrigation points.

Agriculture department Special Secretary Sanjeeb Chadha said in line with the previous instruction of the Chief Secretary, cluster approach was adopted for promotion of banana, guava and papaya cultivation in Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Gajapati, Angul, Dhenkanal, Deogarh, Boudh, Jajpur and Nayagarh.

“Around 1,015 hectares of land in these districts have been brought under such fruit crops in 2021-22. Target was fixed to promote these crops over 1,260 hectare of land during the current year,” Chadha said.



MUSEUM VISIT

Union Minister Shantanu Thakur visits Netaji Birthplace Museum in Cuttack, Tuesday

Swain thrust on farmers’ welfare

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: Newly-appointed Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain assumed the office Tuesday and held a meeting with the department officials.

While holding discussions with officials, Swain said the department would focus on development of farmers and agriculture. He advised the officials to come up with new welfare schemes and also instructed them to ensure strict implementation of the existing schemes.

He held the meeting with agriculture production commissioner-cum-additional chief secretary Sanjeev Chopra and director of Agriculture and Food Production M Muthukumar and others.

The minister also visited the Krushi Bhawan here.

CM launches animal resource mapping

Under the 5T initiative, all animal farms in the state would have geo-tagging and would be displayed on WEB-GIS

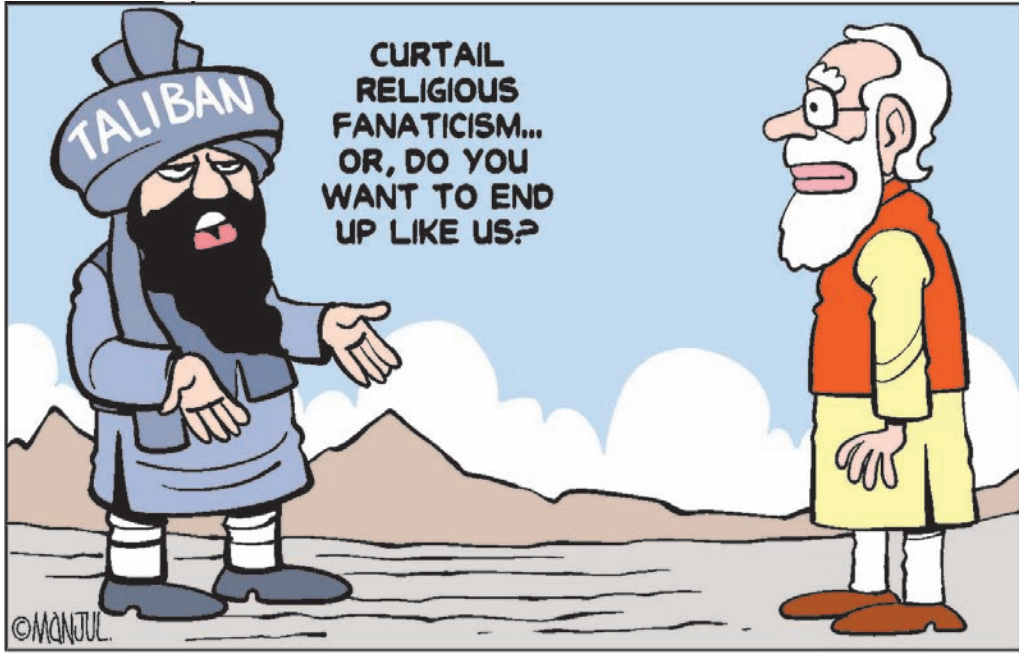
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 7: Appealing to citizens to provide succour to stray animals in distress, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday inaugurated tele veterinary service and launched animal resources mapping initiative.

For protection and care of stray animals in urban areas, Patnaik also launched a helpline number 1962 for immediate response towards animals in distress.

Speaking on the occasion, he said one can dial toll-free number 1962 to report on such animals and ensure emergency services. The helpline will remain open 24x7 to extend veterinary services through animal ambulances in 11 urban areas. Line department officials

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik virtually launching the animal resources mapping initiative. 5T Secretary VK Pandian is also seen

have been directed to facilitate the services, he said, adding that NGOs engaged in animal care would be sanctioned funds for the purpose.

The CM also inaugurated tele veterinary services to help farmers engaged in fisheries and cattle

farming in rural areas. It would not only protect fish and cattle farms but also improve farmers' income, he said.

The farmers can dial toll-free number 1962 or 155333 to avail the services from animal service units

in all blocks, he said.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated fisheries and animal resources mapping system.

Under the state government's 5T initiative, all animal farms in the state would have geo-tagging and would be displayed on WEB-GIS.

The government also signed an agreement with BAIF Institute for engaging 1,500 technicians for artificial insemination across the state. Another agreement was signed with Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aqua Culture for setting up a hatchery of 'Bhekti' fish at Gopalpur in Ganjam district.

Newly-appointed Agriculture, Farmer Empowerment, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development minister RP Swain attended the meeting.

Security tightened for T20 clash

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: The Commissionerate Police has made elaborate security arrangements ahead of the T20 match between India and South Africa going to be held at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack June 12.

Speaking to mediapersons,

Bhubaneswar deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Prateek Singh Tuesday said, “Preparations have been made in Bhubaneswar for the 12th June match as all the players will arrive at the Biju Patnaik International Airport in the city and are scheduled to stay in a hotel here. Security has been tightened at the hotel and airport in the city.

The city police will also make security arrangements during practice session and en route to Cuttack to ensure full protection of the players.

“We have made route lining arrangements and also tightened security arrangements at the airport and hotel. We will ensure the safety of players during their stay and travel,” added the DCP.



Braving hot and humid weather, carpenters construct chariots at Rath Yard in Puri, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Devotees to participate in Snana Yatra June 14

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, June 7: After a gap of two years, devotees of Lord Jagannath will have the opportunity to witness the sibling deities on Snana Mandap (bathing pandal) at the 12th century shrine, from both outside and inside the temple.

This was decided at the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee meeting chaired by Gajapati king Dibyasingha Deb and attended by the chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) VV Yadav and other senior district officials, Tuesday.

The devotees will be allowed for darshan on Snana Mandap from a close distance, but could not touch the idols of Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath, said a temple official.

“All rituals and arrangements from Snana Yatra till Niladri Bije (Lord's entry into temple after Rath Yatra) were finalised at the crucial meeting of the temple managing committee today,” Yadav told reporters.

The Snana Yatra is also called Deva Snana Purnima which falls on June 14 this year. The Snana Yatra will be telecast live, sources said. He said the meeting had a detailed discussion on each arrangement to ensure that the devotees do not face difficulties during the festival. Durga Das Mohapatra, a member of the Managing



Gajapati king Dibyasingha Deb presided over Sriramandir Managing Committee meeting in Puri, Tuesday

This was decided at the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee meeting chaired by Gajapati king Dibyasingha Deb and attended by the chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) VV Yadav and other senior district officials, Tuesday

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Devotees were denied participation in the Rath Yatra and associated rituals for two years in 2020 and 2021 in wake of the Covid-19 pandemic

Committee, said the devotees can have darshan of the deities for three hours on Snana Bedi after the completion of Hati Beshha (elephant attire) of the Lord.

At least 108 pitchers of holy

water would be poured on the deities during the bathing ritual.

As per the schedule of rituals for Snana Yatra, which was finalised at the meeting, Pahandi (procession) of the deities will

start at 4 am and end by 6 am. The Jala Bije ritual will be held between 9.30 am and 11.30 am.

The Chhera Pahanra ritual is scheduled to take place at 12.15 pm while the Hati Beshha ritual will be held between 12.30 pm and 2.30 pm.

Devotees were denied participation in the Rath Yatra and associated rituals for two years in 2020 and 2021 in wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The state government this time has made elaborate arrangements for allowing devotees to participate in the festival keeping in view the significant improvement in the pandemic situation.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	55107.34 ↓ 567.98
NIFTY	16416.35 ↓ 153.20
DOLLAR	77.71 ↑ ₹0.08
EURO	83.02 ↓ ₹0.17
GOLD	₹51,012 ↑ ₹142
SILVER	₹62,180 ↓ ₹119

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
TEMP	
MAX	27.3°C 37.0°C
MIN	36.6°C 27.0°C
Humidity	73% 67%
Rainfall	0mm 0mm
Forecast	
Light rain very likely	

‘Food allergy may cut risk of Covid infection by 50 pc’

Are you allergic to certain foods? You may be at 50 per cent lower risk for infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, finds a study.

US researchers at National Jewish Health and Vanderbilt University speculated the reason to be a different type of inflammation, caused by type 2 cytokines and common among food allergic individuals.

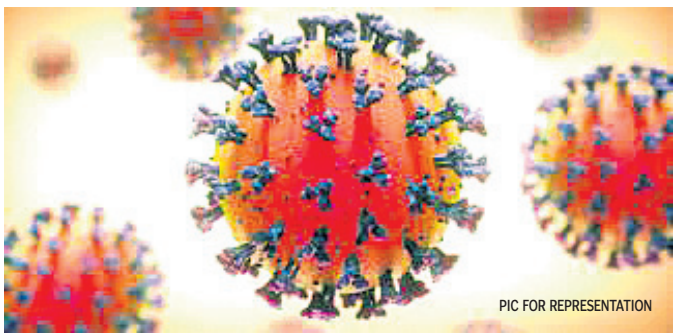
Previous studies showed allergic type 2 inflammation can reduce airway levels of the SARS-CoV-2 receptor gene, ACE2. This led researchers to speculate that food allergic patients may have lower ACE2 receptor levels, reducing the ability of the virus to infect cells

in these individuals.

“Our findings that diseases characterised by different types of inflammation are associated with infection risk, suggest underlying inflammation is an important determinant of susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection,” said Max A. Seibold, the lead National Jewish Health investigator.

In contrast, obesity and high body mass index are risk factors for infection, whereas those with asthma are not at increased infection risk, revealed the study published in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

Besides being an established risk factor for poor Covid illness outcomes, the study found obesity and



PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

high BMI are also risk factors for infection. Study authors speculated that the systemic inflammation that often accompanies obesity may underlie the increased risk experienced by this group.

The findings also provide strong evidence that people with asthma, a risk group for poor outcomes from other viral respiratory infections, are not at increased risk for SARS-CoV-2 infection.

■ Previous studies showed allergic type 2 inflammation can reduce airway levels of the SARS-CoV-2 receptor gene, ACE2

■ This led researchers to speculate that food allergic patients may have lower ACE2 receptor levels, reducing the ability of the virus to infect cells in these individuals

For the study, the team surveyed nearly 1,400 households for SARS-CoV-2 infections. The team also found that children aged 12 years or younger are just as likely to become infected with the virus as

teenagers and adults.

However, they found that 75 per cent of infected children were asymptomatic, whereas only 59 per cent of infected teenagers and 38 per cent of infected adults were asymptomatic.

Although children were considerably more likely to be asymptomatic, they exhibited viral loads comparable to those of teenagers and adults.

“Given children are usually asymptomatic with infection, yet harbour high viral loads and require close caregiver contact, we speculate children may play an important role in household transmission events,” Seibold explained.

IAN

Heatwave warning for western Odisha

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 7: The Met office Tuesday warned of a heat-wave in parts of western Odisha for the next two days.

At least eight weather stations recorded a maximum of over 40 degrees Celsius as the temperature rose by 1-2 degrees in some places, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

A searing heatwave is set to prevail in Bargarh, Bolangir, Boudh, Sambalpur and Subarnapur districts for the next two days.

Nuapada may also experience such conditions on Thursday, according to a bulletin. Boudh recorded 42.5 degrees Celsius, the highest in the state, followed by 42.4 in Nuapada and 42 in Sundargarh. The temperature in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack settled at 36.6 and 37 degrees respectively, it said.

There will be no significant change in the maximum temperature over the next four-five days, it said. The agency forecasted isolated to scattered rain with thunderstorms in Odisha over the next five days under the influence of a north-south trough and strong southwesterly winds from the Bay of Bengal.

Man held for sharing wife's nude photos

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: The twin city Commissionerate Police has arrested a man on charges of sharing his wife's obscene and nude photos with a few of their friends and relatives, an official said Tuesday.

The Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Police arrested Saroj Kumar Das from Chandbali area of Bhadrak district under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code and Information Technology Act. Das was produced before a local court that sent him to judicial custody, it was learnt.

Quoting the victim's complaint, the official said Das, who hails from Chandbali area and was working as a plumber in Tamil Nadu, had married the victim in 2018. Things were rosy until 2020 when Das lost his job owing to Covid-induced lockdowns and shutdowns. With no job, a depressed Das

developed the habit of boozing. On several occasions, a drunken Das tortured the victim demanding money. Unable to bear the torture, the woman returned Odisha and began working as a domestic help under Capital police limits here, the official said, adding that Das, on the other hand, began blackmailing the victim with her private photographs and demanded money.

"When the victim stopped paying him in February this year, a furious Das shared his wife's nude and obscene photos with a few of their friends and relatives," the official pointed out.

After learning about Das's shameful act, the victim approached the Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Police here February 7, 2022.

The police registered a case (3/22) under various sections of the IPC and IT Act and arrested Das from his native place in Chandbali late Monday night.



Artistes perform Odissi during an event organised by National Culture Mission at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

NHRC moved over death of Nigerian UTP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: A human rights activist Tuesday filed a petition before the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) seeking its intervention in connection with the death of a Nigerian Undertrial Prisoner (UTP), whose body has been lying in the mortuary of SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack for the last 13 days.

In his petition, human rights activist Akhand alleged sheer negligence by the prison authorities and district administration in providing medical facilities to the UTP. The petitioner also alleged disrespect to the UTP's body by the authorities concerned.

The petitioner urged the rights body to direct the Chief Secretary, Principal Secretary for Health &



Human rights activist Akhand alleged sheer negligence by the prison authorities and district administration in providing medical facilities to the UTP. He also alleged disrespect to the UTP's body by the authorities concerned

The petitioner also urged the NHRC to instruct the authorities to pay Rs 5 lakh compensation to the relatives of the deceased UTP, identified as Augustine Odikpo of Asba area in Nigeria

Family Welfare department, IG of Prisons directorate, Puri District Magistrate and Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO), and the Superintendent of SCB Medical College and Hospital to file an action taken report (ATR) in this regard and take action against the erring officials after an enquiry.

He alleged that the jail authorities also failed to give free legal aid

to the UTP despite the Supreme Court guidelines advising the state government to arrange a lawyer for a poor UTP.

The petitioner also urged the NHRC to instruct the authorities to pay Rs 5 lakh compensation to the relatives of the deceased UTP, identified as Augustine Odikpo of Asba area in Nigeria.

Sources claimed that Augustine

was arrested in Patna few years ago. Later, the Puri police brought Augustine on remand after it found his involvement in a cyber crime case in the district. He had been under judicial custody in Puri district jail since February 11, 2019.

Augustine was admitted to Puri District Headquarters Hospital for skin infection May 9. He was referred to SCB May 24. Augustine died at the premium hospital May 26.

Augustine's brother Sylvester Obinna Ekwenze has expressed his inability to take the former's body due to fund crunch. On May 27, Ekwenze wrote to the Puri jail authorities in this regard. It has been forwarded to the Puri district magistrate for approval. However, Augustine's body is now rotting at the mortuary of SCB, sources said.

Odisha aims at becoming child labour-free state by '25

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: The Labour and Employee's State Insurance department Tuesday organised a rally from Ram Mandir Square to Master Canteen Square in the city here for elimination of child labour in Odisha.

On this occasion, Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSPCPCR) chairperson Sandhyabati Pradhan said strict implementation of the rules is needed to eliminate child labour menace from the society. She also sought stricter punishment for people who violate the child rights and use children as labourer.

Labour Commissioner N Thirumala Naik said the state government had launched Sishu Shrama Nirakarana Sachetanata Ratha, an awareness campaign, May 29 to spread the message against child labour.

The 15-day long campaign was launched by the Labour and ESI department in collaboration with Unicef, Peoples' Cultural Centre, Campaign Against Child Labour, CYSD, Community Radio Association of Odisha, Aide Et Action, International Justice Mission and several other civil society groups in the state.

Under the campaign, various events including rallies, signature campaigns and sensitization programmes are being taken up at



Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights chairperson Sandhyabati Pradhan said strict implementation of the rules is needed to eliminate child labour menace from the society

Labour Commissioner N Thirumala Naik said the state government had launched Sishu Shrama Nirakarana Sachetanata Ratha, an awareness campaign, May 29 to spread the message against child labour

World Day against Child Labour," Naik said. A state-level function is scheduled to be held on the same day with participation of various government departments, civil society organisations and rescued children, who have become role models for others, Naik added.

"Odisha aims at becoming a child labour free state by 2025. To achieve this objective, we need co-operation from one and all," Naik said.

On this occasion, actor Archita Sahu said it is unfortunate that many children were forced to work as labourer during the Covid-19 pandemic due to their families' poor financial condition. "But, we must understand that child labour will affect the future of our state," Sahu said.

the district level to create awareness on Child & Adolescent Labour (P&R) Act, 1986 and other rules against child labour.

"The campaign will conclude June 12, which is celebrated as the

'Mentally ill' Excise official seeks leave

Continued from P1

Not only has Panda has sought leave, he has also put up a video on social media platforms stating how his mental health has suffered post Covid-19.

"I was infected with Covid in October, 2020, following which I developed some mental health issues. I was under medication for a long. But now I'm mentally unstable as I am not taking the prescribed medicines for the last one month due to unavailability of the same. The statement that I have given against cops is not at all true," Panda has said.

He has also apologised to the police department and the Odisha government for his 'baseless' allegations.

Odisha slips to 8th rank in Food Safety Index 2021-22

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 7: Odisha has slipped to 8th position in the State Food Safety Index 2021-22, a sharp fall from 4th position in 2020-21, among 17 large states in the country.

Odisha scored 54.5 points in the State Food Safety Index 2021-22 with lowest performance on compliance parameter which has weightage of 30 per cent in the index.

The state scored 11 points out of 30 on compliance parameter which measures overall coverage of food businesses in licensing and registration commensurate with size and population of the state/UTs, special drives and camps organised, yearly increase, promptness and effectiveness in issue of state licenses/registrations. Promptness in attending to the consumer grievances and availability of helpdesk and web portals are also examined

Tamil Nadu topped the chart followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra among the large states

under this parameter.

Odisha had scored 20 points on the compliance parameter in 2020-21.

This year, Tamil Nadu topped the chart followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra among the large states. Similarly, Goa stood first followed by Manipur and Sikkim among the small states while Jammu and Kashmir secured first rank followed by Delhi and Chandigarh among the UTs. The State Food Safety Index (SFSI) measures the performance of states on the basis of five parameters prescribed by the Health Ministry. The rating is done by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).



Pujari takes charge as Higher Edu min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 7: Rairakhol MLA Rohit Pujari Tuesday assumed office as the Higher Education (HE) Minister.

While holding discussions with officials, Pujari said the department would focus on proper implementation of 5T action plan of the state government in order to ensure better service delivery to the public.

Sources said the department is faced with a host of challenges like improvement of research output, teacher recruitment and accreditation of state public universities. This apart, dealing with the case on the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act, 2020 pending before the Supreme Court could be another priority area for the newly-appointed minister.

CLASSIFIED
AFFIDAVIT

I, Asutosh Behera changed my name to Ashutosh Behera vide affidavit dated 27.05.2022 sworn before the Court of Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar.

LOST

I, Sri Gopinath Mishra, S/o. Natabar Mishra, Vill: Nilakanthapur, P.O.: Kundapatana, P.S.: Dharmasala, Dist.- Jajpur declare that I have lost Original Deed bearing No. 2677, Khata No. 624/44, Plot No. 1472/2410 of Mouza: Nilakanthapur, Area: 3 desmil while shift of my home on 10.10.2015 and could not track still now.

Cov infection may up risk of psychiatric disorders: Study

People infected with Covid-19 had a roughly 25 per cent increased risk of developing a psychiatric disorder in the four months following their infection, compared with those who had other types of respiratory tract infections, finds a study.

Researchers at Oregon State University in the US found that Covid patients had a 3.8 per cent rate of developing a psychiatric disorder compared with 3.0 per cent for other respiratory tract infections.

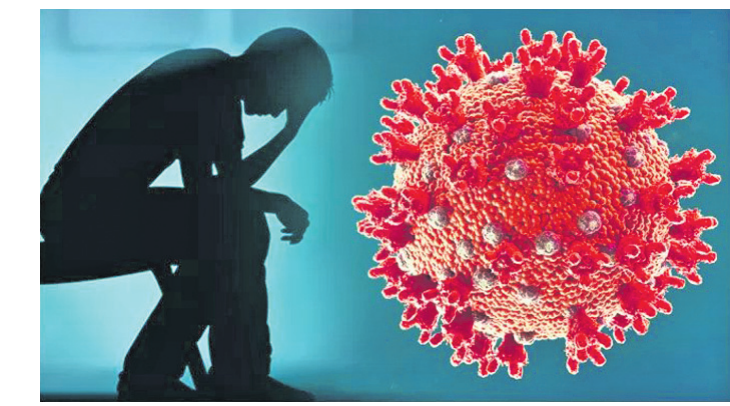
The 0.8 per cent difference amounts to about a 25 per cent increased relative risk.

The team looked specifically at anxiety disorders and mood disorders and found a minor but significant increase in risk for anxiety disorders and no change in risk for mood disorders.

The results speak to the need for both patients and health care providers to be more proactive when it comes to addressing mental health concerns following Covid infection, said Lauren Chan, doctoral student in nutrition in OSU's College of Public Health and Human Sciences.

"For people that have had Covid, if you're feeling anxiety, if you're seeing some changes in how you're going through life from a psychiatric standpoint, it's totally appropriate for you to seek some help," Chan said.

For the study, published in the



journal World Psychiatry, researchers included data of 46,610 Covid-19 positive individuals and

control patients who were diagnosed with a different respiratory tract infection so they could com-

pare how Covid specifically affected patients' mental health.

They looked at the rate of psy-

RESEARCHERS AT OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY IN THE US FOUND THAT COVID PATIENTS HAD A 3.8 PER CENT RATE OF DEVELOPING A PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER COMPARED WITH 3.0 PER CENT FOR OTHER RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTIONS

THE 0.8 PER CENT DIFFERENCE AMOUNTS TO ABOUT A 25 PER CENT INCREASED RELATIVE RISK

chiatric diagnoses for two time periods: from 21 to 120 days after patients' Covid diagnosis, and from 120 to 365 days after diagnosis, limited to patients with no previous mental illness.

When patients leave a doctor's office, sometimes care stops there, but Chan recommended that providers consider calling in two weeks for a check-in.

"I don't want to say that every single person who gets Covid is going to have this type of problem, but if you start to have concern for yourself or a family member, it's not unheard of. You should definitely seek care for yourself or others around you," Chan said.

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SHORT TAKES

Protest against port project

Balasure: Over 3,000 people under the banner of Upakula Bhitamati Surakshya Committee staged a protest against the proposed river-based Subarnarekha port project and a petrochemical project in Baliapal area of Balasure, Tuesday. Social activist and leader of Narmada Bachao Andolan Medha Patkar among others participated in the protest rally. Addressing the rally, Patkar said, "We will fight against the projects together and will win." Former PCC president Niranjan Patnaik, former finance minister Panchanan Kanungo and environmentalist Prafulla Samantara, former MLA Chittaranjan Sarangi and many Congress leaders addressed the meeting.

Woman kills self

Digapahandi: A woman allegedly committed suicide at Bhramarpur village under this block in Ganjam district Tuesday. She was identified as Lily Naik, wife of Sudam Naik. Lily along with her husband Sudam was staying at her father's house following the death of her father. They worked as daily labourers. However, Lily consumed pesticides over some reason late Monday night. Family members first rushed her to Patrapur community health centre. However, she breathed her last during treatment. Police registered a case in this connection and started an investigation.

1 killed, another hurt in mishap

Chhatrapur: A biker was killed while the pillion rider sustained critical injuries after the vehicle rammed into a stationary container truck parked on the National Highway-16 service road at DRDA Square here in Ganjam district, Tuesday. The deceased was identified as N Krishna of Sana Nolianuagaon under Agasti Nuagaon panchayat in the area. The injured is P Polamma of Gopalpur.



ADM Surya Narayan Dash flagged off an awareness rally on child labour in Sonapur, Tuesday

Former sarpanch attacked over political rivalry in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 7: A former sarpanch sustained grievous injuries after some alleged supporters of the ruling party attacked him with sharp weapons over political rivalry at Masihakhali under Sadar police limits in Ganjam district, late Monday night. The miscreants chased former sarpanch Manoj Kumar Sethi, 37, and hacked him with sharp-edged weapons as he ran for cover. His family members and supporters rushed a profusely bleeding Manoj to Kukudakhadi community health centre from where he was shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur. However, he was again shifted to

a hospital in Visakhapatnam as he continued to remain in a state of unconsciousness, his elder brother Hemant Sethi said. He has sustained deep injuries on his head and various body parts. The incident has sparked tension in the area. Sources said the incident occurred after police personnel deployed for maintaining law and order at a village fair left the place post midnight. He was returning home alone from the fair site when the supporters of the ruling party swooped down on him. On being informed, a section of police force rushed to the spot and tried to defuse the tension in the village. Police registered a case and launched an investigation after a complaint filed by his elder brother.

Forest officials seize 52 turtles

Raigarh: Acting on a tip-off, Forest department officials Tuesday seized as many as 52 turtles and arrested two wildlife smugglers from Sarguli village under Raigarh block of Nabarangpur district. The arrested were identified as Rohidas Banik, 55, and Paramanand Bauli, 42, of Kumuli village under Raigarh block. The officials have also seized a motorcycle, a weighing machine, and two mobile phones from their possession. The accused duo used to catch turtles and smuggle them for premium rates outside state. "The seized turtles would be released into a water body on instructions from the district officials."

BSF jawans thwart Red plot in Koraput

2 tiffin bombs planted by Maoists aimed at security forces carrying out combing operations in forested area

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, June 7: Border Security Force (BSF) jawans have thwarted a major Maoist offensive by recovering two live tiffin bombs in Mantriamba forest in Koraput district, Tuesday. The bombs planted by the ultras were aimed at security forces who were carrying out combing operations in the forested area.

Reports said BSF jawans of 151 Battalion got intelligence inputs about a live bomb in Mantriamba forest under Kellar panchayat of Boipariguda block, Tuesday morning. The jawans along with sniffer dogs started a combing operation along the Ranchi-Vijaywada National Highway-326. They looked for signs of earth digging in the forest. After a search, they found two places where they



securely retrieved two tiffin bombs. In the wake of this development, the security forces have confirmed about Maoist activities in the area. BSF Commandant Ajay Kumar and deputy superintendent of police (DSP) Biranchimayran Jagat advised BSF jawans and locals to be more circumspect about such lurking threats posed by Left wing ul-

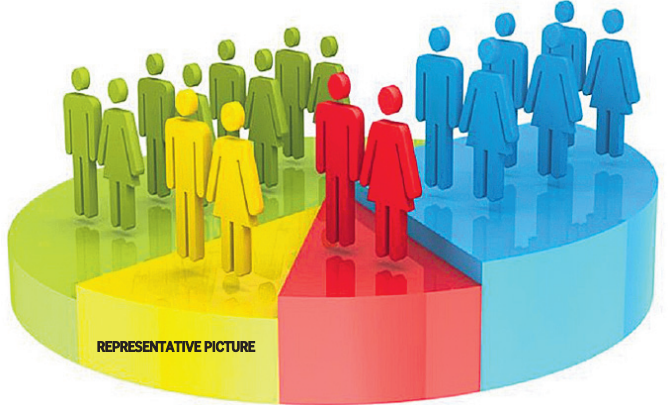
RAIL ROKO



Residents staged a 'rail roko' in protest against the extension of Memu train's originating station to Balasure. The agitation started after the arrival of the train at Charampa railway station in Bhadrak district, Tuesday

DELAY IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CASTE CENSUS

Govt benefits elude many sans 'family' tag



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, June 7: Around 15,000 families residing under this block in Jajpur district are yet to get the recognition of 'family' and hence are being deprived of government benefits as there is a delay in conduct of socio-economic and caste census (SECC), a report said. Locals have demanded early commencement of SECC so that the newly-constituted families get their recognition as legal families. As per rules, the SECC is conducted in every 10 years. The last survey was conducted in 2010 and the final report of the survey was published in 2011. This time, the survey should have been conducted in 2021 but it was put off due to the second wave of Covid-19. Now, with life returning to normalcy, many state governments including Odisha have eased the restrictions. So, the members of the new 'families' are upset with the Odisha government for delaying the survey work. According to 2011 census, there were over 36,000 families in this block. Meanwhile, several new families have sprung up and 59,000 of these families had applied for the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood

and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme in 2019. The number registered a rise because more than one member of a family had applied for the scheme, it is alleged. However, more than 40,000 families are receiving rice under National Food Security Act (NFSA). Locals said the number of total families might exceed 50,000 in the block if a fresh SECC is taken up. A family is defined as a man, his wife and their children. A family is entitled to various welfare benefits like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana, ration cards, health insurance, Saubhagya Yojana, Biju Gram Jyoti Yojana, construction worker assistance, Antyodaya Anna Yojana and several other schemes on the basis of this report. Many new families have failed to reap benefits as the survey work is getting delayed. When contacted, Rasulpur tehsildar Niranjan Sahu said he has no information regarding the SECC. "However, steps will be taken when the government gives an order to this effect," Sahu added.

Injured jumbo battles for life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Narasimhpur, June 7: A tusker allegedly shot at by poachers was found battling for life in Jayapur forest under Narasimhpur (West) forest range of Athagarh forest division in Cuttack district, Tuesday.

The cause of its illness is said to be bullet injuries that were found on its front left leg and trunk. The tusker was found trudging near the forest beat house at Jayapur. On noticing the wild animal, forest officials informed forest ranger Prafulla Kumar Dehuri, who took stock of the situation and informed DFO Sudarshan Yadav. Yadav immediately directed the forest officials to keep a track of the animal and start its treatment which is likely to be taken



ATHAGARH FOREST DIVISION

The cause of the tusker's illness is said to be bullet injuries that were found on its front left leg and trunk

Seven elephants have died during last six months in both east and west forest ranges in Narasimhpur

up, Wednesday. According to reports, the 8/10-year-old tusker was seen roaming in Jayapur forest for over one month. However, neither the wildlife experts of Nandankanan Zoological Park nor the veterinary team of the Odisha University of Agriculture and

Tourist centres remain unused in Jajpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandikhole, June 7: Although the Tourism department has been spending crores of rupees to boost the sector by developing various facilities for visitors in Jajpur district, many such facilities are lying defunct for years together. Seven such tourist centres in Barchana locality have turned into 'haunted houses', said sources. These tourism sites have remained locked for a substantial period now and are unfit for use now. Crores of rupees spent on these centres have gone down the drain, locals lamented. Reports said there are a number tourist sites like Shaivite Shrine Mahavinayak, Chhatiabata, Chandikhole's Chandi Mandir, Amarabati, Olasuni, and Udaygiri (part of Diamond Triangle) in Barchana. Various facilities have been developed at these places but they are wallowing in neglect due to lack of maintenance and upkeep. A roadside facility centre at Chandi Mandir lies unused and has turned into a safe haven for anti-social elements at night. A panthasala (guest house) built at a cost of over ₹50 lakh on the foothill of Mahavinayak for tourists has been

CRORES GO DOWN THE DRAIN



THERE ARE A NUMBER TOURIST SITES LIKE SHAIVITE SHRINE MAHAVINAYAK, CHHATIABATA, CHANDIKHOLE'S CHANDI MANDIR, AMARABATI, OLASUNI, GANGI AND UDAYGIRI (PART OF DIAMOND TRIANGLE) IN BARCHANA

VARIOUS FACILITIES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AT THESE PLACES BUT THEY ARE WALLOWING IN NEGLECT DUE TO LACK OF MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP

left completely neglected. "What is the use of making such facility at a huge cost when it is not used for tourists," rued locals. Another glaring example is Olasuni where the tourist facility was built at a cost of ₹35 lakh in 2014. The centre has remained locked since the day of its inauguration. It has not opened for the tourists for a single day. Besides, a duplex constructed at a cost of ₹48

lakh on the hilltop of Olasuni in 2015 lies in an abandoned state. The Odisha government has also spent several crores in developing facilities for the Diamond Triangle (Ratnagiri-Lalitagiri and Udaygiri) to attract tourists from different parts of India and abroad. One of such facilities is a two-storied complex (14 rooms) with sprawling lawn. The facility was built at a cost of ₹50 lakh

at Patarajpur for accommodation of foreign and domestic tourists in 2002 and it was handed over to a private agency to look after. However, in 2010, the private agency did not renew the contract. Now, the tourist centre is not fit for use anymore due to lack of maintenance. In 2012, tourist reception centres at Udaygiri and Patararajpur had been handed over to private agencies. The two centres were managed successfully. The agencies gave up their management three years ago and now these two centres are also lying neglected. The Tourism department has appointed four security guards for the two centres. Locals alleged that since 2021, the security personnel have not been seen. On one hand, the government has planned to develop various other facilities to boost tourism in Udaygiri, Langudi and Ratnagiri at a cost of ₹8 crore. However, it has failed to make proper use of facilities already built. Locals lamented that cores of rupees are being spent in the name of tourism development, but the facilities are not harnessed properly. Our reporter tried to contact the district tourism officer over phone, but the latter did not respond to the calls.

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"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tender ID: 2021_ORULB_78219
Tender Call Notice No.3139 (PW) Date:04.06.2022
Name of Works: Shifting of 11 KV OH line- 0.45 KM and LT line- 0.44 KM for construction of drain in phase-I from Baula Sahi Chhak to Bandha Chhak at Bidanasi.
Bid Value: Rs.8.60 Lakhs
Period of Completion : One Calendar Month
Date and Time Schedule :
Start End Opening
1.00 PM on 5.00 PM on 11.00 AM on
dt.06.06.2022 dt.13.06.2022 dt.17.06.2022
Tender Details: can be seen from the procurement portal: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Executive Engineer, City Div-I
OIPR-13031/11/0016/2223

EAST COAST RAILWAY
(1) Tender No. ELOP-T-04-2022
Name of Work: MAINTENANCE OF CREW & GUARD RUNNING ROOMS AND CREW LOBBY AT JAKHAPURA INCLUDING PROVISION OF SUBSIDIZED MEALS FOR A PERIOD OF 02(TWO) YEARS.
Advertised Value: ₹2,83,97,023.75, EMD: ₹2,92,000/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹11,800/-
(2) Tender No. ELOP-T-05-2022
Name of Work: MAINTENANCE OF CREW & LOBBY AND RUNNING ROOMS AT ANGUL INCLUDING PROVISION OF SUBSIDIZED MEALS FOR A PERIOD OF 02 (TWO) YEARS.
Advertised Value: ₹1,51,01,466.42, EMD: ₹2,25,500/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹5,900/-
Period of Completion: 730 Days (for both tenders).
Bidding Start Date: 10.06.2022 (for both tenders). Tender Closing time & date: At 1630 hrs. of 24.06.2022 (for both tenders).
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
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Date: 07.06.2022 Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone



There is no greater courage than that of recognising one's own mistakes.

THE MOTHER

Autocratic Ambitions

It is disconcerting, indeed, the way Russia's invasion of Ukraine has fuelled the ambitions of autocratic rulers who seem to be too tempted to take a leaf out of the book of an autocrat like President Vladimir Putin. It is an open secret how China's President Xi Jinping is making subtle moves to invade Taiwan which has spurred the USA and its three allies in the Quad grouping – Australia, Japan and India – to use the recent Tokyo summit to make the right noises that they would not keep quiet in such an eventuality. But, similar ambitions of another autocrat, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to carve out strategic land out of Syria are being aired soon after Russia's adventure in Ukraine. Tension is running high with the US-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters and Turkish forces in league with Turkey-backed Syrian opposition gunmen who are exchanging fire and shelling continually for the past few weeks. Erdogan appears to be trying to take advantage of the war in Ukraine to advance his own agenda in neighbouring Syria. Significantly, his threat to veto NATO membership for Finland and Sweden is being construed as an attempt to leverage his position and forcibly occupy land in Syria.

Erdogan indicated last month his plans to renew Turkish efforts to create a 30-kilometer deep buffer zone in Syria, along its southern border through a cross-border incursion against US-allied Syrian Kurdish fighters. In fact, he had tried to create that zone in 2019 but failed to do so, despite a military operation. "We will come down on them suddenly one night. And we must," Erdogan said, without specifying when he would launch the offensive. If he does so, this will be the fourth major operations inside Syria since 2016, targeting Syria's main Kurdish militia—the People's Protection Units or YPG—which Turkey considers to be a terrorist organisation and an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. The PKK has, for decades, been carrying out insurgency within Turkey against the government in Ankara. The YPG, however, forms the lynchpin of the fight by US-led forces against Islamic State militants. Though Turkey failed to fulfill its ambition through the last three military operations, it has succeeded in wresting control over a large swath of Syrian territory, including the towns of Afrin, Tel Abyad and Jarablus.

Ankara plans to build thousands of housing units in those areas to ensure the "voluntary return" of 1 million out of the 3.7 million Syrian refugees currently in Turkey. Erdogan made it clear late last week that Turkish troops would strive to capture new areas, including the towns of Tel Rifaat and Manbij, which are located on a major intersection of roads on Syria's west-east highway. Turkey says the Syrian Kurdish fighters use Tel Rifaat as a base to attack areas held by Turkey-backed Syrian opposition fighters. Though a Turkish invasion is still in the realm of speculation, analysts say Erdogan is unpredictable and he is in the habit of taking high risks. Now, it is an opportune moment for him as the Russians are preoccupied with the war in Ukraine and the Americans need him not to raise any objections to the expansion of NATO to include Finland and Sweden. There is also another reason for an invasion benefiting Erdogan. A Syrian offensive would mean an opportunity to mobilise Turkish nationalist voters for the Turkish presidential elections a few months away. The economy is sliding down with inflation running at 73.5%. Incursion into Syria in the past to flush out YPG had helped Erdogan in past elections. Syrian Kurdish fighters, however, are not prepared to take Turkey's latest threat lightly and they are gearing up for a possible attack. They warn that an incursion would affect their ongoing fight against IS and their ability to protect prisons in northern Syria where thousands of extremists, many of them foreign nationals, have been locked up since IS was defeated territorially three years ago.

Turkey also must bear in mind that any large-scale military operation would be highly risky as this could enrage both the US and Russia for different reasons. Turkey and Russia support rival sides in Syria's 11-year conflict, but have been closely coordinating in the country's north. Russia has not yet officially commented on Erdogan's threat. All the same, it has sent fighter jets and helicopter gunships to a base close to the border with Turkey, going by reports of the Syrian opposition activists. Russia has played a crucial role as a close ally of Damascus in the Syrian conflict in favour of its President Bashar al-Assad. Washington has made it clear its opposition to a Turkish military incursion on the ground that gains in the campaign against IS would be lost. It may seem like sheer madness to turn both the US and Russia into enemies. Erdogan is in a tricky situation but his ambition to win the election may make him act without prudence and the Turkish autocrat is known to take risks if he is convinced he would gain.



Asad Mirza

INTERNATIONAL TRADERS HAVE CONTINUED TO KEEP RUSSIAN CRUDE TRADE ON, EVEN AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE US-LED ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

A recent report by the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) published June 1, says that some oil companies have been supplying discounted Russian oil to the US and in this regard it specially mentions Indian companies.

Quoting data by Kpler, a commodities data analytics website, the WSJ claims that a refinery owned by Indian conglomerate Reliance Industries bought seven times more Russian crude during May compared to before the war, which is about 20 per cent of its total intake.

Lauri Myllyvirta, an energy analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, told the WSJ that what likely happened was Reliance took on a discounted cargo of Russian crude, refined it and then sold the product on the short-term market where it found a US buyer, and it does look like there's a trade where Russian crude is refined in India and then some of it is sold to America. In addition the report also mentions ship-to-ship transfers at high seas.

The WSJ also named another Indian company Nayara Energy (in which the Russian oil giant Rosneft owes major shareholding) indulging in this trade. The newspaper also claims that Reliance and Nayara, both did not respond to its request for comment.

However, commenting on ship-to-ship transfers, the oil industry analysts say that the whole trade is driven by arbitrage and it is a common practice where cargoes are diverted to the benefit of traders. As savings of even a few cents per barrel results in huge savings, given the volumes. RIL has been importing Russian oil for the last three-four years as has been the Nayara, India's second private sector refinery.

Oil trade tricks

International traders have continued to keep Russian crude trade on, even after the announcement of the US-led economic sanctions against Russia, blending it with other fuels that are then refined.

Meanwhile, India has maintained its trade ties with Russia through the war and has snapped up discounted crude that others have avoided. Indian imports have surged to 800,000 bpd since the conflict began compared to 30,000 bpd previously.

What perplexes one is that why the WSJ has mentioned just Indian companies in its report, as there have been reports earlier that many western nations including Germany have been buying Russian petroleum and gas even after the Russian invasion, in absence of any EU sanctions. So why does the WSJ report singles out India, for this practice?

American oil imports

The spiralling world oil prices, which stood at \$110 June 1, are a particular concern for the US, the world's biggest oil consumer, where inflation is already running at a four-decade high.

The US imports Russian oil, but it is not highly dependent on the country for its supplies. In 2021, the US imported an average of 209,000 bpd of crude oil and 500,000 bpd of other petroleum products from Russia, according to the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM) association, which further says that these imports increased since 2019, after the US ban on Venezuelan oil and after Hurricane Ida disrupted oil production in the Gulf of Mexico.

This whole process also has a broader economic side effect. If the US stopped importing Russian oil, then many other countries may follow, resulting in an already very tight oil market getting much tighter; and that would drive up the price of oil, in turn driving inflation, affecting the US economy badly.

The political fallout of rising oil prices for the Biden administration could be disastrous. Inflation in the US rose at an annual rate of 7.5 per cent in January 2022, as per the Bureau of Labour Statistics, the fastest pace since July 1982. This means a \$276 increase in average monthly expenses for every American household, according to a recent study by Moody's Analytics.

Rising prices and other issues have already dealt a blow to President Joe Biden's approval ratings, which are in the doldrums



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after sinking to a record low of 33 per cent in January 2022. Further increases in inflation could affect his ratings ahead of the crucial mid-term elections in November and also his bid for re-election in 2024.

Potential Scenario

In this scenario, what remains a viable and image building exercise for the US is to help rebuild the petroleum industry and basic infrastructure in Iraq, a country destroyed during its pursuit of the Islamic State and Al Qaeda elements there during the last two decades and turning its political and economic structure to shambles. Iraq, even today remains one of the most underdeveloped oil producers in the Middle East.

Iraq's Oil Minister, Ihsan Abdul-Jabbar, recently stated that the country aims to increase its crude oil production to 6 million bpd by the end of 2027.

Simon Watkins, a leading oil industry expert, in his latest book The Complete Guide To Global Oil Market Trading, opines that currently, Iraq produces around 4.1-4.2 million bpd, compared to its April OPEC quota of 4.44 million bpd, and its quota is due to increase to 4.5 million bpd in June, and it has the potential to increase oil production enormously.

In addition, the US could help Iraq rebuild or expand its petroleum extraction in Zubair, Mishrif, Qarmat, Thi-Qar, Gharraf and Nasiriya oil fields. The revenue from these oil fields will help rebuild Iraq. A promise, which the US has made umpteen, times, but has not upheld.

If the Biden administration is really interested to control the inflation in the US and also take credit for sticking to its promises regarding rebuilding Iraq, while putting an effective ban on Russian oil reaching western nations, it could effectively achieve these objectives by pursuing a strategy whose cornerstone should be Iraq's reconstruction.

The writer is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He writes on Muslims, educational, international, interfaith and current affairs.

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WISDOM CORNER

- Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. **MAHATMA GANDHI**
- Don't count the days, make the days count. **MUHAMMAD ALI**
- Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself. **GEORGE BERNARD SHAW**

WORDSWORTH

Teleplasmic

This is the adjective relating to teleplasm, another word for ectoplasm, the supernatural substance that's said to exude from the body of a medium during a trance. In one remarkable image, the teleplasmic larynx sits on her head like a caul, while a thin but perfectly visible thread runs into her ear; in others the miniature teleplasmic mass rests on her shoulder, connected to her by a thick cable that runs into her nose (Dumbstruck: a Cultural History of Ventriloquism, by Steven Connor, 2000). Teleplasm is rather younger than ectoplasm, starting to be recorded only in the middle 1920s. It was obviously modelled on the latter, which starts to appear a couple of decades earlier. Both are based on Latin and Greek plasma, something formed, moulded, or simulated. This is the source of the ending -plasm that refers to living tissue in words such as cytoplasm and protoplasm (ectoplasm, in another sense, also belongs with this set, since it is the scientific name for the more viscous, clear outer layer of the cytoplasm). Ecto- means outside, so ectoplasm frequently refers to a living tissue that is supposedly formed by the medium outside her body; tele- here means much the same, though its root sense is something happening at a distance. A recent appearance in fiction is in the 1998 Hugo Award-winning SF novel by Connie Willis, To Say Nothing of the Dog, or How We Found The Bishop's Bird Stump At Last, described in one review as "a time travel story, a mystery, a romance, and a screwball comedy: think Bringing Up Baby meets Three Men in a Boat", in which a fake seance occurs: "How wonderful!" Mrs. Mering said. "Do come sit down. Baine, pull up a chair for Madame Iritosky." "No, no," Madame Iritosky said, indicating Professor Peddick's chair. "It is here that the teleplasmic vibrations converge." Professor Peddick obligingly changed chairs.

LOL

The devil's offer

The devil visited a lawyer's office and made him an offer. "I can arrange some things for you," the devil said. "I'll increase your income five-fold. Your partners will love you; your clients will respect you; you'll have



four months of vacation each year and live to be a hundred.

All I require in return is that your wife's soul, your children's souls, and their children's souls rot in hell for eternity." The lawyer thought for a moment. "What's the catch?" he asked.

IN JEST THIS

Don't be late – You might be replaced



Melvin Durai

THE MORE IMPORTANT THE PERSON, THE EARLIER YOU'RE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE AND THE LATER THEY'RE ALLOWED TO SHOW UP

Over the last few years, I've been trying to teach my kids the importance of promptness. I'd like them to learn to be on time and not be perpetually late.

Far too often, when they have to be at an event or appointment at a particular time, they get ready at the last minute or spend too much time getting ready. As a result, we leave home just a few minutes before the event is set to begin and the pressure is transferred to me with these three words: "Drive fast, Daddy!"

Just once, I want to hear the words, "Drive slow, Daddy!" I want to relax and take my time. I want to drive my age – well under the speed limit.

When it's a large event with many guests, being a few minutes late may not really affect anyone. But when my kids have a music lesson and are five minutes late, it

bothers me. I hate to keep the music teacher waiting. Her time is valuable, as I realise every time I pay her.

"If you had an appointment to meet the president, would you be late?" I ask my 16-year-old son, Rahul. He shakes his head. Of course, he wouldn't.

The more important the person, the earlier he would arrive. For his school principal, he'd arrive five minutes early. For the mayor, he'd arrive 10 minutes early. For the president, he'd arrive one day early.

Most of us do the same thing. If we have an appointment with a government official, we try our best to be on time. If we think that the traffic will delay us, we adjust for it. We make sure that the official does not have a chance to deny us whatever we are requesting, whether it's a new passport or a visa or a special permit.

Of course, once we arrive 30 minutes early, the official will see

us 30 minutes late. That's one of the unwritten rules of life: the more important the person, the earlier you're expected to arrive and the later they're allowed to show up.

My son wouldn't be late for important people, so I ask him another question: "Would you be late for your own wedding?"

"Of course not," he replies.

"That's good, because if you're late, you might be replaced."

Then I tell him the story of the recent wedding in Malkapur Pangra, a village in the Buldhana district of Maharashtra. The muhurat or auspicious time of the wedding ceremony was 4 pm, but the groom did not show up until 8 pm. He and his friends had reportedly been dancing to the tunes of a DJ and drinking. Perhaps they drank so much, they forgot what the celebration was all about.

When the groom's party finally arrived at the mandap, an argu-

ment ensued and the bride's father decided to marry his daughter to someone else, a relative who was a guest at the wedding, on the very same night. (Important tip for single people: attend lots of weddings and you might get lucky.)

But don't feel sorry for the groom. After demanding that his former bride return gold and sarees they had given her, his family quickly found another bride for him in a nearby village and got him married the next day.

"See what happens when you're late?" I tell my son.

"Yes," he says. "You will bring more joy to the world."

"What do you mean?"

"Instead of two people getting married, four people got married. And four families were filled with joy!"

I shake my head. Getting my son to be on time is going to be a lot harder than I thought.

India's pollution burden

Sir, The unbearable heatwaves across the country have driven experts into a research mode though the exact underlining cause of such waves is no secret: global warming. Scientists have repeatedly said that climate change and global warming are inextricably linked. Needless to say, pollution is the most common culprit of climate change. Both air and water pollution are the leading cause of mortalities and morbidities all over the world. Approximately 4.5 million deaths are attributed to outdoor pollution and 2.3 million to indoor or man-made pollution. About 6.7 million global deaths have both as causative factors. Alarming, India is reeling under the pollution onslaught, and water pollution is cited as one of the reasons for the rise in dengue, the mosquito-borne viral disease. Apart from fossil fuels, household energy use and non-fossil emissions trigger air pollution through pollutants. Particularly, the particle pollution, or the particulate matter pollution (PM), is a cause for great worry. India has exceeded the WHO standard threshold of PM 2.5 long ago. It is not as if only India is the culprit; almost all leading countries of the world are struggling to keep their air clean and clear. Smaller nations are not 'pure' either. The WHO also has revised its air quality index (AQI) – air pollutant concentration over a average period. AQI for nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide are a few of the eight pollutants that are measured in India. Evidently, AQI is high in all parameters in the country. Transport sector is the biggest contributor of air pollution by way of dust. Roadside dust is also a massive source. To be fair to them, governments are not sitting idle; they are trying their best in their areas of jurisdiction to curb vehicular pollution but what is being done is only a fraction of a huge problem.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

On path to glory

Sir, Iga Swiatek carried too many guns for her young American opponent, Coco Gauff, as she swept to a straight-sets victory to lift her second French Open title. The Polish star has won all three of her career meetings with Gauff, who was playing in her first major final. The victory gives Swiatek her sixth straight title this year and extends her winning run to 35 matches, equalling Venus Williams' record for the longest winning streak by a woman in the 21st century. Given her current form, she is well on course to topple more records and script a glorious chapter in women's tennis.

NJ Ravi Chander,
BANGALORE



‘Will shed my blood to stop division of Bengal’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Alipurduar, June 7: Amid the demands by some BJP leaders for a separate state to be carved out of Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday asserted that she is ready to shed her own blood, if need be, to thwart such divisive attempts.

Lashing out at the saffron camp for “trying to fan separatism” in the state ahead of the general election in 2024, the TMC Chief maintained that all communities in north Bengal have been living in harmony for decades.

“With elections approaching, the BJP is fanning the demands of separate statehood, sometimes seeking Gorkhaland, and at other times a separate state of North Bengal. I am ready to give my blood but will never allow division of the state,” Banerjee said, addressing a party meeting here.

Urging people to stay united, Banerjee also listed various developmental projects for the area. In an apparent reference to a purported video by Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) leader Jeevan Singha, threatening Banerjee of “bloodbath” if she opposed the demand for a



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses a public meeting at Parade Ground in Alipurduar district, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

separate Kamtapur; the feisty TMC boss said such threats do not intimidate her.

North Bengal, with its eight districts, is economically important for West Bengal as it is home to money-minting tea, timber, and tourism industries. The region, which shares an international border with Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh, is also strategically important for the country due to its Siliguri corridor, commonly known as ‘Chicken’s Neck’, connecting the mainland with the northeastern states.

People there have witnessed several violent statehood movements since the early eighties by various ethnic groups such as Gorkhas, Rajbanshis, Koch and Kamatapuri communities.

Launching a scathing attack on the saffron camp over its support to those seeking a separate state of Gorkhaland, Banerjee said the BJP had been trying to create divisions between the people of the hills and the plains. “Before elections, they said they would ensure the creation of Gorkhaland. But I will

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never allow that,” she said.

BJP legislators from Matigara-Naxalbari constituency Anandamay Barman and Dabgram-Phulbari seat Shikha Chatterjee had spoken in favour of Union Territory for North Bengal. BJP MLA from Kurseong Bishnu Prasad Sharma had also demanded separation of Darjeeling from Bengal. BJP’s Alipurduar MP John Barla had also stirred a hornet’s nest last year after he sought a UT by carving out districts of north Bengal.

The TMC supremo claimed that the saffron party, despite having bagged votes of north Bengal people, did nothing for the region. “You people have voted for the BJP. But what did it give you in return? Nothing. Instead, they removed slum dwellers next to railway tracks. If they try to remove you, there will be protests. I will soon hand over land rights documents to refugees’ families. No one can evict you,” she said.

Once considered a stronghold of the Left Front, Alipurduar was clinched by the TMC in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls. But the saffron camp gained ground in the area and won the Lok Sabha seat in 2019. In 2021 assembly polls, the BJP won all the seven assembly seats under this Lok Sabha segment.

Dubbing the BJP-led government at the Centre as “adulterated”, the CM accused it of mismanaging the country’s economy through decisions such as demonetisation. “Earlier, it was ‘Jumla Ki Sarkar’. Now it has turned into ‘Bhejal Sarkar’ (adulterated government). What have they done for the country in the last eight years apart from increasing fuel and LPG prices?” she asked.

As NAS calls out Goa’s edu standards, CM talks tough

The National Achievement Survey (NAS) is a survey of students’ learning undertaken by the Ministry of Education. It gives a system-level reflection on the effectiveness of school education, which helps compare the performance across the spectrum and across the population to find desired direction for improvements



AGENCIES

Panaji, June 7: Alarmed by the drop in standards in the quality of school education, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant Tuesday said that the central civil services (CCS) conduct would be made applicable to teachers, while warning them to teach full-time and not to conduct any other business.

Speaking to reporters after conducting a review of the state’s education apparatus with top officials of the Education department, Sawant, who also holds the Education Ministry portfolio, said that Goa was below the national average according to the findings of the National Achievement Survey (NAS) report. He, however, added that the blame should not be leveled on the government school managements alone, because it accounts for only 20 per cent of the state’s student population.

“We are very much concerned about the NAS 2021 reports. It is a very serious thing. We cannot just blame government teachers and government schools. As many as 80 per cent of Goa’s students study in aided schools. Government provides them grant-in-aid for support. If we are doing this, we want results of some standard,” the Chief Minister told reporters.

“Teachers should be full time teachers and should not have any other businesses. We are paying them. CCS conduct rules are not applicable for teachers in aided schools,” Sawant said.

Goa’s government school education infrastructure has shrunk considerably over the last few decades in the wake of a surge in government aided schools, most of which function under the aegis of the Roman Catholic Church in the state.

Sawant said that since the government pays for the salaries and other grant-in-aid support, aided schools are also needed to shore up their performance.

“In math we are below the national average. The national average is 32 per cent and we are at 30 per cent for Class 10. In Class 8, the national average is 36 per cent and we are at 32 per cent. In Class 5, the national average is 44 per cent and we are at 39 per cent,” Sawant said.

“For Class 3, the national average is 57 per cent and we stand at 55 per cent,” the Chief Minister said, adding that school students in Goa are not faring well in other subjects either.

“Some teachers do a good job, but when the national achievement survey report says we are below national average, it is not good from the perspective of students, especially when it comes to math, social science, science,” Sawant said, adding that he has taken the findings of the national survey report seriously.

“I am wondering whether CCS conduct rules should be applied to teachers in Goa in the interest of the students. We are worried about the future of our children,” he said.

First flight to land at Mopa airport Sept 1

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, June 7: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant Tuesday said that flights will start landing at Mopa airport September 1. The inauguration date, however, is yet to be decided.

Sawant, speaking while giving appointments to 21 candidates in harness cases, said that the greenfield Mopa airport will give much scope to the youth of Goa to work in the aviation sector.

“We will decide on inaugurating this airport between August 15 and 30. In the next six months, 500 candidates will be recruited here. In allied services, it will require one more thousand staff within six months, once the airport is commissioned,” Sawant said.

He said that Goan youth, specifically from Pernem where the Mopa

airport is being built, who want their aviation skills to get updated, can take admissions for better prospects. “From September 1, flights will start landing at Mopa. We will have to join training centres to get jobs in this area. Government jobs are not the only jobs. Even the private sector has good opportunities. We need to grab them,” he said.

Sawant also said that continuous skilling and training is required to get jobs in the aviation area. “It will be a continuous process of recruitment here. For this we will need to up-skill ourselves,” he said.

“The hospitality sector is a big sector as well. If we take admissions in such courses (through ITI and polytechnics), it will help as over two lakh jobs will be created in this sector within the next two to three years,” he said.

COURTESY CALL



President Ram Nath Kovind with West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Thakur during a meeting at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Sukanya’s assets under CBI, ED scanner

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 7: The assets owned by Sukanya Mandal, the daughter of TMC leader Anubrata Mandal, has now come under the CBI and ED scanners, who are conducting parallel probes in the cattle and coal smuggling cases in West Bengal.

Highly placed CBI sources said that recently their officers sought the details of books of accounts, income tax returns, and property and assets details held by Anubrata Mandal and his family members. The TMC Birbhum president submitted the same through his counsels.



A scrutiny of the assets and property details of Sukanya revealed that since 2014 there were high-value properties and assets purchased by her.

The two central agencies, especially the ED, are currently trying to track the money trail behind these high value transactions. At

the same time, the sleuths are also examining the asset details of Anubrata’s close associates, including his personal bodyguard and driver. The books of accounts of a Birbhum-based NGO are also under the scanner.

It is learnt that the red beacon-fitted personal vehicle that Anubrata used before was registered in the name of this particular Birbhum-based NGO. However, following a thrashing from the HC and also objections from his own party high-command, Anubrata removed that beacon.

The conversation between Anubrata and some current and

erstwhile district police officials in Birbhum are also being examined by the CBI sleuths.

Currently, Anubrata is being examined by the sleuths in two different cases. On one hand, the CBI officials based out of the agency’s Nizam Palace office in central Kolkata along with their counterparts in the ED are probing him in the cattle and coal smuggling cases. On the other hand, the CBI based out of the agency’s office at central government office (CGO) Complex at Salt Lake in the northern outskirts of Kolkata have questioned him in connection with the post-poll violence case in the state.

Vlogger held for abusing Mamata on social media

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 7: A special team of Kolkata Police Tuesday arrested popular Bengali vlogger and YouTube star Roy for using abusive words on social media targeting West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee over the sudden demise of popular playback singer KK, who died after performing at a concert in Kolkata May 31.

A joint team of Kolkata Police’s cyber cell and anti-rowdy squad traced Roy’s mobile tower location to Goa from where he was arrested. He will be presented before a lower court in Kolkata Wednesday.



Soon after KK’s death, Roy released a video on social media in which he used abusive and unprintable words targeting Banerjee, state minister Partha Chatterjee and Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim. After the video went viral, cases were filed against Roy at three different police stations.

TMC Rajya Sabha member Santanu Sen had personally ap

proached Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Kumar Goyal and urged him to take action in the matter. Finally a team of the city police arrested him from Goa Tuesday.

Previously too, there had been several complaints against Roy for posting social media vlogs using abusive words. He had also been charged for distorting the language and tune of songs by Rabindranath Tagore. However, this is the first time that he has been arrested.

BJP’s national general secretary Anupam Hazra said it is surprising that a man who did not face any action for distorting songs of Tagore has been arrested for commenting against the CM from as far as Goa.

Now, case filed in Calcutta HC on primary teacher recruitment scam



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 7: At a time when the state government is already facing lots of discomfiture over the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) recruitment irregularities, another case has started in the Calcutta High Court Tuesday pertaining to corruption in the primary teachers’ recruitments.

Incidentally, the case was filed at the Calcutta High Court’s single-judge bench of Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay, who had earlier ordered the CBI probe in the WBSSC recruitment irregularities scam.

The petition has been filed by one Ramesh Mail who has alleged that one Subrata Mandal was appointed as a primary teacher despite not qualifying in the examination for the same. Incidentally, Mandal filed a petition at the Calcutta High Court in 2014 challenging his

results. However, within a few days after filing the petition, he had withdrawn the same and soon after that he got the appointment letter as a primary teacher.

The petitioner has alleged some kind of foul play in the entire sequence of first challenging his results in the count, then withdrawing the same and finally getting the appointment. The matter is likely to be heard June 9. Placing his arguments in the court, Mali’s counsel claimed that if the irregularities in primary teachers’ recruitment are probed properly, then another WBSSC-like scandal will surface.

In another case also pertaining to the same irregularities, the division bench of Calcutta High Court Chief Justice Prakash Srivastava and Justice Rajarshi Bhattacharya has directed the West Bengal government to file an affidavit.

A PIL was filed at the Calcutta High Court alleging irregularities and corruption in primary teachers’ appointments. However, the state government had raised questions on the acceptability of the petition. The division bench has asked the state government to mention their objections on this count in the form of an affidavit.

Don’t trivialise gun salute, say armed forces officers

While it was customary for ships entering a foreign port to empty their cannons as a show of peace, shore batteries would also respond by emptying theirs. Normally, ships would have seven cannons on one side while shore batteries had 21. Hence, the concept of a 21-gun salute

The gun salute is a military affair and should be left at that, several armed forces officers, both serving and retired, said after singer Krishnakumar Kunnath, popularly known as KK, was accorded one by the West Bengal government last Wednesday after his sudden demise in Kolkata soon after a concert.

Three days before that, on May 29, Naik Bappaditya Khutia was accorded a gun salute by the Army before his cremation at Kharagpur in West Midnapore district. Khutia was on his way to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh with other soldiers when his vehicle fell into a gorge. Khutia was killed along with six of his colleagues.

“KK was certainly a great singer. He also performed for the armed forces on several occasions. However, the question that comes to mind is whether he deserved a gun salute, that too in Kolkata

when his last rites were performed in Mumbai.

“The gun salute was originally meant for soldiers killed while performing their duties. It was later extended to heads of states (both present and former) and national figures such as Bharat Ratna recipients. No questions were therefore raised when Lata Mangeshkar received a gun salute. Unfortunately, it now seems to have turned into a fashion to accord such a salute to whoever a government chooses,” a senior officer in the Army said.

According to another officer, the importance of such ceremonies is getting diluted with scores of people, from local politicians to performers, receiving the honour.

“Earlier, it used to be a matter of pride for any town or village when a soldier from there received full military honours, including a gun salute, during his funeral. Nowadays, few people care that a soldier gives up his life for the coun-



try and deserves that kind of respect. Maybe the armed forces should do away with the gun salute altogether. Fortunately, there is a Flag Code or we would find a Tricolour on every other body,” he said.

KK had performed at the Nazrul Mancha in Kolkata May 31 and fell ill at the venue itself. There were initial reports of chaos and overcrowding at the venue that could have caused the air-conditioning machines to malfunction.

These reports prompted many to claim that the Mamata Banerjee-led government in West Bengal attempted to tone down the accu-

sations of administrative failure by according such a send-off to the departed star. The preliminary autopsy report, however, pointed to a heart condition that KK was suffering from.

“There is no rule that governs who the state government can accord a gun salute to. In the past, we have accorded such honour to actors and singers from our state. So, why not to KK? After all, he was an honoured guest in our state,” said an administrative official at Nabanna, the state secretariat. The official admitted that he had no clue about the gun salute’s origin.

While it was customary for ships entering a foreign port to empty their cannons (without cannonballs) as a show of peace, shore batteries would also respond by emptying theirs. Normally, ships would have seven cannons on one side while shore batteries had 21. Hence, the concept of a 21-gun salute came into being.

“As far as gun salutes accorded to soldiers are concerned, they are more of a solemn moment. During the wars fought in the past, fighting stopped for some time to allow both sides to remove their injured and dead soldiers from the battlefield. Once this activity was completed, a three-shot volley would be shot to indicate that the fighting could commence. This is the origin of the gun salute accorded to a soldier. The honour guard comprises an uneven number of soldiers and three-shot volleys are fired. The bugles sound the Reveille immediately after this to alert soldiers that the war is still on. I don’t have a problem if police forces organise such ceremonies for their fallen colleagues but what the governments are doing is leading to trivialisation of the emotions involved,” another officer said.

IANS

of the day quote

Five revolutions in agriculture and food processing over next one decade will propel Telangana to the next phase of growth

K. T. RAMA RAO | MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION & URBAN DEVELOPMENT, INDUSTRIES & COMMERCE, AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OF TELANGANA

Narendra Modi has changed polity and political culture of the country by eliminating family centric, caste and community based politics, appeasement and corruption

JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

Uttar Pradesh is a vibrant example of unity in diversity

RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Cong MP threatened

Ludhiana: Ludhiana MP Rameet Singh Bittu's personal assistant Tuesday claimed the Congress leader received a threat call that he will meet the same fate as his late party colleague and singer Sidhu Moosewala. The call, which was made from an unknown number, was received on the mobile number of the MP's PA Harjinder Singh. Bittu is the grandson of former Punjab chief minister Beant Singh who was assassinated in 1995. The caller threatened to eliminate Bittu for allegedly speaking against slain militant leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He warned Bittu would meet the same fate as Moosewala, Singh said.

Six injured

Patna: Six people, including a woman, suffered stab injuries after two communities attacked each other with knives over alleged molestation of a girl in Shivrajpur village in Bihar's Gopalganj district, police said Tuesday. Three of injured -- Faquddin Mian, Krishna Prasad and Krishna Kushwaha -- suffered serious injuries and were rushed to the emergency ward of Sadar hospital Gopalganj. The doctors of the Sadar hospital referred two of them to Gorakhpur.

Drone shot down

Jammu: Three magnetic Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) packed in a tiffin box and mounted on a drone were brought down by the Jammu and Kashmir Police in the Kanachak area of Jammu near the International Border, officials said on Tuesday. The three IEDs were set to three different timings. The Border Security Force (BSF) first found the IEDs Monday.

Man arrested

Kanpur: Police in Kanpur have arrested Shankar, the owner of Roma Printers, where the posters related to the bandh call on June 3 were printed. Shankar allegedly printed the posters without completing requisite formalities. His printing press is located in Brahmanagar locality. He told reporters that he had merely printed 20 posters and was not aware where the remaining posters were printed.

Tourist raped

Panaji: A British woman was allegedly raped near the Arambol beach in Goa in front of her male partner by a local man under the pretext of giving her a massage, police said Tuesday. The accused, local resident Vincent D'Souza (32), was part of a group that illegally offered massage services near the Arambol beach in North Goa district, which is quite popular with international tourists, they said.



In a state like Bihar, awareness among people is more important than prohibition.

The state government has banned liquor in Bihar. In the garb of liquor ban, the police personnel wrongly implicate poor people and earn crores of rupees. It has turned into a money making tool for police personnel in Bihar

JITAN RAM MANJHI | HINDUSTANI AWAM MORCHA CHIEF

COVID FEAR RETURNS

The Karnataka Health Department has undertaken a slew of measures following the rise of Covid cases in the state in the last one week. The meeting of Covid Experts committee has discussed the prevailing situation and the department has undertaken a serological survey



ED seizes ₹2.85 cr cash, gold from Jain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: "Unexplained" cash of ₹2.85 crore and 133 gold coins were seized after raids were conducted at the premises of Delhi minister Satyendar Jain and his alleged associates as part of a money laundering probe against them, the ED said Tuesday.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) said those raided on Monday "either directly or indirectly assisted (the minister) or participated in the process of money laundering". The cash and coins were "unexplained" and were kept in a "secret" place, it said in a statement.

Jain, 57, was arrested May 30 under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and is in ED custody till June 9. The ED had conducted searches at about 7 premises, including that of a jeweller, in Delhi and some neighbouring locations Monday.

Jain, a minister without portfolio in the Arvind Kejriwal government, is being probed by the federal agency under the PMLA on charges of alleged hawala dealings. Kejriwal recently had defended Jain as a "hardcore honest and patriot" person who was being framed in a "false case" and hoped the minister will come out clean after the ED probe.

The agency said those raided include Jain's wife Poonam Jain, his business associates Ankush Jain and Vaibhav Jain, Naveen Jain and Siddharth Jain (directors of Ram Prakash Jewellers Pvt Ltd), G S Matharoo (chairman of Lala Sher Singh Jivan Vigyan Trust which runs Prudence group of schools), Yogesh Kumar Jain (director in Ram Prakash Jewellers Pvt Ltd.), father-in-law of Ankush Jain and Lala Sher Singh Jivan Vigyan Trust.



tors of Ram Prakash Jewellers Pvt Ltd), G S Matharoo (chairman of Lala Sher Singh Jivan Vigyan Trust which runs Prudence group of schools), Yogesh Kumar Jain (director in Ram Prakash Jewellers Pvt Ltd.), father-in-law of Ankush Jain and Lala Sher Singh Jivan Vigyan Trust.

"Lala Sher Singh Jivan Vigyan Trust had provided accommodation entries for transfer of land from company beneficially owned by Satyendar Kumar Jain to family members of accomplices in order to alienate the property and to frustrate the process of confiscation," the ED said. It said "incriminating documents and digital records" were seized during the raids.

Sonia seeks time to appear before ED

The ED had summoned Sonia Gandhi to appear before it on June 8 in connection with a money laundering case linked to the National Herald newspaper-AJL issue



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: Congress president Sonia Gandhi has sought more time from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to appear before it as she is still suffering from Covid, party sources said Tuesday. They said Sonia Gandhi, who tested positive Thursday, is yet to recover and her latest report is not Covid-negative. The ED had summoned Sonia Gandhi to appear before it on June 8 in connection with a money laundering case linked to the National Herald newspaper-AJL issue.

The ED had also summoned her son and former party chief Rahul Gandhi on June 13 for questioning in the case. He was earlier asked by the agency to depose on June 2 but the Lok Sabha member from Wayanad constituency in Kerala sought a fresh date as he was out of country. The federal agency later asked Rahul Gandhi to appear on June 13 at its headquarters in central Delhi.

Congress leaders had earlier

claimed that Sonia Gandhi is determined to appear before the ED provided she recovered from the virus. The case pertains to the probe into the alleged financial irregularities in the party-promoted Young Indian that owns the National Herald newspaper. The paper is published by Associated Journals Limited (AJL) and owned by Young Indian Pvt Limited.

Officials said the agency wants to record the statements of Rahul and Sonia Gandhi under criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The questioning of the senior Congress leaders and the Gandhis is part of the ED's investigation to understand the shareholding pattern, financial transactions and role of the promoters of Young Indian and AJL, officials had said.

The members of the first family of the Congress party, including Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, are among the promoters and shareholders of Young Indian. The probe agency had registered a fresh case under the criminal provisions of the PMLA after a trial court here took cognizance of an Income Tax Department probe against Young Indian Pvt Ltd on the basis of a private criminal complaint filed by BJP MP Subramanian Swamy in 2013.

Swamy had accused Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and others of conspiring to cheat and misappropriate funds with Young Indian Pvt Ltd paying only ₹50 lakh to obtain the right to recover ₹90.25 crore that Associate Journals Ltd owed to the Congress.

Nupur has always been firebrand votary of Hindutva

She joined the BJP's youth wing and after spending several years there, she was appointed as the spokesperson of the BJP's Delhi unit. Though she lost the election against Kejriwal in 2015, Sharma became a familiar face in the BJP circle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: Nupur Sharma, suspended from the BJP after a major row over her remarks against Prophet Mohammed, was catapulted to the centre stage in 2015 after she was chosen to take on AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal in the Delhi assembly polls.

She first shot into the limelight as a student leader with RSS-affiliated ABV when she was elected the president of the Delhi University Students Union in 2008. Sharma, 37,



a resident of Delhi, did her graduation from Hindu College and thereafter studied law at the Faculty of Law in Delhi University.

For further studies, she went to the London School of Economics and pursued law. She joined the BJP's youth wing and after spending several years there, she was appointed as the spokesperson of the BJP's Delhi unit. Though she lost the election against Kejriwal in 2015, Sharma became a familiar face in the BJP circle.

Lawyer by profession, Sharma,

was made the party's national spokesperson in the team of BJP's national president JP Nadda. During debates on TV channels, she appeared as a firebrand spokesperson and a strong votary of Hindutva.

The party had been giving her several assignments, including the coordination of media in the Uttarakhand assembly polls. Recently, she also addressed the training camp of BJP's women wing on media and communication. Sharma was suspended from

the BJP on Sunday after she allegedly made insulting remarks against Prophet Mohammed during a TV debate that drew condemnation from several Islamic nations. The BJP suspended her under rule 10(a) of its constitution which states that the national president if he so desires, may suspend any member and then start disciplinary proceedings against him. Breach of discipline includes acting or carrying on propaganda against any programme or decision of the party.

JUBILEE HILLS GANGRAPE

BJP MLA booked for revealing girl's identity

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, June 7: The Hyderabad Police has filed a case against BJP MLA M. Raghunandan Rao for sharing the photographs and video of Jubilee Hills gangrape.

A case under Section 228 A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been filed against Rao at Abids Police Station on a complaint by a lawyer. A police officer said the case was registered late Monday night and further action will be taken after seeking legal opinion.

Under Section 228 A of IPC whoever prints or publishes the name or any matter which may known the identity of any victim of sexual assault shall be punished with imprisonment up to two years. The case was registered three days after the BJP MLA from Dubbak released the stills and video allegedly showing an MLA's son in intimate act with the victim of gangrape in a car.

The MLA's action had come under flak. However, he denied that he revealed the name or identity of the victim. He said he wanted to make public the evidence about the alleged involvement of a MIM MLA's son in the incident.

The BJP leader said since police were derailing the investigation by giving a clean chit to the MLA's son, he released the video clip. He had told reporters on Monday that he was ready to face the case. Rao, who is also a lawyer, claimed that he would submit to court all the ev-



A police officer said the case was registered late Monday night and further action will be taken after seeking legal opinion

idence he has at an appropriate time. The video clip went viral on social media after it was released by Raghunandan Rao at a news conference. Police on Monday also booked a couple of YouTubers for allegedly uploading the video.

The 17-year-old girl was allegedly gangraped by five persons in a car on May 28 after promising to drop her home from a pub, where she attended a party. Police have already arrested four accused, including three juveniles in the sensational case while the fifth accused is still absconding. The arrested juveniles include the son of a leader of ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

ON CLOUD NINE



Students celebrate their success after Class 10 examination results were declared, at Christiyoti school in Nagaon district

PTI PHOTO

Ex-Punjab minister held on graft charges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 7: The Punjab Vigilance Bureau arrested former state minister and Congress leader Sadhu Singh Dharamsot along with two others on corruption charges in the early hours Tuesday, officials said.

The social welfare and forest minister in the previous Amarinder Singh-led government was arrested from Amloh. Former minister Sangat Singh Gilzian, who was the

forest minister in the Charanjit Singh Channi-led government, has also been named in the FIR.

Channi became the chief minister after the Congress unseated Amarinder Singh in September last year. Dharamsot, however, denied corruption charges levelled against him, saying he is being framed. A Mohali court later sent him to three-day police custody.

Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring described the arrest as "political vendetta" and

asked Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to let the law take its course and not resort to "kangaroo court justice". Several Congress leaders led by Warring, Partap Singh Bajwa, Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa reached the Mohali Vigilance office Tuesday.

Dharamsot's arrest came just hours ahead of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's visit to Punjab. The former Congress chief visited the house of Sidhu Moosewala in Mansa on Tuesday to express condolences to the slain singer's family.

A few days earlier, a district forest officer (DFO), Guramanpreet Singh, and contractor Harmohinder Singh Hummy were arrested in a corruption case.

Both provided details of the alleged wrongdoings in the forest department when Dharamsot was the minister, said the officials. They alleged that a "deep-rooted nexus of organised corruption" remained prevalent since 2017 between politicians, their associates and officials of the forest department.

of the day quote

It is on Russia to stop rape, violence, and atrocities from within its ranks. It is on Russia to end this unconscionable, unprovoked war on the people of Ukraine, and we call on the Russian Federation to do just that

LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD | US AMBASSADOR

A country's freedom of choosing partners, a principle upheld by the West, has been trampled on by the West itself. Serbia, from the point of view of the West, should not have such freedom

SERGEI LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA

Any nuclear tests would be in complete violation of UN Security Council resolutions. There would be a swift and forceful response to such a test by North Korea. The entire world will respond in a strong and clear manner. We are prepared

WENDY SHERMAN | DEPUTY US SECY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Baerbock tests Cov +ve in Pak

Islamabad: German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock Tuesday cut short her three-nation foreign trip after testing positive for Covid-19 while in Pakistan. Baerbock, who arrived earlier Tuesday on a two-day maiden visit to Pakistan, tested positive for coronavirus shortly after meeting with her counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in Islamabad. At lunch, Baerbock noticed that she had lost her sense of taste, her ministry said, adding that a rapid antigen test she took in the morning had been negative. Baerbock was due to travel to Greece and Turkey.

Italy seizes 4 tonne cocaine

Milan: Italian agents Tuesday confiscated 4.3 tonne of cocaine with a street value of nearly a quarter-billion euros (dollars) in the northeastern port city of Trieste, dealing a blow to Colombia's feared Gulf Clan in one of the largest drug busts ever in Europe. Arrest warrants were being executed for 38 people on suspicion of international drug trafficking in Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, the Netherlands and Colombia.

Cambodia now free of Covid-19

Phnom Penh: Cambodia Tuesday became free of Covid-19 after the last patient recovered, the Health Ministry said in a statement. Since the last 31 days, there were no new cases reported in the country, Xinhua news agency quoted the statement as saying. Since the pandemic began in January 2020, the Southeast Asian nation has registered a total of 136,262 confirmed cases with 133,206 recoveries and 3,056 deaths. Ministry spokeswoman Or Vandine attributed the country's success in controlling the pandemic to the government's right leadership and the effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines.

Polio outbreak in Pak worsens

Islamabad: Pakistan's polio eradication campaign is in disarray after an alarming jump in cases last week. Eight polio cases have now been reported in children over the past month in North Waziristan district, bordering Afghanistan, the Guardian reported. They are the first cases in more than a year.



Only establishing economic stability not enough, we have to restructure the entire economy,

RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | PRIME MINISTER, SRI LANKA

HAPPY B'DAY PRINCESS

Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Tuesday shared a first birthday picture of their daughter Lilibet, named after her great-grandmother Queen Elizabeth II



‘China secretly building naval base in Cambodia’

The base is reportedly located to the west of the South China Sea, where Beijing has overlapping territorial claims with several countries

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beijing, June 7: China is building a naval base for its military in Cambodia, with both Beijing and Phnom Penh going to great lengths to conceal the operation, The Washington Post reported, citing Western officials.

The facility, occupying a portion of Cambodia's Ream Naval Base on the Gulf of Thailand, is set to become only China's second foreign outpost after the opening of a

base in the East African nation of Djibouti in 2017, a Western official claimed, speaking on condition of anonymity, RT reported.

The base is reportedly located to the west of the South China Sea, where Beijing has overlapping territorial claims with several countries. It will be capable of hosting large naval vessels, according to sources.

The leadership in Beijing sees the Indo-Pacific as China's rightful and historic sphere of influence, one



official was quoted as saying.

They view China's rise there as part of a global trend toward a multipolar world where major powers more forcefully assert their in-

terests in their perceived sphere of influence.

Essentially, China wants to become so powerful that the region will give in to China's leadership

Ukraine will fight for all its territory: Zelenskyy

REUTERS

Kyivdruzhkivka, Ukraine, June 7: Ukraine will fight to recover all its territory occupied by Russian forces, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Tuesday, as his troops battled street-to-street in Sievierodonetsk in one of the bloodiest land battles of the war.

"We have already lost too many people to simply cede our territory," he said by video link at an event hosted by Britain's Financial Times newspaper.

Fierce street fighting for key eastern industrial city

Ukraine troops outnumbered, will not surrender: Zelenskyy

Eastern front under constant shelling

Russian-held ports ready to resume grain exports: Moscow

Stalemate was not an option, he said adding, "We have to achieve a full decoupage of our entire territory."

Zelenskyy's remarks were a forceful response to suggestions that Ukraine must cede territory to Russia to end the war, now in its fourth month.

French President Emmanuel Macron said in a recent interview that it was important not to hu-



Civilian militia men hold rifles during training at a shooting range in outskirts Kyiv, Tuesday

AP PHOTO

miliate Moscow, comments interpreted in Ukraine as implying it must accept some Russian demands.

Asked about Macron's comments, Zelenskyy said, "We are not going to humiliate anyone, we are going to respond in kind."

As he spoke, Ukrainian troops in the ruins of Sievierodonetsk were trying to hold onto gains Kyiv had claimed to have made in a surprise counter-offensive that shifted momentum there last week.

The fight for the small eastern industrial city has emerged as a pivotal battle, with Russia focusing its offensive might in the hope

of achieving one of its stated aims - to fully capture surrounding Luhansk province on behalf of separatist proxies.

The situation inside the city could not be independently verified, but Ukrainian officials appear to have backed away from claims to have regained control of as much as half of it. After saying for days that Ukrainian forces had recaptured substantial territory, Luhansk regional governor Serhiy Gaidai said on Monday the situation had again deteriorated.

Other Ukrainian officials spoke of heavy battles underway. Moscow has said its own troops have been advancing.

US, S Korea fly 20 fighter jets to warn North

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, June 7: The South Korean and US militaries flew 20 fighter jets over waters off South Korea's western coast Tuesday in a continued show of force as a senior US official warned of a forceful response if North Korea goes ahead with its first nuclear test explosion in nearly five years.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the air demonstration involved 16 South Korean planes — including F-35A stealth fighters — and four US F-16 fighter jets and was aimed at demonstrating their ability to swiftly respond to North Korean provocations.



The flight came a day after the allies fired eight surface-to-surface missiles into South Korea's eastern waters to match a weekend missile display by North Korea, which fired the same number of weapons from multiple locations Sunday in what was likely its biggest single-day testing event.

North Korea may soon up the ante as US and South Korean officials say the country is all but ready to conduct another detonation at its nuclear testing ground in the northeastern town of Punggye-ri. Its last such test and sixth overall was in September 2017, when it claimed to have detonated a thermonuclear bomb designed for its intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Gupta brothers arrested in Dubai

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Johannesburg/Dubai, June 7: Indian-origin fugitive businessmen Rajesh and Atul Gupta, who were among South Africa's most wanted suspects in a corruption case that led to the removal of President Jacob Zuma from office, have been arrested by the Dubai Police, according to an official statement Tuesday.

The Interpol had issued red notices against Rajesh, 51, and Atul Gupta, 53, — two of the three Indian-origin Gupta brothers — who fled South Africa with their families amid investigations into their alleged looting of billions of rands from state-owned enterprises during the presidency of Zuma, 80.

In a statement, the Dubai Police said that Rajesh and Atul have



been arrested in connection with money laundering and criminal charges in South Africa.

"Dubai Police made the arrest after receiving a red notice for the Gupta brothers by Interpol. The force has also coordinated with the authorities in South Africa regarding the extradition file to complete the legal procedures," the statement said.

The Interpol is currently headed by the UAE. It was not immediately known if the third brother, Ajay Gupta, 56, was arrested.

The Gupta brothers are accused in South Africa of using their relationship with former president Zuma to profit financially and influence senior appointments, charges that they have vehemently denied.

Cancer vanishes in every patient in drug trial

AGENCIES

New York, June 7: A small group of people suffering from rectal cancer has experienced a miracle of sorts according to a report in the New York Times. The report states that the cancer simply vanished from the bodies of the patients during experimental treatment.

According to New York Times, 18 patients took a drug called 'Dostarlimab' for around six months in a clinical trial. At the end of the trials, every one of them saw their tumours disappear.

'Dostarlimab' is a drug with laboratory-produced molecules that act as substitute antibodies in the human body. All 18 rectal cancer patients were given the same drug. After the end of the course doctors treating the patients found that had been com-



pletely obliterated in every patient. Cancer remained undetected by physical exams; endoscopy, positron emission tomography or PET scans or MRI scans.

Dr Luis A Diaz J of 'New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer

Centre' said this was 'the first time this has happened in the history of cancer'.

As per the report, the patients involved in the clinical trial faced gruelling treatments to obliterate their cancer like chemother-

18 patients took a drug called 'Dostarlimab' for around six months in a clinical trial. At the end of the trials, every one of them saw their tumours disappear

apy, radiation and invasive surgery that could result in bowel, urinary and even sexual dysfunction. The 18 went into the trial expecting to have to go through these as the next step. However, to their surprise, no further treatment was needed.

The findings are now making waves in the medical world. Speaking to media outlets, Dr Alan P Venook, who is a colorec-

tal cancer specialist at the University of California, said that the complete remission in every single patient is 'unheard-of'. He hailed the research as a first in the world. He also noted that none of the patients suffered any side effects after using 'Dostarlimab'.

Separately, 'Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre and a co-author of the paper, oncologist Dr Andrea Cercek, described the moment patients found out they were cancer-free. "There were a lot of happy tears," Cercek was quoted as saying by the New York Times.

For the trial, patients took 'Dostarlimab' every three weeks for six months. They were all in similar stages of their cancer — it was locally advanced in the rectum but had not spread to other organs.

Rajnath arrives in Vietnam on three-day visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hanoi, June 7: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Tuesday arrived here in Vietnam on a three-day visit, in reflection of the growing congruence in maritime security cooperation with the key Southeast Asian country amid China's increasing muscle-flexing in the region.



Singh was welcomed at the airport by India's Ambassador to Vietnam Pranay Verma and senior officers of Vietnam's Ministry of National Defence.

"Hon'ble RM, Shri Rajnath Singh arrived at Hanoi on an official visit to Vietnam from 8-10 June 2022. He was welcomed at the airport by Amb. Pranay Verma and senior officers of Vietnam's Ministry of National Defence," the Embassy of India said on Twitter.

In New Delhi, the defence ministry said Singh's visit to Vietnam from June 8 to 10 is aimed at further consolidating the bilateral defence ties as well as the comprehensive strategic partnership.

The defence minister will hold extensive talks with his Vietnamese counterpart General Phan Van Giang, with a focus on exploring new initiatives to further strengthen the defence engagements, besides exchanging views on regional and global issues of shared interest, it said. Singh is also scheduled to call on Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh.

Vietnam, an important country of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), has territorial disputes with China in the strategic South China Sea region.

India, the US and several other world powers have been talking about the need to ensure a free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific in the backdrop of China's aggressive military manoeuvring in the region.

We are on the cusp of an economic transformation and much of our growth will continue to be powered from domestic consumption. The aspiration to own a home will only grow further

DEEPAK PAREKH | CHAIRMAN OF HDFC LTD

The future of mobility is electric and as a company, we have already stated that we will be an all-electric car company by 2030

JYOTI MALHOTRA | MD, VOLVO CAR INDIA

The beginning of FY23 has shown positive hiring scales given the anticipated 5G roll-out and the recovery of several business segments across the country. So far, the Indian job market is faring well despite the current sentiment on sobered hiring

SEKHAR GARISA | CEO OF MONSTER.COM

SHORT TAKES

Govt notifies green rules '22

New Delhi: The government Tuesday said it has notified the Green Open Access Rules 2022 to further accelerate India's renewable energy programmes. These rules are notified for promoting generation, purchase and consumption of green energy including through waste-to-energy plants. It enables a simplified procedure for the open access to green power, the power ministry said in a statement. "In order to further accelerate our ambitious renewable energy programmes, with the end goal of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and green energy for all, Green Open Access Rules 2022 have been notified June 6, 2022," the ministry said. Consumers can now demand green power from discoms (power distribution companies), it said.

AK Choudhary takes charge as SBI MD

Mumbai: The country's largest lender State Bank of India said Alok Kumar Choudhary Tuesday took the charge of managing director for its retail business and operations. Earlier, Choudhary was Deputy Managing Director (DMD) for finance at the bank, a release said. He has worked as DMD (HR) and Corporate Development Officer and also served as the Chief General Manager (CGM) of the bank's Delhi circle for three years. The public sector lender is headed by its chairman Dinesh Khara who is assisted by four managing directors. Besides Choudhary, the other managing directors are: C S Setty, Swaminathan J and Ashwini Kumar Tewari.

PhysicsWallah turns 101st Indian unicorn

New Delhi: Edtech firm PhysicsWallah has raised USD 100 million (about ₹777 crore) in series A funding from Westbridge and GSV Ventures at a valuation of USD 1.1 billion, the company said Tuesday. With this development, the firm has become India's 101st unicorn. PhysicsWallah plans to utilise these funds for business expansion, branding, opening more PW learning centres, and introducing more course offerings, it said in a statement "We are delighted to join the unicorn bandwagon with this latest funding. This latest development will help us further our vision and implement new initiatives to augment the learning journeys of students, thereby enabling them to reach new heights in their careers..." PW founder and CEO Alakh Pandey said in the statement.



If the industry suggests...Their own way of addressing grievance appellate, we are open

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | IT MINISTER

EU FOR SINGLE CHARGING PORT IN BLOW TO APPLE

Apple will have to change the connector on iPhones sold in Europe by 2024 after EU countries and lawmakers agreed Tuesday to a single mobile charging port for mobile phones, tablets and cameras in a world first. The political intervention, which the European Commission said would make life easier for consumers and save them money, came after companies failed to reach a common solution.



WB cuts India's growth forecast to 7.5% for FY23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 7: The World Bank Tuesday cut India's economic growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.5 per cent as rising inflation, supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions taper recovery.

This is the second time that the World Bank has revised its GDP growth forecast for India in the current fiscal 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023). In April, it had trimmed the forecast from 8.7 per cent to 8 per cent and now it is projected at 7.5 per cent.

The GDP growth compares to an 8.7 per cent expansion in the previous 2021-22 fiscal.

In India, growth is forecast to edge down to 7.5 percent in the fiscal year 2022-23, with headwinds from rising inflation, supply chain disruptions, and geopolitical tensions offsetting buoyancy in the recovery of services consumption from the pandemic, the World Bank said in its latest issue of the Global Economic Prospects.

Growth, it said, will also be supported by fixed investment undertaken by the private sector and by the government, which has introduced incentives and reforms to improve the business climate. This forecast reflects a 1.2 percentage point downward revision of growth from the January projection, the



bank added.

Growth is expected to slow further to 7.1 percent in 2023-24 back towards its longer-run potential, it noted.

A rise in prices across all items from fuel to vegetables and cooking oil pushed WPI or wholesale price-based inflation to a record high of 15.08 per cent in April and retail inflation to a near eight-year high of 7.79 per cent.

High inflation prompted the Reserve Bank to hold an unscheduled meeting to raise the benchmark interest rate by 40 basis points to 4.40 per cent last month and another hike is expected Wednesday.

Prior to the World Bank's action, global rating agencies too had slashed India's economic growth forecast. Last month, Moody's

Investors Service trimmed the GDP projection to 8.8 per cent for the calendar year 2022 from 9.1 per cent earlier, citing high inflation.

S&P Global Ratings too had cut India's growth projection for 2022-23 to 7.3 per cent, from 7.8 per cent earlier, on rising inflation and longer-than-expected Russia-Ukraine conflict.

In March, Fitch had cut India's growth forecast to 8.5 per cent, from 10.3 per cent, while IMF has lowered the projection to 8.2 per cent from 9 per cent.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has pegged India's growth at 7.5 per cent, while RBI in April cut the forecast to 7.2 per cent from 7.8 per cent amid volatile crude oil prices and supply chain disruptions due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

I-T dept portal develops snag on first anniv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: The Income Tax Department's new-look tax return filing portal, developed by Infosys, again developed snags Tuesday - a day that marked the first anniversary of its unveiling.

The portal, which was billed to make it easier for taxpayers to file returns and claim refunds, had for several weeks witnessed technical glitches after its launch June 7, 2021, and the snags resurfacing again prompted some to wonder if it has been hacked on the anniversary. Many users complained that they were unable to log in into the portal, while some complained malfunctioning of the search functionality.

"Issue relating to the search functionality of the e-filing website has come to our notice. The Income Tax Department is seized of the matter. @Infosys has been directed to look into it & @Infosys has confirmed that they are resolving the issue on priority," the I-T department tweeted.

The finance ministry officials also assured there has been no data breach on portal. Incidentally, Tuesday is the first anniversary of the launch of new Income Tax portal. In the past year, the portal functioning has been marred on several occasions which prompted the government to extend due date of filing tax returns.

RBI likely to hike interest rate today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 7: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is likely to raise the benchmark lending rate by 25-50 basis points Wednesday as inflation continues to remain above its comfort level, say experts.

Last month, RBI raised the repo rate or short term lending rate by 40 basis points in an off-cycle monetary policy review to check spiralling inflation.

The decision of the RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das-headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which started its deliberations Monday, is scheduled to be announced at 10 am Wednesday. Das has already indicated that there may be another hike in the repo rate though he refrained from quantifying it.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation, which RBI factors in while arriving at its monetary policy, is on the rise since October 2021. Retail inflation has remained above RBI's upper tolerance level of 6 per cent since January. It had soared to an 8-year high of 7.79 per cent in April.

The government has tasked the central bank to ensure retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

A report by HDFC Bank Treasury Research Desk said RBI is expected to raise the policy rate



by 25 bps while continuing to keep its stance and the CRR rate unchanged.

"We tilt on the side of a 25 bps rate hike instead of 50 bps as we do not see a compelling case for a larger rate hike at this stage," it said.

It expects RBI to change inflation forecast by 70-80 bps from 5.7 per cent earlier, citing the change in global and domestic price pressures.

Indranil Pan, Chief Economist at Yes Bank, said the inflation surprise has brought to the fore the need for RBI to tighten the monetary policy.

"We see RBI extending its 40 bps repo hike of May with a 35 bps increase in June, followed by 25 bps each in August and September. By this time, we expect the global growth to have softened enough to pull down commodity prices and thus provide some comfort to the domestic inflation cycle too," he said.

Sensex, Nifty extend sell-off to third day



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 7: Extending its sell-off to the third straight session, equity benchmark Sensex slumped 568 points Tuesday as investors scrambled to offload riskier assets ahead of the RBI's policy decision.

Wobbly global markets, continuous foreign fund outflows and the rupee crashing to a record low against the US dollar further queered the pitch for Dalal Street.

The 30-share BSE Sensex opened in the red and sank around 800 points during the session. It finally finished 567.98 points or 1.02 per cent lower at 55,107.34.

The broader NSE Nifty slumped 153.20 points or 0.92 per cent to end at 16,416.35.

Titan was the biggest laggard in the Sensex pack, tumbling 4.48 per cent, followed by Dr Reddy's, Larsen & Toubro, HUL, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finance, TCS and Nestle India.

Only five counters managed to close higher - NTPC, Maruti, M&M, Bharti Airtel and Reliance Industries, climbing up to 1.35 per cent.

A total of 2,011 stocks declined,

Continuing their selling spree, foreign institutional investors offloaded shares worth a net ₹2,397.65 crore Monday, according to stock exchange data

while 1,286 advanced and 121 remained unchanged.

World markets ticked lower after Australia's central bank hiked rates by 50 basis points - a likely precursor to similar action by the European Central Bank, US Federal Reserve and others amid scorching inflation.

Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Hong Kong and Seoul finished in the negative zone, while Tokyo and Shanghai ended with marginal gains.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.26 per cent to USD 119.2 per barrel.

Continuing their selling spree, foreign institutional investors offloaded shares worth a net ₹2,397.65 crore Monday, according to stock exchange data.

Govt plans to monetise assets of ₹75,220cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: The government plans to monetise assets worth ₹75,220 crore in the coal mining sector in the current financial year.

The monetisation of coal blocks is likely to generate a revenue of ₹52,200 crore, followed by ₹20,320 crore from projects on Mine Developer and Operator (MDO) model, ₹2,000 crore from discontinued mines and ₹700 crore from washeries, the coal ministry said in its monetisation plan for the 2022-23.

The monetisation figures are tentative. The asset monetisation target of NITI Aayog for the coal ministry for FY23 is ₹6,060 crore, the ministry said.



Against the NITI Aayog's target of ₹3,394 crore for 2021-22, the total monetisation of the coal ministry was ₹40,090 crore, it said.

Of the said ₹40,090 crore, ₹28,986 crore came from coal blocks, ₹9,592.64 crore from MDO model and ₹1,512 crore from Coal Bed Methane

(CBM) projects.

"...39 coal blocks are taken for monetisation having total value of ₹28,986 crore. Monetisation value of 39 mines is based on calculation done by NITI Aayog," the ministry said.

According to the National

BIZ BUZZ

CUTM part of Indian delegation to Africa

BHUBANESWAR: Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM), Odisha, participated as part of the CII delegation representing higher educational institutions of India, in the tour of Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu to Gabon and Senegal. CUTM, being the first university in India had two objectives for this visit - i) to add skilled manpower to Gabon and Senegal by offering skill development/ capacity building courses which will help in getting gainful employment and also contribute to the growth of these two countries' economies;



ii) to set up the first maritime education and engineering school in Gabon with the help of GSEZ, MoE (Gabon), MOHE (Gabon), MHRD (Gabon). Monalisha Ghosh, Associate Director - International Relationships and Government Partnerships participated on behalf of CUTM. CUTM strongly believes that this tour will further strengthen the Indo-African relationships through creating better opportunities in higher education through integration of skill.

UCO Bank's outreach programme today

BHUBANESWAR: As per the instruction of the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, banks are celebrating various activities under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) during the ICONIC week from 6th -12th June 2022. On this occasion, on June 8 the following activities will be undertaken at all the branches and district head quarters by UCO bank operating in Odisha - i) Credit Outreach programme; ii) Enrollment of beneficiaries under Janasuraksha Scheme i.e PMJBY, PMSBY and APY; iii) Customers awareness / financial literacy programme at branch level. All are requested to visit their nearby bank or attend the programme at the respective district head quarters. Interested persons may also apply for various credit facilities or enroll themselves in the Janasuraksha Schemes on that day in the nearby branch.



Higher than usual imports of Russian oil to help fuel retailers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jun 7: Higher than usual imports of Russian oil at significant discounts to market prices may limit near-term working capital needs of fuel retailers IOC, BPCL and HPCL, Fitch Ratings said Tuesday.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) haven't changed the retail selling price of petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG in line with cost over the past few months. They incur losses on fuel marketing, which are being offset by gains from other areas such as higher refinery margins from processing cheaper Russian crude.

Fitch said rising global demand and tightening supply for refined products support refining margins, and oil companies' marketing margins recover gradually.

"Higher-than-usual imports of Russian oil at significant discounts to market prices may also limit the OMCs' near-term working capital needs," it said.

This follows weaker metrics in FY22 as marketing losses pressured EBITDA and rising crude oil prices increased working capital requirements, offset partly by inventory gains.

"We expect petrol and diesel retail prices in India to remain aligned with the movement in crude oil prices over the medium term, despite sporadic periods of constant retail prices amidst heightened



volatility in oil prices," the rating agency said.

This, it said, should drive a gradual improvement in the marketing margins of oil marketing com-

panies (OMCs) over the rest of FY23 (2022 to 2023), albeit to levels lower than normal.

However, if crude oil prices are sustained beyond base-case as-

sumptions in 2022, then record-high retail fuel prices may limit the extent to which the changes are passed on, pressuring OMCs' credit metrics, it said.

The three fuel retailers paused daily revision in petrol and diesel prices when five states, including Uttar Pradesh, went to the polls last year. They again hit a pause button after raising rates by ₹10 per litre reach for a fortnight period starting end-March.

Crude oil price (from which petrol and diesel are made) soared from USD 84 per barrel to a near 14-year high of USD 139 in early March before paring some gains. It is trading at USD 119.

Fitch said it expects lower refined product exports from China, disruption in product flows from

ongoing geopolitical tensions, and increased uptake of middle distillates for power generation to maintain the tight demand-supply for petroleum products in Asia in the near term.

However, the current highs in refining margins should moderate over the medium term as new capacities ramp up and supply side issues improve.

"We believe that high crude oil prices, the recent 110 per cent increase in natural gas prices by the Indian government, and our expectation of a further increase in gas prices in the next reset in October 2022, will boost the FY23 profitability of ONGC and OIL and support their investment spending and shareholder distributions," Fitch added.

France held by Croatia



Croatia players celebrate the equaliser against France during their Nations League match, Monday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Split, June 7: Titleholder France failed to rebound from their opening defeat in the Nations League after they were held by Croatia to 1-1.

Midfielder Adrien Rabiot broke the deadlock after the break and substitute Andrej Kramaric equalised from the spot late for Croatia not to lose to France for the first time in 11 years.

The draw did neither any favours: France was stunned by Denmark 2-1 in Paris Friday, the first loss after 20 unbeaten matches, and Croatia started its campaign by losing at home to Austria 3-0.

France will next travel to Austria Friday while Croatia will visit Denmark, which took sole lead of their League A group.

Denmark made it two from two after beating Austria 2-1 in Vienna. Defender Jens Stryger scored six

minutes from the end for Denmark. Xaver Schlager equalized for the hosts after Pierre-Emile Højbjerg's opener.

The match was delayed by 90 minutes due to a power failure. Denmark tops the group with six points, followed by Austria with three. France and Croatia have a point each. The four group winners in League A will qualify for the final four in June next year. The group winners in the lower leagues will gain promotion.

France coach Didier Deschamps called the draw "satisfying" after changing 10 of the side which started the loss against Denmark.

France missed star striker Kylian Mbappé, who picked up a knee injury against Denmark, and also absent were Karim Benzema and Antoine Griezmann, replaced by Wissam Ben Yedder and Christopher Nkunku up front.

"This is our chance to prepare

for the World Cup and try all the possibilities we have," Deschamps said. "We are using this competition the best we can."

At the World Cup in Qatar, France is grouped with Denmark, Tunisia and a yet-to-be-determined team. The sold-out crowd of some 30,000 cheered Croatia captain Luka Modric in his 150th appearance. "It was a phenomenal feeling, I am happy and proud of my 150th match for Croatia," Modric said.

The first defensive half resulted in only one chance on each side and Nkunku had a goal disallowed for offside. Rabiot exchanged passes with Ben Yedder, who set him up to find the back of the net with a left-foot shot seven minutes into the second half to put the visitors ahead.

Kramaric calmly sent the goal-keeper the wrong way with a low right-foot penalty seven minutes from time.

LEAGUE B

Iceland midfielder Jon Dagur Thorsteinsson scored four minutes into the second half to salvage a 1-1 draw against Albania in Reykjavik. Taulant Seferi put the visitors ahead in the first half. Iceland leads the group with two points after drawing with Israel 2-2 in its opening game. Israel and Albania have one point each. Russia was suspended from the group following the invasion of Ukraine.

LEAGUES C & D

Kazakhstan took a three-point lead in Group 3 of League C after a 1-0 away victory at Slovakia, which is second. Belarus drew with Azerbaijan to earn their first point in the same group.

In League D, Latvia made it two wins from two after beating Liechtenstein 1-0. Andorra and Moldova played to 0-0 in the other Group 1 game.

India ready for Cambodia test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 7: Skipper Sunil Chhetri will get a chance to bolster his tally of 80 international goals as the Indian team gears up to steamroll 171st ranked Cambodia Wednesday in its bid to make a fifth appearance in AFC Cup tournament proper.

Cristiano Ronaldo (117 goals from 188 games), Lionel Messi (86 from 162 games) have been on a scoring spree and no wonder at his level, the Indian talisman would like to ride the roughshod over Cambodia, Afghanistan (150th) and Hong Kong (147th).

While no one is comparing the international levels at which they operate, briefly surpassing Lionel Messi won't be a bad feeling for the 37-year-old.

With the next Asian Cup slated in late 2023 or early 2024 after the pull-out of China, Chhetri, who will complete 17 years in international football, might see this tournament as the 'final frontier' in his illustrious career.

"I want to qualify. If I'm not there, my country will be there. So either I'll be having a beer and

watching Udanta sprint, or you having a beer and I'll be sprinting there. But we want to be there," Chhetri made his intention clear ahead of his 126th international appearance.

This is a tournament which gives India the best chance to qualify for the Continental trophy without much fuss but if there is a slip-up against lowly-ranked nation, Chhetri or coach Igor Stimac will have little room for justification.

The Blue Tigers under Stimac did not have a perfect build-up to the continental showpiece, having lost all their three International friendlies arranged in the lead-up to the qualifiers.

In between they endured a shameful 1-2 defeat against Indian Super League side ATK Mohun Bagan, won 2-1 against I-League All Stars and were held to a 1-1 draw against Bengal, the Santosh Trophy runners-up of the season.

It's more than seven months since they won a match at International level - a 3-0 win against Nepal in the SAFF Championship final October 16, 2021.

The recent results have proved to be a setback for the Stimac-

coached side, which put up some gritty shows in the World Cup Qualifiers against Asian heavyweights Qatar (goalless draw) and Oman (1-2 loss after leading till 81st minute). Up against an 'unknown entity' in Cambodia, Chhetri conceded that half the battle will be lost if they don't do well against the minnows.

Compared to Indian build-up, the 'Angkor Warriors', who have qualified for the Asian Cup only once 50 years back in 1972, come here with a 2-1 win over Timor-Leste in a home friendly.

With their Japanese tactician duo of Ryu Hirose and Keisuke Honda at their helm of coaching affairs, the Cambodians will look to surprise the home-backed Indians.

From an Indian point of view, the biggest setback for Stimac in the recent past has been the injury to striker Rahim Ali, who started forming a strong attacking force with the livewire Chhetri.

Just when he started to fill in the vacuum created by Jeje Lalpekhlua, Ali is forced out with a muscle injury as Stimac is forced to look for an alternate combination with little success.



Anand slips to 2nd after draw with Giri in Rd6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Stavanger (Norway), June 7: Indian maestro Viswanathan Anand drew his sixth round contest against Anish Giri of the Netherlands in the Classical section of the Norway Chess tournament.

The classical match ended in a draw after which the Armageddon ended in stalemate early Tuesday to leave Anand on 11.5 points and in second place. World Champion Magnus Carlsen roared to the top spot with a victory over Azerbaijan's Shakhriyar Mamedyarov to take his tally to 12.5 points after six rounds.

The match between Anand and Giri saw the two players shaking hands for a draw after 35 moves in an English Variation game.

In the ensuing Armageddon (sudden death tie-break), the duo battled for 45 moves before it ended in a draw. As per Armageddon rules, the player playing black is deemed to have won the game if it ends in a draw.

The 52-year old Indian superstar, who had shocked Carlsen in the previous round, takes on Teimour Radjabov in round eight.

Barring the Carlsen-Mamedyarov clash, all the other matches ended in draws in the round. The Norwegian World No.1 defeated his Azerbaijan opponent in 56 moves.

I still get nervous and go through negative thoughts but I can deal with that pressure a lot better. Understanding my game better in what I need to do has helped

DAVID MILLER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: The intensity is still the same as it was more than a decade ago, when he made his debut, but what has changed for David Miller is his ability to "understand the game a lot better" and handle pressure with consummate ease.

Miller is enjoying every bit of his new-found star status after playing a pivotal role in Gujarat Titans' IPL triumph with 481 runs. More importantly, he won at least four games in a finisher's role.

"Scoring the amount of runs I did, closing out couple of games is something I looked forward to be-

fore the start of IPL. Batting in the middle order, you do want to finish off games. So it was nice to tick that box," Miller said on the eve of South Africa's five-match T20I series against India.

In the past, the lack of consistency has been Miller's bane despite his voluminous talent, but he feels that he hasn't tweaked his game much. But it's the understanding that has made the difference.

"I wouldn't say I have done anything different. Being around long

MILLER OPENS UP ON HIS EVOLUTION

time now, one grows and matures in role I play for so many years, I understand my game a lot better," he said. "I still get nervous and go through negative thoughts but I can deal with that pressure a lot better. Understanding my game better in what I need to do has helped," he explained.

With five matches left to complete 100 games for South Africa in the shortest format, Miller feels that he brings in calmness in the change-room. "For me, I see myself trying to create that calmness in the change room, trying to just clarify a few things with younger guys to what they need to do better. "Really enjoyable to be giving advice but along with that you are always de-

veloping as player and also learning from youngsters about their mindset, how they approach the game," Miller added.

His IPL performance won't put any extra pressure on him. "Not any extra pressure or weight on my shoulders. Every international game that I have played whether as senior or junior, there has always been a sense of pressure. So I don't think it changes. Just that with experience I deal with it a lot of better." The short vacation to Maldives also helped a lot. "It's been pretty hard with so many games of IPL but I have been working quite hard on physical side of things. I feel fresh and good to go after a two-day break in Maldives. Pretty good for mind," he concluded.

Dravid lauds Indian captains' show in IPL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: Success of Indian players as captains in a tournament like IPL will eventually benefit the national team since leadership role helps in accelerating the growth of cricketers, head coach Rahul Dravid said Tuesday.

Hardik Pandya led Gujarat Titans to title in its maiden season while KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, and Sanju Samson too did a commendable job while leading their respective franchises in the IPL.

Rahul led new entrants Lucknow Super Giants to the play-offs in their maiden season and Samson impressed with his captaincy as he took Rajasthan Royals to a runners-up finish this season.

"It is great that we have a lot of Indian captains doing well. Hardik was one of them. Brilliant. KL did a good job at LSG and Sanju in RR. Shreyas in KKR," Dravid said at a press conference.

"It is really great to see the young batters leading the team. It helps people grow and develop as players, having to lead teams to make the decisions. It helps you grow as a person and as a player. It is great from our perspective that the younger Indian players are leading well in the IPL," he added.

India are set to lock horns with South Africa in a five-match T20 series starting here Thursday.

Several new faces have been named in the Indian squad while the series is also set to feature Pandya and Dinesh Karthik, who make a comeback after stellar IPL campaigns.

Pandya, who struggled with a back and was dropped from the team after team's disappointing group-round exit from the T20 World Cup last year, returned to competitive cricket in the IPL.

He played a key role in Titans' success, contributing with the bat and the ball, something that the Indian team had missed desperately during the World Cup last year.

"It is really pleasing to have him back. Hardik at his best is a fantastic cricketer with both bat and ball. He's been very successful in white-ball cricket and has shown some really good form in this IPL as well," Dravid said.

The former Indian cricketer was impressed by the Baroda player's captaincy skills, adding that they are working at utilising Pandya's full potential for India.

"His leadership was very impressive in the IPL and he performed well. You don't have to be designated as a leader to be part of the leadership group.

"At this point of time from our perspective it is a positive that he has started bowling again. It is really about ensuring that we can get the best out of him as a cricketer in terms of contributions."

CWG: Chitale included in table tennis squad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 7: Young Indian table tennis player Diya Chitale, who had approached the Delhi High Court over her exclusion from the women's CWG squad, was Tuesday included in the side for the July-August event at the expense of Archana Kamath.

However, Manush Shah, who had also filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court against his non-selection, remains a reserve player with no changes made in the men's squad, which will be led by Sharath Kamal.

The Committee of Administrators (CoA) running the suspended Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) had last week announced a provisional women's team comprising Manika Batra, Kamath, Sreeja Akula and Reeth Rishya in the team with 19-year-old Chitale as the standby.

The team was subject to clearance from Sports Authority of India



(SAI) but on Monday the Sports Ministry threw the ball back in CoA's court, saying squad selec-

tion was the responsibility of the national sports federation. The selection committee, chaired

by CoA member S D Mudgil, met again Monday after SAI's response and finalised the team.

Kamath, who was supposed to play doubles alongside Manika, has been excluded from the squad all together and Swastika Ghosh has been put on standby.

"There is only one change. Diya comes in as the fourth player in place of Archana. Archana did not meet the criteria but we thought she is also a good medal prospect (as she is World No.4 alongside Manika). But we were in a dilemma and that is why we went to the SAI and sought its guidance.

"The selectors in the end took the call to include Diya who has also done well domestically and as well as in international events. She would be playing the doubles alongside Manika," Mudgil told this agency.

The team selection factors in performances in domestic (50 per cent) and international tournaments (30 per cent) while the re-

maining 20 per cent is left for the selectors' discretion.

However, the CoA has decided to change the ratio to 40-40-20 from the next season. A place in the squad still not guaranteed, Manush Shah has decided to go ahead with the case which is coming up for hearing June 10.

The CoA also finalised former players S Raman and Anindita Chakraborty as the coaches for the men's and women's teams for the Games in Birmingham.

Raman happens to the personal coach of leading India player G Sathiyan and also runs a private academy but the CoA said it will be taking an undertaking from him to ensure there is no conflict of interest.

The squads: (Men) Sharath Kamal, G Sathiyan, Harmeet Desai, Sanil Shetty, Manush Shah (standby); (Women) Manika Batra, Diya Chitale, Reeth Rishya, Sreeja Akula, Swastika Ghosh (standby).



Rahul Dravid carefully listens to Avesh Khan while watching the Indian players train during India's practice session ahead of South Africa series