



### DARING DECLARATION

Actor Mallika Sherawat says though women in India are vicious to her for some reason, Indian men always love her

LEISURE

P2



### SUNAK TO FACE TRUSS

Rishi Sunak clinched his place for the final leg of the race to succeed Boris Johnson and will go head-to-head with Foreign Secretary Liz Truss

INTERNATIONAL

P10



### ATHLETES TEST POSITIVE

Indian athletes S Dhanalakshmi, Aishwarya Babu test positive for banned substances, dropped from CWG squad

SPORTS

P12

## Ranil elected new Sri Lanka President



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, July 20: Acting President Ranil Wickremesinghe was Wednesday elected as Sri Lanka's new President by Parliament, following a high-voltage political drama which saw his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa fleeing the country and resigning after a popular uprising against his government for mismanaging the economy. The 73-year-old six-time former prime minister secured 134 votes in the 225-member House while his nearest rival and dissident ruling party leader Dulas Alahapperuma got 82. Leftist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna leader Anura Kumara Disanayake secured just three votes. Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena announced the result. Wickremesinghe thanked Parliament for upholding democratic practices and sought support from both the presidential rivals as well as former presidents Mahinda Rajapaksa and Maithripala Sirisena. He also asked Tamil leaders to join him. **MORE P10**

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



As promised, nowadays, Delhi is like London

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		
INDEX	55397.53	▲ 629.91
SENSEX		
NIIFTY	16520.80	▲ 180.30
DOLLAR	80.75	▲ ₹0.03
EURO	81.60	▼ ₹0.03
GOLD	₹50,355	▲ ₹35
SILVER	₹55,895	▲ ₹168

WEATHER		
BHUB CTK		
TEMP	29.3°C	30.8°C
MAX		
MIN	24.1°C	24.0°C
Humidity	95%	88%
Rainfall	2mm	22mm
Forecast		
Light rain very likely		

## SHORT TAKES

### Law & order situation peaceful, says Naveen

**Bhubaneswar:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday asserted that the overall law and order situation in Odisha was peaceful and relatively free from any form of communal discord. During a discussion in the Assembly, Patnaik said elections to panchayat, civic bodies and different co-operative societies were conducted peacefully. He said the overall intensity of Maoist violence has come down in the state, with panchayat polls being conducted sans any incident in Maoist-affected areas and high voter turnout despite efforts by red rebels to hinder the poll process. He said strengthening police machinery in terms of human resources and infrastructure had been the priority of the government. **MORE P3**

### Moosewala murder: 2 killed in encounter

**Amritsar/Chandigarh:** Two gangsters allegedly involved in the murder of singer Sidhu Moosewala were killed in a nearly five-hour-long encounter with the Punjab Police at an Amritsar village Wednesday, an officer said. Three policemen and a journalist were also injured, said police. Gangsters Jagroop Singh Roopa and Manpreet Singh, alias Mannu Kusa, were killed in the operation that lasted for around five hours and ended around 4pm, ADGP Pramod Ban told reporters in Amritsar. "Both died in a heavy exchange of fire," he added. Ban, who heads the Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) of the Punjab Police, said an AK-47 and a pistol have been recovered from the gangsters. **MORE P7**

# 2,107 schools have just 1 teacher each

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Over 2,100 government-run and government-aided schools in the state are running with just one teacher each, said School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash here, Wednesday. Replying to a question raised by BJP MLA Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia in the Assembly, Dash said the state has 30,377 primary, 19,238 upper primary, 2,601 English medium and 10,017 high schools. As many as 2,107 schools functioning in all 30 districts of Odisha have only one teacher each. Out of which, 1,672 schools are being run under the S&ME department while the remaining 435 are government-aided schools, said the minister. According to the written reply of the S&ME Minister, Mayurbhanj district has the highest of 190 such schools, followed by Ganjam district with 169 schools. Similarly, 153 schools in Keonjhar district, 130 schools in Sundargarh district and 119 schools in Balasore district have been managing with a single teacher.

ACCORDING TO SCHOOL AND MASS EDUCATION MINISTER SAMIR RANJAN DASH, ODISHA HAS 30,377 PRIMARY, 19,238 UPPER PRIMARY AND 10,017 HIGH SCHOOLS

Of the 2,107 schools in 30 districts, 1,672 schools are being run under the School and Mass Education department while remaining 435 are government-aided schools

Mayurbhanj has the highest of 190 schools running with just one teacher each, followed by Ganjam with 169 schools. Similarly, 153 schools in Keonjhar, 130 schools in Sundargarh and 119 in Balasore are running with a single teacher

In another reply, the minister said that the per child expenditure at primary education level has been increased from Rs 9,184 in 2014-15 to Rs 25,041 in 2021-22. Dash also informed the House that 44,245 students did not appear the High School Certificate (HSC) Examination 2022 conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha in March-April. In response to a question of Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati, Dash said Mayurbhanj

topped the districts' list with 4,462 students not appearing the HSC Examination. It was followed by Ganjam district where 3,273 students did not turn up for the test. Similarly, 3,145 students in Bolangir; 2,788 in Balasore, 2,688 in Keonjhar and 2,373 in Kalahandi have remained absent in the board examination. The minister added that authorities have been asked to conduct an inquiry into students' absenteeism in the exam.

## Govt closely monitoring situation: Health director

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The situation in Rayagada district, where eight people have died of cholera, is under control and the state government is closely monitoring the situation, an official said Wednesday. The southern Odisha district, which is dominated by tribals, has a history of being hit by cholera and other water-borne diseases. Around 100 others have been affected by the acute diarrhoeal infection in Kashipur block. "We are monitoring the daily trend and the situation is not alarming, but we need to maintain a close watch," Health Services Director Bijay Mohapatra said at a press conference here. Health teams have been deployed in Rayagada and Koraput districts to monitor the situation, Mohapatra said, adding that disinfection activity was also going on. The administration is working to educate the public there about not using water from contaminated sources, the official said. "The situation is in control now,"

he said, underlining the need to stop the chain of transmission. The Rayagada district administration is supplying clean drinking water via tankers to villages affected by cholera in Kashipur block. District Collector Swadha Dev Singh urged everyone to consume only the supplied water after thorough boiling and refrain from using any other water source like rivers, canals, ponds, wells and tube wells for drinking or other purposes. Water sources and surroundings in various panchayats of Kashipur are being decontaminated and cleaned. Neighbouring Koraput and Kalahandi districts have also been put on alert and do immediate intervention if anyone shows symptoms. The Koraput administration is conducting massive awareness and disinfection drive in Dasamantpur in the wake of suspected diarrhoea cases in the block. A large disinfection drive of tube wells and wells in the bordering gram panchayat in Laxmipur is also being carried out, it was learnt.

## After SC bail, Zubair walks out of Tihar jail



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 20:** Alt News co-founder Mohammad Zubair was released from Tihar Wednesday night, hours after being granted interim bail by the Supreme Court in all FIRs lodged in Uttar Pradesh against him for alleged hate speech, prison officials said. Zubair was arrested by the Delhi Police June 27 for allegedly hurting religious sentiments through his tweets. Multiple FIRs were lodged against him in UP - two in Hathras and one each in Sitapur, Lakhimpur Kheri, Muzaffarnagar, Ghaziabad, and at Chandauli police station - on similar charges. "Mohd Zubair has been released from Tihar," a senior official confirmed. The Supreme Court, earlier in the day, ordered the release of Zubair on interim bail, saying 'exercise of the power of arrest must be pursued sparingly' and transferred all the cases in UP to Delhi. The court said it finds no reason or justification for the deprivation of his liberty to persist any further and ordered disbanding of the SIT, constituted by the UP police. **MORE P7**

# Twitter helps resolve Odisha villagers' governance woes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kalahandi, July 20:** "Why shouldn't we try our luck with Twitter?" Tulsi Naik had thought, after having no access to ration supplies during the lockdown in 2020 despite innumerable appeals. Naik, who works with the Nagarik Vikash Sangathan, a people's collective in Kalahandi district, had been trained to use Twitter. "During the lockdown, the supply of ration was stopped. Despite visiting the panchayat office several times, the issue wasn't resolved," says his wife Simanjali, a 21-year-old marginal farmer from a Dalit background. "The office is 20km away and I had to spend Rs 200 to Rs 300 to travel and lose a day's work, when I already wasn't earn-

ing much due to the lockdown." Within three days of trying their luck on Twitter, ration supplies were delivered at their doorstep. Tulsi and Simanjali are not exceptions. The popularity of the social networking site—Twitter—continues to grow beyond the urban and semi-urban elite classes, even more so since the pandemic struck. Marginalised communities, primarily in developing countries, continue to face challenges in expressing their grievances and concerns due to lack of accountable communication channels. However, since the outbreak of Covid-19, Twitter has

HELPING HAND

According to Statista, India has the third-highest number of Twitter users, at 24.45 million. It indicates huge potential for individuals to use the platform as a grievance redressal forum and for organisations to adopt digital era advocacy

In Odisha, the state government has 40 departments, all of which are on Twitter, and it has proven to be the most convenient means to contact government officials

As there were restrictions imposed to contain Covid-19, digital platforms were the only way to reach out to authorities. I had noticed that government offices were responding on Twitter, so I used the medium to help people

SANTANU PATRA | KANDHAMAL YOUTH

emerged as the preferred digital platform in rural Odisha for grievance redressal. **Digital deliverance** The digital platform not only helps people resolve their problems but also save time, money, and

energy, as all they need is access to smartphones. In fact, the Odisha government adopted the 5T model to ensure a tech-enabled governance reform system. The 5T guidelines mandate the department concerned to take action on issues within 24

**How Twitter saved the day** Mandila Digal, an 80-year-old from the remote village of Rajupadar in Kandhamal district's Kotagada block, was overwhelmed when he finally received free ration at his doorstep after over a year of struggles and appeals. **Contd...P4**



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181\*

ARIES

Old, fond memories will define your mood today, which will show up in the manner in which you deal with work, where your mellow side will be visible to others. You are also circumspect with money and tend towards saving it.

TAURUS

You may find yourself compromising against your will today, predicts Ganesha. Stand strong despite things going awry instead of feeling disillusioned due to poor results. Ongoing negotiations might come to a logical end and a few important decisions are likely to be delayed due to lack of proper information.

GEMINI

You have been ignoring a few problems that have been plaguing your family members for quite some time now. It's time you looked into the matter, says Ganesha. Irrespective of how difficult the challenges are, today you will emerge victorious.

CANCER

It is about time that you cultivated healthy eating habits. Today, you will be prone to doing everything in excess. You may overeat or get swept away by emotions. You must keep a check on your emotions, or it may lead to unwanted complications.

LEO

You sure love playing a team sport, but that does not diminish the fact that you are a tough player to compete with, says Ganesha. If only they had a rugby team at the local club! You derive a sense of completion from the fact that you have given your best effort to any endeavour.

VIRGO

Money matters will hit a major snag today, says Ganesha. Let your mind overrule your heart. Take extreme care of personal belongings, legal responsibilities and new ventures with long-term effects in mind.

LIBRA

It's a day of reaching new heights when it comes to finances. The cosmos favours moneylenders and stock marketeers. Call it the special touch that you give to all transactions monetary, but today you have the uncanny knack of raking in the moolah from all sources. Sit back and see your tenacity multiply your fortunes, says Ganesha.

SCORPIO

It is more than likely that you will be in high spirits today, says Ganesha. All your energy and exuberance may not yield expected results. That is no reason to lose heart though. Keep up the effort from your end and you will eventually taste success in the days to come.

SAGITTARIUS

Your business is all set to expand with you making the most of your overseas contacts. Effective communication skills will help you sail through your tasks. And you are making all the right moves to become the leader of your pack.

CAPRICORN

Success never comes easy, but in your case, it will make an exception, says Ganesha. You will meet with success in social as well as professional life, and this will also make heavy your treasure box. At work, prepare to get loaded with new assignments and simultaneously deal with existing work pressure. But it won't be as fatiguing as it sounds; evening recreations will charge you up for the next day.

AQUARIUS

You have already fulfilled your short-term objectives. But you are ambitious, and straightaway begin setting your long-term goals. But all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, says Ganesha. Leisure time with family will rejuvenate and prepare you for a better stint at work.

PISCES

For those in the creative fields of marketing or advertising, today is an extraordinary opportunity to tweak your marketing mix into bringing in maximum profits with bare minimum efforts. Your health interests will also take priority now, and you will find yourself spending more time in the gym, says Ganesha.



WILLEM DAFOE TO STAR IN GONZO GIRL FILM ADAPTATION

Hollywood actor Willem Dafoe will be soon seen in the film adaptation of *Gonzo Girl*. Based on the acclaimed same-name novel by Cheryl Della Pietra, the film starring Camila Morrone and Patricia Arquette, also marks Arquette's directorial debut.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR FEMALE JAMES BOND: ANA DE ARMAS

Actress Ana de Armas, who played mysterious Paloma in Daniel Craig's final outing as 007 in *No Time to Die*, said she instead wants to see more substantial, deeper roles for women in the spy franchise. She told *The Sun* amid calls from some for Daniel's Bond replacement to be of the opposite sex.



Kangana's Emergency lands in controversy

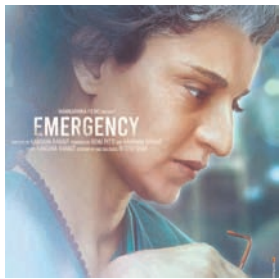
**Mumbai:** Kangana Ranaut has been busy calling the shots for her upcoming directorial *Emergency*, wherein she essays the role of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The film's narrative is based upon the emergency declared in India between 1975 and 1977. While the movie is still being shot, it has landed in a political controversy.

The film's teaser featured Kangana looking uncannily similar to India's former PM and Congress has reportedly objected to the actress portraying late Indira Gandhi on the big screen. According to sources, Madhya Pradesh Congress Media Department vice-president Sangeeta Sharma tagged Kangana a 'BJP agent' and has stated that Kangana took up the role so as to tarnish the image of Indira Gandhi at the behest of the

ruling party. She has reportedly demanded to watch the film before its release.

Reacting to the controversy, state BJP spokesperson Rajpal Singh Sisodia was quoted as saying, "Emergency is a black spot on the country's democracy and Indira Gandhi was the heroine during it, and hence they need not worry."

Previously, the *Dhaakad* actress had clarified that Emergency was not a biopic on Indira Gandhi, but a political drama.



City to witness five plays on Freedom Movement

**Bhubaneswar:** The National School of Drama (NSD), New Delhi is organising a national-level theatre festival *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav - 22nd Bharat Rang Mahotsav, 2022* (Azadi Segment) to pay tribute to the freedom fighters who laid down their lives in Independence Movement.

The event, kicked off July 16 at Kamani Auditorium of New Delhi, is being held in five other cities - Bhubaneswar, Varanasi, Amritsar, Bangalore and Mumbai - also. Under this programme five plays - two Odia, two Assamese and one Bengali - will be staged from July 21-25 at KIIT auditorium here from 6.30 pm every evening.

Satabdita Kalakaar, one of the oldest theatre troupes of the City, will present



Festival controller Suman Vaidya (M) along with Samaresh Routray (L) and Dhira Mallick (R) at the press meet.

*Mahasangramara Mahanayak*, a play written by Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabushan Harichandan and directed by Dhira Mallick while *Gandhinka Odisha*, written by Shankar Tripathy and directed by Nalini Nihar Nayak will be staged by Rourkela-based group Newquest Repertory, informed NSD director Ramesh Chandra Gaur at a presser here, Wednesday.

"All the plays, based on the lives of freedom fighters and the struggle of Independence, will offer a platform to pay tribute to the great sons of India and rediscover the magic of theatre which has been affected by the pandemic," said festival controller Suman Vaidya. Samaresh Routray, an NSD alumnus from Odisha and veteran drama director Dhira Mallick were also present at the press meet.

Men love me in India: Mallika

**Mumbai:** Actress Mallika Sherawat is all set to return to the big screens with her upcoming film *Rk/RKay*. She rose to fame with romantic thriller *Murder*, co-starring Emraan Hashmi. The blockbuster was widely talked about for the steamy scenes Mallika and Emraan shared in the film.

Meanwhile, the actress said that

even though women were vicious to her for some reason, Indian men always loved her.

She said, "I think my glamour was overwhelming for the women. I am unapologetic about it. I wore a bikini in murder and actresses have worn bikini before me also but I was so nonchalant about it. I was like I have a great body. Do you want me to wear a saree at the beach? No, I will wear a bikini and I celebrated my body because for me that was very liberating for me. But that was too much to handle for people, especially women. Men have had no problems with me. Men love me in India and I love them back. It's just some women who are so vicious to me. I don't know why."

On the work front, Mallika Sherawat is promoting her film *RK/RKay*, which will hit cinema halls on July 22. Written and directed by Rajat Kapoor, the film also stars Kubbra Sait, Ranvir Shorey and Manu Rishi Chadha, in pivotal roles.

PRIYANKA TO SHARE SCREEN WITH NICK

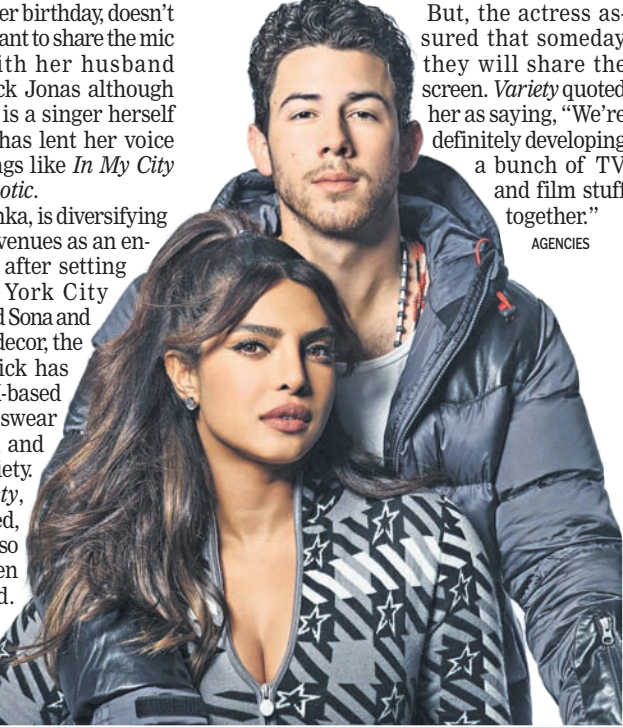
**Los Angeles:** Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who recently celebrated her birthday, doesn't want to share the mic with her husband Nick Jonas although she is a singer herself and has lent her voice to songs like *In My City* and *Exotic*.

Priyanka, is diversifying in other avenues as an entrepreneur, after setting up her New York City restaurant named Sona and investing in home decor; the actress along with Nick has recently invested in a UK-based luxury fashion and sportswear brand specialising in ski and surf clothing, reports *Variety*.

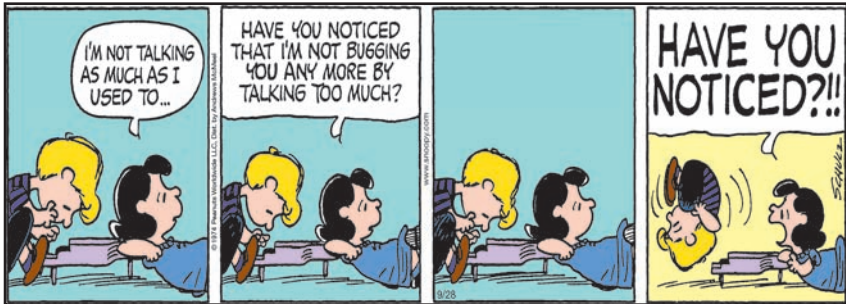
While talking to *Variety*, the Barfi actress mentioned, "I love working with Nick so you'll see things happen as the years unfold. But I'll never sing with him."

When she was asked the reason behind her decision especially when she is a singer herself, PC responded by saying, "Not like him! No chance. He's a musical prodigy!"

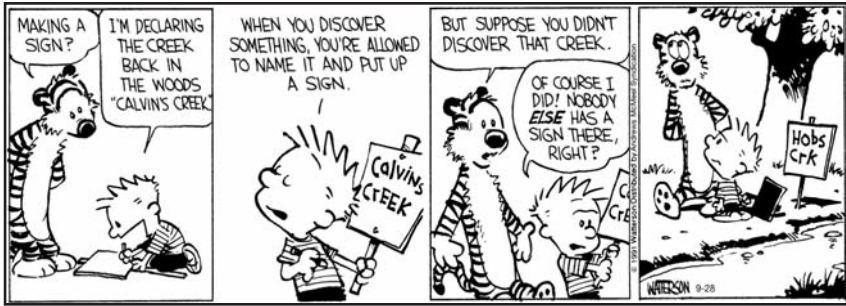
But, the actress assured that someday they will share the screen. *Variety* quoted her as saying, "We're definitely developing a bunch of TV and film stuff together."



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

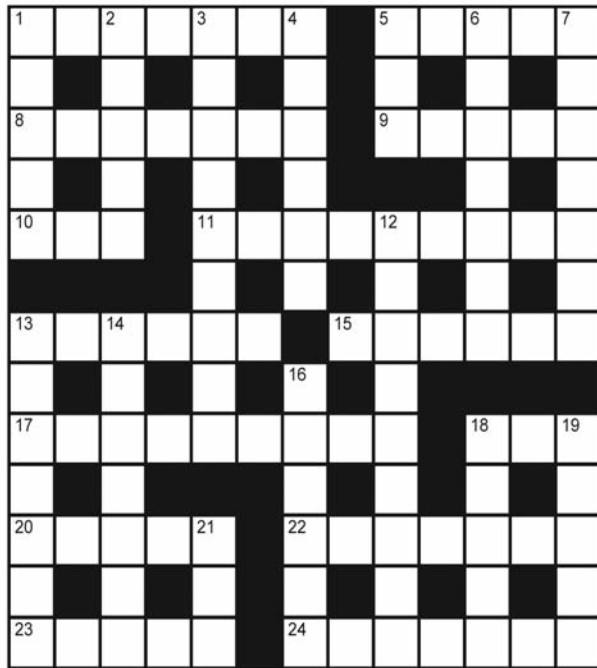


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Wasp's defense
- 5 Fable writer
- 8 Novice
- 9 Arena sound
- 10 Flock member
- 11 Infamous
- 13 Off the mark
- 15 Moved on
- 17 Type of steak
- 18 Vatican vestment

- 20 Marsh growth
- 22 Effusively emotional
- 23 Oranjstad's island
- 24 Shake with fear

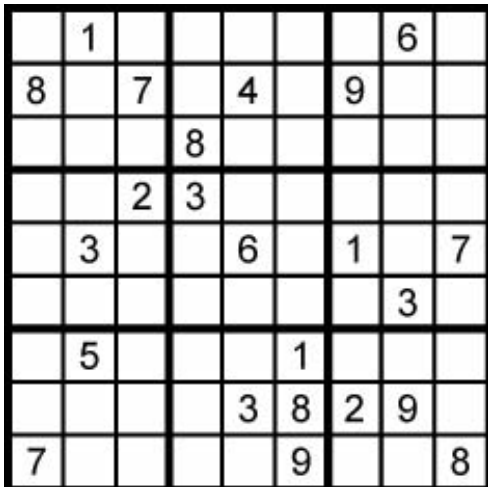
Down

- 1 Ophidian
- 2 Nonsensical
- 3 Thule locale
- 4 Blue moon, e.g.

- 5 Pendulum's path
- 6 Try to find (4,3)
- 7 Examined
- 12 Saloon
- 13 Salzburg site
- 14 Walden author
- 16 Fate
- 18 Off-the-cuff remark (2-3)
- 19 Pig out
- 21 Jacuzzi

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.

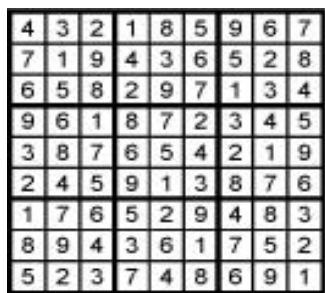


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

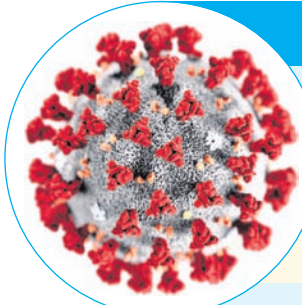


# downtown



### CIVIC ISSUE

Frequent waterlogging on Bomikhal-Rasulgarh road in Bhubaneswar inconveniencing commuters



### COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	57,00,50,934	54,11,73,027	63,92,432
India	4,38,03,619	4,31,32,140	5,25,825
Odisha	13,01,995	12,86,915	9,130

## Law & order situation peaceful: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The overall law and order situation in the state remained by and large peaceful. During the period, the state has been relatively free from any form of communal discord, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said in the Assembly here Wednesday.

The Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath with devotees participating in lakhs after two years was also conducted smoothly due to elaborate police arrangements, he said.

Intensity of overall Maoist violence has come down in the state. The panchayat elections have been conducted incident free in LWE affected areas with high voter turnout despite determined efforts by Maoists to hinder the poll process, said Patnaik.

A total of 944 posts in various ranks were created for Odisha police last year. Further recruitment process is going on for filling up of about 1730 posts in the rank of SI/ASI in police and posts in various ranks of jail as well as under fire services. The state government has created about 200 posts for 28 police outposts.

Similarly, during the current year so far, the government has created 3 security companies in 3 IR Battalions in the state with creation of 663 posts in different ranks.

All women related heinous crimes are being treated as "red flag cases" and special public prosecutors are engaged for these cases. All police stations of the state are being covered under elaborate CCTV coverage and installation of CCTV has been completed in 584 police stations out of 593 police stations.

He further informed that to deal and prevent growing cyber-crime, 15 cybercrime and economic offence police stations have been established in the state.

All police stations of the state are



**My government is committed to promote and implement all policies aimed at overall development of the state and to provide a safe and secure environment to all its citizens**

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CM

covered under "Mo Sarkar" in order to achieve the highest level of accountability and transparency through the feedback from the complainants/ citizens. More than 78,000 random calls were made to the citizens who visited police stations. More than 90 percent of citizens have given good ratings to the police.

All departments have a charter approved for implementation of transformational initiatives and service delivery under 5T. Mo Sarkar has been implemented across the departments and more than 3 lakh citizens have expressed their satisfaction through Mo Sarkar calls and actions have been taken on the basis of their feedback towards institutional trans-

formation, said the CM.

To ensure timely & hassle-free delivery of public services, the government has notified 412 numbers of public services relating to 31 departments under Odisha Right to Public Service Act.

During 2021-22, around 12,810 candidates have been sponsored by Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC), Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC) and Odisha Subordinate Staff Selection Commission (OSSSC) to various departments of the government.

In order to bring efficiency in the administration, 164 government servants have been sent on compulsory retirement/dismissal from government service/pension has been withheld.

During the financial year 2021-22, a sum of Rs.367 crores has been utilized for Covid management from the donations received under CMRF.

Since November 1, 2021, more than 16,000 grievances have been disposed of through Jana Sunani portal.

The office of the Lokayukta has started functioning since March 20, 2019. In the court of Lokayukta, 499 numbers of cases have been disposed of out of 775 cases insti-

CCTVs INSTALLED IN 584 POLICE STATIONS; 78,000 RANDOM CALLS MADE TO THE CITIZENS UNDER MO SARKAR

LOKAYUKTA DISPOSED OF 499 OUT OF 775 CASES REGISTERED IN 2021

VIGILANCE REGISTERED 267 CRIMINAL CASES AGAINST 475 PERSONS

tuted in the year 2021.

"My government has adopted a zero tolerance approach to corruption. We have been taking a number of steps to strengthen the state vigilance so that they can discharge their mandate more professionally and serve the people in a better way," he said.

The state vigilance, during the year has registered 267 criminal cases against 475 persons and has also initiated 373 enquiries against the public servants. Of which 272 accused persons have been arrested in vigilance cases, the CM informed the House.

The state government firmly believes in honesty, transparency and high morality in public life.

"We have made it mandatory for all public representatives as well as government employees at all levels to submit their property statement every year which will be made available in public domain for absolute transparency," he added.

"In democracy, people are supreme and we are here to serve them. My government is committed to promote and implement all policies aimed at overall development of the state and to provide a safe and secure environment to all its citizens. Our special focus is to ensure inclusive growth of the people and ensure transparent pro people governance," Patnaik concluded.

## State registered over 1.55L cognizable offences in 2021

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The police in Odisha have opened fire on 23 occasions in 2021, said the White Paper of Home department tabled in the Assembly Wednesday.

However, the details of the firing incidents have not been mentioned in the White Paper.

As many as 1,55,420 cognizable offences including 1,394 murder, 552 dacoity, 2,826 robbery, 5,133 burglary, 13,024 theft, 5,138 swindling, 2,220 rioting, 3,327 rape, 10,983 motor vehicle accidents and 1,10,823 miscellaneous cases were reported in the state during 2021.

Out of the 1,55,420 cognizable offences, as many as 1,49,232 cases were based on true incidents and chargesheets have been framed in 1,06,283 cases, said the White Paper.

The police have filed chargesheets in 658 murder cases, 1406 swindling cases, 2,335 rape cases and 1,377 rioting cases till December last year, added the report.

However, the White Paper claimed that the overall left-wing extremism (LWE) scenario in the state remained under control in 2021.

"The intensity of CPI Maoist perpetrated violence declined, the cadre strength of Maoists dwindled, the area of influence of the banned outfit shrunk and the mass support base of the Maoist slackened during the year," said the report.

Out of the 10 districts of Odisha presently affected by Maoist activities, the situation has remarkably improved in most of the areas including in Swabhimana Anchal of Malkangiri district and Kalahandi-Rayagada-Kandhamal axis due to pro-active security and administrative response. However, the situation remained dynamic and challenging in a few pockets, it added.

### HOME DEPT WHITE PAPER



OUT OF THE 1,55,420 COGNIZABLE OFFENCES, AS MANY AS 1,49,232 CASES WERE BASED ON TRUE INCIDENTS AND CHARGESHEETS HAVE BEEN FRAMED IN 1,06,283 CASES, SAID THE WHITE PAPER

AS MANY AS 1,55,420 COGNIZABLE OFFENCES INCLUDING 1,394 MURDER, 2,826 ROBBERY, 5,133 BURGLARY, 13,024 THEFT, 5,138 SWINDLING, 2,220 RIOTING, 3,327 RAPE, AND 10,983 MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS WERE REPORTED IN THE STATE DURING 2021

SEVEN HARD-CORE MAOISTS WERE NEUTRALISED IN SEPARATE INCIDENTS OF ANTI-MAOIST OPERATIONS BY SECURITY FORCES WHILE 36 WERE ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN MAOIST ACTIVITIES AND 21 ULTRAS SURRENDERED DURING THE PERIOD

A total of 28 Maoist-related incidents, including 21 incidents of exchange fire between police and the Maoists, were reported in the state during the year in which two civilians were killed and one security personnel attained martyrdom, claimed the report.

Seven hard-core Maoists were neutralised in separate incidents of anti-Maoist operations by security forces while 36 were arrested in connection with their involvement in Maoist activities and 21 ultras surrendered during the period, claimed the White Paper.

Besides, the security forces recovered 30 guns, 48 IEDs and huge quantities of ammunition, explosive materials and other articles during the year.

"Proactive steps were taken to augment the security cover in the core Maoist-affected areas and create a secure atmosphere for development activities," said the White Paper.

The report claimed that focus was given to ensure time-bound implementation of the surrender and rehabilitation scheme as a part of the composite endeavour to integrate CPI Maoist cadres in the mainstream.

No terrorist activity was noticed in the state during 2021 and basing on intelligence inputs, the terrorist activities have been contained effectively. However, advisories and alert messages were issued to the SPs from time to time on possible terrorist activities in the state, it added.

### RUCHIKA SUICIDE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Higher Education Minister Rohit Pujari said Wednesday that strict action would be taken against those responsible for the suicide of a female college student due to alleged ragging earlier this month in city.

Ruchika Mohanty, the first-year student of the BJB Autonomous College was found hanging in her hostel room July 2.

The police found a purported suicide note in the room, in which the student had said she was mentally harassed by three seniors of the college.

However, the Bhubaneswar police had said it did not find any link of ragging with the death.

But the girl's parents and several organisations of students al-



Student Congress activists protest in front of Pujari's residence

OP PHOTO

leged police inaction in identifying the abettors who prompted her to end her life.

Police are conducting an inquiry and appropriate action will

be taken after a report, Pujari told reporters here.

The minister rejected allegations that he was remaining silent on the issue, underlining that he

was down with Covid.

"We have functional anti-ragging cells and all steps will be taken to ensure that there is no ragging anywhere," he said.

Pujari stressed on the need to take measures to make sure better coordination among teachers and students.

The National Students' Union of India staged a protest in front of Pujari's residence, seeking a proper probe into the death.

The students' wing of the Congress carried banners demanding justice and shouted slogans against the minister.

Meanwhile, another student of the college filed a complaint at the Badagada police station, alleging that he faced ragging by several seniors.

The family members of the student accused police and college authorities of not taking any action on the issue.

The parents also alleged that their son was assaulted by the suspects for filing the complaint.

## BMC opens vaccination centres at three malls

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has decided to open vaccination centres at three malls in the city here to administer precaution dose of Covid-19 vaccines to the eligible people.

According to BMC sources, precaution dose will be provided at Symphony mall at Rudrapur (North Zone), DN Regalia mall at Patrapada (South West Zone) and Esplanade One mall at Rasulgarh (South East Zone) from July 21. The dose will be administered between 10 am to 1 pm and 3 pm to 5 pm.

"We have decided to open vaccination centres at three shopping malls in the Capital city to ramp up

Precaution dose will be provided at Symphony mall, DN Regalia and Esplanade One mall from July 21

The dose will be administered between 10 am to 1 pm and 3 pm to 5 pm. People can book their slots by visiting [cowin.gov.in](https://www.cowin.gov.in) portal

administration of precaution dose of Covid-19 vaccines to the beneficiaries. The vaccination centres will start operation July 21. People can book their slots by visiting [cowin.gov.in](https://www.cowin.gov.in) portal," said the civic body in a tweet.

Notably, the BMC had started administering free precaution dose of Covid-19 vaccines at government vaccination centres July 15 as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.

## Murmu's hometown gears up for victory celebration

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rairangpur, July 20:** Laddus are being prepared and hoardings have been put up congratulating Odisha's daughter as NDA presidential nominee Droupadi Murmu's hometown Rairangpur expressed confidence in her win and geared up for celebrations Wednesday, hours

before declaration of results.

The counting of votes polled in the 15th presidential election will begin in New Delhi Thursday morning.

Various local organisations such as traders' bodies, bar associations, and religious and educational institutions, and even government officials are waiting with palpable en-

thusiasm to congratulate the daughter of the soil.

Folk artistes and tribal dancers rehearsed their performances and are ready to hit the streets as soon as the results are declared. They are waiting with bated breath to witness the first tribal woman president of the country.

"We are preparing 20,000 laddus and have put up 100 banners congratulating Murmu, who has her house in our town," local BJP leader Tapan Mahanta said.

Several organisations have planned mass feasts as people from rural areas are likely to throng Rairangpur town in Mayurbhanj district from noon.

There is enthusiasm among the people as for the first time someone from the state is tipped to occupy the country's topmost constitutional post.

Lawmakers across the country exercised their franchise Monday to elect the 15th president of the country, with the contest between Murmu and Opposition nominee Yashwant Sinha.

The NDA candidate has also been supported by BJD, BSP, Shiromani Akali Dal, Shiv Sena and JMM.



Laddus being prepared at a sweet stall in Mayurbhanj

OP PHOTO

### MONSOON WOES



Mayor Subhash Singh, MLA Souvic Biswal and senior officials of Cuttack Municipal Corporation take stock of waterlogging at Ravenshaw University, Wednesday

OP PHOTO



Twitter helps resolve Odisha villagers' governance woes

**Continued from P1**  
At the onset of the pandemic in India, Diga's family was hit by an acute financial crisis, as most of his family members worked as daily wage labourers, and the lockdown put a stop to their income. At that time, the Odisha government had announced the distribution of ration free of cost through the Public Distribution System for three months from April 2020. But his family could not benefit from this provisioning as they didn't have an Aadhaar, which was mandatory to avail this scheme.  
After finding out about Diga's woes, Santanu Patra, a local youth who's been helping amplify the underprivileged voices through Twitter since 2020, visited Rajupadar. He collected all the required information, including Diga's photos, posted them on his Twitter handle and also tagged the Chief Minister, the then Food Supply and Consumer Welfare minister and the Kandhamal collector. The very next day, the Gram Rojgar Sevak, Village Level Worker and the area's Civil Supply Inspector rushed to Diga's house to provide him with rations.  
"As there were restrictions imposed to contain Covid-19, digital platforms were the only way to reach out to authorities," Patra says. "I had noticed that government offices were responding on Twitter, so I used the medium to help people. So far, I've tweeted close to 500 issues, of which over 30 have been resolved."

**To migrant labourers' rescue**  
Maheshwar Sunani (42) and his wife Debaki (37) of Muribahal village, under Nuapada district's Komna block, had migrated to Hyderabad for work. But as cases of the coronavirus were on the rise across the country, they decided to return to their native place in June 2020. Without jobs and no savings, free rations could have been their only respite, as Maheshwar was a ration card holder, but the mismatch of the names of family members on the card had rendered it invalid.  
Sunani approached his local sarpanch, gram panchayat executive officer and even the block development officer, but in vain. This was when Surendra Sunani, a local youth and member of Nuapada-based people's collective Shramajeebee Bikash Mancha, stepped up to help. He posted the family's plight on Twitter, tagging all relevant officials and line departments -- the family received rations at their doorstep within three hours of his tweet! "I had no idea about Twitter. But now, as I see its impact, I am overwhelmed," says Maheshwar.

CLASSIFIED  
LOST

I, Om Prakash Sankholia, R/o. Tiwari Gali, PO/PS-Khetrajpur, Dist. Sambalpur have lost the R.O.R. of Mouza- Rampur, Tahasil- Rairakhol, Dist. Sambalpur, Khata No.73 on 20.07.2022. The aforesaid R.O.R. has been lost near Khetrajpur market area. In spite of through search it could not be traced out. If anybody found please Contact-9337890563.

I, Smt. Hemlata Padhan (69 years), W/o. Late Bimbadhar Padhan, R/o. Bad-Saraipali, P.S./Tah.: Ambabhona, Dist.-Bargarh, Odisha declare before Notary Public, Bhatli that a fixed deposit receipt of my deceased husband Bimbadhar Padhan vide A/C No. 5058 dated 30.08.2021 and R.I. Deposit receipt vide A/C No. 7393 dated 05.09.2021 has been misplaced elsewhere and in spite of my best effort I could not found it or recover the same. Deponent

State sees 1,122 new Covid cases, most in 5 months

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 13,01,995 Wednesday as 1,122 more people, including 164 children, tested positive for the infection, registering the highest single-day spike in the last five months, a Health department bulletin said.  
The state had logged 945 cases Monday. A total of 1,148 infections were recorded February 13.  
The daily positivity rate was at 5.08 per cent as 22,101 samples were tested for Covid-19.  
Khurda district of which capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest number of new cases at 307, followed by Sundargarh (197) and Cuttack (132).  
The number of active cases rose to 6,701, of which 2,204 patients are in Khurda district.  
The toll remained unchanged at 9,130 as no fresh fatality was recorded. Fifty-three other patients have died due to comorbidities so



far. A total of 12,86,111 people have recovered from the disease so far, including 737 in the last 24 hours.  
Health Services Director Bijay Mohapatra said the infections are rising but the progress is slow and not alarming.  
Meanwhile, Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) in Sundargarh directed business establishments to not allow any employee or customer without a mask inside their premises.  
They have to put up appropriate signage such as 'No Mask, No Entry' or 'No Mask, No Goods' at the entry point, according to an order.  
RMC also urged people to wear masks in public places.

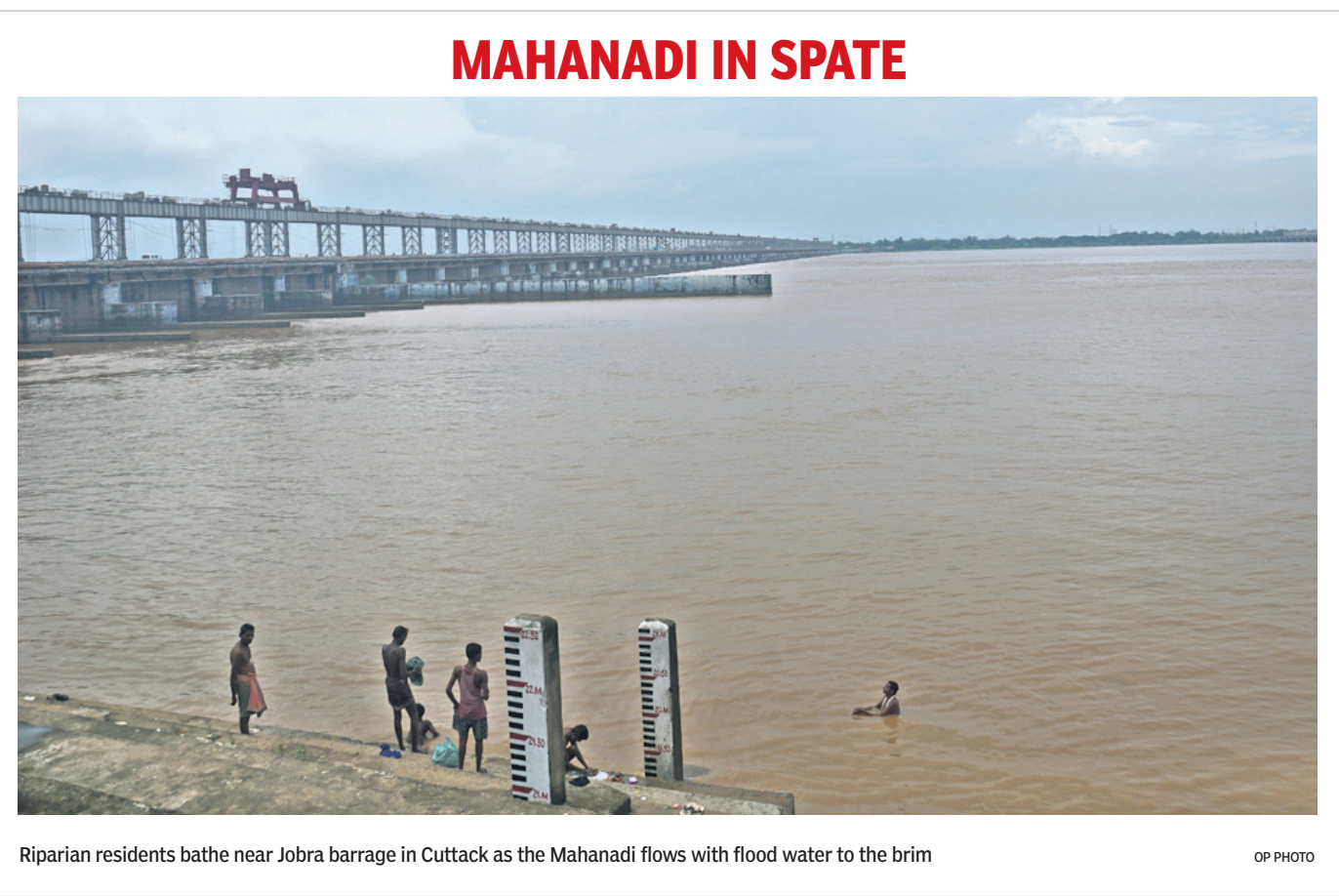
Online application process for Plus II admission begins

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The Online application process for Plus II admission into Arts, Science and Commerce stream began Wednesday. The students can fill up online application form on Student Academic Management System (SAMS) Odisha portal till August 10.  
The first merit list will be out August 17, and first phase of admission will start from August 19 to 25. The second merit list will be out September 2, and second phase of admission will start from September 5 to 7.  
Applicants must have passed the high school certificate (HSC) examination from the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha or its equivalent board. Applicants shall apply online by registering themselves on the SAMS portal (www.samsodisha.gov.in)  
The applicants must retain the print-out of application form and payment receipt after successful submission of the Common Application Form (CAF) and payment receipt.  
The common application form fee must be paid through online



mode. The application fee for general category is Rs 200 and SC ST category Rs 100.  
After the first and second phase of admission, the spot admission will start September 13.  
100 per cent syllabus to resume  
The Council for Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) has decided to resume 100 per cent syllabus in Plus II curriculum for the academic session 2022-23. The CHSE has decided to re-introduce 100 per cent syllabus along with its question paper pattern prevailing in the session 2019-20 with effect from session 2022-23 in Arts, Commerce, Science and Vocational stream.  
The CHSE has further clarified that the regular students appear-



Riparian residents bathe near Jobra barrage in Cuttack as the Mahanadi flows with flood water to the brim

OP PHOTO

ATG machines soon for foodgrain distribution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Odisha will soon have All Time Grain (ATG) dispensing machines to provide food grains to beneficiaries under the public distribution system.  
This was stated by Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak here Wednesday.  
He said the ATG machines will be similar to ATMs but will dispense foodgrains and will be in-

**F**ood Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak said the ATG machines will be similar to ATMs but will dispense foodgrains  
**T**he ATG machines will be introduced in the urban areas of the state in the preliminary phase. The service will be available in Bhubaneswar initially

duced in the urban areas of the state in the preliminary phase. The service will be available in Bhubaneswar initially, the minister said.  
He said the beneficiaries of the National Food Security Act and the State Food Security Scheme

will be provided with a special card to avail the service.  
The state government has been chalking out a plan in this regard, he said, adding that the ATG kiosks will be opened in different places of Bhubaneswar city.  
In a related development, the

Odisha government has decided to provide agricultural loan up to Rs 1 lakh to small and marginal farmers without any interest. Earlier, the small and marginal farmers were getting interest free loans up to Rs 50,000, the minister said.  
This apart, the government has also decided to charge only 2 per cent interest on agriculture loan between Rs 1 lakh to Rs 3 lakh, he said, adding that as many as 32 lakh small and marginal farmers will get the benefit.

BISHI URGES CENTRE TO SANCTION HOUSES FOR FANI HIT FAMILIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, July 20:** Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Niranjan Bishi Wednesday urged the Union government to sanction houses under PMAY (G) to 1.84 lakh families affected by the cyclone Fani that hit Odisha in 2019.  
The BJD MP, while raising the issue in Rajya Sabha, stated that these families would not be otherwise eligible for housing under the scheme. He also submitted that the state government had sought intervention from the Centre, to consider these families for PMAY (G) special housing, by waiving the pre-condition that their names should be included in the permanent waiting list for the scheme.  
"This issue has been put forth multiple times to the Centre by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. I request the Central government to pay heed to this issue immediately and facilitate the sanctioning and allotment of houses to all of the 1.84 lakh families as soon as possible," the MP said.



City mourns demise of Padma Shri Ajay Parida



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The mortal remains of Institute of Life Sciences (ILS) Director Ajay Parida, who passed away following a cardiac arrest yesterday, arrived here on a special flight from Guwahati, Wednesday.  
Family members of the noted researcher were present at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here, when his mortal remains arrived early this morning and later took them to his residence in city.  
His mortal remains were then taken to the ILS office here, where officials and employees paid their last respect to the departed researcher.  
Parida's last rites were conducted in his native at Bhagabanpur in Jajpur district with full State

Condolence meet at CUO, Koraput

**W**ith passing away of Padma Shri Ajay Parida, the Department of Biodiversity & Conservation of Natural Resources (BCNR), Central University of Odisha Wednesday organised a condolence meeting in the memory of the departed soul. A two minutes silence was observed in his memory.  
honours, as per the directive of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Ministers Pramila Mallick, Priti Ranjan Ghadei, Collector CS Rathore and noted personalities of the district were present on the occasion. Prior to the rites, the remains of Parida were taken on a procession around the village.  
A pal of gloom has descended on the native village of the ILS Director after his untimely demise.

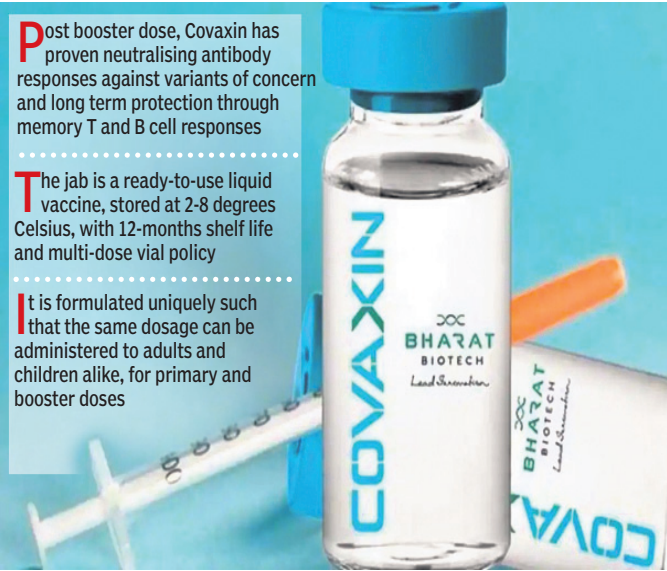
‘Covaxin booster works against emerging variants’

*The goal of developing a safe and efficacious vaccine with long-term protection against a spectrum of variants has now been achieved, says Bharat Biotech*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, July 20:** Pharmaceutical major Bharat Biotech Wednesday said its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin has proven to be safe, well-tolerated, and immunogenic in subjects in controlled clinical trials.  
The study has been accepted and

published in Nature Scientific Reports, a high impact factor journal.  
A press release from the vaccine maker said the study was conducted in 184 subjects, who were randomised 11 and received either a booster dose of Covaxin or a placebo, six months after the primary series of two doses.  
Subjects were evaluated for safety, neutralising antibody responses against variants of concern, binding antibodies against spike protein, RBD, N proteins, and for memory T and B cell responses to demonstrate cell-mediated immunity, it said.  
Krishna Ella, chairman and managing director, Bharat Biotech, said the team has now demonstrated that Covaxin is a multi-epitope vaccine with antibodies against spike, RBD and N proteins. Post booster



dose, it has proven neutralising antibody responses against variants of concern and long term protection through memory T and B cell responses. "We have now achieved our goal of developing a safe and efficacious vaccine with long-term protection against a spectrum of variants," Ella said.  
Covaxin, is formulated uniquely such that the same dosage can be administered to adults and children alike, for primary and booster doses, making it truly a universal vaccine, the company release said.  
The jab is a ready-to-use liquid vaccine, stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius, with 12-months shelf life and multi-dose vial policy.  
Bharat Biotech has a stockpile of more than 50 million doses of Covaxin ready to be distributed as and when required.

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**  
Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Map-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Rajrajesh Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.





A boy was seen selling plastic balloon toys in Angul town, Wednesday, to earn a living

OP PHOTO

# Families ostracised in Kendrapara village

Munda Sahi residents are reportedly not being allowed to use any public utilities like ponds, rivers, water pumps in the village

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, July 20:** Stigma, social ostracism and ill-treatment are just a few of the societal hurdles that residents of Munda Sahi in Magurgandapatana village under Sadar police limits in Kendrapara district are facing for the last one week following monkeypox scare in the area.

Munda Sahi residents are allegedly not being allowed to use any public utilities like ponds, rivers, water pumps in the village. They are not wel-

comed to festivals and functions. They are not allowed to go for work. Worse, their children have been debarred from going to school in fear of further spread of the disease.

According to reports, Lalu Sidhu, a Bengaluru returnee, reportedly developed a skin-related disease June 20. He was admitted to Kendrapara district headquarters hospital and later, was shifted to SCBMCH in Cuttack where he breathed his last.

Later, Lalu's family developed skin-related ailments and rumors spread in the locality that they were affected by monkeypox. And then, the family was ostracised. Panicked locals restricted the Munda Sahi residents for daily wage works and started maintaining social distance.

On Monday, seven students were asked by Shyamasundarpur Nodal High School teachers to skip classes

## MONKEYPOX SCARE



for a few days to keep the disease at bay. Following the rumours, the Health department has set up a health camp in the village. After medical examinations, it was found to be a skin disease due to contaminated water. The medical team has distributed free medicine to the residents.

Meanwhile, Odisha government has issued guidelines urging district

administrations to intensify surveillance and monitor international travellers. Director of Public Health Niranjan Mishra has shot off letters to all CDMOs, Dean-cum-Principals of government medical colleges to keep tabs on migrants coming from affected states and countries.

They have been directed to send samples of suspected cases to Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC) for onward transmission to National Institute of Virology (NIV) at Pune for testing.

As per the guidelines, international passengers will have to avoid close contact with sick people, contact with dead/live wild animals and others. They have been advised to avoid contact with contaminated materials used by sick people such as clothing, bedding or materials used in health-care settings.

# Push for broom grass farming in Kotia

To foster economic growth of the region by creating scope for earning, ORMAS will encourage people to start broom grass farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koraput, July 20:** Amid continuous attempts by Andhra Pradesh government to intrude into Kotia panchayat of Koraput and woo its people by offering sops, the state government has taken up a slew of projects to counter the moves.

The state government is making all-out efforts to build infrastructure and create income generation opportunities for its people so as to make them happy.

The latest thing added to its list is a plan to promote broom grass culti-

vation in the area. Demand for brooms made out of grass is high in the market. Keeping this in view, Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) has thought of taking up this grass cultivation in the fringe area on which the neighbouring state has set its sight and where it is sporadically stoking controversies by making intrusive bids.

"To foster economic growth of the region by creating scope for earning, ORMAS will encourage people to start broom grass farming. It has set a target to choose 800 beneficiaries in the panchayat, who will be trained and



REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE

helped to grow grass," said deputy director of ORMAS's district unit Roshan Kumar Kartik.

He added that broom grass cultivation will be encouraged under

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Additional project director Soumendra Kumar Nayak said steps have been taken to distribute saplings of broom grass among the beneficiaries.

People in the area collect broom grass sticks with their flowers, but they are unable to bind broom sticks in an attractive fashion. As a result, they have to sell out the brooms at throwaway prices, it was said.

After harvest of the broom grass, people will be trained on how to bind the brooms properly to add value to them for enhancing its marketability. Nayak said.

## Plea for NH-55 repair

**Bhubaneswar:** The state government Wednesday urged NHAI to immediately repair NH-55 in Angul as its bad condition is inconveniencing people. At a meeting between the NHAI and officials in Bhubaneswar, Angul Collector Siddhartha Shankar Swain explained through virtual mode the ground-level situation of the NH. Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra told the NHAI to start repair work immediately and keep the road in good condition.

## Manganese smuggling rampant in Koida area

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh/Tensa, July 20:** Illegal manganese mining and smuggling are on the rise in Koida forest division of Sundargarh district, allegedly in connivance with some Mines department officials, as per reports.

The ongoing illegality came to the fore a couple of days ago when two trucks

loaded with illegally extracted manganese ore were seized by forest officials in Ganua reserve forest under Koida forest division.

Manganese ore weighing 63 tonne was also seized. The seized manganese was valued at ₹5 lakh.

Two drivers identified as Ajay Kumar Yadav, 57, of Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh and Ajay Kumar Kumar Mahato, 36, of Saraikeela in Jharkhand - were arrested. It was alleged that the

officials of Mines department have failed to detect such illegal mining activities even though such activities have been going on over years in reserve forest areas. Many such illegal activities fall below the notice of the mines department.

Locals said regular raids and patrolling by the Mines department can curb the illegal mining activities in deep forested pockets under this forest division.



**NATIONAL SILKWORM SEED ORGANIZATION**  
Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India  
CSB Complex, IV Floor, B.T.M. Layout, Madivala, Bengaluru - 560 068.  
Phone: 080-26202426, 26282436 Fax: 080-26680387 Email: nssoban.csb@nic.in

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**

**Date: 21.07.2022**

No.CSB/NSSO/CSPI/AMC/HSR/MYS/2019-20

National Silkworm Seed Organization, Bengaluru invites sealed bids from the reputed firms who are in the field of Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration for awarding Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (for two-year period) for Cold Storage Rooms installed at following locations/States:

- I. 05 Cold Rooms at CSGRC, Hosur
- II. 11 Cold Rooms at Cold Storage Plant, Mysuru
- III. 92 Cold Rooms at different locations in Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and States in Southern India

Interested parties may visit the Cold Storage Plants at the said locations to know more about the Cold Storage and quote their lowest rate for any or all the above listed three items, and submit to this Office latest by **22.08.2022 (3.00 PM)**.

For details, terms & conditions, please visit our website [csb.gov.in](http://csb.gov.in) or e-procurement portal. Hard copy of the document can be obtained from the above address in Bengaluru on payment of Rs.1,000/- per document on working days from Monday to Friday between 10.00 AM-05.00 PM.

CBC 41109/12/0006/2223

**Director**

# RIVER TURNS TOXIC Pollution chokes Brahmani

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal, July 20:** Discharge of toxic effluents by the industrial firms has polluted the state's second largest river Brahmani flowing through this district and has proved fatal for the aquatic species, a report said.

As per reports, pollution in Brahmani has reached such an alarming level that several kinds of fishes as well as turtles are found floating dead in the river.

The recovery of a large turtle carcass weighing over 30 kg near the river bank in Kushupanga village under Odapada block in this district Sunday is a case in point.

It is suspected that the amphibian might have died due to severe water pollution caused by discharge of effluents from industrial units in the locality. Locals alleged that turtles are dying in regular intervals but forest officials seemed to be clueless.

The death of the aquatic animals is indicative of the alarming level of pollution in the river water.

Environmentalists have expressed concern over pollution in Brahmani river, which is otherwise known as the nursery of the freshwater turtles in the state.

They apprehend that if immediate steps are not taken, the day is not far when Brahmani

Pollution in Brahmani has reached such an alarming level that several kinds of fishes as well as turtles are found floating dead in the river

will turn into a graveyard of aquatic animals.

The riverbed of Brahmani flowing through Banasingh & Radhadeipur under Sadar forest range and Rankia & Budhibili under Kamakhyanagar forest range has become the mass nesting site of the freshwater turtles for the last few years. The turtles visit this place in November every year and lay their eggs.

As turtles are visiting this place in large numbers, forest officials are keeping a close watch on the mass nesting site in the area.


Residents have also joined hands to protect the aquatic creatures. They have formed a voluntary outfit 'Brahmani Kainchha Surakshya Samiti' to protect the turtles.

Reports said around 900 to 1,000 turtles had laid eggs in mass nesting site last year. However, owing to acute river water pollution several turtles were found dying and floating in the river.

Rajendra Panigrahi, convener of 'Brahmani Kainchha Surakshya Samiti' said, "Dynamites are being exploded in regular intervals for fishing while the industrial plants situated close to the riverbanks are discharging effluents into the river causing severe pollution in the river."

DFO Prakashchand Gogineni expressed his ignorance on the development, but assured to direct the forest officials to review the situation.



**Union Bank of India**  
REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK  
M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar-751003

**DEMAND NOTICE**

**Notice under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 for Enforcement of Security Interest**  
A Demand Notice under Sec. 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 was issued and sent by Regd. Post with A.D. by the Authorised Officer of **Union Bank of India, Markat Nagar Branch (e-AB)** against the following Borrower/Guarantor, which could not be served to the below mentioned parties. Therefore, the contents of the same including the outstanding, Loan Amount and details of the secured assets are herein furnished below.

MARKAT NAGAR BRANCH (e-AB) Name & Address of Borrower & Guarantor	Nature / Limit	Date of Demand Notice / Outstanding	Details of Property Mortgaged
<b>Borrower:</b> Mr Avijit Routray, S/o: Mr Prasanta Kumar Routray, C/o: Narayan Swain, Co-obligant: <b>Mr Prasanta Kumar Routray</b> , C/o: Narayan Swain, both are resident of Plot No.: A/ 516, Tarachandpatna, Pithapur, Cuttack, Pin-753009. <b>Guarantor:</b> Mrs Swarupa Mohanty, HO-Rita Rani Sahoo, Sibaji Nagar, Near Sati Choura, Cuttack- 753002.	<b>Education Loan / Rs. 7,00,000/-</b>	<b>14.06.2022</b> as on 02.05.2022 together with further interest & charges from 03.05.2022	Residential Building in the name of <b>Mr Prashant Kumar Routray</b> situated at Plot No.F/150, Sector-7, CDA, Cuttack-753014, Area: 512 Sqft, Bounded by: North-6meter wide Road, South-Plot No.F/173, East- Plot No.F/149, West- Plot No.F/151.

As the above mentioned Borrower/Guarantor of the Markat Nagar Branch (e-AB) have defaulted in repayment of the principal loan/facility in installments /interest/ both, the account has been classified as NPA and all of you are jointly and severally liable to pay the above mentioned amount as mentioned against the respective account with subsequent interest as per the agreement. You are hereby called upon to pay the said outstanding amount together with up to date interest within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, the Bank shall be constrained to take any one or more of the following measures against the properties Hypothecated / Mortgaged to the Bank detailed above, to recover the amount without the intervention of the court as provided under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act (54 of 2002) i.e 1. Take possession of the secured assets including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured assets. 2. Take over the management of the secured assets of the borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale and realize the secured assets. 3. Appoint any person (hereafter referred to as the manager) to manage the secured assets the possession of which has been taken over by the secured creditor. 4. Require at any time by notice in writing any person who has acquired any of the secured assets from the borrower and from whom any money is due or may become due to the borrower, to pay the bank, so much of the money as is sufficient to pay the secured debt. Please take notice that after receipt of this notice, you shall not transfer by the way of sale, lease or otherwise any of the secured assets referred to in the notice, without prior written consent of the Bank. The charges, expenses incurred for taking the aforesaid actions shall be met out of the sale proceeds and if the sale proceeds are found insufficient to satisfy the entire amount due to the bank, for the balance amount appropriate legal action as provided in the SARFAESI Act 54 of 2002 or any other Act as deemed necessary will be taken against you, holding all of you jointly and severally liable to all costs and consequences thereof, it may be noted that under the provisions of section 13(8) of the Act, right to redemption is available to you, by paying the dues of the Bank together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the bank, at any time, before the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets.

**This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the bank available under any other law.**

**Place:** Bhubaneswar, **Date:**20.07.2022 **Sd/-** Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India

**UCO BANK**

**Zonal Office, UCO Bank Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009, Tel: 0674-2620423**

**POSSESSION NOTICE**  
For Immovable Property


**(Under Section 13(4) of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act., 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for Immovable Property)**  
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **UCO Bank**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors to repay the amount with interest at the contractual rate together with incidental expenses and costs within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **POSSESSION** of the properties described here-in below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules.The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the **UCO Bank** for an amount plus interest & expenses thereon.

BRANCH / Name and Address of Borrowers/Guarantors	Amount Outstanding as on Specified Date	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of the Immovable Properties
<b>PURI BRANCH/ Borrowers :</b> 1) Mr. Amina Dash, S/o: Mr. Bhaskar Dash, 2) Mrs. Lipsmita Dash, W/o: Mr. Amina Dash, Both are At: Dandimala Sahi, Near Town Police Station, Puri-752001	<b>₹ 4,18,468.91</b> as on <b>31.01.2022</b> + Interest and other expenses thereon	<b>10.03.2022 / 19.07.2022</b>	All part and parcel of Land and Building situated at Mouza: Kharipara, Khata No.: 266/105, Plot No.: 361/759, Area : Ac 0.014 Dec., Tahasil: Puri, Thana: Puri, Standing in the name of <b>Mr. Amina Dash</b> , Bounded by North: Sub Plot No.: 22, South: Govt. Land, East: Govt. Land, West: Road
<b>NIMAPARA BRANCH/ Borrower :</b> M/s. Bhabani Industries, Prop.: Smruti Ranjan Das, S/o: Niranjan Das, A/ PO.: Gada Andhia, PS.: Nimapara, Dist.: Puri/ <b>Guarantors:</b> 1) Mr. Sridhar Das, S/o.: Alekha Das, 2) Mr. Manoranjan Das, S/o.: Sridhar Das. Both are At: Gada Andhia, PO.: Nimapara, PS.: Nimapara, Dist.: Puri	<b>₹ 16,86,863.28</b> as on 27.04.2022 + Interest and other expenses thereon	<b>18.05.2022 / 19.07.2022</b>	All that part and parcel of immovable property standing in the name of <b>Mr. Sridhar Das</b> , S/o.: Alekha Das, Mouza: Andhia, Thana: Nimapara, Tahasil: Nimapara, Khata No.: 536, Plot No.: 3275, Sabik Plot No.: 2831, Area: Ac.0.07 Dec. (3049 Sq.ft.)
<b>NIMAPARA BRANCH/ Borrower :</b> Mr. Jayaram Das, S/o: Manu Das, At: Banahara, PO.: Baulang, PS.: Gop, Dist.: Puri	<b>₹ 2,21,473.77</b> as on 26.04.2022 + Interest and other expenses thereon	<b>31.05.2021 / 19.07.2022</b>	All that part and parcel of immovable property standing in the name of <b>Mr. Jayaram Das</b> , S/o.: Manu Das, Mouza: Banahara, Thana: Gop, Tahasil: Gop, Khata No.: 28, Plot No.: 504, Area: Ac.0.03 Dec.
<b>CHANDRASEKHARPUR BRANCH/ Borrower :</b> Mr. Bichitrnanda Swain, S/o: Jogendranath Swain, At: Plot No.: 74/ 1292, Nuasahi, Rasulgah, PO.: GGP Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751010/ <b>Guarantor:</b> Mrs. Deepa Patel, W/o.: Kalpesh Patel, At: Flat No.: 202, UMA Heights, Block A, Jagannath Nagar, GGP Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751025	<b>₹ 36,14,819/-</b> as on 16.07.2022 + Interest and other expenses thereon	<b>04.05.2022 / 16.07.2022</b>	All that part and parcel of property situated at Flat No.: 604, 6th Floor, Block A, Type - 2BHK, Apartment named as Gangotree Green, Panchagaon, Sundarpada, PS.: Airfield, PS. No.: 30, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, under SRO: Jatni, Dist.: Khurda, Plot No.: 49, 50, 56/36, 88, corresponding to Khata No.: 31, 469/1366, <b>Total super built up Area: 1220 Sq.ft.</b> , standing in the name of <b>Mr. Bichitrnanda Swain</b> , Bounded by North: Plot No.: 49 (Part), 58, 56 (Part), East: Plot No.: 288 and 62, South: Road, West: Plot No.: 49, 50, 52 and 53
<b>KUANPAL BRANCH/ Borrower :</b> Das and Das Cycle Store, Prop.: Mr. Santosh Kumar Das, S/o: Dhaneswar Das, At: Pasulunda, PO.: Kuanpal, PS.: Mahanga, Dist.: Cuttack - 754204/ <b>Guarantors:</b> 1) Mr. Sanotsh Kumar Das, 2) Mrs. Tava Das, W/o.: Dhaneswar Das, Both are At: Pasulunda, PO.: Kuanpal, PS.: Mahanga, Dist.: Cuttack - 754204	<b>₹ 4,57,541.12</b> as on <b>31.01.2021</b> + Interest and other expenses thereon	<b>09.04.2022 / 16.07.2022</b>	All that part and parcel of Land situated at Residential Plot No.: 610, 611/1559, Admeasuring Area: Ac.0.13 Dec., Khata No.: 491/48, Village: Pasulunda, Thana: Mahanga, Taluka: Mahanga, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha, standing in the name of <b>Mrs. Tava Das</b> , W/o.: Dhaneswar Das, Bounded by North: Raghunath Das, South: Road, East: Gayadhar Das, West: Nrusingha Das

**Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 20.07.2022** **Authorised Officer, UCO Bank**



“Trust the divine power, and she will free the godlike elements in you and shape all into an expression of divine nature.”



SRI AUROBINDO

# Confluence of Crises

At recent gatherings of G7 leaders, NATO members, and G20 foreign ministers, it was clear to everyone that the world is facing a confluence of emergencies unlike anything we have seen in decades. International tensions have risen to alarming heights on the back of increasing food and energy insecurity, depreciating currencies, looming debt crises, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the intensifying effects of climate change, and armed conflicts.

Previously a forum for tackling financial and economic problems, the G20, chaired by Indonesia this year, is being pushed into perilously sensitive terrain. The group's Leaders Summit in mid-November will be critically important; but we cannot wait until then to address today's intertwined crises. The G20 should launch a virtual (online) process to start working toward a common, coordinated response in advance of its November summit.

According to the World Food Program (WFP), more than 800 million people are now chronically hungry, with up to 323 million facing the prospect of starvation. Energy prices have soared, and COVID-19 continues to rage through the world's under-vaccinated populations (only 16.5 per cent of people in low-income countries have been fully vaccinated). Moreover, some 60 per cent of low-income countries are in debt distress, and communities around the world are experiencing droughts, floods, wildfires, and other symptoms of climate breakdown.

In April, UN Secretary-General António Guterres warned that today's confluence of crises "could throw up to 1.7 billion people – over one-fifth of humanity – into poverty, destitution, and hunger on a scale not seen in decades." But though the situation is perilous, we are not powerless to change it. Some multilateral initiatives have already been launched to address debt, energy, and food insecurity. To be effective, however, such efforts must be coordinated and comprehensive. Our problems are too interconnected to be addressed piecemeal.

The immediate priority is to ensure fair prices and secure supplies across food and energy markets. At least \$10 billion is needed to bridge the WFP's financing shortfall this year. So far, international institutions and many governments have responded to the food crisis with initiatives such as the Global Alliance for Food Security, which was launched this spring to coordinate humanitarian financing and investments in food-system resilience. And more than 80 countries have endorsed a US-led Roadmap for Global Food Security Call to Action, and there have been important regionally focused summits such as the Mediterranean Ministerial Dialogue on the Food Security Crisis and the Uniting for Global Food Security Ministerial Conference.

But even though it is well known that open trade is crucial to containing food insecurity, more than 20 countries have imposed restrictions on food exports. While World Trade Organization member states recently agreed to exempt the WFP's humanitarian purchases from export restrictions, that is not enough. We need to take full advantage of our knowledge of how the global food market operates both in the short and long run, and in terms of both supply and reserves.

To that end, major countries holding grain stocks in reserve should release them onto international markets to dampen further price increases; and governments should strengthen the Agricultural Market Information System to improve transparency and monitoring and to prevent speculation. We must ensure that more countries can build self-sufficiency through agricultural-import diversification and more resilient domestic production.

On energy, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, US President Joe Biden, and others have discussed creating an oil-purchasing cartel to negotiate better prices; and there are many new initiatives to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy, improve energy efficiency, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. But we need to pick up the pace in the run-up to November's COP27 in Egypt.

For their part, the International Monetary Fund and the multilateral development banks can and must do more to provide relief from today's food, energy, and debt crises. Only one-quarter of the IMF's trillion-dollar balance sheet is currently committed to providing financial assistance and debt-service relief to struggling countries. Likewise, the World Bank could lend more, by negotiating a capital replenishment with its member states and by leveraging its triple-A credit rating to crowd in private capital with loan guarantees.

To address the looming debt crisis, we need a robust preemptive multi-lateral restructuring and relief initiative for developing countries with unsustainable debt burdens. The share of low-income countries in debt distress, or at high risk of it, has doubled from 30 per cent to 60 per cent since 2015. Making matters worse, many middle-income countries' credit ratings are being downgraded, which means that they will face higher debt-service costs, especially now that the US Federal Reserve and other major central banks are tightening their monetary policies.

New initiatives to alleviate debt distress will need to go much further than similar recent efforts did. The Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) that was launched early in the pandemic has since expired, after providing only \$13 billion in temporary relief to 48 low-income countries. Moreover, it covered only official bilateral creditors, thus excluding the private creditors who hold the largest share of developing-country debt.

Following the launch of the DSSI, the Common Framework for Debt Treatments was established to deal with sovereign insolvency and protracted liquidity problems in DSSI-eligible countries. It is supposed to provide debt relief and restructuring consistent with a debtor's essential-spending needs and capacity to pay; but, one and a half years after its inception, only three countries have signed up (Chad, Ethiopia, and Zambia), and none has successfully completed a debt restructuring.

With participation in the Common Framework currently limited to the 73 poorest countries, the eligibility criteria may need to be reviewed and expanded, and all creditors – including China and the private sector – will need to be incorporated into the process. Greater debt transparency is essential for effective sovereign-debt renegotiation. While securing Chinese participation may prove difficult, private-sector participation can be required by regulation, particularly in the United Kingdom and the United States, where there is already a precedent for this.

Finally, IMF surcharges should be suspended immediately. The number of countries incurring such costs has already risen from nine to 16 since the pandemic began, and the IMF projects that the total could rise to 38 by 2025.

We are facing an unprecedented confluence of crises that could gravely jeopardize our future. Once again, the world needs the G20 to step up and act with resolve.

*José Ramos-Horta, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, is President of Timor-Leste. Danilo Türk is a former President of Slovenia.*

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## WISDOM CORNER

- “If you are depressed you are living in the past. If you are anxious you are living in the future. If you are at peace you are living in the present.”

LAO TZU
- “The real question is not whether life exists after death. The real question is whether you are alive before death.”

OSHO
- “The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude.”

OPRAH WINFREY



Robert Skidelsky

THE CAUSE OF BORIS JOHNSON'S FALL WAS NOT JUST HIS PERCEIVED LACK OF MORALITY, BUT ALSO HIS PERCEIVED LACK OF A POLITICAL COMPASS



José Ramos-Horta & Danilo Türk

According to the WFP, more than 800 million people are now chronically hungry, with up to 323 million facing the prospect of starvation



Bhigneswar Swain

INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ISSUES ARE MORE CORRELATED TODAY THAN THEY WERE EVER BEFORE

# Letters

## TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Nearly all political careers end in failure, but Boris Johnson is the first British prime minister to be toppled for scandalous behaviour. That should worry us.

The three most notable downfalls of twentieth-century British leaders were caused by political factors. Neville Chamberlain was undone by his failed appeasement policy. The Suez fiasco forced Anthony Eden to resign in 1957. And Margaret Thatcher fell in 1990 because popular resistance to the poll tax persuaded Tory MPs that they could not win again with her as leader.

True, Harold Macmillan was undone in 1963 by the Profumo sex scandal, but this involved a secretary of state for war and possible breaches of national security. Election defeats following economic failure brought down Edward Heath and James Callaghan in the 1970s. Tony Blair was forced to resign by the Iraq debacle and Gordon Brown's impatience to succeed him. David Cameron was skewered by Brexit, and Theresa May by her failure to deliver Brexit. No such events explain Johnson's fall.

David Lloyd George, a much greater leader than Johnson, is his only serious rival in sleaze. But though the sale of seats in the House of Lords, slipshod administrative methods, and dishonesty had weakened Lloyd George, the immediate cause of his fall (exactly a century ago) was his mishandling of the Chanak crisis, which brought Britain and Turkey to the brink of war.

The more familiar comparison is with US President Richard Nixon. Every Johnson misdeed is routinely labeled "gate" after the Watergate break-in that ended Nixon.

John Maynard Keynes called Lloyd George a "crook"; Nixon famously denied that he was one. Neither they nor Johnson were crooks in the technical sense (of being convicted of crimes), but Nixon would have been impeached in 1974 had he not resigned, and Johnson was fined £50 for breaking lockdown rules. Moreover, all three showed contempt for the

## FOCUS POLITICS

# JOHNSON'S FALL



Nearly all political careers end in failure, but Boris Johnson is the first British Prime Minister to be toppled for scandalous behaviour

laws they were elected to uphold, and for the norms of conduct expected from public officials.

We struggle to describe their character flaws: "unprincipled," "amoral," and "serial liar" seem to capture Johnson. But they describe more successful political leaders as well. To explain his fall, we need to consider two factors specific to our times.

The first is that we no longer distinguish personal qualities from political qualities. Nowadays, the personal really is political: personal failings are ipso facto political failings. Gone is the distinction between the private and the public, between subjective feeling and objective reality, and between moral and religious matters and those that government must address.

Politics has crossed into the realm previously occupied by psychiatry. This was bound to happen once affluence undermined the old class basis of politics. Questions of personal identity arising from race, gender, sexual preference, and so on now dominate the spaces vacated by the politics of distribution. Redressing discrimination, not addressing inequality, became the task of politics.

Johnson is both a creature and a victim of identity politics. His rhetoric was about "leveling up" and "our National Health Service."

But, in practice, he made his personality the content of his politics. No previous British leaders would have squandered their moral capital on trivial misdemeanors and attempted cover-ups, because they knew that it had to be kept in reserve for momentous events. But momentous events are now about oneself, so when a personality is seen as flawed, there is no other story to tell.

Johnson's personality-as-politics was also the creation of the media. In the past, newspapers, by and large, reported the news; now, focusing on personalities, they create it. This change has given rise to a corrupt relationship: personalities use the media to promote themselves, and the media expose their frailties to sell copy.

There has always been a large market for sexual and financial gossip. But even in the old "yellow press," there was a recognised sphere of public events that took priority. Now the gossip stories are the public events.

This development has radically transformed public perceptions about the qualities a political leader should have. Previous generations of political leaders were by no means all prudes. They lied, drank, fornicated, and took bribes. But everyone concerned with politics recognised that it was important to protect the public

sphere. Leaders' moral failings were largely shielded from scrutiny, unless they became egregious. And even when the public became aware of them, they were forgiven, provided the leaders delivered the goods politically.

Most of the offenses that led to Johnson's resignation would never have been reported in the past. But today the doctrine of personal accountability justifies stripping political leaders naked. Every peccadillo, every lapse from correct expression, becomes a credibility-destroying "disgrace" or "shame." People's ability to operate in the public sphere depends on privacy. Once that is gone, their ability to act effectively when they need to vanishes.

The other new factor is that politics is no longer viewed as a vocation so much as a stepping stone to money. Media obsession with what a political career is worth, rather than whether politicians are worthy of their jobs, is bound to affect what politically ambitious people expect to achieve and the public's view of what to expect from them. Blair is reported to have amassed millions in speaking engagements and consultancies since leaving office. In keeping with the times, The Times has estimated how much money Johnson could earn from speaking fees and book deals, and how much more he is worth than May.

In his resignation speech, Johnson sought to defend the "best job in the world" in traditional terms, while criticising the "eccentricity" of being removed in mid-delivery of his promises. But this defense of his premiership sounded insincere, because his career was not a testimony to his words. The cause of his fall was not just his perceived lack of morality, but also his perceived lack of a political compass. For Johnson, the personal simply exposed the hollowness of the political.

*The writer is a member of the British House of Lords and Professor Emeritus of Political Economy at Warwick University.*

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM ECONOMY

# Time for a change in global financial system

At the end of the World War II, there was literally no operational global economy, so nations got together to create a new trading system and a new monetary system. That monetary system was devised in a town in New Hampshire called Bretton Woods, so it was called the Bretton Woods Agreement. One of the key elements was that the dollar would be pegged to gold at \$35 an ounce. Other central banks could exchange the dollars they held for gold. In that sense, the dollar was as good as gold. Every other currency had a fixed exchange rate to the dollar.

They established the dollar-gold standard to create some predictability and stability for global commerce. For the next 25 years, it was a tremendous success. The dollar became the global currency. Everyone was happy to hold it, in large part because they could exchange it for gold if they had any doubts about its value. It was part of the phenomenal recovery from the war in Europe and Japan. It also created enormous economic prosperity in the US, all through the '50s and '60s.

Late in October 1968, the Paris negotiations began to break as

North Vietnam eased its hard line on an unconditional bombing halt, but just as the conversations began to inch forward, strings of intelligence both in the US and abroad warned the Johnson team that Nixon was up to something. The national security agency has intercepted communications from South Vietnam's ambassador back to his government referencing conversations with the Nixon entourage and saying that the closer the US got to a Nixon victory, the better the position South Vietnam was in.

Nixon's decision to delink the dollar from gold, announced without warning in August 1971, remade the global monetary system in an instant. In August 1971, Nixon took his top economic advisors to Camp David. Over three days, they made the radical and momentous decision to cut the dollar loose from gold. In the process, they unilaterally changed the whole global monetary system.

When the Nixon administration came into office in 1969, they realised that the world economy had grown very, very big. Everybody wanted dollars, so the Federal Reserve was printing lots of dollars. As a result, there were four times as many

dollars in circulation as there was gold in reserves.

Nixon went on television and very clearly articulated what had been decided. The dollar would not be backed by gold anymore. There would be a 90-day wage-price freeze in the US to put down inflation. And he imposed a 10% tariff on all imports, which would be removed only after there was a new international monetary agreement. That put a gun to the head of all other countries. Not only was it done unilaterally, but it was done with enormous force. The US could never get away with that again—it was a singular moment. These policy changes had enormous implications. That is the time since when the US and global economy are divorcing from each other. They are not growing in the same pace, same direction, and projection. By now, a huge vacuum has been created between the two which will never conjoin. It was a decision for which every singly US citizen is suffering until now. Inflation goes up and up, money printing machine being used multifold. This creates distortion over the period. Recession is not because of inflation; distortion is not because of recession. It's

the money printing, withdrawal of gold reserve which is haunting the US and creating inflation cum recession. Is there a stop to that – my analysis says, the vacuum grows bigger over the period.

International and domestic issues are more correlated today than they were ever before. We have to be very careful in taking domestic decisions that have international repercussions. There are a lot of similarities between what's going on now and what was going on in 1971. There's inflation and big trade deficits. There are challenges to the dollar. On the horizon, we can see there will be challenges with regard to China because of the scale of its economy and from central bank digital currencies. There are going to be real problems on the currency front. I think we are on the cusp of having to make some big decisions about another change in the global financial system. History is good to understand for context.

*The writer, Head North America & LATAM of a leading IT company, is Co-founder of Shri Jagannath Chetana. Views are personal.*

## Check cholera

Sir, Kashipur in Rayagada district is reeling under waterborne diseases and cholera afflicting the masses. It is a matter of concern. Many have been hospitalised. There is a lack of awareness among the masses about uses of water for domestic use and drinking purposes. Provision of clean and safe drinking water is the bounden duty of the government. The Health and Family Welfare department is urged to take proactive measures to check cholera and other waterborne diseases and spread awareness about health and hygiene in Kashipur. It is the demand of the day. Every life is precious.

**Prabhudutt Dash,**  
BHUBANESWAR

## Anti-people policies

Sir, The BJP must remember that it cannot always win elections on the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi only. Performance and pro-people policies matter a lot. For sometime petrol and diesel prices were increased continuously. It goes without saying that increase in petrol and diesel prices would shoot up the prices of essential commodities and services. Now imposition of GST on packaged products including cereals, pulses, flour, curd, lassi, puffed rice and other products has caused much problem among people. The anti-people policies would have telling effect on the upcoming elections. Modi has a clean image. However, the spiralling prices of essential goods and services would not only tarnish his image but also make the BJP lose elections. The good performance of any government is reflected in price control, eradication of unemployment. If the government does not pay proper attention to these things, people think of alternatives at the time of election. In Karnataka, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has tried to pacify the people by saying that he would ask the traders not to pass on the 5 per cent GST to the consumers. There is no guarantee that the traders pay heed to the request of the Chief Minister. If the traders agree to the suggestion of the Chief Minister, their profit margins would reduce by 5 per cent. Consumers cannot escape the additional financial burden. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman must read the writings on the wall. Opposition parties cannot be faulted if they attack the central government on price rise and imposition of GST but they were not any different when they were in power and will not be any different when they come to power. Similarly BJP and its allies never missed the opportunities to attack the government when they were in opposition.

**KV Seetharamaiah,** BANGALORE



of the day quote

I am delighted and proud to see this. Kudos to these shining stars of our Yuva Shakti from Arunachal Pradesh for furthering the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' by singing in Tamil

**NARENDRA MODI** | PRIME MINISTER

Yesterday, somebody alleged that there is no work going on in Mantralaya...But I want say that wherever I go, it becomes my Mantralaya. I sign documents and other papers on the move. My work continues wherever I go, be it Thane, Mantralaya or any other place

**EKNATH SHINDE** | MAHARASHTRA CM

A new system for the recruitment of deserved persons will come into being though an amendment

**PINARAYI VIJAYAN** | CHIEF MINISTER OF KERALA

SHORT TAKES

Go First's plane diverted to Jaipur

**New Delhi:** A Go First flight heading from Delhi to Guwahati was diverted to Jaipur after the A320neo aircraft's windshield cracked mid-air, aviation regulator DGCA officials said. This is the third incident of technical malfunction on a Go First aircraft in two days. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is investigating all three incidents.

NIA conducts searches in J&K

**New Delhi:** The NIA Wednesday conducted searches at nine locations in the Kashmir Valley - four in Srinagar district and five in Pulwama district in the case related to the conspiracy of carrying out terror activities in and around Srinagar, an official said. Four accused were arrested in the case and 15 pistols, 30 magazines, 300 rounds, and a vehicle was seized.

Fake call centre busted in Delhi

**New Delhi:** A fake call centre has been busted in the national capital, and six persons who used to dupe foreign nationals in the name of Microsoft technical support have been arrested in this connection, an official said Wednesday. The arrested individuals have been identified as Abhishek Chhabra (31), Rahul Gupta (24), Pushkar Raj (23), Aditya Dhankar (23), Arpit Chaudhary (23) and Ashish Vaswani (25).

18 hurt in J&K road accidents

**Jammu:** As many as 18 people were injured in two separate road accidents in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi and Rajouri districts on Wednesday, police said. In Reasi, 14 people, including four children, were injured after a minibus collided head-on with a truck on the Katra-Reasi road, they said. The injured have been hospitalised, they said.

Agnipath protests: Two died, 35 injured

**New Delhi:** Two people died, 35 were injured and 2,642 arrested from railway premises during the Agnipath agitation, the Parliament was told Wednesday. "No compensation has been paid to the passengers and their families who died/injured during this protest," Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told the Lok Sabha in a written reply.



I condemn that the Centre has not given representation to Punjab in the panel on MSP as was promised to farmers. Punjab's farmers are already stuck in crop cycle and debt. MSP is our legal right. The Centre should ensure representation of Punjab in the MSP committee

**BHAGWANT MANN** | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

FLOOD SITUATION IMPROVES

The flood situation in Assam improved further Wednesday as the number of people affected by the deluge came down to 16,462 even as one more person died, an official bulletin said



Moosewala shooters killed in encounter

MOOSEWALA WAS GUNNED DOWN MAY 29 CLOSE TO HIS NATIVE VILLAGE NEAR MANSA IN PUNJAB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Amritsar/Chandigarh, July 20:** In a major police crackdown Wednesday, two sharpshooters -- Jagroop Rupa and Manpreet Manu -- involved in the killing of famed Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala were shot dead by Punjab Police on the outskirts of Amritsar close to the India-Pakistan border.

Three policemen and a journalist were also injured, said police. Gangsters Jagroop Singh Roopa and Manpreet Singh, alias Mannu Kusa, were killed in the operation that lasted for around five hours and ended around 4 pm. Additional Director General of Police Pramod Ban told reporters in Amritsar:

"Both died in a heavy exchange of fire," he added. Ban, who heads the Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) of the Punjab Police, said an AK-47 and a pistol have been recovered from the gangsters.

A bag has also been recovered but it will be examined by a forensic team, the ADGP added. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann congratulated the Punjab Police for its operation.



An injured police officer being shifted to a hospital after the encounter

PTI PHOTO

"Congratulations to the Punjab Police and the Anti-gangster Task Force for their big success in a campaign started by my government against the gangster culture and anti-social elements," said Mann in a tweet. He said peace and brotherhood in Punjab will be maintained at all costs.

Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, popularly known as Sidhu Moosewala, was shot dead in Punjab's Mansa district on May 29. Roopa and Kusa

hid themselves in a building at Bhakna village near the India-Pakistan border in Amritsar.

Both the gangsters were at large after the killing of the singer. The area was cordoned off and the locals told to stay indoors, said police.

Gunshots were heard from the site where the accused were thought to be hiding. A heavy police force was deployed at the village. Amid intermittent firing, bullets hitting the walls of the house from the

four sides could be seen.

Policemen wearing bulletproof jackets were seen taking the cover of a tractor and a trolley near the building where the gangsters were hiding. Two armoured vehicles and some bullet-proof vehicles were also deployed.

Later addressing a press conference, Ban said the Punjab Police teams have been following these two gangsters. "We were getting their footprints at various places, we had the latest information about their movement which was noted in this area," said Ban while sharing details of the operation.

"Since morning, our teams had been conducting their recce and they were sighted in that area. They ran and went inside a house," said Ban. The AGTF chief said the Punjab Police warned them to surrender but they opened fire at the police teams. The police teams surrounded the house and they were cornered, said Ban. Despite constantly asking them to surrender, they continued to fire at police teams. They did not surrender. The encounter continued for four and half hours.

Zubair walks free after SC grants bail



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Alt News co-founder Mohammad Zubair, held in custody for 24 days on allegations of hate speech, walked free on Wednesday, hours after the Supreme Court granted him interim bail, saying the "exercise of the power of arrest must be pursued sparingly".

Zubair was held in police and judicial custody following half dozen FIRs lodged against him in different parts of Uttar Pradesh for posting tweets that allegedly hurt religious sentiments. The UP state police had also set up a Special Investigation Team to probe the allegations.

On Wednesday, a bench of justices DY Chandrachud, Surya Kant and AS Bopanna ordered disbanding of the SIT and transfer of all the cases to Delhi, saying there was "no reason or justification for the deprivation of his (Zubair's) liberty to persist any further."

The SC bench also refused to restrain Zubair from tweeting in the future as sought by the UP government. "Can a lawyer be restrained from arguing?" the bench asked. "How can a journalist be restrained from tweeting and writing?"

"If he violates any law by tweeting or for that matter any citizen speaking in public or private, then he can be proceeded as per the law", the bench said in a lengthy order passed after more than two-hour hearing. "It is a settled principle of law, that the existence of the power of arrest must be distinguished from the exercise of arrest and the exercise of the power of arrest must be pursued sparingly," it said.

Zubair, dressed in striped T-shirt

and blue trousers, showed the victory sign as he hurriedly left in a car after his release from Tihar Jail at around 9 pm.

Earlier, the court said the directions for the transfer of investigations of the FIRs which have been registered in Uttar Pradesh to the special cell of Delhi Police shall apply to all the existing FIRs forming the subject matter of the tweets as noted earlier and to any future FIR to be registered against him under the same subject matter.

Fairness to Zubair would require that the entirety of the investigation into all the FIRs be clubbed together and should be handled by one and the same investigating authority, it added.

It said the overlap between the allegations in the FIRs, emanating as they do, from the tweets of the petitioner (Zubair) would only go to emphasise the need for a consolidated as opposed to a piecemeal investigation by a diverse set of law enforcement agencies.

The apex court said that essentially, the gravamen of allegations against the petitioner pertains to tweets that have been put out by him.

"Having found from the record that the petitioner has been subjected to a fairly sustained investigation by the Delhi police, we find no reason or justification for the deprivation of the liberty of the petitioner to persist any further. "Consequently, we are of the view that the petitioner shall be released on interim bail in each of the FIRs which form the subject matter of these proceedings under Article 32 of the Constitution", it said.

Zubair was arrested by the Delhi Police June 27 for allegedly hurting religious sentiments through one of his tweets.

Paytm's Vijay Shekhar Sharma, Ola's Ritesh Agarwal to meet Parl panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Top executives of eight domestic tech firms, including Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma and Oyo founder Ritesh Agarwal, will appear before a key parliamentary panel Thursday to discuss the market behaviour of technology platforms amid rising anti-competition concerns.

BJP leader and former Union minister Jayant Sinha-chaired Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance has been looking into various aspects of competition in the marketplace, especially with respect to technology majors.

Sinha told PTI that the panel has decided to ask representatives of various technology platforms, e-commerce players and gaming entities to appear before it soon, and they will be mainly asked about their market behaviour. Representatives of food delivery platforms Swiggy and Zomato, e-commerce player Flipkart, cab aggregator Ola, hotel aggregator Oyo, digital Finance firm Paytm, MakeMy Trip and All India Gaming Association, are those who have been called by the panel, Sinha said.

According to notice available on the Lok Sabha website, the committee will be hearing "views of representatives of associations/industry stakeholders on the subject Anti-Competitive Practices by Big-tech companies" July 21.

According to sources, PayTM founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma, Ola CFO Arun Kumar, Make My Trip Chairman and Chief Mentor Deep Kalra, Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal, Oyo founder and Group CEO Ritesh Agarwal, have confirmed to the panel to attend the meeting.



Congress MP Rahul Gandhi with Mallikarjun Kharge and other Opposition MPs during a protest against inflation and the decision to increase GST on food items, near the Gandhi statue at Parliament complex in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

Van carrying cattle mows down police officer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, July 20:** In a rerun of the killing of a police officer in Haryana during a drive against illegal mining, a woman police officer engaged in vehicle checking near the Jharkhand capital was mowed down Wednesday by a pickup van allegedly smuggling cattle.

Sandhya Topno was conducting the checking drive at Tupudana on the outskirts of Ranchi, when the speeding vehicle carrying the cattle ran over her and fled, a police official said. "She was immediately taken to Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences but she succumbed to her injuries on way to the hospital," Tupudana police station in charge Kanhaiya Singh told PTI. Singh said the ve-



hicle driver has been apprehended and the vehicle seized along with the cattle. Ranchi city superintendent of police Anshuman Kumar said that prima facie the matter seems to be a case of cattle smuggling.

"One person has been detained and the police are in search of others. Investigations are on," he said.

Sandhya Topno, a 32-year-old police sub-inspector, was conducting the checking drive at Tupudana on the outskirts of Ranchi, when the speeding vehicle carrying the cattle ran over her

The incident occurred a day after a deputy superintendent of police probing illegal mining was killed in Haryana's Nuh district when a truck he had signalled to stop drove into him

An eyewitness said that the SI had raised her hand from a distance to stop the pickup van but the driver ran her over.

The incident occurred a day after a deputy superintendent of police probing illegal mining was killed in Haryana's Nuh district when a truck he had signalled to stop drove into him. The death of

the SI has resulted in a war of words between Jharkhand's ruling coalition partner Congress and the main opposition BJP.

BJP national vice-president and former Jharkhand chief minister Raghubar Das has demanded an immediate CBI probe into the matter and action to bust a syndicate of cattle smugglers allegedly active in the state.

"Law and order has collapsed in the state under the present JMM-led regime and a syndicate is active under the patronage of the state government," Das claimed. BJP state president and MP Deepak Prakash said "There has been an increase in cow smuggling in Jharkhand ever since the Hemant Soren government has been formed.

Centre reviews Covid situation in nine states



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 20:** Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the Covid situation in nine states reporting a surge in new daily cases or a rise in positivity.

The Centre flagged concern over low level of testing and vaccination in Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

NITI Aayog's Member, Health, Dr VK Paul, who was also present in the meeting, said: "We need to be mindful that Covid has not gone. Looking at the global scenario, we need to be at high alert. There is poor surveillance, poor testing and below average vaccination in many states undergoing the present surge." He urged states to improve the testing in areas with high positivity, increase surveillance as per the revised surveillance strategy, and speed up vaccination.

Underlining critical Covid control and management strategies, Bhushan said that all districts reporting higher positivity rate need to undertake adequate testing with higher proportion of RT-PCR tests, warning any laxity will result in deterioration of the situation in these districts. States were advised to conduct surveillance as per revised surveillance strategy issued June 9.

'No Kashmiri Pandits migrated from Valley since August 2019'

THE ARTICLE 370, WHICH GAVE SPECIAL STATUS TO JAMMU AND KASHMIR, WAS ABROGATED AUGUST 5, 2019 AND THE STATE WAS BIFURCATED INTO TWO UNION TERRITORIES - J&K AND LADAKH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Not a single Kashmiri Pandit has left the Kashmir valley ever since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, Rajya Sabha was informed Wednesday.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai also said that as many as 118 civilians, including five Kashmiri Pandits and 16 other Hindus and Sikhs, were killed in

Jammu and Kashmir since the abrogation of Article 370.

No Kashmiri Pandit has reportedly migrated from the valley since August 2019, he said in a written reply to a question. Rai said 5,502 Kashmiri Pandits have been provided government jobs in different departments of government of Jammu and Kashmir in the valley. The minister said there has been substantial decline in terror-



Representational image

ist attacks in last three years - from 417 in 2018 to 229 in 2021. "From August 5, 2019 till July 9, 2022, 128 security force personnel and 118 civilians were killed by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir. Out of 118 civilians killed, 5 were Kashmiri Pandits and 16 belonged to

other Hindu and Sikh communities," he said.

Rai said no pilgrim has been killed during this period. He said the government has a policy of zero tolerance against terrorism and the security situation has improved significantly in Jammu and Kashmir.

WFH guidelines issued by Centre

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 20:** As per the Commerce Ministry, Work from home (WFH) is allowed for a maximum period of one year in a special economic zone unit and can be extended to 50 per cent of total employees.

The Department of Commerce has notified a new rule 43A for WFH in Special Economic Zones Rules, 2006. Keeping in view the demand from the industry, the notification by the ministry was issued to make a provision for a countrywide uniform WFH policy across all Special Economic Zones (SEZs). The new rule provides work from home for a certain category of employees of

a unit in SEZ. These include employees of IT/ITeS SEZ units; employees who are temporarily incapacitated; employees who are travelling and who are working offsite, said the ministry. WFH may be extended to a maximum of 50 per cent of total employees, including contractual employees of the unit, it added.

Work From Home is now allowed for a maximum period of one year. However, the same may further be extended for one year at a time by the DC on the request of units," the ministry said. In respect of SEZ units whose employees are already working from home, the notification has provided a transition period of 90 days to seek approval.



9 die in Bengal hooch tragedy

CBI files chargesheet against 41 in coal scam

AGENCIES

**Kolkata, July 20:** Nine persons died after consuming spurious liquor in Ghusuri in West Bengal's Howrah district Wednesday.

The toll was likely to rise during the course of the day as the condition of some of those admitted to a local hospital was stated to be "extremely" critical.

Local police sources said that on Wednesday morning, six people died after they consumed spurious liquor at a local hooch-joint which is at a stone's throw distance behind the local Malipanchghora police station. Twenty others were admitted to a local hospital where three died later.

The deceased have been identified as Amit Kumar Burma, Anil Chaurasia, Ranjit Gupta, Lakshman Shau, Tribhuban Pandit, Sukumar Chowdhury, Prakash Mitra, Biskut Roy and Rajeshwar Roy. The first six persons named in the list reportedly died in the morning, while three more died later. All of them were employed in local factories and foundry units in the Ghusuri area.

Meanwhile, the owner of the said hooch-joint which is located adjacent to the railway tracks near the Malipanchghora PS, Pratap Karmakar, who was absconding since Wednesday morn-



We have heard of coal-mafia, cattle mafia and illegal arms-mafia before. Now, we are hearing of hooch mafia enjoying the patronage of the ruling party and the local police administration

MP ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY | CONGRESS MP

ing, has been ultimately nabbed by the local police. He was being interrogated regarding the source of the liquor which was served Tuesday night, consuming which so many people died.

On Wednesday afternoon, the commissioner of Howrah City Police, Praveen Kumar Tripathi reached the area

and interacted with the local people. He said that the police are investigating the matter and none will be spared. Meanwhile, political mud-slinging has started over the tragedy. State Congress president and the veteran party MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said that hoo-

gans have a free-ride in West Bengal in the current Trinamool Congress regime.

"We have heard of coal-mafia, cattle mafia and illegal arms-mafia before. Now, we are hearing of hooch-mafia enjoying the patronage of the ruling party and the local police administration. The hooch joint was running from very close to the local police station. Is it believable the local ruling party leaders and the local police were not aware of it," he said?

CPI(M) central committee member, Sujan Chakraborty said that liquor is the only source of revenue for the state government and also an avenue for earning for local Trinamool Congress leaders. "So, such illegal hooch-joints are mushrooming across the state under the direct patronage of local administration and local ruling party leaders," he said.

Trinamool Congress's state general secretary and party spokesman Kunal Ghosh said that opposition parties are unnecessarily doing politics over dead bodies. "The police will not spare those responsible for this tragedy. I would like to remind Sujan Chakraborty that the network of liquor shops in West Bengal was extended mainly during the previous Left Front regime," he said.

CBI files chargesheet against 41 in coal scam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, July 20:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has named 41 people, including senior officials of Eastern Coalfields Limited, in its chargesheet filed at a court in West Bengal's Asansol in a multi-crore coal pilferage scam.

Among others who find mention in the chargesheet are private companies and 'unknown officials' of the CISF and Railways, a CBI statement said.

"They entered into a conspiracy and in pursuance of that, fraudulently misappropriated coal from the coal reserve of leasehold areas under the dominion of ECL, and also from the coal stock parked in the Railway sidings for sale and supply," it said.

"It was further alleged that the said accused had obtained undue advantage in the form of huge and regular cash amount as bribe from said private person and facilitated misappropriation of coal from ECL leasehold area... and thereby extended undue protection & patronage to the illegal coal syndicate..." the statement added.

The charge sheet was filed



CBI officials have conducted search operations at several places in West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in connection with the case

Tuesday. Sleuths of the CBI have conducted search operations at several places in West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in connection with the case.

Last month, the central probe agency had announced a reward of Rs 1 lakh for providing information about absconding former Trinamool Congress youth leader Vinay Mishra in the coal pilferage case.

It had earlier questioned TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee's wife Rujira Narula Banerjee twice in connection with the case.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had also attached assets worth Rs 9.28 crore belonging to Mishra, his brother Vikas and prime accused Anup Majhi under the anti-money laundering law.

The probe is continuing, the CBI said.

Cyberabad police destroys drugs worth ₹2.5 crore

AGENCIES

**Hyderabad, July 20:** Cyberabad Police has destroyed drugs worth about Rs 2.5 crore.

A total of 1338.05 kg of ganja (cannabis), 485 ml of weed oil, 11 grams of cocaine, all worth about Rs 2.5 crore were destroyed by incineration at Hyderabad Waste Management Project in Dundigal, police said Wednesday.

In the last two years, Cyberabad Commissionerate Police has seized around 5,406 kg ganja, 10.86 litre hashish/weed oil, 141 kg alprazolam, 206 gram cocaine, 200 gram opium, 333 gram MDMA.

Of these, 1338.05 kg ganja, 485 ml weed oil and 11 gram cocaine were seized in eight different police station limits under Cyberabad Police Commissionerate.

Police said 198.321 kg cannabis and 100 ml weed oil were seized

under the limits of Dundigal police station.

Control of the drug menace is one of the top priorities of the Cyberabad police.

R Jagadishwar Reddy, DCP, Shamshabad, has formed special teams with law and order police stations in coordination with the Special Operation Team (SOT) and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) team.

"Our topmost priority is to look out for drug dealers and consumers, and have built a robust informant network to assist combat the drug problem and registered 4 drug-related cases in the first half of 2022," the DCP said.

Cyberabad police is one of the three police commissionerates in Greater Hyderabad. IT corridors and some key growth clusters around the city fall under Cyberabad commissionerate.



MARTYRS' DAY TODAY



Cutouts of TMC Supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee placed on the city street on the eve of Martyrs' Day, in Kolkata, Wednesday, July 20, 2022. July 21 is observed as Martyrs' Day in memory of 13 Congress workers who were killed in police firing during an agitation against the then-ruling Left Front Government in Kolkata in 1993

Martyrs' Day rally against authoritarian rule: TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, July 20:** Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee Wednesday said that the party's mega Martyrs' Day rally will be against the Centre's 'authoritarian rule'.

The party plans to make its annual rally here Thursday, being

held after a gap of two years of the pandemic, a grand success.

TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee claimed that around 20 lakh people will attend the programme. According to TMC sources, the party is likely to announce at the rally its strategy for strengthening Opposition unity against BJP and its pan-India ex-

pansion plans. "We are dedicating this rally to the martyrs and against the authoritarian rule of the Centre," Banerjee said after visiting the venue to see for herself the preparations.

The TMC had held its annual Martyrs' Day rally during the past two years virtually due to the COVID pandemic.

This year's rally is also special as it is being held in its normal format after its victory in the last year's high-octane state poll in which the party returned to power for the third consecutive time. According to TMC sources, there are chances of workers of other parties, specially the BJP, joining it at the rally.

BRITISH ERA TREASURE TROVE FOUND

'Alladin's Cave' in Kolkata Secretariat building

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, July 20:** Tucked away in a store-room in the labyrinth like corridors of a Secretariat building in Kolkata is a rare treasure trove of 19th century photographs, sketches, mementos and documents whose discovery has turned the neglected room into an Antiquarian's 'Alladin's cave'.

Black and white photographs of a three-decker, steam-driven, tram on the roads of the second city of British Empire and another of a pontoon bridge which preceded the iconic Howrah Bridge over the Hooghly, a certificate issued to Paul Gregory Melitus, the 1880 top-per from Bengal Presidency of the coveted ICS examination, an ivory replica of the Holwell Monument, besides a 1919 book on public hygiene written by an Indian doctor during the outbreak of the Spanish flu contagion, are among the treasures discovered and now being carefully restored by the Administrator General and Official Trustee of Bengal.

A British era law dating back to 1849 created the office which looks after the property and effects of any citizen who dies with-



Biplab Roy, the current Administrator General and Official Trustee of West Bengal, shows restored rare objects, documents and photographs of the British ruled India earlier found dumped in store room, in Kolkata, Tuesday

THERE ARE PHOTOS OF THE RIVER GHATS ALONG HOOGHLY, SMALL SHIPS, NEW MARKET AND GREAT EASTERN HOTEL IN THE 19TH CENTURY AS WELL AS PRIVATE ALBUMS OF MANY BRITISH ARMY OFFICERS

FIREARMS FROM 19TH CENTURY ALONG WITH AMMUNITION HAVE ALSO BEEN FOUND HIDDEN IN THE HEAPS OF PRIVATE EFFECTS IN THE ROOM

out any heir or next of kin. Most of those whose properties came under the Administrator's charge were Britons who died while working or doing business here and had no one who came forward to

claim their estate.

The law continues till date with changes in 1902 and 1913, and has created a huge depository of personal effect which may prove to be a collection of remarkable value

for both antiquarians and historians looking to flesh out their understanding of social life in 19th and early 20th century.

Biplab Roy, the current Administrator General who has been working hard to preserve this unique treasure, told PTI, "Once we stumbled across these objects in the storeroom, our next line of action was dusting and cleaning. We then started cataloguing and documentation ... Restoration is being done systematically, but the sheer number and variety of such photos, letters and documents is overwhelming."

The work undertaken by Roy and his team is quite enormous. Thousands of sepia-tinted photographs which date from 19th century to early 20th century, mostly taken by Britishers along with tonnes of documents and artefacts stashed away in leather folios and trunks are being taken up for restoration work.

Around 1,000 photos have already been restored and are now in safe custody of the department, Roy said.

He pointed to a book - Hygiene and Public Health by Dr Jahar

Lal Das, published in 1919, during the Spanish flu outbreak - which he pointed out may hold clues for tackling the Covid contagion.

Das had suggested wearing masks and listed ways to prepare a mask in the manual and explained why masks should be worn in certain situations and "was the first doctor here who had talked about this".

"We are lucky to have his writing on the issue of pandemic with us," Roy said.

His team is trying to find photographic evidence of the Spanish Flu as also other important landmark happenings.

There are photos of the river ghats along Hooghly, small ships, New Market and Great Eastern Hotel in the 19th century.

Firearms from 19th century along with ammunition have also been found hidden in the heaps of private effects in the room. "We want to set up a museum in our building storing all these objects after they are fully restored. We also want to introduce digital touch screen where a visitor can see the images by the touch of a screen," Roy said.

Rama Rao attacks Centre over inflation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, July 20:** TRS working president and Telangana minister KT Rama Rao Wednesday targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre over issues like inflation.

In a tweet, he said, "What do you call a PM who can Neither control Inflation in the country Nor Infiltration into the country?"

- A) 56"
- B) VishwaGuru
- C) Achhe Din wale

D) All of the above are un-parliamentary words & therefore expunged."

Rama Rao, son of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao, cited media reports that wholesale price inflation surged to a 30-year high in 2021-22.

He also referred to reports that China is coming up with a second village along the Arunachal border.

The ruling TRS in Telangana and opposition BJP have been engaged in a political one-upmanship as they gear up for next year's Assembly polls.

JU Pro-VC found dead

AGENCIES

**Kolkata, July 20:** Jadavpur University Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Samantak Das was found dead in his residence in south Kolkata Wednesday, police said.

The body of the 57-year-old renowned academician was found hanging from the ceiling, with a karate belt tied around his neck, in his Ranikuthi residence in the afternoon.

Das did not go to the university campus in the morning. When

the varsity sent a car to pick him up for some work, his family members knocked on his closed room and when he did not respond, broke it open to find his body hanging from the ceiling.

He was taken to a nearby state-run hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead.

"The body has been sent for post-mortem examination, and further investigation is underway," an officer of Regent Park Police Station said.

Das's wife had died by suicide a few years back.



of the day quote

The Supreme Court today accepted the state (Maharashtra) backward class commission's report for OBC reservation. It has given permission to allot OBC reservations as per the commission's report

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | BY CM OF MAHARASHTRA

Recipe of 'Gabbar' for people struggling with inflation: Make less, eat less, satisfy hunger with the 'tadka of jumlas'. The Prime Minister, who listens to even the unsaid words of 'friends', will now also have to listen to the public and withdraw this GST

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

India will always be indebted to doctors and healthcare workers who served humanity without concerning about their own lives during Covid. We have crossed the 200-crore milestone with regards to the number of total doses administered in the country since the vaccination began in January last year

J P NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

India inks pact with Namibia

**New Delhi:** India and Namibia Wednesday signed a crucial memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the reintroduction of cheetahs, declared extinct in the country in 1952. A senior environment ministry official said the first batch comprising four male and as many female cheetahs will arrive from Namibia in August. "Talks are on with South Africa too. An MoU will be signed with them as soon as we get approval," the official said.

Sanjay Pandey sent to ED custody

**New Delhi:** A court here Wednesday sent former Mumbai Police Commissioner Sanjay Pandey to nine days' ED custody in connection with a money laundering case pertaining to the phone tapping of the employees of National Stock Exchange (NSE) between 2009 and 2017 allegedly on the instructions of NSE's former CEO and MD Chitra Ramkrishna. Pandey who was arrested Tuesday was presented at the Rouse Avenue Court here.

Deeg: Seer sets himself afire

**Jaipur:** A seer set himself afire amid a protest over illegal stone mining in Bharatpur's Deeg Wednesday, a day after another seer climbed atop a mobile tower demanding a ban on it. The seer was referred to Jaipur from Bharatpur in critical condition, officials said. The seer who had climbed atop the mobile tower came down after the incident and peace talks are going on, police said.

JEE-Main second session postponed

**New Delhi:** The second session of the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Main has been postponed and will now begin from July 25 instead of July 21, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced Wednesday. The NTA did not cite any reason for the postponement of the crucial exam. "JEE-Main's second session is going to be commenced from July 25 for 6.29 lakh candidates at different centres located in approximately 500 cities including 17 cities outside India. The admit cards will be available for download from Thursday," the NTA said.



At the same time, there is an atmosphere of fear and panic in Uttar Pradesh due to the wrong government policy of arresting people even on trivial matters while criminals linking themselves with the ruling party are roaming freely. How is it possible to control crime and implement rule of law? The fear of law must be there in all criminals

MAYAWATI | BSP SUPREMO

RAIN HAVOC

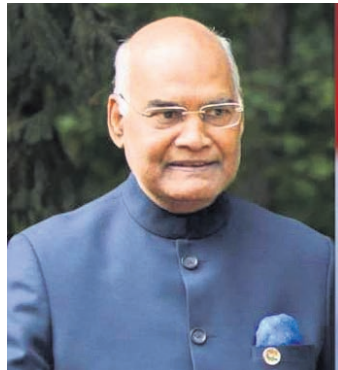
At least seven flights were diverted and 40 services were delayed at Delhi airport due to heavy rains that lashed the city Wednesday afternoon, sources said



Now, Kovind will be Sonia's new neighbour

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 20:** Outgoing President Ram Nath Kovind will now be the new neighbour of Congress' interim chief Sonia Gandhi, once he shifts to 12 Janpath from Rashtrapati Bhavan. Kovind's term will end July 24, after which the swearing-in ceremony of the new President will take place July 25. Sonia resides in 10 Janpath, while Kovind will live in 12 Janpath, one of the biggest bungalows in Lutyens' Delhi. Former Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan lived in this bungalow for almost 30 years. Even after his death in 2020,



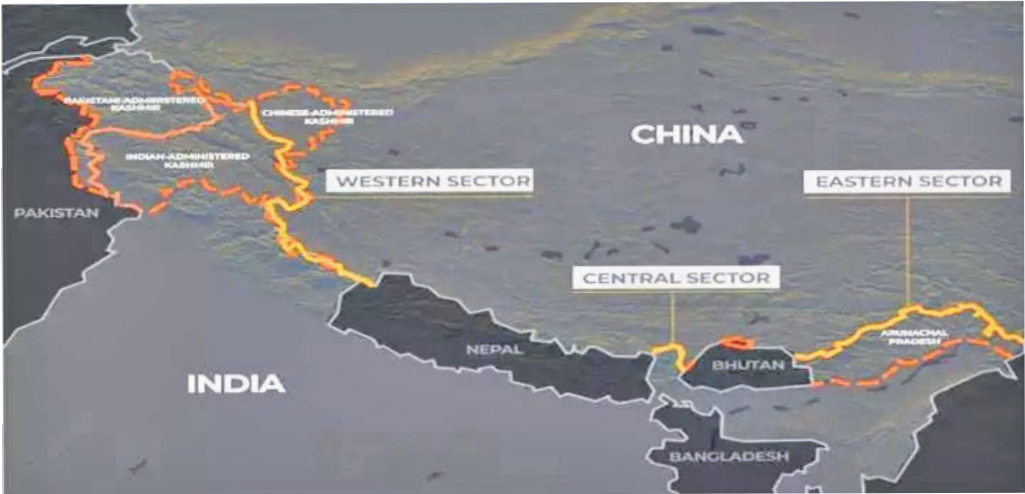
his family continued to reside there, but recently this bungalow was vacated by his son and Lok Sabha



MP Chirag Paswan. 12 Janpath is the same bungalow in which Sonia met Paswan in 2004

and the UPA was formed. Kovind will soon come to live here, at present his family's belongings are being brought to the bungalow. The furniture is being changed and refurbished. The bungalow is getting a coat of paint while the room for the security personnel is also being changed. At the same time, barbed wire has been erected around the house for security reasons. Kovind will continue to get a variety of government perks for the rest of his life. An assistance amount of Rs 30,000 will also be paid to the President's wife Savita Kovind.

China plans to build new highway along LAC: Report



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Beijing, July 20:** China plans to build a new highway along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India as part of Beijing's efforts to strengthen its strategic position and project its power, a media report said Wednesday. The highway, spanning from Lhunze county in Tibet to Mazha in Kashgar, Xinjiang region, is among 345 construction plans proposed in the new national programme, which aims to build a total of 461,000 kms of highway and motorway by 2035, as China seeks to revive its faltering economy with infrastructure investment, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Lhunze county, according to reports, formed part of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims as part of South Tibet. Under the plan released last week, the highway known as G695 is expected to run through Cona county - which lies immediately north of the LAC, Kamba county bordering Sikkim and Gyirong county near the border with Nepal, the report said. The planned road would also go through Burang county between Tibet, Nepal and India as well as Zanda county in Ngari prefecture, parts of which are held by India, it said.

The details of the new construction remain unclear, but the highway, when completed, may also go near the hotly contested areas such as the Depsang Plains, Galwan Valley and Hot Springs on the LAC, it said. There was no official reaction here to the news report in the Hong Kong media.

- The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas
- Both sides (China & India) gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry
- China has been ramping up infrastructure in Tibet
- Last year it launched a high-speed bullet train connecting the provincial capital Lhasa with Nyingchi, the Tibetan border town close to Arunachal Pradesh

India has said previously that it keeps an eye on all the activities along its border. The report of the new highway plan along the LAC comes at a time when India and China made efforts to resolve the over two-year eastern Ladakh standoff. The two countries have so far held 16 rounds of talks to disengage troops at different points. At Sunday's 16th round of talks between the top military commanders of the two countries, it was learnt that the Indian delegation sought resolution of pending issues in Depsang Bulge and Demchok. India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC were key for the overall development of the bilateral ties. Last month External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar asserted that India will not allow any uni-

lateral attempt by China to change the status quo or the LAC. At his meeting with Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the side-lines of recent G20 foreign ministers in Bali, Jaishankar conveyed to Wang the need for early resolution of all the outstanding issues in Eastern Ladakh. The eastern Ladakh border stand-off erupted May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas. Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry. As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area. China has been ramping up infrastructure in Tibet. Last year it launched a high-speed bullet train connecting the provincial capital Lhasa with Nyingchi, the Tibetan border town close to Arunachal Pradesh. On Tuesday, new satellite images emerged indicating the construction of a Chinese village East of the Doklam plateau on the Bhutanese side, a region that is considered important for India's strategic interest. Chinese President Xi Jinping travelled by bullet train during his rare visit to border areas in Tibet. The massive development of rail, road and airport development vastly improved the Chinese military's ability to move men, materials and weapons to the border areas at a faster pace. Tibet has five airports including at Nyingchi, Shigatse and Ngari located close to the Indian and Nepal borders.

SC says pleas filed by Sena, rebel MLAs raise constitutional questions



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** The Supreme Court Wednesday said the petitions filed by the Shiv Sena and its rebel MLAs during the recent Maharashtra political crisis raised constitutional issues including split, the merger of a political party, defection, and disqualification which may require consideration by a larger bench. A bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana, meanwhile, extended the operation of its July 11 order by which it had asked Assembly Speaker not to proceed with a plea seeking disqualification of MLAs of the Uddhav Thackeray faction as sought by CM Eknath Shinde group on the ground of defying the party whip during the trust vote and the election of the speaker. The bench, also comprising justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli, issued notices on petitions filed by the Uddhav group and asked the other side to file responses and issues by July 27 for consideration by a larger bench and fixed them for hearing August 1. While a battery of senior lawyers including Kapil Sibal and A M Singhvi took charge on behalf of the Uddhav faction, the Shinde group was led by senior advocate Harish Salve. "What happens to the verdict of people? The 10th schedule, meant to stop defection, has

turned topsy-turvy and has been used to instigate defection," Sibal said, adding that the protection against disqualification is available in case of a merger and not in the case of the split of a party. Salve replied saying, "Heavens do not fall if a chief minister is changed. Let us get into if the speaker was appointed as per law and not on the crisis of democracy and all that... Raising a voice within the party without crossing 'Lakshman Rekha' is not an act of defection." "Some of the issues, consequences of removal of paragraph three (of 10th schedule) and absence of split concept, whether a minority party leader has right to disqualify party leader, these are some of the issues. If you can pull out the issues, we can decide how to proceed," the CJI said, adding that at the moment he was "thinking aloud". "After hearing the counsel, it has been agreed that some issues may, if necessary, be referred to a larger bench also. Keeping in mind the same, to enable the parties to frame the issues, let them file the same preferably by next Wednesday (July 27)," the bench said in its order. The bench was hearing six pleas related to the political crisis that led to the fall of the Maha Vikas Aghadi government. Out of these, the first one was filed by the Shinde faction against the move to disqualify them by the Thackeray group.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE



Commuters waded through a waterlogged road following monsoon rains in Noida

PTI PHOTO

'70% dists have maternal mortality rate above UN goals'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) in 448 of India's 640 districts are higher than the target set under UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), according to the first mapping of India's maternal deaths at the district level. Arunachal Pradesh fares the worst of all states and Maharashtra the best, says the study published in the journal PLOS Global Public Health Tuesday. Scientists analysed 61,982,623 (61.9 million) live births and 61,169 maternal deaths recorded in the Health Management Information System (HMIS) during 2017-2019. HMIS is a web-based monitoring system put in place by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW). As Census 2011 data was used, only 640 districts were considered against 773 in 2022.

"The findings suggest that 70 per cent of districts (448 out of 640 districts) in India have reported MMR above 70 deaths - a target set under Sustainable Development Goal," the researchers said. The highest MMR is in Arunachal Pradesh (284) and the lowest in Maharashtra (40), researchers from the International Institute for Population Sciences in Mumbai, the University of Portsmouth, UK, and the University of Western Australia found. Four other states -- Manipur (282), Andaman and Nicobar Island (275), Meghalaya (266), and Sikkim (228) -- have MMR greater than or equal to 210. Nine states and two union territories have MMR in the range of 140-209. These are Nagaland (143), Punjab (143), Chhattisgarh (144), Jammu and Kashmir (151), Delhi (162), Rajasthan (162), Bihar (164), Madhya Pradesh (179), Lakshadweep

**MMR refers to deaths due to complications from childbirth or pregnancy per 1 lakh live births**

**The MMR under the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030 is 70**

**India's MMR is 113 right now. It accounts for 15 per cent of world maternal deaths, second only to Nigeria (19 per cent)**

(208), Uttar Pradesh (208), and Assam (209). "Recent estimates of Sample Registration System (SRS) of India hve witnessed a steady decline in the MMR from 130 to 113 per 100,000 live births," the authors said in the journal. "We examined socio-demographic and health care correlates of MMR using large-sample and robust statistical tools," they added. MMR is a key and sensitive parameter used by health policymakers to monitor maternal health conditions in particular and women's status in general in a country. Although MMR is falling at an average of 4.5 per cent yearly, the target set under SDG-3 is an annual rate of 5.5 per cent, the researchers said. A comparison of successive rounds of information from the Office of Registrar General of India reveals a surprising rise in MMR in Punjab.

"We are guessing that it could be due to unsafe sex-selective abortions leading to the death of women in the state. However, a detailed examination of reasons for such a rise is needed from the state government's side," the researchers said. Among the districts, the MMR is found in the Tirap district in Arunachal Pradesh and the lowest in Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti in Himachal Pradesh, the researchers said. Overall, 115 districts registered a maternal mortality ratio greater than or equal to 210; 125 districts show a range of 140-209 while 210 districts fall in the range of 70-139, and only 190 districts reported a maternal mortality ratio less than 70, they said. The findings can be immensely useful in identifying 'hot spots' of maternal mortality within the states, thus aiding in micro-level maternal health care policy and planning.



# international

## of the day quote

IMF hopes to complete negotiations with Sri Lanka as quickly as possible, & the moment there is a govt we can continue our discussions & our team will be there

**KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA** | MD, IMF

A dangerous and worrying trend in global terrorism is the rising number of children that are recruited and involved in terrorism-related activities

**R RAVINDRA** | CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AT INDIA'S PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UN

Our monitoring reveals that despite the improved security situation since 15 August, the people of Afghanistan, in particular women and girls, are deprived of the full enjoyment of their human rights

**MARKUS POTZEL** | DEPUTY SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, AFGHANISTAN

## SHORT TAKES

### Syria breaks ties with Ukraine

**Damascus:** Syria said Wednesday that it is formally breaking diplomatic ties with Ukraine in response to a similar move by Kyiv. Syria is a strong ally of Russia, which joined Syria's conflict in September 2015 helping tip the balance of power in favour of President Bashar Assad. In late June, Damascus said it would recognise the "independence and sovereignty" of Ukraine's Russia-backed eastern Luhansk and Donetsk regions, becoming the first country to recognize the two breakaway states' independence. That led Ukraine to sever ties with Syria.

### Draghi lists terms to stay in office

**Rome:** Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi Wednesday demanded unity among his coalition partners if they wanted him to stay in office, leaving his resignation threat hanging over parliament. Draghi set out a series of issues facing Italy ranging from the war in Ukraine to social inequality and rising prices. "Are the parties and you parliamentarians ready to rebuild this pact?" Draghi said in an uncompromising speech to the upper house, adding that was what Italians were demanding.

### Serbia, Egypt to boost relation

**Belgrade:** Egypt and Serbia Wednesday agreed to boost political, economic and other cooperation as the two countries look for ways to deal with the global impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi was in Serbia on a three-day visit this week — the first in more than three decades by an Egyptian president. His host, Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic, said the visit had a "historic character." "It will bring so much in the future," he said adding, "This is just a beginning."

### US Vlogger gang raped in Pak hotel

**Lahore:** A 21-year-old American woman was allegedly gang-raped by two men in Punjab province of Pakistan, police said Tuesday. The incident took place at a hotel in hill station 'Fort Monroe' of DG Khan district, about 500 kilometres from here, July 17 when the victim - a Blogger/Tiktoker who runs a Facebook page -- was visiting the place along with her social media friends Muzamil Sipra and Azan Khosa to make a vlog.



A visit by Pelosi would severely undermine China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, gravely impact the foundation of China-US Relations and send a seriously wrong signal to Taiwan independence forces

**ZHAO LIJIANG** | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

## 'HASTA LA VISTA, BABY'

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson bowed out of his final showpiece parliamentary appearance with a round of applause from his party, jeers from opponents and an enigmatic exit line: "Mission largely accomplished ... hasta la vista, baby"



# Wildfires rage across Europe as climate alarm sounded

A BRUTAL HEATWAVE SETTLED OVER SOUTHERN EUROPE LAST WEEK, PART OF A CURRENTLY DEVELOPING GLOBAL PATTERN OF RISING TEMPERATURES - WIDELY ATTRIBUTED BY SCIENTISTS AND CLIMATOLOGISTS TO HUMAN ACTIVITY - THAT IS FORECAST TO DUMP SEARING HEAT ON TO MUCH OF CHINA INTO LATE AUGUST



BLAZE NEAR ATHENS AS HUNDREDS EVACUATED

HUNDREDS FLEE IN TUSCANY AS FIRE-HIT GAS TANKS EXPLODE

STEP UP CLIMATE FIGHT, UK WARNED, AFTER HOTTEST DAY

REUTERS

**London, July 20:** Emergency services battled wildfires across swathes of southern Europe amid mass evacuations Wednesday, as warnings sounded in London after Britain's hottest day that the fight against climate change needed to be stepped up.

A blaze fuelled by gale-force winds raged in mountains north of Athens, forcing hundreds including hospital patients to evacuate, and similar numbers fled in central Italy as gas tanks caught in a forest fire near the Tuscan town of

Lucca exploded.

While the record heat experienced last week around parts of the Mediterranean has eased, mercury readings have begun heading up again in Portugal and Spain and rising in Italy.

Portugal's northern region's

During this heatwave, more than 500 people died because of such high temperatures. I ask citizens to exercise extreme caution. Climate emergency is a reality

**PEDRO SANCHEZ** | PM, SPAIN

Even if Europe meets all of its climate goals and the rest of us don't, we all lose. It's a grim outlook. There's no getting away from it, I'm afraid

**BILL HARE** | CLIMATE SCIENTIST & CEO OF CLIMATE ANALYTICS

Civil Protection commander Armando Silva said rising temperatures and strong winds would make it harder to fight the country's largest wildfire, which has burned 10,000-12,000 hectares (38-46 square miles) since Sunday in and around the municipality

of Murça.

In Spain, where emergency crews were tackling fires in five regions, national weather service AEMET also forecast higher temperatures.

### RECORD TEMPERATURE

Wildfires burned in several areas of Italy and 14 cities, including Rome, Milan and Florence, were due to be put on the country's highest heatwave alert Thursday, up from nine Wednesday.

Forecasters there said that temperatures were expected to hit 40C (104F) across a swathe of the north and centre this week.

That mark was topped in Britain for the first time Tuesday, shattering the country's previous temperature record by 1.6 degrees Celsius.

The Chief of Science and Technology of Britain's Met Office,

## GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE?

### HOTTER, MORE FREQUENT HEATWAVES

Climate change makes heatwaves hotter and more frequent. This is the case for most land regions, and has been confirmed by the UN's global panel of climate scientists (IPCC). Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities have heated the planet by about 1.2 Celsius since pre-industrial times. That warmer baseline means higher temperatures can be reached during extreme heat events. A study in the journal Nature this month found that heatwaves in Europe have increased three-to-four times faster than in other northern mid-latitudes such as the United States.

### FINGERPRINTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

To find out exactly how much climate change affected a specific heatwave, scientists conduct "attribution studies". Since 2004, more than 400 such studies have been done for extreme weather events, including heat, floods and drought - calculating how much of a role climate change played in each. This involves simulating the modern climate hundreds of times and comparing it to simulations of a climate without human-caused greenhouse gas emissions.

### HEATWAVES WILL STILL GET WORSE

The global average temperature is around 1.2C warmer than in pre-industrial times. That is already driving extreme heat events. Temperatures will only cease rising if humans stop adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Until then, heatwaves are set to worsen. A failure to tackle climate change would see heat extremes escalate even more dangerously.

### CLIMATE CHANGE DRIVES WILDFIRES

Climate change increases hot and dry conditions that help fires spread faster, burn longer and rage more intensely. In the Mediterranean, that has contributed to the fire season starting earlier and burning more land. Last year more than half a million hectares burned in the European Union, making it the bloc's second-worst forest fire season on record after 2017. Hotter weather also saps moisture from vegetation, turning it into dry fuel that helps fires to spread.

Stephen Belcher, said that unless greenhouse gas emissions were reduced, the country might experience similar heatwaves every three years.

London mayor Sadiq Khan, a member of the opposition Labour Party, issued a similar warning.

"The sad reality is this is what the future for London and the UK is likely to look like if we don't take strong action now on the climate crisis," he said.

Treasury Minister Simon Clarke said Tuesday's "remarkable, unprecedented" record served as "a reminder ... of the importance of tackling climate change."

### HIGH WINDS

To the south on the European mainland, major wildfires continued to rage. In Greece, thick clouds of smoke darkened the sky over Mount Penteli 27 km (16 miles) north of Athens, where close to 500 firefighters, 120 fire engines and 15 water-carrying planes tried to contain a blaze that broke out on Tuesday and continued to

burn on several fronts.

Authorities said they evacuated nine settlements. One hospital and the National Observatory of Athens were also evacuated and police helped at least 600 residents out of fire-stricken areas.

Strong winds were forecast to persist until Wednesday afternoon. Last year, wildfires ravaged about 300,000 acres (nearly 470 sq miles) of forest and bushland in different parts of Greece as the country experienced its worst heatwave in 30 years.

In Italy, fire crews in the central region of Tuscany battled a wildfire for a third day near the town of Lucca that had destroyed some 560 hectares (2.15 sq miles) of forest, authorities said.

In France, where firefighters in the southwestern Gironde region have been battling since July 12 to contain huge forest fires, Agriculture Minister Marc Fesneau said more money needed to be invested to tackle such threats.

## UK PM RACE

### Sunak to face Truss in final leg

IT IS OFFICIAL - RISHI SUNAK IS NOW THE CLOSEST ANYONE OF INDIAN ORIGIN HAS EVER BEEN TO TAKE CHARGE AS BRITISH PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, July 20:** Rishi Sunak Wednesday clinched his place for the final leg of the race to succeed Boris Johnson and will go head-to-head with Foreign Secretary Liz Truss as one of two finalists to take charge as Conservative Party leader and British Prime Minister.

Sunak won the fifth and final voting round of Tory MPs with a resounding 137 votes, while second-placed Truss won the support of 113 MPs. Trade Minister Penny Mordaunt was knocked out of the race after coming in third with 105 votes.

The 42-year-old British Indian for-



mer Chancellor, who has topped every voting round so far, added 19 votes to his Tuesday tally of 118 and comfortably crossed the 120 MPs mark seen as the threshold to confirm a place in the final showdown.

Sunak and Truss are now set for their first head-on clash in a live televised debate scheduled on the BBC for Monday.

# 'We lost': Disappointment at SL protest camp post election

Sri Lanka's president-elect vowed Wednesday to take tough action against anyone resorting to what he called undemocratic means that led to his predecessor's ouster

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Colombo, July 20:** A sullen crowd reacted to the election of Sri Lanka's new president with disappointment Wednesday, near the protest camp where they last week celebrated chasing his predecessor into exile.



Around 200 people gathered under a sweltering morning sun to watch the contest outside the presidential secretariat

"We are disappointed, but not surprised," said Nuzly Hameem. "We lost - the whole country lost," said Damitha Abeyrathne, a prominent Sri Lankan actress who has been a regular fixture at the protest

site in recent months.

### 'We will continue'

The protesters, who forced President Rajapaksa to flee the country and quit, Wednesday demanded the resignation of his successor Wickremesinghe as well.

"We will continue our protest campaign until Wickremesinghe resigns," he said. Many protesters insist only a complete overhaul of government will satisfy their demands.

The six-time former premier is tainted in protesters' eyes by his association with Rajapaksa and his family, who have been blamed by critics for driving the country to the brink of economic ruin.

# China blocking UN rights chief report on Xinjiang

RIGHTS GROUPS ACCUSE BEIJING OF ABUSES AGAINST XINJIANG'S UYGHUR INHABITANTS, INCLUDING THE MASS USE OF FORCED LABOUR IN INTERNMENT CAMPS. CHINA HAS VIGOROUSLY DENIED THE ALLEGATIONS

REUTERS

**Geneva, July 20:** China is asking the United Nations human rights chief to bury a highly-anticipated report on human rights violations in Xinjiang, according to a Chinese letter seen by Reuters and confirmed by diplomats from three countries who received it.

United Nations High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet has faced severe criticism from civil society for being too soft on China during a May visit and has since said she will refrain from seeking a second term for personal reasons.

But before she leaves at the end

of August, she has pledged to publish a report into the western Chinese region of Xinjiang.

The letter authored by China expressed "grave concern" about the Xinjiang report and aims to halt its release, said four sources - the three diplomats and a rights expert who all spoke on condition of anonymity. They said China began circulating it among diplomatic missions in Geneva from late June and asked countries to sign it to show their support.

"The assessment (on Xinjiang), if published, will intensify politicisation and bloc confrontation in the area of human rights, under-



- Report on human rights in Xinjiang promised for months
- Chinese letter expresses 'grave concern' about report
- UN rights chief set to leave office next month

mine the credibility of the OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), and harm the cooperation between OHCHR and member states," the letter said, referring to Bachelet's office.

"We strongly urge Madame High Commissioner not to publish such an assessment" said Liu Yuyin, a

spokesperson for China's diplomatic mission in Geneva.

Liu said that nearly 100 countries had recently expressed their support to China on Xinjiang-related issues "and their objection to interference in China's internal affairs under the pretext of human rights".

A Chinese foreign ministry

spokesperson told Reuters that Bachelet would have witnessed a "real Xinjiang with a safe and stable society" when she visited the region during her May trip to China. He said attempts by some countries to "smear China's image" using the Xinjiang issue would not succeed.

The report is being finalised prior to public release, he added, saying this includes the standard practice of sharing a copy with China for its comments. It is set to address China's treatment of its Uyghur minority. A team of rights experts began gathering evidence for it more than three years ago but its release has been delayed for months for unclear reasons.



of the day quote

Today, it is immensely encouraging that the company's newer FMCG Businesses have garnered an annual consumer spend of ₹24,000 crore. The carefully selected portfolio, with substantial headroom to grow, is estimated to have a total addressable market potential of ₹5,00,000 crore by 2030

SAJIV PURI | CMD, ITC

We are undertaking a host of initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint, aligned with India's net zero ambitions and are envisaging an investment of ₹10,000 crore towards this. One such initiative is to increase the use of renewable power in our operations

SAJJAN JINDAL | CHAIRMAN, JSW STEEL

We are happy to report good growth in revenue and crossing ₹2,000 crore sales mark for the first time in a quarter. All our business segments did well with our leading brands registering healthy sales growth,

RG CHANDRAMOGAN | CHAIRMAN, HATSUN AGRO PRODUCTS

SHORT TAKES

Steel exports grow 25%; imports drop

**New Delhi:** The exports of finished steel from India jumped over 25 per cent to 13.49 million tonne (MT) in 2021-22, Union Minister Faggan Singh Kulaste said Wednesday. During the preceding 2020-21 fiscal, the exports stood at 10.78 MT, the Minister of State for Steel said in a reply to the Lok Sabha. The imports fell to 4.67 MT in 2021-22 from 4.75 MT a year ago, a fall of 1.68 per cent, according to Kulaste.

Wipro Q1 profit falls nearly 21%

**New Delhi:** IT services company Wipro Ltd Wednesday reported about a 21 per cent year-on-year fall in its consolidated net profit to ₹2,563.6 crore for the first quarter ended June 2022. The profit for the period (attributable to the equity holders of the company) stood at ₹3,242.6 crore in the year-ago period. The net profit was down 20.6 per cent on a year-on-year basis, according to a filing. The company's revenue from operations rose nearly 18 per cent year-on-year to ₹21,528.6 crore during the just-ended quarter.

FPIs, MFs increase stake in Paytm

**New Delhi:** Foreign portfolio investors and mutual funds have marginally increased stake in Paytm's parent company One97 Communications, according to a regulatory filing. The shareholding pattern of One97 Communications for June quarter 2022-23 shows that the number of shareholders as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) rose from 54 to 83, taking the number of shares held by them to 3,53,72,428 from 2,86,80,948 in the previous March quarter.

Insolvency bid against Future

**Mumbai:** The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) Wednesday admitted Bank of India's plea to initiate insolvency resolution proceedings against debt-ridden Future Retail Ltd (FRL). The tribunal rejected Amazon's objection to initiating insolvency proceedings against Future Retail. Admitting the lenders' plea, the NCLT appointed Vijay Kumar Iyar as the resolution professional for FRL.



Central bankers globally move in a herd led by ring master the US Fed. Whether easy or tight money. Go out of line your currency is crushed. Look at Japan, a 30 plus percent depreciation. That's the power of the US \$ the most sought after asset in the world today. How long?

UDAY KOTAK | VETERAN BANKER

UK INFLATION SOARS TO NEW 40-YR HIGH

Inflation in the United Kingdom has accelerated to a new 40-year high, driven by rising food and fuel prices that are contributing to a cost-of-living crisis. Consumer prices rose 9.4% this year through June, up from 9.1% the previous month. The new figure is the highest since 1982, when inflation peaked at 11%



More than 13L EVs registered: Gadkari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Wednesday said more than 13 lakh electric vehicles are registered in the country.

This figure excludes the data of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Lakshadweep, the Road Transport and Highways minister said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

Gadkari said under Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) Phase-II scheme, 2,877 public EV charging stations have been sanctioned in 68 cities and 1,576 EV charging stations across 9 expressways and 16 highways.

"The number of electric vehicles in the country is 13,34,385 (excluding data of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Lakshadweep, which is not available in VAHAN 4) as on 14-07-2022 and a total of 2,826 public charging stations are operational in the country, as per the Bureau of Energy Efficiency," he said.

Gadkari said, according to the World Road Statistics (WRS) of the International Road Federation, Geneva, India recorded 1.5 lakh road accident fatalities in 2020, which was 26.37 per cent of total road accidents recorded in 207 countries.

₹ closes below 80 mark for 1st time against \$



RUPEE HAS LOST OVER 7% OF ITS VALUE IN 2022

RBI'S CURRENCY RESERVES HAVE FALLEN BY MORE THAN \$60 BILLION FROM ITS PEAK OF \$642.450 BILLION IN EARLY SEPTEMBER

FOREX RESERVES STOOD AT \$580.252 BILLION, DOWN BY \$27.05 BILLION FROM MARCH-END 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 20:** The rupee for the first time dropped below the 80 level against the US currency Wednesday due to strong dollar demand from importers and fiscal slippage concerns.

Crude oil prices remained above the \$105 per barrel mark despite a correction while fiscal slippage concerns after the government reduced the windfall tax on the export of oil products hit the rupee sentiment.

The local unit closed at a record low of 80.05 to a dollar, showing a net loss of 13 paise over the previous close. The rupee had breached the 80 level to hit a low of 80.05 in intra-day trade Tuesday but settled at 79.92 to a dollar due to suspected RBI intervention and forex inflows. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local cur-

rency opened at 79.91 and later traded in a range of 79.89 to 80.05.

Forex traders said significant dollar demand from oil importers, firm crude oil prices, as well as concerns about swelling trade deficit, weighed on investor sentiments. "Overall gains in crude in the last few days where Brent has risen again above \$105 and lack of intervention from RBI has kept the rupee hovering around 80.00. Going ahead rupee will be seen in the range of 79.75-80.25," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst at

LKP Securities.

The rupee is broadly in downward trend even after measures from the RBI on international payment gateways or import duty hikes on commodity products, Trivedi said.

According to Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, the rupee consolidated in a narrow range and focus will now be shifting to the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) next week.

Britain's unemployment rate held at 3.8 per cent in the three

'RBI ready to spend \$100bn more to stem rupee plunge'

**Mumbai:** India's central bank is prepared to sell a sixth of its foreign exchange reserves to defend the rupee against a rapid depreciation after it plumbed record lows in recent weeks, a senior source aware of the central bank's thinking told Reuters.

The RBI's currency reserves have fallen by more than \$60 billion from its peak of \$642.450 billion in early September, in part due to valuation changes, but largely on the back of dollar selling intervention.

Despite the drawdown, the RBI's reserves of \$580 billion remain the fifth largest in the world, giving the central bank confidence in

its ability to prevent any sharp, jerky depreciation of the currency.

"They have shown that they will use reserves at will to prevent volatility in the rupee. They have the wherewithal and have demonstrated the willingness to use it," the source said.

"The RBI can afford to spend even \$100 billion more if required to defend the rupee," the source added.

The source said the RBI, as per its stated stance, does not try to protect the rupee or hold it at a certain level but will act to avoid any runaway depreciation in the currency.

months to May, while the number of people in work rose by the most since the middle of 2021, Somaia said, adding, "We expect the USD-INR (spot) to trade in the range of 79.70 and 80.20 in the short-term."

Japanese brokerage Nomura said the reversal makes it maintain the earlier projection for a 0.4 per cent fiscal slippage over the budgetary target of 6.4 per cent for FY23.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.11 per

cent to 106.56. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, fell 1.73 per cent to \$105.49 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 629.91 points or 1.15 per cent up at 55,397.53, while the broader NSE Nifty jumped 180.30 points or 1.1 per cent to 16,520.85.

Foreign institutional investors were net sellers in the capital market Wednesday as they sold shares worth ₹230.22 crore, as per exchange data.

Netflix loses 10L subscribers in Q2

NETFLIX HAS CONFIRMED IT IS RENEGOTIATING DEALS TO PUT ADS ON ITS PLATFORM AND WILL LAUNCH FIRST IN COUNTRIES THAT HAVE MORE MATURE ADVERTISING MARKETS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICES

**San Francisco, July 20:** Popular video streaming platform Netflix has announced that it lost nearly one million paid subscribers in the second quarter of this year.

In the second-quarter earnings report, the company revealed that it lost 9,70,000 subscribers, which is more than the 2,00,000-member decline from the first quarter.

"The second quarter was better-than-expected on membership growth, and foreign exchange was worse-than-expected (stronger US dollar), resulting in 9 per cent revenue growth (13 per cent con-



stant currency)," the company said in a statement.

"Our challenge and opportunity is to accelerate our revenue and membership growth by continuing to improve our product, content, and marketing as we have done for the last 25 years, and to better monetise our big audience," it added.

Netflix said it has 73.28 million paid subscribers in the US and Canada and 220.67 million worldwide and it expects to add one million in the third quarter.

According to Netflix, revenue increased 9 per cent year over year from \$7.3 billion in 2021 to \$7.97 billion this quarter.

In April, the platform reported a loss of 2 lakh paid subscribers in the first quarter of 2022 - its first subscriber loss in over a decade.

Moreover, Netflix forecast a global paid subscriber loss of 20 lakh for the second quarter of 2022. However, it only lost half of that.

BIZ BUZZ

BoB celebrates 115th foundation day

**Bhubaneswar:** Bank of Baroda, Bhubaneswar Regional office celebrated its 115th foundation day at its office premises, Wednesday. On the occasion the bank organised various activities including a blood donation camp, drawing competition among small children and donated book shelves to Maa Ananda Ashram, Damana Square. A cultural programme was also organised at Guru Kulu Charan Mohapatra Odishi Research Centre, here. On this occasion Regional Manager, Rajeev Krishna delivered the brief key note about the bank as well as the region in the cultural evening. All staff members of regional office were present on the occasion.



Kia crosses 5L sales in less than three years

**Bhubaneswar:** Kia India, one of the fastest growing car makers in the country, sets another benchmark, surpassing the 5,00,000 domestic sales milestone in just under three operational years, making it the quickest carmaker in India to achieve the feat. Including exports, Kia India's cumulative despatches soar to 6,34,224 units from its Anantapur manufacturing facility. Backed by the strong performance of Carens, the company secured its last 1 lakh sales in just 4.5 months. With its strong performance in the Indian market, the company now contributes more than 6% to the global sales of Kia Corporation.



'DANCING TO RUSSIA'S TUNE'

EU tells members to cut gas usage by 15%

The disruptions have hampered Europe's efforts to refill gas storage before winter, raising the risk of rationing and another hit to fragile economic growth if Moscow further restricts flows in retaliation for Western sanctions over the war in Ukraine

REUTERS

**Brussels, July 20:** The European Union told member states Wednesday to cut gas usage by 15% until March as an emergency step after President Vladimir Putin warned that Russian supplies sent via the biggest pipeline to Europe could be reduced further and might even stop.

Deliveries via Nord Stream 1, which accounts for more than a third of Russian gas exports to the EU, are due to resume Thursday after a 10-day halt for annual

maintenance.

The head of Germany's network regulator, Klaus Mueller, said that initial nominations for gas flows via Nord Stream into Germany stood at 800 gigawatt hours (GWh) for July 21, adding this could still change by tomorrow.

July 10, the last full day before maintenance on the pipeline started, flows stood at around 698 GWh.

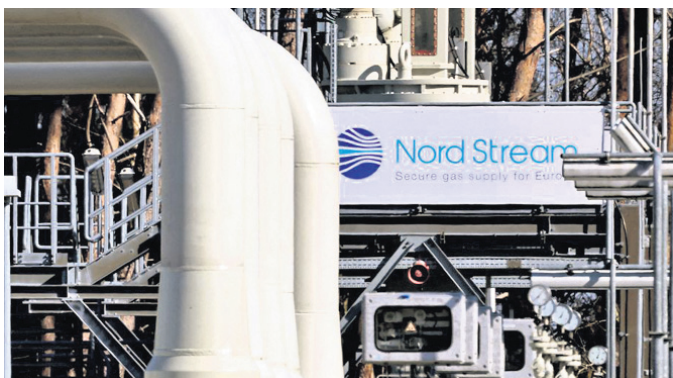
Supplies via the route had been reduced even before the maintenance outage in a dispute over sanctions, and may now be cut further, while flows via other routes,

such as Ukraine, have also fallen since Russia invaded its neighbour in February.

The European Commission proposed a voluntary target for all EU states to cut gas use by 15% from August to March, compared with their average consumption in the same period in 2016-2021.

The Commission proposal would enable Brussels to make the target mandatory in a supply emergency, if the EU declared a substantial risk of severe gas shortages.

The move, which needs the backing of EU states, will be discussed Friday



so ministers can approve it July 26.

"We believe that a full disruption is likely," one EU official said. "If we wait, it will be more expensive and it will mean us dancing to Russia's tune."

European politicians say Russia is using technical issues as a pretext to cut deliveries. The Kremlin

says Russia is a reliable energy supplier and blames sanctions for reduced flows.

Two Russian sources familiar with export plans said flows via Nord Stream 1 were expected to restart Thursday but below capacity of 160 million cubic metres (mcm) per day.

Russia is blackmailing us. Russia is using energy as a weapon. And therefore, in any event, whether it's a partial, major cut-off of Russian gas or a total cut-off of Russian gas, Europe needs to be ready

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | PRESIDENT, EU COMMISSION

Kremlin-controlled Gazprom cut gas exports via the route to 40% capacity in June, blaming delays to the return of a turbine that Siemens Energy was servicing in Canada. Gas prices have rocketed in volatile trade since the Ukraine crisis erupted. The front-month gas contract climbed above 160 euros per megawatt hour (MWh) Wednesday, 360% up on a year ago but below its March peak of 335 euros.



# Dope smear hits Indian CWG-bound contingent



Athletes S Dhanalakshmi, Aishwarya Babu test positive ahead of team’s departure for Birmingham

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 20: Two Commonwealth Games (CWG)-bound athletes, sprinter S Dhanalakshmi and triple jumper Aishwarya Babu, have tested positive for banned drugs, as dope shame struck Indian athletics just a few days ahead of the multi-sport event. Both have been ruled out of the upcoming July 28 to August 8 Birmingham Games and have been handed provisional suspensions.

The 24-year-old Dhanalakshmi returned positive for a banned steroid in a dope test conducted abroad by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) of World Athletics. “Dhanalakshmi tested positive in a dope test conducted by AIU. She will not go for Birmingham CWG,” a top source privy to the development told this agency Wednesday on conditions of anonymity.

Dhanalakshmi was named in the CWG team for 100m and the 4x100m relay team along with the likes of Dutee Chand, Hima Das and Srabani Nanda. Earlier, she was

## MODI WISHES LUCK

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted Wednesday the struggle, grit and determination of the CWG-bound athletes in a light-hearted interaction as he urged them to forget expectations and focus only on giving their best at the Birmingham multi-sport event. Among others who interacted with the PM on virtual mode were 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable, weightlifter Achinta Sheuli, women’s hockey player Salima Tete, cyclist David Beckham, para shot putter Sharmila, shuttlers PV Sindhu, Kidambi Srikanth and wrestler Sakshi Malik.

also named in the Indian team for the ongoing World Championships in Eugene, USA, but failed to make it to the showpiece, ostensibly due to visa problems.

Dhanalakshmi had recorded a personal best time of 22.89 seconds to win June 26 the 200m gold at the Qosanov Memorial Athletics Meet. She had become only the third Indian woman to run sub-

23s after national record holder Saraswati Saha (22.82s) and Hima Das (22.88s).

The 24-year-old Aishwarya’s dope sample, taken by the NADA officials during the National Inter-State Athletics Championships in Chennai last month, has also returned a positive result. She was named for the triple jump and long jump events in the Indian athletics team for the CWG.

“Triple jumper Aishwarya Babu’s sample, taken during the National Inter-State Championships, has returned positive,” the source said.

Aishwarya had smashed the triple jump national record with a stunning effort of 14.14m to emerge the undisputed star of the meet in Chennai. She had produced a 6.73m effort in the long jump qualification round during the Chennai event. That was the second longest personal best by an Indian woman long jumper after legendary Anju Bobby George (6.83m), the only Indian to win a medal at the World Championships.

# Indian shooters top medal’s tally at ISSF World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Changwon, July 20: India finished yet another ISSF Shooting World Cup campaign by topping the medal’s tally with a haul of 15 medals, including five gold, six silver and four bronze here Wednesday. On the final day of competitions, the Indian trio of Anish Bhanwala, Vijayveer Sidhu and Sameer won the silver in the men’s 25m Rapid Fire Pistol team event.

The Indians were all set to top the podium and, at one point, were leading 10-2 against the quality Czech side of Martin Podhrasky, Tomas Tehan, and Matej Rampula. However, they lost their nerve as they went down 15-17 to settle for second place.

India had won all five ISSF World Cup stages in 2019, one in the curtailed 2021 season and yet again this year in the first stage in Cairo. The next big assignment for the Indian rifle and pistol shooters will be the much-awaited ISSF World Championship scheduled in Cairo in October this year.

A good performance by the Indian shooters at the World Championships means they will have a chance to represent India at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris.

# Hashika, Apeksha steal show

3 new records on concluding day of Junior National Aquatic Championships

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: A total of 26 new records were established at the 48th Junior National Aquatic Championships that concluded Wednesday at the Biju Patnaik Swimming Pool inside the Kalinga Stadium here.

In the end, Karnataka won the overall championships with a total of 623 points.

The final day saw a brilliant efforts from Hashika Ramachandra of Karnataka who eclipsed the national record in the 400m medley for Group II girls by clocking 5:10.70s. The Karnataka lass bettered the previous record of 5:13.80s held by Apeksha Fernandes of Maharashtra. Sri Nithya Sagi of Telangana and Raghu Ramanujan of Maharashtra finished second and third in this event with a time of 5:26.33s and 5:27.49s respectively.

Maharashtra’s Apeksha, meanwhile, continued to remain in dominant form as she created a new national record in the 200m breaststroke in the Girls’ Group II segment. She clocked an impressive time of 2:40.36 seconds to improve on the previous record of 2:43.01s held by Saloni Dalal. Apeksha finished well ahead of S Lakshya and Saanvi S Rao, both



Swimmers of Karnataka pose Wednesday with their medals and trophies after winning the overall team championship

OP PHOTO

from Karnataka. While Lakshya clocked 2:45.03s to take the silver, Saanvi with a time of 2:46.49s settled for the bronze.

Another record of the day came in the 400m medley for Girls’ Group I segment. Shakthi S of Tamil Nadu smashed Sayani’s Ghosh’s record of 5:15.04s set in 2016. Shakthi touched the pads on 5:11.77 seconds to create the new record and also win the gold medal. She beat Delhi’s Bayya Sachdeva (5:14.87s) and Karnataka’s A Jedidah (5:22.81s).

The ‘Best Swimmer’ awards for Group I Boys went to Utkarsh Patil

of Karnataka and Devansh Parmar of Gujarat. Both finished with an impressive tally of three gold and one silver medal. In the Boys’ Group II category, the individual award went to Navaneeth Gowda of Karnataka who won five gold medals. In the Girls’ Group I segment, Apeksha took home the ‘Best Swimmer’.

She won five gold medals en route to creating five national records.

In water polo, Bengal emerged champions in the boys’ category while Kerala won the title in the girls’ segment.



YAROSLAVA MAHUCHIKH

## YAROSLAVA BAGS SILVER IN HIGH JUMP AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eugene, July 20: The second-place finish at the World Championships (WC) here was besides the point for Ukraine’s best high jumper, Yaroslava Mahuchikh.

“For me, it’s gold,” Mahuchikh said Tuesday night, as she looked down at her newly-won prize, one nobody would have been right to expect four months ago after she took a three-day car trip to flee her hometown Dnipro and get away

from the bombing.

Mahuchikh left shortly after her country came under siege by the Russian military. The war grinds on. Though thousands of civilians and soldiers are dying, Mahuchikh felt it was her duty to keep doing what she does best, if for no other reason than to give people back home something to be happy about. And, she said, to show ‘Ukraine is strong’.

“We will fight for our independence and for our territory,” Mahuchikh said. “And of course, finally, we will win.”

Mahuchikh came into the biggest high jump contest of the year as a favourite, because the three-time defending champion, Maria Lasitskene from Russia was not allowed to compete in the Athletics Worlds due to the war.

The Ukrainian finished behind Eleanor Patterson of Australia, who had one fewer miss than Mahuchikh at 2.02 metres (6 feet, 7 1/2 inches), which made the difference between first and second.

Still, this was a night to celebrate for Ukraine, and for Mahuchikh, who said she felt the warmth from

## NO MATCH WILL BE EASY, SAYS SURENDER

# India eye historic hockey gold at CWG

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 20: India men’s hockey team defender Surender Kumar has warned there will be no easy matches when the Commonwealth Games (CWG) commence July 28 in Birmingham. He also said that India will plan for one game at a time, but the team are determined to end the gold drought at the CWG and create history.

The 28-year-old defender informed that the team have been training at the SAI Centre here with special emphasis on physical fitness. “Our focus has been mainly on fitness, and we have been working a lot on this aspect of the game during training. We have also worked on getting stronger in other areas as well, especially in defence,” Surender informed.

India are placed in Pool B along with England, Canada, Wales, and Ghana at the Birmingham CWG. They open their campaign July 31 against Ghana. Surender said that the team will not be taking any of the teams lightly.

“We cannot take any match lightly. Every team will enter the tournament to win gold. Our current focus is on the first game against Ghana,” said the defender.

“We have been closely following their footage that we have received. Our coaches are making plans accordingly and we hope to execute the same on match day. There will be no easy teams in the



**The performance in FIH Pro League has been a confidence-booster for us. It will stand us in good stead at the CWG**

SURENDER KUMAR

tournament,” Surender added.

Surender said the good show in the FIH Pro League (India finished third) has been a confidence-booster: “Our target is to win a historic

gold at Birmingham. The Pro League experience will stand us in good stead. However, we will have to play well... that is the bottomline,” Surender asserted.

“The matches that we have played since the Tokyo Olympics have been quite good. We have played against strong teams and it has really benefited us. We were also able to recognise the areas where we need improve upon,” the 28-year-old added.

Surender also had words of advice for youngsters like striker Abhishek and defender Jugraj Singh, who will be playing their first CWG.

“We have told the players to not feel pressure of performing at the Commonwealth Games and to take them as normal matches. We have also been telling them that they have experience of playing against strong teams and hence, they are ready to perform in the competition,” the defender signed off.

## ENGLAND ALL-ROUNDER BIDS ADIEU TO ODI CRICKET

# TRIBUTES POUR IN FOR STOKES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Durham, July 20: Former England white-ball captain Eoin Morgan hailed Test skipper Ben Stokes as a ‘true leader’ and lamented the fact that the all-rounder is leaving the ODI format at the age of 31. Stokes played Tuesday his last ODI against South Africa. Stokes said that the ‘unsustainable’ workload by playing in all three formats in international cricket was too much for him.

“England will miss the all-round contribution of Stokes – on the field and in the changing room, possibly more so in the changing room. He is a true leader who

drags people with him and makes people better players by making them believe anything is possible. For him to retire from ODIs at just 31 years of age is incredibly sad,” Morgan said.

Meanwhile, England white ball captain Jos Buttler hailed Stokes as a ‘once-in-a-generation player’ after the game Tuesday in Durham.

“We will miss him (Stokes) and it’s bittersweet as an England fan. There’s a bit of sadness that Ben is no longer available in this form of the game but our loss in ODI cricket is certainly going to be England’s gain in Test cricket,” said Buttler.

**Stokes is a true leader who drags people with him and makes them better players with sheer self-belief**

EOIN MORGAN

“That’s his favoured format and his priority, especially now he’s captain, and I’m sure it will give him much more longevity in the purest form of the game,” added Buttler.

Another former captain Nasser Hussain said that Stokes retired from ODIs as the all-rounder was unable to keep up with the physical demands of multi-format cricket.

# Lakshya has unfinished business at Birmingham

Shuttler will settle for nothing else, but gold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 20: Lakshya Sen, the new poster boy of Indian badminton, has some unfinished business in Birmingham. Four months ago, it was in Birmingham that he became the first Indian man in 21 years to reach the finals of the All England Championship, only to see the gold medal slip out of his hands.

The 20-year-old from Almora will have another opportunity to dazzle in Arena Birmingham this year and he is keen to go all the way, albeit, in a different tournament – the Commonwealth Games (CWG), beginning July 28.

“I like playing in that hall, the conditions suit me. I have good memories there and I am very confident that I will do well this time too. This is also a big tournament, so I am looking forward to giving my best and winning a medal at the CWG,” Sen stated Wednesday.

“All the top 3-4 players have a good chance of winning the gold and I am not thinking about the colour of the medal. I just want to go there

and focus on one match at a time,” the shuttler added.

The year 2018 turned out to be important for the ‘wonder boy’ as he won the Youth Olympics mixed team gold in Buenos Aires, became the Asian Junior Champion in Jakarta and also secured a bronze at the World Junior Championships.

“Last time I watched CWG on TV when India won the gold. Before that, I also watched (Parupalli) Kashyap bhaiya win the gold (in 2014). But 2018 was a nice moment. I wanted to be there in that team,” Sen said.

“CWG is a prestigious event for India. I think it will be up there along with the World Championships in terms of priority. Everyone aspires to play the Olympics but before that, you try to get used to such multiple events and do well in them. So I have been thinking a lot about how as a team we can repeat the achievement we got last time. It will be a tough to win but I am looking forward to it. However, there are some strong teams like Malaysia and England,” Sen said.



**I don't want to put too much pressure on myself, I just want to go there and win one match at a time**

LAKSHYA SEN

## SHORT TAKES

### Carlsen gives up title

Mumbai: Magnus Carlsen, the five-time World Chess Champion, relinquished Wednesday his title. He announced that he will not defend the title he has held since 2013. Carlsen, considered by many as the greatest player to play the game who achieved the highest rating ever in chess, has conveyed his decision to FIDE, the sport’s world governing body, according to a report by ‘Chess24.com’. Carlsen won his first title in 2013 by beating Viswanathan Anand in Chennai. The 31-year-old Norwegian said he is ‘not retiring’ and vows ‘to be the best in the world, and not care about the World Championship’!

### Zimbabwe tour on

New Delhi: The Indian cricket team will travel to Zimbabwe for the first time in six years for a three-match ODI series, next month. The three ODIs will be played August 18, 20 and 22 in Harare, Zimbabwe Cricket announced Wednesday. KL Rahul who has recovered from his injury is expected to lead the Indian side. The series is part of the ICC Men’s Cricket World Cup Super League, a 13-team competition serving as the main route for direct qualification for the 50-over World Cup to be staged in India next year. Zimbabwe are currently placed 12th in the 13-team pool, with just three wins in 15 matches.

### Seif succeeds Batra

Lausanne (Switzerland): Egypt’s Seif Ahmed has been appointed as the acting president of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) following the resignation of Narinder Batra, the world body said in a statement Wednesday. The FIH said that a permanent successor to Batra is due to be elected in November. The appointment of Ahmed was announced following an FIH executive board meeting, which officially accepted Batra’s resignation. “Officially accepted the resignation of Dr Narinder Dhruv Batra, unanimously appointed FIH EB member and president of the African Hockey Federation Seif Ahmed (Egypt) as acting president until the next presidential elections,” the FIH said.

### Bumrah slips

Dubai: India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah dropped to second among bowlers while Hardik Pandya rose a whopping 13 places to eighth in the all-rounders’ list after his strong show against England in the latest ICC ODI rankings issued Wednesday. Bumrah missed the third ODI against England due to injury and it helped New Zealand’s Trent Boult to top the bowling chart with 704 rating points. The Indian speedster (703) is just one point behind. Pandya was rewarded with for his impressive show with bat and ball against England. He took six scalps and made a total of 100 runs. AGENCIES