



THANK YOU NOTE

Actor Sunny Leone says she is grateful to the Hindi film industry which has accepted her with open arms

LEISURE

P2



POLL RULES CHANGED

UK's Conservative Party modifies voting process to elect a new party leader and PM

INTERNATIONAL

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LOVEPREET IMPRESSES

Weightlifter Lovepreet Singh claims a bronze in men's 109kg making his CWG debut memorable

SPORTS

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SEEKING PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT



An all-party delegation of MLAs led by Odisha Assembly Speaker Bikram Keshari Arukha called on President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Wednesday in New Delhi and sought her support for the overall development of the state (Report P3)

Govt rejigs IAS officers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** In a minor reshuffle among senior level IAS officers, the Odisha government Wednesday appointed Bishnupada Sethi as the new principal secretary, Higher Education department. According to a notification issued by the General Administration & Public Grievance department, Sethi will also remain in additional charge of principal secretary, Commerce & Transport department.

IAS officer Aswathy S, who recently returned from central deputation, has been appointed the new School & Mass Education department secretary. Saswata Mishra's position as principal secretary, Higher Education department will end the day Sethi takes over, government officials informed.

On return from central deputation, Arabinda Kumar Padhee has been posted as principal secretary, Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment department. He will also continue in additional charge of the Fisheries & Animal Resources Development department, officials said.

The appointment of Sanjeev Chopra as Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture department will be terminated from the date Padhee assumes office.

Similarly, the government has posted 1997 batch officer Sanjay Kumar Singh as principal secretary, Rural Development (RD) department. In spite of the new responsibility, Singh has been allowed to remain in additional charge of the Information & Public Relation department, vice-chairman of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and MD of Bhubaneswar Smart City Ltd.

The additional appointment of Pradeep Kumar Jena in the Rural Development department shall stand terminated from the date Singh takes charge.

Sources also indicated that some more minor bureaucratic reshuffles are expected soon.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I know Zawahiri is killed, but we were terrorised by prices, not him

Oppn apprehensive of amended PMLA

■ 17 parties including the Congress and AAP have asked the Supreme Court to review its decision as the government is involved in 'political vendetta'

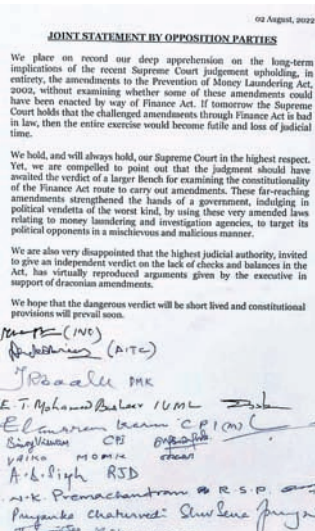
AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 3:** At least 17 Opposition parties, including the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and AAP expressed 'deep apprehensions' Wednesday about the long-term implications of the Supreme Court verdict, upholding the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) amendments, and strongly pitched for a review.

Among the parties that have signed the joint statement are the Congress, TMC, DMK, AAP, NCP, Samajwadi Party, Shiv Sena, CPI-M, CPI, IUML, RSP, MDMK, RJD and RLD.

In a joint statement, the 17 parties said the judgment will strengthen the hands of a government which 'indulges in political vendetta' to target its opponents in a 'mischievous and malicious manner' and expressed hope that this 'dangerous verdict will be short-lived'.

"We place on record our deep apprehension on the long-term implications of the recent Supreme Court judgment up-



holding, in entirety, the amendments to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, without examining whether some of these amendments could have been enacted by way of the Finance Act," the statement by the opposition parties said.

The parties said, 'they hold and will always hold' the Supreme Court in the highest respect.

"Yet, we are compelled to point out that the judgment should have awaited the verdict of a larger Bench for examining the constitutionality of the Finance Act route to carry out amendments," the statement said.

The opposition said if tomorrow the SC holds that the chal-

lenged amendments through Finance Act are bad in law, the entire exercise would become futile and lose judicial time.

"These far-reaching amendments have strengthened the hands of a government, indulging in the political vendetta of the worst kind, by using these very amended laws relating to money laundering and investigation agencies, to target its political opponents in a mischievous and malicious manner," the opposition parties alleged.

"We are also very disappointed that the highest judicial authority, invited to give an independent verdict on the lack of checks and balances in the Act, has virtually reproduced arguments given by the executive in support of draconian amendments. We hope that the dangerous verdict will be short-lived and constitutional provisions will prevail soon," the leaders added.

The top court upheld July 27 the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) powers relating to arrest, attachment of property, search and seizure under the PMLA.

Observing that it is a common experience world over that money laundering can be a 'threat' to the good functioning of a financial system, the apex court upheld the validity of certain provisions of the PMLA, some of which were contested by over 240 petitioners, including Congress MP Karti Chidambaram.

2 new ITIs to come up in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced Wednesday that two new state-run industrial training centres (ITIs) will soon be functional at Kuchinda in Sambalpur district and Patnagarh in Bolangir district. Patnaik pointed out that once the two new ITIs are functional it will be beneficial for the youth of these two tribal dominated areas.

The establishment of a new government ITI at Kuchinda will benefit youths of Kuchinda, Bamra and Jamankira blocks. A total of 240 students will be trained in various skills that have the potential for getting jobs and also scope for self-employment.

Similarly, the ITI at Patnagarh will also impart training to 240 students in four trades. Vocational

PRINCIPAL HELD

**Baripada:** Police detained Tuesday the principal of a private ITI College under Kuliana police station in Mayurbhanj district after some students alleged misbehaviour and attack by his brother. The incident occurred Tuesday following which the students lodged a complaint at the district collector's office Wednesday. The students alleged that the principal's brother had beaten them up. Following the complaint, police detained Satyaban Giri while his brother Trilochan is absconding.

training in addition to enhancing the skills of the block's youths will provide them with opportunities for employment and self-employment.

Out of the 314 blocks in Odisha, 241 have government/private ITIs.

Govt acts tough to end ragging

In the last two years, Odisha has registered 60 cases of ragging, one of the highest in India with two deaths reported in April and July

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** Odisha government's Higher Education department directed the universities and colleges in the state to implement strict measures to prevent ragging as per UGC regulations. Secretary of the Higher Education department, Saswat Mishra wrote a letter Wednesday to vice-chancellors of all universities and principals of all colleges on curbing the menace of ragging. The regulations were first issued by the UGC in 2009 and since then have been modified three times.

In the a letter Mishra said, "As per



the 2nd Amendment of the above-said UGC Regulations, it is compulsory for each student and his/her parent/guardian to submit an on-line undertaking each academic year in either of the two designated websites namely (www.antiragging.in) and (www.amanmovement.org) that they will not be as-

sociated with ragging.

In the letter, educational institutions have been directed to file FIRs with the local police station for every established case of ragging. They have also been asked to take action promptly against students found guilty of ragging or involved in abetment of ragging.

Mishra in the letter said that efforts should be made to create in students the ability to understand and share the feelings of one another. Emotional Quotient (EQ) is to be developed in them which will in turn help them to manage their own emotions in a positive way.

Contd...P4

Al-Zawahiri's balcony visits led to his death

INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES FOUND THAT THE AL-QAEDA LEADER NEVER LEFT THE SAFE HOUSE, BUT SPENT A LOT OF TIME ON ITS VERANDAH WHILE READING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York, August 3:** Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri liked to read alone on the balcony of his Kabul safe house for lengthy periods, a 'pattern-of-life routine' that eventually gave American intelligence agencies the chance to carry out a precision strike that killed one of the world's most wanted terrorists, a report in 'The New York Times' said Tuesday. Zawahiri was killed in a US drone strike Saturday.

"Intelligence officers made a crucial discovery after tracking Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaeda, to Kabul, Afghanistan: He liked to read alone on the balcony of his safe house early in the morning,"



The balcony of the house where Ayman al-Zawahiri was standing when he was killed by a drone attack

'The New York Times' (NYT) said in a report titled 'How the CIA tracked the leader of Al-Qaeda'. The report said that analysts search

for 'pattern-of-life intelligence', which means any habit the CIA can exploit to hunt down and target terrorists. "In al-Zawahiri's case, his long bal-

cony visits gave the agency an opportunity for a clear missile shot that could avoid collateral damage," it informed. Once intelligence agencies confirmed the location of Zawahiri's safe house, 'the CIA followed the playbook it wrote during the hunt for (Osama) Bin Laden. The agency built a model of the site and sought to learn everything about it'.

"Analysts eventually identified a figure who lingered on the balcony reading, but never left the house, as al-Zawahiri," the NYT report said. Biden authorised July 25 the CIA to conduct the airstrike 'when the opportunity presented itself'.

"Sunday morning (US time Saturday evening) in Kabul, the opportunity came. A drone flown by

the CIA found al-Zawahiri on his balcony. The agency operatives fired the missile, ending a more than two-decade-long hunt," the report said.

A 'key insight that had emerged about Zawahiri's pattern of life was that 'he was never seen leaving the house and only seemed to get fresh air by standing on a balcony on an upper floor. He remained on the balcony for extended periods, which gave the CIA a good chance to target him'.

The Al-Qaeda leader was killed by a 'Hellfire' missile, which is 'designed to kill a single person'.

Biden was briefed July 1 by CIA director William Burns and he was shown a model of the house after which he gave the go ahead.

SHORT TAKES

Ranjit Rath appointed as CMD of Oil India

**NEW DELHI:** Ranjit Rath has taken over as the new CMD of India's second-largest state-run oil and gas producer, Oil India Ltd. A geoscientist, Rath is an alumnus of IIT Bombay, IIT Kharagpur and Utkal University and took over the charge August 2, the company said in a statement Wednesday. Rath, 50, previously was CMD of Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd (MECL) and was selected for the top job at Oil India Ltd by the government headhunter in March. He replaces Sushil Chandra Mishra who superannuated June 30. Rath will be among the youngest to have occupied the corner office at a public sector unit.

Woman found dead in Nayapalli house

**BHUBANESWAR:** A woman identified as Ranjita Sahoo of Choudwar locality in Cuttack was found hanging Wednesday at a rented house in Nayapalli locality of the Odisha capital. Sources said she was working for a private company. Neighbours initially spotted the body hanging from a ceiling fan with a dupatta and informed police. Locals informed that Ranjita was staying in the rented place for five months and was scheduled to vacate it at the end of August. They also alleged that she was being 'harassed' by a youth for the past few weeks. Police have launched a probe into the incident and are trying to ascertain why the deceased took such a drastic step.



leisure

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ARIES You will be inclined towards deep introspection. You will realise that it is important to understand your inner self. However, Ganesha says spontaneity is equally vital, and playing with children is a very good way to be spontaneous.

TAURUS This is a great day for students and scholars, declares Ganesha. If you are pursuing higher studies or professional courses you will feel pleased and confident about the progress you are making. Do not, however, expect the atmosphere, or the arrangements to be the way you expect them to be.

GEMINI You will attempt to be a part of your elders' or your friend's sorrows and try to lighten their burdens. Your kind and courteous nature, as well as your joviality will cheer them up. The later half of the day will be filled with entertainment and happiness.

CANCER A very hectic day for you! Today, you may have too much work to do, and taking even a coffee break may not remain an option. You will be forthright in dealing with issues and nothing will escape your sharp observation.

LEO The tiny voice inside us always tells us a lot of things. If only we were more in sync with ourselves, we could avoid so many troubles, says a retrospective Ganesha. Well, today it seems you are going to have no qualms in listening to your inner voice as you strive for excellence in all your efforts.

VIRGO You don't need to be one of the Mafia to realise the importance of family, says Ganesha. Your better half will try spicing up the relationship in the afternoon some time. So keep fuelling the fires of love – a wildfire isn't always bad now, is it?

LIBRA There are indications that today, you may want to take a break from your humdrum routine in order to recharge your batteries. It is an essential change that we all need from time to time, says Ganesha. Finances may improve sometime later in the day. Children, if any, may be a source of joy in the afternoon.

SCORPIO Life's not too slow nor too fast: you are going steady and strong, feels Ganesha. On the career front, simply grin and bear it all. Workplace efficiency will improve today. At home, you will be happy and content and more importantly – at peace, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS Chances are that you shall experiment with your Chi today. Afternoon promises to have an undercurrent of excitement. You will charge up the work environment with your dynamism. Evening will be passionate as your charm works its way to win over many a sweetheart, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN A couple of fascinating developments on the family front will fill the air with excitement, and will keep you pleasantly occupied throughout the day, says Ganesha. Your outstanding efforts at work will be rewarded adequately, but you will need to be extra careful while executing plans as you may commit mistakes that will do irreparable damage.

AQUARIUS It is not everyday that work is rewarding. So, if your boss praises you, feel good about it. You may even begin something new. A joint venture? Go ahead, says Ganesha. You are exceptionally talented. There is no need to blow your own trumpet, your work will speak for itself.

PISCES A day wherein you will be busy socialising in the company of your near and dear ones, or childhood buddies. Refurbishing and refurbishing your home is also likely to be on the agenda. You may find yourself visiting a holy place as well, says Ganesha.



DEV PATEL RISKS LIFE TRYING TO STOP VIOLENT KNIFE FIGHT

British actor of Indian origin Dev Patel and his friends broke up a knife fight outside a convenience store in Adelaide, Australia. Acting on his natural instinct, he managed to de-escalate the situation where a man was stabbed by a woman on his chest, a representative of the actor has confirmed.

JOEY KING: HAVE BECOME COMFORTABLE IN MY SKIN

Known globally for her smash hit Netflix rom-com franchise *The Kissing Booth*, actress Joey King says she is now comfortable in her skin. "I'm becoming more comfortable in my own skin and making choices that make me happy and are exciting," said King in a virtual interview.



JANHVI NOT KEEN TO STAR OPPOSITE KHANS

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor has said that she definitely wants to work with Salman Khan, Aamir Khan and Shah Rukh Khan but she cannot be their heroine.

In a recent interview, when asked if she would like to work with the Khans, the Dhadak actress said, "Which actor would not like to work with them? But it would be a little odd to star opposite them."

Janhvi said she would definitely love to work with all three Khans but she does not think she can be their heroine, it would be weird to do so. Explaining her point, she said that

she is quite young and that is the reason why she cannot be their heroine.

Janhvi is 25, while the three Khans are 27 to 28 years older than her. Besides, her mum Sridevi somehow acted in films opposite all three Khans. She added that she has met all three Khans who look young and youthful while their work is so brilliant that one does not even feel that they are old.

Janhvi, however, said she would look good with Varun Dhawan or Ranbir Kapoor on-screen.

AGENCIES



Madhubala to come alive on screen soon

Mumbai: Producer Tutu Sharma, who has produced over 25 films, has set his eyes on producing a biopic on yesteryear's star Madhubala.

The movie, based on a book, will showcase Madhubala's rollercoaster life journey.

Her iconic role as Anarkali in *Mughal-e-Azam* was described by critics as one of the finest performances in Indian cinematic history.

Her name is synonymous with Hindi cinema and beauty and actresses till date follow her method of acting and go over her performances so as to learn and grow. Sharma said: "Right now it's too early to give more information. I'm honoured to present this legendary life story of one of my all time favourite performers. I am looking forward to making this the magnum opus it deserves."

Madhubala was the screen name of Mumtaz Jehan Begum Dehlavi. In a career spanning two decades, she acted in around 60 movies and earned a reputation of one of the highest earning film stars of her time in India. She died tragically young, at just 36, in 1969.

IANIS

7th Deomali National Theatre fest concludes



A scene from Odia play Shaheed Laxman Nayak

Event's creative director Sourav Gupta claims that it is the only national level theatre festival of undivided Koraput district

KORAPUT: The 7th Deomali National Theatre festival, a three-day cultural extravaganza organised by Koraput-based theatre troupe Nandanik, came to an end here at Municipal Auditorium, Wednesday.

Two plays - *Target* in Hindi was performed by Titli Foundation, Rourkela and *Kouto* in Bangla was staged by Bisargo Theatre, West Bengal. Written by Shibankar Chakrabarty and directed by Pallav Chatterjee *Target* dealt with Left extremism while the second play written by Mohit Chattopadhyay and directed by Dwaipayan explored the existential crisis of human beings in an experimental theatre pattern.

Earlier, the troupe, Monday, arranged a lecture on *Ek Patriya Natya Yatra-Lekhan se Manchana* by Padma Shri Shekhar Sen, a singer-actor of international repute.

The festival was inaugurated Tuesday in the presence of Koraput Collector Abdul Akhtar; Municipality chairman Lait Ranjan Sethy, eminent actress Bhaswati Basu and veteran theatre practitioner Umakant Das.

Two Odia plays - *Shahid Laxman Nayak* (written by Gauriprasad Rath and directed by Saumendra Swain) and *Takkhyaka* (written by Manoj Mitra and directed by Sourav Gupta) were staged by Nandanik in the evening. The first play was dedicated to the life & work of Laxman Nayak, tribal martyr from undivided Koraput while the second play was based on a story from Mahabharata themed on the struggle between life & death.

A mono action, *Kiss of Love*, was performed by A T Sunny, a PhD research scholar from Central University of Odisha.

Sourav Gupta, the Creative Director of the event, informed that the event is the only national level festival in undivided Koraput district.

Asim Basu Memorial Award 2022, a mark of encouragement to young theatre artists of Koraput, was presented to Ajay Edding, a theatre artist of Nandanik from Semiliguda by actress Basu. The award is jointly presented every year by Nandanik in association with Asim Basu Foundation, Bhubaneswar in memory of late Asim Basu, Odisha's theatre icon, since 2018.

The people of Koraput gathered in large numbers to watch the plays in the newly constructed air conditioned auditorium by Koraput Municipality.

PNN

SUNNY: GRATEFUL THAT B-TOWN ACCEPTED ME WITH OPEN ARMS

Mumbai: It has been a 10-year-long journey in Hindi cinema for Sunny Leone, who feels grateful that Hindi film industry has accepted her with open arms and that career in cinema reiterates her faith in the fact that hard work always yields result.

The actress began her career with *Jism 2* after a stint in *Bigg Boss Season 5*. She

then starred in the popular number *Laila* alongside Shah Rukh Khan in *Raees*.

Talking about her journey, the actress said: "When my husband Daniel Weber and I first started working, we borrowed money from the banks to start our first company and we turned that into a successful venture. My journey in cinema reiterates my faith in

the fact that hard work always yields results. I love my life and job."

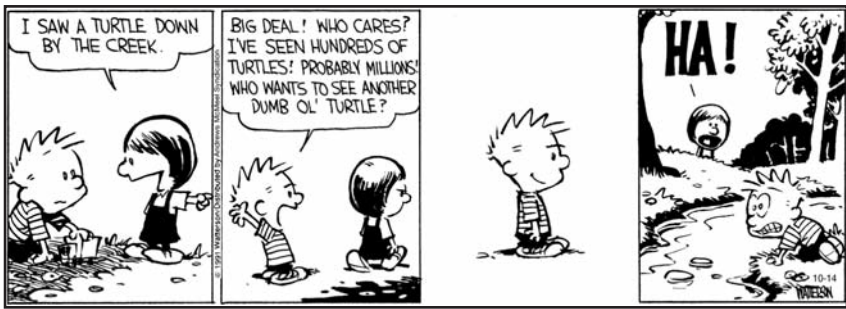
"I have a wonderful family, a great partner in Daniel, three beautiful children, a lovely home and a career that I have worked hard to put together. I am grateful that B-town accepted me with open arms," concluded Leone.

IANIS

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

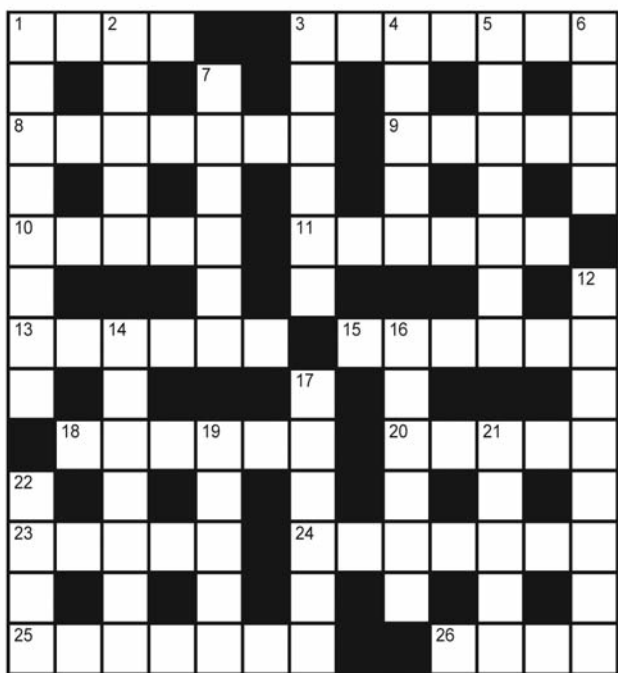


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Smoke a cigarette
- 3 City on the Loire
- 8 Flipper?
- 9 Chopper part
- 10 Fussbudget
- 11 "Scram!" (2,4)
- 13 Primroses
- 15 Savage
- 18 Entertains
- 20 Whale finder
- 23 Scale

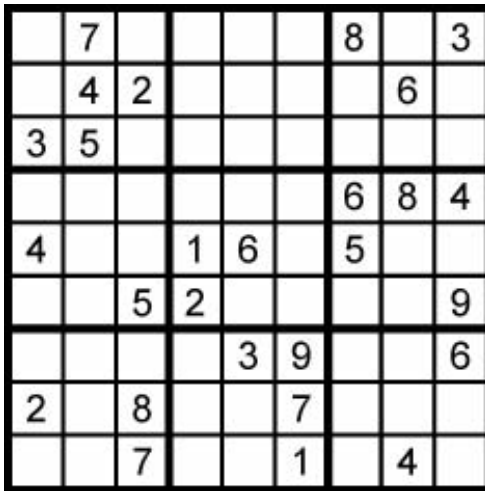
Down

- 1 Check register
- 2 Criminal offense
- 3 Juice source
- 4 Tough, durable wood
- 5 Tackle
- 24 Using an iron, maybe
- 25 Constrict
- 26 Skin problem

- 6 Belgrade native
- 7 Make more cheerful (4,2)
- 12 "I'm game" (3,5)
- 14 Furry-footed rodent
- 16 Outcome
- 17 Polygonal shape
- 19 Wooden shoe
- 21 In need of a muffler
- 22 Aberdeen native

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.

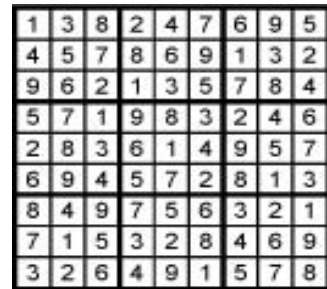


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





**NOBLE INITIATIVE**

Cuttack DCP Pinak Mishra speaks during the inauguration of voluntary CCTV installation drive in the Silver City, Wednesday

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	58,44,98,294	55,51,45,878	64,24,381
India	4,40,67,144	4,34,03,610	5,26,477
Odisha	13,15,603	13,00,951	9,142



Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Aswini Kumar Patra at the inaugural occasion of annual art exhibition of BK College of Art & Crafts organised at Kalinga Art Gallery in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

ARTIFICIAL HOCKEY TURF ON CARDS IN SAMBALPUR DIST

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, August 3:** Budding hockey players of Sambalpur district will be able to hone their skills on an artificial turf soon as the much-awaited sports infrastructure is set to see the light of the day.

The Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) has been entrusted with the work at the hockey ground in tribal-dominated Jujumura block, around 25 km from Sambalpur city.

IDCO divisional head Bidhan Majhi said the new artificial turf had already been brought to Jujumura and work on the base

for laying of the synthetic grass had also been completed.

“Technical experts from Germany will check the base and the turf will be laid after they give a nod. The ground will be ready by the end of this month,” Majhi said.

He said the estimated budget of the project was around Rs 5.30 crore. A turf, which was removed from the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, was brought to Sambalpur in 2018 for relaying at Jujumura.

However, the decision to relay the old turf was changed and new artificial turf was brought for the ground of the Jujumura High School, which is spread over 4.69 acres.

BJD seeks more central universities in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, August 3:** The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Wednesday supported the Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2022 in the Lok Sabha and demanded establishment of more central universities in Odisha.

BJD MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu said that there is no uniformity in setting up of central universities in states. “We’ve to examine the criteria for setting up of central universities in the states. There is no uniformity in setting up of such universities as some small states have more number of central universities as compared to the bigger ones. It has been en-

couraging migration from one state to other. In order to check such migration, there’s a need to have policy for setting up of central universities,” Sahu said.

The BJD MP said Odisha has only one central university—at Koraput. “Crunch of professors and assistant professors has been plaguing the varsity. Its vice-chancellor also stays at Bhubaneswar instead of Koraput,” he said.

“We’ve a large number of youth but only one central university. As a result, only a small number of students will be benefitted from

this university. Therefore, I demand the Union Minister to set up more central universities in Odisha so that the objectives of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya are achieved and the youth of Odisha can equally contribute to the nation building,” Sahu said.

The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2022 seeks to convert the National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTU), a deemed-to-be university, into the Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, an autonomous Central university.



Odisha Assembly delegation calls on President Murmu

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** A delegation of Odisha MLAs, led by Speaker Bikram Keshari Arukha, called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi Wednesday.

As many as 24 MLAs, including the Speaker, Parliamentary Affairs and Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari, Revenue Minister Pramila Mallick, government chief whip Prasant Muduli and BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi met Murmu, who hails from Mayurbhanj district.

“The all-party committee of the Odisha Assembly met the President Wednesday. It was the happiest moment for all of us. We’ve handed over her the resolution paper, which was passed earlier in the Assembly thanking her,” said Arukha after meeting the President in New Delhi.

On behalf of the Odisha Assembly, the delegation congratulated and felicitated Murmu. The President has thanked the people of Odisha and assured to extend necessary support for the develop-



ment of Odisha, under the purview constitutional provisions, said the Speaker.

Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati said he has presented a Kotpad handloom saree. Murmu thanked Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for supporting her in the Presidential election.

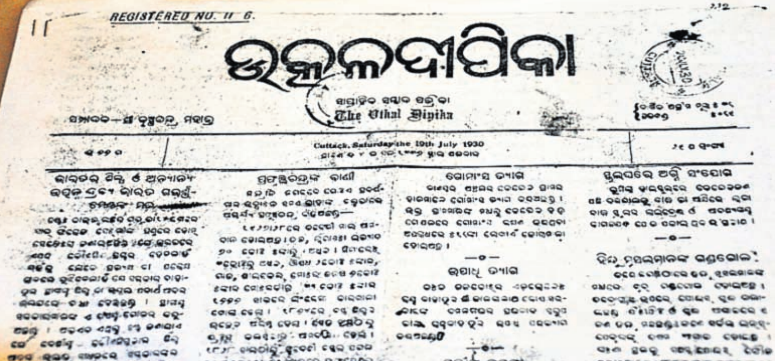
BJP legislator Bishnupada Sethi said he has presented his own written poem on Murmu’s journey from Rairangpur town of Odisha to Raisina hill. “She

(Murmu) asked me to read out the first and last stanza of the poem,” he said.

The MLAs spent a quality time in the Rashtrapati Bhavan visiting various halls, galleries and Mughal Gardens. They have also clicked a group picture with the President.

Odisha Assembly had passed a unanimous resolution July 25 congratulating Murmu for assuming the top constitutional post of the country.

ODIA JOURNALISM DAY ‘Impartial journalism is indispensable to healthy democracy’



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** As Odisha celebrates Odia Journalism Day Thursday (August 4), the day when the first Odia newspaper ‘Utkala Deepika’ was launched by Gourishankar Ray and Babu Bichitrananda Das in 1866, Orissa POST speaks to a few senior journalists and academicians on the current state of journalism in Odisha.

Senior journalist Pradip Das says, journalism is not being given enough importance by the Education department and academicians.

“We should focus on developing journalism education as the current classroom teaching is not enough to make one a journalist in true sense,” asserts Das.

Senior scribe Ramakanta Mahananda was of the opinion that pay disparity has been plaguing the profession.

“Only a few newspapers in Odisha are paying decently to the journalists. This disparity has been hindering the development of Odia journalism. It’s high time for addressing

the issue,” Mahananda added.

According to noted journalist Rabi Das, currently, journalism in Odisha is controlled by two political parties—BJD and BJP.

“Nowadays, anyone can be a journalist, thanks to the penetration of digital media. But one should remember that true and unbiased journalism is indispensable to healthy democracy,” Das said.

Ravenshaw University Journalism and Mass Communication Assistant Professor Jayant Swain highlighted the contribution of Odia journalism to the state. “From drought to development, Odia newspapers have contributed a lot with utmost care and empathy. Media, especially the print, has served its best in feeding readers multiple data with creativity. It has certainly strengthened our culture and heritage. Media while reporting issues and best practices have never neglected to draw inspiration from our rich literature,” he said.

Snigdha Mohanty, a journalism student, said, “Newspapers play a big role in times of humanitarian disaster. Furthermore, newspapers play a key role in Odisha’s social and political life. Time and again, it is the newspaper that brought the hardship of the common man to the attention of the administration.”

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# Scanty rainfall shrinks Odisha's paddy cultivation by 20 per cent



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** The plight of a large number of farmers in Odisha is miserable due to a delayed monsoon and poor rainfall in June and in July, which leads to a 20 per cent decline in paddy cultivation across the state, officials said Wednesday.

Transplanting and broadcasting of paddy is going on along with raising of nurseries in around 16 lakh hectares of land during the current kharif season against 20 lakh hectares by August 1 last year, according to a senior official in the Directorate of Agriculture and Food Production.

"The deviation is 20 per cent," he said. However, the IMD in its recent forecast said that many parts of Odisha will receive good rainfall from August 5 onwards.

"We have two more months in the kharif season and the target is likely to be achieved if good rainfall occurs in August," he said.

Admitting that scanty rainfall in June adversely affected paddy cultivation in parts of the state, the official said that the situation has slightly improved in July and if IMD's prediction of good rainfall for August comes true, the paddy cultivation will survive.

The state experienced 26 per cent excess rainfall in May while it received 43 per cent less rain in June. The actual rainfall in June was 98.6 mm this time against the average normal of 173.2 mm.

However, the situation improved slightly in July, the Meteorological Centre here said. "Seasonal cumulative rainfall realized between June 1 to August 3 is 522.9 mm against its normal value of 586.3 mm," the Met Centre said.

During the period, only two districts (Boudh and Kandhamal) received excess rainfall while seven districts (Bhadrak, Mayurbhanj, Sundergarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Bolangir and Kalahandi) recorded deficient rainfall.

The highest deficiency of rainfall was recorded in tribal-dominated Sundergarh district at minus 42 per cent followed by Sambalpur (-32 per cent), Bhadrak and Jharsuguda (-23 per cent each), Bolangir (-22 per cent) and Kalahandi (-21 per cent) till August 3, the met office said.

"The remaining 21 districts have received normal rainfall and paddy cultivation activities are going on smoothly there," the official said.

However, the ground realities appear to be different as, farmers

"Above 70 per cent of agricultural fields in Odisha do not have irrigation facilities for which the farmers depend on rainwater," said Akshya Kumar, the state convenor of Nabanirman Krushak Sangathan

said, transplantation of paddy saplings has been affected due to inadequate rainfall.

"Above 70 per cent of agricultural fields in Odisha do not have irrigation facilities for which the farmers depend on rainwater," said Akshya Kumar, the state convenor of Nabanirman Krushak Sangathan, an organisation of peasants.

"Though the paddy saplings are ready, we are unable to transplant them due to lack of water in agricultural fields," said Susant Samal, a farmer in Patkura area in Kendrapara district.

Even as Kendrapara recorded only minus 9 per cent deficient rainfall, the farmers face difficulties as traditional irrigation channels are blocked and there is no water in canals, farmers said.

Similar is the fate of farmers in almost all the coastal districts and also in Sundergarh, Sambalpur and Mayurbhanj.

According to agriculture scientist Sandip Patnaik, Odisha for some years has been witnessing a different climate as most of the rain comes in the month of September and October instead of the normal monsoon months of July and August.

## ESSENTIAL DEMANDS



Members of Utkal Mahila Samiti affiliated to NFIW staged a protest rally for their various demands at Master Canteen in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

# Congress demo over price rise August 5

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** In protest against the price rise of essential commodities, Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) would join the nationwide protest call given by the party and gherao the Raj Bhawan here August 5 next.

Addressing a press conference here Wednesday, OPCC president Sarat Pattanayak said hundreds of party activists will gherao the Raj Bhawan in protest against rise in prices of essential commodities, hike in prices of petrol, diesel, cooking gas, unemployment, Agnipath scheme and imposition

of GST on food items like molasses, flattened rice and pressed rice.

He said in 2014 the Prime Minister had promised 'achhe din' to people but instead people are leading a miserable life now.

The price of cooking gas per cylinder has increased from Rs 410 in 2014 to Rs 1080, and the price of petrol and diesel crossed Rs 100 per litre, he said.

Pattanayak alleged that the Centre has collected over Rs 25.50 lakh crore revenue from oil by exploiting the people. The state government is also collecting hundreds of crores of revenue by imposing VAT on petrol and diesel.

**OPCC president Sarat Pattanayak said party activists will gherao the Raj Bhawan in protest against rise in prices of essential commodities, including petrol & diesel**

Though the prices of essential commodities have gone up neither the Central government nor the state government has taken any step to check the price rise, said the Congress leader.

The Centre has imposed 5 per

cent GST on general food items. However, unfortunately, the BJD government did not oppose it even once, he added.

Patnaik said the Congress workers would gherao the offices of the collectors or additional district magistrate across the state on coming August 5.

Commenting on this, the BJD said price hike is a central subject and the state government is taking all steps to protect the interest of 4.5 crore Odia people. On the other hand, a BJP leader said there will be no impact of the protest as people have faith in the Modi government, which will decently control inflation.

# HC seeks Centre's reply on children with DMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, August 3:** The Orissa High Court has sought a response from the Centre on what arrangement can be put in place to immediately address the needs of 15 children suffering from Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), an official said Wednesday.

While hearing a PIL filed by lawyer Anshuman Ray, a division bench of the HC comprising Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice RK Pattanaik Tuesday posted the next hearing for September 15 this year.

Ray, in the PIL, has sought direction to the state government to provide Antisense Oligonucleotide (AON) therapy which costs Rs 40 lakh to 50 lakh annually to the 15 children under the Biju



**Swasthya Kalyan Yojana.**

Children suffering from DMD, a genetic disorder, have progressive muscle degeneration and weakness.

Children with DMD typically lose the ability to walk when they reach 8 to 12 years of age and need wheelchairs to get around, it was learnt.

# Satkosia among 10 newly added Ramsar wetlands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** Ten more Indian sites, including Satkosia in Odisha's Angul, have entered the Ramsar list, taking the number of wetlands of international importance in the country to 64, the Union Environment Ministry said Wednesday.

The Ramsar list aims at "developing and maintaining an international network of wetlands, which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life, through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits".

The 10 new sites - six in Tamil Nadu and one each in Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha - cover an area of 12,50,361



hectares in the country.

The new Indian wetlands which have bagged the coveted tag are Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary, Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve, Vembannur Wetland Complex, Vellore Bird Sanctuary, Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary and Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu; Satkosia Gorge in Odisha; Nanda Lake in Goa; Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Karnataka; and Sirpur Wetland

in Madhya Pradesh.

"The designation of these sites would help in conservation and management of wetlands and wise use of their resources," the environment ministry said in a statement. India is one of the contracting parties to the Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. New Delhi signed it on February 1, 1982.

Satkosia spreads along the magnificent gorge over the river Mahanadi in Odisha. Established in 1976 as a wildlife sanctuary, Satkosia is the meeting point of two biogeographic regions of India: the Deccan Peninsula and the Eastern Ghats. India is aiming at getting a Ramsar tag for 75 of its wetlands on the 75th year of its independence, according to officials.

# Bhub-Jeypore trial flight takes off from BPIA

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 3:** Ahead of commencement of commercial flights between two Odisha cities, an IndiaOne Air flight Wednesday took off from Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here as part of trial flight from the City to Jeypore.

As per sources, the flight took off from the Capital city with only the aircraft staffers onboard at 10:15am and landed at Jeypore by 11:00am. The flight then returned from Jeypore to Bhubaneswar at 12:00pm, informed BPIA Director Prasanna Pradhan.

It can be mentioned that earlier a three-member team of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had reviewed the feasibility of the flight operations between Jeypore and

Bhubaneswar and gave the green signal. As a result, a 9-seater airline commenced its trial flight. The Jeypore airstrip will be the third to get the civil aviation airport tag in the state after Bhubaneswar and Jharsuguda.

Meanwhile, IndiaOne Air Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Arun Kumar Singh had said, "The first flight will fly directly from Bhubaneswar to Jeypore and Jeypore to Vishakhapatnam. After stabilisation of operations, we will commence services from Utkela."

Discussing about the ticket rates Singh added, "Initially, we will come up with some promotional schemes and the passengers can enjoy air travel within Rs 500-1000. However, the ticket rates depend on inflation, so I can't quote the price right now. But, the price will be affordable for all."

# Govt gets tough to prevent ragging

Continued from P1

In the letter all the institutions have been asked to form an anti-ragging team comprising three to four teachers.

The contacts of the team members should be made available to all students.

The letter said that the squad members should always be alert and conduct surprise visits to hostels and other places vulnerable to incidents of ragging.

They should inform the head of the institution cases of ragging, following which the latter will initiate disciplinary action.

The letter said that the anti-ragging squad shall also conduct discreet random survey amongst fresh students every fortnight during the first three months of the academic year to verify whether the institution is indeed 'free' of ragging or not.

# Internet usage reveals a lot about global sleep patterns

Everyone sleeps, but we have few tools for measuring the sleep the world is getting at scale. AI and sleep could help us study global shocks in near-real time.

It's not unusual to hear people complaining about tiredness multiple times a day, but why? Sleep is fundamental to human health, but because it's so private, there are few tools for measuring how much sleep everyone is getting at scale. Existing methods use time diaries, sleep surveys, sleep laboratories or, more recently, wearable technology to measure sleep. But none of these approaches is ready to tackle a global sleep-loss pandemic.

A Monash University study asked a different question: could the massive data we all generate when connecting to and disconnecting from the internet help researchers understand sleep?

As internet addresses go online and offline through the day, they track the daily human behavioural cycle: a trough in the early hours, followed by rising activity through

the day to a peak in the evening, and then a sharp drop-off overnight.

And yet, no two cycles are the same: day of the week matters (heading downtown Friday night depresses internet activity), stay-at-home orders certainly matter (we go online earlier and longer), and even dips in activity during prayer times during Ramadan are visible in traditionally Muslim regions.

The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) asks Americans about their previous day's activities, including when they woke up and when they went to sleep. The Monash study used survey data for 81 US cities over a six-year period to calculate when residents slept and woke up each year, then used internet activity-data to make the same calculation.

The researchers then trained a machine-learning algorithm to track how changes in internet use over a day relate to the average waking and sleeping times in each city. When asked to predict the expected average sleep duration for



AS INTERNET ADDRESSES GO ONLINE AND OFFLINE THROUGH THE DAY, THEY TRACK THE DAILY HUMAN BEHAVIOURAL CYCLE: A TROUGH IN THE EARLY HOURS, FOLLOWED BY RISING ACTIVITY THROUGH THE DAY TO A PEAK IN THE EVENING, AND THEN A SHARP DROP-OFF OVERNIGHT

a city the algorithm had never seen before, it was accurate to within 20 minutes. When estimating the average morning wake-up time, it was accurate to within nine minutes.

The researchers repeated this result when using daily electricity-demand data instead of internet data to predict sleep. But there's something fundamentally different

about internet-activity measurements compared to electricity-demand data: global availability. The US has a highly functioning electricity bureaucracy, but not all countries do. Internet-activity measurement, on the other hand, can be remotely and consistently measured for any internet-connected device on the planet. This suggests the amount of sleep we are collecting

tively getting can be estimated for any (internet-connected) city on the planet in near real time.

This kind of research has a huge range of applications, including impact mapping during natural disasters, documenting internet shutdowns associated with human-rights violations, and even providing internet-availability assessments during the Russo-Ukrainian war.

Whether this approach can be applied globally remains to be seen. The technology and sleep habits of Americans may be unique. If so, an Artificial Intelligence (AI) model that learns the internet-sleep association in the US will fall down outside its borders. Another potential pitfall is internet patterns are likely affected by the technology mix at play - the internet signature of a 'mobile-first' continent such as Africa could be vastly different to that of North America, which relies heavily on fixed broadband internet.

Like so many challenges in the

application of AI to health sciences, the answer to both hurdles lies with widening the training pool for the model. The more measurements researchers have from traditional sleep studies, in more countries, cultures and technology contexts, the more confidence they can have in any model prediction.

Should a global sleep observatory (from internet measurements) arise, population health and sleep scientists will perhaps gain the most.

If major shifts in internet use reveal similar changes in sleep patterns, researchers may flock to the field and use more precise tools to investigate further. Likewise, significant global shocks such as pandemics and recessions can be studied in near real time for their impact on our sleep, prompting the right public health messaging around mental health and sleep, better technology and app design, and timely education around the importance of sleep in times of stress.

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# ITDA team visits Juang village, assures steps

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, August 3:** A day after Orissa POST highlighted the plight of Juang tribals living in Bayapandadhar village under Banspal block of Keonjhar district, a team of officials from Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) visited the village and interacted with the people about their problems.

Project administrator Tapan Kumar Nayak, the special officer, an assistant engineer and the project coordinator of ITDA looked into the issues of the primitive Juang tribals.

The report appeared in this newspaper mentioned about unhealthy living conditions, consumption of spurious liquor, unavailability of safe drinking water, lack of livelihood opportunities and poor healthcare among other issues that are taking a toll on the tribals. The apathy has resulted in premature death of 12 tribals within a year.

The officials enquired about rea-

sons behind the deaths, issues related to their livelihood, employment scope and healthcare facilities.

The tribal residents told the officials about the people who have died of various diseases. The villagers said that two Juang tribals had died in the first week of July. The deceased were identified as Madha Juang, 35, and Babula Juang, 25. The deaths have sparked panic and concern among the tribals.

This year, over 12 Juangs have died prematurely for various reasons in the village.

Some conscious villagers blamed unhealthy living conditions, consumption of spurious liquor, contaminated water and lack of health-care facility for these deaths.

They said that houses have not been provided to them while lack of safe drinking water and scope of earning have made their lives miserable.

They have been given job cards, but are yet to get work under any

**THE REPORT APPEARED IN THIS NEWSPAPER MENTIONED ABOUT UNHEALTHY LIVING CONDITIONS, CONSUMPTION OF SPURIOUS LIQUOR, UNAVAILABILITY OF SAFE DRINKING WATER, LACK OF LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND POOR HEALTHCARE AMONG OTHER ISSUES THAT ARE TAKING A TOLL ON THE TRIBALS**

**THE APATHY HAS RESULTED IN PREMATURE DEATH OF 12 TRIBALS WITHIN A YEAR, THE REPORT SAID**

**ITDA AUTHORITIES SAID A REPORT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE COLLECTOR AND STEPS WILL BE TAKEN FOR SORTING OUT THEIR PROBLEMS**

livelihood scheme or poverty alleviation scheme like Mahatma Gandhi Natter Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). As a result, they have often had to migrate for works or live in hunger when there is no work.

They demanded that they should be provided financial assistance under social security schemes while premature deaths have become a matter of grave concern for them.

Many villagers are suffering from malnutrition due to lack of nutritious food. Many of them live in shanties or in ramshackle houses where their life becomes miserable during rains.

ITDA project administrator Tapan Kumar Nayak said, "We reached the village after the media report and took stock of the condition of the tribals. A report will be submitted to the Collector and steps will be taken for sorting out their problems including healthcare issues."

making them hold crowbars and hammers.

Sahoo also attached some photographs of students engaged in preparing the school floor as the headmaster was supervising the works sitting on a chair.

The NCPCR asked Jajpur Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore to investigate and submit an action-taken report within 20 days. Earlier, the district education officer had asked an additional block education officer to submit a report, following which Das was suspended



ITDA officials holding discussions with the villagers, Wednesday

## NCPCR seeks report from Jajpur Collector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jajpur, August 3:** The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) Wednesday sought a report from Jajpur Collector after a headmaster allegedly engaged the students in construction work at a government-run school last month.

The apex child rights body took cognisance of the incident on the basis of a complaint against Pramod Das, headmaster of Bahadur Nagar Upper Primary School at Charinangal under Barchana block.

**SCHOOLKIDS ENGAGED IN CONSTRUCTION WORK**



Complainant Udayanath Sahoo alleged that Das engaged some students in construction works on the premises during school hours,

## FASHION SHOW



Children took part in a fashion show organised by Sambalpur Hub at Ratha Community Centre, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

# Forest dept in soup as trees cut in gramya jungle

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Deogaon, August 3:** Felling of over 200 trees on a private land which was part of Sarasbahal gramya jungle under Kandhakelagaon section in Bolangir district has left the Forest department in a soup. Following media reports, the DFO has taken it

**Strangely enough, the Forest dept has spent lakhs of rupees towards maintenance of the forest on the private land**

seriously and directed the Saindala ranger to look into the matter and submit a report to the department.

Meanwhile, ranger Sanghamitra

## PLANTATION ON PRIVATE LAND



Bhoi and forester Sushil Puta visited the spot and confirmed cutting of the trees. The land is a patch of ryot

category of land. Villagers had alleged over 200 valuable trees in over three acres had been cut down. However,



Seven councillors have been staging hunger strike outside Deogarh Municipality office, demanding investigation into various irregularities in the civic body. The agitation entered 10th day Wednesday

OP PHOTO

## Man arrested for duping job seekers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri, August 3:** Police Wednesday arrested a person who has duped several job aspirants of lakhs of rupees in the district, said sources.

The arrested was identified as Chinmay Kumar Mohapatra of Jambeswarpur in Balasore.

Police said Chinmay had befriended one Krushnachandra Barik of Bimanpalli under Mathili police limits over phone in 2020. Later, Chinmay met Krushnachandra, who was looking for a job, at his residence. Chinmay assured the victim that he would arrange a job for him in Food Corporation of India (FCI) for which ₹6 lakh is required as bribe for some top officials.

Chinmay took ₹6 lakh from Krushnachandra in installments. However, he did not pick up the call of Krushnachandra when the latter wanted to know about the developments.

Later, the victim filed a complaint at Mathili police station in this regard. Later, Malkangiri cyber police came to know about the location of Chinmay in Cuttack and arrested him from there. On interrogation, he admitted to have taken ₹14 lakh from several people on job promises.

Police seized two cell phones, three ATMs and an Aadhaar card from him, said Malkangiri Superintendent of Police (SP) Nitesh Wadhvani.

# Bolangir farmers fret over fertilizer crunch

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Lathore, August 3:** Farmers in over 30 villages of five panchayats under Khaprakhol block in Bolangir district have alleged shortfall in urea fertilizer that has affected agricultural activities in the region. Some farmers have also alleged artificial shortage of urea.

The farmers complained that Lathore primary cooperative society has failed to meet the fertilizer requirements of over 13,000 farmers in 30 villages under Lathore, Benedar, Karuajhar, Tankapai and Malpada panchayats.

The secretary of Lathore primary cooperative society had issued a letter-231 dated March 31, 2022, to the branch manager of Bolangir Central Cooperative Bank and the block agriculture officer to supply 700 quintal of urea. However, only 333 quintal has been supplied to the society and that too in two phases. As a result, the requirement of the farmers could not be met in time.

One packet of urea is supposed to cost ₹267, as per official deci-



**One packet of urea is supposed to cost ₹267, as per official decision but farmers are buying it from open market at ₹ 600**

sion but farmers are buying it from open market at ₹600.

As monsoon remains active, transplantation of paddy saplings has picked up across the state. Urea is used as a fertilizer during

pre-sowing land preparation as well as post-transplantation of paddy saplings.

Saplings will be affected by stunted growth without the urea, but the dealers in the market keep raising prices, it was alleged. The urea shortage has enraged farmers, it was said.

However, society secretary Jagdish Rana said, "Even half of the amount of fertilizers we require has not been supplied till date."

## 14 students taken ill in Papadahandi

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Papadahandi, August 3:** At least 14 students of Daleiguda SSD Girls' High School in Papadahandi block in Nabarangpur district were suddenly taken ill for cold, cough and fever. A dozen of them were down with cold, cough and fever while two were affected by diarrhoea.

**Two days ago, a medical team had checked their health at the school**

Most of them belong to Class IX and X. Reports said after their classes were over, they complained of cold, cough and fever. Twelve students were provided preliminary treatment at a nearby hospital while two-diarrhoea-hit students were admitted to the district headquarters hospital.

Two days ago, a medical team had checked their health at the school. However, reasons for diarrhoea are not known. The families of the students were informed about their illness.

On the other hand, diarrhoea has been spreading in some pockets of the district with the health department taking preventive measures. People are being sensitised against unhygienic surroundings and contaminated water.

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For registration, please contact: Rahul Kumar Gupta, Mobile: 75420 23554.

Registration is compulsory.

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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 01. Name of the Work  | : 3 nos Works.  |
| 02. Type of Bid   | : Single Bid System   |
| 03. Estimated Cost  | : Rs. 28.46 lakhs to 31.81 lakhs  |
| 04. Period of Completion                                      | : 4 (Four) Calendar Months  |
| 05. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal | : From 11.00 AM of dt. 08.08.2022 to 5.00 PM of 20.08.2022  |
| 06. Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal         | : 5.00 PM of 20.08.2022   |
| 07. Date & Time of opening of technical bids                  | : At 11.30 AM of 22.08.2022   |
| 08. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid              | : Superintending Engineer P.H.Division,Sambalpur Brooks Hill, Near Stadium At/Po-Motijharan Dist-Sambalpur-768001 |

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2. Total No. of work	:	2 (Two) Road works			
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4. Approximate estimated cost	:	11.00 Lakhs to 14.00 Lakhs			
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6. Other details are as follow	:				
Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last date and time of seeking tender clarification	Technical Bid Opening Date
		From	To		
Executive Engineer, R.W. Divn., Patnagarh	EEPNTNG-Online-03/2022-23	06.08.2022 at 11.00 AM	20.08.2022 upto 5.00 P.M.	16.08.2022 upto 1.00 PM	22.08.2022 upto 10.00 A.M.

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“

One mighty deed can change the course of things; a lonely thought becomes omnipotent.

SRI AUROBINDO



# Diaspora Strength

There have been diasporas ever since the Old Testament, and, leaving aside their tragic nature, no two mass exoduses have been alike. In the twentieth century, the world witnessed Jews escaping from pogroms, the Bolshevik revolution, and then Hitler; African-Americans migrating en masse out of the Jim Crow South; and Vietnamese fleeing a war-torn country. In this century, Syrians, Iraqis, and Afghans have fled failed liberations and brutal sectarian wars; Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Hondurans have been walking away from poverty and violence; and, now, millions of newly arrived Ukrainians in Europe and elsewhere are wondering when or even if they will ever go home.

For some countries, diasporas also are not new. Just ask the Russians. For three-quarters of a century, Stalin's NKVD and its successor, the KGB, kept close tabs on expatriate Russians, constantly worrying about the threat they might pose. And now, Russian President Vladimir Putin's security service, the FSB, is continuing the tradition. According to recent FSB estimates, almost four million Russians left the country in the first three months of this year.

Obviously, FSB statistics are hard to verify. But the sheer magnitude of this year's departures is striking. Compared to the first quarter of 2021, Russian arrivals in Georgia and Tajikistan increased fivefold, and they grew fourfold in Estonia, threefold in Armenia and Uzbekistan, and twofold in Kazakhstan. Moreover, Latvia and Lithuania together took in some 74,000 Russians, and popular tourist spots like Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Turkey welcomed just under a million. Nearly 750,000 people crossed into the Georgian region of Abkhazia, one of Putin's vassal territories.

While some of these travelling Russians doubtless returned home, the total number of departures in the first quarter is remarkable. It represents nearly 2% of the country's population, and that doesn't even count the Russians who have left for Europe or other parts of the world.

The FSB isn't tracking these departures just to pass the time. From the October Revolution to the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian diasporas were flies in the ointment of the worker's paradise. While Russians had already started to flee in the wake of the failed 1905 revolution, these numbers surged when the Bolsheviks took power in 1917 and during the subsequent civil war. "Little Moscovs" cropped up across Europe.

This history was repeated in the 1990s, but with a twist. Not only did the collapse of the Soviet Union leave 30 million ethnic Russians outside Russia's borders (primarily in the Baltics, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine), but several million more emigrated to Europe, Asia, and North America, producing the second major diaspora in the space of a hundred years.

Do such large expatriate communities really matter? That depends on your point of view. In the 1920s, exiled Russian monarchists, rightists, and assorted military veterans – the losers in the five-year-long civil war – continued to conspire against the Bolshevik regime. But they continued to embody all the divisiveness that had led to their earlier defeat. Likewise, in 2011, the German historian Karl Schlögel argued that today's Russian exiles lack the political structures to organise, and thus have little potential to effect change in their home country.

But Schlögel also identified an important difference between the émigrés and refugees of the 1920s and Russia's twenty-first-century expatriates: today's diaspora includes the most dynamic and entrepreneurial elements of Russian society, from business managers and information-technology specialists to scientists and artists. Their flight abroad represents a major brain drain.

Igor Zubov, Putin's deputy interior minister, warned of this problem in June, when he asked the Russian parliament to allow more foreign IT workers to enter the country. In his testimony, he revealed that Russia was short some 170,000 IT workers, contradicting official claims that most of those who left had already returned home.

The Russian Association for Electronic Communications has painted a similar picture. Industry insiders forecast that 10% of Russian IT workers may leave in 2022.

It's not just techies. As in the 1920s, hundreds of Russian journalists, writers, actors, filmmakers, and artists have also fled abroad, often resuming the same work in their countries of refuge. Investors and entrepreneurs, too, are leaving. Henley & Partners, a British firm that brokers citizenship deals for wealthy clients seeking to change their nationality, reports that 15,000 millionaires are expected to leave Russia in 2022. Most will try to domicile in Malta, Mauritius, or Monaco, where inviting beaches and lax tax laws welcome immigrants who come with cash.

Whether skilled professionals and Cristal guzzlers are leaving because of their opposition to Putin or for personal economic reasons, what matters is that they are depriving Russia of critical talent and capital. That is why the Biden administration has proposed legislation to loosen visa requirements for Russian IT workers and scientists with advanced degrees. And other countries and companies are making similar efforts to harness the benefits of the new Russian diaspora.

But these efforts will yield mostly private economic and financial gains, while the political potential of the diaspora remains untapped. If Western countries want to support Ukraine and confront Russian aggression, they ought to be doing more to bring together Russia's expatriate intellectual and financial capital, forming a real community abroad that can communicate with, and potentially influence, Russians back home.

A century ago, some 300,000 Russians – businessmen, writers, artists, and others – created Europe's leading "little Moscow" in Berlin, and by the mid-1920s, the city had some 150 Russian political journals and 87 publishers.

Some of these were Soviet enterprises, but most were not. As Schlögel notes, the Russian exiles were attracted not only by Weimar Germany's freedom but also by its strategic location. It was a place where books, magazines, and political tracts could find their way into the new Soviet state.

In today's wired world, this episode in the history of print may sound quaint. But that is only because we have exponentially more powerful tools with which to disseminate information. Ultimately, only Russians can shape their country's fate. But the West has ample means at its disposal to help those who want change in their homeland.

The writer served as the CIA's director of public affairs.

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## WISDOM CORNER

- “

Do one thing at a time, and while doing it put your whole soul into it to the exclusion of all else.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA
- “

If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
- “

The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.

VINCE LOMBARDI

## FOCUS NATION

# TRYST WITH ECONOMIC DESTINY



Bikash Narayan Mishra

THE ENTRY OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN BASIC EDUCATION AND HEALTH SECTORS IN A BIG WAY DOES NOT AUGUR WELL FOR A SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY TRANSITIONAL ECONOMY SUCH AS OURS

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's historic speech, "Tryst with destiny", to the Constituent Assembly in Parliament on the eve of India's Independence towards midnight of 14 August 1947, is considered as one of the greatest speeches of the 20th century. It was a kind of tryst with pivotal reforms 44 years later when on 24 July the then finance minister presented the landmark budget. The Indian economy had remained fundamentally unchanged on the policy fronts for nearly four decades. It was only after 1985 that reforms found place in policymaking. But the Indian economy was far away from being strong and resilient. And then came the unprecedented balance of payment crisis in 1991.

If 1947 saw India's Independence after nearly 100 years of freedom struggle, 1991, in a sense, witnessed independence of the Indian economy. By the beginning of 1990s, India was reeling under a double-digit inflation, gross fiscal deficit of above 7.5% of GDP, internal debt over 50% of GDP and above all foreign exchange reserves were just enough to cover import bills of 15 days. And there was a new government at the Centre not with the kind of majority which most Congress governments had earlier. So, there was a kind of both political and economic crisis. Liberalisation started with a dose of double devaluation; one of 7-9% on 1 July and second 11%, though accidentally, on 3 July. Then came the landmark Budget on 24 July 1991 and the rest, as they say, is history.

It is worth recalling what the then Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh had said while presenting the Union Budget: "I don't minimise the difficulties that lie ahead on the long and arduous journey on which we have embarked. But as Victor Hugo once said, 'no power on earth can stop an idea whose time has come.' I suggest to this August House that the emergence of India as a major economic power in the world happens to be one such idea.



Reforms must continue in all sectors; but we need to carry out our social commitments at the same time. They will not be contradictory but will be complimentary to each other

Let the whole world hear it loud and clear: India is now wide awake. We shall prevail. We shall overcome."

After decades of growing at a rate of 3.5%, then known as the Hindu rate of growth, India took a few bold decisions that forever changed the path of the economy and the country embarked upon a new journey. Thirty-one years later we are aiming at a \$5 trillion economy and to be the fifth super power economy on a permanent basis.

Behind the transition of the economy, which we call liberalisation, there were two pillars – PV Narasimha Rao, the then Prime Minister and his Finance minister Dr Manmohan Singh. Both were by nature introverts and without mass base. As stated above, reforms started with a dose of devaluation to be followed by a series of policies which together used to be called LPG (liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation) reforms. The change was initially not welcomed by all; within and outside the then ruling dispensation.

Thirty-one years down the line, from a GDP of \$512.92 billion in 1991 we have grown to a \$3.3 trillion economy and are likely to be a \$5 trillion economy before the end of present decade. Besides the average annual growth rate has been over 6% post 1990s. Thanks to the increase in the share of service sector and gradual reduction of share of agricultural sector which is heavily dependent on the vagaries of nature, the growth rates have been less volatile post 1991. Similarly, the average annual rate of inflation in the post-reform era has been around 5%. The gross fiscal deficit to GDP, another crucial economic barometer, too has been below 5% all these years. On the external front although our import bill continues to provide causes for concern exports have come a long way and exceeded the \$400 billion mark as of March 2022. Opening of the economy also makes it susceptible to external shocks. But we have successfully met the challenges of 1997 and that of 2008. The reforms also had a telling impact on India's

socio-economic fabric. We have some 15% people below the poverty line as of now as against 45% in 1991. There have been improvements in literacy rates, gross enrolment ratio and also in life expectancy.

However, the major criticism about the reforms is that they have widened the gap between the rich and the poor: While the increase in share of service sector has its advantages in terms of less vulnerability and new employment opportunities, the reduction in share of agriculture has far reaching consequences. A close to 40% of workforce is employed in the agriculture sector and nearly 60% of our population depends on agriculture and allied activities for livelihood. So, a reduction in its share will certainly further widen the rich-poor gap. Moreover, 65% of our population living in some 63,800 villages is directly or indirectly and emotionally connected with the farm sector.

Besides, the entry of the private sector in basic education and health sectors in a big way does not augur well for a socially and economically transitional economy such as ours. Although we developed the resilience to face the external shocks of 1997 and 2008, we were not adequately prepared to face the onslaught of COVID-19, especially the second phase.

Reforms must continue in all sectors; but we need to carry out our social commitments at the same time. They will not be contradictory but will be complementary to each other. We need more infrastructural facilities - roads, railways, ports, airports, factories and the private sector can continue to play big role there. At the same time, we need more irrigation projects for our farmlands, quality schools and primary health centers and it's the government only which can make these available for the needy

The writer is senior adviser, Indian Banks' Association. Views are personal.

## SPECTRUM INVESTING

# Debt funds back in the reckoning



Sourajeet Pradhani

IN THE PREVAILING SCENARIO, THE RBI AND THE MARKET ARE IN SYNC WITH INFLATION AND GROWTH PROJECTIONS

For close to two years, debt mutual funds were out of demand. From March 2020 to November 2021, equity as an asset class has outperformed every other investment instrument (except crypto currencies). During this phase, most of the equity mutual funds delivered much higher returns vis-à-vis any fixed income product. The interest rates were kept low to provide the requisite impetus to the market.

Countries like the USA kept on printing notes, thus increasing liquidity in the global economy. With inflation taking centre stage globally, the central banks are compelled to increase the interest rates. This has brought fixed income products back in the reckoning.

Debt mutual funds are investment instruments for investors with low risk appetite. Also investors, who stay put for three or more years, can have indexation benefits. The whole objective of investment in debt mutual funds is to generate 1-2% alpha vis-à-vis fixed deposits. It provides the requisite liquidity in times of emergency.

The two risks involved in debt mutual funds are credit risk and interest risk. Credit risk implies the risk of 'default' while interest risk implies the risk of interest rate change on the yields. Credit risk can be avoided

by selecting funds having exposure into government securities and AAA rated papers. Interest rate changes depend upon external parameters like inflation, macroeconomic factors, geopolitical factors, incumbent government policy. Hence getting insulated from interest rate fluctuations is tougher than the perils of credit risk.

On 28 July, the Federal Reserve of the US hiked the interest rate by 75 basis points. This was a back-to-back rate hike of 75 basis points within months. With an inflation rate of more than 9%, the US had witnessed the worst inflation scenario in four decades. Hence the central bank is ready to make growth the 'sacrificial anode' to curtail inflation.

Since the US's Federal Reserve sets the tone for other global central banks to take the requisite decisions, it is expected that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI will follow the suit to prevent the 'sell off' from the foreign institutional investors and foreign portfolio investors. The silver lining amidst the uncertain ecosystem is the declining unemployment rate in the US. It will be interesting to see the impact of interest rate hike on inflation as well as commodity prices. Once there is an interest rate hike, the value

of existing bonds in the secondary market goes down. There is no surety regarding the number of rate hikes that can be anticipated. It depends upon a number of parameters. Such trivial scenarios make fixed income space a complex asset class.

As many analysts and experts have opined, there isn't any 'right time' to invest in market (or any asset class). One shouldn't wait for the final rate hike to take place to invest in debt funds. One may not be overweighed in debt funds, but must have exposure in this asset class.

Hence the factor that controls interest rate fluctuations is 'duration'. Macaulay's Duration and Modified Duration (MOD). Duration in layman terms implies average maturity period. Macaulay's Duration is defined as the weighted average time to receive cash flow from the bond. Modified Duration is the risk associated with a bond to change in interest rate.

In the prevailing scenario, the RBI and the market are in sync with inflation and growth projections. The bond yields have already factored in the imminent rate hikes. In such an ecosystem, it is not only imperative but inevitable to choose the debt fund with the right duration.

With a holding period horizon of 3-12 months, one can definitely opt for liquid and ultra short term duration funds. The returns may not be that lucrative, but it reduces the scope of negative returns. Low duration, short term debt funds, banking and PSU bond funds provide the investment time horizon of 18 months. Medium duration debt funds still possess the interest rate risk at this point of time.

With the hoopla around inflation and interest rate hike expected to persist, the holding period returns from the debt category will remain pivotal. While the bond yields may not come down immediately, the cushion or the silver lining is the buffer that has already been factored in. The important aspect at this point of time is not to downplay the risk but to recognise the buffers to manage it.

Fixed income outcomes are always driven by the duration of investment and not by short term rate volatility. They can actually create alpha for investors in an uncertain market. Hence an investor must choose the right product on the basis of the investment horizon rather than getting perturbed by the imminent rate hikes.

The writer is an investment banker. Views are personal.

## Eliminating terror

Sir, This refers to the front page report "Al-Qaeda chief Zawahir killed in US drone strike" (Orissa Post, August 3, 2022). The Taliban has violated the Doha Agreement signed with the US by providing a safe haven to the Al-Qaeda chief and the world's most wanted terrorist Ayman-al-Zawahiri in Afghanistan, underlining the differences between its sayings and doings. Zawahir was Osama Bin Laden's deputy and was deeply involved in the 9/11 attacks that murdered thousands of innocent people and shook the world. For decades, he has been the mastermind behind the attacks against Americans including the bombing of the USS Cole in 2000. He had also played a key role in the bombings of US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Over the years, he had carved a trail of murder and violence against American citizens, journalists, and diplomats. In his address to the nation, authenticating the killing of Zawahir by the Central Intelligence Agency, US President Joe Biden's statement that the people around the world no longer need to fear the vicious and determined killer provides an interim relief. Although several other terror outfits have started to gain a foothold in Afghanistan after the pullout of US and NATO troops, the killing of the designated terrorist sends a clear message that America's intelligence presence on Afghanistan's soil has still not waned.

Tushar Anand, PATNA

## Cybersecurity for kids

Sir, It is alarming to see that children as young as five are utilising internet platforms for a variety of purposes. Youngsters started using the internet for online classes, entertainment, and socialising more quickly after the pandemic. On educational, gaming, and entertainment websites, many kids have their own accounts, and that number is increasing by the day. Children are becoming more susceptible to cyber fraud as a result of spending more time online and engaging in multiple online activities thus creating numerous points of entry for scammers. They are quite ignorant and may not be aware of the dangers that lurk them. Across India, several cases of cyber threats have surfaced where children felt threatened as their safety and privacy were compromised. Educational institutions across the country should conduct training programmes for students, focused on internet safety and on combating online threats. Parents should be aware of their children's digital world, know the apps they use, use parental controls where possible and enlighten the child to avoid online scams.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD



of the day quote

Over 34,000 women are currently serving in various central armed police forces like CRPF, BSF and CISF



NITYANAND RAI | UNION MINISTER

The State government would soon decide on conducting the police sub-inspector examination, which was annulled a couple of months ago following alleged irregularities



ARAGA JNANENDRA | K'TAKA HOME MINISTER

Kejriwal government strives to make world-class health facilities more accessible for Delhi residents



MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Lok Sabha passes Gati Shakti Bill

**New Delhi:** The Lok Sabha Wednesday passed a bill that seeks to transform the National Rail and Transportation University into central university to be called Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya. Currently, the National Rail and Transportation University located in Vadodara is a deemed-to-be-institution. The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, which also seeks to expand the scope of the deemed university from beyond the railways to cover the entire transport sector to support the ambitious growth and modernisation in the field, was passed by a voice vote after a brief discussion.

4 dead after vehicle ploughs into dhaba

**Patna:** Four persons were killed and more than 12 others injured after a speeding dumper ploughed into a dhaba in Hajipur city in Bihar's Vaishali district Wednesday afternoon, police said. The accident occurred at Bahuara chowk under Patepur police station. The police said that three of the deceased died on the spot while another died on the way to the hospital.

Navy busts fake recruitment scam

**Mumbai:** The Naval Police have busted a fake recruitment scam allegedly perpetrated by a self-styled 'Captain' of the Indian Navy, who lured young candidates with job offers as naval security guards, officials said here Wednesday. The mastermind of the racket has been identified as 'Captain' Sameer Singh, who used a fake letter from the Ministry of Defence, indicating that INS Kunjali in Colaba was the recruitment and workplace.

Flood threat in northern Bihar

**Patna:** Threat of a flood loomed large in northern districts of Bihar Wednesday with many rivers in the region flowing above danger levels, the water resources department said. Heavy rainfall in Nepal and some parts of the state situated along the border has caused a rise in water levels of Kosi, Kamala Balan and Bagmati rivers over the past few days, it said.

SC to hear plea on 'Ram Sethu'

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Wednesday said it would list for hearing BJP leader Subramanian Swamy's plea seeking a direction to the Centre to declare the Ram Sethu a national heritage monument. A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli, which had agreed to list the plea for hearing July 26, said it could not do so as one of the judges of the bench concerned had some health issues.

Cong leaders' DPs have Nehru holding Tricolour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** The Congress and a host of its top leaders Wednesday changed their display pictures on social media accounts to an image of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru holding the national flag, evoking a "dynastic" jibe from the BJP.

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several BJP leaders made the 'tiranga' their profile picture on social media platforms, Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and the party's official handle on Twitter and other



Congress @INCIndia

social media platforms posted a photograph of Nehru with the tricolour as their display pictures.

The BJP took a dig at the Congress over it, saying Rahul Gandhi should look outside his family and allow party members to use their photos with the Tricolour.

Indian weightlifters continue to excel and bring glory for the nation. Congratulations to Lovepreet Singh for winning bronze medal in weightlifting at #CommonwealthGames. My best wishes to him for success in future events

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

A private school in Kolkata will launch its own nano-satellite to train its students in space science. The South Point High School, a part of the MP Birla Group, has decided to name its satellite PriyamvadaSat in the memory of Priyamvada Birla, the former chairperson of the business group



Free entry to all monuments from Aug 5 to 15

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** The Union Culture ministry Wednesday announced free entry to all Archaeological Survey of India-protected monuments and sites across the country from August 5 to 15.

This is being done as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations to mark 75 years of India's Independence.

"As part of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' and 75th I-Day celebrations, @ASIGoI has made entry free for visitors/ tourists to all its protected monuments/sites across the country, from 5th-15th August, 2022," Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy said in a tweet.



In Agra, home to the Taj Mahal, several events, including a cleanliness campaign and exhibitions have been planned for the 75th anniversary of Independence.

"The ASI's Agra circle will also carry out a 'Swachhata' campaign at 40 monuments from August 8 to 15. The Agra Fort, Akbar's Tomb at Sikandra, Fatehpur Sikri and Itmad-ud-daulah will also be illuminated from August 5 to August 15 as a part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav," Superintending Archaeologist of ASI's Agra Circle Rajkumar Patel told PTI.

"An exhibition will also be organised at the Agra Fort, Taj Mahal, and Guru Ka Tal at Sikandra. Besides, at Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri two tricolours each 50-feet high will be installed by August 15," he added.

SC suggests expert body to address freebies issue

Distribution of freebies inevitably leads to 'future economic disaster', the Centre told the Supreme Court

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 3:** The Supreme Court Wednesday said irrational freebies offered to induce voters during elections would not be effectively debated in the Parliament, since no political party would like to take away freebies.

It recommended constituting an expert body having persons who could effectively scrutinise the problem and find a solution, while acknowledging that irrational freebies promises is a serious issue.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, in principle, supported doing away with the practice of promising freebies to voters, and emphasised that freebies were paving the way to an "economic disaster", and also distorting the informed decision-making of the voters.

He suggested that the Election Commission should apply its mind on the matter, and they can have a relook. However, the EC's counsel said that its hands were tied by a



judgment of the apex court on freebies. Chief Justice NV Ramana asked senior advocate Kapil Sibal, who was in the courtroom for another matter, to share his view on the matter. Sibal said the EC should not be involved in the matter, since the issue is political and economical in nature. "ECI is MFI (Most Favoured Institution)," he said, adding: "The Parliament will have to debate."

To this, the Chief Justice asked Sibal that "which political party will agree? Do you think there will be a debate in the Parliament? These days everyone wants freebies... no political party will take out freebies, as all want freebies". The bench, also comprising justices Krishna Murari

and Hima Kohli, said: "We take the side of the ordinary people, the downtrodden. Their welfare has to be taken care of."

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, representing petitioner Ashwini Upadhyay, said those in power in states burdened with debt should bring out in public the source of money to fund freebies. He added that it should be revealed whose pockets would pay for these freebies. Mehta said a poor person feels that what is put in his left pocket would be taken out of his right pocket.

The Chief Justice said the poor are entitled for the benefits and benefits should not just reach the rich. Singh then suggested that the

EC could prepare a "model manifesto" to control freebies. The bench said if the EC had taken up the issue, the court would not have intervened now, and its judgments against violence during elections continue to be ignored.

The Chief Justice emphasised this is a serious issue and the EC and the Central government cannot say that they cannot do anything in the matter. He said the government and the EC have to consider the issue and give suggestions.

The bench suggested that the Central government along with the NITI Aayog, the Finance Commission, the Reserve Bank of India, the Law Commission, opposition, etc, would have to be engaged to thoroughly debate the matter to address the issues with irrational freebies, and they can come up with constructive conclusions. It asked the Centre, the EC, petitioners and Sibal to give suggestions within a week on the composition of an expert body that will examine how to regulate freebies and give reports to Centre, EC and to the court.

The bench scheduled the matter for further hearing next week. The top court was hearing a PIL by Upadhyay against the announcements made by political parties for inducing voters, through freebies, during elections, and seeking that the EC should debar state and national parties from making such promises.

SSC SCAM

Partha, Arpita to remain in ED custody till Aug 5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, August 3:** Former West Bengal education minister Partha Chatterjee and his aide Arpita Mukherjee were sent to three more days in the custody of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) by a special court in Kolkata in the SSC scam case.

The ED had sought four days of custody for Chatterjee and three days for Mukherjee, from whose apartments crores of rupees in cash and other valuables were recovered last month. They are facing charges under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Hearing the arguments, special PMLA judge Jibon Kumar Sadhu granted three days' ED custody to both the accused. They will be produced before the court



again August 5, he directed.

The investigating officer was directed to arrange for the medical examinations of both the accused persons every 48 hours of their stay in ED custody.

The former minister's lawyer prayed for his bail, while Mukherjee's counsel submitted that there was no requirement for any further ED custody of his client.

Appearing for the ED, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) SV Raju

submitted that several companies and properties in the joint holding of Chatterjee and Mukherjee were unearthed, and they were needed to be questioned on these.

Both the accused were produced before the court in person. The ED counsel claimed before the court that Chatterjee has not been co-operating in the investigation, while Mukherjee is comparatively cooperative.

Judge Sadhu also allowed 15 minutes of consultation by the lawyers of each accused with their clients on one day in the presence of ED officials. Chatterjee was arrested in the SSC scam case July 23 after crores of rupees in cash, gold believed to be in kilograms and documents of properties were found at the apartments of his aide Mukherjee.

GEARING UP



PTI PHOTO

Youngsters attend a training session as they prepare for the Agnipath examination 'Ganga pathway' in Patna, Bihar

Monkeypox scare: Health Ministry issues dos and don'ts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** With rising cases of monkeypox in the country, the Union health ministry Wednesday released a list of dos and don'ts to avoid contracting the disease.

It also underlined that anyone can catch the virus if they have had prolonged or repeated contact with an infected individual.

Among the dos, the ministry advised isolating the infected person from others so that the disease does not spread, use of hand sanitisers, or washing hands with soap and water, covering mouth with masks and hands with disposable gloves when close to a patient, and using disinfectants to sanitise the environment around. "Do not stigmatise people who have contracted



Meanwhile, a task force on monkeypox has been constituted to closely monitor the emerging situation in the country and decide on response initiatives to tackle the spread of the disease

the virus, and suspected patients as well. Also, do not believe any rumour or misinformation," it said.

It will also provide guidance to the government on expansion of diagnostic facilities in the country and explore emerging trends related

to vaccination for the disease, official sources had told PTI.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) had recently declared mon-

STRICT VIGIL

The don'ts state avoid sharing linen, beddings, clothes, towels, among others, with people who have tested positive for the infection

The ministry advised not to wash soiled linen or laundry of patients and those of non-infected persons together, and avoid public events even if you only exhibit symptoms of the disease

Delhi reported its fourth case of monkeypox Wednesday with a 31-year-old Nigerian woman testing positive for the disease

keypox a global public health emergency of international concern.

According to WHO, monkeypox is a viral zoonosis - a virus transmitted to humans from animals - with symptoms similar to smallpox although clinically less severe.

Monkeypox typically manifests itself with fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes and may lead to a range of medical complications. It is usually a self-limited disease with symptoms lasting for two to four weeks. The 'Guidelines on Management of Monkeypox Disease' issued by the Centre stated that human-to-human transmission occurs primarily through large respiratory droplets generally requiring prolonged close contact.

It can also be transmitted through direct contact with body fluids or lesions, and indirect contact

with lesion material such as through contaminated clothing or linen of an infected person. Animal-to-human transmission may occur by bite or scratch of infected animals or through bushmeat preparation.

The incubation period is usually from six to 13 days and the case fatality rate of monkeypox has historically ranged up to 11 per cent in the general population and higher among children. In recent times, the case fatality rate has been around 3 to 6 per cent.

The symptoms include lesions which usually begin within one to three days from the onset of fever, lasting for around two to four weeks and are often described as painful until the healing phase when they become itchy.



# Terror funding from Pak through Bitcoin trade



AGENCIES

**Srinagar, August 3:** Jammu and Kashmir's State Investigation Agency (SIA) Wednesday searched houses of seven persons in connection with a case of terror financing through Bitcoin trading, sources said.

"In connection with FIR number 12/22, these searches were carried out in Baramulla, and Kupwara districts in Kashmir division and Mendhar in Poonch district of Jammu division," a source said.

Sources said although the investigation is at an initial stage, yet the mastermind has been found in Pakistan who has been sending money to terrorists with active

support of Pakistani intelligence agencies and Pakistan-based terrorist outfits.

"Identity of the Pakistani mastermind has been comprehensively established, but is not being revealed so that other agents in the loop are not alerted," a source said.

Houses searched Wednesday include those of Zahida Bano, Ghulam Mujtaba, and Tamjeeda Begum, all in Kupwara district, Yasir Ahmad Mir and Sharief-ud-Din, both in Baramulla, and of Farooq Ahmad and Imran Choudhary, both in Poonch district.

"Preliminary investigations revealed evidence that the dirty money originating from Pakistan has reached these persons. The

# Mehbooba's new Twitter DP shows tricolour, old J&K flag



AGENCIES

**Srinagar, August 3:** PDP president Mehbooba Mufti Wednesday put a new Twitter display picture showing her late father Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the national flag and the now-derecognised flag of Jammu and Kashmir.

In his Mann ki Baat radio broadcast this Sunday, PM Modi had said the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' is turning into a mass movement and urged people to put 'tiranga' as the profile picture of their social media accounts between August 2 and 15.

Putting the new display picture, Mehbooba said the flag of Jammu and Kashmir might have been "snatched", but it cannot be erased from the collective conscience of the people.

The photograph was taken at a

rally addressed by the Prime Minister during his Kashmir visit in November 2015 when Mufti Sayeed was chief minister of the erstwhile state.

Mehbooba's previous profile picture was her own photo with the party's logo.

"Changed my dp since a flag is a matter of joy & pride. For us our state flag was irreversibly linked to the Indian flag. It was snatched thus breaking away the link. You may have robbed us of our flag but cant erase it from our collective conscience," Mehbooba tweeted.

The Twitter post by the former chief minister also comes two days ahead of the third anniversary of revocation of Article 370 of the Constitution that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

With the revocation of the special status, the Jammu and Kashmir flag was also derecognised.

# Over 7cr pages of revenue records digitised in J&K

AGENCIES

**Srinagar, August 3:** About 7.70 crore pages of revenue records and 55,216 'Musavis' (maps) have been digitised in Jammu and Kashmir as part of a flagship initiative to bring transparency and ease in obtaining land records, officials said.

'Aapki Zameen Aapki Nigrani' is one of the flagship programmes launched by the J-K administration to bring ease, transparency and convenience about land records for people.

Public users can search and view copies of scanned data online on CIS Portal- <http://lan-drecords.jk.gov.in/>.

The initiative facilitates easy online access to the Land Records Information System, thereby reducing manipulation of the land records and improving the efficiency of revenue offices substantially, an official spokesman said Tuesday.

It is part of Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP), and J-K has achieved an important milestone to provide the most trans-



parent and accountable services to the people, he said.

The spokesman said as per the official records, 7.70 crore pages of revenue records and 55,216 Musavis (maps) have been scanned till date.

About 6.5 lakh citizens have viewed their land records till date and the feedback of citizens has resulted in purification, updation of land records on constant basis, he said.

Earlier, there was no mechanism to view or monitor the sta-

tus of the land records by the citizens who were dependent on the officials to check their land records, the spokesman said.

"It is a landmark initiative which saved common people from burden of visiting tehsil offices and patwari offices for their own land records," Ali Asghar Raza, a resident of Thanamandi, said.

He said the people can check their land documents anytime at their own will.

"We can also apply for loan eas-

# J&K lawyers stir for multi-storey building on court premises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, August 3:** Hundreds of lawyers Wednesday staged a protest outside Raj Bhawan here in support of their demands, including construction of a multi-storey building for housing various tribunals and offices within court complexes.

The Jammu chapter of J&K High Court Bar Association (JKHCBA) organised the hour-long protest and threatened to intensify their agitation if Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha-led administration did not pay attention towards its demands.

"We had submitted a memorandum of our demands to Lt Governor Manoj Sinha in November last year, but it seems the government has lost the papers, forcing us to abstain from work and come on the roads to highlight our issues," JKHCBA (Jammu chapter) president MK Bhardwaj told reporters here.

The lawyers, who were carrying national flags and chanted slogans in support of their demands and against the lieutenant governor, came in a rally from HC complex to the protest site and later dispersed off peacefully.

"Due to shifting of courts and tribunals outside the district court complex, lawyers' fraternity and general public are facing insurmountable hardships. We are seeking housing of different tribunals in a single multi-dimensional complex of HC," Bhardwaj said.

transfer of money has been layered to prevent backward tracing of its origin, the investigation has revealed. While several accounts in the middle that have been used to layer the money are outside J&K, the effective whitewashing of the Pakistani money has taken place through exploitation of loopholes in international Bitcoin trade," the source added.

# NCSC finds lapses in quota in bank jobs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, August 3:** The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) found certain lapses in some nationalised banks in implementing the government's reservation policy for SCs, promoting them and also in implementing some of the populist schemes of the Central government, the Commission's chairman Vijay Sampla said Wednesday.

Also, during the two-day review, which concluded Wednesday here, the Commission found that banks employed only about 10 per cent of Safai Karamcharis against the required strength.

Sadly, the sanitary workers are paid wages less than they deserved and this situation of low wages prevailed in some of the collectorates, he said.

# JKFA in soup over Biryani worth ₹43L

AGENCIES

**Srinagar, August 3:** Biryani purchased for Rs 43 lakh by Jammu & Kashmir Football Association (JKFA) was never seen or eaten by anybody, the J&K Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has revealed.

Unearthing a financial scam by the office bearers of the JKFA, the ACB has found that as per its

records, the association purchased biryani for Rs 43 lakh from a local eatery, 'Mughal Darbar' as refreshments for the youth, but the bill, on scrutiny, was found to be fake.

"Nobody ever saw or ate that biryani for which the association claimed to have paid Rs 43 lakh to Mughal Darbar. The bill turned out to be fake," an ACB source said.

# CHINESE VESSEL AT HAMBANTOTA PORT

# Tamil Nadu to tighten coastal security

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, August 3:** Tamil Nadu police headquarters has communicated to all the police superintendents in the coastal districts of the state to beef up security as a Chinese vessel is intended to reach Hambantota port in Sri Lanka August 11.

The arrival of the Chinese vessel Yuan Wang 5, which is a research-oriented vessel, at Hambantota port in Sri Lanka was announced by the Sri Lankan Defense Ministry, Spokesman, Col Nalin Hareth.

According to the Lankan defense official, the vessel will reach Hambantota port August 11 and will stay till August 17.

While it is announced that the arrival of the vessel is mainly for replenishment of fuel, the Indian defense establishment and the Tamil Nadu security system are viewing it sceptically.

Tamil Nadu has a coastal area of 1,076 km and the presence of seaports and nuclear power reactors is a major issue that requires high-security surveillance. Sources in Tamil Nadu state police told IANS that the Central agencies have warned of a possible demonstration by pro-LTTE elements in Tamil Nadu against the Sri Lankan government for allowing the Chinese vessel to reach that country. Some Tamil extremist groups showing al-



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legiance to the LTTE cause can also create minor disruptions along the Tamil coast.

The state police have already stepped up surveillance over the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu after the economic breakdown in Sri Lanka leading to a refugee crisis and a possible entry of certain highly trained and motivated Sri Lankan Tamils into the Indian soil through the Tamil coastal line.

The presence of Chinese military on Sri Lankan soil is against the Indian defense interests and the Speaker of Tamil Nadu assembly, M Appavu had already come out against the proposed Spent Fuel storage facility at Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) citing the Chinese presence in neigh-

bouring Sri Lanka as a danger to it.

Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker, who is also a legislator from Radhapuram assembly constituency which houses KKNPP, had once said that as long as Sri Lanka was a friendly nation the situation was different and with the Chinese presence increasing in the island nation, there is danger to KKNPP.

Tamil Nadu police DGP C Sylendrababu had in the mean time held a meeting with the state ADGP, Coastal Security Group, Sandeep Mittal Tuesday over rising speculation in security circles on the possibilities of increasing security along the coastal areas of the state.

# I-T RAIDS CONTINUE ON FILM PRODUCER

AGENCIES

**Chennai, August 3:** The raids carried out by the Income Tax (I-T) department at many places in Madurai and Chennai of noted film producer Anbu Chezhian continued Wednesday.

According to information available, the I-T sleuths are conducting search operations at 20 places of the well-known producer who had earlier been subjected to I-T raid after the release of the movie 'Bigel' starring superstar of Tamil industry Vijay. The I-T department had unearthed unaccounted cash to the tune of Rs 65 crore during the raid.

It may be noted that the marriage of the daughter of Anbu Chezhian was held in Chennai five months ago and it was a grand gala wedding in which several Tamil film celebrities and industrialists attended. Tamil Super stars Rajanikanth, Kamal Haasan and producer Boney Kapoor were some of the noted names who had attended the marriage function of Anu Chezhian's daughter.

Ashok Kumar, Tamil film producer and director had in 2017 committed suicide by writing an eight-page suicide note blaming Anbu Chezhian's high-handedness behind his suicide. The director-producer had said that Anbu Chezhian had threatened to kidnap the women in the family even after he (Ashok Kumar) had paid huge money as interest and that he could not get justice from even the police.

# HEAVY RAIN LIKELY IN INTERIOR TN TILL AUG 5

AGENCIES

**Chennai, August 3:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted heavy rain in the interior areas of Tamil Nadu while light to moderate showers are expected in the state capital Chennai till August 5.

A senior officer with the IMD told IANS: "There will be a light to moderate rain till August 5 in most parts of Tamil Nadu and Southwest monsoon has intensified and that there is an upper circulation in the atmosphere over coastal Tamil Nadu. There was a shear zone where the easterlies and the westerlies meet over the central region and this zone is likely to move towards the north direction in the next few days."

The officer said that this would lead to heavy rain in Theni, Dindigul, Coimbatore, and Tirupur districts and very heavy rain in Coimbatore and the Nilgiris.

In the next couple of days, light to moderate rains is likely over some places in Chennai and adjacent areas. It is to be noted that

since June 1, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry have received an excess of 94 per cent rain.

Meanwhile, Chennai witnessed heavy rains Wednesday morning bringing traffic blocks on all the main roads. With the IMD predicting heavy to very heavy rains, the water resources department has taken initiative to look after the water flow into the major dams of the state.





**of the day** **quote**

Railways and airlines are two different modes of transportation, it is not right to compare them. Railways have also implemented flexi fare facility in some trains like airlines, but there is a limit to increase the fare

**ASHWINI VAISHNAV** | RAILWAY MINISTER

We wish to provide good quality premium bus service so that people leave their private vehicles and use public transport. Discussed app-based bus aggregator scheme with transport department. We will seek public feedback on the same

**ARVIND KEJRIWAL** | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

When we ask people in the United States what do they think of Karnataka today, they will say to you that Karnataka never witnessed the type of violence it is facing today

**RAHUL GANDHI** | CONGRESS LEADER

**SHORT TAKES**

**Kerala: Orange alert in 11 dists**

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Red alert was withdrawn from Kerala and Orange alert issued in 11 districts of the state by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Wednesday, indicating a probable decrease in the intensity of the rains hitting the southern state. The IMD at 12 PM withdrew the Red alert from the state and issued Orange alert for the day in all the districts barring Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Kasaragod where Yellow alerts have been issued.

**Kuldeep Bishnoi resigns as MLA**

**Chandigarh:** Haryana MLA Kuldeep Bishnoi, who was expelled by the Congress from all party positions for cross-voting in the June Rajya Sabha polls, resigned from the assembly Wednesday, a day before he joins the ruling BJP. The 53-year-old Bishnoi submitted his resignation to Speaker Gian Chand Gupta here. This necessitates a by-poll for the Adampur seat in Hissar district, which Bishnoi currently represents.

**7 killed in two road accidents**

**Dhar/Satna (MP):** Seven persons were killed and as many others injured in two road accidents in Dhar and Satna districts of Madhya Pradesh, officials said Wednesday. Both the accidents took place Tuesday, they said. Four persons were killed when the motorcycle they were riding on collided with a car near Dehri village, around 90 kms from Dhar district headquarters, under Bag police station limits Tuesday night, Sub Divisional Officer of Police (SDOP) Dilip Singh Bilwal said. In Satna district, three women were killed when a jeep overturned into a canal near village Khairhani, some 70 kms from the district headquarters, in the afternoon, said Ramnagar Police Station in-charge Rohit Yadav.

**Five kids drown**

**Ahmedabad:** In a tragic incident, five children, including four girls, drowned to death in a pond near Methan village in Gujarat's Surendranagar district Wednesday. According to the police, the children had gone to take bath in the pond located between Methan and Sarawan villages.



**The government is committed to ensure judicious use of every single penny of the taxpayers' money**  
**BHAGWANT MANN** | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

**Govt withdraws Data Protection Bill**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** The government Wednesday withdrew the Personal Data Protection Bill from Lok Sabha and said it will come out with a "set of fresh legislations" that will fit into the comprehensive legal framework. "The government will bring a set of new legislation for a comprehensive legal framework for the digital economy," IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, who moved for the withdrawal of the Bill in the House, told PTI. The government would hold a wide public consultation before putting the new legislation to Parliament, sources said.

According to sources, the Bill could be replaced by more than one bill, dealing with privacy and cyber security and the government may bring the new set of bills in the Winter Session of Parliament.

The government circulated among members a statement, containing reasons for withdrawal of the Bill, which was introduced 11 December 2019 and was referred to the Joint Committee of the Houses for examination. The report of the JCP was presented to Lok Sabha in December 2021.

The withdrawal of the Bill was made part of the supplementary agenda of Lok Sabha this afternoon.

The withdrawn Bill had proposed restrictions on the use of personal data without the explicit consent of citizens. It had also sought to provide the government with powers to give exemptions to its probe agencies from the provisions of the Act, a move that was strongly opposed by the opposition MPs who had filed their dissent notes.

According to the statement cir-



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■ The report of the JCP was presented to Lok Sabha in December 2021

■ According to the statement circulated to Lok Sabha members Wednesday, the 2019 Bill was deliberated in great detail by the JCP, which proposed 81 amendments and 12 recommendations for a comprehensive legal framework for the digital ecosystem

culated to Lok Sabha members on Wednesday, the 2019 Bill was deliberated in great detail by the JCP, which proposed 81 amendments and 12 recommendations for a comprehensive legal framework for the digital ecosystem. "Considering the report of the JCP, a comprehensive legal framework is being worked upon. Hence, in the circumstances, it is proposed to withdraw The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 and present a new bill that fits into the comprehensive legal framework," the statement said.

After the Bill was withdrawn, Minister of State for IT Rajeev Chandrashekar tweeted that this will soon be replaced by a comprehensive framework of global standard laws including digital privacy laws for contemporary and future challenges and catalyse Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's vision.

He said the JCP report on the Personal Data protection bill had identified many issues that were relevant but beyond the scope of a modern Digital Privacy law. "Privacy is a fundamental right of Indian citizens & a Trillion-dollar Digital Economy requires Global std Cyber laws," he said in another tweet.

The withdrawn data protection Bill had also proposed the setting up of a Data Protection Authority.

It had also proposed to specify the flow and usage of personal data, protect the rights of individuals whose personal data are processed, as it works out the framework for the cross-border transfer, accountability of entities processing data, and moots remedies for unauthorised and harmful processing.

**India-US to hold military exercise**



**THE INDO-US JOINT EXERCISE IS KNOWN AS 'YUDH ABHYAS' WHICH IS IN ITS 15TH EDITION THIS YEAR**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, August 3:** Amid rising tensions with China, India and the US will come together for a two-week high altitude military exercise at Auli in Uttarakhand, less than 100 km from the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the central region.

The Indo-US joint exercise is known as 'Yudh Abhyas' which is in its 15th edition this year.

Sources in the defence and security establishment said a joint exercise is being planned from October 14 to 31, where both the forces will

conduct 'maneuvers to exploit the full scope' of the high altitude warfare. The sources said that the location (at 10,000 feet) where the exercise will take place falls in Phase 1 of adaptation to high altitude.

"This time it is a very important exercise as the Indian side will be showcasing its high altitude warfare strategies, while the US will demonstrate a number of techniques that can be used in such scenarios. This exercise is planned in such a way that both the sides can come together for any scenario," said a source.

Another source said that various activities have been planned for both sides to take full advantage of the two-week military exercise and to see how the troops can work together.

India and China have seen escalating tensions along the LAC in the last two years following the standoff in Ladakh.

**Nine new faces in Mamata ministry**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, August 3:** Nine new ministers were inducted in the Mamata Banerjee-led West Bengal government Wednesday - five as cabinet ministers, two as ministers of states (independent charge) and two as ministers of state.

However, till the report was filed, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is yet to announce the portfolios for these ministers.

The five cabinet ministers who were sworn in by Governor La Ganesan are Pradip Majumdar, Trinamool Congress MLA from Durgapur-East in West Burdwan district, Babul Supriyo from Ballygunge assembly constituency in Kolkata, Udayan Guha from Dinhat in Cooch Behar, Partha Bhowmik from Naihati in North 24 Parganas, and Snehasis Chakraborty from Jangipara in Hooghly district.



Since the Trinamool came to power in West Bengal, Majumdar had been acting as the principal agriculture advisor to the state government. A person of extremely clean image, he is a close confidant of Banerjee.

Singer-turned-politician Babul Supriyo was a two-time BJP Lok Sabha member from Asansol in West Burdwan district and was also a Union Minister in the Narendra Modi-led Union government. Santhali actress-turned-politician, Birbaha Hansda from Jhargram assembly constituency and Biplab Roy Chowdhury from Panskura-East in East Midnapore district were sworn in as ministers of state (independent charge).

Satyajit Burman from Hentabadi assembly constituency in North Dinajpur district and Tajmul Hossain from Harishchandrapur Assembly constituency in Melda district were sworn in as ministers of state.

**CENTRE BLOCKS 348 MOBILE APPS**

Amid rising complaints against mobile apps, the Centre has identified and blocked 348 apps developed by various countries, including China, for allegedly collecting user information for profiling citizens and transmitting it overseas in an unauthorised manner, the Parliament was told Wednesday



**AICC HQs 'under siege', claims Cong**

*This incident came soon after the ED temporarily sealed the premises of Young Indian (YI) in the Congress-owned National Herald office in Delhi*



View of the Cong-owned Herald House after the ED sealed the premises of YI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** The road to AICC headquarters here was blocked Wednesday with the Congress alleging the party was "under siege" while the police said barricades have been erected and its personnel deputed to avoid any untoward situation.

This came soon after the ED temporarily sealed the premises of Young Indian (YI) in the Congress-owned National Herald office in Delhi as part of an ongoing money laundering investigation.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh shared a video showing heavy police presence outside the AICC headquarters here and the road sealed for traffic. The barricades were later removed. "Delhi Police blocking the road to AICC Headquarters has become a norm rather than an exception! Why have they just done so is mysterious..." Ramesh tweeted.

"The Congress is under siege. Delhi police has surrounded our HQs, and homes of INC President and ex-President. This is the worst form of vendetta politics. We will not submit! We will not be silenced! We will continue to raise our voice against injustices and failures of Modi Sarkar!," he said in another tweet.

A senior Delhi police officer said, "We have received inputs from our special branch that some protesters might gather at the Congress Office situated on Akbar Road. So, as a preventive measure, we have put barricades and deputed our personnel to avoid any untoward situation."

In a tweet in Hindi, the Congress said, "The voice of truth will not be afraid of police guards. Gandhi's followers will fight and win from this darkness." Sealing the office of the National Herald, bringing the Congress headquarters under police guards show both the "fear and frustration of the dictator", the party said, adding that questions of inflation and unemployment will still be asked.

Senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid, while entering the AICC headquarters, told reporters that there is nothing in the case of money laundering investigation as there is "no money involved, so no question of laundering".

Senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge also raised the issue in the upper house and alleged that the police have barricaded the residence of the Congress president, former Congress president and the party headquarters.

**PURE DEVOTION**



Women Kanwariyas (Lord Shiva devotees) carrying holy water from the Narmada river pass through a street during their pilgrimage in the month of Shravan, in Jabalpur

PTI PHOTO

**Heatwaves increasing in India but related deaths fall**

**INDIA SUFFERED ITS HOTTEST MARCH IN MORE THAN A CENTURY THIS YEAR AND TEMPERATURES WERE UNUSUALLY HIGH IN APRIL AND MAY TOO**

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 3:** Temperatures during the monsoon season have risen this century and the country could see more frequent heatwaves in future, the Centre said Wednesday, but it added heat-related deaths have fallen in recent years.

India suffered its hottest March in more than a century this year and temperatures were unusually high in April and May too, mainly blamed on climate change. The government says heatwaves are common mainly between April and June.

"The average temperature during the monsoon season is found to be rising in the last two decades," Science and Technology and Earth

Sciences Minister, Jitendra Singh, told the Parliament.

"The warming of the tropical Indian Ocean and more frequent El Nino events in future may lead to more frequent and long-lasting heatwaves over India."

El Nino is characterised by a warming of sea-surface temperatures in the Pacific. It causes heavy rains and floods in South America and scorching weather in Asia and even east Africa.

Singh said India's mean temperature during the June-September monsoon season rose to nearly 28.4 degrees Celsius last year from less than 28 degrees Celsius in 2001.

Heatwave deaths, however, have come down in recent years, according to data provided by Singh to lawmakers that cited



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

newspaper reports.

For this year through July, India recorded 24 such fatalities, versus none for the whole of last year, and 25 in 2020. That compares with a multi-year high of 505 deaths in 2019. The minister did not say why there have been fewer fatali-

ties in recent years, but a government official earlier told Reuters that most Indian states now have plans ready to alter office and school timings as well as working hours for labourers to avoid the hottest time of day, in a bid to reduce exposure. The World Health

**India approves NDC under Paris climate pact**

**New Delhi:** The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, incorporating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Panchamrit' strategy announced at the Glasgow conference into enhanced climate targets. According to the updated NDC, India now stands committed to reducing emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 per cent by 2030, from 2005 level, and achieving about 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030. NDC means national plans and pledges made by a country to meet the goal of maintaining global temperature increases to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, while aiming for 1.5 degrees Celsius to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. The updated NDC will be implemented over the 2021-2030 period through programmes and schemes of relevant ministries and departments and with support from states and Union territories.

Organization says that from 1998-2017, more than 166,000 people died due to heatwaves globally. It says that between 2030 and 2050, cli-

mate change is expected to cause about 250,000 additional deaths per year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress.



of the day quote

I pray for the families of the victims of that disastrous event and the dear Lebanese people. I pray that each one may be consoled by faith, and comforted by justice and truth that can never be hidden



POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF VATICAN CHURCH

We congratulate the people of India on 75 years of independence. As the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy, respectively, we will continue to work together every day to deliver opportunities, security, freedom, and dignity to our peoples



KARINE JEAN-PIERRE | WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

Whether redoubling our efforts to tackle Islamist extremism or rooting out those who are vocal in their hatred of our country, I will do whatever it takes to fulfil that duty



RISHI SUNAK | PM CANDIDATE, UK

SHORT TAKES

Russia's Lavrov visits Myanmar

**Bangkok:** Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov arrived Wednesday in Myanmar for an official visit that Moscow said will include discussions with the military government on security and economic issues, the Russian news agency TASS reported. Russia is a major supporter of Myanmar's military government, which came to power in February last year when it ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. Lavrov met with his counterpart, Win Myint, and other top Myanmar officials shortly after his arrival in the capital, Naypyitaw, Russia's Foreign Ministry wrote on Twitter.

US okays big arms sale to Saudi, UAE

**Washington:** The Biden administration has approved two massive arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to help them defend against Iran. The more than USD 5 billion in missile defense and related sales follow President Joe Biden's visit to the Middle East last month, during which he met with numerous regional leaders in Saudi Arabia.

Putin's 'girlfriend' faces US sanctions

**Washington:** A new round of US sanctions targeting Russian elites includes a woman named in news reports as Vladimir Putin's longtime romantic partner. The Treasury Department said Tuesday that the government has frozen the visa of Alina Kabaeva, an Olympic gymnast in her youth and former member of the state Duma, and imposed other property restrictions. The department said she is also head of a Russian national media company that promotes Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

'Ukraine N-plant is out of control'

**United Nations:** The UN nuclear chief warned that Europe's largest nuclear power plant in Ukraine "is completely out of control" and issued an urgent plea to Russia and Ukraine to quickly allow experts to visit the sprawling complex to stabilise the situation and avoid a nuclear accident. Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said Tuesday that the situation is getting more perilous every day at the Zaporizhzhya plant, which Russian troops seized in early March.



As for now, China is balancing and indeed has neutrality and, I will be honest, this neutrality is better than China joining Russia. It's important for us that China wouldn't help Russia

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

RARE WHITE JUMBO BORN IN MYANMAR

A rare white elephant has been born in western Myanmar, state media said, unveiling what many in the Buddhist-majority country believe to be an auspicious creature



US tickles dragon's tail

Pelosi full of praise, support for Taiwan



Today the world faces a choice between democracy and autocracy. America's determination to preserve democracy, here in Taiwan and around the world, remains ironclad

NANCY PELOSI | US HOUSE SPEAKER

Facing deliberately heightened military threats, Taiwan will not back down. We will firmly uphold our nation's sovereignty and continue to hold the line of defense for democracy

TSAI ING-WEN | TAIWANESE PRESIDENT

AGENCIES

**Taipei, August 3:** US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi left Taiwan Wednesday after pledging solidarity and hailing its democracy, leaving a trail of Chinese anger over her brief visit to the self-ruled island that Beijing claims as its own.

China demonstrated its outrage over the highest-level US visit to the island in 25 years with a burst of military activity in surrounding waters, summoning the US ambassador in Beijing and halting several agricultural imports from Taiwan.

Some of China's planned military exercises were to take place within Taiwan's 12 nautical mile sea and air territory, according to Taiwan's defence ministry, an unprecedented move a senior defence official described to reporters as "amounting to a sea and air blockade of Taiwan".

Pelosi arrived with a congressional delegation on her unannounced but closely watched visit late on Tuesday, defying China's repeated warnings, in what she

PELOSI TELLS PREZ TSAI "WE WILL NOT ABANDON TAIWAN"  
CHINA STEPS UP MILITARY ACTIVITY AROUND TAIWAN  
TAIWAN'S MILITARY INCREASES ALERTNESS LEVEL  
BLINKEN DISCUSSED PELOSI VISIT WITH CHINA'S WANG YI LAST MONTH  
CHINA SUMMONED US AMBASSADOR IN BEIJING

said shows unwavering US commitment to Taiwan's democracy.

"Our delegation came to Taiwan to make unequivocally clear that we will not abandon Taiwan," Pelosi told Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, who Beijing suspects of pushing for formal independence - a red line for China.

"Now, more than ever, America's solidarity with Taiwan is crucial, and that's the message we are bringing here, today," she said during her roughly 19-hour visit. A long-time China critic, especially on human rights, Pelosi met with a former Tiananmen activist, a Hong Kong bookseller who had been detained by China,

and a Taiwanese activist recently released by China.

Fury on the mainland over the 82-year-old Democrat's defiance of Beijing was evident all over Chinese social media, with one blogger railing: "this old she-devil, she actually dares to come!" The last US house speaker to go to Taiwan was Newt Gingrich, in 1997. But Pelosi's visit comes amid sharply deteriorating Sino-US relations, and during the past quarter century China has emerged as a far more powerful economic, military and geopolitical force.

China considers Taiwan part of its territory and has never renounced using force to bring it under its control. The United States warned China against using the visit as a pretext for military action against Taiwan.

In retaliation, China's customs department announced a suspension of imports of citrus fruits, chilled white striped hairtail and frozen horse mackerel from Taiwan, while its commerce ministry banned export of natural sand to Taiwan.

Taiwan Strait: A history of crisis since 1949

Ever since Communist China and Taiwan broke away from each other at the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949 the waterway separating them has been a tense geopolitical flashpoint. Just 130 kilometres wide at its narrowest point, the Taiwan Strait is a major international shipping channel and all that lies between now democratic, self-ruled Taiwan and its giant authoritarian neighbour. Historians pinpoint three previous moments when tensions within the Taiwan Strait boiled over into an acute crisis.

1st Taiwan Strait Crisis

At the end of the Chinese Civil War, Mao Zedong's communist forces had successfully pushed out Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists, who relocated to Taiwan. Two rivals stood on each side of the strait -- the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland and the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan. The First Taiwan Strait Crisis broke out in August 1954 when the Nationalists placed thousands of troops on Taiwan-ruled Kinmen and Matsu, two small islands just a few miles from the mainland. Communist China responded with artillery bombardments of the islands and the successful capture of the Yijiangshan Islands, about 400 kilometres north of Taipei. The crisis was eventually defused but nearly brought China and the United States to the brink of direct conflict.

2nd Taiwan Strait Crisis

Fighting broke out again in 1958 as Mao's forces conducted an intense bombardment of Kinmen and Matsu in a bid to once again dislodge Nationalist troops there. Concerned that the loss of those islands might lead to the collapse of the Nationalists and Beijing's eventual takeover of Taiwan, US President Dwight D Eisenhower ordered his military to escort and resupply their Taiwanese allies. At one point, the US even briefly considered deploying nuclear weapons against China. Unable to take the offshore islands or bombard the Nationalists into submission, Beijing announced a ceasefire. Mao's forces would still intermittently shell Kinmen up to 1979 but an otherwise tense stalemate set in.

3rd Taiwan Strait Crisis

It would be another 37 years before the next crisis. In those intervening decades, both China and Taiwan changed considerably. Following the death of Mao, China remained Communist Party-controlled but began a period of reform and opening up to the world. Taiwan, meanwhile, began shaking off the authoritarian years of Chiang Kai-shek and evolving into a progressive democracy, with many embracing a distinctly Taiwanese -- and not Chinese -- identity. Tensions exploded again in 1995 when China began test-firing missiles in the waters around Taiwan to protest a visit by Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui to his alma mater university in the United States. Beijing particularly loathed Lee because he favoured Taiwan declaring itself an independent state. Further missile tests were carried out a year later as Taiwan held its first direct presidential election. The display backfired. The US dispatched two aircraft carrier groups to push China into backing down and Lee won the election by a large margin. A year later, Newt Gingrich became the first US House Speaker to visit Taiwan, a precedent Pelosi is now following 25 years later.



China vows 'strong' countermeasures

**Beijing:** An infuriated China Wednesday vowed to take "strong and resolute" countermeasures against the US and Taiwan for violating the one-China principle, as US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi successfully completed her high-profile visit to Taipei disregarding Beijing's threatening statements and live-fire military drills. China views Taiwan as part of its territory, despite having never controlled it and has long vowed to reunify the island with the Chinese mainland, by force if necessary. Pelosi's trip to Taiwan has angered China. As the 82-year-old top Democrat left Taiwan, there were already signs of the strains her visit to Taipei had placed on Washington's testy relationship with Beijing -- which warned the Biden administration that her trip would have a "severe impact on the political foundation of China-US relations." Pelosi's successful visit to Taiwan has left questions about the efficacy of Beijing's high-voltage rhetoric ahead of her visit as it added more pressure to act after she left the island.

Intense military drills around Taiwan

Starting from the successful visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taipei, the Chinese military Wednesday conducted a series of naval-air joint drills around Taiwan amid speculation that it may be attempting a blockade of the self-ruled island. The drills featured the Navy, Air Force, Rocket Force, Strategic Support Force and Joint Logistic Support Force in the sea and air space north, southwest and southeast of the Taiwan island, the Eastern Theatre Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) said. The PLA will also conduct live-fire military drills from August 4 to 7 in six different areas that encircle the island of Taiwan from all directions, official media reports said. PLA drills around Taiwan will continue to rehearse reunification operations and the exercises to blockade the island will become routine, state-run Global Times reported.

YEAR'S 2ND HEATWAVE LEAVES PARIS SWELTERING



Beachgoers enjoy the beach in Le Pouldu-Goatland as a heat wave hits France

REUTERS

AGENCIES

**Paris, August 3:** Paris' regional authorities warned residents to be vigilant Wednesday, with temperatures soaring to 36 degrees Celsius. In a tweet, the Ile-de-France prefecture also asked residents to moderate their water consumption amid a "major dry spell."

Elsewhere in France, some 27 departments have now been placed on "orange alert" with a heat wave spreading mainly to the east of mainland France. Temperatures are set to hit up to 40 C in some places in the south. The heat will reach its peak Wednesday, and begin to decline Thursday.

This August heat wave episode should be shorter than that of July, according to the French weather agency.

UK PM poll rules changed amid ballot hacking alerts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, August 3:** Britain's governing Conservative Party Wednesday said it had modified the voting process for its members to elect a new party leader and Prime Minister, between former Chancellor Rishi Sunak and Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, after an alert from the country's spies warned that cyber hackers could change members' ballots.

It was initially planned that the voting process would have allowed members to choose whether to vote by post or online and then, if they changed their minds, use the alternative method to cancel out their previous vote.

But after advice from the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), the party headquarters decided to make changes that would result in a small delay to the process.

The postal ballot papers were to be mailed out from Monday but

Baloch insurgents claim downing army helicopter, killing 6

REUTERS

**Quetta (Pak), August 3:** Separatist insurgents in Pakistan's resource-rich Balochistan province said they shot down a military helicopter that went down during a flood relief operation Monday, killing all six on board including a top army commander.

A senior military official dismissed the insurgents' claim as propaganda and fake news. The military said the helicopter crashed during bad weather.

The Baloch Raaji Aajoi Sangar (BRAS), an umbrella group of Baloch insurgent groups, said in a statement sent to Reuters late Tuesday that its fighters shot down the low flying helicopter with an anti-aircraft weapon.

The group provided no evidence and Reuters could not independently verify the claim.

China kindergarten attack kills 3; 6 hurt



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Beijing, August 3:** Police in southern China are searching for a man who allegedly killed three people and injured six at a kindergarten in the country's southern province of Jiangxi Wednesday.

The 48-year-old suspect was identified by his surname Liu in a police statement. No further details of the Wednesday morning attack in the province's Anfu County were given in the brief statement.

China upgraded security at schools following a spate of deadly attacks in recent years attributed largely to people bearing grudges against society or who had unidentified mental illnesses.

China does not allow private gun ownership, so most such attacks are carried out with knives, homemade explosives or gasoline bombs. Around 100 children and adults have been killed and hundreds injured over the past decade in apparently uncoordinated, "lone wolf" attacks in which the motive was unclear and the overwhelmingly male assailants were either killed, ended their lives or were put on trial and executed.

Acts of violence against China's youth resonate especially strongly due to the country's chronically low birth rate, partly due to decades of population control policies.





The rupee-denominated sales will be a big, big advantage. I see in the next two months \$8-\$9 billion of trade with Russia and Sri Lanka

BVR SUBRAHMANYAM | TRADE SECRETARY

We are delighted to announce that Airtel will commence roll out of 5G services in August. We have signed 5G network agreements with Ericsson, Nokia and Samsung to commence deployment

GOPAL VITTAL | CEO, AIRTEL

CIL has dispatched 152.49 MT of coal to Power Sector in the first quarter of the current fiscal surpassing all the previous highs of the same period and achieving a growth of 19 per cent over last year in the same period

PRALHAD JOSHI | COAL MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Uber sells its 7.8% stake in Zomato

**Hong Kong:** Uber Technologies Wednesday sold its 7.8% stake in food delivery firm Zomato Ltd for \$392 million via a block deal on local exchanges, two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters. The Zomato block deal was executed at Rs 50.44 per share. Reuters reported Tuesday the offer size of the block deal was set to be for 612 million shares, according to its term sheet. As Reuters calculations, the stake sale by Uber was worth Rs 30.87 billion (\$392 million).

### July soyoil imports jump to record

**Mumbai:** India's soyoil imports in July more than doubled from a month ago to a record high as refiners ramped up purchases to take advantage of New Delhi's move to allow duty free imports of the vegetable oil to calm all-time high prices, five dealers said. The country's soyoil imports in July jumped 113% from a month ago to a record 493,000 tonne, according to the average estimate from five dealers with global trading firms that account for more than 80% of India's soyoil imports.

### NHAI debt stands at ₹3.49L-crore

**New Delhi:** The total outstanding debt of state-owned National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) stood at around Rs 3.49 lakh crore as of March 31, 2022, Parliament was informed Wednesday. In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said the fund required by NHAI for debt servicing in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 will be Rs 31,282 crore, Rs 31,909 crore and Rs 30,552 crore, respectively.

### Adani Power net surges manifold

**New Delhi:** Adani Power Limited Wednesday posted a manifold jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 4,779.86 crore in the quarter ended June 2022, on account of growth in income. The consolidated net profit of the company in the year-ago period was at Rs 278.22 crore, according to a regulatory filing. The company's total income rose to Rs 15,509 crore in the June quarter. It was at Rs 7,213.21 crore in the same period last year. Expenses stood at Rs 9,642.80 crore during the quarter under review compared to Rs 6,763.50 crore in the preceding fiscal.



India is now home to 75,000 startups in the 75th year of Independence and this is only the beginning. These numbers tell the power of a vision. A vision to see innovation & enterprise drive growth

PIYUSH GOYAL | UNION MINISTER

### INDIGO'S 'SWEET 16' ANNIVERSARY SALE

IndiGo airline launched a 'Sweet 16' anniversary sale for all its consumers flying on domestic routes August 3. The offer is to commemorate 16 years of flying by the airline. As per the offer, fares will start at Rs 1,616. The sale will be live for three days, from August 3 to 5, 2022. The discounted fares will be applicable for travel between August 18, 2022, till July 16, 2023



## RECORD TRADE DEFICIT

# ₹ dips after four days of gains

INDIA'S EXPORTS DIPPED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 17 MONTHS IN JULY, WHILE THE TRADE DEFICIT TRIPLED FUELLED BY OVER A 70 PER CENT RISE IN CRUDE OIL IMPORTS

REUTERS

**New Delhi, August 3:** The Indian rupee lost ground Wednesday after four straight sessions of gains as the country's ballooning trade deficit and uncertainty around the upcoming central bank decision dented its appeal.

The rupee slumped by 62 paise to close at 79.15 against the US dollar Wednesday, marking its worst single-day fall in the current fiscal as widening trade deficit and US-China tensions dented the investor sentiment.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened lower at 78.70 on Wednesday and fell further to the day's low of 79.21 as the dollar strengthened in the global markets.

India's provisional July trade deficit widened to \$31.02 billion from \$10.63 billion a year earlier, as the country spent more on crude oil and coal imports, a government official said Tuesday.

The gap between exports and imports widened to \$31.02 billion in July from \$26.18 billion in June. This, as a result of exports falling and elevated commodity prices together with a weak rupee, is inflating the import bill.

India's current account deficit (CAD) was around \$100 billion for the current fiscal year ending in March.

"The temporary relief we had seen on the back of a pullback in crude prices and a correction in the dollar index is over. We have to take



- July trade deficit widens to \$31.02bn from \$10.63bn last year
- Imports jumped 43.59% in July YoY, while exports dropped 0.76%
- Rupee tanks 62 paise to close below 79 mark; worst fall this year
- India's trade deficit likely to remain above \$20 billion: Barclays

domestic pressures into consideration," said Swati Arora, an economist with HDFC Bank.

Funding the current account will be a challenge and inflationary problems have not yet gone away, making risks skewed towards the downside, Arora added.

On Tuesday, the rupee rallied 53 paise - its best single-day gain in over 11 months - to close at an over one-month high of 78.53 against the US dollar.

No one wants to make big bets ahead of the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy decision Friday either as it is unclear what the size of the interest rate hike will be, a trader at a private bank said.

## GOVT CUTS FUEL EXPORT TAXES, HIKES TAX ON DOMESTIC CRUDE

**New Delhi:** The government has halved the windfall tax on the export of diesel and scrapped the levy on jet fuel (ATF) shipments but raised the tax on domestically produced crude oil. The tax on the export of diesel was cut to Rs 5 per litre from Rs 11, according to an official notification issued Tuesday evening. Export of petrol will continue to attract nil tax. The tax on domestically produced crude oil was hiked to Rs 17,750 per tonne from Rs 17,000, a move that will hit producers like ONGC and Vedanta Ltd. The cut in taxes - the second in as many weeks - came as India's trade gap swelled to a record. India first imposed windfall taxes July 1, joining a growing number of nations that taxes super normal profits of energy companies. But international oil prices have cooled since then, eroding profit margins at both oil producers and refiners.

## LIC breaks into Fortune 500 list, RIL up 51 places

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** Recently-listed Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has broken into the latest Fortune Global 500 list, while Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has jumped 51 places.

The nation's biggest life insurer with revenue of \$97.26 billion and a profit of \$53.8 million, was ranked 98th on the list. Reliance jumped 51 places to 104 on the 2022 list.

This is the first outing of LIC on the list, which ranks listed companies by sales. Reliance, with revenue of \$93.98 billion and a net profit of \$8.15 billion in the latest year, has been on the list for 19 years.

The list has nine Indian companies - five of them state-owned, and four from the private sector.

Indian Oil Corporation rose 28 places to 142nd rank while ONGC climbed 16 places to 190.

The list had two Tata group firms - Tata Motors at 370 and Tata Steel at 435th spot. Rajesh Exports at 437th rank. SBI climbed 17 places to rank 236th and BPCL 19 places to 295.

Walmart landed at No 1 for the ninth straight year, trailed by Amazon, which reached its highest ranking ever. Chinese energy giants State Grid, China National Petroleum, and Sinopec rounded out the top five.

# Sugarcane FRP hiked by ₹15/quintal for FY22-23

## INDIA HAS CROSSED BRAZIL IN SUGAR PRODUCTION IN THE CURRENT SUGAR MARKETING YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** The government Wednesday increased the minimum price that mills have to pay to sugarcane growers by Rs 15 to Rs 305 per quintal for the 2022-23 marketing year starting October.

The decision will benefit around 5 crore sugarcane farmers and their dependents, as well as about 5 lakh workers employed in sugar mills and related ancillary activities.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for the 2022-23 marketing year (October - September) at "Rs 305 per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10.25 per cent", an official statement said.

The cost of production of sugarcane for the 2022-23 marketing year is Rs 162 per quintal. A premium of Rs 3.05 per quintal will be provided for each 0.1 per cent increase in recovery over and above 10.25 per cent,

while there will be a reduction in FRP by Rs 3.05 per quintal for every 0.1 per cent decrease in recovery.

However, there would not be any deduction in the case of sugar mills where recovery is below 9.5 per cent. Such farmers are likely to get Rs 282.125 per quintal for sugarcane in 2022-23 as against Rs 275.50 per quintal in the current sugar season 2021-22.

The FRP of Rs 305 per quintal at a recovery rate of 10.25 per cent is higher by 88.3 per cent over the cost of production, thereby ensuring the promise of giving the farmers a return of more than 50 per cent over their cost. The FRP for sugar season 2022-23 is 2.6 per cent higher than the current sugar season 2021-22.

The government highlighted that it has increased FRP by more than 34 per cent in past eight years.

It has also introduced the concept of Minimum Selling Price (MSP) of sugar to prevent a fall in ex-mill prices of sugar and accumulation of cane arrears. The MSP is currently at Rs 31 per kg.

In the next 2022-23 marketing year, more than 3,600 lakh tonne of sugarcane are likely to be purchased by sugar mills worth more than Rs 1,20,000 crore. In the current 2021-22, out of cane dues payable of Rs 1,15,196 crore, about Rs 1,05,322 crore have been paid to farmers, as of August 1.

The govt also said that India has surpassed Brazil in sugar production in the current sugar marketing year. In the last four seasons of 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 & 2020-21, about 6 lakh tonne, 38 lakh tonne, 58.60 lakh tonne and 70 lakh tonne of sugar have been exported, respectively.



## Malabar gives scholarships to over 215 girls

BHUBANESWAR:

Malabar Gold and Diamonds, one of the largest gold and diamond retail chains in the country, organised a CSR event at Kamala Nehru Women's College, Unit 1, Bhubaneswar August 3 to distribute scholarships to female students as part of the group's CSR initiative. The chief guest for the event was Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das. Other dignitaries present were Anant Narayan Jena, MLA, Central Bhubaneswar; Rajkishore Das, Corporator; Aasia Begum, Corporator; Susant Kumar Patnaik, Principal, Kamala Nehru Women's College; Ashnaf Store Head, Malabar; Siddheswar Rathia, Odisha Business Head, Malabar and key members from management team and teachers. Over 215 girl applicants were identified for scholarships worth Rs 17,64,000 on merit basis. Since 2007, Malabar Group has supported education programmes for girls and provided scholarships to female students studying in government colleges, with financial assistance amounting to Rs 6,000 to Rs 10,000 each year for intermediate first year students. In the last five years, the group has awarded scholarships worth nearly Rs 25.83 crore to over 53,971 girl students in India.

## UCO Bank inks MoU with state government



Cum-Secretary, Department of Mission Shakti, Government of Odisha July 26 for engaging Women SHG Members as Business Correspondent Agents as a last mile delivery of banking services in Unbanked & Underbanked GPs in the State. The other dignitaries present on the occasion include Ranjeet Singh, General Manager, Financial Inclusion, UCO Bank; Binod Kumar Jena, Joint Secretary to Govt and Lingaraj Nayak, Incharge of SLBC, Odisha.

**BHUBANESWAR:** Ishraq Ali Khan, Executive Director, UCO Bank, Head Office, Kolkata visited Odisha from July 26 to July 28. In his presence, an MoU was signed by Goutam Patra, General Manager & Zonal Head, Bhubaneswar and Sujata R Kartikeyan, Commissioner-

# Easing raw material costs promising for FMCG cos

Despite fall in raw material costs, Indian retail prices in June were 7.01% higher than a year earlier, compared with the central bank's inflation tolerance band of 2% to 6%

REUTERS

**New Delhi, August 3:** Softening commodity prices are holding out hope for Indian consumer-goods firms that have struggled with inflation, particularly in the large but price-sensitive rural market.

Prices of palm oil, a key ingredient for many food products, detergents and cosmetics, are down 32% from a record peak hit in March.



Another key input is energy, the price of which also drives other costs. Crude oil prices have fallen from peaks of over \$120 a barrel to around \$100 a barrel.

Still, Indian retail prices in June were 7.01% higher than a year earlier, compared with the central bank's inflation tolerance band of

2% to 6%. While reporting a 4.5% fall in second-quarter profit and higher expenses, Nestle India said July 28 it could see softening of prices in such commodities as edible oil and packaging materials.

A week earlier, Unilever's India unit said a softening of commodi-

ties prices augured well. If the improvement persisted, it would improve the company's margins from quarter to quarter beginning late this year.

Price rises have particularly hit demand in rural areas, a key market for all Indian consumer goods companies. To overcome this, firms have resorted to selling in smaller, cheaper units, such as reduced packages.

But rural markets are beginning to turn the corner, according to market analytics firm NielsenIQ. "Urban markets have turned towards a positive consumption growth, and rural markets are following closely," Satish Pillai, managing director for India at NielsenIQ, said in a statement.

NielsensIQ forecast the consumer goods industry would grow 8% to 10% in 2022.

# DRI DETECTS ₹2,217CR DUTY EVASION BY VIVO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 3:** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has detected customs duty evasion of around Rs 2,217 crore by smartphone maker Vivo India, a subsidiary of China-based Vivo Communication Technology, a Finance Ministry statement issued Wednesday said.

During the investigation, searches were conducted by DRI officers at the factory premises of Vivo India, which led to the recovery of incriminating evidence indicating willful misdeclaration in the description of certain items imported by it for use in the manufacture of mobile phones, it said.

This misdeclaration resulted in wrongful availment of ineligible

duty exemption benefits by Vivo India, amounting to Rs 2,217 crore, the statement said.

After completion of the investigation, a show cause notice has been issued to Vivo India demanding customs duty amounting to Rs 2,217 crore, under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962, it added.

Recently, in another set of investigations by DRI, show-cause notices demanding a duty of Rs 4,403.88 crore were issued to Oppo Mobiles India Private Limited.





# HISTORIC BRONZE FOR GHOSAL

WORLD NO.15 BECOMES FIRST INDIAN TO CLAIM A SINGLES MEDAL IN SQUASH AT THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Birmingham, August 3:** Breaking a long-standing jinx, Saurav Ghosal Wednesday claimed India's first ever singles medal in squash – a bronze – at the Commonwealth Games here.

World No.15 Ghosal dominated the contest against England's James Willstrop from beginning to end, winning 11-6, 11-1, 11-4 in the bronze

playoff. It is Ghosal's second CWG medal, having won a mixed doubles silver with Dipika Pallikal in the 2018 Gold Coast edition. The 35-year-old Ghosal proved too strong for his opponent as he out-classed the Englishman in all aspects of the game, from court coverage to placement of his shots. Ghosal had lost the men's singles semi-final 3-0 (11-9, 11-4, 11-1) to New Zealand's Paul Coll.

Earlier in the day, the mixed doubles pair of veteran Joshna Chinappa and Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu progressed to the pre-quarterfinals.

The immensely experienced Chinappa and her partner Sandhu downed Sri Lanka's Yeheni Kuruppu and Ravindu Laksiri 8-11, 11-4, 11-3. The Indians were a bit shaky initially and ended up conceding the first game.

## Para discus thrower Pillai tests Covid +ve

**BIRMINGHAM:** Para discus thrower Aneesh Kumar Pillai Wednesday tested positive for COVID-19, forcing him to miss his competition in the Birmingham Games. Pillai was supposed to take part in the F44 discus throw final. "He is asymptomatic but has tested COVID positive. The CGF did not clear his participation as his CT value is on the higher side. It is really unfortunate as he had his final today," a para official of the Indian contingent told PTI. Earlier, women's hockey player Navjot Kaur had to fly back home after contracting the virus. Two India women's cricketers, S Meghana and Pooja Vastrakar, had tested positive in India ahead of the Games but have now joined the team.

However, they quickly turned things around and made a strong comeback to bag the next two games without breaking much sweat.

Sunayna Kuruvilla also defeated Fung-A-Fat of Guyana in the women's squash singles plate final. Sunayna downed her Guyanese opponent 11-7, 13-11, 11-2 in what turned out to be a comfortable victory for the 23-year-old squash player.

"It is a delight to see Saurav Ghosal scaling new heights of success. The Bronze medal he's won in Birmingham is a very special one. Congratulations to him. May his achievements help boost the popularity of squash among India's youth," tweeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi with photo of the player.

# Lovepreet lifts bronze medal on CWG debut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Birmingham, August 3:** India's Lovepreet Singh won a bronze in men's 109 kg to continue the country's medal rush in weightlifting at the CWG here Wednesday.

The 24-year-old son of a tailor from Amritsar lifted a personal best of 355 kg, including a new national record of 192 kg in clean and jerk, to finish third on the podium.

A steady Lovepreet improved from 157kg to 163kg in his final attempt of snatch to be joint second with Canadian Pierre-Alexandre Bessette. However, the intense competition got the better of him in the clean and jerk, as he slipped to third position.

Junior Nyabeyeu of Cameroon claimed the gold medal with a total lift of 361 kg, while Jack Opeloge of Samoa bagged the silver by lifting 358 kg in the event.

Lovepreet could have joined his father's business, but his family wanted to make him a sportsman, and his journey began at the age of 13 by training at the DAV Ground.

Life changed after the heavy-weight lifter joined Indian Navy in 2015, and then moved to the national camp at Patiala. He went on to win the 2017 Commonwealth Junior Championship, and in the same year, bagged a bronze at the Asian Junior Championship.

In his maiden CWG, he had successful lifts in all his attempts in both snatch and clean-jerk, displaying his composure.

Like Vikas Thakur, Lovepreet



**I COULD NOT HAVE BEEN HAPPIER. THIS WAS MY FIRST BIG COMPETITION AT THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE AND I PRODUCED MY BEST EVER SHOW TO RETURN WITH A MEDAL**

LOVEPREET SINGH

also did the 'thigh-five' celebration to pay tribute to the late Punjabi singer Sidhu Moose Wala, with his songs playing in the background.

India have so far won nine medals in the weightlifting arena at the National Exhibition Centre, including three gold, to lead standings in the discipline. They have two more events lined up.

# NITU, HUSSAMUDDIN ASSURE INDIA MEDALS



Mohammad Hussamuddin



Nitu Ghanghas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Birmingham, August 3:** Nitu Ghanghas showed her ferocity to demolish Northern Ireland's Nicole Clyde in the women's 48kg category and assure India their first boxing medal at the ongoing CWG here Wednesday.

Soon after Mohammad Hussamuddin defeated Tryagain Morning Ndevelo of Namibia in a 4-1 split verdict to advance into the semifinals of the men's 57kg and fetch his second consecutive CWG medal.

The 28-year-old from Nizamabad had won bronze in Gold Coast four years ago. Hussamuddin had to work hard for the win as it was a fiercely contested bout and could have gone either way. Earlier, the 21-year-old Nitu dominated the

first two rounds against Clyde before the bout was abandoned with the outcome only going one way.

Making her CWG debut, Nitu had big shoes to fill in the weight category of the great MC Mary Kom, who injured herself during the selection trials held before the mega event.

The Indian contingent had trained in Ireland before coming to Birmingham and that helped Nitu in the fight against Clyde. The Strandja Memorial gold medallist doesn't have any role models and is also not into watching videos of other boxers.

## NIKHAT THROUGH

Later on the day, Nikhat Zareen, the reigning World Champion, produced a dominating 5-0 unanimous decision win over Helen Jones of Wales in the light flyweight (50kg) quarterfinals.

# India eves reach semifinals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Birmingham, August 3:** The Indian women's hockey team survived some anxious moments before beating lower-ranked Canada 3-2 in their must-win Pool A match to qualify for the semifinals of the Commonwealth Games here Wednesday.

The Indians looked in control of the match till the 22nd minute, having taken a 2-0 lead over their World No.15 opponents through goals from Salima Tete (third minute) and Navneet Kaur (22nd).

But the Canadians, then, produced a lion-hearted performance to level the scores through goals from Brienne Stairs (23rd) and Hannah Haughn (39th).

## INDIA MEN ROUT CANADA

Harmanpreet Singh and Akashdeep Singh scored a brace each as the Indian men's hockey team thrashed Canada 8-0 in their third match and jump to the top of Pool B at the CWG Wednesday.

Harmanpreet (7th, 54th minute) converted two penalty corners while Akashdeep Singh (38th, 60th) scored two fine field goals. Amit Rohidas (10th), Lalit Upadhyay (20th), Gurjant Singh (27th) and Mandeep Singh (58th) were the other goal scorers for India.

## SHUTTLERS SETTLE FOR SILVER

Kidambi Srikanth came up with an underwhelming performance as India succumbed 1-3 to Malaysia and settled for a silver in the mixed



Indian players celebrate a goal against Canada, Wednesday

team badminton event at the CWG Tuesday. Srikanth lost to lower-ranked Tze Yong Ng 19-21, 21-6, 16-21 to put the defending champions on the backfoot in the final.

Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty failed to keep pace with the ultra attacking Olympic bronze medallists duo of Teng Fong Aaron Chia and Wooi Yik Soh, losing 21-18, 21-15. In the women's singles, PV Sindhu had to toil hard against the 60th ranked Goh Jin Wei before sealing the match 22-20, 21-17.

The World No.11 duo of Thinaah Muralitharan and Koong Le Pearly Tan defeated Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly in the women's doubles 21-18, 21-17.

## 3 FROM SL TEAM MISSING

The Sri Lankan contingent at the CWG has asked its athletes and officials to submit their passports after three members of the touring party disappeared from their respective villages.

Sri Lanka, which is facing a huge economic crisis, had picked a 161-member contingent, including 51 officials, for the Games.

The Commonwealth Games Federation and Sri Lanka Cricket have funded the athletes' participation. Sri Lankan team press attache Gobinath Sivarajah confirmed to PTI that a judoka, a wrestler and the judo manager have disappeared.

# Judoka Tulika in final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Birmingham, August 3:** India's Tulika Mann booked her berth in the women's 78kg final to be assured of a medal at the CWG here Wednesday.

The 22-year-old, a four-time national champion, trailed in the match initially but performed an 'Ippon' to humble New Zealand's Sydnee Andrews within three minutes in the semifinal match. Tulika will now face Scotland's Sarah Adlington in the final.

This is India's third medal in Judo at the showpiece event. L Shushila Devi and Vijay Kumar had claimed a silver and bronze in women's 48kg and men's 60kg respectively Monday.

## Comfortable victories

Mridul Borgohain won both his men's singles matches while the women's pair of Lovely Choubey

and Nayanmoni Saikia won one and drew another in the lawn bowl events, Wednesday.

Borgohain first humbled Chris Locke of Falkland Islands 21-5 in his second round match and then beat Scotland's Iain McLean 21-19. Borgohain will be up against Ross Davis. Choubey and Saikia defeated Hina Rereiti and Olivia Buckingham of Niue 23-6 but tied their round three match against South Africa 16-16. The

Meanwhile, the men's fours team comprising Sunil Bahadur (lead), Navneet Singh (second), Chandan Kumar Singh (third) and Dinesh Kumar (skip) defeated Cook Islands 20-10 in round two for their second win.

The Indian women's triples team of Tania Choudhary (lead), Pinki (second) and Rupa Rani Tirkey (skip) defeated Niue 28-7 in the third round.



# Surya helps India beat West Indies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Basseterre (St Kitts & Nevis), August 3:** Suryakumar Yadav (76, 44b, 8x4, 4x6) gave an exhibition of his incredible hitting skills with a superb knock as India cantered to a seven-wicket win against the West Indies in the third T20I here Tuesday.

India now lead the five-match series 2-1 with the cricket caravan moving to USA's Florida for the last two games of the series. While more than 147 had never been chased in a T20I at the Warner Park ground, Surya decided to alter that script as India made a short work of the 165-run target in 19 overs.

Shreyas Iyer (24) was an ideal partner at the other end in a stand of 86 as they made the target look way easier than it actually was and that too on a surface which exactly didn't look batting-friendly during the first part of the game.

Having had a brief dry spell after his maiden T20I hundred at Nottingham, Suryakumar was back in his element and this time in an unfamiliar role as an opener, which he has been performing during the series.

It was another 360 degree effort



**INDIA'S OWN 'MR 360':** Suryakumar Yadav is in an unorthodox position after playing a shot during his innings, Tuesday

which showed his flexibility, skill and hand-eye coordination, all in one go. There was a picture-perfect lofted six over extra cover off Alzarri Joseph, which will be difficult to forget as he held his pose for several seconds after execu-

tion.

At the half-way stage, the score was 96 for no loss despite skipper Rohit Sharma (11) retiring hurt with a back muscle pull. By the time Suryakumar was dismissed, India had the match under con-

**Suryakumar Yadav has moved three spots up to the second position in the latest T20 rankings for batters. He also moved within two rating points of top-ranked batter Babar Azam (Pakistan)**

trol with Rishabh Pant (33 n o) providing finishing touches.

It was after Rohit won a good toss and opted to field. His bowling unit maintained discipline for the better part before Avesh Khan (0/47) and Arshdeep Singh's (1/33) relative inexperience saw West Indies put up a competitive 164/5. Kyle Mayers (73, 50b, 8x4, 4x6) was the top scorer for the hosts, while Bhuvneshwar Kumar (2/35) and Hardik Pandya (1/19) were excellent with the ball for India.

**BRIEF SCORES:** West Indies 164/5 (Kyle Mayers 73; Bhuvneshwar Kumar 2/35, Hardik Pandya 1/19) lost to India 165/3 (Suryakumar Yadav 76, Rishabh Pant 33 n o; Akeal Hosein 1/28) by 7 wickets.

# Indian mixed relay team secures silver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Cali (Colombia), August 3:** The Indian mixed 4x400 relay team clinched a silver medal by bettering their own Asian record time in the final of the World U-20 Athletics Championships here.

The Indian quartet of Barath Sridhar, Priya Mohan, Kapil and Rupal Chaudhary clocked 3 minutes and 17.67 seconds to finish behind USA (3:17.69) Tuesday night.

The Indian team bettered their

own earlier Asian record of 3:19.62 set here a day earlier during the heats. The new timing of 3:17.67 is the second best (in juniors) in the all time list in the event, behind USA's. Jamaica took the bronze in 3:19.98.

This was India's second consecutive medal in mixed 4x400m relay at the World U-20 Athletics Championships after the bronze at the last edition in Nairobi in 2021, where the event was introduced for the first time.



**JOB DONE:** (From L) Rupal Chaudhary, Kapil, Priya Mohan and Barath Sridhar pose with their medals

# Humpy, Vaishali shine in India 'A' win over Georgia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mamallapuram, August 3:** India's top player Koneru Humpy and R Vaishali led the women's 'A' team to a 3-1 win over a strong Georgian side in the sixth round of the 44th Chess Olympiad here Wednesday.

In the Open section, teenaged Grandmaster D Gukesh notched up a sixth consecutive win, but India 'B' went down 1.5-2.5 to former champions Armenia.

The India 'C' team recorded an emphatic 3.5-0.5 win over Lithuania as SP Sethuraman, Abhijeet Gupta and Abhimanyu Puranik beat their opponents and the experienced Surya Shekhar Ganguly drew against Titas Stremavicius.

Humpy defeated Nana Dzagnidze in 42 moves, Vaishali scored a win over Lela Javakhshvili, while D Harika and Tania Sachdev settled for draws against Nino Batsiashvili and Salome Melia in the clash between the top-seeded India 'A' and No.3 seeds Georgia.

In the Open event, top-ranked USA defeated Iran, while Australia stunned the Magnus Carlsen-led Norway, ranked No.3.