



WISE MOVE

Actor Shriya Pilgaonkar says she is consciously seeking projects that prevent her from being stereotyped

LEISURE P2



EU BACKS UKRAINE

The European Union's executive arm recommends putting Ukraine on a path to EU membership Friday

INTERNATIONAL P10



NEW WORLD RECORD

Jos Buttler's unbeaten 70-ball 162 helps England post a world record 498/4 in an ODI against the Netherlands

SPORTS P12

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Nupur Sharma 'untraceable': Mumbai police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 17: A team of Mumbai Police which travelled to Delhi to serve a summons to suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma in connection with a case regarding her controversial remarks about Prophet Mohammad could not find her, an official claimed here Friday.



The Delhi police too did not extend much cooperation, he alleged, adding that eventually they served summons to Sharma through email. A team from Pydhonie police station in Mumbai was in the national capital for the last five days to hand over a summons to Sharma personally, seeking her appearance before the investigating officer.

A First Information Report (FIR) was registered against the suspended BJP leader at Pydhonie police station May 28 after her statement about Prophet Mohammad during a TV debate caused a furore.

She has been asked to appear before Pydhonie police June 25 at 11am for recording statement.

After reaching Delhi, the police team contacted their counterparts in the national capital as Sharma was not traceable, but it did not get 'expected cooperation' from the Delhi Police, the official alleged. The police then executed the summons to Sharma through email, he added.

Sharma was suspended by the BJP after her comments on Prophet Muhammad on TV drew furious reactions and official protests from at least 15 nations, including Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Several Gulf nations had summoned Indian envoys and expressed condemnation over what they called 'anti-Islamic statements' by BJP spokespersons.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



There is only one way to save govt properties from protesters...privatise them!

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	51360.42 ↓ 135.37
NIFTY	15293.50 ↓ 67.10
DOLLAR	78.56 ↓ ₹0.01
EURO	96.36 ↑ ₹1.32
GOLD	₹50,959 ↓ ₹27
SILVER	₹61,044 ↓ ₹483

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.8°C	33.0°C
TEMP MIN	26.6°C	74°C
Humidity	75%	88%
Rainfall	13.2mm	1.8mm
Forecast	Light to Moderate Rain	

Agnipath singes India

Protests against Centre's defence recruitment scheme spread to more states; 1 killed in police firing in Telangana; public property worth crores vandalised

PROTESTS IN ODISHA

Bhubaneswar: Protests against the Centre's Agnipath scheme spread to Odisha Friday as hundreds of aspirants for recruitment in the Armed Forces blocked the arterial Ring Road in Cuttack and tore down hoardings in Cantonment area. Many among the protesters claimed to have already cleared fitness and medical tests for recruitment in the Army last year and were waiting to write Common Entrance Examination. Police resorted to lathi charge to disperse protesters and detained some of them, said DCP Pinak Mishra.

ASPIRANT ENDS LIFE

Balasure: A 27-year-old man Dhananjay Mohanty, a resident of Tentei village in Soro police station area who had cleared the physical fitness test one and half years ago during a recruitment drive by the Army, allegedly committed suicide due to frustration over the Agnipath scheme. His family members said that Mohanty had received the admit card for the CEE to be held August 30. But he apprehended that the examination stood cancelled after the announcement of the Agnipath scheme.

234 TRAINS CANCELLED

New Delhi: The Railways cancelled 234 trains while 340 trains have been affected so far due to protests against the Agnipath scheme for recruitment in the defence services, the Railways said Friday. It said that 94 mail and express trains and 140 passenger trains have been cancelled due to the protests, while 65 mail and express and 30 passenger trains were partially cancelled. The Railways has also diverted 11 mail and express trains. The total number of trains affected so far stands at 340, officials said.



YOUTH FURY: Smoke billows from buses after they were set on fire by people protesting against the Centre's Agnipath scheme in Aurangabad, Friday

PTI PHOTO

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 17: One person was killed in police firing in Secunderabad, the first casualty of protests against the Agnipath defence recruitment scheme that raged through several states for the third day Friday with trains torched, public property vandalised and many thousands blocking tracks and highways.

Angry crowds, some armed with brickbats and stones, fanned out across large parts of India, from Uttar Pradesh to Telangana and Bihar to Madhya Pradesh.

The protests spread, seemingly uncontrolled, with crowds squatting on tracks and highways, pelting stones and vandalising public property to vent their anger resulting in losses worth many crores of rupees.

Agnipath - youth rejected. Farm laws - farmers rejected. Noteban - economists rejected. GST - traders rejected... The prime minister does not understand what the people of the country want, as he cannot hear anything except the voice of his 'friends'

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER



A mob attacked the home of BJP leader and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Renu Devi in Patna.

In Secunderabad, a parcel coach of a passenger train was set ablaze by a crowd of about 300-350. One person was fatally injured

when police fired in the air to disperse protesters on the rampage at the Secunderabad station.

Confirming the death, a senior official of the South Central Railway told PTI the firing was done by Railway Protection Force (RPF). There was mayhem with people running helter-skelter and shops in the vicinity hurriedly downing shutters.

The scenes of chaos over the defence recruitment scheme that touched an emotive chord in thousands of youth and led to rail and road traffic being disrupted were mirrored elsewhere in the country.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi cited schemes such as GST, noteban, farm laws and now Agnipath and said they were projected to be for the welfare of the people but were rejected by the citizens.

"Agnipath - youth rejected. Farm laws - farmers rejected. Noteban - economists rejected. GST - traders rejected...The prime minister does not understand what the people of the country want, as he cannot hear anything except the voice of his 'friends'," Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi.

Continued on P4
More on P7

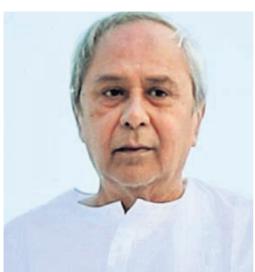
'Be ready for possible disasters'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: Noting that the period between June and October is crucial for Odisha in terms of natural calamities, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday asked the state administration to follow the state's policy of 'every life is precious' while dealing with all possible disasters.

Patnaik said this 'every life is precious' policy has made Odisha a leading state in the field of disaster management and risk reduction. The coastal state has emerged as a pioneer in managing disasters, especially cyclones, by reducing human loss during calamities.

In April 2018, Odisha became the first Indian state to have an early warning system in place for natural disasters such as cyclones and tsunamis for people living



along its 480 km-long coast.

Natural disasters like floods, cyclones, and droughts occur in the June-October period every year, and therefore the state administration must strengthen its preparedness to handle such calamities, the CM said.

Patnaik issued the directions while presiding over the state-level

Natural Disaster Management Committee Meeting here.

The entire administrative machinery, Patnaik said, should be ready with early information dissemination systems, rescue, and relief arrangements, drinking water supply systems, and health and animal care. The CM said officials must ensure the availability of enough food stocks in disaster-prone and remote areas, 24-hour functioning of district-level emergency centres, and opening of veterinary camps. Special attention should be given to pregnant women, people with physical and mental disabilities, children, widows, and the elderly, he said.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallick briefed the meeting on the state's preparedness before the onset of the monsoon.

Denied money for new dress, 10-yr-old hacks mom to death



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 17: In a shocking incident, a 10-year-old boy hacked his mother to death as the latter was unable to pay for the former's demand for a new dress on the Raja festival.

The incident took place at Barada

under Bansapal block in Keonjhar district Thursday evening.

The deceased was identified as Muga Santa (40).

According to reports, Muga and her two sons were living in a miserable condition after the death of her husband. The boy, her youngest son, demanded some money from his mother to buy a new dress on the Raja festival. This led to a spat between the mother and the son. In a fit of rage, the boy picked up an axe and attacked his mother. She died instantly.

The boy later became repentant and revealed the matter before the villagers.

Nayakote police station IIC Swarnamani Hembram registered a case of murder and detained the minor boy for interrogation.

SANJAY SINGH NEW I&PR SECY



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: A day after effecting a major reshuffle among IAS officers, the state government Friday appointed 1997 batch IAS officer Sanjay Kumar Singh as the new principal secretary, Information & Public Relations (I&PR) department.

As per a notification issued by the General Administration & Public Grievance department, Singh will also remain in additional charge of vice-chairman of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and CMD of Bhubaneswar Smart City Ltd in addition to his own duties. Earlier, Singh had served as secretary of I&PR department.

Similarly, 2008 batch IAS officer Yamini Sarangi has been appointed as officer on special duty (OSD) in the General Administration & Public Grievance department. At present, Sarangi is serving as managing director, Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd (OSMCL) with additional charge of Commissioner, Food Safety, Odisha.

The government Thursday transferred 24 officers including 11 district collectors in a major reshuffle following the swearing-in of the new Council of Ministers.

Guj riots, Mughal courts out from NCERT books

CHAPTERS TITLED 'DEMOCRACY AND DIVERSITY', 'POPULAR STRUGGLE AND MOVEMENTS' AND 'CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY' DROPPED

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 17: The NCERT has removed portions about the 2002 Gujarat riots, Emergency, Cold War, Naxalite movement and Mughal courts from its class 12 textbooks as part of its 'syllabus rationalisation' exercise.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has cited 'overlapping' and 'irrelevant' as reasons for dropping those portions from the syllabus. Many of these changes were

announced earlier this year when the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) rationalised its syllabi in April. Besides schools under CBSE, some state boards also use NCERT textbooks.

Listing the changes, the NCERT, in a note, said, "The content of the textbooks has been rationalised for various reasons, including overlapping with similar content in other subject areas in the same class, similar content included in the lower or higher classes on the same subject."



In class 12 political science textbook, pages on the topic 'Gujarat Riots' will be excluded from the

chapter titled 'Recent Developments in Indian Politics'. The mention of the National Human Rights Commission report on the 2002 violence and the 'raj dharma' remark by then Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee have been dropped from the textbook. Also, chapters on Mughal courts in a history textbook, a poem on the Dalit movement and a chapter on the Cold War, are among the exclusions from the political science textbook.

In class 10, the excluded chapters included verses of poet Faiz Ahmed

Faiz in the 'Religion, Communalism and Politics — Communalism, Secular State' section of the textbook 'Democratic Politics II'.

Also, chapters titled 'Democracy and Diversity', 'Popular Struggle and Movements' and 'Challenges to Democracy' have been dropped.

In the social science textbook of classes seven and eight, references to Dalit writer Omprakash Valmiki were removed. In the class seven textbook titled 'Our Past-2', the topic 'Emperors: major campaigns and events', has been removed.

leisure



RENAISSANCE TO FEATURE DANCE, COUNTRY TRACKS

Say My Name hitmaker Beyonce recently announced and set the release date of her forthcoming sixth solo album, *Renaissance*, as July 29. The said album will feature dance and country-leaning tracks, reports *Variety*.

ROBERT PLANT SAYS NO TO A CAMEO IN GOT

Led Zeppelin frontman Robert Plant has said that he rejected a cameo in the TV adaptation of George RR Martin's award-winning fantasy saga *Game of Thrones* because he doesn't want to be stereotyped. Asked if he has seen the HBO show on Apple Music 1's *The Strombo Show*, he replied: "No."



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

You may be taut with stress at work. But it doesn't stop you from knocking down your opponents. You are considerate but cunning when you need to be. People should know you by now. Ganesh says just march on ahead.

TAURUS

The day is coloured in the shade of arguments and belligerence for most part of today, predicts Ganesh. You may spend the afternoon in lengthy business discussions with friends. Things will look up by evening as you might get some special treatment from your soul mate.

GEMINI

You are likely to be begin the day by setting new goals and benchmarks for yourself. But minor problems will spoil your plans. In the afternoon, your financial standing may give you a slight scare. Ganesh advises you not to lose heart. You may spend a spiritual evening doing meditation.

CANCER

Your relationship with your lover may get a little messy today. But it has little to do with the lack of love, and more with too much of it. The two of you will get extremely emotional, and if your sweetheart has the same sun sign as yours, the situation may get ridiculously emotional.

LEO

Have you ever marvelled at how circus artists do all those tricks while walking the tightrope? Well, don't be too surprised at their abilities, because as far as Ganesh sees, today you have some pretty good skills yourself as you balance business and pleasure.

VIRGO

Ganesh foresees you up the ante today. You will set new limits for yourself and break existing barriers today. The afternoon may see you being alarmed about the health of your finances. Trivial matters will spoil your spirits, but attain the next level by spending the evening in spiritual well-being.

LIBRA

Today, you will entertain and keep people around you amused with your wit and intelligence. That shouldn't be too hard for you, considering you have plenty of both. Intangible benefits may arise out of your social contacts at work, as you will be the number one troubleshooter today.

SCORPIO

A maddening passion will grip you early in the day today. You shall be willing to go over the edge of the world to lease your beloved. Ganesh sees you being equally sensitive and gentle with the elderly. For some, marriage news is likely to come in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS

Wield the baton and conduct proceedings today, says Ganesh. You may enrol yourself in a personality development course to hone your skills. But a small, out-of-synch, unexpected chord may spoil the sonata for you today. But remember, there is always hope.

CAPRICORN

Love will top your priority list once again, and will make innumerable demands that you will strive to meet, says Ganesh. If you currently have any research work on hand, expect a breakthrough today. This besides, you will reminisce the good old days and will long to relive time spent together with family and friends. This longing you will share with someone who is a part of your fond memories.

AQUARIUS

You may get a chance to fulfill some promises today. Those of you in the legal profession will find things going well for them. You aim to excel in whatever you do, and if nothing else, you will derive huge work satisfaction.

PISCES

While you have cultivated a wide network of acquaintances, it is that core group you have nurtured over the years that will stand you in good stead now. In times of need, it is good to know that you can bank on their support.

Don't want to be typecast: Shriya



Mumbai: Actress Shriya Pilgaonkar says that she's here to showcase her versatility through her performances and is consciously seeking projects that prevent her from being stereotyped.

Shriya says: "It feels surreal at this point that both my shows *Guilty Minds* and *The Broken News* have got such critical appreciation and love from the viewers. This truly is an exciting, new phase in my career and I have nothing but gratitude for the love and appreciation coming my way.

"It means a lot to receive messages, especially from young girls who have been inspired by the characters of Kashaf and Radha. I've never taken this for granted."

She added: "After playing a forensics expert, a lawyer and a news reporter, I am now doing a comedy-drama *Taaza Khabar* with Bhuvan Bam where I play a sex worker. It's unlike anything I've done before which is super exciting.

"There's another film coming up which is a romantic comedy of sorts. I want to continue to challenge myself and don't want to give people a chance to stereotype me in any way which is why I am consciously seeking out different genres and characters. I also want to explore more films."

She awaits the release of *Crackdown Season 2*, *Taaza Khabar*, a romantic comedy and a few exciting titles.

ODISSI NRUTYA NATIKA UTSAV Works of Gopabandhu, Biju Babu captivate audience on last day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The works of Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das and former Odisha Chief Minister Biju Patnaik came alive on stage, on the third and concluding day of *Azadi*, the three-day Odissi dance drama festival here at Rabindra Mandap, Friday.

In the first presentation, the students of Cuttack-based Gunjan dance Academy led by Guru Meera Das, performed *Utkalamani*. The drama unfolded the sacrifices of Gopabandhu Das, a symbol of Odia identity who devoted his entire life to the cause of Orissa, in particular, and India, in general.

Similarly, the second show *Mahanayaka Bijayananda*, presented by the members of Srjan



led by Guru Ratikant Mohapara, showcased the life and works of former chief minister of Odisha Biju Patnaik who is revered as one of the chief architects of modern Odisha.

The event was a collaboration of Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi (OSNA) and Odia Language,

Literature and Culture (OLL&C) department of Odisha.

Among others, OLL&C Minister Ashwini Kumar Patra, Odissi music Guru Ramhari Das, OSNA president Aruna Mohanty, vice-president Manmath Kumar Satpathy, secretary Prabodh Rath were present at the event.

Kriti making the most of every opportunity

Mumbai: Kriti Kharbanda has done her fair share of work in the film industry, including multiple films in Hindi, Telugu and Kannada languages. She has also been part of several OTT projects.

She feels that the space has changed a lot for everyone involved in showbiz. Has it also opened more avenues, giving actors increasing opportunities to showcase their work? To this, the *Housefull 4* actress says, "I think every opportunity, irrespective of the platform, is a great thing, and one should treat it as such. Personally, I believe in doing my best on each project. I can't control the results or feedback, but I can surely give it my 100 per cent."

She goes on to add, "Having said that, every actor looks for an opportunity to showcase what they are good at. The fact that people have become more accepting of watching films and shows on OTT platforms has changed things for us. Because of that, we are getting more opportunities. The industry will adapt to changes, but in the meantime, as an actor, all I wish for is that the viewers keep watching us on whatever platform they like to."

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'Sensationalism is part of society'

Mumbai: Actress Sonali Bendre recently returned to the world of audio-visual content with her newly-released series *The Broken News* where she plays a righteous editor of a news channel.

In an interview, the actress spoke about her experience of coming back in front of camera, how sensationalism isn't confined to news in the current age, her access point for consumption of information and her detoxification process from all information junk.

While TV anchors may rupture the eardrums by screaming at the top of their lungs, or flashy graphics may blind the viewer with horrendously loud colours, it's not just the news where sensationalism finds its place.

As Sonali says, "Sensationalism is a part of society, it's not just the news. Everything out there has a bit of sensationalism. There are so many voices that we end up noticing only the louder ones."

However, the changing times manifested in more ways than one. The actress explains, "Having said that, the times have definitely changed, the way of working on the sets, the technology, the rhythm of sto-

rytelling and the acting has also changed considerably."

For someone like her, who is a voracious reader, the prime source of news consumption remains the written material either on paper or on digital.

"I am more of a reader so for me a large part of news consumption happens while I read something, opinion pieces or news articles from different backgrounds", the actress signs off.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

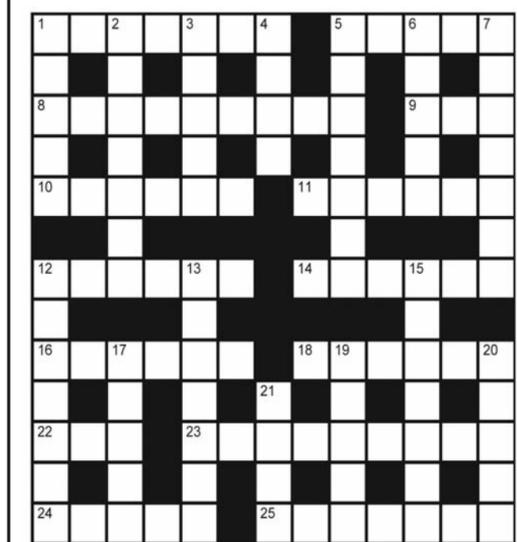


BREVITY



FUN post

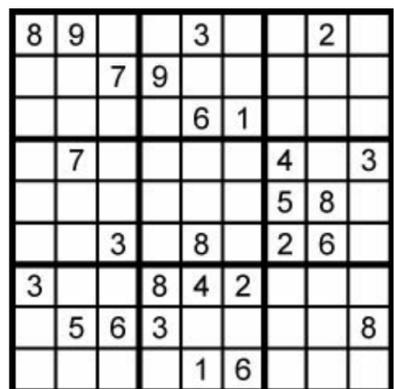
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Echo
 - 5 Athletic trainer
 - 8 Unsafe building
 - 9 Tartan cap
 - 10 Trafalgar, for one
 - 11 Tank top
 - 12 Washday item
 - 14 Gentle breeze
 - 16 Crude stone artifact
 - 18 Bordeaux wine
 - 22 Place to stay
 - 23 It's on tap (5,4)
 - 24 Drawing support
 - 25 Italian rice
 - Down**
 - 1 Carnival attractions
 - 2 It's the law
 - 3 Theatre employee
 - 4 Feathered missile
 - 5 Chess move
 - 6 Fragrant oil
 - 7 Little pet
 - 12 Most direct route
 - 13 Stronghold
 - 15 Farmer's season
 - 17 Chain parts
 - 19 Egyptian water lily
 - 20 Trunk
 - 21 Lion's den

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

CROSSWORD

CARAWAY MOCHA
A E O I A A G
R E P R E H E N S I B L E
G T B L U R I L L
O B I E N D U R A N C E
L G S O S
O C E L O T F A M O U S
P N L D N
T R A G E D I E S A S H
I N Q T R E
M I N I A T U R E G O L F
A O W I R L T
L O Y A L D I S P L A Y

SUDOKU

6 1 7 8 3 9 4 2 5
4 8 3 7 5 2 9 1 6
9 2 5 6 4 1 8 3 7
7 6 2 9 8 4 1 5 3
8 3 1 5 6 7 2 4 9
5 4 9 2 1 3 7 6 8
1 7 4 3 9 5 6 8 2
2 5 8 4 7 6 3 9 1
3 9 6 1 2 8 5 7 4

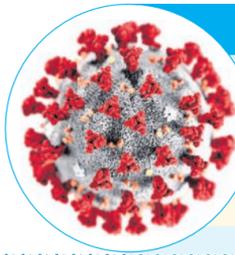
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



MOTHER WORSHIP

A woman worships mother Earth after the completion of three-day Raja festival in Alisha Bazar area of Cuttack, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	54,33,14,846	51,85,02,738	63,38,473
India	4,32,70,577	4,26,82,697	5,24,817
Odisha	12,88,762	12,79,419	9,126

Mission Shakti-AMHSSC pact to train 10k SHG members

FOCUS ON APPAREL SECTOR



The Mission Shakti department signed an agreement with the Apparel Made-ups and Home Furnishing Sector Skill Council (AMHSSC), New Delhi, to launch an initiative for skill development of 10,000 SHG members on apparel manufacturing

The initiative will ensure generation of skilled manpower in apparel sector, creation of self-employment opportunities for women and establishment of micro enterprises in local apparel industry through active participation of skilled Mission Shakti SHG members

ket-focused skills and entrepreneurship promotion apparel sector. This initiative will enhance the abilities of SHG members with basic tailoring skills to a higher level of tailoring in order to raise employability. This will further equip SHGs/PGs with the necessary skills and opportunities for round the year engagement in order to ensure the long-term viability of tailoring units, sources added.

The initiative is set to be executed over a period of 18 months. After completion of the training programme, the AMHSSC will assist the SHG members in establishing their tailoring units and offer necessary handholding support. The council will also facilitate strategic and feasible industry partnership with the apparel sector under this collaboration.

Bhubaneswar, June 17: The state government is committed to the promotion of entrepreneurship among women through formation of micro enterprises of Mission Shakti women self-help groups (SHGs).

The Mission Shakti department Friday signed an agreement with the Apparel Made-ups and Home Furnishing Sector Skill Council (AMHSSC), New Delhi, to launch an initiative for skill development of 10,000 SHG members on apparel manufacturing.

The initiative has been named as 'Skill-based training of Mission Shakti Women Self Help Group Members as Sewing Machine

Operators'. The initiative will ensure generation of skilled manpower in apparel sector, creation of self-employment opportunities for women and establishment of micro enterprises in local apparel industry through active participation of skilled Mission Shakti SHG members, sources said.

Under the unique livelihood convergence model of Mission Shakti, women self-help groups (SHGs)/producer groups (PGs) have been engaged in stitching and supply of uniforms for pre-schools, schools and other academic institutions. Through its collaboration with AMHSSC, the Mission Shakti department aims at improving livelihood opportunities of 10,000 SHG members through skilling on mar-

Edu institutions reopen after summer vacation

BHUBANESWAR: All educational institutions -- from elementary schools to universities -- reopened in Odisha Friday after an 11-day summer break.

Physical classes will start from 10 am and continue till 4 pm. There will be no morning classes that were earlier being conducted due to heat wave conditions.

Teachers will have to reach their respective schools by 9.30 am and stay on the campus till 4.30 pm.

The state government had announced summer vacation for schools and other educational institutions from June 6 to 16.

The School and Mass Education Department has issued fresh guidelines urging headmasters to hold meetings with teachers and direct them to complete the syllabus and conduct examinations on time.



Students return home after attending classes in a government school in Bhubaneswar, Friday

State gets 63 new Adarsha Vidyalayas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: As many as 63 new Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas (OAVs) were inaugurated across the state, Friday.

Two new OAVs were inaugurated at Nimapara and Gop block of Puri district by School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash while 61 more such schools were launched at various blocks by the local MLAs.

With the Friday's inauguration, the S&ME department has almost achieved the target of establishing OAVs at all the 314 blocks of Odisha. The Adarsha Vidyalaya at Koraput will be made functional soon, said an official of the department.

Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan (OAVS) is an initiative of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who is passionate about school ed-



S&ME Minister Samir Ranjan Dash at the inauguration of an OAV at Nimapara

ucation. OAVS provides free quality education in English medium to the students, especially from semi-urban and rural areas of the state.

The Adarsha Vidyalayas aims at promoting rural talents by inculcating the 21st century learning skills through a holistic and integral approach for their physical

and aesthetic development, apart from academic fineness. The Adarsha Vidyalayas will play a key role in spreading modern education in remote parts in the state while integrating the students of small towns and villages with mainstream education.

Earlier, the state government had set up 250 OAVs as many

TWO NEW OAVS WERE INAUGURATED AT NIMAPARA AND GOP BLOCK OF PURI DISTRICT BY S&ME MINISTER SAMIR RANJAN DASH WHILE 61 MORE SUCH SCHOOLS WERE LAUNCHED AT VARIOUS BLOCKS BY THE LOCAL MLAs

WITH THE FRIDAY'S INAUGURATION, THE S&ME DEPARTMENT HAS ALMOST ACHIEVED THE TARGET OF ESTABLISHING OAVS AT ALL 314 BLOCKS OF ODISHA

The S&ME department has decided to construction of hostels for students of all OAVs by November 2023, sources said.

Besides, the department has also decided to fill up 1,749 vacancies in OAVs for better management of the schools.

Minor's death: Scientific team begins probe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: A day after the recovery of a minor boy's body from a pit near Panda Park Basti here, a scientific team Friday visited the spot.

The team reportedly collected some crucial evidence from the spot. The police, meanwhile, handed

over the minor boy's body to his family members after an autopsy at Capital Hospital, sources said.

Commissioner Police sources claimed that no external injuries have been detected on the body of Daityraj Nayak during the autopsy.

"Various body parts of the deceased, including viscera, have been collected during autopsy

which will be sent to State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL) at Rasulgarh for scientific examination to ascertain the actual cause of death," said a police officer.

The Chandrasekharpur police have reportedly detained two youths from the slum for interrogation in connection with the case. The duo reportedly confessed to have assaulted Nayak June 13.

SEXUAL ABUSE CASE

NHRC seeks report from DGP, Khurda DM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought action-taken reports (ATRs) from the Director General of Police (DGP) and Khurda Collector and District Magistrate (DM) within four weeks in connection with the alleged sexual harassment of a minor girl by a police official in the capital city here.

The NHRC gave this direction June 16 while hearing a plea filed by rights activist Himanshu Sekhar Nayak. The rights activist has informed the commission that the accused, a constable at Lingaraj police station in the capital city, sexually exploited the minor girl for



four years by promising to marry her. "Accused Rajanikanta Gamango, who hails from Gajapati district, came in contact with the girl, a resident under Lingaraj police limits, while visiting one of his friends—a neighbour of the minor. Gamango sexually abused the girl when she was 13 and video recorded the same. The victim was then black-

mailed and subjected to frequent sexual abuse. He continued to exploit the girl for at least four years now," Nayak said in his complaint while quoting the victim's police complaint.

Recently the victim mustered courage and approached the Childline authorities who helped the minor get her complaint registered with the Mahila police here. The Mahila police registered a case under relevant Sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act before arresting Gamango.

Seeking justice for the minor girl, Nayak moved the NHRC May 25 this year.

Council of Ministers approves Budget

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: The state government has approved the budget for the remaining eight months of the current financial year 2022-23 in the first meeting of the newly formed Council of Ministers held here under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday evening.

Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari will present the budget before the Assembly July 2, the first day of the monsoon session of the House.

Sources indicated that the total budget for the entire financial year will be Rs 2 lakh crore.

In March 30, the state government had approved a budget of Rs 1.06 lakh crore for the first four months April-July of the financial year. At that time, the government had estimated the total size of the budget at Rs 2 lakh crore.

In view of the model code of conduct, imposed due to the panchayat and urban body elections in the state, the government had opted for a vote-on-account budget instead of the regular budget. Out of Rs 2 lakh crore, the total programme expenditure outlay was Rs 1,10,000 crore.

Similarly, the outlay for disaster response funds was Rs 3,210 crore while the outlay for transfers from the state to the local bodies was Rs 7,170 crore.

The monsoon session will continue till August 4.

RESPIRE FROM SULTRY WEATHER



The residents of Bhubaneswar heaved a sigh of relief as the city witnessed its first monsoon rain, Friday

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POSSESSION NOTICE
For Immovable Property

Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of The Federal Bank Ltd under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (herein after referred to as Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as Rules) issued a Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon the Borrower(s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest and expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules.

The Borrower(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the said properties will be subject to the charge of the The Federal Bank Ltd for the amount stated below with interest & expenses thereon.

Name & Address of the Borrowers	Description of the Immovable Property	Liabilities due on the specified date as per Notice	Date of Demand/Possession Notice
Borrowers : 1) Smt. Kalyani Mallik, W/o: Chandan Mallik, 2) Shri Ranjit Mallik, S/o: Chandan Mallik, 3) Shri Prasanjit Mallik, S/o: Chandan Mallik, 4) Smt. Gitirani Mallik, W/o: Ranjit Mallik, All Residing At: Gobarghata, Laxmannath, Jaleswar, Dist.: Balasore, Odisha-756032	All that piece and parcel of the Landed property measuring Ac. 0.035 Dec., (1525 sqft) with Building bearing Plot No.: 4581/6853, 4598/6854, Khata No.: 1365/1376 situated at Mouza: Gobarghata, P.S.: Jaleswar, P.S No.: 1, Dist.: Balasore & Bounded by East: Plot No.: 4582, West: Road, North: Subir Chattarjee & South: Sourendra Narayan Ray (As per sale Deed Doc. No.: 803 Balasore, Odisha-756032)	1) In A/c No.: 21877300000037 ₹6,74,836 as on 02.01.2022 2) In A/c No.: 21875500000724 ₹3,68,355.91 as on 31.12.2021 together with further interest and Cost thereon	15.01.2022 / 15.06.2022

Place : Kolkata, Date : 17.06.2022 For The Federal Bank Ltd. (Authorised Officer under SARFAESI Act 2002)

Union Bank of India REGIONAL OFFICE : CUTTACK, M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar-751003, Ph.: 0674-2537900

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable/immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 . Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described movable/immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/symbolic/physical Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, (Secured Creditor), will be sold on "As is where is" "As is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 20.07.2022 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM for recovery of outstanding dues to the Union Bank of India from the Borrowers & Guarantors mentioned below . The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit is stated in the column respectively .

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantors/ Mortgagees/Co-Applicants/ Co-Obligants/Outstanding Dues	Description of Properties to be Auctioned	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment	Account Details for EMD Submission
1.	DHENKANAL BRANCH, Mob.: 9439566274 Borrower: Mrs Meherun Nissa (Prop.: M/s Meherun Nissa), W/o: Mr Abdul Mallik Beg, C/o: Rasida Bibi, Guarantor: Mr Abdul Mallik Beg, S/o: Mr Samsad Beg, C/o: Rasida Bibi, both are resident At.: Gandhi Mandir Road, Dhenkanal- 759001 . / Outstanding: Rs.24,82,745/- as on 31.05.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses .	EM of Residential Land and Building at Khata No.468/506, Plot No.2036/3333 (Ac.0.380 dec.), 2035/3334 (Ac.0.310 dec.), 2034/3335 (Ac.0.310 dec.), Mouza: Katakamadakhmar, Tahasil: Dhenkanal (No.295), PS: Dhenkanal Sadar (No.211), Dist: Dhenkanal, Odisha-759013, Total Land Area: A1,000 Dec. (43560 Sqft.) in the name of Mrs Meherun Nissa, W/o: Mr Abdul Mallik Beg .	Rs.14,29,000/- / Rs.1,42,900/- / Rs.10,000/-	Account No.: 540501980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0554057
2.	ANGUL BRANCH, Mob.: 7682820374 Borrower: Mr Prafulla Kumar Pattanaik, S/o: Dambudhar Pattanaik, TBT/05, Nalco Nagar, Nalco, Angul, Odisha-759145, Guarantor: Smt Sucharita Rana, W/o: Pramod Ku. Pattanaik, Address: Plot No.6276/9379, Khata No.932/1468, Kumunda, Angul-759122 and TBT/05, Nalco Nagar, Nalco, Angul, Odisha-759145. / Outstanding: Rs.29,01,671.39 as on 23.11.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses .	Residential Land and Building over Plot No.6276/9379, Khata No.932/1468, Area: A0.045 dec., belonging to Smt Sucharita Rana, W/o: Pramod Ku. Pattanaik, Mouza: Kumunda, PS: Anugul, Tahasil: Banarpal, Kisan: Garbari, Dist: Angul, Odisha, Bounded by: North- Narana Swain, South- Road, East- Kalyani Banarjee, West- Dushmant Dehuri .	Rs.52,69,000/- / Rs. 5,26,900/- / Rs.10,000/-	Account No.: 144321980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0914339

Date & Time of Inspection of Property for intending purchasers : Before 19.07.2022 on any working day during banking hours

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION: 20.07.2022 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM

Last Date & Time of EMD Submission : on or before the commencement of E-Auction

Details of encumbrances if any : NIL

For registration and login and bidding rules visit <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>, www.unionbankofindia.co.in

For further detailed any query please contact: Mr Rishikant Prasad, Mob.: 9769987208

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) / RULE 9(1) OF STATUTORY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002

This may also be treated as notice u/r 8(6) / Rule9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrower/s and guarantor/s of the said loan about the holding of E-Auction Sale on the above mentioned date .

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 17.06.2022 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

Realtor held for duping investors of ₹1.15 crore



The accused, identified as Amaresh Chandra Sarangi of Nuagan Barabati under Fatehgarh police station in Nayagarh district, was Friday produced before the OPID court at Cuttack that sent him to judicial custody

The siblings later approached the Old Station Square Branch of Allahabad Bank through the builder for a housing loan of ₹32 lakh. A tripartite agreement between the bank, the complainant and the realtor was executed following which the bank transferred ₹18,50,000 to the account of the real estate firm through Demand Draft.

"The accused persons including the Builder, by entering into a conspiracy, neither handed over the apartment to the complainant, nor did they return the amount so received from the complainant. The accused persons also did not renew the approval of BDA which should have been done after 3 years of approval. The accused persons closed down their office at Palasumi, Bhubaneswar and absconded," revealed the EOW sources.

During the course of investigation, the EOW also came to know that the accused have cheated several others to the tune of ₹1,15,82,550 in similar fashion.

The sleuths found out that a large chunk of the money collected from the investors through Basera Designs have been diverted to the bank account of 'Sadangi Traders', a firm owned by the accused Sarangi. This apart, he is the director of 'Cottage Design Pvt Ltd' and 'LX Max Developers Pvt Ltd'.

Search is on to arrest other accused persons involved in the case, said EOW sources.

had accused in his complaint that Sarangi along with three other accused duped several persons including the complainant to the tune of ₹1.15 crore.

Sarangi introduced himself to Panda and his brother Subha Shankar as a partner in the real estate firm Basera Designs Pvt Ltd in 2016. Sarangi and other accused individuals including the Managing Director of the firm induced the siblings to buy a flat in their project.

Subsequently, the siblings booked a 3BHK apartment (no 306) in 'Basera Fresco' at Sijua here for ₹41,50,000. They also executed the agreement for acquisition of ownership of apartment with the MD April 25, 2016. The accused persons had promised the complainant to hand over the flat by June 30, 2017.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch has arrested a realtor on charges of duping investors of more than ₹1 crore on the pretext of providing flats in a housing project by Basera Designs Pvt Ltd at Sijua on the outskirts of the Capital city.

The accused was identified as Amaresh Chandra Sarangi, a resident of Nuagan Barabati under Fatehgarh police station in Nayagarh district.

The EOW Thursday arrested the accused following a probe into the EOW police station case (2/22) based on a complaint lodged by one Jyoti Shankar Panda. He was Friday produced before the OPID court at Cuttack that sent him to judicial custody. Panda



State Congress held a dharna in front of PMG office in Bhubaneswar, Friday, against BJP government in Centre alleging vendetta politics and police atrocities

POLITICAL SLUGFEST

'StartUps for Railways' to help improve rail safety

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: 'StartUps for Railways' would leverage innovative technologies developed by startups in order to improve operational efficiency and safety of the Indian Railways, said East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager (I/C) Sharad Kumar Srivastav while highlighting the ambitious policy of the national transporter at Rail Sadan here Friday. Launched by Railways, Communications and Electronics

& Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw June 13 this year, StartUps for Railways aims at bringing scale and efficiency in the field of operation, maintenance and infrastructure creation in Indian Railways through participation of very large and untapped startup ecosystem, said Srivastav.

As per the new policy, Srivastav said, grant up to Rs 1.5 crore will be given to innovator on equal sharing basis with provision of milestone-wise payment. "Complete process, from floating of problem



statement to development of prototype, will be done online through Indian Railway Innovation portal with defined timeline to make it transparent and objective," he said.

Srivastav added that trials of prototypes will be done in Railways. Enhanced funding will be provided to scale up deployment on successful performance of prototypes.

Efficiency and Research Directorate of Railway Board shall be the nodal directorate for policy implementation and process execution. Selection of innovator will be done by a transparent and fair system which will be dealt through online portal. Developed Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) will remain with innovators only, he said.

Agnipath sings india

Continued from P1

In Uttar Pradesh's Ballia town, youths raised slogans such as "Bharat Mata ki Jai" and "Agnipath Vapas Lo" and set an empty train on fire and vandalised a few other trains, prompting police to lathicharge them. Protests also erupted in Varanasi, Firozabad and Amethi, causing damage to government buses and other symbols of public property. Madhya Pradesh's commercial capital Indore saw hundreds gather on tracks and hurl stones. About 15 protesters were arrested.

"Nearly 600 youths gathered in different groups on the tracks near Laxmibai Nagar railway station in the city, forcing the railway administration to stop a few trains," Indore Police Commissioner Harinarayan Chari Mishra told PTI.

The fight against the government scheme escalated in Haryana with youths burning tyres and several others squatting on rail tracks in Narwana and blocking the Jind-Bathinda track, officials said.

Following the violent protests in Palwal, the Haryana government has suspended mobile internet and SMS services for 24 hours in Ballabgarh area of Faridabad district as a precautionary measure. Police booked over 1,000 people for the violence on Thursday in Palwal district.

An official said verification and identification of all the accused from video clips and CCTV footage was being done. He did not divulge further information.

The national capital was relatively quiet but Metro travel was disrupted with members of the Left-affiliated All India Students' Association staging demonstrations. The entry and exit gates of some Delhi Metro stations had to be closed.

The volatile agitation that spread like the proverbial wildfire saw politicians ranged against each other.

While the government defended the scheme, saying it will secure the future of youths and help maintain a youthful profile of the armed forces, opposition leaders maintained it would adversely impact the functioning of the armed forces.

Unveiling the scheme on Tuesday, the government had said youngsters between the ages of 17-and-a-half and 21 years would be inducted for a four-year tenure, while 25 per cent of the recruits will be retained for regular service.

VOICING DISSENT



Members of SUCI (Communist) Odisha State Committee held a rally from Raj Mahal square to Master Canteen square in Bhubaneswar, Friday, against rising price of fuel and other essentials

Turning away head by 9° during short talks reduces Cov risk

Turning the head away by nine degrees during short conversations reduces the risk of Covid infection, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) said in a statement Friday.

A team of researchers from the Department of Aerospace Engineering, IISc, along with collaborators from the Nordic Institute for Theoretical Physics (NORDITA) in Stockholm and the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (ICTS) in Bangalore have been involved in the study which was published in the journal Flow.

Based on the results, the team suggests that just turning the head away by about nine degrees from each other while still maintaining eye contact can reduce the risk for the speakers considerably.

The statement explains that when a person sneezes or coughs, they can potentially transmit droplets carrying viruses like SARS-CoV-2 to others in their vicinity. Does talking to an infected person also carry an increased risk of infection? How do speech droplets or "aerosols" move in the air between the people interacting?

To answer these questions, the research team carried out computer simulations to analyse the movement of the speech aerosols.

The team visualised scenarios in which two mask-less people are standing two, four or six feet apart and talking to each other for about a minute, and then estimated the rate and extent of spread of the speech aerosols from one to another.

Their simulations showed that the risk of getting infected was higher when one person acted as a passive listener and did not engage in a two-way conversation. Factors like the height difference between the people talking and the quantity of aerosols released from their mouths also appear to play an important role in viral transmission.

"Speaking is a complex activity and when people speak, they are not really conscious as to whether this can constitute a means of virus transmission," said Sourabh Diwan, Assistant Professor in the Department of Aerospace Engineering, and one of the corresponding authors.

In the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, experts believed that



the virus mostly spread symptomatically through coughing or sneezing. Soon, it became clear that asymptomatic transmission also leads to the spread of Covid-19. However, very few studies have looked at aerosol transport by speech as a possible mode of asymptomatic transmission, according to Diwan.

To analyse speech flows, he and his team modified a computer code they had originally developed to study the movement and behaviour of cumulus clouds - the puffy

cotton-like clouds that are usually seen on a sunny day.

The code, called Megha-5, was written by S Ravichandran from NORDITA, the other corresponding author on the paper, and was used recently for studying particle-flow interaction in Rama Govindarajan's group at ICTS.

The analysis carried out by the team on speech flows incorporated the possibility of viral entry through the eyes and mouth in determining the risk of infection - most previous studies had only considered

In the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, experts believed that the virus mostly spread symptomatically through coughing or sneezing. Soon, it became clear that asymptomatic transmission also leads to the spread of Covid-19. However, very few studies have looked at aerosol transport by speech as a possible mode of asymptomatic transmission

SOURABH DIWAN | CO-AUTHOR & ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF AEROSPACE ENGINEERING, INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

when the height difference was moderate - the variation looked like a bell curve.

Moving forward, the team plans to focus on simulating differences in the loudness of the speakers' voices and the presence of ventilation sources in their vicinity to see what effect they can have on viral transmission.

They also plan to engage in discussions with public health policymakers and epidemiologists to develop suitable guidelines. "Whatever precautions we can take while we come back to normalcy in our daily interactions with other people, would go a long way in minimising the spread of infection," Diwan said.

when the height difference was moderate - the variation looked like a bell curve.

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Blast fishing annihilates river ecosystem

This method of fishing has affected the livelihood of local fishermen who depend on Jira and Mahanadi river for livelihood as fish catch has reduced



FILE PHOTO

Binika tehsildar says fishing through blasting is a punishable offence and that he has asked the local RI to conduct a probe into the allegations

gal blasting has affected our livelihood so much that our children are forced to go out of state in search of income," rued a local fisherman.

When contacted, Binika tehsildar Mukteswar Panigrahi said, "This illegal blasting in rivers to catch fish is a punishable offence. I have directed the local revenue inspector (RI) to conduct a probe and take stringent action in this connection."

On the other hand, the police have assured to take stringent action against those found guilty in the case.

"We haven't received any complaint about the illegal blasting. We will take steps to stop the illegal act," Binika IIC Pabitra Sahu said.

hood of local fishermen who depend on the Jira and Mahanadi river for livelihood as the fish catch has reduced. As per the allegations, some anti-social elements are illegally using blasts as a method of fishing, despite protest by locals. They are exploding dynamites or other chemicals to catch fish from the river.

"The unbridled explosions are not only causing destruction to the aquatic ecosystem in the river but also polluting its water, leading to serious setbacks to the livelihood of thousands of fishermen community in the region,"

a local fisherman alleged adding that it is also causing serious health hazards.

Flowing through Sarangpalli and Hutuma under Bankighirdi gram panchayat of Binika block, Jira river falls in Mahanadi at Arigaon village. The river is home to a variety of fishes. In a bid to catch the fishes in huge quantities, the mafia gangs put explosives inside beer bottles and use it for the blasting. Locals have further alleged that despite sincere requests, officials are not bothered to curb the illegal act and take necessary action.

"Fishing is our lifeline but the ille-

SCAM UNDER HARISHCHANDRA YOJANA

11 people declared 'dead' in records

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, June 17: Eleven people have been "wrongfully declared dead" and government aid for their funeral has been allegedly embezzled in Kendrapara district, officials said Friday.

The incident came to light recently when one of the 'deceased' persons, identified as Sanyasi Khuntia, saw his name on a list of 11 people from Kurunti gram panchayat, declared having died in May this year, on state social security department website with their relatives mentioned as receivers of ₹2,000 each under the Harishchandra Sahayata Yojana for their funeral.

However, the relatives of the 'deceased' people claimed they haven't received any money under the scheme as all the 11 of them are alive.



BDO says, an inquiry has been initiated after receiving complaints. If the allegations are found to be true, action will be taken against those responsible for fund embezzlement

Khuntia, along with other "deceased" Pravat Kumar Swain and Ananta Jena, ac-

cused panchayat officials looking after disbursement of government funds of its embezzlement and registered complaints with the Rajnagar Block Development Officer Wednesday.

Swain continues riding his auto-rickshaw and another "deceased" Gopinath Khatua working as a plumber in Kerala.

Sukanti Pradhan, the relative of one of the "deceased" claimed she has never received any money under the scheme launched by the state government in 2018 to help poor families complete the last rites of the dead.

"We have received complaints about the matter and an inquiry has been initiated. If the veracity of the allegations is established, those responsible for misappropriating the funds will be taken to task," BDO Rabindra Pradhan said.

MONSOON CLOUDS



Dark clouds hover over Sambalpur outskirts, Friday, as southwest monsoon has set foot in Odisha recently

op photo

Crime graph on rise in Baisinga

House owners asked to provide tenants' info

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baisinga, June 17: As Baisinga area in Mayurbhanj district has been witnessing a steady rise in crimes, house owners have been directed to submit data about their tenants at the police station.

If any house owner in Baisinga and its peripheral areas dares to disobey the order, action would be taken against them, police said.

It was agreed that outsiders and migrants have taken houses in Baisinga area and nearby areas on rent. Many of them get involved in various anti-social activities and crimes, it was alleged. Most of the tenants keep their identities secret. In some cases, it was alleged that migrants from other states stay in the area and work as hawkers during the day and commit crimes at night.

Taking serious note of the issue, Baisinga police have asked all the house owners to submit documentary details of their tenants such as copies of voters' identity cards and Aadhaar - within seven days. Following a directive from IIC Prabhansu Sekhar Mishra, a team of police officials has announced the decision through public awareness systems.

Boudh ranger suspended for jumbo deaths

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, June 17: Boudh ranger Pradip Kumar Behera has been suspended in connection with death of two tuskers May 26. Earlier, the Divisional Forest Officer of Boudh had suspended three forest officials - Sushil Hota, the Forester of elephants movement, Jyotiranjana

Barik, forest guard of Jamakhol forest beat and Sharat Chandra Nayak, the forester of Beredabari forest range - over the issue. The officials have been put under suspension on the charges of utter negligence in tracking the elephants' movement and their safety.

Notably, carcasses of two elephants had been recovered from Baghiapada

Man dies in jumbo attack

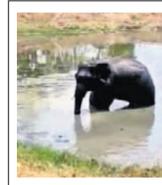
BARIPADA: A man died after being attacked by a wild elephant at Deopada village under Manada range in Mayurbhanj district late Thursday night. The deceased was identified as Ratan Soren. The elephant entered the backyard of his house last night in search of food when Soren came face to face with the pachyderm. His kin rushed Soren to Rairangpur Sub-Divisional Hospital where he breathed his last.

section of Bankamundi Reserve Compartment-8 forest in Boudh district May 26.

The deaths had been investigated and the investigation revealed that the animals were poached for their tusks.

Elephant stuck in Sambalpur pond

SAMBALPUR: A tusker that had entered a pond to drink water was stuck in the water body in Badasahi Forest Range under Sambalpur Forest Division. The matter came to the fore after a few villagers spotted the pachyderm stuck in the slush. Villagers say the tusker was stranded when it came to drink water late Thursday night. Meanwhile, Forest department officials are making arrangements to rescue the elephant from the mud.



Woman's immolation bid in front of SP office

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 17: Fed up with police inaction in tracing her missing minor daughter, a woman poured kerosene on herself and attempted self-immolation in front of the SP office here Friday.

Luckily, a few cops on duty rushed to her rescue and snatched away the kerosene bottle and matches from her possession. The victim has been identified as Manjita Rout.

According to sources, Manjita's minor daughter has been missing for a couple of weeks now. After failing to trace her



whereabouts, Manjita had lodged a missing persons' complaint about her daughter at the Town Police Station June 2.

Techie reaps success with marigold farming



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, June 17: Youths of his age are idling away time while some others are vainly running after government jobs, but Ramakant Padihari, 26, an engineering student of Bant area in Bhadrak district, has chosen a different path and tried his luck in marigold farming. And his efforts have finally paid off as this farming has made him self-reliant.

His successful initiative has shown others the way of earning handsome money.

Ramakant, son of Gangadhar Padihari of Odanga panchayat, completed his BTech from Barpada College of Engineering and Technology, two years ago. Thereafter, he prepared himself for a government job, but could not crack one. He gave up running after

jobs, but focused on farming on his seven acres of land.

Initially, he lent his helping hands to his father in farming. After fencing the seven acre land, he grew papaya, plantain, other vegetables and cereals. Then, he dug a pond in the farmland and took up fish farming, which fetched him good earning.

However, he observed that the local market has good demand for marigold flower. Hence, he brought high-yielding marigold saplings from Kolkata in December, last year.

He initially invested ₹20,000 in marigold farming and sold out the flowers for ₹60,000.

He sees good earning scope in this flower farming and has a plan to expand it further.

"A kg of marigold is sold for ₹40 to 50. I have raised marigold on around 2.5 decimal land and the daily flower yield is one quintal to one and a half quintals," he said.

Importantly, he does not have marketing issues. "I have no problem in selling my produce, because traders come to my farm to buy flowers. If the horticulture department makes provision of training and financial assistance, I would take the farming a step further," he said.

Karur Vysya Bank
Smart way to bank

THE KARUR VYSYA BANK LTD.,
Cuttack Branch
Plot No.1254 P, Bajrakabati Road, Near Board School, Bajrakabati Road, Cuttack Orissa-753001

POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

Issued under [Rule 8(1)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Whereas,
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **THE KARUR VYSYA BANK LIMITED**, under the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 20.12.2021 calling upon 1. **Mr. Bishnu Charan Sahoo (Borrower)**, S/o Late Sunakar Sahoo, At-Bada Mundali, PO-Mundali Colony, PS-Barang, Dist-Cuttack Odisha-754006 2. **Mrs. Gitanjali Sahoo (Guarantor)**, At-Bada Mundali, PO-Mundali Colony, PS-Barang, Dist-Cuttack Odisha 754006, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.17,17,182.24** (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Seventeen Thousand One Hundred Eighty Two and paise Twenty Four Only) together with further interest within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this **17th day of June of the year 2022**.

The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **THE KARUR VYSYA BANK LIMITED** for an amount of **Rs.17,17,182.24** (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Seventeen Thousand One Hundred Eighty Two and paise Twenty Four Only) and interest thereon, cost and expenses.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property	
All that piece and parcel of Residential Land And Building measuring 1524.60 Sq Ft. (A0.035 Dec), situated at Plot No.1470/2915, Khata No.604/366, Mouza-Mundali, Tahasil-Barang, District-Cuttack standing in the name of Mr. Bishnu Charan Sahoo and the land is butted and bounded by	
On the North by: Rest of the Plot	On the East by : Village Road
On the South by: Rest of the Plot	On the West by : Nabin Lenka

Place: Cuttack
Date: 17.06.2022

Authorized Officer
The Karur Vysya Bank Limited

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
MEGA LIFT, BHUBANESWAR
Plot no. A 8/2, Bhojnagar, Bhubaneswar,
Odisha, PIN-751022
E-Mail: cemplwr.od@gmail.com

Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. 4ML/2022-23

No.A-326:OnLine open tender is invited for EPC Contract (Turn Key Basis) for Mega Lift, Odisha

- Name of Work:** Execution of 9 nos Lift Irrigation Schemes in Cluster No.- XXI including power system connectivity and Operation & Maintenance of complete commissioned schemes for 15 years.
- Period of completion:** 36 (Thirty-six) calendar months including rainy season.
- Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal :** 18.06.2022, 10 A.M.
- Last date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal :** 01.08.2022 up to 5.00 P.M
- Name & address of the officer Inviting Bid:** Chief Engineer, MegaLift, A-8/2, Bhoi Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Pin-751022
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>".

Sd./- Chief Engineer, Megalift, Bhubaneswar
OIPR-32301/11/0008/2223

INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS
(An Autonomous Research Institute of Dept. of Atomic Energy, Govt. of India)
P.O: Sainik School, Bhubaneswar-751005, India, <https://www.iopb.res.in/>

PH.D ADMISSION - 2022

Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar is an autonomous research institution of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Government of India. The research activities in the Institute span theoretical and experimental research in the areas of condensed matter physics, nuclear physics, high energy physics and interdisciplinary areas such as quantum information, biological physics, complex systems, nano-science, and materials science, etc.

The Institute invites application for its regular Doctoral Programme in Physics starting from August, 2022. Indian nationals satisfying both the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- A valid CSIR-JRF / UGC-JRF fellowship OR
A valid GATE score with rank up to 200 OR
JEST - 2021 rank up to 250 (for Ph. D only)
- M.Sc. in Physics with a minimum of 55% marks (in aggregate) or equivalent cumulative CGPA. (Candidates appeared for M.Sc. in 2022 and who satisfy the criteria mentioned above can apply. However, if selected, their admission will be provisional subject to satisfying the minimal criteria and submission of the M. Sc. certificate.)

For details and online application please visit <https://www.iopb.res.in/>
The last date of applying online is **30th June 2022**.

Tentative dates of selection are **12th - 15th July, 2022**. The selection will be based on written test and/or interview. However, depending on the Covid-19 situation, the dates and/or the selection process may be modified.

Director

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(Scholarship Section)
National Overseas Scholarship Scheme
(NOS) for ST Candidates for the Selection
year 2022-23

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, invites online applications for the **National Overseas Scholarship Scheme (NOS) from ST candidates** for the selection year 2022-23. The scholarship is awarded to students selected for pursuing higher studies abroad at the Masters level, Ph.D and Post-Doctoral Research programmes.

Numbers of slots for Scholarship:20
Interested Candidates may apply online through <https://overseas.tribal.gov.in/> The last date for submitting applications online is:- **30.07.2022**.

For more details candidates may visit Ministry's portal: <https://overseas.tribal.gov.in/>

Note: Scheme guidelines are under revision and changes will be notified soon. Candidates are required to keep watch on the above mentioned portal.

davp 43101/11/0006/2223

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO II, BHUBANESWAR
eerb2 bbsr@yahoo.com

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No- C.C. (R&B) - 02
e-Procurement Notice No. 09 of 2022-23

No.B-282:The Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No-11, Bhubaneswar on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids for **One Number of Supply & installation DG Set** to be received in online bidding. Single cover system as detailed in : <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>. The details of bid documents will be available in the above website from **18.06.2022 to 5.00 P.M of 02.07.2022**. The bidders must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate of Class II or III. Bids received online shall be opened at **11.30 A.M. of 04.07.2022** in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No-II, Bhubaneswar. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Addendum / Corrigendum, if required, will be available only in the Website.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
BBSR (R&B) Division No.II, BBSR
OIPR-34088/11/0012/2223

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

LEBANON'S GRIDLOCK



The international community must reassess the costs of the Lebanon's perverse political equilibrium, and its main foreign patrons must recognise that they ultimately share an interest in breaking the country's institutional gridlock

domestic and international laws. Lebanese citizens are more likely to trust actions by foreign powers if they can see that enforcement is not selective, discriminatory, or designed merely to advance narrow strategic objectives.

Coordinated action among strategic rivals is a tall order; but it is the only option. Lebanon's institutional troubles cannot be wished away. The international community must reassess the costs of the country's perverse political equilibrium, and Lebanon's main foreign patrons must recognise that they ultimately share an interest in breaking the country's institutional gridlock.

Lebanon's foreign patrons are members of the G20, which recognises the negative effect of corruption on economies. The G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group can lead anti-corruption efforts in Lebanon, especially as it works with the International Monetary Fund, which is currently negotiating with Lebanon regarding conditional financial support, and the World Bank, whose Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR) plays an advisory role on related issues, including asset recovery and anti-money laundering policies. In short, such existing initiatives of global governance could be harnessed to improve Lebanon's governance.

In the absence of such coordinated global action, tensions in the country will escalate, resulting in a growing number of asylum-seekers, which will affect Europe in particular.

Greater emphasis should be placed on preventing displacement, rather than mitigating the refugee crisis through foreign aid. The diagnosis and the cure have been identified, but the physician still seems to have an incentive to keep the patient sick.

Jamal Ibrahim Haidar is a research associate at the Middle East Initiative at Harvard University. Adeel Malik is Associate Professor of Development Economics and Globe Fellow in the Economics of Muslim Societies at the University of Oxford.

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Lebanon's political economy is gridlocked. The country's political leaders will not commit to the kinds of economic reforms that it needs, because doing so would undermine their own power. For good reason, most published analyses of Lebanon include references to problems such as corruption and institutional decadence. But what most commentaries miss is the role played by external stakeholders who see little reason to push for changes to the dysfunctional status quo.

While foreign powers with interests in Lebanon often do voice support for reforms, they lack the proper incentives to back up their rhetoric with concrete action, because doing so would simply undercut their own influence in the country. Meanwhile, the Lebanese people have been left to suffer at the hands of an oppressive economic structure. In 2021, the country's GDP was just \$20.5 billion, down from \$55 billion in 2018. With poverty rates soaring and the currency having lost 90% of its value, the economy is teetering on the edge of collapse, and a humanitarian crisis is looming.

It doesn't have to be this way. If foreign stakeholders wanted to effect positive change within the country, they would have many tools for doing so. They could easily tie the hands of Lebanon's political elites by applying existing laws in their home countries, and by leveraging their influence over global financial institutions to hold politically exposed persons (PEPs) in Lebanon to account.

While the Lebanese authorities have largely failed to bring corrupt officials to justice, foreign disclosures of stolen wealth could still create the domestic pressure for change. For example, the SWIFT interbank messaging service for cross-border payments can be used to identify potentially corrupt wealth transfers made from Lebanon at any point over the past three decades. And information on property registries could be used to identify Lebanese public officials who might have accumulated assets beyond their means.

Moreover, British, the US, and

the EU financial agencies can make similar public disclosures using information from the Western banking system. The UK Financial Conduct Authority, the US federal banking agencies, and the European Commission all require financial-system "gatekeepers" to perform enhanced checks on PEPs, their families, and their close associates. Each jurisdiction recognises that there is a risk of PEPs abusing their positions and using the financial system to launder ill-gotten gains. Under existing laws, Lebanese oligarchs and officials can and should face enhanced scrutiny when they try to access these parts of the global financial system.

Lebanon's foreign stakeholders thus have ample leverage with which to push for domestic reforms. The problem is that punitive measures can succeed only if they target all politicians, officials, and bankers who may be involved in corruption, regardless of their political affiliations or foreign-policy positions. But owing to Lebanon's complicated, factionalized domestic politics and its geo-strategic location, broad-brush enforcement tends to be a non-starter for foreign stakeholders, each of which has its own transactional, patronage relationships with various Lebanese political actors.

The US, for example, wants to

ensure that its allies in Lebanon vote in line with US interests in the ongoing negotiations over Lebanon's southern maritime border. EU countries want their allies to oppose a "Going East" campaign that envisions Lebanon (which currently gets 38% of its imports from Europe) deepening its economic ties with China, Russia, and other countries. And Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates want their allies in Lebanon to remain aligned with their own foreign-policy positions regarding Iran and Palestine.

Taken together, these strategic interests prevent foreign stakeholders from pursuing broad anti-corruption measures, because their own Lebanese allies could be ensnared. Without broadly coordinated action to tackle all corrupt elements without fear or favour; and to identify and seize all ill-gotten gains across multiple jurisdictions with varying legal structures, Lebanese elites will not be held accountable under the law. But no foreign power will implement punitive measures unless it is convinced that competing stakeholders will do the same.

In addition to being coordinated, punitive measures also need to be consistent and credible. Any foreign action needs to be backed by ample, transparent evidence against the accused, and it needs to adhere to due process under the relevant do-



Jamal Ibrahim Haidar and Adeel Malik

WHILE THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES HAVE LARGELY FAILED TO BRING CORRUPT OFFICIALS TO JUSTICE, FOREIGN DISCLOSURES OF STOLEN WEALTH COULD STILL CREATE THE DOMESTIC PRESSURE FOR CHANGE

There is a thirst for Love which no human relation can quench. It is only the Divine's love that can satisfy that thirst.

THE MOTHER



Babu on a Mission

The "heaven-born" often catch a lot of flak, usually when they are seen as misusing their privileges or as pliant tools of their political masters. But many IAS officers get appreciated for silently going about their work, often below the radar. Certainly, it's not often we hear of IAS officers winning international plaudits.

Rajasthan cadre IAS officer Sandeep Verma was selected for the "Best Paper" award at an international conference on data analytics organized by the Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management. Verma is the CMD of Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation and is considered within babu circles as a specialist in public procurement systems.

Sources have informed DKB that Verma is a familiar presence at international conferences where he is widely sought for his insights and expertise in public procurement reform and project management. His speciality is in using public procurement rules to increase domestic manufacturing and stimulate innovation in high-tech areas.

During his career, besides his regular postings, Verma has reportedly trained nearly 2,000 senior IAS officers and military officials on various aspects of defence procurement, government contracts and project management. He has influenced the defence procurement procedures and helped draft the public procurement rules for the Assam government, among others. Most recently, Verma drafted a new public-private partnership policy for his cadre state of Rajasthan. During his stint as Home Secretary in Rajasthan and other postings, Verma has contributed immensely to increase professionalism in project management in government departments.



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian

Clearly, the IAS officer is equally at home in the power corridors as well as the rarified environs of the IAS training academy in Mussoorie and influential think tanks.

Ex-cops to probe serving IPS officers

The Gujarat Home Department has named two retired IPS officers Anup Kumar Singh and Keshav Kumar to lead preliminary enquiries (PE) and departmental enquiries (DE) against any IPS officers who are accused of corruption.

The move has raised eyebrows since traditionally such enquiries are conducted by a panel of officers in the Home Department. But in recent times, there have been some instances where allegations against top-ranking IPS officers have been probed by other serving IPS officers. Recently former Rajkot police commissioner Manoj Agarwal was transferred as Principal of the State Reserve Police Training School following an enquiry report against alleged corruption.

The reason that ex-IPS officers have been chosen to conduct enquiries is that serving IPS officers are already occupied with their own portfolios and cannot devote time to conducting preliminary enquiries, which delays the process. Also, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Raj Kumar admitted that the government realises that serving IPS officers conducting a PE or DP against another IPS officer is not ideal, and can compromise the enquiry.

While this would be evident to anyone, babu or not, the appointment of Singh and Kumar is meant to send a signal that the government wishes to be seen as impartial in inquiries against senior state cops.

Centre eases off on changing IAS cadre rules

The acute deficit of All India Service (AIS) officers that the Centre faces is likely to get prolonged. The proposal to depute IAS, IPS and IFOs officers to the Centre without the approval of their respective state governments has been shelved for the time being, DKB has learnt.

In 2021, only 10 per cent of mid-level IAS officers were posted with the Union government, a sharp dip from 19 per cent in 2014. The best indication of the deepening crisis can be seen in the recent appointment of 23 joint secretary-rank officers in various ministries. Only six were IAS officers and one from the IPS. The majority are from other Central services.

Now the reason for this shortfall has emerged, in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) response to an RTI query. The DoPT has stated that a final view on the proposal is yet to be taken and that DoPT cannot disclose the information held in a "fiduciary relationship". Reading between the lines, what this means is that the Centre has put off the proposal due to stiff opposition from officers in the states. At least eight states including Odisha, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have opposed the move. The political faultlines are only too apparent.

For now, the Centre has prudently decided not to push further. It already has too many irons in the fire. But once it refocuses on the issue, the battle will surely be resumed.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

THOMAS A EDISON

It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.

CONFUCIUS

Well done is better than well said.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

WORDSWORTH

Agog

Middle French had gogue, entertainment, fun or amusement. From this developed en gogues, in good humour. English took it in and gave it a home, but changed the first element to on and then to a-, at the same time shortening the unpronounced ending. It's still widely to be found, though its usage has dropped off in the last half century. Standard dictionaries say it has the sense that you're using - eager or curious to hear or see something. The compound all agog ("I was all agog to discover who the new Dr Who would be") has an air of bouncy immature anticipation that makes it difficult to use in serious contexts. Looking around, I discovered that agog is having serious identity issues. Typical of recent usage was a headline in the Irish Times in 2011, "Americans left agog at confused cruelty of Irish abortion law". To me, agog can't mean "astonished", but its entry in the Oxford English Dictionary, revised in 2012, says it now can. Might its users have been confusing it with goggle? Another compound form, less common, is agape and agog, which communicates a sense of utter gobsmacked astonishment. Incidentally, a related Middle French form was a gogo, uninhibitedly or joyfully, probably formed from gogue by reduplication. This is still in the French language and appeared in Paris in 1952 in the name of the nightclub and pioneering discotheque called the Whisky à Gogo (that is, Whisky Galore, presumably from the film of the book by Compton Mackenzie). The format became fashionable and it and the name were brought into English, leading to the modified version a-go-go appearing all over the place during the 1960s as a fashionable creation meaning fashionable. This presumably influenced go-go, a native English reduplication of go that appeared about the same time, especially in the erotic dancers called go-go girls, as well as the triply emphatic go-go-go for continual movement, hustle and bustle.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Checking soil erosion vital

The recently concluded conference of UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 15) at Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire found that desertification has been on the rise in most parts of the world.

An earlier UNCCD report released in April showed that 40 per cent of all ice-free land is already degraded globally, affecting 50 per cent of humanity. It also noted that the current scale of degradation threatens half of global GDP (US\$44trillion). According to Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary, UNCCD, the best comprehensive solution is to indulge in land restoration, which addresses many of the underlying factors of degraded water cycles and the loss of soil fertility. He voiced the need for rebuilding landscapes better, mimicking nature wherever possible and creating functional ecological systems.

Today, there can be no doubt that desertification has emerged as a major global issue. The fact is that we are only beginning to see the grave impact of climate change. Experts believe that these are expected to become more deadly as temperatures continue to spiral,

which may get out of hand. Also such desertification has an impact on soil health and food production.

It is vital to understand the importance of soils, which play a crucial role in areas such as: helping combat and adapt to climate change by storing carbon and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere; provide water infiltration through soil, trapping pollutants and preventing them from leaching into groundwater; capture and store water for crops; minimise surface evaporation and maximise water use efficiency; host a quarter of the planet's biodiversity and contribute to global cycles that make all life possible; and provide fibre, fuel, medicinal products and other ecosystem services.

Coming to the case of India, it has about 160 million hectares of arable land, but nearly 40 per cent of this soil is labeled as distressed soil. That means in another twenty-five to thirty years' time, we may not be able to grow the food that we need in this nation. When there is no water and food, the level of civil strife that will happen will impact demolish the nation adversely in

many ways. People from rural areas, where water completely runs out, are going to migrate in large numbers into urban centres. With no infrastructure, they may find their way in squatter settlements and even pavements. It could also lead to social strife.

Soil erosion that is quite rampant in the country is affecting soil health and productivity by removing the highly fertile topsoil and exposing the remaining soil. It has been decreasing agricultural productivity, degrading ecosystem functions and amplifies hydro-geological risk, such as landslides or floods. Experts believe that soil erosion has been causing significant losses in biodiversity, damage to urban and rural infrastructure and, in severe cases, leads to displacement of human populations. They are unanimous that soil erosion has to be stopped at all costs. "It takes up to 1,000 years to form one centimetre of topsoil, but this one centimetre can be lost with just one heavy rainfall if soil cover is not protected," they say.

There is a cry the world over to fight soil erosion for it is needed to "save our future." A movement

to save soils has gained momentum and it is expected that by December 5 (World Soil Day) there would be renewed efforts and awareness generation at the grass-root levels to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil and to advocate for the sustainable management of soil resources.

Meanwhile, it is indeed distressing to note that various factors of warming, specially droughts and excessive pressure on soils has led India to figure at the bottom of the 2022 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) ranking of 180 countries. The US, the largest historical polluter, is ranked 43rd while the current biggest emitter, China has been ranked at the 160th position. The report pointed out: "India, with its increasingly dangerous air quality and rising greenhouse gas emissions falls to the bottom of rankings for the first time."

Considering all these developments and also the increasing use of chemicals and pesticides, which are not just hazardous to human health but also to soil health, there is need for the government to formulate a guideline to check desertification and ensure that soil health is not disturbed.

INFPA

Dhurjati Mukherjee

TO PREVENT AND MINIMISE SOIL EROSION, FARMERS AND OTHER LAND USERS HAVE TO ADOPT SUSTAINABLE SOIL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES UNDER AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Grim picture

Sir, A national survey recently conducted by NGO HelpAge India paints a grim picture of the status of the elderly in our country, who find themselves at the receiving end in the final years of their life. The findings reveal that 47 per cent of elderly people are economically dependent on their families. In the good olden days elders in families were respected a lot due to their wisdom and wealth of life experience. With changing times, sadly they are seen as millstones and neglected by their own family members. We need to reform our approach towards elderly persons by bringing care closer to where they live, and where it costs less to deliver and does more good. Acknowledging seniors' contributions will help to make ours a more age-inclusive society that does not pit one generation against the other. Also, the central government must bring needful policies and programmes to socially protect the elders of our country. We must create an environment in which ageing is accepted as a natural part of the life cycle, where anti-ageing attitudes are discouraged and elders are given the right to live in dignity.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Violence no solution

Sir, It is really unfortunate of late to see so much of violence happening in the various protests connected to different issues in the various corners of our nation. The protests against Agnipath recruitment scheme is the latest one and it is really heart breaking to see bloody violence, arson, clashes and conflicts happening in the name of protests. Be it the Agnipath protests, protests connected to comments on prophet Muhammed, the Kerala gold scam protests, ED questioning Rahul Gandhi - what one is able to see is just clashes and conflicts occurring at the drop of a hat. Violence is not going to yield any good result. Our heads have to hang in shame as this is happening in a land where the greatest of preachers of peace and nonviolence was born. In a land where the greatest of apostle of peace was born it seems his people have completely forgotten that. We the citizens of a beautiful nation rich in its culture and heritage must truly introspect ourselves, analyse the matters in deep and choose the right. Let us also not forget the Mahatmas thought provoking words-be the change you wish to see in the world.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

of the day quote

Eighty-nine per cent of the country's adult population has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 while over 75 per cent of children in the 12-14 age group have received the first dose

Even government lands have been sold off or acquired fraudulently by land mafia in the state

Good governance during the eight years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has boosted India's social welfare, economic growth and ease of living of its citizens

SHORT TAKES

Prez polls: 15 nominations filed

New Delhi: Fifteen candidates have filed their nominations for the presidential election with the papers of three of them rejected for want of proper documents, sources said Friday. While 11 filed their nominations on the first day of filing the papers on June 15, three filed their nominations on Thursday and only one on Friday. One nomination was rejected on the first day and two were rejected on the second day.

IGI airport ranked best in India again

New Delhi: Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport has been adjudged the best in India and South Asia for the fourth consecutive year at the Skytrax World Airport Awards, an official statement said Friday. The airport also improved its overall ranking to 37th from last year's 45th position, said the statement from GMR which added that it is the only airport from India to be included in the world's top 50 airports.

Toddler rescued

New Delhi: An eight-month old infant allegedly sold by his own parents for Rs 5 lakh was rescued by the joint efforts of the Delhi Police and the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW). Later, the parents of the baby said their child was missing and after not receiving the entire money they approached the DCW. According to information given by the child's parents, they had agreed to take Rs 5 lakh in exchange for the child, of which Rs 20,000 was paid immediately and the remaining amount was promised later to them. However, seven months after the baby's parents were promised the money, the remaining amount was not paid to them following which the child's mother approached the DCW hoping that the remaining money will be paid to them.

Couple found dead

New Delhi: An elderly couple was found dead in the national capital's Nirman Vihar area on Friday, an official said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (East district) Prianka Kashyap said a PCR call was received at Preet Vihar police station wherein the caller Pramod Kumar Talwar stated that his brother and his sister-in-law are not opening the door of their residence despite repeatedly knocking the door. When the police reached the spot, they found the door was bolted from inside after which, the police with the help of Fire Department officials, broke open the door and entered the house.



When life has no surety, why should we fight? Why should we spread hatred or kill each other? We must understand it. I am not talking about any particular religion, but about all the religions. Remember it is not the common people who create riots, but it is done by some greedy leaders who have their minds full of black dirt

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

MEGA EVENT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead a mass Yoga event at the Mysuru Palace grounds in Karnataka on the International Day of Yoga June 21, Union Ayush Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said Friday. He will join 15,000 yoga enthusiasts



'AGNIPATH' PROTESTS INTENSIFY



A policeman aims to fire in the air to disperse people protesting against 'Agnipath' scheme in Danapur



A man carrying his child heads for a safer place during a clash between security personnel and people protesting against 'Agnipath' scheme, on Agra-Delhi National Highway in Mathura



People shout slogans during their protest against 'Agnipath' scheme, on Agra-Delhi National Highway in Mathura

'Agnipath' recruitment process to start soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: As protests against the Agnipath military recruitment scheme intensified, the Army, Navy and the Air Force Friday announced that they will start the enrolment process under the new model by next week while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh appealed to the youths wanting to join the armed forces to start preparing for the induction.

Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari said that the selection process by the Indian Air Force for recruitment under the new scheme will start from June 24 while the Army said it will begin the initial exercise within two days.

While the Indian Navy said it will start the recruitment process "very soon", a senior naval commander said the notification for the recruitment would be out within a week. The three services are planning to deploy the first batches of recruits under the new scheme both in operational and non-operational roles by June next year, senior military officials said.

The officials also said the agitating youths are not fully aware of the benefits of the Agnipath scheme. In an attempt to pacify the protesters, the government on Thursday night increased the upper age limit for recruitment for soldiers under the Agnipath scheme to 23 years from 21 for the year 2022.

Defence Minister Singh, on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, said the relaxation of the



A mob vandalises trains and railway properties at the Secunderabad Railway Station in protest against the 'Agnipath' scheme

The schedule of the recruitment process will be announced shortly. We call upon our youth to avail this opportunity for joining the Indian Army as 'Agniveers'

GEN MANOJ PANDE | ARMY CHIEF

age limit indicates that the government cares for the youth and asserted that the model of recruitment is a "golden opportunity" for those wanting to join the country's defence system.

He said the Department of Military Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the three services are committed to commencing the recruitment process at the earliest and invited the youths to join the Indian armed forces and "serve the nation through Agnipath". Unveiling the scheme on Tuesday, the gov-

The monthly salary of an 'Agniveer' in the first year of employment would be Rs 30,000 and the in-hand amount would be Rs 21,000 as Rs 9,000 would go to a corpus with an equal contribution from the government. Subsequently, the monthly salary in the second, third and fourth year will be Rs 33,000, Rs 36,500 and Rs 40,000

The announcement of the new scheme came in the backdrop of recruitments into the military remaining stalled over the coronavirus pandemic for over two years

The officials said the Army has set its target of starting the training of new recruits under the Agnipath scheme by December, adding the plan is to deploy the initial batches in operational and non-operational roles by June next year

due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the last two years. "The schedule of the recruitment process will be announced shortly. We call upon our youth to avail this opportunity for joining the Indian Army as Agniveers," Gen Pande said.

Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said the raising of the upper age limit for the year 2022 would permit a larger section of youths to enrol under the new model of recruitment. "The government has recently announced the 'Agnipath' scheme for enrolment in the armed forces. The age bracket for the scheme is 17-and-half-years to 21 years. I am pleased to inform you that the upper age limit for the first induction has been increased to 23 years," he said.

Gehlot slams Centre as CBI raids brother

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, June 17: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot Friday hit out at the Centre over the CBI raid at his brother's residence, saying this is not going to panic him but will ultimately harm the BJP only.

Gehlot said that the raid was an act of revenge by the centre for his recent activism in Delhi. Congress State President Govind Singh Dotasra and former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot also criticised the CBI action by calling it motivated by political vendetta. The CBI Friday raided Aghrasen Gehlot's residence in Jodhpur in connection with a corruption case. An Enforcement Directorate (ED) team too had raided his place in 2020.

"If I am active in Delhi or have participated in this movement for Rahul Gandhi, then why revenge is taken from my brother? When there was a political crisis here in our government in 2020, at that time also the ED had raided my brother's place

more they harass the people of the country, the more adverse impact they will suffer," he said.

Gehlot said that he had recently sought an appointment with the Director of CBI and the ED, and the Chairman of the Income Tax Department. He said, "On June 13, time was sought, on 15 the case was registered, and on June 17 there were raids. What is this approach, it is beyond comprehension?"

Gehlot was in Delhi for several days to participate in the Congress' protest against the questioning of Rahul Gandhi by the ED in a money laundering case.



If I am active in Delhi or have participated in this movement for Rahul Gandhi, then why revenge is taken from my brother? When there was a political crisis here in our government in 2020, at that time also the ED had raided my brother's place

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

Covid cases rising in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Delhi logged 1,797 Covid-19 infections in a single day, highest in nearly four months, along with one fatality while the positivity rate rose to 8.18 per cent, according to data shared by the health department here Friday.

The fresh cases came out of 21,978 tests conducted in Delhi the previous day to detect the infection. This is the third consecutive day that Delhi has recorded over 1,300 cases in a day.

The capital has logged more than 1,000 daily cases for the fourth day on the trot.

Friday's figures are the highest since February 4, when the na-

tional capital logged 2,272 cases and 20 deaths while the positivity rate stood at 3.85 per cent.

The positivity rate on Friday is the highest since January 29 when 4,044 cases were recorded with a positivity rate of 8.60 per cent, while the city had registered 25 deaths.

The national capital recorded 1,323 new Covid cases and two deaths on Thursday, while the positivity rate stood at 6.69 per cent.

The fresh cases pushed Delhi's coronavirus tally to 19,19,025 while the death toll rose to 26,226, the department said in its latest bulletin.

The national capital had recorded 1,375 new Covid cases Wednesday, the highest since May 8, while the positivity rate rose to 7.01 per cent.

J&K polls possibly by year-end: Rajnath

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, June 17: In the first indication of a timeline for assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir since it was downgraded to a Union Territory, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Friday said there is a possibility of holding the polls "by this year-end".

Addressing a function here to celebrate the 200th year of the coronation of Maharaja Gulab Singh, the defence minister said the delimitation exercise has been completed following which the number of seats has gone up to 90 with Kashmir having 47 seats and Jammu 43. Rajnath Singh, who is on a two-day visit to the Union Territory, said, "By this year-end,



there is a possibility of holding assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir."

The indication of a timeline comes two days after the Election Commission initiated the revision of electoral rolls in the union territory and prepare the draft rolls by August 31. According to the officials, Chief Election

Bhim Sena chief arrested for threatening Nupur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: The Delhi Police has arrested Bhim Sena chief Nawab Satpal Tanwar for threatening and announcing a bounty of Rs one crore on now-revived BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma over her remarks on Prophet Mohammad, officials said Friday.

Tanwar was arrested Thursday from Gurugram in Haryana, they said. The statements of former BJP office-bearers Sharma and Naveen Kumar Jindal on Prophet Mohammad have sparked a massive controversy which has led to violent protests in several parts of the country.

The police said Tanwar had posted a video in which he announced a bounty of Rs one crore on Sharma for her remarks and was trying to fuel communal disharmony. Recently, various handles on Twitter and other social media platforms were posting materials which was spreading hate and was against the maintenance of public tranquillity, the police said in an official statement, adding that they received also various complaints in this regard.

On the basis of complaints and suo-motto social media analysis, the Delhi Police registered 19 FIRs under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, it said. In one such case, Tanwar, who claimed to be the chief of Bhim Sena, having multiple Twitter handles and Facebook profile, posted a video in which he announced a bounty of Rs one crore on Sharma and was trying to fuel communal disharmony, the statement stated. An FIR was registered in this connection and the investigation was taken up.

BMW hit-and-run case: One CCTV helps trace driver

A 27-year-old man was arrested by the Delhi police for ramming a speeding BMW car into another car, which killed two children sleeping on the footpath, while eight people were injured, a police official said

car, which killed two children sleeping on the footpath, while eight people were injured, a police official said.

The accused driver was identified as Sahil, a resident of east Delhi's Nirman Vihar. Deputy Commissioner of Police (south east), Esha Pandey said a PCR call was received on June 10 at Hazrat Nizamuddin regarding an accident wherein two to three persons were injured under the Lodhi Road flyover.

Responding to the PCR call, the police officers rushed to the spot and came to know that a Wagon R was hit by a black coloured luxury car.

Due to the force of the collision, the Wagon R ran over people sleeping on the footpath under the Lodhi Road flyover. The injured persons were shifted to AIIMS trauma centre where Roshini (6) and her brother Amir (10) were declared brought dead.



The Wagon R car's driver said at nearly 4.30 a.m. while they were returning from Samrat hotel and moving towards Surya hotel through Lodhi road, a black coloured luxury car's driver who was driving fast hit their car.

The black car's driver fled from the spot. As the incident took place late night and there was no one to witness the incident except the in-

jured persons, it was a very challenging task for the police.

The CCTV cameras installed near the flyover were not functioning at all. After this the police started making efforts to first locate the route through which the black car had travelled after the incident. To trace the accused driver's route, nearly 60-70 cameras which were installed on the road towards

Oberoi hotel, Lodhi Road, Barapulla Road and Lala Lajpat Rai Marg were checked.

It was just one camera which led to a breakthrough in the case. "In one of the cameras, it was found that the vehicle after the accident had turned towards Neela Gumbad, Nizamuddin," the official said. The CCTVs on the route going towards Zakir Hussain Marg, Sunder Nursery and Mathura Road were checked.

After analysing the CCTV footage of nearly 70-80 cameras, one black colour sedan luxury car was zeroed in. It was found that the vehicle took a turn to Mathura road and had gone towards Ashram. The police finally reached the exact location of the accused driver. Upon interrogation of the accused Sahil, it was revealed that he along with his uncle was coming from the airport while he was driving the car.

Images of women achievers to be displayed in school walls

Lucknow, June 17: Images of noted Indian women, including Rani Laxmi Bai, Chand Bibi, Savitribai Phule, Sarojini Naidu, Lata Mangeshkar, Mother Teresa, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, Amrita Pritam, Mahadevi Verma, astronaut Kalpana Chawla, Begum Akhtar and Mary Kom, among others, will soon adorn the walls of government primary schools in Uttar Pradesh.

senting students of these schools with women role models, the state government has ordered that one wall each of all 1.54 lakh schools across 75 districts to be dedicated for this mission under Mission Shakti Phase-4 special campaign. According to the government spokesman, the aim is to motivate students to emulate these personalities. "The information about the women personalities is to be given by either painting a wall of the school or installing flex. The



The UP government has ordered that one wall each of all 1.54 lakh schools across 75 districts to be dedicated for this mission under Mission Shakti Phase-4 special campaign

women personalities and display brief write-ups about them," the spokesman added. The focus will be on women achievers from the past and also on contemporary achievers. Instructions have come from the government that the names of local or region-specific women of the district, development block and divisional level women personalities can also be displayed as part of this initiative after due clearance by the officials concerned, official said.

UP to emerge as hub of distilleries



Lucknow, June 17: Uttar Pradesh is all set to emerge as a hub of distilleries, with as many as 13 new distillery plants being set up with an investment of ₹20,000 crore.

The state government has been making sustained efforts for reforming the field of excise through various policies and making it free from the dominance of liquor mafia. The state will soon become an exporter of liquor and will also provide liquor to other states and countries. It is worth stating that in the last five years, the number of distilleries has increased from 61 to 78 with an investment of about ₹6,500 crore. Due to this, the alcohol production capacity of the state has increased from 170 to 270 crore bulk litres and the production of ethanol also went up from 42 to 115 crore bulk litres. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently laid the foundation stone of 13 distillery plants to be set up with an investment of ₹20,000 crore in the ground breaking ceremony. Two distillery plants are being set up in Bareilly and Shahjahanpur while one each in Deoria, Amroha, Rampur, Lakhimpur Kheri, Gorakhpur and Sitapur. Sanjay Bhooresdy, Additional Chief Secretary, Excise and Sugar Industry and Cane Development Department said that the investment has increased due to the end of mafia raj and corruption in the state.

PROPHET ROW

Friday prayers go 'peacefully' after week of protests

UP has been racked by high tension protests across its cities since last Friday, which was responded to by authorities, among other methods, with demolition of houses of some of the key accused



been held in Saharanpur and Deoband the past couple of days as a precautionary measure. Aligarh too, reportedly, witnessed no confrontation or protests after the prayers, where they were observed amid tight security.

According to reports, the district authorities had conferred with the prominent people of both communities and top officials, including the district magistrate Inder Vir Singh, to discuss ways of restoring the peace. SSP Kalanidhi Naithani reportedly visited all communally sensitive spots of the city to oversee the situation. The chief mufti of Aligarh, Khalid Hameed, had also issued an appeal urging members of the Muslim community "not to collect at any spot after offering Friday prayers." A report from Kannauj said the administration had made strict arrangements for road safety. Reportedly, a drone camera in Chhibramau Kotwali area of the district found a pile of bricks on the roof of a religious place, which was removed following an order. Inspector Jai Prakash Sharma said that the purpose for collection of bricks on the roof is being ascertained.

UP Police had made elaborate security arrangements for the prayers in view of the state-wide violence that erupted following the Friday prayers last week over a remark against Prophet Mohammad by Nupur Sharma, a former BJP spokesperson. The first such protest had happened Kanpur on June 3, during which people from Hindu and Muslim communities clashed with each other over the shutting down of a prominent market in the city. In Prayagraj, a mob had set on fire a few motorcycles and carts, and also attempted to set ablaze a police vehicle last Friday. Police had used tear gas and lathis to disperse the protesters and restore peace.

LS by-polls: A do-or-die battle for SP

SURPRISINGLY, WITH JUST 5 DAYS LEFT FOR THE TWO BY-POLLS WHERE POLLING WILL BE HELD JUNE 23, NEITHER AKHILESH NOR MAYAWATI HAS YET CAMPAIGNED FOR THEIR CANDIDATES



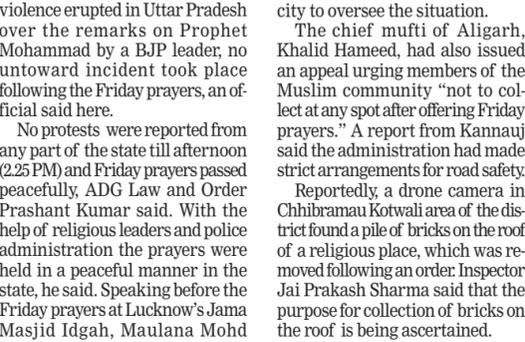
Lucknow, June 17: The two Lok Sabha by-elections in Uttar Pradesh in Rampur and Azamgarh is a litmus test for the Samajwadi Party that faces the challenge of holding on to its number two position in the state. The two bypolls will also decide the future of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) which is desperately trying to make a comeback to the center stage of UP politics. The

Azamgarh seat was vacated by Akhilesh Yadav who chose to retain his Assembly seat in March this year. His cousin and former MP Dharmendra Yadav is contesting the seat. Akhilesh, Thursday night, issued an appeal to the voters in both the constituencies to vote for his party. The Samajwadi Party has the highest stakes in these by-elections since both, Azamgarh and Rampur were held by SP. The Bahujan Samaj Party is play-

ing a spoiler for SP in Azamgarh where it has fielded Guddu Jamali, a popular local leader who is likely to wean away Muslim votes. Azamgarh has a sizeable Yadav and Muslim population and any dent in these vote banks could upset the apple cart for SP. Samajwadi Party's Maharashtra unit president Abu Asim Azmi is leading the party's campaign in Muslim-dominated areas of the district. Besides, the BJP has fielded Bhojpuri star Dinesh Lal Yadav

Nirahua who had lost to Akhilesh in 2019 in Azamgarh. The BJP campaign is supported by the presence of other Bhojpuri stars, including Manoj Tiwari, a BJP MP, and Akhilesh's absence is now emerging as a major factor in the constituency. The outcome of the election now depends on how well the BSP candidate performs. The more Muslim votes he pulls out will make it easier for the BJP to find a foothold in the SP bastion. In Rampur, which is Mohd Azam Khan's stronghold, the battle is between SP and BJP. The SP candidate here is Asim Raja, a close confidant of Mohd Azam Khan. Despite his poor health, Azam Khan is campaigning for Asim Raja and his emotional appeals seem to be having the desired impact among voters. The BJP candidate is Ghanshyam Lodhi, also a former Azam Khan acolyte. The BSP has not fielded any candidate in Rampur. Interestingly, the Congress is not participating in the by-elections this time.

ON CLOUD NINE



Students jubilate after Maharashtra State Education Board declared Class 10 exam results, in Solapur

Teen fighting cancer scores 81.60%

Thane/Palghar, June 17: Fifteen-year-old Divya Pavale, who was detected with cancer while undergoing tests for coronavirus at the peak of the pandemic, was all smiles as she managed to score a creditable 81.60 per cent in the Class 10 exams conducted by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, the results of which were declared Friday.

She was in Vakalwadi in Pune when her Covid-19 tests, prompted by frequent bouts of cold and cough, returned negative but further examination by doctors resulted in her being detected with cancer. She returned to Thane and had to make several trips over nine months to the premier Tata Memorial Hospital in Parel in central Mumbai for cancer treatment, which included several chemother-

apy sessions, blood transfusion on 14 occasions and platelets 15 times, kin said. Her parents told her to skip SSC exams this year but Pavale, a student of Saraswati Secondary School in Thane city, was adamant and confident she would overcome the trouble caused by her ailment and do well, they added. Incidentally, even on the day of results, she had to go to TMH in Parel for a treatment session, kin said.

Mumbai: Cov TPR crosses 15 per cent twice this week

Mumbai, June 17: The Covid-19 test positivity rate (TPR) in Mumbai jumped over 15 per cent twice in the current week, civic officials said Friday, as the metropolis battles a fresh surge in cases after the third wave of the pandemic waned earlier this year. They said TPR jumped to 15.58 per cent on June 14, when 1,724 people tested positive for coronavirus out of 11,065 tests conducted that day and then again on June 16 the rate shot up to 15.11 per cent when 2,366 new patients were detected on the back of 15,656 tests in

a span of 24 hours. TPR is the proportion of positive cases out of the total tests conducted and it has witnessed a steady rise in the financial capital since the last one month. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has ramped up the number of daily tests since the first week of June after the city witnessed a spike in fresh cases. Since June 7, Mumbai has been witnessing daily cases in four digits with the fresh count crossing the 2,000-mark on a few days. Consequently, the number of tests since then has also gone above 15,000 per day barring a couple of days.



UP VILLAGES TO BE PROVIDED MUSIC KITS

According to the state Minister for Culture and Tourism Jaivir Singh, the idea is to encourage villagers to sing 'Birha', 'Alha' and 'bhajans' in panchayat houses and promote mutual brotherhood and harmony in villages

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, June 17: Nearly 58,000 villages in Uttar Pradesh will be provided music kits, which will include instruments like a drum, cymbal, harmonium, in an effort to keep the tradition of folk music alive. "Uttar Pradesh has a huge heritage of folk arts but some of these arts are on the verge of extinction. The state government has decided to encourage folk artists. It will register them in various districts and they will be given an opportunity to exhibit their art in festivals fairs and other programmes organised by the state government," the state Minister for Culture and Tourism Jaivir Singh Minister said. Singh



also noted that the Bhatkhande Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya will soon complete all necessary preparations for the launch of various programmes. The National Kathak Institute, State Lalit Kala Akademi, Bharatendu Natya Akademi, Sangeet Academy, Jain Research Institute will also be activated, he said. "On the occasion of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the culture department has identified the villages of freedom fighters who sacrificed their life during the freedom struggle. The people will be made aware about the contribution of the freedom fighters. The family members of the freedom fighters will be also felicitated," adds the Minister.

DREAM BIG

FARMER APPLIES FOR ₹6.6CR BANK LOAN TO BUY COPTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aurangabad, June 17: Citing that farming had become unaffordable, a 22-year-old cultivator from Maharashtra's Hingoli has applied for a bank loan of over ₹6 crore to purchase a helicopter and rent it out. Kailas Patange, a resident of Taktoda village in the district, approached a bank in Goregaon with his loan application Thursday. Patange, who owns two acres of land, said irregular rainfall and drought-like conditions had made farming unaffordable over the years. "I cultivated soybean on my land over the last two years. But it didn't fetch me good returns due to unseasonal rains. Even the money from crop insurance wasn't enough," Patange said. Considering these factors, Patange chanced upon the idea of buying a helicopter and renting it out to make a good living.

At 137L tonnes, Maha sees its all-time high sugar production

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aurangabad, June 17: Maharashtra has set a record for itself by producing 137.28 lakh tonnes of sugar in 2021-22, which is nearly 31 lakh tonnes more than the previous year; a senior official said. The state also broke another record of crushing 1,320.31 lakh tonnes of sugarcane this year, he said. "The state has produced 137.28 lakh tonnes of sugar this year, which is 30.88 lakh tonnes more than the previous year. With this, the crushing season in the state has now ended," state Sugar Commissioner Shekhar Gaikwad told PTL. The sugar produced in Maharashtra this year is so much that it stands next to Brazil in terms of the production, he said. "The crushing season of Maharashtra lasted longer this year after an all-time high production of sugarcane. The sugarcane crushing season which used to be around



90-120 days, went up to 240 days in some parts of the state this year. The average crushing season went up to 173 days, which was 140 the previous year," he said. This year, around 200 sugar mills were involved in crushing sugarcane across the state. With the crushing capacity of 8 lakh tonnes a day, these mills crushed 1,320.31 lakh tonnes of sugarcane this year. Last year, this figure stood at 1,013.64 lakh tonnes. So far, the mills crushed nearly 306.67 lakh tonnes more sugarcane than the previ-

Maharashtra has produced 137.28 lakh tonnes of sugar this year, which is 30.88 lakh tonnes more than the previous year. With this, the crushing season in the state has now ended

SHEKHAR GAIKWAD | MAHARASHTRA SUGAR COMMISSIONER

ous year, Gaikwad said. The total sugar production of the state last year (2020-21) was 106.40 lakh tonnes. This year nine additional sugar mills (total 199) were involved in the process vis-avis 190 the previous year, the top official said. The region-wise sugar production of the state (in lakh tonnes) this year is as follows: Kolhapur 30.04, Pune 29.12, Solapur 28.43, Ahmednagar 20.07, Aurangabad 12.92, Nanded 15.32, Amravati 0.96, Nagpur 0.38.

of the day quote

Developments in our own region too have had their implications, whether we speak of Afghanistan or of Myanmar. Further away, the conflict in Ukraine is exacerbating concerns over food, fertiliser and our fuel security

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

I strongly suggest that every Bill of national importance that is likely to affect one or more states should be placed before the Council before it is introduced into Parliament, and the views of the Council are also tabled before the Parliament at the time of introduction of such Bill

M K STALIN | TN CM

We are open to any suggestion, so I have asked the textbooks to be posted on the website. There are certain objections regarding the revised textbooks and the previous textbooks, the contents of which have not been changed and kept as it is in the revised text book. Our government is open to rectifying if anything needs to be

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

SHORT TAKES

Soldier dies

Srinagar: A soldier was killed in an accidental grenade blast on Friday in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district. Police sources said that the grenade exploded accidentally when signalman Bharat Yaduwanshi was on duty at the Gonipora Gugtiyal Camp in Kupwara.

2 militants killed

Srinagar: Two terrorists were killed in a gunfight with the security forces in the Kokernag area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district, officials said Friday. "One more terrorist killed (total 02). Search going on," police said in a tweet. Both the terrorists belonged to the Hizbul Mujahideen terror outfit and one of them was involved in the killing of Sarpanch Ghulam Rasool Dar and his wife in 2021.

Man arrested

New Delhi: A 22-year-old man was arrested in Delhi for trying to break an ATM in a bid to steal money from it, an official said Friday. The accused, identified as Sanjay, a resident of Agra, was not carrying any equipment to break the ATM machine. Sharing details, DCP Benita Mary Jaiker said a PCR call was received regarding the entry of a thief in an ICICI Bank ATM at C Block, Tigr Colony in South Delhi at 2.38 a.m. on Thursday.

Techie ends life

Hyderabad: A software engineer committed suicide by jumping under a speeding train following failure in love. N. Ramesh (26) killed himself under Simhapuri Express between Ghatkesar and Cherlapally railway stations late on Thursday. The railway police identified the body with the help of identity card found in his pocket. Hailing from Nagepalle village in Peddapalli district, Ramesh was working as software engineer with a firm in Hyderabad.

Anti-tank mine defused in Samba

Jammu: Troops of the Border Security Force (BSF) detected an anti-tank mine near the International Border in Ramgarh sector of Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, which was defused later. The mine was found on Thursday evening.

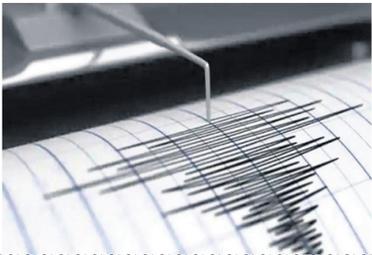


Some have been sent behind bars, many more are in the waiting. Lists are ready. Those who looted the state will be held accountable. I just need some time

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

MILD TREMORS FELT IN DELHI

Mild tremors were felt in parts of Delhi-NCR and northwest India due to a 5.2 magnitude quake in Afghanistan Friday afternoon



Gopalkrishna, Farooq lack personality for Prez: Sena

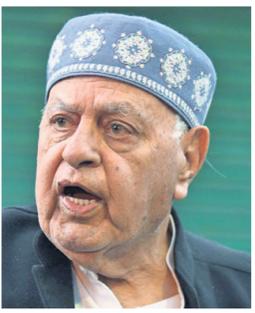
AGENCIES

Mumbai, June 17: The Shiv Sena Friday said people may ask how the Opposition will give a capable prime minister if it cannot field a strong candidate for the upcoming presidential polls, stressing that it needs to take the elections for the next president seriously.

In an editorial in its mouthpiece 'Saamana', the party said Mahatma Gandhi's grandson Gopalkrishna Gandhi and National Conference's Farooq Abdullah, the "regular names that crop up during the presidential polls", don't have the personality or heft to make it a tightly-contested battle.

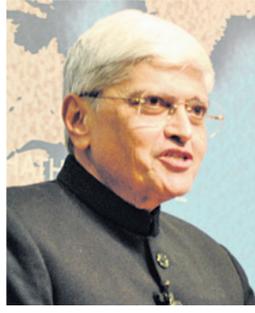
On the other hand, the government is not also likely to come up with a "bright" candidate, the party said, adding that five years back, two-three people shortlisted President Ram Nath Kovind's name and even this year they are likely to do the same.

The term of President Kovind ends on July 24 and an election to find his successor is scheduled to be held on July 18. The process to file nominations for the presidential polls began Wednesday.



Seventeen opposition parties, including the Congress, DMK, NCP and Samajwadi Party, attended the crucial meeting in Delhi on June 15, convened by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to build a consensus on fielding a joint candidate against the BJP-led NDA in the presidential elections.

Leaders of these parties also urged NCP supremo Sharad Pawar to be their joint candidate for the presidential election, but the veteran leader declined the offer at the meeting. A second meeting of the opposition parties will be convened by Pawar in Mumbai on June 20 or



21, sources said. "If not Pawar, then who? Had the work to find answers to this question done six months back, then that would have displayed the Opposition's seriousness for this election," the party said. "If the Opposition cannot field a strong candidate for the presidential polls, then how can it give a capable prime minister in 2024? This question will come to people's mind," it said. The party said if the numbers add up for an opposition prime minister in 2024, then there will be "many grooms in the queue", but they avoid the presidential polls.

BJP forms panel

NEW DELHI: The BJP Friday formed a 14-member management committee for next month's Presidential poll. Union Minister for Water Resources Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has been made convener and BJP national general secretaries Vinod Tawde and C T Ravi are co-conveners of the committee. Union ministers G Kishan Reddy, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Sarbananda Sonowal, Arjun Meghwal and Bharati Pawar are members of the committee. Bharatiya Janata Party national general secretary Tarun Chugh, vice-president D K Aruna, national secretary Rituraj Sinha, women's wing national president Vanati Srinivasan, spokesperson Sambit Patra and MP and vice-president of the party's Assam unit Rajdeep Roy are also part of the 14-member committee. Sources said that the committee will manage a nationwide campaign for the NDA candidate.

Dera chief gets parole

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, June 17: In less than five months of granting a 21-day furlough, self-styled jailed godman and Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh was Friday granted parole for a month by the BJP-led Haryana government.

He is currently serving a life term for the murder of his manager in 2002 and was also convicted for the rape of two women in 2017. He's lodged in Haryana's Sunaria jail since 2017 after being convicted in the rape and murder cases. He has a large number of followers in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

Earlier, he was released from the jail four times for various reasons, including his plea to meet the ailing mother. The parole has been granted for the first time since his conviction. Justifying the decision, an official said Ram Rahim has been granted parole as per the jail manual. He will stay in Barnawa in Bagpath, the first ashram established in Uttar Pradesh in 1980, during parole.

According to an official, the dera chief was provided Z-plus security cover during his parole owing to the "high threat perception" to his life from "pro-Khalistan" groups.

Earlier just ahead of the Punjab polls, Ram Rahim, who is lodged at the high-security Sunaria jail in Rohtak, 250 kms from state capital Chandigarh, was granted furlough on February 7 to meet his family in Gurugram.

In June 2019, Ram Rahim Singh had withdrawn his parole plea after the state BJP government was cornered by opposition parties for favouring the self-styled godman, who sought parole for 42 days to tend to his agricultural fields at his sect's headquarters in Sirsa town. Also, the high court had rejected his parole plea for attending the wedding ceremony of his foster daughter.

Ram Rahim was sentenced to 20 years in jail in August 2017 for raping two women.

CHANDRASHEKHAR'S PLEA: SC SEEKS CENTRE'S STAND

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandrashekhara had moved the Supreme Court to seek his transfer from Tihar Jail to another prison, saying that since he has levelled allegations against jail officials, he faces a threat to his life



my life from the Tihar authorities and the court responded positively" his counsel Ashok K. Singh said. "I am not seeking to be transferred to a prison of my choice. I am entitled to the security of my life. Put me under any condition, produce me virtually but I have a tremendous threat to my life," counsel argued during the course of the hearing.

Chandrashekhara had moved the Supreme Court to seek his transfer from Tihar Jail to another prison, saying that since he has levelled allegations against jail of-

ficials, he faces a threat to his life.

The matter would now be heard on Monday. A counter-affidavit submitted by the Delhi Police before the apex court earlier stated that Chandrashekhara, who is in judicial custody since April 28, 2017, was lodged in Jail no 1 in Tihar initially and then shifted to Jails no 7, 4, 8, 3, 10, 4 and is now again in jail no 1 since January 25 this year.

Prior to that the Delhi High Court also sought the response of the CBI on a plea moved by the jailed conman alleging that the Tihar prison authorities have extorted around ₹12.5 crore from him in the last two years. Chandrashekhara, who is charged with many multi-crore fraud cases, is also accused of extorting ₹200 crore from the family of former Fortis Healthcare and Ranbaxy Lab promoters Shivinder and Malvinder Singh from the premises of the prison.

UPPING THE ANTE



Police use water cannon to disperse Youth Congress workers protesting over summoning of party leader Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case by Enforcement Directorate in Kochi

New initiative to identify smuggled antique idols of TN

The special wing of the Tamil Nadu police will seek the support of IIT-Madras to create artificial intelligence-based software to hunt for smuggled idols belonging to temples of the state

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, June 17: The Idol wing of Tamil Nadu police is joining hands with Indian Institute of Technology-Madras for identifying smuggled antique idols from the state.

The special wing of the Tamil Nadu police will seek the support of IIT-Madras to create artificial intelligence-based software to hunt for smuggled idols belonging to temples of the state.

Director-General of Police K. Jayanth Murali, who is heading the Idol Wing of the Tamil Nadu police, while addressing media persons said, "We are developing an algorithm along with the IIT-Madras, with the unique characteristics of idols belonging to different periods like Pandya, Chola, and Sangam periods."

This software, according to the police officer, will look for idols from Tamil Nadu using the images of idols using the images available on international web-



sites of museums and collectors. The Tamil Nadu idol wing had identified two more idols stolen from Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu and now in Denver and California. The DGP said that the department registered a case on Wednesday and initiated action

RAIN BATTERS ASSAM

NE reels under floods



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, June 17: The flood situation in the northeast remained grim Friday as incessant rainfall continued to pound parts of the region for the fourth consecutive day, leaving major rivers in spate, officials said.

According to Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), over 11 lakh have been impacted due to rain and floods in 25 districts of the state. The situation is no better in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh, where roads have been damaged due to landslides and villages are largely flooded.

Sohra (erstwhile Cherrapunji) in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills received 972 mm of rainfall in 24 hours ending 8:30 am on Friday -- highest in June since 1995 -- the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Friday. A man went missing in Assam's Sonitpur district after a boat carrying him and three others overturned in Jia Bhoroli river.

Three persons were rescued, but the fourth individual could not be traced, a district official said. Fresh landslides were reported in several areas of Guwahati and parts of Dima-Hasao, Goalpara, Hojai, Kamrup and Kamrup (M).

The toll due to flood and landslides in Assam this year rose to 46 Thursday after two children were buried alive when their house collapsed. Union Minister for Shipping, Ports, Waterways and Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal, during the day, called Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, and discussed the grim flood and landslide situation that crippled life in the state, an official said.

The CM apprised the Union min-

ister of the prevailing situation and how the various departments are working round the clock to help people in the affected areas, he said. Several rivers are flowing above the danger mark in Assam, including Brahmaputra at Nimatighat and Dhubri, Kopili at Nagaon, Puthimari at Kamrup, Pagaladiya at Nalbari, Manas and Beke at Barpeta, a bulletin issued by the Central Water Commission (CWC) maintained. Heavy erosion has been reported from districts such as Bongaigaon, Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Kamrup, Kokrajhar, Morigaon, Nalbari, Sonitpur and South Salmara.

The current wave of floods has impacted 1,702 villages, and forced more than 68,000 people to take shelter in 150 relief camps. Besides, 46 relief centres have been opened in various places for distribution of food and medicines. NDRF, SDRF, Fire and Emergency Service personnel, the police and ASDMA volunteers are carrying out evacuee drive in the affected areas on war-footing.

So far, 5,840 people have been safely evacuated, ASDMA officials stated. Lakhs of animals and a total crop area of 20,142 hectares have been affected by the rain that began earlier in the week and subsequent flood.

Sonia being treated for post-Covid issues

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 17: Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi is undergoing treatment for fungal infection in the lower respiratory tract and other post-Covid symptoms, the party said Friday.

She was admitted to Sir Gangaram Hospital after she developed profuse bleeding from the nose on June 12. A statement released by Congress on Friday said: "A fungal infection in the lower respiratory tract was also detected upon admission. She is currently being treated for it along with other post-Covid symptoms. She continues to be under close observation and treatment."

Sunday, party General Secretary Randeep Surjewala tweeted: "Congress President Sonia Gandhi was admitted to Ganga Ram Hospital today owing to Covid-related issues. She is stable and will be kept at the hospital for observation."

international



We have full confidence that (we can) contain the epidemic, steady the economy and achieve the goal of safe economic development
WANG WENBIN | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

FRESH ALERT

China's national observatory Friday renewed a yellow alert for high temperatures, as heatwaves hit parts of the country. During daylight hours Friday, parts of Hebei, Shanxi, Henan, Shandong, Anhui, Jiangsu, Hubei, Shaanxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, and Xinjiang are expected to see temperatures of 37 to 40 degrees Celsius



of the day quote

Adequate infrastructure is the key for development and luring investments
ABDEL-FATTAH AL-SISI | EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT

Russia is not squeaky clean. Russia is what it is. And we are not ashamed of showing who we are
SERGEI LAVROV | RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

I appreciate the spirit in which it's been offered and one of the reasons why Australia has been invited to NATO is that Australia is the largest non-NATO contributor to give support to Ukraine in its defense of its national sovereignty against Russia's illegal, immoral invasion. And we'll continue to stand with the people of Ukraine
ANTHONY ALBANESE | AUSTRALIA'S NEW PM

SHORT TAKES

China launches 3rd aircraft carrier

Beijing: China Friday launched its third aircraft carrier, the country's most advanced, as an aggressive Beijing sought to extend the range of its navy in the strategic Indo-Pacific region and perhaps at a later date to the faraway Indian Ocean where it has already acquired bases. The aircraft carrier named Fujian was launched at a brief ceremony held at Shanghai's Jiangnan Shipyard, the official media reported from the eastern metropolis.

Alabama church shooting kills 2

Vestavia Hills: A gunman opened fire at a potluck dinner inside a suburban Alabama church, killing two members and wounding a third before being taken into custody Thursday, authorities said. Emergency dispatchers got a call at around 6:20 pm reporting an active shooter at Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in the Birmingham suburb of Vestavia Hills, said Police Capt. Shane Ware. A suspect was detained and the wounded victim was being treated at a hospital, Ware said at a press conference late Thursday.

Pak stays on FATF 'Grey List'

Islamabad: Pakistan will continue to be on the "Grey List" of countries under increased monitoring of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a statement from the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog said Friday. The watchdog said the country may be removed from the list after an on-site visit to verify the implementation of Pakistan's reform on countering terror financing mechanisms.

Mexico finds truck with 366 migrants

Mexico City: Mexican immigration authorities said Thursday they found a veritable United Nations of migrants aboard a freight truck. Mexico's National Immigration Institute said the truck was carrying 366 migrants, including people from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Yemen, Uzbekistan and South Africa.

CoD maker gives clean chit to seniors

San Francisco: Activision Blizzard, the developer behind the popular game 'Call of Duty' (CoD), has given a clean chit to its senior executives on gender discrimination charges after initiating an internal probe. In a filing with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the company said that its own board did not fail to act when presented with allegations of harassment.

EU commission backs Ukr's membership bid



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, right, speaks with from left, European Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement Oliver Varhelyi, European Commissioner for Internal Market Thierry Breton and European Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders during a meeting of the College of Commissioners at EU headquarters in Brussels

REUTERS

Brussels/Kyiv, Ukraine, June 17: The European Union gave its blessing Friday for Ukraine and its neighbour Moldova to become candidates to join the bloc, reaching out deep into the former Soviet Union for what would be a major geopolitical shift resulting from Russia's invasion.

"Ukrainians are ready to die for the European perspective," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told a news conference, wearing Ukrainian colours: a yellow blazer over a blue blouse. "We want them to live with

Ukraine EU candidacy signals major shift in European geopolitics

Europe can create a new history of freedom,' Zelenskyy says

Battle for Sievierodonetsk grinds on

Ukraine claims strike on Russian tugboat

the European dream." Though only the start of a process that may take many years, it puts Kyiv on course to realise an aspiration that would have been

beyond its reach just months ago. Ukraine applied to join the EU four days after Russian troops poured across its border in February. Another four days later, so did Moldova and Georgia - smaller ex-Soviet states also contending with separatist regions occupied by Russia.

"It's the first step on the EU membership path that'll certainly bring our victory closer," tweeted President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "Precisely because of the bravery of the Ukrainians, Europe can create a new history of freedom, and finally remove the grey zone in Eastern Europe between the EU and Russia." One of President Vladimir Putin's main objectives in launching an invasion that has killed thousands of people, destroyed cities and driven millions to flight was to halt the eastward expansion of Western institutions.

Friday's announcement underlined how the war has had the opposite effect: convincing Finland and Sweden to join transatlantic alliance NATO, and now the EU to embark on potentially its most ambitious expansion since welcoming Eastern European states after the Cold War. Leaders of EU countries are expected to endorse the decision at a summit next week. The leaders of the three biggest - Germany, France and Italy - conveyed their solidarity Thursday by visiting Kyiv, along with the president of Romania.

US is there for India: Biden administration

State Department spokesperson Ned Price's remarks came in response to a question about whether the US is talking with the Indian authorities as India and other Asian nations are becoming an increasingly vital source of oil revenues for sanctions-hit Russia, despite strong pressure from America

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 17: The US is there for India, the Biden administration has said, reiterating that New Delhi's relationship with Moscow developed over several decades when Washington was "not prepared or able to be a partner of choice" for the Indian government.

"We have had a number of discussions with our Indian partners, and the point that we have made is that every country is going to have a different relationship with Moscow," State Department spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at his daily news conference Thursday. Russia has overtaken Saudi Arabia to become India's second-biggest supplier of oil behind Iraq as refiners snap up Russian crude available at a deep discount



following the war in Ukraine, industry data showed recently.

India, the world's third-biggest oil-importing and consuming nation, has long defended purchases of crude oil from Russia following President Vladimir Putin ordering the invasion of Ukraine. The oil ministry had last month stated that "energy purchases from Russia remain minuscule in comparison to India's total consumption." Price said India's relationship with Russia developed over several decades. "It developed over the course of decades at a time when the United States was not prepared or able to be a partner of choice for the Indian government," Price said. "This is not a partnership built in the course of days, weeks, or months, Price said. "I mentioned before that India's relationship with Russia was built up over the course of many decades, as countries reorient their relationship with Moscow, as we have seen many of them do. This will be a gradual process," he said in response to a question.

Britain approves Julian Assange extradition to US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 17: The UK government Friday gave the go-ahead for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to be extradited to the US to face charges over the alleged leak of classified documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

UK Home Secretary Priti Patel gave the requisite ministerial sign-off for the 50-year-old Australian national's extradition order after several stages of court appeals right up to the Supreme Court. However, a counter appeal by Assange's legal team is expected to restart another round of legal battle.

"On 17 June, following consideration by both the magistrates



court and High Court, the extradition of Mr. Julian Assange to the US was ordered. Mr. Assange retains the normal 14-day right to appeal," a UK Home Office spokesperson said.

"Under the Extradition Act 2003, the Secretary of State must sign an extradition order if there are no grounds to prohibit the order being made. Extradition requests are only sent to the home secretary once a judge decides it can proceed after considering various aspects of the case," the spokesperson said.

"In this case, the UK courts have not found that it would be oppressive, unjust, or an abuse of process to extradite Mr. Assange. Nor have they found that extradition would be incompatible with his human rights, including his right to a fair trial and to freedom of expression, and that whilst in the US he will be treated appropriately, including in relation to his health," the spokesperson added.

Assange has denied any wrongdoing all along and has been held at Belmarsh high-security prison in London since 2019 when he was taken into custody from the Ecuadorian Embassy where he had sought asylum.

He had been living in the embassy since 2012 to avoid extradition to Sweden to face sex offence allegations, which he denied and were eventually dropped.

FDA authorises 1st Covid-19 shots for infants, preschoolers

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 17: US regulators Friday authorised the first Covid-19 shots for infants and preschoolers, paving the way for vaccinations to begin next week.

The Food and Drug Administration's action follows its advisory panel's unanimous recommendation for the shots from Moderna and Pfizer. That means US kids under 5 - roughly 18 million youngsters - are eligible for the shots, about 1 1/2 years after the vaccines first became available in the country for adults, who have been hit the hardest during the pandemic.

There's one step left: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends how to use vaccines. Its independent advisers began debating the two-dose Moderna and the three-dose Pfizer vaccines on Friday and will make its recommendation Saturday. A final sign-off is expected soon after from CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky. At a Senate hearing Thursday, Walensky said her staff was working over the Juneteenth federal holiday weekend "because we understand the urgency of this for American parents." She said pediatric deaths from Covid-19 have been higher than what is generally seen from the flu each year. "So I actually think we need to protect young children, as well as protect everyone with the vaccine and especially protect elders," she said.

The FDA also authorised Moderna's vaccines for school-aged children and teens; the CDC will review those next week.

BEACH LOVERS



Thousands of people relax in the hot weather on Bournemouth beach, in England

PTI PHOTO

ENERGY CRISIS

AGENCIES

Colombo, June 17: Sri Lanka is awaiting official confirmation from India on a new credit line that would allow the cash-strapped nation to have supplies of petrol and diesel for the next four months, Energy Minister Kanchana Wijesekara said Friday.

"We did receive unofficial communication on a new credit line for fuel three to four weeks ago, so far no official confirmation of it being made available," Wijesekara said.

He said the anticipated USD 500 million line of credit facility from India would enable the country to have supplies of petrol and diesel for the next four months.

The government was also working on making arrangements to purchase crude oil even though it is a more costly operation.

The refilling stations are experiencing serpentine queues with the government cutting down on issues to manage the crisis.

The minister said only 3,000 MT of diesel is being issued to meet the

Lanka awaits Indian nod for new credit line

2 WEEKS' WFH FOR GOVT STAFF

With transportation coming to a near standstill nation-wide due to fuel shortage, Sri Lanka Friday declared "work from home" (WFH) for government employees for the next two weeks. The Ministry of Home Affairs issued a circular Friday urging all government institutions to limit the number of employees and arrange for a two-week WFH programme starting next Monday.

daily demand of 5,400 MT. Only 2,600 MT of petrol is being issued daily when the demand is for 3,400 MT. Wijesekara said the fuel suppliers are no longer giving Sri

Lanka credit and demand upfront cash payments. The current shortages were made worse by the government's inability to get the state-owned Bank of Ceylon to open

Letters of Credit for fuel imports. As a measure to tackle the fuel shortages and the resultant transport difficulties the state sector employees are allowed to treat Fridays as holidays starting from June 17, the public administration ministry said in a circular. This will be in force for the next three months. A special holiday was granted on Friday for all schools due to transport difficulties. The privately-owned bus operators said they were doing only 20 per cent of the services due to fuel scarcity.

China blocks US, India move to list Makki as global terrorist

AGENCIES

United Nations/Beijing, June 17: China has blocked a joint proposal by India and the US to designate Pakistan-based top LeT militant Abdul Rehman Makki as a global terrorist under the UN sanctions committee, a move Beijing's claimed were in accordance with the relevant procedures and rules.

On June 1, India and the US jointly proposed to list Makki under the UN Security Council's Al-Qaeda and ISIL Sanctions Committee which is also known as the UNSC 1267 Committee. But, China, a close ally of Pakistan, placed a "technical hold" on the proposal to list Makki and this measure can last for up to six months at a time.

All decisions of the Committee are taken through consensus. In New Delhi, government sources

said China's decision runs counter to Beijing's claim of combating terrorism and signals its "double standards".

He has been involved in raising funds, recruiting and radicalising youths to resort to violence and planning attacks in India, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir, they said. Protecting well-known terrorists from sanctioning will only undermine China's credibility and "risk exposing" even itself more to the growing threat of terrorism, they said.

"This decision by China is extremely unfortunate given the overwhelming evidence against Makki. Moreover, it runs counter to China's claims of combating terrorism," said a source.

In Beijing, the Chinese foreign ministry on Friday defended its move, saying that its actions were



XI JINPING

in accordance with the relevant procedures and rules.

"I would like to say that China opposes terrorism in all its manifestation and the actions we take in the 1267 committee in the UNSC



ABDUL REHMAN MAKKI

always abide by relevant procedures and rules," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said when asked why China chose to put a hold on designating the known Pakistan-based terrorist.

Makki, a US-designated terrorist, is the brother-in-law of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief and 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed

Both India and the US have already listed Makki as a terrorist under their domestic laws

"China will continue to carry out its work in a constructive and responsible attitude," he said.

Asked to elaborate on his comments, especially on procedures and rules, Wang declined to go into details. "I have already shared China's position quite clearly. I won't go back to that," he said.

Responding to another question about whether China's stand to put a hold on the designation of the wanted terrorist will add to

the growing list of issues causing discord between India and China, he said: "I have already elaborated China's position and as to the China-India relations, our position is clear and consistent".

"We hope that India and China can work together and promote the relations to be more sound and stable," Wang said, amidst a chill in bilateral ties over the unresolved military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

Earlier also, China has placed holds and blocks on bids by India and its allies to list Pakistan-based terrorists. In May 2019, India had won a huge diplomatic win at the UN when the global body designated Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar as a "global terrorist", a decade after New Delhi had first approached the world body on the issue.

of the day quote

The way the capacity utilisation in the economy has improved from 69 per cent to 74 per cent, and is inching upwards, it is a clear sign that the economy is poised for its natural growth

DINESH KHARA | CHAIRMAN, SBI

I am confident that telecom players will participate with enthusiasm in 5G auction and make it a success

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER

Our collaboration with GGGI is an important step towards helping developing countries achieve their carbon-neutral goals and promote environmental sustainability projects

PAWAN SINGH | MD & CEO, PFS

SHORT TAKES

No consensus on GST rationalisation

New Delhi: A panel of state ministers on GST rate rationalisation on Friday failed to reach a consensus as some members opposed changes to tax slabs and rates, sources said. The Group of Ministers will, however, present a status report to the GST Council on the consensus which was arrived at the previous meeting of the GoM on November 20, 2021, they added. The GoM will seek an extension to submit its final report, they said, adding issues of tax rates will also be raised in the upcoming Council meeting later this month.

Oil retailers urged to maintain stock

New Delhi: In a bid to rein in private fuel retailers curtailing operations to cut losses, Government has expanded the scope of Universal Service Obligation (USO), mandating licensed entities to maintain petrol and diesel sales at all petrol pumps, including in remote areas, for specified working hours. "The government has now expanded the horizon of USO by including all retail outlets (petrol pumps) including remote area ROs under their ambit," the Oil Ministry said in a statement Friday. Failure to meet norms can lead to the cancellation of licences.

Sharma buys 1.7L shares of Paytm

New Delhi: Digital financial services firm One97 Communications' Managing Director Vijay Shekhar Sharma has purchased 1.7 lakh shares of the company worth ₹11 crore, according to a regulatory filing. The disclosures from the company, which operates under Paytm brand, show that Sharma bought the shares May 30-31. May 30, Sharma bought 1,00,552 shares worth ₹6.31 crore and May 31, he bought 71,469 shares worth ₹4.68 crore. The company stock was trading at ₹625.75 in afternoon session.

Reliance considers acquiring Revlon

New Delhi: Indian conglomerate Reliance Industries is considering buying out Revlon Inc in the United States, days after the cosmetics giant filed for bankruptcy, business channel ET Now reported Friday, citing sources. The report comes as Revlon filed for bankruptcy earlier this week after global supply chain disruptions drove up raw material costs and prompted vendors to demand upfront payments.



Given the ongoing sense of uncertainty among the private sector participants, both in banking and the non-banking world, the government is committed to making sure that capital expenditure continues such that growth impulse that we have regained after the third wave is not surrendered

V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

'SAME-DAY DELIVERY' BY DELIVERY

Integrated logistics player Delivery Friday said it has launched "guaranteed same-day delivery" service in 15 key cities in the country to help direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands deliver their orders the same day. Under the new service, orders received as late as 3 pm will be delivered on the same day



Hyundai working on small and affordable electric car for India

IN INDIA, EVs ACCOUNT FOR LESS THAN 1% OF TOTAL CAR SALES, BUT THE GOVT IS AIMING FOR A SHARE OF 30% BY 2030 AS IT LOOKS TO REDUCE POLLUTION AND FUEL IMPORTS

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 17: South Korea's Hyundai Motor Co has begun developing a small electric car for India for the future even as it focuses on bringing more premium models to the country starting this year, an executive told Reuters Thursday.

Various departments are working on issues such as charging ecosystem, sales network, manufacturing and the kind of assembly process the carmaker should have, Tarun Garg, director sales, marketing and service for Hyundai India, said in an interview. "We have to look at as much lo-



calisation as possible," Garg said, referring to sourcing and producing components locally to control costs and keep the cars affordable. "So we are able to bring it at the right price. The ecosystem should be ready, we should have enough charging". The small EV is part of Hyundai's broader plan to invest

'EVs to cost on par with petrol vehicles in a year'

New Delhi: The prices of all electric vehicles (EVs) will be equal to the cost of petrol vehicles in the country within one year, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said Friday. Gadkari further said the government is promoting ethanol produced from crop residue instead of petrol and diesel. "I am trying...Within one year, the cost of electric vehicles will be equivalent to the cost of petrol vehicles in the country and we will save money spent on fossil fuels," he said while addressing TV9 What India Think Today Global Summit. The minister said the government is already promoting green fuels in a big way.

₹40 billion (\$512 million) to launch six electric vehicles in India by 2028, making a clean driving push in a country with some of the world's most polluted cities. Until its small EV hits the roads, Hyundai will launch premium models starting with its Ioniq 5 electric crossover this year and will gradually move down the price chain, Garg said. The Ioniq 5, which has a range of about 480 kms, is priced starting at around \$44,000 in the United States.

'FOCUS ON INFLATION TARGET DISASTROUS'

RBI not behind the curve: Guv

CEA Arvind Subramanian's article blamed the RBI for being behind the curve, pointing out that the 4 per cent inflation target has not been met since October 2019 and in 18 of the 32 months since then, the headline consumer price inflation has breached even the RBI's ceiling of 6 per cent



Economy contracted by 6.6% in FY21 and recovered to barely above the pre-pandemic levels in FY22

RBI pulled out excess liquidity of over ₹6 lakh crore from a slew of measures that it has carried out



RBI shoots down Big Tech's financial services play

Mumbai: RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Friday said the entry of big tech firms into the financial sector poses systemic concerns like overleveraging at the borrowers' ends. The entry of firms like Google, Amazon and Facebook (Meta), referred as big tech companies, also poses question marks around competition and data privacy. "They (big tech) carry risks, which need to be properly assessed and dealt with," Das said while speaking at Modern BFSI Summit 2022 organised by Financial Express. Such companies can include entities in e-commerce, search engines and social media platforms that have started to offer financial services in a "big way" on their own or through tie-ups, he said, adding this is leading to the use of new methodologies in credit assessment. "Such large-scale use of new methodologies in credit assessment can create systemic concerns like overleverage, inadequate credit assessment and similar other risks," he added. Das said deploying harsh recovery methods like calling up at odd hours or using foul language is "unacceptable" and assured that the RBI is paying "serious attention" to such happenings to ensure necessary action is taken to curb such activities.

Direct tax collections rise 45% till mid-June



The improved collections are mainly due to a 47 per cent growth in TDS mop-up and a 33 per cent rise in advance tax realisation for April-June quarter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Reflecting an uptick in economy, net direct tax collections between April and mid-June jumped 45 per cent to over ₹3.39 lakh crore, the Income Tax department said Friday.

The net direct tax collection of over ₹3.39 lakh crore included Corporation Tax (CIT) of over ₹1.70 lakh crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT), including Security Transaction Tax (STT), of more than ₹1.67 lakh crore. "The figures of direct tax collections for the financial year 2022-23, as on June 16, 2022, show that net collections are at ₹3,39,225 crore compared to ₹2,33,651 crore over the corresponding period of the preceding year, representing an increase of 45 per cent over the collections of the preceding year," the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said.

The gross collections grew 40 per cent to over ₹3.69 lakh crore till June 16. The collection in the same period last year was over ₹2.64 lakh crore. Gross collection included refunds of ₹30,334 crore.

The advance tax collections for the first quarter this fiscal stood at over ₹1.01 lakh crore against ₹75,783 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal, witnessing a growth of more than 33 per cent. This comprises CIT at ₹78,842 crore and PIT at ₹22,175 crore. The TDS collections at over ₹2.29 lakh crore was 46 per cent higher than ₹1,57,434 crore realised during the corresponding period of the preceding financial year. Self-assessment tax collection was recorded at ₹21,849 crore, 41 per cent up from ₹15,483 crore collected in the year-ago period. In the last fiscal ended March 31, 2022, India's direct tax collection rose by a record 49 per cent to ₹14.10 lakh crore. The government has estimated to collect ₹14.20 lakh crore from direct taxes this fiscal. This includes ₹7.20 lakh crore from corporate taxes and ₹7 lakh crore from individual taxpayers.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 17: Governor Shaktikanta Das Friday refuted criticism of the RBI being behind the curve in its policies, making it clear that the consequences of focusing on the 4 per cent inflation target would have been "disastrous" for the pandemic-hit economy. In comments that came two days after former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian co-authored an article blaming the RBI for acting late on inflation and being behind the curve, Das said the central bank acted as per the evolving economic developments and also gave out a timeline of its actions to explain the shift. "...tolerance of a higher inflation during the pandemic was a necessity, and we still stand by our decision," Das said speaking at an event organised by Financial

If we had attempted to keep monetary policy tighter at that time, the economic damage that you would have caused to our economy and to our financial markets would have been enormous and it would have taken years for India to come back

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

Express here. He said the RBI switched into ultra-accommodation as soon as the country went into the lockdown and shifted focus to inflation two years later in April 2022, when it saw that the GDP had gone beyond the pre-pandemic level. "I feel that we are very much in line with the requirements of our time, the RBI has acted proactively and I would not agree with any perception or any sort of descrip-

tion that the RBI has fallen behind the curve," Das said.

"If we had been very firm in maintaining 4 per cent (inflation) and kept the rates unduly high, I'm sorry, the consequences of that approach would have been disastrous for the economy."

According to the governor, the RBI was not optimistic with its FY23 inflation estimate of 4.5 per cent made public ahead of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which sent the oil prices rocketing. Das said in the estimate, the RBI had baked-in oil prices to be at \$80 per barrel, and had decided to wait till the end of the fiscal to see the developments and take actions accordingly. Seeking to stress that the RBI was watchful of the inflation situation, the governor said the central bank, which had initially decided to look through the higher CPI prints in the pandemic, dropped the word "transitory" from its commentary in

August 2021 when it saw the inflation is persistent.

He, however, assured of a smooth exit from the 'chakravayuh' (labyrinth) of easy liquidity and added that it will be a "soft landing".

HCL to hire 1,000 freshers from state

Bhubaneswar: Aiming to empower youths across state, HCL Technologies Friday announced beginning of its walk-in drive where the company will look to educate and hire 1,000 undergraduate students from Odisha. Under its flagship career program 'TechBee' the leading global technology company will conduct drive at six cities in state from 18 June to 23 July. The six cities selected under the programme are Bhubaneswar, Rourkela, Berahampur, Sambalpur, Koraput and Cuttack. "The TechBee programme prepares students technically and professionally for entry-level IT jobs in HCL. Under this, the candidates will undergo intensive 12-month training and will also get an opportunity to do an internship with HCL. While working at HCL, students may also enroll in an undergraduate degree programme offered by reputed partner institutions like BITS Pilani, SAITRA and Amity University," informed Subbaraman B, Vice President, HCL Technologies. After completing the training programme, students earn a salary between ₹1.70 to 2.20 lakh per annum. As a part of the program, selected students will get an assured job at HCL Technologies upon completion of training and an internship. The internship will come with a stipend of ₹10,000. "Students who have completed their 10+2 in 2021 or are appearing for the same in 2022 with mathematics or business mathematics can apply for the programme. Selected students should score 60% or higher in their Class XII to continue with the programme. Eligible candidates will appear for an aptitude test to assess candidate's grasp in quantitative, logical reasoning and English. This will be followed by interview," Subbaraman added.

Markets suffer worst week in over 2 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 17: Benchmark equity indices extended their fall for the sixth straight session Friday, marking their worst week in over two years, tracking World stocks headed for their weakest performance this week since the markets' pandemic meltdown in March 2020.

Investors were further hemmed in by unrelenting foreign fund outflows and rising crude oil prices. After a see-saw session, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 135.37 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at an over one-year low of 51,360.42. Similarly the broader NSE Nifty lost 67.10 points or 0.44 per cent to end at 15,293.50. Titan emerged as the top lag-



UNDERSCORING GLOOM

On a weekly basis, the Sensex plunged 2,943.02 points or 5.42%, while the Nifty shed 908.30 points or 5.61%

Investors' wealth has tumbled by over Rs 18.17-cr during six days of market decline

gard among the Sensex constituents, skidding 6.06 per cent, followed by Wipro, Dr Reddy's, Asian Paints, Sun Pharma, L&T, UltraTech Cement and PowerGrid. On the other hand, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, Reliance Industries, ITC, HDFC Bank and Tata Steel were among the gainers,

spurring up to 2.63 per cent. Over the last six sessions, equity investors have lost a whopping ₹18.17 lakh crore, with the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms standing at ₹2,36,77,816.08. In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined by 0.88 per cent on Friday, while the mid-

cap index dipped 0.68 per cent. Among the BSE sectoral indices, oil & gas fell the most by 3.07 per cent, followed by consumer durables (2.68 per cent), energy (1.86 per cent), healthcare (1.60 per cent), consumer discretionary goods & services (1.59 per cent) and utilities (1.57 per cent). Finance, bank, metal and realty ended in the green. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 0.96 per cent to \$120.96 per barrel. The rupee pared initial gains to settle just 1 paise higher at 78.09 (provisional) against the US dollar Friday. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market, as they sold shares worth ₹3,257.65 crore Thursday, as per exchange data.

WTO strikes global trade deals after 'roller coaster' talks

The deals were forged in the early hours of the sixth day of a conference of more than 100 trade ministers that was seen as a test of the ability of nations to strike multilateral deals amid geopolitical tensions heightened by the Ukraine war. Delegates passed seven agreements and declarations

Friday as well as a deal to boost the supply of Covid-19 vaccines in a series of pledges that were heavy on compromise. The package, which the WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala called "unprecedented", included the two highest profile deals under consideration - on fisheries and on a partial waiver of intellectual property (IP) rights for Covid-19 vaccines. The accord to curb fishing subsidies is only the second multilateral agreement setting new global trading rules struck in the WTO's 27-year history and is far more ambitious than the first, which was designed to cut red tape. At one stage, a series of demands from India, which sees itself as the champion of poor farmers and fishermen as well as developing countries, appeared set to paralyse talks but accommodations were



The package of agreements we have reached will make a difference to the lives of people around the world. The outcomes demonstrate that the WTO is in fact capable of responding to emergencies of our time

NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA | DIRECTOR-GENERAL, WTO

found, trade sources said. The WTO's rules dictate that all decisions are taken by consensus, with any single member able to exercise a veto.

'LOT OF BUMPS'
"It was not an easy process. There were a lot of bumps, just like I predicted. It was like a roller coaster, but in the end we got there," an ex-

DEALS REACHED ON FOOD, HEALTH AND FISHING

FORMERLY DEFIANT INDIA JOINS CONSENSUS

PACKAGE SEEN BOOSTING CREDIBILITY OF WTO

hausted but elated Okonjo-Iweala told a final news conference. The deal to ban subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing or fishing of an over-fished stock has the potential to reverse collapsing fish stocks. Though pared back significantly, it still drew approval. "This is a turning point in addressing one of the key drivers of global over-fishing," said Isabel Jarrett, manager of The Pew Charitable Trusts' campaign to reduce harmful fisheries subsidies. Okonjo-Iweala said it was the first step after 21 years of talks to-

wards what she hoped would be a more comprehensive deal. The deal on a partial IP waiver to allow developing countries to produce and export Covid-19 vaccines has divided the WTO for nearly two years, but finally passed. It has also drawn the fiercest criticism from campaign groups that say it barely expands on an existing exemption in WTO rules and is too narrow by not covering therapeutics and diagnostics. One agreement also reached was to maintain a moratorium on e-commerce tariffs, which business says is vital to allow the free flow of data worldwide. Overall, many observers said the deals should boost the credibility of the WTO, which was weakened by former US President Donald Trump's crippling of its ability to intervene in trade disputes, and set it on a course for reform.

DK, Avesh lift India

Jaffer concerned with Pant's form

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajkot, June 17: Dinesh Karthik (55, 27b, 9x4, 2x6) played a knock to remember before Avesh Khan (4/18) gave his dad a "perfect birthday present" with a fiery spell as India steam-rolled South Africa by 82 runs here Friday to level the five-match series 2-2.

Karthik scored his maiden fifty close to 16 years after his T20 debut and alongside vice-captain Hardik Pandya (46, 31b, 3x4, 3x6) took India to a fighting 169/6.

For the second game in a row, South African batters faltered and collapsed to 87/9 in 16.5 overs with skipper Temba Bavuma retired hurt. Avesh led India's brilliant display with the ball and recorded his career-best figures in the process. It was an away team's lowest total in T20Is in India.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Avesh were impressive with the new ball as South Africa slipped to 35/2 in the powerplay. After a hit on the shoulder, Bavuma (8) injured his left elbow with a dive on the run and had to leave the field. He didn't even come out for the post-match presentation ceremony.

Quinton de Kock (14), who missed the last two games due to a wrist injury, was run out after getting a 'yes and no' from Dwaine Pretorius at the other end.



The pitch remained tricky to bat on even in the second innings with the odd ball gripping and rising sharply from good length, making strokeplay difficult. South Africa could never get into the chase with wickets falling regularly.

Earlier, the Indians were struggling at 81/4 before a 65-run stand between Hardik and Karthik

brought the home team back into the game. India were able to amass 73 runs in the last five overs.

Having won their fourth toss in as many games, South Africa put the Indians on the back-foot in the powerplay despite the absence of their lead bowler Kagiso Rabada due to an injury.

The first ball after the powerplay made matters worse for India

as the hosts struggled to 40/3 in 6.1 overs. Ishan Kishan, who played some fine strokes en route to his 27 off 26, was dismissed on the very ball of Anrich Nortje's opening spell.

Post the powerplay, skipper Rishabh Pant and Hardik, gave the innings a move on with a 41-run stand. Indian batters have targeted South Africa's weak link, the spinners, throughout the series and that trend continued Friday.

Hardik hammered Tabraiz Shamsi for successive sixes while a struggling Pant was trying to find his range at the other end.

However, the India skipper once again went for the big one against a wide ball and that led to his downfall. On this occasion, Maharaj purposely bowled wide and Pant took the bait only to edge it back to short third man.

The momentum changing stand came via Hardik and Karthik who swept his way to a memorable knock. Having made his T20 debut back in December 2006 when India played their maiden game in the shortest format, the man of comebacks finally completed his first half century.

Brief scores: India 169/6 (Dinesh Karthik 55, Hardik Pandya 46; Lungi Ngidi 2/20) beat South Africa 87/9 (Rassie van der Dussen 20; Avesh Khan 4/18, Yuzvendra Chahal 2/21, Harshal Patel 1/3) by 82 runs.



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 17: Expressing concerns over Rishabh Pant's form in T20I cricket, former India opener Wasim Jaffer has said that the wicketkeeper-batter has not been able to replicate his Tests' success in the shortest format of the game and the left-hander is not a certainty in the Indian side going forward.

The 24-year-old Pant is leading India in the ongoing 5-match T20I series against South Africa. He was named the captain after KL Rahul, who was initially picked as the skipper, was ruled out of the series due to a groin injury.

The left-handed batter had a decent IPL 2022 campaign with Delhi Capitals wherein he scored 340 runs in 14 matches but he has been struggling to get going in the on-going T20I series, having managed just 34 runs in 3 matches.

The more concerning thing about Pant is the way he is throwing his wickets away more than once and Jaffer feels that the attacking batter might not be able to retain his place when Rahul returns to the side and also mentioned about the presence of Dinesh Karthik in the scheme of things.

"You've got KL Rahul. Once he comes back, he walks into the side. He's a wicketkeeper as well. If

Dinesh Karthik is certain to play, then again, he is also a wicketkeeper. So, I am not too sure. The way Rishabh Pant has played recently, I won't call him a certainty," Jaffer told 'ESPNcricinfo'.

"I think he still needs to score runs and score them pretty consistently. He hasn't done that in the IPL. He hasn't done it in many T20Is. I've said that many times — the way he has played in Test cricket, the way he has played in quite a few ODI innings as well, he hasn't done that in T20Is. So, I won't say that Rishabh Pant is a certainty for me (in T20Is) going forward," he added.

Injured Rahul is set to miss India's tour of England as well, whereas Dinesh Karthik has been named as the wicketkeeper for the T20I series in Ireland in the last week of June and the side also have Ishan Kishan. India also have Sanju Samson waiting in the wings as the Rajasthan Royals captain has found his way back to the side for the T20I series against Ireland after leading his side to IPL 2022 final.

Pant's form in T20I cricket has been far from impressive and in stark contrast to his numbers in Tests. While the wicketkeeper-batter has established himself as a mainstay in the longest format of the game with some match-winning knocks, he has not been at his best in the T20I cricket. The batter has managed just 723 runs in 46 T20Is at a paltry average of 23.32, with only three fifties.

England set new WR in ODIs, post 498/4



BUTTLER, MALAN, SALT HIT TONS AGAINST THE NETHERLANDS TO SURPASS THEIR PREVIOUS BEST OF 481/6 AGAINST AUSSIES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amstelveen (The Netherlands), June 17: England broke their own record for the highest-ever score in the history of one-day international (ODI) cricket by making 498/4 against the Netherlands Friday.

The total surpassed the 481/6 made by England against Australia at Trent Bridge in June 2018. Jos Buttler (162 n o, 70b, 7x4, 14x6), Dawid Malan (125, 109b, 9x4, 3x6) and Phil Salt (122, 93b, 14x4, 3x6) all hit centuries in Amstelveen, outside Amsterdam.

Buttler reached three figures in 47 balls for the second-fastest hundred for England. His pleasing knock of 162 not out contained 14 of the team's 26 sixes. Buttler now has the three quickest ODI centuries for the national team — off

46 balls, 47 balls and 50 balls.

Salt made 122 off 93 balls and Malan 125 off 109 balls, while Liam Livingstone (66 n o, 22b, 6x4, 6x6) weighed in with a blitzkrieg of a knock.

The Netherlands — playing an ODI against England for the first time outside a Cricket World Cup — had only a few moments to savor amid a barrage of big-hitting from the tourists, which led to a number of balls being lost outside the stadium. Shane Snater bowled his cousin, Jason Roy, to leave England 1-1 and Pieter Seelaar took two wickets off successive balls — including captain Eoin Morgan for a golden duck.

BRIEF SCORES: England 498/4 (Jos Buttler 162 n o, Dawid Malan 125, Phil Salt 122, Liam Livingstone 66 n o; Pieter Seelaar 2/83) vs The Netherlands.

Bairstow credits IPL stint with PBKS for Trent Bridge show

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, June 17: England cricketer Jonny Bairstow has given a huge compliment to the IPL, saying that the lucrative league had prepared him better for Test cricket than red-ball county cricket.

The 32-year-old Bairstow was the architect of England's five-wicket win in the Trent Bridge Test, with the right-hand batter smashing a T20-style 136 off 92 deliveries to guide the team to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series.

He smashed seven maximums and 14 boundaries as England

chased down 299 on the final day of the Nottingham Test, scoring at a strike rate of nearly 148.

This season Bairstow, a member of England's 2019 World Cup-winning squad, was bought by Punjab Kings for Rs 6.75 crore and scored 253 runs in 11 games at a strike rate of 145.

The Yorkshireman said the IPL provided better preparation for his Test cricket. "There were a lot of people saying I should not be at the IPL and should be playing county cricket," Bairstow was quoted as saying by Daily Mail after the 32-year-old came within

one ball of breaking Gilbert Jessop's 120-year record for the fastest Test ton by an Englishman.

"But you are playing against the best in the world in the IPL and to have those gears, and being able to switch them up and down, is important," said Bairstow.

"People say it would be fantastic if you had four games of red-ball cricket under your belt before a Test series but unfortunately that doesn't happen with current scheduling and we're very fortunate to be able to play in some of the best competitions around the world."



Sathiyani stuns World No.6 to sail into last 16

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Indian paddler Sathiyani Gnanasekaran pulled off an upset by beating World No.6 and reigning European champion, Jorgic Darko, 3-1 to enter the men's singles round of 16 in the WTT Contender in Zagreb, Croatia.

Sathiyani showed courage and executed his plans to perfection on his way to a 6-11, 12-10, 11-9, 12-10 win over the second seeded Slovenian player in their round of 32 clash Thursday.

"Went all guns blazing as I secured a MASSIVE WIN tonight taking down the World Rank 6 & current European cup champion Jorgic Darko (SLO) 3-1 in the Men Singles Round of 32 here in WTT Contender Zagreb 2022," Sathiyani tweeted.

This is Sathiyani's second win over a player ranked inside top 10 in the world. Before this, Sathiyani had beaten former World No.5 Tomakazu Harimoto of Japan during the 2019 Asian Championships.

Prannoy in Indonesia Open semis



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, June 17: India's HS Prannoy continued his impressive run as he sailed into the semifinals of the Indonesia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament with a straight-game win over World No.13 Rasmus Gemke of Denmark here Friday.

A little over a month after his heroic win over Gemke in the decisive fifth rubber against Denmark which ensured India's entry into the Thomas Cup final, Prannoy pro-

duced yet another finely-crafted performance to outwit the Danish World No.13 21-14, 21-12 in a 40-minute quarterfinal clash. Prannoy, who had reached the Swiss Open Super 300 final in March, will next face China's Zhao Jun Peng.

It is the second semifinal appearance for World No.23 Prannoy at the Indonesia event. He had reached the last four in the 2017 edition during which he had stunned former Olympic gold medalist Chen Long and Malaysian great Lee Chong Wei on way to the semifinals.

SNOOKER TOURNEY

Kothari bags rare double in Pacific Int'l

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, June 17: It was double delight for former world billiards champion Sourav Kothari, who clinched the Pacific International Billiards Championship title Friday, just days after bagging the Snooker crown in the same event.

The 37-year-old Kothari edged past multiple-time English champion Rob Hall of England 1500-1321 in the finals of the Level 5 highest World Billiards ranking event to win the title. The 2018 World Billiards champion thus became only the second cueist after Mathew Bolton of Australia to achieve a double title in the Pacific International.

In the thrilling final, Kothari displayed great mastery of cue ball control from the beginning. He notched up breaks of 161, 141, 135 and 117 to take a massive 600-point lead. The Englishman could manage only a solitary century break of 177 during that session.

A couple of missed regulation drop cannons by Kothari in the next session saw Hall fight back with a magnificent break of 391 as he reduced the margin to 200 points before overtaking Kothari. Kothari showed great calmness and composure under trying circumstances and sealed the issue with a century break of 111.

Earlier, Kothari scraped past compatriot Dhruv Sitwala in a nail-biting 1200-1131.



Excitement & disappointment as 2026 WC cities named

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, June 17: Cheers and sighs met FIFA's announcement of the host cities for the 2026 World Cup. There were a number of no-brainers among the 16 World Cup sites, like the Los Angeles area, Mexico City and Toronto. But for some of the cities that were on the bubble, the announcement Thursday was a dud.

At a watch party in Washington DC, the crowd was sullen when the last of the cities was announced. It was just the third time that a nation's capital has not been included as a World Cup host city. A similar scene played out in Denver.

Six cities that vied for games were disappointed in the end: In addition to Denver and the Washington D.C. Area, there was Edmonton, Alberta; Cincinnati; Nashville, Tennessee; and Orlando, Florida.

"We're disappointed. Anybody that knows me, I'm a pretty competitive SOB. I don't like losing," said Butch Spyridon, CEO of the

Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp.

Nashville's bid was centered around Nissan Stadium, home of the Titans, but it was complicated earlier this year when the NFL team publicly pushed for a new stadium because of rising renovation costs for Nissan, opened in 1999.

"Not the news we wanted but on to the next thing," Nashville Mayor John Cooper said. "And it was quite an elite group of cities that they were picking from."

Kansas City was one of those cities that wasn't a sure thing but prevailed in the end. Despite sweltering temperatures, hundreds of people gathered at Kansas City's Power & Light entertainment district erupted in cheers when Kansas City was announced as a host.

Chiefs owner Clark Hunt, whose family has been strong soccer supporters since the beginning of Major League Soccer, said the announcement was the culmination of years of work by many people. "Now we have an opportunity to



FIFA president Gianni Infantino and CONCACAF president Vittorio Montagliani, along with a couple of FIFA officials, during the announcement of host cities at a press conference

showcase Kansas City on the international stage," Hunt said.

Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes is part owner of Sporting KC and his wife, Brittany, is one of three founders of the Kansas City Current in the National Women's Soccer League.

"I want to be at every one of those games. I know Kansas City and how much they love soccer, and now with the Current and Sporting — the city loves that sport," Mahomes said a few hours before the official

announcement was made.

Hunt's brother, Dan, chairman of the committee to bring the World Cup to Dallas, had loftier ambitions than just hosting games. He wants the final. A delegation from the city will travel to New York City Sunday to meet with FIFA representatives.

Soccer's governing body won't announce the stadiums for knock-out round matches until after the World Cup in Qatar later this year. "This is a great opportunity to

have this World Cup and have it on center stage right here in Dallas. You guys know how enthused I am about the Dallas Cowboys but this is unbelievably special for Dallas," Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said at a joyous rally in that city.

Atlanta's celebration was marked with a bit of confusion when the city was announced on television in the Central region, rather than the East. "It was Dallas and then Atlanta and it was like what? Then we all went crazy," Atlanta Sports Council President Dan Corso said.

Atlanta and Seattle were among the cities that currently have artificial turf at their stadiums and will have to install real grass — likely temporarily — for the World Cup.

Brian Bilello, president of Boston Soccer 2026 and the New England Revolution, was already looking ahead to preparations for the big event.

"For the next four years. It's really about making sure we're ready to host the world. I mean, this is an event like no other. It's not a stadium

event. It's not a city event. It's a statewide event. Making Massachusetts, making Boston ready to host the world is going to be a big focus and obviously we have a lot of work to do," Bilello said.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine tied to find a silver lining amid the disappointment. "It was an honor to be in the running for the FIFA World Cup 2026, and the spotlight on Cincinnati as a potential host city provided a platform to show all that Cincinnati has to offer to an international audience," DeWine said.

While Seattle's chances to host seemed fairly safe, Sounders owner and Seattle bid head Adrian Hanauer was still nervous up until the moment his city was announced.

"I was shockingly nervous, sitting here with my stomach turning inside out. I honestly was more nervous than for our Champions League final. It surprised me actually," Hanauer said. "It's just years and years of anticipation. Born and raised here. Grew up as a soccer brat. Just a lot of emotion."