



VALUABLE TIPS

Actor Mrunal Thakur shares her mantra to become a mass actor in the film industry

LEISUREP2



STAGE SET

Ukraine is all set to be accepted as a candidate to join the European Union

INTERNATIONALP10



EVES BEAT SRI LANKA

Indian women's team register a comfortable 34-run victory in the first T20 International against Sri Lanka

SPORTSP12

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Dead Sambalpur jumbo was shot at

Sambalpur: The ailing tusker that breathed its last after being stuck in a pond near Sapalahara village under Padiabahal forest range in Sambalpur district for four-five days was actually shot by poachers that eventually led to its death, revealed the Divisional Forest Officer in a press meet held Thursday. The matter came to the fore after doctors found a 4-inch bullet from the carcass of the tusker during post-mortem. Swinging into action, police and Forest department officials have detained three persons in this connection.

P5

Man sets himself on fire outside PS

Cuttack: A man set himself on fire outside a police station in Cuttack district Thursday, alleging police inaction on a complaint he filed. The incident took place in front of the Kissannagar police station. The man, identified as Gunanidhi Bisoi -- a resident of Salipur area, suffered 90 per cent burn injuries, police said. Feeling helpless due to alleged inaction by the police on a complaint he filed over a land dispute, Bisoi poured petrol and set himself on fire, his family alleged. Locals and police rescued him and rushed him to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, where his condition is stated to be critical.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I lied I'm a Shiv Sena MLA and they gave me a free air ticket to Guwahati!

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
CURRENCY BOURESSE	SENSEX	52265.72	▲ 443.19
	NIFTY	15556.70	▲ 143.40
	DOLLAR	78.66	▼ ₹0.04
	EURO	82.71	▼ ₹0.09
	GOLD	₹50,833	▼ ₹71
BULLION	SILVER	₹60,254	▼ ₹394

WEATHER			
		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	34.2°C	33.2°C
	MIN	24.0°C	25.0°C
Humidity		92%	88%
Rainfall		8.1mm	1.8mm
		Forecast: Light rain likely	

Deep Grace named Savita's deputy for Birmingham CWG

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 23: Odisha's Deep Grace Ekka has been named vice-captain of the Savita Punia-led Indian women's hockey team for the Birmingham Commonwealth Games (CWG). The event will take place July 28 to August 8. Star forward Rani Rampal was left out yet again from the Indian team for failing to regain full fitness after an injury.

The CWG team is very similar to the one taking part in the World Cup next month.

There are only three changes in the CWG team from the World Cup squad. Rajani Etimarpu was named in place of Bichu Devi Kharibam



as the No. 2 goalkeeper while World Cup team member Sonika (midfielder) was left out from the CWG squad. Forward Sangita Kumari, who was named as one of the replacement players for the World Cup, figured in the CWG team as a full member.

WOODEN MARVEL



Chariot construction in full swing at Rath Yard in Puri, Thursday

PHOTO: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

'National party' will help us, says Shinde

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 23: Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde, whose rebellion against the party has pushed the three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government to the brink of collapse, said a 'national party' has termed their revolt as 'historic' and assured to provide all help to them.

A video of Shinde addressing the group of rebel Sena legislators at a Guwahati hotel was released by his office here. The video also showed the legislators unanimously authorising Shinde to take further decision on their behalf as their group leader. In the video, Shinde is seen saying, "Our worries and happiness are the same. We are united and victory will be ours. There is a national party, a 'mahashakti'... You know they vanquished Pakistan. That party has said that we have taken a historic decision and assured to provide all help."

Shinde is currently camping with 37 rebel MLAs of the Sena and nine independents in Guwahati. The NCP and Congress also share power in the Uddhav Thackeray-led



Rebel Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde interacts with supporting MLAs at a hotel in Guwahati, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

dispensation. A statement issued by Shinde's office said the decision to authorise him to take decision on their behalf was taken unanimously. However, Maharashtra Legislative Assembly's Deputy speaker Narhari Zirwal has earlier approved the appointment of Ajay Choudhary as Shiv Sena group leader in the House replacing Shinde. Meanwhile, talking to reporters in Mumbai, Ajit Pawar, when asked if the opposition BJP had a role to play in the ongoing political crisis in the state, said, "So far, no top BJP leader has been seen in the forefront."

FLOOR TEST TO DECIDE GOVT FATE: PAWAR

Mumbai: NCP president Sharad Pawar Thursday said the fate of the MVA government in Maharashtra will be decided on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, and the Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress coalition will prove its majority in a trust vote. Addressing the media, Pawar also asserted that the BJP has played a role in the crisis that has befallen the Uddhav Thackeray-led government in Maharashtra.

Four drown in pit dug for road construction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput/Dasmantapur, June 23: Four minors, including three girls, drowned in a rainwater-filled pit dug up for road construction at Majhiguda village under Dasmantapur block under Sadar police limits in Koraput Thursday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Bimala Shuki, 6, and Raita Shuki, 4, daughters of Samra Shuki, Purni Antar, 5, daughter of Sunia Antar and Madhusudan Hantal, 6, son of Rabi Hantal of the village.

Sources said a company engaged in the construction of a road in Majhiguda village under the Bharatmala project had dug up the pit of around six feet deep.

The pit got filled to the brim following the rain that lashed the

area Wednesday.

The four minors were playing near the pit when they accidentally slipped deep into it and drowned.

On learning the incident around 2:30pm, villagers brought them out of the pit and rushed them to a nearby hospital where the doctors pronounced them 'brought dead'.

On being informed, Koraput sub-divisional police officer Manoj Pujari and Sadar police officials rushed to the spot and launched a probe into the incident.

Meanwhile, villagers blamed the contracting company for the tragedy and demanded compensation to the bereaved families.

A pall of gloom descended on the area after reports of the deaths spread.



A police official holds discussion with villagers

OP PHOTO

'Nuapada ambush a bid to revive LWE violence'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: The recent ambush of three CRPF personnel and looting of their weapons by Naxals in Odisha's Nuapada are being seen by security officials as an attempt to 'rekindle' Maoist insurgency in 'silent' areas where the forces have begun dominating the remote topography.

Two sub-inspectors and a constable of the paramilitary force were ambushed and their sophisticated assault rifles were looted by the Maoists June 21 in Nuapada district of the state which borders Chhattisgarh and has a cross-border jungle area running into the Sunabeda sanctuary area.

A senior security officer told PTI that the attack on the three



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

personnel, who were possibly isolated from their team doing a road clearing exercise, was carried out by central military commission and Odisha state Maoist committee head Malla Raji Reddy alias

Sathenna/Murali/Sangram. The personnel were killed while they were under a tree in an open field and were reportedly shot and fired with crude 'barrel grenade launchers' that have explosives

filled inside their iron casing.

The slain personnel belonged to the 'golf' company of the 19th battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and were making a movement to secure a new forward operating base that the force had established in the area only three days back.

"There has been no violent incident in the Nuapada district and its remote locations including near Sahajpuri village where the ambush took place Tuesday. This looks to be an attempt by the Maoists to register their presence and rekindle their activity," the officer said.

He said the CRPF recently created a forward base in the area so that the Maoists' supply line in the area is cut and armed cadres who would operate across the bor-

der in south Chhattisgarh and escape to this area could be checked.

A strong team of Naxals ambushed the three CRPF personnel and looted their AK series rifles. The overall execution of this attack is understood to have been made by Malla Raji Reddy, a second officer said.

The CPI (Maoist) unit of the local Mainpur-Nuapada division led by state committee member Guddu was reported to have been moving in the area, he said.

"After a long silence, a top Maoist cadre of Mainpur (Chhattisgarh)-Nuapada (Odisha) division has marked its presence in the area. The forces are geared up and alert to counter this challenge," the second officer quoted above said.

(More P5) Contd...4

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181*

ARIES

Think positive today and watch the world around you changing. Regardless of how difficult things may seem, Ganesh advises you to take it without getting upset. If you set your mind to something, you can do it. You have the Midas touch today, so it is a good time to introduce a new strategy.

TAURUS

Ganesh urges you to be prepared for setbacks and disappointments today. Your efforts may end in being a waste of precious time and energy. The results you get are likely to be far below your expectations. Falling short of your target is likely to weigh you down with stress and anxiety. You can, however, ease and reduce your frustration by reexamining your expectations and lowering them down to a comfortable, achievable level.

GEMINI

You will be in a state of heightened sensitivity today. Therefore you need to curb down on your emotions. You will be able to successfully express your feelings to someone, and your feelings will play a vital part in your life, says Ganesh.

CANCER

You are known for your ability to set the ball rolling. Once you set your mind to do something, it is generally considered done by your peers. Today, you are eyeing a few accomplishments on the monetary front. Most part of your day will go in dealing with financial transactions, and importing and exporting goods.

LEO

The desire and passion for learning is a life-long quest, says Ganesh. It may be that you love to learn, but dissipating the knowledge you have acquired is equally important. So on this day, it is through teaching that you shall learn just how fascinating and frustrating children can be. Give them time and space and you shall find yourself filled with pride as they scale greater heights. Ganesh believes that now is the time to master some extracurricular activities.

VIRGO

All the work done in the past will reap rich rewards today, says Ganesh. You'll direct things your own way, and in no way would you take orders from anyone. But don't go overboard with all the authority and keep a cool, calm head.

LIBRA

Sometimes, you lend a helping hand and people end up taking the entire arm. Well, that's kids for you! So beware, because young ones around you may try to take undue advantage of your sympathetic nature today, hints Ganesh. Minor issues and problems may dampen the high spirits that you are in today. But fret not, just keep a cool head and get back on track to being your charismatic self. Also, Ganesh sees you taking chances in money matters today.

SCORPIO

In all probability, your mood is extremely hawkish today. Your belligerence may even put off Lady Luck for the time being. Ganesh advises you to stay away from confrontations and troubles of any kind. The evening, however, promises to be relaxing.

SAGITTARIUS

Remember that actions always speak louder than words. You will, in all probability, finish your work that has been seeking your attention for long now. You shall also successfully bring continuing disputes to the table and resolve them logically.

CAPRICORN

The journey from defeat to success is driven by optimism. You will be very optimistic today – about your work, future and everything that can lead you to success, says Ganesh. You will also be very careful while dealing with day-to-day work, and will capitalise on every opportunity that can get you a step closer to your goals. Determination and good luck is all you need to realise your dreams; you will have both today.

AQUARIUS

It's an uphill struggle today! But the heavens are on your side, and you will be saved from being swindled. Otherwise, it's an eventful day at work. You may initiate big business deals and new projects as well. It will take all your energy, and Ganesh suggests you hit the deck early.

PISCES

While you like cooperating with your colleagues, there is nothing like a little competition to spice things up. You will nonchalantly take on the challenges coming your way, and thrive on the sweet smell of success today. Luck is in your favour as well. Make the most of it, says Ganesh.



JOHNNY DEPP TO TOUR WITH THE HOLLYWOOD VAMPIRES

Hollywood star Johnny Depp is headed to Europe for an overseas tour with his band *Hollywood Vampires*, which includes rock luminaries such as Joe Perry, Alice Cooper and Tommy Henriksen. According to *Variety*, the supergroup had previously cancelled a tour back in March because of pandemic-related obstacles.

EUPHORIA STAR SCHAFFER JOINS THE HUNGER GAMES PREQUEL

Euphoria star Hunter Schafer has joined the cast of *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*. According to *Variety*, she will appear opposite Tom Blyth and Rachel Zegler in the studio's attempt to recapture that old Panem magic.



Mrunal's mantra to become a 'massy' actor

MUMBAI: Actress Mrunal Thakur feels that to become a 'massy' actor, it is important to do different roles. Mrunal made her debut with *Love Sonia*. She was later seen in films such as *Jersey* opposite Shahid Kapoor. Her upcoming line-up includes a family comedy film called *Aankh Micholi* directed by Umesh Shukla, followed by a war period drama, *Pippa*. The actor will also be making her Telugu debut opposite the south heartthrob, Dulquer Salmaan in *Sita Ramam* this year.

Mrunal says, "I want to work in all the genres possible and do not want to limit myself to one particular style. And this has been very clear in my head since day one, it does not matter to me if this is just the beginning of my career, I just want to stick to doing films and projects that excite and challenge me as an actor."

She added: "I feel that it's important to do different roles to become a massy actor and it is only possible if one does not set limitations in terms of work. With my work, I am always trying to strike a balance when it comes to entertaining the audiences and satisfying my own creative urges as an actor." IANS

RASHMIKA turns vegan entrepreneur

BANGALORE: Rashmika Mandanna, who became a national sensation after starring in *Pushpa: The Rise*, has begun her entrepreneurial journey the vegan way.

Vegan beauty and personal care brand Plum Thursday said that actor Rashmika Mandanna has come on board as an investor and brand ambassador. This comes at a time when the brand aims to double its annual recurring revenue (ARR) over the next 12 months, with Rashmika's pan-India presence and fan base.

In just a short span of 6 years, Rashmika has not only emerged as one of the most bankable actresses in the Indian film industry, but also an influential name in the brand world, endorsing the top ones. With this, the actress has turned entrepreneur.

Apart from being a lucky mascot at the box office and one of the leading female stars of her generation, Rashmika is fast emerging as a savvy businesswoman too.

On the work front, Rashmika currently boasts of one of the strongest line-ups. She will be next seen in *Pushpa 2* opposite Allu Arjun, *Goodbye* alongside Amitabh Bachchan, *Animal* opposite Ranbir Kapoor, *Varisu* alongside Vijay Thalappatty and *Mission Majnu* with Sidharth Malhotra. IANS



When Taapsee Pannu gets star-struck

MUMBAI: Actress Taapsee Pannu, who is all set to bring the story of veteran India batter Mithali Raj on the big screen, has admitted to the fact that she gets star struck being around sports stars.

Speaking about her love for sports Taapsee said: "I am star struck with sport stars. I haven't seen many movies while growing up until college but I followed sports since my childhood."

She added: "So, whenever I see a sports star, I am always star struck which comes with huge amount of respect that I have for each one of them. I always ensure that I don't trespass a line when I have a sports star around me and avoid being my usual

chirpy self."

Shabaash Mithu is set land in the atres July 15. The film, directed by Srijit Mukherji and written by Priya Aven, is based on the life of Mithali Dorai Raj, the celebrated skipper of the Indian women's cricket team.

In a career spanning 23 years, Mithali boasts of seven consecutive 50s in ODIs and has led India in 4 World Cups. The story tracks her journey from being an 8-year-old girl with a dream to becoming a cricketing legend. IANS



TWO-DAY CLASSICAL DANCE FEST CONCLUDES

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: The emotion of love was in full display on the second and concluding day 12th Margi, a classical dance festival here at Rabindra Mandap, Thursday. The event began with the performance of *Dasa Mahavidya* by Kendra Sangeeta Nataka Akademi awardee dancer Aloka Kanungo.

The second performance of the evening was a dance drama based on 'Kaibartya Theme', performed by Guru Ashok Kumar Ghosal on the original composition of late Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi.

Odissi danseuse Madhusmita Mohanty showcased her grace in her dance drama *Bara Badhu*



Guests posed with the performers

OP PHOTO

while Sushanta Kumar Dash performed on an old composition *Dina Bandhu Ehi Ali*.

The event concluded with dance drama *Shree Jaydev*, performed by Nrutyashala artistes under the direction of Guru Ashok Kumar Ghosal.

Tourism, Culture and Excise Minister Aswini Patra, Utkal Sangeeta Mahavidyalaya Principal Bijay Jena, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi secretary Prabodh Rath were present as guests in the evening. The programs were anchored by Srinibas Ghatuary.

FUN post

PEANUTS



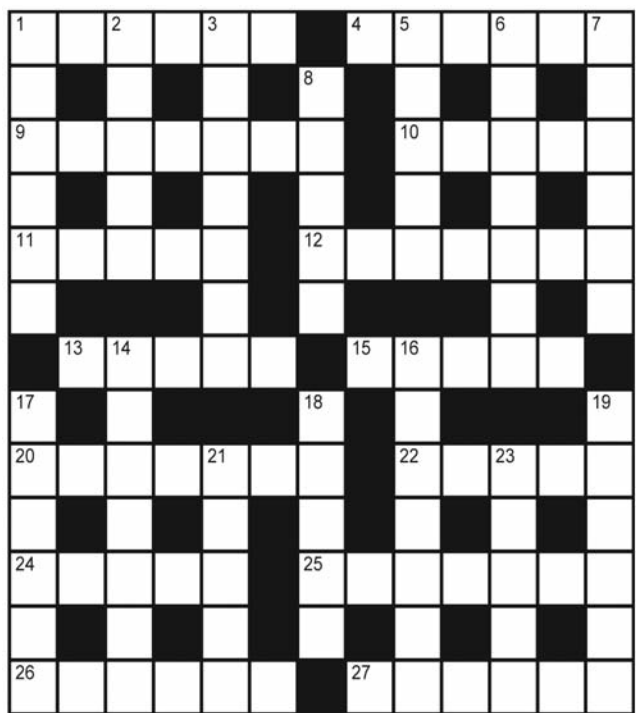
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Chinese tea
- 4 French pastry
- 9 Fire up
- 10 Beginning
- 11 Part of TNT
- 12 Tell tales
- 13 Loft
- 15 Gallic goodbye
- 20 Swiss cheese
- 22 Savory jelly
- 24 Confuse

Down

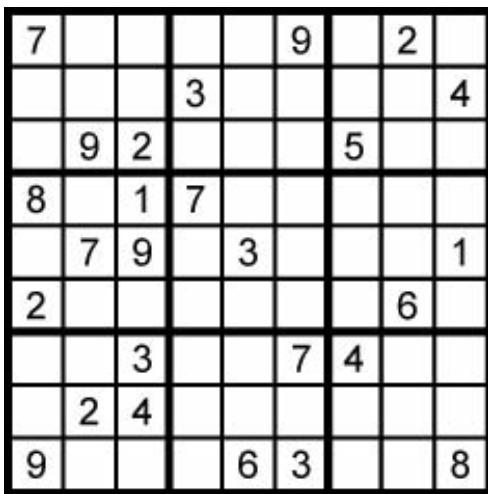
- 25 Unclear
- 26 Oxygenise
- 27 Alehouse
- 1 Whopper toppers
- 2 Hungarian composer
- 3 Largest city of Kenya
- 5 Singing group
- 6 Take the edge off

Rank

- 8 Where to find gold
- 14 Storm noise
- 16 Between Israel and Jordan (4,3)
- 17 Large lizard
- 18 Malefactor
- 19 Bug repellent
- 21 Throw out
- 23 Break in the action

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

SUDOKU

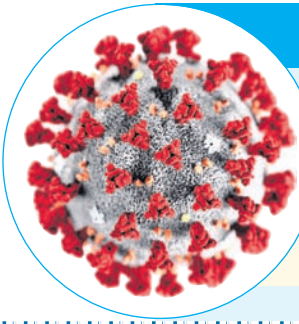


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



MUSICAL EVENT

An artiste performs at a musical event organised during the 17th annual function of cultural outfit Murchhana at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	54,68,76,244	52,23,82,822	63,46,207
India	4,33,44,958	4,27,36,027	5,24,941
Odisha	12,89,068	12,79,559	9,126

INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC DAY
State to build world-class sports infra: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar June 23: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, on International Olympic Day, Thursday, said the state is committed to build world-class sports facilities and sports ecosystem to help athletes bring glory to the nation.

Taking to his Twitter account, Patnaik said, “On International Olympic Day I remember all the athletes who made the nation proud with their stellar achievements in Olympics. Odisha is committed to build world-class sporting facilities and sports ecosystem to help athletes bring glory to the nation.”

In the last Olympics in Tokyo, Odisha's Birendra Lakra and Amit Rohidas created history as they became the first two players from the state to win Olympics medal. Lakra and Rohidas were part of the Indian Men's Hockey team that defeated Germany by 5-4 for the bronze medal in Tokyo Olympics as the country won its first Olympics



File photo of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik visiting Kalinga Stadium

“On International Olympic Day I remember all the athletes who made the nation proud with their stellar achievements in Olympics. Odisha is committed to build world-class sporting facilities and sports ecosystem to help athletes bring glory for the nation

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

hockey medal after a gap of 41 years.

After that Pramod Bhagat, the ace para badminton player who hails from Bhubaneswar, had defeated Daniel Bethell of Great Britain to win men's singles gold medal for India at the Tokyo Paralympics.

The Chief Minister handed over the cheque of Rs 2.5 crore each to Birendra Lakra and Amit Rohidas along with DSP-rank jobs in state police. He also felicitated

Pramod Bhagat by announcing Rs 6 crore cash and offered a Group-A government job.

In recent times, Odisha is aggressively projecting itself as the sports capital of India. It is already a leader when it comes to hosting big-ticket international events in hockey, be it the Men's World Cup in 2018 or the FIH Pro League matches. The Kalinga stadium in Bhubaneswar has become a permanent training base for both men's and women's national

hockey teams since 2018. The coming eight months will see Odisha hosting two major international competitions – FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Bhubaneswar between October 11 and 30 and Men's Hockey World Cup from January 13 to 29, 2023 in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela. India will become the first nation to host four Men's Hockey World Cups after successfully hosting the tournaments in Mumbai (1982), New Delhi (2010) and Bhubaneswar (2018).

Congress MLAs won't back Murmu: Narasingha

POST NEWS NETWORK, AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 23: Congress MLAs from Odisha will not support NDA's presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu as she has been inspired by BJP and RSS ideology, said party legislator Narasingha Mishra Thursday.

“If a person, irrespective of his/her personality, intelligence and popularity, is inspired by the BJP or RSS ideology, neither me nor my party members will cast a vote in favour of that person,” Mishra said.

Murmu is a nice person. However, she is inspired by the BJP and RSS ideology, which is responsible for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. So, the Congress party will not support her, Mishra added.

“The Opposition parties at the Centre, including the Congress, have already chosen their candidate for the presidential elections. Our party has supported a candidate for the top post. If we



“If a person, irrespective of his/her personality, intelligence and popularity, is inspired by the BJP or RSS ideology, neither me nor my party members will cast a vote in favour of that person

NARASINGHA MISHRA, CONGRESS MLA

vote for another candidate then it will be a betrayal to our party,” said the Congress legislator.

The Congress leader also criticised the BJD government and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who had appealed to all MLAs from the state to support Murmu, a resident of Odisha.

Claiming that the BJP and the BJD are like two sides of a coin, Mishra said, “If the Chief Minister has so much love for Odisha and Odias, why did he send a non-Odia to the Rajya Sabha? Were there no deserving Odia candidates?”

He was referring to the BJD's

support to BJP candidate Ashwini Vaishnav, a former Odisha cadre IAS officer, in the 2019 Rajya Sabha election. Vaishnav, now a Union minister, worked as the district magistrate of Cuttack and Balasore during his tenure. He hailed from Rajasthan.

The Congress MP from Koraput, Saptagiri Ulaka, told PTI that as a tribal leader, he welcomes the nomination of a tribal candidate for the Presidential election.

“But, the tribals should be actually empowered. Any symbolic representation will not work,” Ulaka said.

Prez poll: Murmu seeks cooperation from all

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June, 23: NDA presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu Thursday sought cooperation from everyone for the upcoming election to choose the first person of the country, and said she will meet all the electors to seek their support before July 18, when the polling is scheduled to take place.

Murmu left for Delhi on a flight from Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) at 9.40 am. A tribal dance was organised as a large number of her friends and well-wishers gathered at the airport to see her off.

She had reached the capital city from her native Rairangpur town in Mayurbhanj district Wednesday night after covering a distance of 280 km by road amid cheers and greetings from people along the way.

In a brief statement issued before her departure for the na-



NDA Presidential nominee Droupadi Murmu at BPIA in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

I thank all and seek cooperation from everyone for the presidential election. I will meet all voters (lawmakers) and seek their support before July 18

DROUPADI MURMU | NDA PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

tional capital, Murmu said, “I thank all and seek cooperation from everyone for the presidential election. I will meet all voters (lawmakers) and seek their support before July 18.”

Itishree Murmu, the NDA pres-

idential candidate's only daughter who was present at the airport, said, “People of the country love my mother for her simplicity and soft-spoken nature. She has left to serve the country after handing over the responsibilities of the family to me.” Itishree is a bank official in Bhubaneswar and is

currently on maternity leave to take care of her two-month-old daughter.

On Wednesday, Droupadi Murmu was received in Bhubaneswar by state BJP president Samir Mohanty and local MP Aparajita Sarangi at a guest house, where she spent the night, an official said.

She had to drop her plan to visit her alma mater, Unit-II Girls' High School, in the capital city as she attracted crowds wherever she went. She also wanted to pay obeisance at Lingaraj temple here, but had to shelve the plan owing to a delay in her arrival, the official said.

Murmu's school teachers and some of her college lecturers, however, greeted her at the guest house.

“We are proud that our alumna is tipped to become the next President of India,” said her school's headmistress, Kalyani Mishra.

The former Jharkhand governor had graduated from Rama Devi Women's College, now a university. Murmu had also worked as a class-III employee in the Odisha Irrigation Department after completing her graduation.

WITH CARE & DEVOTION



Servitors prepare herbal medicines for the Anasara rituals of Srimandir deities in Puri, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Naveen meets Odia diaspora in Rome

AGENCIES

Rome, June 23: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday met the Odia diaspora here. Odias based out of 12 countries across Europe had a very lively and engaging interaction with the Chief Minister, his personal secretary, VK Pandian and resident Commissioner Ravi Kant.

The diaspora comprised professionals, entrepreneurs, researchers, missionaries and students from diverse fields such as medicine, engineering, IT, artificial intelligence and business process outsourcing.

All were proud to recount the achievements of the Odisha government in the areas of food security, health, education, infrastructure, disaster management, women empowerment among others.



Representatives from UK Odia Association explained about the steps they are taking to construct a Jagannath temple in UK. Patnaik assured all support for the same

They reiterated their strong sense of ownership and dedication for the development of Odisha.

Patnaik thanked them for their renewed sense of conviction. He was especially glad to see that the Odias are doing well in Europe. He discussed with them the transformational initiatives taking place in Odisha and invited them to partner with the state government for the

development of the state.

Representatives from UK Odia Association explained about the steps they are taking to construct a Jagannath temple in UK. Patnaik assured all support for the same.

He congratulated them on their successful careers and said the state is proud of their achievement. He wished them good luck in their future endeavours.

Gavali takes charge as Sundargarh Collector

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, June 23: IAS officer Parag Harshad Gavali Thursday assumed office as the Collector and District Magistrate (DM) of Sundargarh.

Gavali took charge from outgoing Collector Nikhil Pavan Kalyan at the collectorate in Sundargarh. Senior officials from various departments welcomed the new Collector and wished him all success.

“Sundargarh is a tribal dominated district. All possible steps will be taken for the overall development of the district with the cooperation and participation of people. Focus will be on key sectors like health and education. The district administration will strive to ensure that the common man is benefitted by the schemes and programmes of the government,” Gavali said.



“Mo Bus, Capital Region Urban Transport India is the recipient of the prestigious UN Public Service Awards,” the global organisation announced. Ten initiatives from Brazil, Canada, India, Ireland, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Ukraine have

been recognised for their innovative public service delivery with the prestigious UN Public Service Awards at a virtual celebration organised by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The awards recognise 10 innovations to help the world recover better from

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BMC launches campaign to combat dengue in City

POST NEWS NETWORK



more than 60 source reductions.

“As the city witnesses the first touch of monsoon, it has become more vulnerable in terms of spreading of Dengue. BMC has been doing its bit and the citizens should come forward and join hands to get rid of the possible dengue menace” said Das while doing Padyatra in Nayapalli and adjacent areas under ward No 37, 38 and 39.

The Dengue cases in the capital

has shown double rate of increase in the past two weeks creating concerns among citizens. The campaign is also aimed at reaching out to schools and Anganwadis centres in the city to increase awareness.

“Generally August is the month for Dengue outbreak in the city and we have started the campaign earlier to inculcate a regular practice amongst citizens to prevent dengue. The unwanted containment of stagnant water for more than 7-10 days causes the breeding of mosquitoes. Hence, this campaign will be carried out on Sunday and Thursday to bring a behaviour change in each household,” said Vijay Kulange, BMC Commissioner.

State bags 1st prize in Nat'l MSME Award '22

THE UNION GOVERNMENT RECEIVED AS MANY AS 2,785 APPLICATIONS AGAINST 44 CATEGORIES FOR SCRUTINY AND FINALISATION OF AWARDS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 23: The state MSME department has been awarded the first prize in the category of 'National MSME Award 2022 to States/UTs for Outstanding Contribution in the Promotion and Development of MSME Sector' by virtue of various initiatives taken up for the development of MSMEs in state.

Kalahandi has been awarded the third prize in the category 'National MSME Award 2022 to Aspirational Districts for Outstanding Contribution in the Promotion and Development of MSME Sector' as the sectoral de-

velopment was in the line of award parameters.

Similarly, Sumeet Mohanty M/s Saferisk Insurance Brokers Private Limited, Bhubaneswar has been awarded first prize in the category Award for Service Entrepreneurship - Service Small Enterprise (Overall). Sibabrata Rout M/s Amarnath Pest Management Technology, Cuttack has been awarded third prize in the category Award for Service Entrepreneurship - Service Micro Enterprise (Overall).

The Union government came up with National MSME Award 2022 Scheme which comprises of altogether 44 categories including manufacturing entrepreneurship (12 awards), service entrepreneurship (9 awards), special category enterprises (14 awards) and institutional support to MSMEs (9 awards).

While awarding states, union territories and aspirational districts, their contribution to the MSME, parameters like sector-specific policies and their performance, efficacy of Facilitation Council, grievance redressal, Y-o-Y growth of MSME budget, growth of MSME credit, implementation of cluster approach, Udyam Registration, skill development programmes and awareness conducted etc were taken into account. Applications in these categories were evaluated by Central selection committee.

Applications for enterprise level awards were evaluated by State Level Selection Committee (SLSC) and National Level Selection Committee (NLSC) on the basis of Investment in plant and machinery, turnover both total and export, net profit, value of current assets and liabilities, expenditure on salary & employees' welfare and total employees. The Union government received as many as 2,785 applications against 44 categories for scrutiny and finalisation of awards.



Bhubaneswar Development Authority conducted an eviction drive at Trinath Market in Baramunda Housing Board Colony area in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

CP grills ex-boyfriend in TV actress suicide case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 23: The Commissionerate Police (CP) Thursday grilled former boyfriend of noted Television actress Rashmirekha Ojha who was found dead in her room at Gada Sahi in Nayapalli area June 18. Raja, the ex-boy friend of Ojha, was interrogated at the Nayapalli police station for around two hours.

Police sources claimed that

vital clues regarding the reasons behind the actress's suicide came to fore during the interrogation of Raja Thursday. He may be called again for further interrogation into the case. Raja told media that he is fully cooperating with the commissionerate police in the investigation.

Meanwhile, Ojha's boyfriend Santosh Kumar Patra is yet to appear before the police despite issuance of notice for appearance.

Ojha's boyfriend Santosh Kumar Patra is yet to appear before the police despite issuance of notice

Patra has been asked to appear before the police by June 25.

Patra allegedly left the rented house around three days before the death of Ojha. He has been absconding ever since and his mobile is also found switched off. Patra and Ojha were staying in a live-in relationship for the last few months.

The family members of Ojha, while speaking to media, have held Patra responsible for the death of their daughter. Notably, the post mortem report of Ojha confirmed the actress committing suicide. She was under mental pressure and police has been investigating to the find the reasons behind it.

CONTINUED FROM P1

Murmu to file nomination today

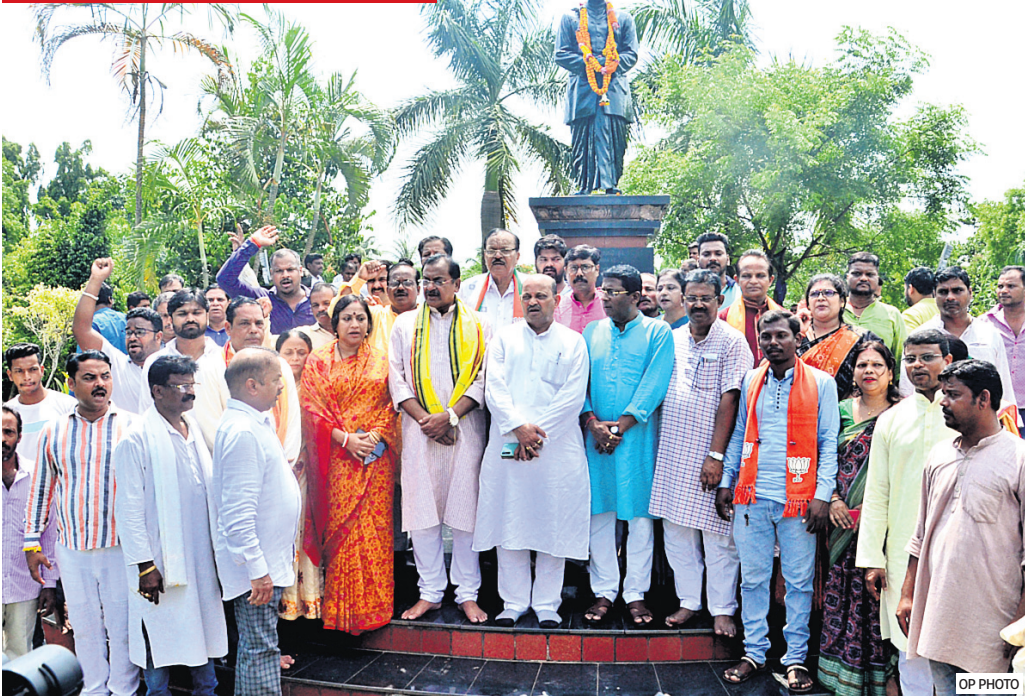
Sources in the BJP said four sets of nomination papers were being prepared for this.

PM Narendra Modi, senior ministers Rajnath Singh and Amit Shah, and BJP president JP Nadda will be Murmu's proposers. Union Ministers and senior BJP leaders are signing as proposers and seconders at Joshi's residence.

A host of BJP leaders from Odisha, including 10 MLAs, are also in Delhi to attend Murmu's nomination filing event.

As Murmu is a daughter of Odisha, Patnaik Wednesday appealed to all the members of Odisha Legislative Assembly, cutting across party lines, to extend unanimous support to elect her to the country's highest office. If elected, she will be the first tribal president of India and the second woman in the post.

PAYING HOMAGE



Members of state BJP observed the death anniversary of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee at a park in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

Bhubaneswar, Cuttack railway stations launch 'One Station-One Product' stalls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 23: Under the Central government's 'One Station-One Product' Scheme, Khurda Road division of Railways in co-ordination with Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) has launched two stalls at Bhubaneswar and Cuttack Railway stations, involving local self help groups (SHGs) Thursday.

The 'One Station- One Product' scheme was announced by the Union government in the recent budget with an objective to provide enhanced livelihood opportunity and welfare of local artisans, potters, and weavers. Under this scheme, stalls are being provided at stations to the local artisans to showcase and sell products of their areas.

Passengers can get Khurda district's famous bell metal products at Bhubaneswar station. Likewise,



Cuttack's famous silver filigree handicrafts and handloom products will be available at Cuttack station. The passengers can purchase these products directly from the artisans.

Previously, Khurda Road division had launched one stall at Puri Railway station to promote Odisha's famous handicrafts Pattachitra and Pipili Applique under the 'One Station-One Product' scheme.

Nuapada ambush a bid to revive LWE violence?

A CRPF spokesperson, on the day of the incident, had said that their "troops retaliated forcing the Maoists to flee while three bravehearts made the supreme sacrifice in the encounter".

Officials said that according to the new categorisation of left wing extremism-affected districts of the country brought out by the Union home ministry in June last year, Nuapada does not figure among the "most affected" Naxal violence affected districts of the country.

Nuapada has been silent, with no Maoist incidents being reported for over some years but, yes, the district figures in the list of those 70 districts in 10 states which get the security related expenditure funds from the centre to counter Naxal activities, usher in development and creation of infrastructure for security forces, officials said.

Only three districts of Odisha i.e. Kandhamal, Malkangiri and Kalahandi are put under the most affected left wing extremism districts while Koraput is listed under the 'district of concern' category.

There are a total of eight districts in six states categorised as 'districts of concern' and as per government definition they are those jurisdictions where the authorities need "to counter Maoists' spread to new areas and to stop resurgence in the areas where left wing extremism influence is waning".

Many scientists doubt any such declaration would help curb the epidemic, since the developed countries recording the most recent cases are already moving quickly to shut it down

As the World Health Organisation (WHO) convenes its emergency committee Thursday to consider if the spiralling outbreak of monkeypox warrants being declared a global emergency, some experts say WHO's decision to act only after the disease spilled into the West could entrench the grotesque inequities that arose between rich and poor countries during the Covid pandemic.

Declaring monkeypox to be a global emergency would mean the UN health agency considers the outbreak to be an "extraordinary event" and that the disease is at risk of spreading across even more borders. It would also give monkeypox the same distinction as the Covid-

19 pandemic and the ongoing effort to eradicate polio.

Many scientists doubt any such declaration would help curb the epidemic, since the developed countries recording the most recent cases are already moving quickly to shut it down.

Last week, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus described the recent monkeypox epidemic identified in more than 40 countries, mostly in Europe, as "unusual and concerning." monkeypox has sickened people for decades in central and west Africa, where one version of the disease kills up to 10% of people. In the epidemic beyond Africa so far, no deaths have been reported.

"If WHO was really worried about monkeypox spread, they could have convened their emergency committee years ago when it reemerged in Nigeria in 2017 and no one knew why we suddenly had hundreds of cases," said Oyewale Tomori, a Nigerian virologist who sits on several WHO advisory groups. "It is a bit curious that WHO only called their experts when the disease showed up in white countries," he said.

Until last month, monkeypox had not caused sizeable outbreaks beyond Africa. Scientists haven't found any major genetic changes



in the virus and a leading adviser to WHO said last month the surge of cases in Europe was likely tied to sexual activity among gay and bisexual men at two raves in Spain and Belgium.

To date, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed more than 3,300 cases of monkeypox in 42 countries where the virus hasn't been typically seen. More than 80 per cent of cases are in Europe. Meanwhile, Africa has already seen more than 1,400 cases this year, including 62 deaths.

David Fidler, a senior fellow in global health at the Council on

Foreign Relations, said WHO's newfound attention to monkeypox amid its spread beyond Africa could inadvertently worsen the divide between rich and poor countries seen during Covid-19.

"There may be legitimate reasons why WHO only raised the alarm when monkeypox spread to rich countries, but to poor countries, that looks like a double standard," Fidler said. He said the global community was still struggling to ensure the world's poor were vaccinated against the coronavirus and that it was unclear if Africans even wanted monkeypox

vaccines, given competing priorities like malaria and HIV.

"Unless African governments specifically ask for vaccines, it might be a bit patronizing to send them because it's in the West's interest to stop monkeypox from being exported," Fidler said.

WHO has also proposed creating a vaccine-sharing mechanism to help affected countries, which could see doses go to rich countries like Britain, which has the biggest monkeypox outbreak beyond Africa — and recently widened its use of vaccines.

To date, the vast majority of cases in Europe have been in men who are gay or bisexual, or other men who have sex with men, but scientists warn anyone in close contact with an infected person or their clothing or bed sheets is at risk of infection, regardless of their sexual orientation. People with monkeypox often experience symptoms like fever, body aches and a rash; most recover within weeks without needing medical care.

Even if WHO announces monkeypox is a global emergency it's unclear what impact that might have.

In January 2020, WHO declared that Covid-19 was an international emergency. But few countries took notice until March, when the organisation described it as a pandemic, weeks after many other authorities did so. WHO was later slammed for its multiple missteps throughout the pandemic, which some experts said might be prompting a quicker monkeypox response.

"After Covid, WHO does not want to be the last to declare monkeypox an emergency," said Amanda Glassman, executive vice president at the Center for Global Development. "This may not rise to the level of a Covid-like emergency, but it is still a public health emergency that needs to be addressed."

Salim Abdool Karim, an epidemiologist and vice chancellor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, said WHO and others should be doing more to stop monkeypox in Africa and elsewhere, but wasn't convinced that a global emergency declaration would help.

"There is this misplaced idea that Africa is this poor, helpless continent, when in fact, we do know how to deal with epidemics," said Abdool Karim. He said that stopping the outbreak ultimately depends on things like surveillance, isolating patients and public education.

"Maybe they need vaccines in Europe to stop monkeypox, but here, we have been able to control it with very simple measures," he said.

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PATADHARA MAOIST ATTACK

Jawans’ sacrifice won’t go in vain: IG Amitabh Thakur



FILE PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, June 23: Close on the heels of Maoist ambush in Patadhara killing three CRPF jawans, IG, Operations Amitabh Thakur Thursday said the sacrifice of the CRPF jawans won’t go in vain and that a blueprint is being prepared to eliminate Maoists in Nuapada and other parts of the state.

A team of senior police officials including Thakur, DIG (South Western Range) Rajesh Pandit, CRPF ADG Nitin Agrawal and Nuapada SP Pratyush Dibakar conducted an investigation into the incident at Patadhara Reserve forest of Bhainsadani panchayat under Boden block of Nuapada district.

Later, they held a high-level meeting at the CRPF office here on the anti-Maoist operation.

Addressing a presser here after the meeting, officials said Maoists used mortars to attack security forces in neighbouring Chhattisgarh. It was also revealed that the Left-wing extremists are preparing mortars.

“The Maoists have used mor-



A blueprint has been prepared to deal with the Left-wing extremism in the district while a joint combing operation has been launched by Odisha and Chhattisgarh police

tars against CRPF jawans for the first time in Odisha. The used mortars have been seized,” they said.

They also added that a blueprint has been prepared to deal with the

Left-wing extremism in the district while a joint combing operation has been launched by Odisha and Chhattisgarh police.

The IG and DIG stated that reconstruction of a ghati road from Bhainsadani to Patadhara is underway. To provide security to the road construction contractor, three CRPF jawans had gone to the site from Bhainsadani June 21.

The jawans took shelter under a Mahua tree as it was raining heavily. Suddenly, Maoists launched an attack from behind. Three jawans fell to the Maoists’ bullets.

On the other hand, following the ambush, the people in the area have been living in an atmosphere of terror. People Wednesday feared to venture out to sell their produce at a recently inaugurated market in the area.

Locals said the ultras have been opposing restoration work of Bhainsadani-Patadhara road. CRPF personnel were engaged here to provide security to the ongoing road work.

It was suspected that since the ambush took place close to the border with Chhattisgarh, involvement of Red rebels from the neighbouring state cannot be ruled out.

In the wake of this incident, security has been beefed up in Patadhara area.

IG of CRPF, SP Mohanty, CRPF DIG Daljit Singh and Commandant Rajesh Bose were present at the press conference.

Man gets 10 years in jail for raping minor

BARIPADA: A court in Mayurbhanj district Thursday sentenced a 29-year-old man to 10 years imprisonment for raping a 15-year-old girl eight years ago. Baripada POCOS court judge Sumita Jena also imposed a fine of ₹16,000 on the convict, public prosecutor Abhinna Patnaik said. The court directed the State Legal Services Authority to pay ₹4 lakh to the rape survivor. July 21, 2014, the girl was alone at her house in Betanoti area when the convict forcibly took her to his sister’s house in Balasore district and raped her for six days. The judgement was based on the medical report and the statements of the girl and 16 witnesses.

Rajnagar ABE0 held for molestation

KENDRAPARA: An education officer was arrested Thursday for allegedly sexually assaulting a 15-year-old girl at a school in Kendrapara district, police said. Rajnagar assistant block education officer (ABEO) Subash Chandra Mohanty allegedly molested the Class IX student while inspecting her high school, according to an FIR. Mohanty was arrested under sections 294 (obscene act) and 354 (outraging modesty) of the Indian Penal Code, besides the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. An investigation is on, Rajnagar police station inspector Tapan Nayak said.

Woman hacked to death by hubby

PATKURA: In a shocking incident, a man hacked his wife to death with an axe at Tendakuda slum under Patkura police limits in Kendrapara district, police said. The deceased was identified as Pyarul Biwi, 45. However, the reason behind the murder is unclear. Reports said Manan Ali, 50, attacked his wife Pyarul with an axe when the latter was asleep at 2am Thursday. IIC Saroj Sahu said Manan seems to be mentally deranged. Manan is a daily wage earner and has three sons. A team of police officials along with a scientific team has launched an investigation into the incident. Police seized the body and the axe used in the crime from inside the house.

Couple leads by example in horticulture

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, June 23: A migrant labourer couple has become self-reliant by fighting all odds in a dry and non-irrigated region like Muribahal block, infamous for migration in Bolangir district.

The couple – Gourang Pattnaik and his wife Baidehi Pattnaik of Tetelkhunti village under the block – has achieved self-reliance by growing vegetables on farmlands taken on lease from other villagers.

However, with their sheer grit they have brought a turnaround in their fortune by growing vegetables on their farmlands. A few years back, Gourang and his wife had no choice than to migrate to other states to earn a living. But now with their hard labour and determination they are leading by example in the area.

However, things took a different turn when the couple migrated to Chhattisgarh with their three sons to work in a poultry farm on Raipur outskirts. There they saw some farmlands lying close to the poultry farm.

There the couple witnessed how horticulture is profitable and it is helping the farmers to lead a decent life. There they learnt how vegetable farming requires very less water.

Later, they returned to their village and decided to take up some land on lease



from co-villagers and start cultivation. They borrowed ₹20,000 from a co-villager and got 4 acre land on lease from another near a small rivulet called Kankada Jora and cultivated watermelon.

They reaped a good harvest and profit from the cultivation. However, the next year he failed to reap the same quantity of harvest. He was pondering about recovering the losses when he came in contact with an official of a voluntary outfit who taught him to take up mixed crop

farming with the assistance from the Horticulture department.

They used to leave for their farmland early morning and spend the whole day there cooking food, clearing weeds, applying manure to the plants, planting saplings and watering the crops. Gradually, they became very popular among the farmers’ community in the district.

Encouraged by the advice, he took seven acre of land on lease and cultivated vegetables and applied organic manure for better harvest.

Since then, there has been no looking back for the green couple.

Gourang said he has earned around ₹60,000 to ₹1 lakh from broccoli cultivation on half acre of farmland. Moreover, he has also earned ₹40,000 from chili cultivation, ₹1 lakh from pointed gourd and ₹60,000 from long beans cultivation. Deputy director of Horticulture department Prafulla Kumar Bhanja said Gourang and his wife have become an example for others to emulate. The couple who once worked as migrant labourers has been able to engage five casual labourers in their farmlands.

Collector Chanchal Rana lauded the couple for selecting the right alternative and becoming self-reliant through horticulture. The state government has also been encouraging farmers like Gourang, he said.

INCULCATING PATRIOTISM



BSF jawans participated in a patriotic event ‘Har Ghar Jhanda’ programme with students and staffers of Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya at Gundariguda under Kudumulgumma block in Malkangiri district as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Dead Sambalpur jumbo was shot by poachers

An extensive search operation was launched in Padiabahal range and three persons were detained. During interrogation, the poachers have confessed to the crime

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 23: The ailing tusker that breathed its last after being stuck in a pond near Sapalahara village under Padiabahal forest range in Sambalpur district for four-five days was actually shot by poachers that eventually led to its death, revealed Divisional Forest Officer in a press meet held Thursday.

The matter came to the fore after doctors found a 4-inch bullet from the carcass of the tusker during post-mortem. Swinging into action, police and forest department officials have detained three accused in this connection.

Briefing the media, DFO Vishwanath Neelannavar said



“Initially, we suspected it could have died due to illness after being stuck in the pond. However, during post-mortem, doctors recovered a bullet from the carcass.”

“An extensive search operation was launched in Padiabahal range and three persons were detained within 48 hours. During interrogation, the poachers confessed to the crime. The accused are reported to have fired at the elephant from atop a tree in Kalapat area. Today we raided their houses and seized a country-made gun, two axes, wires and a rod used for stuff-

ing the gun barrel. Interrogation is on,” Neelannavar added.

The incident has triggered outrage among wildlife lovers.

Notably, the tusker was trapped in the slush in a pond near Sapalahara. Due to weakness, the pachyderm was partially submerged in water and was unable to come out. Forest officials claimed that they had given their best efforts to revive and rescue the ailing elephant. However, the tusker did not respond to the treatment. Finally, it breathed its last June 21.

Meanwhile, reports of yet an-

Tusker ailing in Keonjhar

KEONJHAR: A 25-year-old tusker has been ailing in Khuntakata forest under Bhuyan-Juanga Pidhi range. It was separated from its herd and spotted lying at a place two days ago. The forest officials are keeping track of the elephant.

other injured elephant have surfaced after it was found limping in the reserve forest of Deogarh district Thursday.

According to sources, the female elephant was hit by a pick-up van while it was crossing National Highway-49 near Banjari village in the district. The elephant was then found wandering in the Prabhassuni reserve forest alone as its herd had left her behind after it was injured and could not catch up to the herd’s pace.

A team of rangers led by Deogarh DFO Magar Dhanaji Raoso and a team of doctors from Simlipal had traced down the elephant in the Kansar reserve forest and had started its treatment after tranquillizing it. The condition of the pachyderm is improving now, sources said.

Skill development workshop at Berhampur ITI

BERHAMPUR: Berhampur ITI recently organised a workshop to promote the waste-to-wealth mission under ST initiatives of schools. The workshop was organised for 622 headmasters in Ganjam district. J Sonal, Commissioner, BeMC, Keerthivasan V, PD, DRDA, Ganjam inaugurated the programme with Binita Senapati, district education officer and Rajat Panigrahy principal of the ITI. More than 600 headmasters and headmistresses from different schools of the district participated in the programme. BeMC Commissioner appreciated the initiative taken by the ITI, and urged the headmasters to take various initiative to prepare various items at school level like the ITI students.



SBI, Angul holds SHG camp, disburses ₹706cr loans

BHUBANESWAR: The State Bank of India’s (SBI) regional business office at Angul held a mega SHG mela Wednesday. Chandershekar Sharma, Chief General Manager (CGM) of Bhubaneswar Circle, SBI disbursed 389 loans of ₹7.06 crore to various SHG groups. Kundan Jyoti, DGM (B&O), Zone-II, Bhubaneswar, Pramod Kumar Mishra, DGM (PBBU) and Bikram Kesharee Mandhata, regional manager, were also present. An ambulance was donated to Uttal Pradeshik Marwari Sammelan by Sharma under CSR programme. He has emphasised to make SBI the first choice bank of the state.

COMMISSIONERATE OF CT AND GST, ODISHA (AT: CUTTACK)
(FINANCE DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA)
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No. S-07: Details can be seen in our website <https://odishatax.gov.in>.
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Bid Identification No. - RWDRRP - 04/2022-23
Date: 21.06.2022

1.

Name of the Work

2.

Estimated Cost

3.

Class of Contractor

4.

Period of Completion

5.

Tender Paper Cost

Periodical Maintenance for the year 2022-23

From Rs.13.27 lakhs to 17.70 lakhs (approximately)

“D” & “C” Class (of Odisha P.W.D.) or relevant Class of works licence

01 (One Calendar Month)

As per Annexure

The details are as follows

Procurement Office	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding	Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of Tender in O/o. S.E.R.W. Division, Rairangpur, Technical Bid & Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5
S.E., R.W. Division, Rairangpur	RWDRRP - 04/2022-23	28.06.2022 at 11.00 A.M.	07.07.2022 upto 5.00 P.M.	08.07.2022 at 11.30 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

Sd./- Er. D. Behera
Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Rairangpur

OIPR-25107/11/0007/2223

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E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

E-auction Sale Notice for the Sale of Immovable Assets under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with Proviso to Rule 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and particular to the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of CholaMandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited, the same shall be referred herein after as CholaMandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited. The Secured Assets will be auctioned on 29.07.2022 on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis through E-Auction. It is hereby informed to General public that we are going to conduct public E-Auction through website <https://chola-lap.auctiontnger.net>.

Sl. No.	Account No. and Name of the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee	Date & Amount as per Demand Notice U/s 13(2)	Description of the Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	a) Reserve Price (RP) b) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) c) Bid Increment Amt.	a) E-Auction Date and Time b) EMD Submission Last Date c) Inspection Date d) Date Possession (Status of Possession)
1.	Loan A/c. Nos. : X0HECUC00003446393, X0HEBHU00002234179 & HE02BHU000000001351 Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee : 1. Binodini Routray, 2. Jitendra Routray 3. Rangalata Samantray 4. Sasmitha Routray, 4. Liza Routray 5. M/s. Yummi Foods All are at : Plot No. EB-373, Badagada, Brit Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751 018.	24.09.2021 Rs. 52,84,781.65 as on 23.09.2021	All that piece and parcel of the property situated at District - Khurda, Tahasil - Bhubaneswar SRO - Bhubaneswar Sahar, under Baragarha Housing Accommodation Scheme of BDA, BDA allotted House Plot No. EB-373, Area 805 Sq.ft (35 x 23) as per Drawing No. B-342 corresponding to Revenue Khata No. 1611/757, Revenue Plot No. 4402/7462, Area Ac. 01018 dcml. Status Pattadar, Kisam - Homestead bounded on the : North by EB 376, South by Road, West by EB 374, East by EB-372.	a) Rs. 52,00,000.00 b) Rs. 5,20,000.00 c) Rs. 25,000.00	a) 29.07.2022, 11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M. (with unlimited extension of 5 min) b) 28.07.2022 (up to 5.00 P.M.) c) 19.07.2022 and 20.07.2022 (10.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.) d) 13.01.2022 (Symbolic Possession)
2.	Loan A/c. No. : X0HEBHU00002551992 Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee : 1. Purna Chandra Samantray, 2. Bishnu Priya Samantray 3. Rangalata Samantray All are at : Plot No. 1106, Mahavir Nagar, Jharpada, Bhubaneswar, Dist - Khurda, Odisha - 751 006. Also at : Plot No. 581/3560, Madhupatna, Unit No. 32, Cuttack Sadar, Cuttack - 753 010. 4. M/s. New Kalika South Indian Hotel Plot No. 661, Bomikhal, Cuttack Road, Ward 31, Bhubaneswar, Dist - Khurda, Odisha - 751 006.	15.06.2021 Rs. 22,99,027.50 as on 10.06.2021	All that piece and parcel of the property and construction thereon situated in Dist - Cuttack, P.S. - Madhupatna No. 7, Tahasil & D.S.R.O. - Cuttack Sadar, Tahasil No. 231, Mouza - Cuttack Sahar, Unit No. 32, Madhupatna, Mutation, Khata No. 861/518, Plot No. 581/3560, Kissam- Gharabari One, Area Ac 0.020 Dec, Hal Khata No. 818, Hal Plot No. 581. Butted and bounded by: North - by Road, South - by Govt. Land, East - by Building (Mr. Panda), West - Vacate Land.	a) Rs. 36,00,000.00 b) Rs. 3,60,000.00 c) Rs. 25,000.00	a) 29.07.2022, 11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M. (with unlimited extension of 5 min) b) 28.07.2022 (up to 5.00 P.M.) c) 19.07.2022 and 20.07.2022 (10.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.) d) 17.12.2021 (Symbolic Possession)

1. All Interested participants / bidders are requested to visit the website <https://chola-lap.auctiontnger.net> & <https://www.cholamandalam.com/auction-notices>. For details, help, procedure and online training on e-auction, prospective bidders may contact M/s. e-Procurement Technologies Ltd.; Contact : Mr. Ram Sharma, Contact Number: 80000 23297 / 079-35022182, E-mail ID : ramressed@auctiontnger.net, support@auctiontnger.net.

2. For further details on terms and conditions please visit <https://chola-lap.auctiontnger.net> & <https://www.cholamandalam.com/auction-notices> to take part in e-auction.

THIS IS ALSO A STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002

Date : 24.06.2022
Place : Bhubaneswar, Odisha

For M/s. CholaMandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited
Authorised Officer



The New Revolution

Human-induced climate change is causing dangerous and widespread environmental disruption and affecting the lives of billions of people around the world. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world faces unavoidable climate hazards over the next two decades. But, with average annual global greenhouse-gas emissions reaching their highest levels in human history between 2010 and 2019, we are simply not doing enough to limit global warming to 1.5° Celsius.

The IPCC report released in April recommended that the world rapidly reduce fossil-fuel supply and demand between now and 2050: by 95% in the case of coal, 60% for oil, and 45% for natural gas. But how can we possibly achieve such ambitious targets?

The answer is by switching to green hydrogen, which can be produced from all forms of renewable energy, including solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal. Green hydrogen is a zero-emissions fuel; when produced through electrolysis, the only “emission” is water. It is a practical and implementable solution that, by democratising energy, decarbonising heavy industry, and creating jobs globally, would help revolutionise the way we power our planet.

A rapid acceleration of the green-energy transition can also fundamentally alter the geopolitical landscape, since countries will no longer be powerful simply because of the fossil fuels they produce. In 2021, Russia provided 34% of Germany’s crude oil and 53% of the hard coal used by German power generators and steel-makers. Russian-piped natural gas was Germany’s largest source of gas imports in December 2021, accounting for 32% of supply. Since Russian President Vladimir Putin launched his horrific, unjust war in Ukraine in February, fossil-fuel exports to Europe have been earning Russia roughly \$1 billion a day.

But since the start of the invasion in February, European Union countries in particular have moved quickly to reduce their energy dependence on Russia, recently agreeing to ban all seaborne imports of Russian oil. These new sanctions against Putin’s war machine could cut the amount of oil the EU buys from Russia by 90% this year. The US has declared a complete ban on Russian oil, gas, and coal imports, while the UK is phasing out imports of Russian oil by the end of 2022.

These policies have sent fuel prices soaring. But sharply higher prices have also highlighted the opportunity to drive down energy costs by investing in renewables and the production of green hydrogen.

New research suggests that green hydrogen will be competitive with fossil fuels over the next decade. The cost of green hydrogen is expected to decline significantly by 2025 and to fall to \$1 per kg by 2030 in favourable locations such as Australia. For comparison, grey hydrogen, which is made using polluting liquefied natural gas, currently costs around \$2 per kg.

Some advocate using LNG to “solve” the current energy-security crisis, but “natural gas” contains methane, and the IPCC says that we must reduce use of natural gas by almost 45% by 2050; adding more to the energy mix now would be a catastrophic mistake.

So, there is now a global race for green energy, and specifically for green hydrogen. Dozens of countries that have abundant renewable-energy sources can develop energy independence by producing green hydrogen at scale. And energy importers will not have to rely only on the few countries (such as Russia) that have a natural endowment of fossil fuels.

In a recent report, the International Renewable Energy Agency said that (green) hydrogen can bolster energy security in three main ways: by reducing import dependence, mitigating price volatility, and boosting energy systems’ flexibility and resilience through diversification. As technologies improve, the cost of green hydrogen will fall. We must do everything we can to accelerate this process.

Companies like Fortescue, where I am a board director, are investing significantly in green hydrogen and will help to replace Russian fossil fuels with green energy. Fortescue recently announced an agreement with Germany’s largest energy distributor, E.ON, to supply Europe with five million tonnes of green hydrogen a year by 2030 – the equivalent of one-third of the calorific value of the energy that Germany currently imports from Russia.

But while rapid changes in the energy and geopolitical landscape present a clear opportunity to address the energy and climate crises simultaneously by investing in green energy, there is a clear perception of unfairness when developed countries claim that relatively low-emitting developing economies need to shut down fossil-fuel use. Why should they risk slowing their development to address a problem they played no part in causing?

It’s a valid question. Policymakers will need to account for developing countries’ interests during the green transition and enhance funding and incentives for them to move to clean energy as the basis of industrialisation.

The world is clearly at a fork in the road. We can remain locked into a costly, polluting future that is hideously inefficient and empowers only a handful of fossil-fuel-rich countries. Alternatively, we can choose a green revolution of low-cost energy for all that keeps our future secure from pollution, global warming, and dictators. Given that green energy has the power to democratise global supply as more countries achieve energy independence, the choice is not difficult.

The writer is a non-executive director of Fortescue Metals Group.

WISDOM CORNER

- The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate. OPRAH WINFREY
- It's in responsibility that most people find the meaning that sustains them through life. It's not in happiness. It's not in impulsive pleasure. JORDAN PETERSON
- Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for. ZIG ZIGLAR

WORDSWORTH

Tolfraedic


In centuries past, merchants selling goods by number often supplied more than the nominal total. The baker’s dozen of 13 is well known. Less so is the measure of 120, which was once known variously as the great hundred, long hundred or small gross. This number 120 is the result of measuring items in a mixed system of twelves and tens, in part a survival of the duodecimal system used by many civilisations in antiquity and of which relics like the dozen and the gross still survive. It’s known, though very rarely, as the tolfraedic system. In origin the word is Icelandic, from tólf, twelve, plus ráða, to speak. Relatives of the term were used in Iceland and throughout Scandinavia to distinguish between hundreds that were ten tens and hundreds that were ten twelves (in Icelandic called tölfrátt hundrað). The long hundred was so widely used at one time in England that a proverb was created to remind people that: Five score’s a hundred of men, money and pins; six score’s a hundred of all other things (Quoted in Curiosities in Proverbs, by Dwight Edwards Marvin, 1916).

FOCUS ECONOMY

SPECTRE OF STAGFLATION



While the inflationary spiral is a worldwide phenomenon, India is beleaguered by a high unemployment rate of 7.83 per cent (in April) with labour force shrinking and labour participation rate plummeting



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

KEEPING THE REAL INTEREST RATE IN NEGATIVE TERRITORY FOR A LONG TIME WAS A GRIEVOUS BLUNDER

SPECTRUM EDUCATION

Helping 222 million children



Yasmine Sherif

OF THE 222 MILLION CHILDREN CURRENTLY AFFECTED BY CRISES AND EMERGENCIES, 78.2 MILLION ARE OUT OF SCHOOL

The United Nations recently estimated that the number of crisis-affected children in need of urgent educational support has skyrocketed from 75 million in 2016 to 222 million today. That’s 222 million dreams dashed – and 222 million attacks on our collective humanity.

This growing crisis will have far-reaching effects on our economies and societies. But only 24-per cent of global humanitarian funding is dedicated to education. As world leaders decide how to allocate resources in response to COVID-19, climate change, and conflict, they must make spending on education a much higher priority. This means rethinking international development policy with a view to achieving a world in which respect for equality and human rights starts with education for all.

Education requires money, but it is an investment that empowers people, creates more resilient economies, and ends poverty traps that perpetuate negative cycles of hunger, displacement, conflict, and chaos. A space flight with Jeff Bezos was recently auctioned for \$28 million – a sum that could provide close to 200,000 crisis-affected children with the safety, power, and opportunity for an education.

Every \$1 spent on girls’ education generates approximately \$2.80 in return. And ensuring that all girls complete their secondary education could boost developing countries’ GDP by an average of 10 per cent over the next decade.

But we can’t just throw money at the problem. We need to think about the quality of our investments in education.

Of the 222 million children currently affected by crises and emergencies, 78.2 million are out of school. And nearly 120 million are in school but not achieving minimum proficiency in math or reading.

Yes, these children need classrooms, teachers, books, pencils, and more. But, to benefit from the kind of learning that has the power to transform societies, they also need a broad spectrum of additional educational supports.

For example, according to the UN, only 56 per cent of schools in least-developed countries have access to safe drinking water; and 350 million children worldwide are hungry. How can a child who rarely eats a nourishing meal be expected to learn algebra?

Through the School Meals Coalition and other broad partnerships, we can ensure that children in places like Haiti and Somalia are able to eat at least one nutritious school meal a day. That can make all the difference.

So can protecting children from violence. The recent deadly shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, was a tragic reminder of the need to keep schools safe. The challenge is particularly daunting for children who face the prospect of living their entire life in a war zone.

According to the recent Education Under Attack 2022 report, attacks on education and the use of schools by military forces increased by one-third from 2019 to 2020. The war in Ukraine, in which over 1,800 educational institutions have so far been damaged and 170 completely destroyed, has made the situation even worse. Upholding international humanitarian law and the Safe Schools Declaration is another investment countries must make.

Additional supporting measures will help to achieve quality learning outcomes. These include counseling and other psychosocial services, which are vital to ensuring continuity of education for young people.

Donors should also follow the lead of organisations like The LEGO Foundation by investing in early childhood education. Teaching girls science, technology, engineering, and math should be a high priority. And we must provide the specialised education services that children with disabilities and other severely marginalised groups need.

Without education, no other Sustainable Development Goals can be achieved. To avoid inefficiencies and further disruptions to efforts to deliver on the SDGs, we need to focus on achieving universal and equitable education (SDG4).

That is a distant dream for the 84 per cent of the crisis-affected out-of-school children who are living in areas with protracted crises. The vast majority are in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Yemen. The war in Ukraine is exacerbating the problem, with recent estimates indicating that the conflict is threatening the lives and well-being of 5.7 million school-aged children.

There is hope. For example, the Ecuadorean government has recently responded to the crisis in Venezuela by allowing refugees to access public education. In Uganda, which hosts the largest refugee population in Africa, the government is implementing an Education Response Plan to provide safe learning environments for refugee children. In Ethiopia, accelerated school programs are helping refugee girls to make up for years of lost learning.

Responding to the urgent educational needs of children affected by crises is not the job only of national governments or the UN. By making a global commitment to help every child and adolescent – including those enduring wars, forced displacement, and climate-induced disasters – to reach their potential, we can contribute to human rights, peace and security, and economic prosperity for all. First, we have 222 million dreams to save.

The writer is Director of Education Cannot Wait, the UN global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises.

Ban scurrilous speeches

Sir, There is a saying: “Speech is silver, silence is golden.” Now a days, many political leaders are making scurrilous speeches damaging the reputation of opponents in public. Freedom of speech is not a license to spread venom in the society. A person who has no control over his speech can hardly prosper in life. Right to speech guaranteed under Article 19 (1) of the Constitution is not absolute. Reasonable instructions can be imposed on it on account of maintaining public morality and security of the state. In politics, there should not be any room for hatred and antipathy. Politics is the affairs of the state, that strives to attain a state having built on the edifice of equality, fraternity, fellow feeling and good will. Venomous speech doesn’t augur well for the growth of democracy. It creates division in the society, and a rupture in the opponent’s heart than maintaining peace and harmony in the society. The Election Commission of India should ban scurrilous speeches made by leaders of various political parties. This is the demand of the day.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Murmu as Prez candidate

Sir, Both the ruling NDA and the Opposition UPA have announced their candidates for the upcoming presidential election. The UPA chose former Finance and External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha as their candidate, while the NDA nominated teacher-turned politician and former Jharkhand Governor Droupadi Murmu as their candidate. With the numbers on the NDA’s side, we can expect Droupadi Murmu to be the next President of India. If elected, Murmu will become the first-ever person from a tribal community to hold the office. She will also become the second woman President of India. Nominating Murmu who has experience of working as a Governor of Jharkhand will increase the chances of winning the election for the NDA. We hope this nomination of Murmu will pave the way for other women in rural and semi-urban areas of the country to dream big and achieve their goals. This is such a proud moment for every tribal woman throughout the country facing different social challenges for basic rights. This is also a matter of pride for every Odia.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

the day note

Water from the mining pits would be utilised for irrigation purposes in future to foster the farming activities

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

Horse-trading is not new in Indian politics and the Congress' mistakes while in power at the Centre is being repeated by the BJP

OMAR ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEADER

Continue to focus on surveillance and whole genome sequencing to scan any possible mutations

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

New NIA chief

New Delhi: IPS officer and former Punjab Police chief Dinkar Gupta has been appointed as the Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), an official statement said Thursday. A 1987 batch officer, Gupta succeeds Yogesh Chandra Modi and will head the premier security agency till March 31, 2024. Gupta, who was Punjab Police for two years and seven months, was currently posted as Chairman of the Punjab Police Housing Corporation. He had been seeking a posting at the Centre.

Body found

Nainital: The body of a woman was found in Naini Lake here after some passer-by saw it floating on Thursday morning. The police reached the spot after receiving the news and fished out the body from the lake with the help of locals. The body was later sent for post-mortem. According to Senior Sub-Inspector, Mallital police station, Deepak Bisht, the woman has been identified as Kamala, wife of Kishan Giri, a resident of Krishnapur. Her husband Kishan works as a gardener at Himachal High Court Advocate General's office.

10-year-old dies

New Delhi: Enacting a social media video stunt proved costly to a ten-year-old boy who died of suffocation after his skipping rope got entangled around his neck in East Delhi's New Usmanpur. A police source said that the other part of the rope got stuck into the peg of a standing cot. "The boy was trying to enact a video which was uploaded on a social media site. He was performing the same stunt when the tragedy occurred on Wednesday," said the source.

Tiger kills farmer

Bahraich: A 57-year-old farmer was killed by a tiger in a forest in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district, officials said Thursday. According to them, the incident took place on Wednesday evening near Bhartapur village in the Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary. The victim, Ghanshyam Rajbhar was cutting grass when the tiger attacked him.

Man burnt alive

New Delhi: A man was charred to death after a major fire broke out at a shop in Pooth Kalan area of Rohini on Thursday afternoon. According to the fire department, they got a call regarding the incident at around 4:44 p.m. Initially, four fire tenders were rushed to the spot. Later six more were sent to the site. The fire fighters which were pressed into service took an hour to bring the fire under control.



By bringing 'Agniveers' on a four-year contract, the BJP has broken the dream of lakhs of youth to serve the nation. Such a storm will rise from these tears that will destroy the arrogance of power of the prime minister

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

GULERIA'S TENURE EXTENDED

The tenure of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, Director, Dr Randeep Guleria was extended by three months Thursday, an official statement said



China 'largest security anxiety': Aus Dy PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: China is the "largest security anxiety" for Australia and India and Beijing's actions along the Line of Actual Control in 2020 as well as in South China Sea were reflective of its increasing assertiveness, and like-minded countries must work together in the face of such challenges, Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said Thursday.

Marles also said that China has been attempting to "shape the world in a way that was not seen before" and that deeper defence cooperation between India and Australia is absolutely crucial to protect the rules-based global order including in the Indo-Pacific region.

India is "completely central" to Australia's worldview, he told a small group of journalists, wrapping up his four-day visit to India, the first from Canberra after Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party came to power last month.

"For Australia, China is our largest trading partner and so is for India.. For Australia, China is our largest security anxiety. That is also the same for India. How to reconcile those two things is not obvious," he said.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh shakes hands with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles

PTI PHOTO

Richard Marles, who is also Australia's defence minister, said Canberra sees its relationship with India as being "really important" in protecting the global rules-based order, adding Chinese assertiveness is a matter of concern

Marles said that China has been attempting to "shape the world in a way that was not seen before" and that deeper defence cooperation between India and Australia is absolutely crucial to protect the rules-based global order including in the Indo-Pacific region

vious," he said.

"Our anxiety is that when you look at the Chinese behaviour; be it in the Line of Actual Control (LAC), be it in the South China Sea - what you are seeing is an assertive behaviour which seeks to challenge the established rules based order which has been so important to the prosper-

ity of the region," he added. In that context, Marles, who is also Australia's defence minister, said Canberra sees its relationship with India as being "really important" in protecting the global rules-based order, adding Chinese assertiveness is a matter of concern.

"We have seen it in respect of

the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The incident that occurred a couple of years ago, where there was appalling behaviour towards Indian soldiers, and we stand in solidarity with India in respect of that incident," he said, referring to the Galwan Valley clashes in 2020.

He said the Chinese actions along the LAC was reflective of one country seeking to deal with its disputes not based on a set of rules but through "power and through force and that's a concern". The Australian deputy prime minister said China has been increasing its assertiveness in the South China Sea and noted that its actions are inconsistent with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Marles said Australia is also "anxious" about the growing defence ties between China and Russia and emphasised the importance for democracies to protect the rules-based order. Replying to a question, he said "China is seeking to shape the world around us in a way that we have not seen before and that is really about the last decade. And in seeking to shape the world around us we are experiencing particularly recently in the last couple of years more assertive Chinese behaviour."

ED GRILLS RUJIRA FOR SIX HOURS



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 23: Rujira Narula Banerjee, the wife of Trinamool Congress' national general secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, Thursday faced a marathon six-hour questioning by Enforcement Directorate (ED) sleuths holding her two-and-a-half year-old son Ayansh.

She is being questioned in connection with the coal smuggling scam in West Bengal, which as per the estimates is to the tune of Rs 1,300 crore.

According to ED sources, Rujira Narula Banerjee reached central government office (CGO) complex at around 11.10 a.m. holding her son in her lap. She requested the investigating officials, who came from New Delhi on Thursday morning only, to allow her son to be present during the questioning session.

The ED officials allowed that on humanitarian ground. The investigating officials, source said, gave her timely breaks in between in view of the fact that her son was with her. Sources said that Rujira was questioned mainly on two bank accounts, purportedly held by her, one in London and the other in Bangkok. She was specially

She is being questioned in connection with the coal smuggling scam in Bengal, which as per the estimates is to the tune of ₹1,300 crore

questioned about the Bangkok-based bank account, where money was transferred by a Howrah-based chartered accountant, Neeraj Singh, who is currently absconding. The money transferred, according to ED sources, was from an India-based bank account after converting Indian rupee into Thai baht.

Apart from that she was also questioned about some mobile screenshots that the agency has recovered from the cellphones of other suspects in the coal smuggling scam.

Sources said that in most of the questions she either denied any knowledge or claimed to have been erased from her memory. Finally, at around 5 p.m. she left the ED office. A team of four officials of the ED that included a lady officer and led by joint director, Kapil Raj came from Delhi specially to interrogate Rujira Narula. They left for New Delhi on Thursday only.

Sluggish voting in Azamgarh, Rampur bypolls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, June 23: An average of only 41 per cent votes were cast till 5 pm Thursday in the by-elections to Azamgarh and Rampur Lok Sabha seats, an hour before polling was scheduled to close in the two Samajwadi Party bastions. Rampur, which fell vacant after SP leader Azam Khan moved to the state assembly, recorded a turnout of just 37 per cent till this time. In 2019, the final percentage was 63.19. In Azamgarh, represented by SP president Akhilesh Yadav before he was elected to the assembly in the last Vidhan Sabha polls, the turnout was 45.97 per cent till 5 pm. In the last Lok Sabha polls in 2019, the final turnout on this seat was 57.56 per cent.

Together, the two seats had registered a turnout averaging a little over 41 per cent till an hour before closing time. Polling began at 7 am. Over 35 lakh people were eligible to vote in the bypolls in these two constituencies to decide the fate of 19 candidates.

No violent incident was reported. But in a series of tweets, the opposition Samajwadi Party alleged irregularities in both constituencies. "The police are harassing SP workers at the behest of the ruling party in Tanda and Daryal areas of Swar assembly seat in Rampur. The Election Commission should take note. Action should be taken against the guilty policemen. Ensure fair voting," the party said.

It attached a letter written to the poll panel with this complaint. The party alleged that people were prevented from casting votes at a booth in Tanda and the polling was stopped. It also claimed that its agents were driven out of several polling booths in Azamgarh. "All agents were made to leave from all the polling booths in Gopalpur, Sagdi, Mubarakpur, Azamgarh and Mehnagar assembly areas as part of a conspiracy at the behest of the BJP.

TRAGIC JOURNEY



Mangled remains of a bus after it collided with another on Howrah Bridge in Kolkata. At least 7 people were injured in the mishap, according to officials

PTI PHOTO

Nine real estate firms under CBI scanner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: DHFL allegedly diverted funds worth over Rs 14,683 crore through nine real estate firms controlled by then chairman-cum-managing director Kapil Wadhawan, director Dheeraj Wadhawan and businessman Sudhakar Shetty, where they had financial interests, the CBI has alleged.

The role of these real estate firms - five belonging to Shetty's Sahana Group and four others - have come under the Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) scanner in a Rs 34,615 crore scam in Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL) as it has surfaced that loans to the companies were allegedly disbursed under the instructions of Kapil Wadhawan and Dheeraj Wadhawan, officials said.

The Union Bank of India, which has approached the CBI, has al-



leged that Amayllis Realtors, Gulmarg Realtors and Skylark Buildcon owe Rs 98.33 crore, and Darshan Developers and Sigtia Constructions owe Rs 3,970 crore as outstanding towards DHFL. All five companies belong to the Sahana Group, the officials said. It is also alleged that Darshan Developers and Sigtia Constructions were controlled by the Wadhawans.

The outstanding amount towards Creatoz Builders is Rs 1,192 crore,

towards Township Developers Rs 6,002 crore, towards Shishir Realty Rs 1,233 crore and towards Sunlink Real Estate Private Limited Rs 2,185 crore, the officials said.

A portion of the money was diverted to companies controlled by former promoters Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and the Sahana Group, where they also had prima facie financial interest, the officials said.

The funds were part of Rs 42,871

Distress writ large upon submerged Silchar

Silchar Lok Sabha MP Rajdeep Roy Thursday said this was the worst flood that Silchar has witnessed in the last seven decades

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Silchar, June 23: Silchar town, the gateway to Assam's Barak Valley is in the grip of severe floods with the town remaining submerged since Monday, and people facing acute shortage of food and drinking water, besides frequent power outages.

Silchar Lok Sabha MP Rajdeep Roy Thursday said this was the worst flood that Silchar had wit-

nessed in the last seven decades. Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi - the three districts of Barak Valley - are reeling under severe floods with the Barak and Kushiya rivers flowing above the danger level, affecting over six lakh people - 2,32,002 in 565 villages in Cachar district and 2,81,271 in 469 villages of Karimganj.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma made an aerial survey of the marooned town, which has a population of approximately three lakh, visited a few relief camps, and reviewed the prevailing flood situation with public representatives and district officials on Thursday.

Ten-year-old Shreya Das of Silchar town was relieved last week when the Cachar district administration had announced the closure of schools following incessant rainfall, as she would not have to wade through



water-logged streets. Little did the Class 4 student know of the harrowing time that her family would experience over the next few days.

Shreya's house, along with that of around two lakh people in most areas of the town, was submerged following the damage of a dyke at

Betkundi. The dyke breached on Sunday following which water entered the homes of people, disrupting power and water supplies and the flood-affected population waiting to be evacuated.

"For four days, we are without power and clean drinking water

and flood waters have entered the ground floor of my house, forcing us to move to the upper floors. At least, we are fortunate to have a triple-storied house and we could move to safety within the house", school teacher Mandira Deb of the College Road area said.

The water level of River Barak was already flowing above the danger level since the rains but with the breach in the dyke, it gushed into the low-lying areas of Sonai Road, Rangirkhari, Link Road, Ambicapatty, Ashram Road, College Road, Public School Road, Fatakbar, Betkundi and other areas of the town.

However, retired government employee Bireswar Nath of the Rangirkhari area was not so lucky and he along with his family of five remained inside the flooded

home for over 24 hours. They were evacuated to a relief camp, set up in a school, that too under water. In Cachar, 33,766 people have taken shelter in 258 relief camps while in Karimganj 20,595 inmates are in 103 relief camps.

Monica Acharjee, a 32-year-old with severe breathing problems, aggravated by the trauma of flood waters entering her home in Ghaniwala area was unable to reach the hospital, but the local ward commissioner reached out to the Deputy Commissioner who sent a rescue team and evacuated her to an emergency ward of a private hospital. The Silchar MP Thursday posted pictures on social media of the road outside his home in Bilpara area, which is completely submerged with only the upper portion of vehicles in sight.

B'LORE CIVIC BODY DRAWS FLAK

Roads wither soon after ₹23cr repair ahead of PM's visit



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, June 23: The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), which drew flak from the public for spending Rs 23 crore for the facelift of 14 km roads in Bangalore ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit, is again finding itself on a spot.

The asphalted roads are wearing out at many locations and in some parts the roads are even caving in, exposing the public to danger. People of the surrounding areas of this stretch of roads, who were happy feeling that their hiatus with potholes was over, are now disappointed again.

The authorities have developed Kengeri to Kommaghatta (7 km), Mysuru Road (0.15 km), a stretch after Hebbal flyover (2.4 km), Tumakuru Road (0.90 km) and roads in Bengaluru University campus (3.6 km). The BBMP also repaired maidans, fixed street lights, painted roads and kerbs.

The work was done on war footing amid rains. However, though the roads could hold till Prime Minister Modi's visit, the public started complaining about potholes coming up on these roads and at some

points jelly stones surfacing.

A stretch of road, asphalted as part of Rs 23 crore road works, the Jnanabharathi Main Road was repaired at a cost of Rs 6 crore and Modi travelled on this stretch Monday. After a spell of overnight rain, this stretch of road caved in.

BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath stated that at some points the asphalted road was damaged only due to heavy rainfall and it was not fair to say that the entire stretch of repaired road was damaged.

Ravindra PN, the Special Commissioner (Projects) has stated that asphalted roads is part of protocol ahead of the PM's visit. The civic agency has so far fixed 14,500 potholes in the city. Another 1,500 potholes will be fixed soon and rains are delaying the work, he maintained.

The pathetic condition of the roads in the city has been a major concern among the vehicle riders in Bangalore. The issue has been raised by many prominent personalities, including Biocon Chief Kiran Majumdar-Shaw. The Karnataka High Court also warned the authorities on multiple occasions to fix the Bangalore roads.

100 pool-sized potholes in 20-km stretch of NH

Interestingly, road construction minister of Bihar Nitin Navin comes under the BJP quota in Nitish govt

AGENCIES

Patna, June 23: While the double engine government of Bihar has been claiming a good road network in the state, a video of National Highway 227 in Madhubani district has taken social media by storm which shows 100 small pool-size potholes on the road.

The highway has more than 100 big potholes in a stretch of over 20 km from the Kaluahi village to Umgaon crossing at Basopatti block in the district.

The local residents claim that the road was in good condition in early 1990 and the Union Road Transport ministry gave it the status of a national highway in 2001. After that, the road construction department of the Bihar government looked after this road. In the last 20 years, the condition deteriorated to such



During the monsoon season, small ponds appear on the road that give one an experience of travelling through a jungle

RAJU KUMAR | LOCAL RESIDENT

an extent that now it is full of with potholes.

The local residents claim that the road was being used by all the big officers in the state, including the District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police, local MLA, ministers and even the chief minister, but no action was taken to repair it.

Bihar BJP chief fires fresh salvo at JD(U)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, June 23: In fresh trouble for the ruling NDA in Bihar, state BJP president Sanjay Jaiswal has squarely blamed alliance partner JD(U) of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for the less than satisfactory condition of higher education in the province.

Jaiswal also termed as laughable the contention of JD(U) that there should be a punarvichaar (re-think) on the Agnipath scheme of recruitment in the armed forces which last week left the state in throes of violent protests. The BJP leader made the remarks on Wednesday, a day before a video of the same went viral on social media, at the remote Raxaul town falling under his Pashchim Champaran Lok Sabha constituency.

Jaiswal was holding forth on the promised virtues of Agnipath which, he said, would equip youngsters with enough skills and qualifications by the time they were discharged after four years of service.

I find it laughable when JD(U)



leaders demand a rethink. They should do punarvichaar of the state of higher education in Bihar. The portfolio has been with them and students still have to contend with delayed academic sessions, spending more than three years to complete their graduation, said Jaiswal.

The JD(U), which was last week left fuming after Jaiswal alleged complicity of the administration in the attack on his house by a mob protesting against Agnipath, was predictably rankled by the latest barb

hurled at the party. Former minister and JD(U)'s chief spokesman Neeraj Kumar came out with an indignant statement enumerating steps taken for bringing the academic calendar back on track.

He did not mention Jaiswal by name but prefaced his rebuttal with the Hindi saying kahin pe nighan, kahin pe nishana (looking at one place, aiming at another), in a clear signal that the JD(U) would not take kindly to any snide remarks by its ally, whatever may be the pretext.

Prashant Kishor taunts Nitish over Bihar roads

Patna: 'Jan Suraj' campaign convener Prashant Kishor Thursday sought to puncture his former mentor Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's claims of having given a face-lift to the state's roads. Kishor, who is touring the state as a spade-work for a full-time launch into politics, shared on his Twitter handle an image of a national highway passing through Madhubani district which reminded him of the "jungle raj of the 1990s". "Nitish ji had recently told officials of road construction department that they must tell the people about the condition of roads in the state", Kishor tweeted. "Jungle raj of 1990s" was a reference to the husband-wife duo Lalu Prasad and Rabri Devi who together ruled Bihar for 15 years until the defeat of their RJD by the NDA headed by Kumar in 2005. Lawlessness and the abysmal state of roads were the two primary counts on which the RJD faced criticism. Kishor, who had helped Lalu-Nitish alliance clinch a victory in the 2015 assembly polls and formally joined the JD(U), then headed by Kumar, as his number two a couple of years later, now feels that the two leaders have let the state down. Having given up his career which gave him the opportunity to rub shoulders with the who's who of Indian politics, Kishor has now come out with the promise of transformational, bottom-up politics in his home state.

in Nitish Kumar government.

Ravindra Kumar, the contractor of this road said, "The department has allotted the tender to me, but has not released the fund. The

rate of construction materials has already been increased. We are unable to pay our labourers. Hence, the repairing of the road has not happened so far."

'Blueprint is ready for development of Lord Hanuman birthplace'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Koppal (Karnataka), June 23: The ruling BJP in Karnataka Tuesday clarified that the blueprint for the development of Anjanadri hills, which is regarded as the birthplace of Lord Hanuman, is ready. We will develop Anjanadri Hills at any cost, announced Tourism Minister Anand Singh.

The Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanams (TTD) in Andhra Pradesh is disputing the fact that Karnataka is the birthplace of Lord Hanuman which claims that Anjanadri Hills at Tirumala is the birthplace of Lord Hanuman.

The Karnataka government is claiming that since time immemorial, thousands of devotees are visiting Anjanadri hills in Koppal district which is regarded as the birthplace of Lord Hanuman. To counter the move by TTD, the state government of Karnataka has prepared a grand plan of turning the place as a pilgrimage centre to visit after Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. Recently in Maharashtra, it was

claimed that Anjaneri in Nashik is the real birthplace of Lord Hanuman. Amid row, Congress leader in Karnataka Ugrappa has chided that the ruling BJP is least bothered about developing the birthplace in Karnataka as Lord Hanuman belongs to lower caste. Reacting to this, Minister Anand Singh said that his party did not know about castes.

The Karnataka government is all set to elevate the Anjanadri Parvatha (hills) as a pilgrimage centre of the world, he said.

The plan is being made to make Ayodhya-Anjanadri a tourism corridor. Sources say that Ramseti in Kanyakumari will also be included as a part of the corridor, since all these places are integral part of Hindu holy book 'Ramayana'.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai had announced Rs 100 crore for the development of the birthplace of Lord Hanuman in the state budget. The state also has plans to invite Prime Minister Narendra Modi to inaugurate a slew of development projects.



Bihar legislature's monsoon session begins today

CONTINUING TILL JUNE 30, THE SESSION WILL HAVE ONLY FIVE DAYS OF LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, June 23: A short, though thunderous and stormy, monsoon session of the bicameral legislature in Bihar commences here Friday.

Continuing till June 30, the session will have only five days of legislative business, though, in the backdrop of the political heat, lots of fireworks may be expected.

One of the things to watch out for will be the chemistry, or lack thereof, between the ruling allies JD(U) and BJP which had recently been at each other's throats with divergent views on the Agnipath scheme and the massive unrest that rocked the state in its wake.

Opposition RJD led by Tejashwi Yadav has fired on all cylinders whenever the legislature is in session though it would be interesting to see whether its recent strategy of attacking BJP more than Kumar



Police personnel deployed at the Bihar Assembly ahead of the Monsoon session, in Patna

PTI PHOTO

and his JD(U) continues on the floor of the House.

Despite having an axe to grind against Kumar who dumped it in

2017, the RJD has shown a bit of leniency towards the chief minister, an arch-rival of its founding president Lalu Prasad, since the fel-

low Mandalite ordered a headcount of castes following the Centre's refusal to undertake the same as part of the census.

Triple murder accused let off by K'taka HC



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Belagavi (K'taka), June 23: In a major development, the Karnataka High Court has acquitted a man charged with triple murders that shook the state in 2015.

A woman, along with her two children, was brutally murdered by her paramour Praveen Bhat.

A bench headed by Justice KS Mudagal and Justice MGS Kamal vindicated the accused youth Praveen Bhat of all charges against him June 21.

The incident had taken place in Kuvempunagar of Belagavi city

August 16, 2015. Reena Malagatti, a resident of Kuvempunagar in Belagavi, her son Aditya and daughter were found murdered at their residence and the police had arrested Praveen Bhat in connection with the crime. After conducting the trial, the Second District and Sessions Court, had awarded life imprisonment to Bhat April 16, 2018. APMC Police of Belagavi city had submitted a charge sheet in this regard.

The accused was arrested within 24 hours of the crime. The investigations suggested that the illicit affair between Bhat and Reena Malagatti was the reason for the

triple murder.

Praveen Bhat from Uttara Kannada district lived with his parents in Kuvempunagar locality of Belagavi city and studied in a reputed college. Reena and Praveen were known to each other for one year before the incident. Police suspected that as Reena's husband went to outstations regularly, the two got into an affair.

The police alleged that Praveen Bhat who always visited Reena's house from the backside with the help of a rope and never entered from the front door even once. He visited Reena's house twice on the day the tragic incident took place. It is alleged that Reena forced him to continue the illegal relationship and threatened him to make their affair public. Praveen, allegedly enraged by this, stabbed Reena with a knife and killed her.

It was alleged that he killed one of the kids by smothering and dumped another into a bucket full of water.

Ship grounded off Mangalore may sink completely

The ship carrying the steel coils from Malaysia to Lebanon touched the bottom and got stuck. ICG personnel rescued 15 Syrian crew members from the ship

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mangalore, June 23: The merchant vessel Princess Miral, which ran aground off Ullal near here is now submerged by 70 percent and is facing the threat of sinking completely as the sea is rough with high waves, official sources said.

The ship agency owning the vessel is exploring ways to prevent the ship from sinking. The ship's owner is holding talks with the representative of Marcan shipping agency based here. The experts have to arrive from the Smith Salvage com-



pany of Mumbai to rescue the ship. It is learnt that the owner of the ship may try to salvage the cargo of steel coils, which is worth crores of rupees, sources said.

The ship was carrying the steel coils from Malaysia to Lebanon. Due to a technical fault, a hole developed in the front part of the ship. Though the agents of the vessel tried to bring it to New Mangalore Port (NMP) or the Old

Port here for repair, permission was not granted.

Meanwhile, the ship touched the bottom and got stuck at Uchilla in Ullal near here. The Indian Coast Guard personnel rescued 15 Syrian crew members onboard the ship.

The Coast Guard handed over the 15 crew members of the ship to Panambur police Wednesday.

City police commissioner N Shashi Kumar said the Dakshina Kannada

district administration will take care of the Syrian nationals who were on board the ship for now.

They will be later sent to the detention centre for foreigners in Bangalore. After getting consent from the External Affairs ministry, they will be repatriated to Syria, he said. Coast Guard personnel, port officials and coastal security police are in Ullal keeping a watch on the submerged vessel.

of the day quote

It is astonishing that the government is preparing to deploy crores of youths in front of the enemy's bayonets by providing them merely six months of training

SANJAY SINGH | AAP MP

By reading books and newspapers, you will remain updated and get a broader perspective of things around you

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

Dummy cars and a government on dialysis do not last long

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Techie falls to death

Hyderabad: A software engineer died under suspicious circumstances in Hyderabad Thursday, an official said. The incident occurred in Deepti Srinagar colony of Miyapur area under the limits of Cyberabad police commissionerate. Sandeep (42) fell from fourth floor of a building and died on the spot. He fell down along with his laptop. Police shifted the body to government-run Gandhi Hospital.

10 killed in UP

Pilibhit (UP): Ten persons were killed when a pick-up van rammed into a tree on Puranpur highway under the Gajraula police circle here Thursday morning. Seven others were seriously injured in the accident and have been admitted to a hospital. According to reports, the van was moving at a high speed when the driver apparently dozed off and the vehicle hit a tree. Seventeen passengers in the vehicle were returning from Haridwar after taking a holy dip in the Ganga river.

7 tourists saved

Srinagar: Seven tourists were rescued Thursday from a sinking houseboat in Jammu and Kashmir's Dal Lake by the owner of the houseboat. A houseboat called 'Kolahoi' started sinking this morning after incessant rains in the Valley during the last four days. Reports said after the owner of the houseboat, Muhammad Yusuf, noticed that the houseboat was sinking, he and his family members quickly evacuated the seven tourists without caring for their own safety.

1 dead, 8 rescued

New Delhi: A 25-year-old man was killed while eight people were rescued after a fire broke out at a building in Rohini area here on Thursday evening, officials said. Fire department officials said they received information about the blaze in the building in Sector 5, Pooth Kalan, at 3.57 pm. Ten fire tenders were rushed to the spot, they said. The building comprised of a basement, ground floor and four upper floors. There was a shoe manufacturing-cum-storage unit in the basement, ground and first floor and the rest of the upper floors were being used for residential purposes.

Woman found dead

New Delhi: A 25-year-old woman was found dead in West Delhi's Mohan Garden area Thursday. The identity of the deceased is yet to be established. Dwarka DCP M Harsha Vardhan said that the body bore marks which indicated she was strangled to death. A case of murder was lodged at Mohan Garden Police Station and the body was sent to Deen Dyal Upadhyay Hospital for post-mortem.



Amid floods in Assam, why are Maharashtra MLAs being sent to that state to disturb affected people? BJP trying to topple Maharashtra govt in unethical manner

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

SHIFT LIKELY

The Enforcement Directorate Thursday informed the Supreme Court that it could shift alleged conman Suresh Chandrashekhar and his wife from the Tihar Jail to Mandoli Jail in east Delhi



AAP MLA threatened

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 23: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Sanjeev Jha has claimed that he is receiving death threats in the name of gangster Neeraj Bawana. Jha has said that ₹10 lakh has been demanded from him.

According to the Delhi Police, based on the AAP MLA's complaint, an FIR under sections 387 of the Indian Penal Code and 66c of the IT act has been lodged. Seeing the gravity of the matter, the case was lodged with the Special Cell.



"On June 20, I got a call at about 11:49 p.m., the caller said that he is Vicky Cobra, brother of Bawana. I ignored him and disconnected the call. After this, he sent me voice recording in which he demanded ₹10 lakh. The sender also threatened me that he would kill my family if his demands were not met," Jha said in his complaint.

INDIA DEPLOYS TEAM AT KABUL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: India Thursday resumed its diplomatic presence in Kabul by deploying a team in its embassy in the Afghan capital, over 10 months after it pulled out its officials from the mission following the Taliban's capture of power.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in a statement, said an Indian technical team has reached Kabul on Thursday and has been deployed in the embassy there. The reopening of the embassy came three weeks after an Indian team led by JP Singh, the MEA's point person for Afghanistan, visited Kabul and met acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi and some other members of the Taliban dispensation.

It is learnt that the Taliban side had assured the Indian team that adequate security will be provided if India sends its officials to the embassy in Kabul.

"In order to closely monitor and coordinate the efforts of various stakeholders for the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance and in continuation of our engagement with the Afghan people, an Indian technical team has reached Kabul today and has been deployed in our embassy there," the MEA said.

The MEA has been maintaining that the embassy was not shut as only India-based officials were brought back home and that the local staff continued to function at the mission.

"Recently, another Indian team visited Kabul to oversee the delivery operations of our humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and met with senior members of the Taliban," it said, referring to the visit to Kabul by the Singh-led team.

In the statement, the MEA said an assessment of the security situation was also carried out during the visit of that team.

"Our longstanding links with Afghan society and our development partnership including humanitarian assistance for the people of Afghanistan, will continue to guide our approach going forward," the MEA said.

It said India has a historical and civilizational relationship with the people of Afghanistan.

AIADMK meet turns into virtual war zone

The meet that witnessed chaotic scenes was over in less than 40 minutes after it started. A water bottle landed pretty close to OPS when he stood near the podium and fell on his Personal Security Officer who extended his arms around the former Chief Minister to protect him

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, June 23: Amid chaos, the AIADMK General Council meeting here Thursday announced that the one and only demand of the GC members is to bring in a system of a single leadership for the party, favouring Joint Coordinator Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS).

The Executive and General Council meet held together saw EPS emerging as the supreme leader and he was honoured with a decorated crown, a sword and sceptre by supporters.

EPS's colleague and Coordinator O Panneerselvam, popularly known as OPS was apparently snubbed in the meet and rude slogans were shouted against him.

The meet, which stuck to the one and only demand of making EPS the supreme party leader, turned out to be a full show of strength of the Palaniswami camp with OPS followers heavily outnumbered. Panneerselvam camp promptly declared the proceedings invalid and OPS, a three-time Chief Minister is likely to air-dash to Delhi to explore options like approaching the Election Commission to take forward his fight against OPS faction.

While the EPS camp asserted that the GC would meet again July 11 to elect Palaniswami as the party head, OPS group said that it is not



possible as only Coordinator and Joint Coordinator had the powers to convene the meet and not the Presidium Chairman.

Within the party, most belonging to the Vanniyakula Kshathriyas community also known as Vanniyars, dominant in northern Tamil Nadu and the Gounders, seen as movers and shakers of the western region favoured EPS. While OPS hails from the Mukkulathor community, EPS is a Gounder.

When the EC-GC meet consistently focused on the 'EPS for single leader' demand, OPS was prompted to leave the dais along with his supporters including R Vaithilingam.

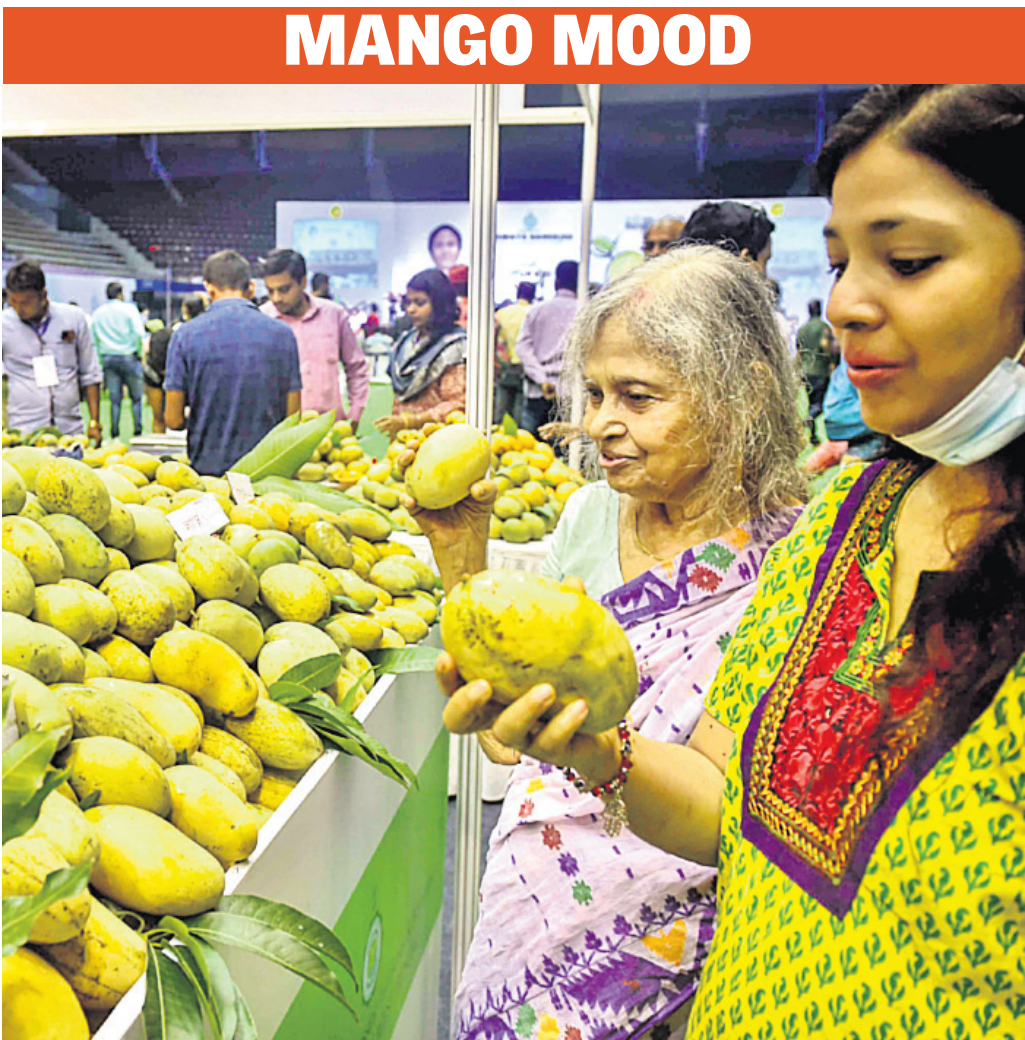
The meet that witnessed chaotic scenes was over in less than 40 minutes after it started.

A water bottle landed pretty close to OPS when he stood near the podium and fell on his Personal Security Officer who extended his arms around the former Chief Minister to protect him.

A second water bottle came close to the party Coordinator when he was walking down the stairs from the dais towards the exit gate.

A palpable sense of anxiety prevailed as supporters of Panneerselvam and Palaniswami engaged in rival slogan shouting and some of them loudly argued against one another and voiced their full-throated backing to their respective leaders.

As OPS and EPS entered the premises of the hall -the venue of the meeting- their supporters raised slogans welcoming them.



People check mangoes during the Mango Utsav organised by West Bengal government at Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

MBBS ASPIRANTS DEMAND NEET POSTPONEMENT

The last year's exam was initially scheduled for August 1 but was postponed to September 12 due to the second wave of the pandemic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: Thousands of MBBS aspirants have demanded the postponement of medical entrance exam NEET scheduled on July 17, saying it's "too close" to other competitive exams, giving them limited time to prepare.

Hashtag #PostponeNEETUG has been trending on microblogging site Twitter and the aspirants have also started an online petition which has been signed by over 24,000 students.

In their petition, they said the counselling of National Eligibility

cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate)-UG 2021 ended just in March, and the 2022 edition is scheduled on July 17.

"How are we to revise such a vast syllabus in just 3 months? Moreover, other important exams like the Board Exams, CUCET, JEE Mains are also scheduled around the same time. Imagine the trauma and pressure we students are having to go through with all these significant exams scheduled one after the other. Is this a fair decision?" the petition demanded.

The last year's exam was initially scheduled for August 1 but was

LAWRENCE BISHNOI PLANNED MOOSEWALA KILLING, SAYS COP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 23: Gangster Lawrence Bishnoi has admitted that he was the "mastermind" in Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala's killing and the planning was going on since last August, Punjab Police ADGP Pramod Ban said Thursday.

Ban, who is also the head of the Anti-Gangster Task Force, said another accused, Baldev alias Nikku, a resident of Haryana's Sirsa district, was arrested on Thursday. Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, also known as Sidhu Moosewala, was shot dead in Mansa district on May 29, a day after the Punjab government pruned the security cover of the singer and 423 people temporarily.

"We had recently arrested Lawrence Bishnoi in the case and his remand was extended till June 27. He has admitted that he was the mastermind (in Moosewala's killing)," Ban told reporters here.

"The plan to carry out the killing was being hatched since August last year. According to our information, recce was done thrice. In January too, a different group of shooters had come to kill Moosewala but could not do so," the ADGP said.

"We have arrested 13 people so far and the entire conspiracy has been unravelled," Ban said, adding that Lawrence has also admitted to using a mobile phone in Tihar Jail. Asked if the weapons recovered from the arrested shooters in the case by the Delhi Police were used in Moosewala's killing, he said they are waiting for the forensic analysis.

"We will have to get those weapons forensic checked to see whether those were used in this case, that is part of the investigation." Ban said that fake passports made outside Punjab were used by Lawrence's brother Anmol and his associate Sachin Thapan to travel abroad earlier this year.

Bishnoi made them settle abroad



A court in Mansa had recently extended the police remand of Lawrence Bishnoi who was brought to the state by the Punjab Police from Delhi last week for questioning in the Moosewala murder case

The ADGP said a Punjab Police team is in the national capital for the questioning of shooter Priyavrat and others

from where they could coordinate, facilitate and successfully execute the crime without being noticed or held culpable, the police officer said. A separate FIR has been lodged in Mohali in connection with the case of the fake passport, he said.

Bishnoi has confessed to hatching the conspiracy with Canada-based gangster Goldy Brar, Sachin Thapan and Anmol, he said. Ban said the police have got details of associates, weapons suppliers, financiers and others helping this gang in various activities. The police in various districts of the state have arrested 19 people linked to this gang.

The ADGP said a Punjab Police team is in the national capital for the questioning of arrested shooter Priyavrat alias Fauji and others who are in the custody of the Delhi Police. He said that within hours of Moosewala's killing, the Punjab Police made the first arrest in the case. Some of the accused involved in the crime had reached Mansa three to four days before the crime.

"As far as the arrest of the other

accused goes, eight to nine teams of the Anti-Gangster Task Force are at the job. We are also in touch with other states and are hopeful of nabbing them soon," the ADGP said. About the accused arrested on Thursday, Ban said Baldev was the main person who carried out recce with Sandeep, who has also been arrested.

Baldev took a selfie with Moosewala and he spoke to Goldy Brar and Sachin Thapan over the phone and passed on information to the conspirators who had direct contact with the shooters, he said.

A court in Mansa had recently extended the police remand of Lawrence Bishnoi who was brought to the state by the Punjab Police from Delhi last week for questioning in the Moosewala murder case. The Delhi Police had arrested three persons, including two shooters, in the case, officials had said on Monday adding that one of them was in touch with Canada-based gangster Goldy Brar at the time of the incident.

NATIONAL HERALD CASE

ED asks Sonia to depose late July

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: The Enforcement Directorate has asked Congress president Sonia Gandhi to record her statement with the agency sometime in late July after it accepted her plea to postpone her deposition in a money-laundering case linked to the National Herald newspaper, officials said Thursday.

She was issued a second summons for June 23 by the agency but the 75-year-old Congress leader could not keep the date as she "has been strictly advised to rest at home following her hospitalisation on account of Covid and lung infection". Sources said the federal agency has postponed her questioning in the case for about four weeks and she has now been asked to depose sometime in the last week of July.

Sonia Gandhi was first issued the notice for an appearance on June 8 but after she reported positive for COVID-19, the summons for June 23 was issued. The Congress president was Monday discharged from a private Delhi hospital where she was admitted for coronavirus-



The Congress president was Monday discharged from a hospital where she was admitted for coronavirus-related complications

related complications. She was admitted to the hospital on June 12, days after she tested positive for COVID-19 on June 2.

Her son and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi has been questioned by the agency in the same case for about 54 hours over five days.

The probe relates to alleged financial irregularities in the Congress-promoted Young Indian Private Limited, which owns the National Herald newspaper.

the NEET-UG," said Sanjana Gupta, an aspirant.

According to Anubha Srivastava, a lawyer and the president of the India Wide Parents' Association, NEET and Common University Entrance Test (CUET), are happening at the same time causing inconvenience to students.

"NEET must be held after JEE MAINS so that students can prepare well. Already the session is not going to start before Feb 2023 for NEET Aspirants as the counselling will take time," she said.

The National Testing Agency (NTA) announced Wednesday that

the debut edition of CUET-UG will be conducted from July 15 to August 10.

"Dear @DG_NTA and @EduMinOfIndia please hear the plea of the students, and their small demand, it's not a unjustified wants there are many reasons also NTA announced the CUET which directly clash with NEET exam," a Twitter user said.

The number of registrations for medical entrance exam NEET has crossed 18.72 lakh this year - 10.64 lakh women, 8.07 lakh men - recording a significant jump of over 2.5 lakh since 2021.

of the day quote

Any suggestion that there could be any possibility of a free and fair election in Myanmar in 2023 is frankly preposterous. You can't have a free and fair election if you locked up your opponents. You can't have a free and fair election if you put your opponents on death row

TOM ANDREWS | UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR FOR MYANMAR

It would be necessary to build compromises with the other political parties sitting in the National Assembly in order to serve the general interest of the country

EMMANUEL MACRON | FRENCH PRESIDENT

We are strongly committed to bringing inflation back down, and we are moving expeditiously to do so

JEROME POWELL | CHAIR OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE OF THE US

SHORT TAKES

Polio virus in UK sewage samples

London: Health officials in the UK have found poliovirus in sewage samples in London, 19 years after it was eliminated by 2003. According to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), the poliovirus in sewage samples collected from the London Beckton Sewage Treatment Works, was probably imported to London by someone who was recently vaccinated overseas with a live form of the virus.

Bulgarian govt loses no-trust vote

Sofia: Bulgaria's coalition government led by Kiril Petkov was ousted in a no-confidence vote in Parliament here. In the 240-seat legislature, 123 deputies from the center-right GERB-UDF coalition (Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria and Union of Democratic Forces), the centrist Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), the ultranationalist Revival party and the populist There Is Such A People (ITN) party voted against Petkov's government.

Turkey battles wind-driven wildfire

Ankara: Firefighting crews battle for a third day Thursday a wind-driven wildfire that has blackened swaths of pine forest near a popular resort in southwestern Turkey and driven dozens of people from their homes. More than 2,500 firefighters, aided by water-dropping planes and helicopters, were deployed to fight the blaze that erupted Tuesday in the Bordubet region, near Marmaris on the Aegean Sea coast.

Six people die in helicopter crash

Logan (US): Six people were killed when a helicopter crashed in West Virginia Wednesday, authorities said. The Vietnam-era helicopter was based at the Logan airport and used for tourism flights, Ray Bryant, chief of operations for Logan County's office of emergency management, told WSAZ-TV.

Masks no longer compulsory in SA

Johannesburg: South Africans heaved a sigh of relief as Health Minister Joe Phaahla announced that they will no longer be compelled to wear masks or have limitations on public gatherings as the government has lifted all remaining restrictions imposed more than two years due to the pandemic. Proof of vaccination at all ports of entry will also no longer be required.

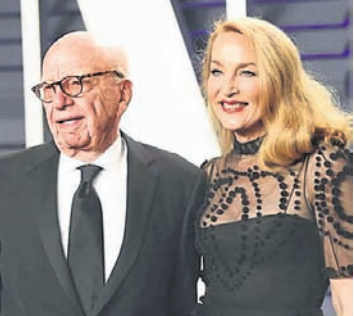


Thank you to my US colleague and friend Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin for these powerful tools! Summer will be hot for Russian occupiers. And the last one for some of them

OLEKSI REZNIKOV | UKRAINIAN DEFENCE MINISTER

AT 91, RUPERT MURDOCH HEADING FOR 4TH DIVORCE

Media mogul Rupert Murdoch and actress Jerry Hall are getting a divorce, the New York Times reported, citing two people familiar with the matter



EAM meets counterparts from Commonwealth countries

AGENCIES

Kigali (Rwanda), June 23: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Thursday met many of his counterparts from the Commonwealth countries here and exchanged views on major international issues and measures for further strengthening cooperation with their countries.

Leaders of Commonwealth nations are calling for increased climate action at a meeting in Rwanda this week, ahead of the United Nations climate change summit in the seaside resort of Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt later this year.

Jaishankar, who attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) Foreign Ministers' plenary, met his counterparts from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Canada, Tanzania, Rwanda, New Zealand, South Africa, Brunei, Tuvalu, Singapore, Bahamas, Guyana and other member nations of the 54-nation bloc.

Jaishankar arrived here Wednesday on a four-day visit to attend the 26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). He will be representing Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the summit June 24-25.

During his meeting with New



EAM S Jaishankar interacts with Lankan Foreign Minister G L Peiris during Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), in Rwanda PTI PHOTO

Zealand Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta, the two leaders exchanged

views on the agenda of the Commonwealth Summit and dis-

cussed strengthening bilateral ties, especially its people-to-people aspects.

Jaishankar and his South African counterpart Naledi Pandor discussed the international situation and agreed that India and South Africa must together uphold the interest of the Global South.

During the bilateral talks with Tuvaluan Foreign Minister Simon Kofe, Jaishankar discussed India's development partnership with the island nation, focusing on energy, health and climate action.

Jaishankar said that India is strongly committed to advancing its Pacific Islands cooperation.

During the bilateral meeting with Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly, the two leaders exchanged views on international issues, including the Commonwealth, Ukraine conflict and the Indo-Pacific.

Earlier he held talks with his Rwandan counterpart Vincent Biruta during which they discussed the agenda of the Commonwealth summit beginning Friday and exchanged perspectives on regional developments. The theme of 26th CHOGM Summit is: 'Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming'.

Ukr takes tentative step towards EU membership



Ukrainians living in Belgium protest outside the European Council building

REUTERS

Kyiv, June 23: Ukraine is set to be accepted as a candidate to join the European Union Thursday, a move that boosts the country's morale as Russian assaults wear down the defenders of two cities in the eastern Donbas region.

Although the approval of the Kyiv government's application by EU leaders meeting in Brussels is just the start of what will be a years-long process, it marks a huge geopolitical shift and will anger Russia as it struggles to impose its will on Ukraine.

The expected green light "is a signal to Moscow that Ukraine, and also other countries from the former Soviet Union, cannot belong

to the Russian spheres of influence," Ukraine's ambassador to the EU, Vsevolod Chentsov, told Reuters.

Friday will mark four months since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops across the border in what he calls a "special military operation" partly necessitated by Western encroachment into what Russia considers its sphere of influence.

The conflict, which the West sees as an unjustified war of aggression by Russia, has killed thousands, displaced millions and destroyed cities as well as having ramifications across much of the world as food and energy exports have been curtailed. Russia has focused its campaign on southern

Russian military extends its grip

KYIV: The Russian military extended its grip Thursday on territory in eastern Ukraine, capturing two villages and vying for control of a key highway as it seeks to cut supply lines and encircle some frontline Ukrainian forces, British and Ukrainian military officials said. Ukrainian forces withdrew from some areas near the city of Lysychansk to avoid being surrounded as Russians sent in reinforcements and concentrated their firepower in the area, Britain's Defense Ministry said. The city is located in Luhansk province, a major battlefield in Russian President Vladimir Putin's war against Ukraine.

and eastern Ukraine after its advance on the capital Kyiv in the early stages of the conflict was thwarted by Ukrainian resistance.

The war of attrition in the Donbas - Ukraine's industrial heartland - is most critical in the twin cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk, which sit on opposite sides of the Siverskyi Donets River in Luhansk province.

The battle there is "entering a sort of fearsome climax", said Oleksiy Arestovych, an adviser to Zelenskyy.

US Supreme Court expands gun rights, striking NY limits

AGENCIES

Washington, June 23: In a major expansion of gun rights, the Supreme Court said Thursday that Americans have a right to carry firearms in public.

The justices' 6-3 decision follows a series of recent mass shootings and is expected to ultimately allow more people to legally carry guns on the streets of the nation's largest cities - including New York, Los Angeles and Boston - and elsewhere.

About a quarter of the US population live in states expected to be affected by the ruling, the high court's first major gun decision in more than a decade.

The ruling comes as Congress is working toward passage of gun legislation following mass shootings in Texas, New York and California. Justice Clarence Thomas wrote for the majority that the Constitution protects "an individual's right to carry a handgun for self-defense outside the home".

In their decision, the justices struck down a New York law requiring people to demonstrate a particular need for carrying a gun in order to get a license to carry one in public. The justices said that requirement violates the Second



Amendment right to "keep and bear arms". California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island all have similar laws. The Biden administration had urged the justices to uphold New York's law.

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul said the decision comes at a particularly painful time, when New York is still mourning the deaths of 10 people in a mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo.

"This decision isn't just reckless. It's reprehensible. It's not what New Yorkers want," she said. In a dissent joined by his liberal colleagues, Justice Stephen Breyer focused on the toll taken by gun violence. "Since the start of this year alone (2022), there have already been 277 reported mass shootings - an average of more than one per day," Breyer wrote. In most of the country gun owners have little difficulty legally carrying their weapons in public.

India ready to help SL in quick economic recovery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, June 23: A four-member Indian delegation led by Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra Thursday met Sri Lanka's top leadership, including President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and underlined that India stands ready to help the island nation's quick economic recovery through promoting investments, connectivity and strengthening economic linkage.

Sri Lanka is facing the worst economic crisis since independence in 1948 which has led to an acute shortage of essential items like food, medicine, cooking gas and fuel across the island nation. The delegation first met President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

During the meeting, Kwatra told



Rajapaksa that India, as a close friend, will extend its fullest support to Sri Lanka in overcoming the difficult situation, the newfirst.Lk website reported.

The delegation includes Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Finance of India, Ajay Seth; Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India Dr V Anantha Nageswaran and Joint Secretary of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Kartik Pande of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

The delegation reviewed the already provided assistance in terms of fuel, medicine, fertiliser and other essentials and said the Indian government is committed to support Sri Lanka, the report said. The delegation also met Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and discussed Sri Lanka's economic situation.

In a tweet, the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said Kwatra, accompanied by Seth and Nageswaran, met President Rajapaksa and "held productive discussions on the current situation in Sri Lanka and India's ongoing support".

N Korea's talks of new army duties suggest N-deployment



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, June 23: North Korea discussed assigning additional duties to front-line army units at a key military meeting, state media said Thursday, a move that analysts said indicates it plans to deploy battlefield nuclear weapons targeting South Korea along the rivals' tense border.

While much international attention has focused on North Korea's testing of intercontinental ballistic missiles potentially ca-

pable of reaching the US Mainland, it is also developing a variety of nuclear-capable short-range missiles that can target South Korea.

South Korean officials recently said that North Korea has completed preparations for its first test of a nuclear explosive device in five years, part of a possible effort to build warheads capable of being mounted on short-range missiles.

During an ongoing meeting of the Central Military Commission of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party, leader Kim Jong Un and other top military officers discussed Wednesday "the work of additionally confirming the operation duties of the front-line units of the Korean People's Army and modifying the operation plans," according to the official *Korean Central News Agency*.



COMMONWEALTH CALL: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his wife Carrie Johnson disembark from their plane as they arrive for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda PTI PHOTO

Afghans bury dead, dig for survivors of devastating quake

The Taliban and the international community that fled their takeover struggled to bring help to the disaster's victims

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, June 23: Villagers rushed to bury the dead Thursday and dug by hand through the rubble of their homes in search of survivors of a powerful earthquake in eastern Afghanistan that state media reported killed 1,000 people.

Under a leaden sky in Paktika province, which was the epicentre of Wednesday's magnitude 6 earthquake, men dug a line of graves in one village, as they tried to lay the dead to rest quickly in line with Muslim tradition.

In one courtyard, bodies lay wrapped in plastic to protect them from the rains that are hampering relief efforts for the living. The state-run Bakhtar News Agency reported the death toll and said an estimated 1,500 more were injured.

In the first independent count, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said around 770 people had been killed in Paktika and neighbouring Khost province.

It's not clear how the totals were arrived at, given the difficulties of accessing and communicating with the affected villages tucked into remote mountainsides.

Either grim till would make the quake Afghanistan's deadliest in two decades, and officials continued to warn the number could still rise.

The Taliban's takeover led to a cutoff of vital international fi-



nancing, and most governments remain wary of dealing directly with them.

UN agencies and other organizations still operating in Afghanistan said they sent sup-

plies to the area, including medical kits, tents and plastic tarps, but the needs appeared immense as whole villages sustained massive damage. Search and rescue remained a priority. In hard-hit Gayan

District, much of the rubble was too large for people to move with their hands or shovels. They said they hoped large excavators would make it out their remote homes. For now, there was only one bulldozer in the area.

On Wednesday, a UN Official said the government had not requested that the world body mobilise international search-and-rescue teams or obtain equipment from neighbouring countries, despite a rare plea from the Taliban's supreme leader, Haibatullah Akhundzadah, for help from the world.

UN agencies are facing a \$3 billion funding shortfall for Afghanistan this year, and Peter Kessler, a spokesman for the United Nations' refugee agency, said that means there will be difficult decisions about who gets aid.

In addition to the political and financial concerns, there were also logistical challenges to getting aid to remote villages.

The roads, which are rutted and difficult to travel in the best of circumstances, may have been badly damaged in the quake, and landslides from recent rains have made some impassable.

Though just 175 kilometres directly south of the capital, Kabul, some villages in Gayan District took a full day's drive to reach.

Rescuers rushed in by helicopter — and Associated Press journalists also saw ambulances in the quake zone Thursday — but heavier equipment will be difficult to deliver.

Walls and roofs of dozens of homes in Gayan collapsed in the quake, and villagers said whole families were buried under the rubble.

of the day quote

Glad to meet Young Liu, Chairman, Foxconn. I welcome their plans for expanding electronics manufacturing capacity in India, including in semiconductors. Our push for EV manufacturing is in line with our commitment of Net Zero Emission

NARENDRA MODI | PM

With better agricultural production and revitalised rural economy India should touch 7 per cent growth in the current year despite global headwinds

NR BHANUMURTHY | EMINENT ECONOMIST

We are delighted to introduce Moto Morini brand to the Indian motorcyclists. At Adishwar Auto Ride India, one of our key endeavors is to create values through our relationships with our customers

VIKAS JHABAKH | MD, ADISHWAR AUTO RIDE INDIA

SHORT TAKES

WB okays \$245mn to modernise rlys

New Delhi: The World Bank has approved a \$245 million loan to support India's efforts to modernise rail freight and logistics infrastructure, the international financial institution said in a statement Wednesday. The Rail Logistics project will help India shift more traffic from road to rail, making transport -- both freight and passenger -- more efficient and reducing millions of tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) each year. The project will also incentivise more private sector investment in the railway sector.

Hero MotoCorp to hike prices

New Delhi: Two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp Thursday said it will hike prices of motorcycles and scooters by up to ₹3,000 from July 1 to partially offset the steadily growing overall cost inflation, including commodity prices. In a regulatory filing, the company said, "The exact quantum of increase will be subject to the specific model and market. The price revision has been necessitated to partially offset the steadily growing overall cost inflation, including commodity prices".

Vi defers ₹8,837cr AGR payment

New Delhi: Debt-ridden telecom operator Vodafone Idea (Vi) has decided to defer payment of additional adjusted gross revenues of ₹8,837 crore dues by a period of four years. The company in a late night filing on June 22, said that the DoT on June 15, has raised adjusted gross revenue (AGR) demand for additional two financial years beyond 2016-17, which were not covered under the Supreme court order on the statutory dues.

P-notes investment dips to ₹86,706cr

New Delhi: Investment in the Indian capital markets through participatory notes (P-notes) dropped to ₹86,706 crore till May-end from the preceding month, while experts say foreign investors will reverse their selling stance and return to the country's equities in the coming 1-2 quarters. P-notes are issued by registered Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) to overseas investors who wish to be a part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly.



This is a Golden Time for India to emerge as an innovator nation in the Biopharma sector. Key fundamentals under play are: current geo-political situation, innovation driven mindset of India's top leadership

KARUN RISHI | PRESIDENT, USA-INDIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

TWITTER TESTS NEW TEXT FEATURE

Twitter Inc said it was testing a new feature called 'Notes' that would allow users to share essay-like write-ups as a link both on and off the social media platform. The company also said newsletter firm Revue, which it bought last year, would now be part of Twitter Write along with the 'Notes' feature. It currently has a 280-character limit on tweets



Germany triggers gas supply alarm stage

THE MEASURE IS THE LATEST ESCALATION IN A STANDOFF BETWEEN EUROPE AND MOSCOW SINCE THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE THAT HAS EXPOSED THE BLOC'S DEPENDENCE ON RUSSIAN GAS SUPPLIES

REUTERS

Berlin, June 23: Germany triggered the "alarm stage" of its emergency gas plan Thursday in response to falling Russian supplies

but stopped short of allowing utilities to pass on soaring energy costs to customers in Europe's largest economy.

The decision, announced by the economy minister, marks a stark shift especially for Germany, which has cultivated strong energy ties with Moscow stretching back to the Cold War. Lower gas flows sparked warnings this week that Germany could fall into recession if Russia supplies halted altogether. S&P Global's flash Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) Thursday showed the economy losing momentum in the second quarter.

Russia has denied the gas supply reductions were premeditated, with state supplier Gazprom blaming a delay in return of serviced equipment caused by Western sanc-



tions. Under its Phase 2 plan, Berlin will provide a credit line of 15 billion euros (\$15.76 billion) to fill gas storage facilities. In addition, a gas auction model will be launched this summer to encourage industrial gas consumers to save gas.

The government activates the second "alarm stage" of a three-stage emergency plan when it sees a high risk of long-term supply

We must not fool ourselves: The cut in gas supplies is an economic attack on us by Putin. It is obviously Putin's strategy to create insecurity, drive up prices and divide us as a society. This is what we are fighting against

ROBERT HABECK | ECONOMY MINISTER

shortages. It theoretically allows utilities to pass on high prices to industry and households and thereby help to lower demand.

Russia may cut off gas to Europe entirely to bolster its political leverage, the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Wednesday, adding Europe needed to prepare now.

1ST CAR FIRE CASE

Tata Nexon EV bursts in flames

REUTERS

Bangalore, June 23: India's Tata Motors is investigating what it described as an "isolated thermal incident" after a video on social media showed one of the company's electric cars engulfed in flames.

The video, which has gone viral, showed firefighters trying to extinguish the fire in a Nexon electric vehicle (EV) in a suburb of Mumbai. "A detailed investigation is currently being conducted to ascertain the facts of the recent isolated thermal incident that is doing the rounds on social media. We will share a detailed response after our complete investigation," India's biggest manufacturer of electric cars said in a statement.

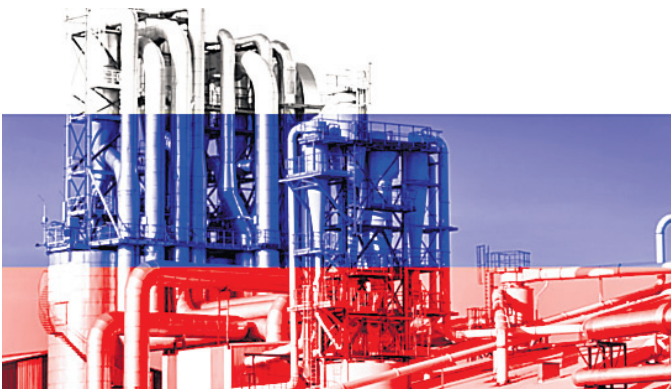
The company said this was the first such incident, having sold more than 30,000 EVs, the bulk of which are its Nexon model.

The incident follows a spate of e-scooter fires that have triggered an investigation by the Indian government. Initial findings of the federal probe into three e-scooter makers, including SoftBank-backed Ola Electric, found faulty battery cells and modules to be the leading cause of fires, Reuters reported last month.

Later in the day, the government ordered an independent enquiry into the incident, a senior Road Transport and Highways ministry official said Thursday. "We have ordered an independent enquiry to investigate the Nexon EV fire incident," the official told PTI.

FROM 0.2% TO 10%

India's Russian oil imports jump 50X



Last month, Russia overtook Saudi Arabia to become India's second-biggest supplier of oil behind Iraq as refiners snapped up Russian crude available at a deep discount following the war in Ukraine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: India's crude oil imports from Russia have jumped over 50 times since April and now make up for 10 per cent of all crude bought from overseas, a senior government official said on Thursday. Russian oil made up for just 0.2 per cent of all oil imported by India prior to the Ukraine war.

"Russia oil now makes up 10 per cent of India's oil import basket in April. It is now among the top 10 suppliers," the official told reporters here. As much as 40 per cent of the Russian oil has been bought by private refiners - Reliance Industries and Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy.

Indian refiners bought about 25 million barrels of Russian oil in May. Russian-origin crude accounted for 10 per cent of India's total seaborne imports in April for the first time, rising from 0.2 per cent throughout 2021 and Q1 2022.

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.

Iraq remained the top supplier to India in May and Saudi Arabia is now the third biggest supplier. India has taken advantage of dis-

Indian retail chains in Russia in offing: Putin

President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday while addressing a BRICS business forum said talks are going on between Moscow and India regarding the launch of Indian retail store chains in Russia. "Contacts between Russian business circles and the business community of the BRICS countries are being activated. For example, negotiations are underway to open Indian retail chain stores in Russia, to increase the share of Chinese cars, equipment and machinery in our market. Russia's presence in [BRICS] countries is also expanding," Putin stated. "The volumes of Russian oil deliveries to China and India are growing noticeably. Cooperation in the field of agriculture is developing dynamically. Russia exports significant volumes of fertilizers to the BRICS countries. Russian IT companies are expanding their activities in India and South Africa, and our satellites provide TV broadcasting to 40 million people in Brazil," the Russian president informed.

counted prices to ramp up oil imports from Russia at a time when global energy prices have been rising.

Following its invasion of Ukraine, there are now fewer buyers for Russia's Ural crude oil, with some foreign governments and companies deciding to shun Russian energy exports, and its price has fallen. Indian refiners have taken advantage of this and bought Russian crude oil at discount as high as \$30 per barrel. Earlier, the crude was disadvantageous because of the high freight cost.

RUPEE SETTLES AT RECORD LOW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 23: The rupee Thursday closed at its all-time low of 78.32 against the US dollar as strong American currency and persistent foreign fund outflows weighed on investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened higher at 78.26 and rose to the day's high of 78.22 due to weakness in the US dollar and crude oil in early trade.

However, a rebound in the greenback and Brent crude later hit the rupee sentiment, pushing the local currency to the day's low of 78.38. The rupee finally settled unchanged at 78.32, its record low level against the US dollar.

The dollar had weakened in the early session in Asia after the US Federal Reserve chairman said a recession is possible as the US central bank raises interest rates to cool surging inflation.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.41 per cent to 104.62. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, edged higher 0.3 per cent to \$112 per barrel after initial losses as investors weighed recession fears.

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 443.19 points or 0.86 per cent higher at 52,265.72, while the broader NSE Nifty gained 143.35 points or 0.93 per cent to 15,556.65.

UCO Bank MD visits Capital

Bhubaneswar: Managing Director (MD) of UCO Bank, Soma Shankara Prasad, visited Bhubaneswar, Thursday, co-chairing over the 167th State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) meeting at UCO Bank Building, Janpath. During the meet, Prasad informed that out of 75 digital banking units to be opened in the country by all banks, UCO Bank will open open two such units in Odisha at Puri and Cuttack. "The digital banking units will allow smooth operations of all banking activities without much human intervention. Further we will open 15 new branches in Odisha during current financial year making total branches in state to 266. We will focus bank's development and involvement in retail, agriculture and MSME sectors," Prasad added. During the meet State Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari and other secretaries appreciated the performance of all banks in Odisha on 93.06 per cent achievement of Annual Credit Plan target for last financial year 2021-22. They also stressed on achieving the target of current financial year. He also appreciated the improvement in Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio of the state to 72.22%.

CGM, SBI, Bhubaneswar Circle congratulates Murmu



Chandershekar Sharma, CGM, SBI Bhubaneswar Circle greeted and congratulated Droupadi Murmu at Bhubaneswar June 22, 2022 on her nomination for presidential candidature.

BOI unveils term deposit of 444 days with 5.5% interest rate

Bhubaneswar: Bank of India (BOI), a premier public sector bank, has launched 444 days term deposit scheme June 23, 2022 with an attractive rate of interest of 5.50% per annum. This special term deposit scheme is launched on account of bank's ensuing 117th Foundation Day to be celebrated September 7 with an intent to reaffirm its commitment to pass on the benefits of policy rate changes towards its customers & general public. This offer shall be valid for limited period only and the same is available at BOI's all branches/ online platforms like internet banking/ BOI mobile app. On this very special term deposit, senior citizen will also get additional interest of 0.50% per annum. Bank has also hiked rate of interest up to 40 bps on term deposits of various maturity periods.

US recession fears darken outlook for global growth

There is a roughly one in three chance of a recession in the US within 12 months, economists predicted. They also said inflation - which hit a record high of high of 8.1% last month - was yet to peak

REUTERS

London/Tokyo, June 23: Manufacturing growth is slowing from Asia to Europe as China's Covid-19 curbs and Russia's invasion of Ukraine disrupt supply chains, while the

growing risk of a recession in the United States poses a new threat to the global economy.

High prices in the euro zone meant demand for manufactured goods fell in June at the fastest rate since May 2020 when the coronavirus pandemic was taking hold, with S&P Global's headline factory Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) falling to a near two-year low of 52.0 from 54.6.

A Reuters poll had predicted a more modest drop to 53.9 and the index nudged closer to the 50 mark separating growth from contraction.

Jerome Powell, chair of the Federal Reserve, said Wednesday the central bank was not trying to engineer a recession in the United States to stop inflation but was fully committed to bringing prices under control even if doing so risks



The central bank is trying to bring inflation down without inflicting too much damage, but the Fed's aggressive rate hikes could tip the American economy into recession

Jerome Powell | CHIEF, US FEDERAL RESERVE

an economic downturn. He acknowledged a recession was "certainly a possibility".

Inflation continues to run at least three times higher than the

Fed's targeted level of 2% and it is expected to deliver another 75 basis point interest rate hike next month, according to economists polled by Reuters.

40% chance of a US recession over the next two years, with a 25% chance of that happening in the coming year

35% chance of a British recession within 12 months, Reuters poll showed

South Korea's exports for the first 10 days of June shrank almost 13% YoY

Japan Manufacturing PMI slipped to 52.7 in June from 53.3 in May, marking the slowest expansion since February

"The global macroeconomic outlook has deteriorated materially since end-2021," said Fitch Ratings, which slashed this year's global growth outlook to 2.9% in June from 3.5% in March. "Stagflation,

which is characterised by persistent high inflation, high unemployment and weak demand, has become the dominant risk theme since late 1Q22 and a plausible potential risk scenario," it said in a report released this week.

A string of recent data globally showed policymakers are walking a tight rope as they try to defuse inflation pressures without tipping their economies into a steep downturn.

Britain's economy unexpectedly shrank in April, adding to fears of a sharp slowdown as companies complain of rising production costs. In Asia, South Korea's exports for the first 10 days of June shrank almost 13% year-on-year, underscoring the heightening risk to the region's export-driven economies.

Clinical India choke SL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dambulla, June 23: The Indian bowlers choked the Sri Lankan women's team after Jemimah Rodrigues's vital knock on return to secure a convincing 34-run victory in the first T20 International here Thursday.

Defending a modest 139, left-arm spinner Radha Yadav (2/22) made her presence felt right after the powerplay by dismissing the dangerous-looking Sri Lankan captain Chamari Athapaththu (16) and Harsitha Madavi (10) in three balls.

Reduced to 27/3 inside seven overs, Sri Lanka never managed to get going in the run chase, which was further derailed by some tight bowling by seamer Pooja Vastrakar in the middle overs en route to a tidy spell of 4-1-13-1.

Deepti Sharma gave India a flying start, dismissing opener Vishmi Gunaratne (0) in the second over. The senior off-spinner was at her miserly best in the powerplay and returned with figures of 3-1-9-1 to stymie the Sri Lanka's progress early on. Deepti also took a stunning catch running in from deep square leg to give Radha her second wicket of the day.

Kavisha Dilhari waged a lone battle for the hosts with a fighting 49-ball 47 (6x4), but the Indians' top-class bowling and fielding ensured their team emerged easy winners for a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

The hosts needed 78 runs in the last five overs and Kavisha got going with a flurry of boundaries against Harmanpreet Kaur and Radha. But it proved insufficient as the Indians choked the home team's run rate while denying the Islanders any six in their innings. Shafali Verma compounded Sri



Watchful knock: Jemimah Rodrigues drives through the offside during her crucial innings against Sri Lanka in the first T20I, Thursday

Lanka's misery by dismissing Ama Kanchana (11) in the death overs to leave them tottering at 104 for five. The second match of the series is slated for Saturday.

Opting to bat, India lost opener Smriti Mandhana (1) in the third over of the game, the 25-year-old becoming the victim of veteran spinner Oshadi Ranasinghe while looking to free her arms. She hit a tossed-up delivery straight to Chamari Athapaththu at mid-on.

Sabbhineni Meghana was out for a golden duck, sent back to the dressing room by old warhorse Ranasinghe. Losing two wickets early and under pressure in the hot and humid Dambulla, it was left

to the duo of Harmanpreet and Verma to take control of the situation.

A well-settled Verma was the next to go, dismissed by Aththapathu on 31 while trying to go for a maximum. Smart bowling by the Lankans ensured that they soon got their biggest breakthrough when Harmanpreet (22) was trapped in front of the wicket by spinner Inoka Ranaweera in the 11th over.

Ranaweera picked two more wickets to send back wicketkeeper batter Richa Ghosh (11) and Vastrakar (14) to reduce the visitors to 106 for six in 17 overs and leave Jemimah with the task of giving

the Indian total a semblance of respectability.

Coming in at five, Jemimah, who made her comeback to the side after a while, did not succumb to the pressure and scored some crucial runs, hitting three fours and a six, with Deepti playing the second fiddle with a 17 off 8 balls.

BRIEF SCORES

India Women 138/6 (Jemimah Rodrigues 36 n o, Shafali Verma 31; Inoka Ranaweera 3/30, Oshadi Ranasinghe 2/22) beat Sri Lanka Women 104/5 (Kavisha Dilhari 47 n o; Radha Yadav 2/22, Deepti Sharma 1/9, Shafali Verma 1/10, Pooja Vastrakar 1/13) by 34 runs.

MP reach 123/1 at stumps on Day 2 of Ranji Trophy final after 41-time champions post 374 in their first essay

Sarfراز ton props Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 23: Sarfaraz Khan (134, 243b, 13x4, 2x6) completed his transformation from Mumbai cricket's resident 'enfant terrible' to 'Man Friday' with a superb hundred that kept his side ahead against Madhya Pradesh in the Ranji Trophy final, here Thursday.

Courtesy Sarfaraz's fourth hundred of the season, the 41-time champions managed a fighting 374 in their first innings after beginning the day at 248/5.

But Madhya Pradesh won't be too unhappy as they finished the second day at 123/1 with Yash Dube (44 batting) and Shubham Sharma (41 batting) adding 76 runs for the unbroken second wicket.

The day belonged to none other than Sarfaraz, who has now scored an astounding 937 runs in Ranji Trophy in just six games and could make it 1000 for the season if Mumbai bat again in this match.

What stood out was how he managed the innings after Shams Mulani was trapped leg before by Gourav Yadav (4/106) in the opening over of the second day.

His batting with the tail showed his new-found maturity, which is proving to be a boon for Mumbai cricket. He chose loose deliveries for boundary, forcing MP captain Aditya Shrivastava to open the field.

The manner in which Sarfaraz has turned a corner since the 2019-20 season (928 runs back then) is phenomenal as he had disciplinary issues early in his career, which also forced him to leave Mumbai for a season.

With father Naushad Khan, who also doubles up as his coach, mak-



ing him play 400 balls (nearly 67 overs including nets and knocking) a day at practice, Sarfaraz 2.0 is a battle-hardened man, the 'khadoos street fighter' that any captain would want to go to a war with.

Once he reached his fifty, he touched the lion's crest on his jersey, gesturing 'Don't worry, I am going nowhere'. Having entered '90s, he played a typical T20 scoop over keeper's head while being partially blindsided and completely off-balance. It was a sight worth capturing.

The Indian Test team's middle-order is still jam-packed but the manner in which Sarfaraz is batting, to put it in head coach Rahul Dravid's words, he is not just knocking but banging the selection door down.

Sarfraz was involved in four small, but very effective, partnerships which could prove to be de-

cisive if the match turns out to be an affair of one innings.

He added 40 for seventh wicket with Tanush Kotian (15), 26 for the eighth wicket with Dhawal Kulkarni (1), 39 for the ninth with Tushar Deshpande (6) and another 21 priceless runs for the final wicket with Mohit Avasthi (7).

By the time, he became Mumbai's last batter to be dismissed, he had ensured that the total is good enough for his bowlers to defend.

But there are ominous signs as MP batters have looked solid so far and Mumbai's bowling line-up hasn't made much of an impact, save Tushar Deshpande's delivery that straightened to find Himanshu Mantri's (31) pads.

BRIEF SCORES: Mumbai 374 (Sarfraz Khan 134; Gourav Yadav 4/106, Anubhav Agarwal 3/81; Madhya Pradesh 123/1 (Yash Dube 44 batting, Shubham Sharma 41 batting). Match to continue.

Indian archers in WC Stage 3 final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, June 23: India's recurve archers, who had a nightmarish qualification round in the women's event, bounced back strongly to storm into the final, confirming their first medal at the ongoing World Cup Stage 3 here Thursday.

A day after all of them slipped out of top-30 in the qualifying round to get a lowly 13th seed, the trio of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Simranjeet Kaur beat Ukraine, Britain and Turkey en route the summit clash. They will be against Chinese Taipei Sunday.

The Indian women's recurve trio started off by eliminating fourth-seed Ukraine 5-1 (57-53 57-54 55-55). Against Great Britain in the quarterfinals, they dropped just four points to down their opponents 6-0 (59-51 59-51 58-50).

In the semifinals, they had a slow start, aggregating 56 in the first set but their eighth-seeded Turkish rivals Gulnaz Coskun, Ezgi Basaran and Yasemin Anagoz shot a poor 51 to concede the first set by five points.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leicester, June 23: India's star batter Cheteshwar Pujara said his first class stints in Ranji Trophy and County Championships helped him find his lost rhythm and stage a comeback to the national side.

The 34-year-old Pujara, who was left out of India's home Test series against Sri Lanka earlier this year, forced his way back into the national team for the fifth Test against England after scoring 720 runs in just 5 matches with an outstanding average of 120 for Sussex.

While in the Ranji Trophy, Pujara scored an 83-ball 91 against Cumbria, he hit four centuries, including two double centuries for Sussex in Division Two County Championships.

"It's about playing as many first-class games as possible and for me, that experience was very important. When you want to get back into form, when you want to find your rhythm, when you have that concentration, it is important to play some long innings" Pujara told BCCI TV.



Warm-up game: Bharat shines, top order falters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leicester, June 23: Wicketkeeper Srikar Bharat impressed with an unbeaten 70, even as India's top-order failed to get batting practice on the first day of their warm-up match against Leicestershire here Thursday.

Opting to bat after winning the toss, India's top guns failed to fire as the visitors slipped to 81/5, before reaching 246/8 at the close of play.

Bharat shone during his 158-minute stay in the middle before rain brought an early end to the day's proceedings at Grace Road. In all, the 28-year-old batter from Andhra hit eight fours and a six while facing 111 balls. At stumps, Mohammed Shami was giving Bharat company on 18.

Skipper Rohit Sharma (25) and Shubman Gill (21) got out after getting starts. The opening duo, which is set to begin India's innings in the one-off 'fifth Test', added 35 runs for the first wicket before the latter was dismissed by fast-medium bowler Will Davis.

India's first-choice wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant, who was representing the English county side alongside Cheteshwar Pujara, Jasprit Bumrah and Prasidh Krishna, held on to the catch of



Gill, who found the fence four times while lasting 38 minutes.

For the addition of another 15 runs, India lost the wicket of Rohit. Rohit's departure paved the way for Virat Kohli's arrival. In between, Hanuma Vihari (3) came on to bat at No.3 but departed cheaply. Shreyas Iyer failed to open his account and walked back to the dressing room after facing 11 balls.

All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja too failed to make an impact as he was adjudged lbw off the bowling of Roman Walker (5/24).

Kohli and Bharat added 57 runs to steady the ship. However, Kohli fell to Walker before the seamer dismissed Shardul Thakur (6) to reduce India to 148/7. Umesh Yadav chipped in with 23 off 32 balls.

NEWS IN BRIEF

India jump to 104th in FIFA rankings

NEW DELHI: The Indian football team reaped a good harvest of its impressive Asian Cup qualification campaign as it gained two places to jump to 104th in the latest FIFA world rankings released Thursday. The Blue Tigers are placed just below New Zealand (103rd), who missed out on a 2022 FIFA World Cup spot after losing to Costa Rica 0-1 in the intercontinental play-off earlier this month. India's ranking among Asian Football Confederation members, however, still remained static at 19th place. Iran retained the top spot among AFC countries at 23rd place. In the overall rankings, Brazil remained on top, three months after taking the top spot from Belgium (2nd). Argentina jumped one place to third at the expense of France (4th) who paid the price for four winless games in the UEFA Nations League. England, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal and Denmark complete the top-10.

Trial for Maradona's medical personnel

BUENOS AIRES: An Argentinian judge ruled Wednesday that eight medical personnel involved in the care of soccer star Diego Maradona will face a public trial for criminal negligence. Brain surgeon Leopoldo Luque and psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov are among those who will stand trial for homicide, the judge ruled. The trial is not expected to begin until the end of 2023 or early 2024. The defendants are accused of failing to take proper care of Maradona when he was recovering from surgery, which led to his death. Maradona died at the age of 60 November 25, 2020 due to a cardio-respiratory arrest while he was recovering at a house outside Buenos Aires from surgery for a blood clot on his brain. Prosecutors requested in April that Judge Orlando Diaz put those under investigation on public trial.

India women go down against Sweden

STOCKHOLM: A spirited show by the Indian women's football team went in vain as an injury-time goal helped Sweden post a 1-0 win in the three-nation U23 tournament at the Angelholm Athletics Stadium here. Mid-fielder Linn Vickius scored the solitary 96th minute goal to help the Swedes earn the victory Wednesday night. India dominated the proceedings right from the get-go and earned themselves a flurry of goal scoring opportunities. Sweden too created number of scoring chances but failed to find the target. However, when it looked certain that the game was heading towards a draw, Vickius scored the all-important goal for Sweden off a corner from midfielder Ebba Hed, and earned her side the victory.

Eves suffer 0-7 loss

UDINE (ITALY): India's U-17 women's football team suffered a humiliating 0-7 defeat against Italy in the opening match of a four-nation tournament at Grandisico D'Isenzo stadium here. Maria Rossi put the ball into the back of the net to end Indian resistance. Anna Longobardi and Giulia Dragoni scored in the 31st and 33rd minutes, respectively. Italy picked up right from where they left off in the first half as Manuela Sciabica scored in the 48th minute. Couple of quick-fire goals followed after that and within 15 minutes of the second half, Italy had extended their lead to six goals. Marta Zamboni scored the final goal of the game in the 67th minute as she stretched Italy's lead to 7 goals.

Comfortable wins

PALMA: Daniil Medvedev and Stefanos Tsitsipas advanced to the quarterfinals of the Mallorca Championships, while Nick Kyrgios withdrew to avoid aggravating an injury ahead of Wimbledon. The top-ranked Medvedev overcame a slow start in a 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 win over Aslan Karatsev, while Tsitsipas triumphed 6-4, 6-4 against Ilya Ivashka. Medvedev will next face Roberto Bautista Agut, who advanced after Kyrgios withdrew ahead of their match because of an abdominal injury. The sixth-ranked Tsitsipas will next face American Marcos Giron.

SAVITA TO LEAD AT CWG, RANI LEFT OUT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: India Thursday named an 18-member women's hockey team for the upcoming Commonwealth Games, with star striker Rani Rampal left out yet again for failing to regain full fitness after an injury. The CWG team is very similar to the one taking part in the World Cup next month.

The side will be captained by goalkeeper Savita Punia while experienced defender Deep Grace Ekka will be her deputy in the Birmingham CWG, to be held from July 28 to August 8. The duo will also take the same roles in the World Cup, to be co-hosted by the Netherlands and Spain from July 1 to 17.

There are only three changes in the CWG squad from the World Cup team. Rajani Etimarpu was named in place of Bichu Devi Kharibam as number two goalkeeper while World Cup team member Sonika (midfielder) was left out from the CWG squad. Forward Sangita Kumari, who was named as one of the replacement players for the World Cup, figured in the CWG team as a full member.

India have been placed in pool A along with England, Canada, Wales and Ghana. They will begin their campaign July 29 against Ghana.

Rani, who led the Indian women to a historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics, was picked for the recent FIH Pro League matches in Belgium and Netherlands after recovering from a hamstring injury.

She didn't feature in the first four games of the side's European leg of Pro League, raising doubts about her fitness. Eventually, it cost her a place in the World Cup-bound squad.

In the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, India had finished fourth after losing to England in the bronze medal match. However, after an impressive campaign in their maiden FIH Pro League where they finished overall third behind Argentina and the Netherlands, the Indian team is looking for a podium finish in Birmingham.

Speaking about the team selection, chief coach Janneke Schopman said, "We have chosen an experienced side for the Commonwealth Games and the players believe they have a good shot at a medal this time.

"The team is upbeat after a good outing in the FIH Pro League matches and understand very well that the expectations are also high. We would have finished our World Cup campaign only days before the CWG so it was very essential for us to pick a physically fit team as the recovery time between the two events is just about 10 days," added Schopman.

The squad: (Goalkeepers) Savita (C), Rajani Etimarpu; (Defenders) Deep Grace Ekka (vc), Gurjit Kaur; Nikki Pradhan, Uditia; (Midfielders) Nisha, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Monika, Neha, Jyoti, Navjot Kaur, Salima Tete; (Forwards) Vandana Kataria, Lalremsiam, Navneet Kaur, Sharmila Devi, Sangita Kumari.

