



STARTLING REVELATION

Actor Deepika Padukone reveals that she once contemplated to end life after suffering from depression

LEISURE P2



CHINA SANCTIONS PELOSI

China Friday announced sanctions on Nancy Pelosi in retaliation to her visit to Taiwan this week

INTERNATIONAL P10



MANIKA, SREEJA THROUGH

Indian paddlers Manika Batra and Sreeja Akula entered the women's singles quarterfinals in TT event of the CWG

SPORTS P12

MPs to elect next V-P today

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 5: Members of Parliament will vote Saturday to elect the next Vice President of India in an election where NDA candidate Jagdeep Dhankhar is pitted against Opposition pick Margaret Alva.

With numbers stacked in favour of the NDA, Dhankhar, former Governor of West Bengal, is set for an easy win.

Cracks were visible in Opposition unity as Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress decided to abstain from voting alleging lack of consultations while deciding on the name of Alva.

The 80-year-old Alva is a Congress veteran and has served as Governor of Rajasthan, while the 71-year-old Dhankhar is a Jat leader from Rajasthan with socialist background.

While polling will be held from 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, the ballots will be counted immediately after that. By late Saturday evening, the returning officer will announce the name of the next Vice President.

Members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, including nominated members, are eligible to vote in the vice presidential poll.

The term of incumbent M Venkaiah Naidu ends August 10. The Vice President is also the chairperson of Rajya Sabha.

TWO IN A ROW FOR INDIA



India celebrate their 5-2 victory over Bangladesh in the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) U-20 Championship final, claiming the title for the second consecutive time, at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Friday (Report on P12)

CM TO VISIT DELHI TODAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will embark on a three-day visit to New Delhi from Saturday to attend two important meetings.

According to officials, the CM will leave for the national capital Saturday morning. He is scheduled to attend the meeting of the National Committee on 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' August 6.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and various members of the National Committee including, Lok Sabha Speaker, Governors, Union Ministers, Chief Ministers, political leaders, officials, media personalities, spiritual leaders, artists and film personalities, and eminent persons from other walks of life will likely attend the meeting.

Patnaik will also attend the seventh NITI Ayog's Governing Council Meeting August 7, before returning to the state the following day at 11 am. Prime Minister Modi will chair the meeting.

The agenda of the meeting, inter alia, includes crop diversification and achieving self-sufficiency in oilseeds and pulses and agri-communities; implementation of the National Education Policy-school education; implementation of the National Education Policy-higher education; and urban governance, sources said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



... plus GST

| MARKET WATCH | | |
|--------------|----------|-----------|
| INDEX | | VARIATION |
| SENSEX | 58387.93 | ▲ 89.13 |
| NIFTY | 17397.50 | ▲ 15.50 |
| DOLLAR | 79.83 | ▼ ₹0.13 |
| EURO | 80.63 | ▼ ₹0.47 |
| GOLD | ₹51,893 | ▼ ₹272 |
| SILVER | ₹57,465 | ▼ ₹517 |

| WEATHER | | |
|----------|----------------------|--------|
| | BHUB | CTK |
| TEMP MAX | 32.1°C | 33.0°C |
| TEMP MIN | 25.6°C | 25.5°C |
| Humidity | 92% | 86% |
| Rainfall | 0.9mm | 5.8mm |
| | Generally cloudy sky | |

EMIs to rise further

RBI hikes key interest rate by 50 basis points, the third straight increase since May, in an effort to cool stubbornly high inflation

AGENCIES

Mumbai, August 5: Home, auto and other loan EMIs are set to rise further after RBI Friday raised the key interest rate by 50 basis points, the third straight increase since May in an effort to cool stubbornly high inflation.

The increase in lending rate or the repurchase rate (repo) by 50 bps to 5.40 per cent is 25 bps higher than the pre-pandemic repo level.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das signalled that the second straight half-point hike wasn't the end of the rate tightening regime and more may come to tame inflation that has for six months stayed above the comfort zone of 6 per cent.

The central bank however did not revise its existing economic growth or inflation forecast despite indications of a global slowdown, recessionary conditions in developed economies, and the moderation already witnessed in commodity prices.

"Inflationary pressures are broad-based and core inflation remains elevated. Inflation is projected to remain above the upper tolerance level of 6 per cent through the first



If you look all around, 50 bps (hike) has become the new normal and a large number of central banks are now hiking by 75-to-100 bps. So there is a tendency that 75-to-100 bps will take over 50 bps. But in RBI, we take a very calibrated and measured view...

three quarters of 2022-23, entailing the risk of destabilising inflation expectations and triggering second-round effects," Das said.

RBI said the volatility in the global market is leading to imported inflation. The spillover from geopolitical shocks has resulted in uncertainty in the inflation trajectory. Global commodity, metal and food prices have eased from recent peaks, how-

The lending rate of 5.40 per cent is 25 bps higher than the pre-pandemic repo level

Despite this sharp hike, RBI expects inflation to remain above its comfort zone and has retained CPI inflation forecast at 6.7 per cent for current fiscal year

RBI expects India's GDP growth to remain strong at 7.2 per cent in FY23

ever, they still remain elevated.

Since May, the central bank has cumulatively raised interest rate by 140 bps in its effort to contain inflation. Despite this sharp hike, RBI expects inflation to remain above its comfort zone and has retained CPI inflation forecast at 6.7 per cent for current fiscal year. RBI expects India's GDP growth to remain strong at 7.2 per cent in FY23.

The RBI's six-member rate-setting panel voted unanimously on the rate hike decision while sticking to its resolve to withdraw the accommodative stance.

The monetary policy committee (MPC) believes "calibrated withdrawal of monetary policy accommodation is warranted to keep inflation expectations anchored and contain the second-round effects," Das said.

On the rupee depreciating against the US dollar, he said at a 4.7 per cent decline, the rupee fared much better than several reserve currencies as well as many of its EME and Asian peers.

"The depreciation of the Indian rupee is more on account of the appreciation of the US dollar rather than weakness in macroeconomic fundamentals of the Indian economy. Market interventions by the RBI have helped in containing volatility and ensuring the orderly movement of the rupee," he said.

Das said the RBI will remain watchful and maintain the stability of the rupee. The Indian economy has been impacted by the global economic situation and is grappling with the problem of high inflation.

Govt asks depts to fill up vacant posts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The state government Friday asked its departments and recruiting agencies to expedite the recruitment process to fill up the vacant posts of various grades and cadres.

Holding a high-level meeting with senior officials, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra directed the departments to expedite the recruitment process for regular posting in vacant positions.

The government recruiting bodies like the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC), the Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC), the Odisha Subordinate Staff Selection Commission (OSSSC), and the Odisha Police Recruitment Board (OPRB) were advised to expedite the process of examination and selection.

They were also asked to quickly recommend the list of candidates already selected for appointment by respective departments.

In the post-Covid scenario, the state government has waived application and examination fees for different posts and services. The upper age limit for entry into government service was also enhanced from 32 to 38 years for

- Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra directs departments to expedite recruitment process for regular posting in vacant positions
- A good number of junior engineers, stenographers, SIs of excise, data entry operators, block social security officers, auditors, RIs, ARIs, amins, forest guards, excise constables, nursing officers, and livestock inspectors would be recruited
- Officers in Odisha civil service cadre, assistant professors for medical colleges, assistant agriculture officers, post graduate teachers, geologists, and assistant professor of government colleges would be recruited soon

advertisements already made/to be made during three calendar years - 2021, 2022 and 2023. Concomitantly, upper age limit for the reserved categories was also enhanced as per the prescribed norms.

According to sources, in 2021-22 and 2022-23 (till the date), 2,848 officers were recruited through OPSC; 2555 officers were recruited through OSSC; and 10,351 officers were recruited through OSSSC.

Woman throws four-year-old daughter to death from 4th floor

AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 5: In a tragic incident, a mother killed her four-year-old daughter by throwing her from the fourth floor of an apartment building in the heart of Bangalore, as the child was reportedly mentally challenged, police said Friday.

The incident happened at Sampangiramanagar Thursday afternoon and the mother too tried to kill herself after throwing the child, but was rescued by the neighbours, they said. A CCTV camera installed in the apartment has captured the incident.

"On receiving the information, we went to the hospital and during inquiry we were told that the child

had fallen from the terrace. On detailed investigation, we came to know that the mother purposely threw her daughter, who succumbed to injuries late last night. The mother has been booked for murder and arrested. Further procedures are on," DCP Central Division Bangalore R Srinivas Gowda said.

Speaking to reporters, he said prima facie it has come across that the mother is said to have committed the crime citing the child was mentally challenged and it is being investigated further.

The mother is said to be a dentist, but was not practising and the father is a software engineer, police said, adding that based on the father's complaint further probe is on.

Prisoners for 10 years should be released on bail: SC

Bench of Justices SK Kaul and MM Sundresh says that in collaboration with state governments, the Centre can come up with a uniform remission policy

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 5: The Supreme Court Friday reiterated that prisoners, especially from the weaker economic social milieu, who have been languishing in jail for 10 years, should be released on bail, and since the country is celebrating 75 years of Independence, some action in this direction should be taken by both Central and state governments.

A bench of Justices SK Kaul and MM Sundresh said prisoners who are languishing in jail for 10 years should be released on bail and prisoners who have been in jail for 14 years, should be considered for remission.

It suggested developing a uniform remission policy, if possible, for all state governments and in cases where state governments have an objection to grant bail to some accused, who have spent 10 years or more in prison, those matters could be examined separately.

We are celebrating 75 years of Independence, why can't some action be taken by state governments... it is an appropriate time to look into the issue where an accused has been languishing in jail for a long period of time, from the weaker economic social milieu...



Justice Kaul said: "We are celebrating 75 years of Independence, why can't some action be taken by state governments... it is an appropriate time to look into the issue where an accused has been languishing in jail for a long period of time, from the weaker economic social milieu... Accused who have been charged with a single crime."

proper time to look into the issue where an accused has been languishing in jail for a long period of time, from the weaker economic social milieu... Accused who have been charged with a single crime."

He added that the Central government could initiate a discussion with the state governments in cases where the period in custody has exceeded a certain part of the

maximum sentence, for example one-third of the sentence. Justice Kaul also emphasised that good behaviour of the prisoner should be considered as a condition for their release, which would unburden the trial courts in many cases.

The bench pointed at plea bargain, which is much prevalent in the US, but added that sometimes it may not work, as the social stigma of conviction may force the accused to not accept the guilt. "Trial courts may use it usefully," it noted.

Justice Kaul pointed out that if every case has to be tried till the end, and if every case has to go to appeal and be heard by the apex court, then it may take several hundred years to tackle pendency. "Out of box thinking is required," he said.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today will be a very romantic day for you. Ganesha says you will be faced with many temptations, and you may forget that your wishes are not being reciprocated. If your relationships are in troubled waters, you will get some hints about pending matters.

TAURUS

You may, this day, get your moods ruffled, your emotions hurt. Emotionally you are likely to be too touchy and, therefore, vulnerable. Ganesha sees you being grouchy and upset throughout the morning. Later, however, the clouds of gloom will disperse and you will gradually regain your exuberance.

GEMINI

Today, luck is on your side. In the afternoon, you will remain reserved and subdued. But as the day progresses, you will be a different person altogether. You will transform into an enterprising and outgoing person. At work, you will impress your bosses with your brilliance, predicts Ganesha.

CANCER

Your day will revolve around your spouse and matters related to him/her. Thanks to the love and warmth that he/she will shower on you, you may not want to go to work, and you would expect the same from him/her. Don't push it, unless both of you can take a break from work without any harm done to your day's tasks. A good day to plan a mini-vacation.

LEO

Ganesha foresees that today, you will be gripped by the desire to shop till you drop, even if it means having to spend a small fortune from your hard-earned savings! You have no problem with that, especially if all the money-spending is being undertaken to please your sweetheart.

VIRGO

All you have to do is start what you intend to do, and its success will automatically fall in. Such is the day today for you, says Ganesha. Financial transactions will be rewarding. However, the day may not be as exciting as you expect. But then again, don't expect - just go with the flow, says Ganesha.

LIBRA

Remember back when you were a kid? Maybe you don't, not everything at least. But don't worry, today, in all probability, you shall have a new revelation about your childhood. At work, you will demonstrate exactly who you are through your intelligence. In this same honest vein, you will express your sincerest feelings and emotions to your loved ones, says Ganesha.

SCORPIO

Keep as much distance as possible from partnerships and JVs, advises Ganesha. At work, your experience will be enough to manage huge projects. Today you are set to emerge as a better manager of large pools of people, and guide them on the lines of your imagination and decisiveness.

SAGITTARIUS

Actions speaking louder than words could never have been truer for you than it is today. Let the force of your actions do the talking. You may find yourself working on personality development and self-improvement later in the day. While some of your actions will be channelled to renovating your abode, still others may initiate constructing your dream home.

CAPRICORN

It is time again for that once-in-blue-moon mood swing. You will be easily irked by everyday activities and may let small, less important things bother you too much, foresees Ganesha. But the darkest hour is just before dawn. Things should start looking up later in the day.

AQUARIUS

If you're a boss - at work or at home - you may not feel like one today. Your workload will be back-breaking. However, Ganesha says it will pay off very soon. Your competency will inspire subordinates, and your reputation will be augmented by your committed approach.

PISCES

You have been ruminating on your past performance for quite some time now, and today will be the day when you attempt to better it, says Ganesha. Your peers may try to outwit you, but you will manage to pre-empt them with consummate skill. Meditative techniques will help you remain calm.



CARA DELEVINGNE TO TEACH ABOUT SEX IN DOCUMENTARY

Model-turned-actress Cara Delevingne will be diving into some of the biggest questions about sexuality in an upcoming new documentary titled *Planet Sex with Cara Delevingne* for Hulu.

THE FLASH RACES AHEAD OF EZRA CONTROVERSIES

As controversies continue to swirl around actor Ezra Miller over allegations of abuse compounded with other legal troubles, the makers of his upcoming film *The Flash* confirmed that the film will hit theatres as planned. The actor was arrested on charges of disorderly conduct and second-degree assault.



‘Body is not the only thing that defines you’

Though Shikha Talsania, daughter of veteran Hindi film actor Tiku Talsania, started off as a floor producer and then managed careers of several top actors, she went on to appear in some 10 mainstream films and a couple of web series. The ‘Veere Di Wedding’ actress was in the city to perform in ‘One on One’, a unique collection of seven plays, which was staged Friday at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar. The emerging actress took some time off to speak to **Orissa POST**. Excerpts:

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

■ **After working in more than 10 films and web series, which character that you've played is closest to your heart?**

■ All of them are but I do have a special place for the character I portray in the Dulhaniya segment of this anthology One on One. I really enjoy performing it. This



Shikha Talsania

play showcases the dilemma of a modern girl.

■ **What sort of roles fascinates you?**

■ I want to play roles those I haven't performed yet. As a professional actor, I am always ready to get into the skin of a character.

■ **What is something that you want desperately to explore?**

■ I would like to try something with my hands, maybe pottery or some art that comes into my area of interest area. Life's all about uncertainties, I would never know what interests me tomorrow, it could be astrology.

■ **What according to you defines an individual?**

■ Everybody who's older than me, younger than me, men, women, non-binary, and humans, has issues with their bodies and body type and that is not the only thing that defines you. There are so many things about you that you're going to be remembered for, your actions, your values.

I was suicidal at times: Deepika

Mumbai: Actress Deepika Padukone has come out again about suffering from depression a few years ago.

In an event in Mumbai, the Om Shanti Om actress opened up about her battle with depression few years ago and how she would always put up a brave front for her parents who would visit her in Mumbai. She also added that even now, she does the same.

Talking about what she went through while suffering from depression, Deepika said, "I would break down for no apparent reason. There were days when I wouldn't want to wake up; I would just sleep because sleep was an escape. I was suicidal at times". She used to behave normal in front of her parents. The Bajirao Mastani actress revealed, "My parents live in Bangalore so every time they visited me, even now when they visit me, I always put on a brave front that everything's okay. You always want to show your parents that you are fine." IANS



Seven-play anthology *One on One* spellbinds City theatre aficionados

The event was part of an initiative taken by City-based Zain Foundation Trust to raise funds for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Bhubaneswar: Seven plays, written by seven eminent playwrights, were performed here by six of the finest actors of Mumbai film/theatre circle to a packed Rabindra Mandap auditorium. City theatre lovers couldn't have asked for a better presentation to get the worth of their tickets.

Titled *One on One* and produced and directed by Rage Productions of Mumbai, the event comprising a collection of seven short plays was organised by Bhubaneswar-based Zain Foundation Trust under its annual fundraiser for the people suffering from Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The ensemble cast included eminent theatre and film artiste Rajit Kapur; film actor Vrajesh Hirjee, film actress Shikha Talsania and *Permanent Roommates* fame actor Sumeet Vyas.

The first play of the evening was *Game, Set(ing) & Match*. The 13-minute English language mono act, performed by Vrajesh Hirjee, showcased an American Desi boy who is invited to meet a prospective bride, but ends up getting Jignesh, a groom. The play was written by Farhad Soraabjee and directed by Rajit Kapur.

The second play of the evening was also in English. Titled *Dear Richard*, again an mono act play performed by Rajit Kapur, was about an angry and exhausted airline traveller who writes an open letter to the owner of Virgin Airlines on the state of inedible food. The play was written by Oliver Beale, adapted by Nasir Khan & Akarsh Khurana and directed by Nadir Khan.

Hindi play *TC Rashbehari* was performed by Gagandeve Riar. The protagonist, a ticket collector, was slapped many times in the past but today he was upset as he feels that he was punished for none of his faults. Written by Ashok



Rajit Kapur in *Dear Richard*

Mishra, the play was directed by Rajit Kapur.

Fourth performance of the evening was the Hindi play *Majnu*. The 14-minute affair portrayed two Indian soldiers at a border outpost who built a relationship over a series of conversations. Written by Hussain Dalal and directed by Akarsh Khurana the play had Rajit Kapur and Sumeet Vyas as performers.

Fourteen-minute-long *Dulhaniya* (Hindi/English) presented Gurpreet who is getting ready for her wedding to her boyfriend of seven years. As the wedding ceremony approaches she begins to question everything about their relationship. The play was written by Sumeet Vyas and directed by Puja Sarup. Shikha Talsania played the protagonist.

Sixth play of the evening was *Khoon Pasina Action* which took the audience to a day of a first time producer of a big budget Hindi film. Written by Ashish Jagtiani and directed by Akarsh Khurana the play had Sumeet Vyas as the first time producer.

The last and seventh play *RTPCR* was written, directed and acted by Aseem Hatangady. Founded in 2015, Zain

Foundation is engaged in advocacy work for the autism community in Bhubaneswar through workshops, art exhibitions, rallies, as well as awareness through print and audio visuals. Earlier, the Foundation organised plays featuring eminent actors like Shabana Azmi, Javed Akhtar, Naseeruddin Shah, Rajit Kapur and Shernaz Patel and others.

Before starting the event Gargi Bhattacharya, the Managing Trustee of the

Foundation said, "There is still a lot of denial among people for autism in the country. They also have right to live freely and we hope that this play will help in raising fund for the autism affected people."

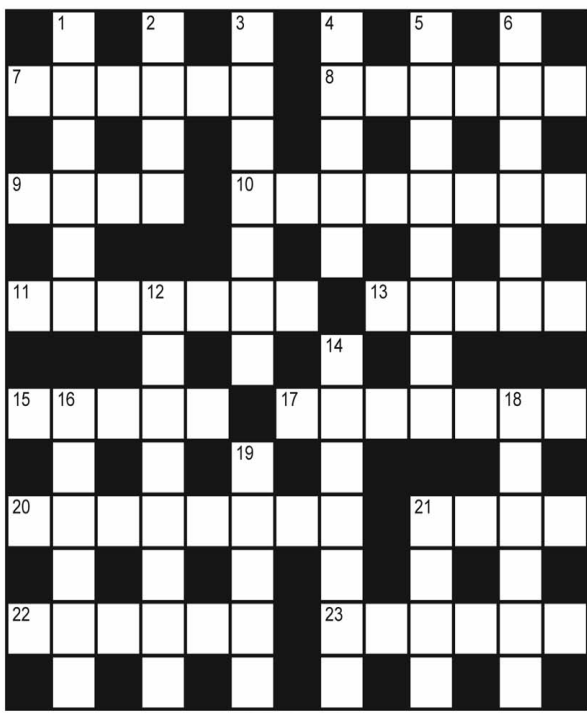
PNN



Vrajesh Hirjee in action

FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 7 Fine wool
8 Concurred
9 Pizzazz
10 Just saying "no"
11 Brewers' needs? (3,4)
13 Confuse
15 Geological crack
17 Got on the train

- 20 Peace officer
21 Scoundrels
22 Kea, e.g.
23 Gofer's job

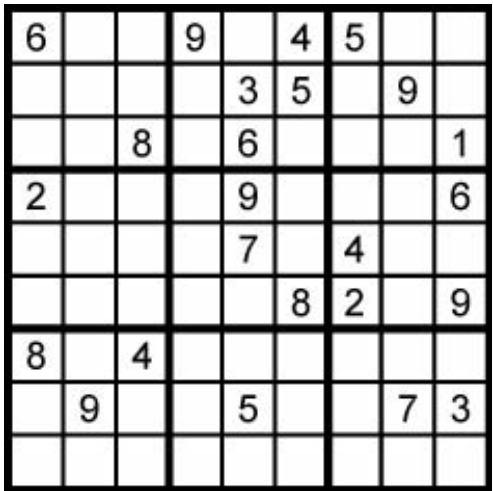
Down

- 1 Warning to Caesar
2 School group?
3 Bravery
4 Faux pas
5 Social reformer
6 Type of equinox
12 Reinforces
14 Like a hand saw
16 Solvent
18 Novelist's need
19 Main artery
21 Wine bottle stopper

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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.

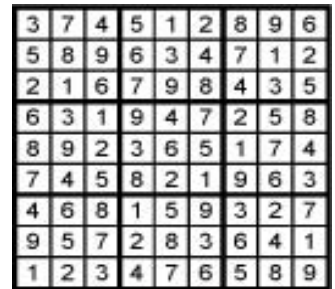


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



| | INFECTED | RECOVERED | DEAD |
|--------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| World | 58,71,10,053 | 55,72,17,425 | 64,31,557 |
| India | 4,41,07,588 | 4,34,45,624 | 5,26,600 |
| Odisha | 13,17,309 | 13,02,941 | 9,145 |

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Centre urged to include left out PMAY-G beneficiaries

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 5: Union Minister of Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan Friday urged Union Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh to open the AWAS+ window and allow the Odisha government an opportunity to include the eligible beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen (PMAY-G) who were left out of the ambit of the scheme.

Soon after meeting the Union Rural Development Minister and submitting a memorandum to him in this regard, Pradhan said that Singh has assured him of every possible assistance towards ensuring that no poor and vulnerable in Odisha is left out of the dream of having a pucca house.

“Keeping in view the increase in scope and budget of PMAY-G, I met Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh to submit a request to allow the Odisha government an opportunity to migrate data of eligible beneficiaries from Rural Housing portal to permanent wait list of PMAY-G by opening the AWAS+ window,” Pradhan said.

In his memorandum, Pradhan claimed that the data transfer will open the door to a life of dignity for the poorest of the poor in dire need of housing in Odisha. He also emphasised the need for rigorous monitoring of the entire process so



that no eligible beneficiary is left out.

Noting that the Centre had launched PMAY-G in November 2016 to ensure pucca houses for the economically weaker sections of the society, Pradhan said the initial target was to construct 2.95 crore houses across the country.

The BJP leader said the Centre has extended the scheme till 2024 with an additional budget grant of Rs 1.25 lakh crore. The target has also been revised to include an additional 93 lakh families in the scheme.

Till date, as many as 1.9 crore houses have been built across the country under the scheme, while in Odisha, around 27 lakh families have been included under PMAY-G, read the memorandum.

“Families affected by cyclones and floods in the coastal districts of Odisha are still waiting for their inclusion under the housing scheme. Similarly, many families

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the data transfer will open the door to a life of dignity for the poorest of the poor in dire need of housing in Odisha

in the southern and western Odisha are yet to get houses under PMAY-G due to delay in geo-tagging and other technical issues,” Pradhan said in his letter.

He further mentioned that the Odisha government has failed in terms of completion of survey for identification of eligible families, geo-tagging of households, inclusion of eligible families, exclusion of ineligible beneficiaries and linking of Aadhar and Job Card details of eligible families. However, the state government is claiming that around 7 lakh families have been excluded from the scheme, he added.

Sources said the BJD MPs have time and again highlighted the issue in the Parliament. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had also urged the Centre to open the AWAS+ portal so that over six lakh houses, mostly of the tribal people, can be included under the PMAY-G.

EMIs to rise further

Continued from P1

“Nevertheless, with strong and resilient fundamentals, India is expected to be amongst the fastest growing economies during 2022-23 according to the IMF, with signs of inflation moderating over the course of the year,” he said.

The financial sector is well capitalised and sound while the foreign exchange reserves - supplemented by net forward assets - provide insurance against global spillovers. “Our umbrella remains strong,” he said.

Prisoners for 10 years should be released on bail: SC

Continued from P1

The bench told Additional Solicitor General KM Nataraj, representing the Central government, that in collaboration with the state governments, the Centre can come up with a policy.

“Please come up with something... a little out of box thinking.” As Nataraj sought four weeks’ time in the matter, Justice Kaul said: “Do something by Independence Day... it will send a message... do some beginning.”

After a detailed hearing in the matter, the top court scheduled the matter for further hearing September 14.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before Notary, Bhubaneswar I, Managobinda Rout, At: Salianch, P.O.: Sitaleswar, P.S.: Aul, Dist. : Kendrapada, Odisha have changed my name from Mangobinda Rout to correct name Managobinda Rout is one and same person for all purposes.

LOST

I, Manalisha Dash wife of Chittaranjan Dash from Kaptipada. Original Dalil No. 103, Case No. 182 was lost. If anyone found contact: 6370226357.

FIMTA-2022

Guests, including PhD students and postdoctoral, pose for a photo at the 3-day international conference on Frontiers in Materials for Technological Applications (FIMTA-2022) at the CSIR-IMMT campus in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

Engineers asked to properly execute street light projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: A one-day orientation programme of electrical engineers on smart LED street lights in urban local bodies (ULBs) was held at the SUDA Conference Hall here Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, G Mathi Vathanan, principal secretary Housing and Urban Development department, asked the engineers to get acquainted with the latest technologies. “Being technocrats, we expect all of you to be in sync with the changing and new technologies that can bring efficiency and transparency to your work. That will help achieve the mandate of our 5T initiative of the state,” Vathanan told the engineers.

The department has a major responsibility of providing street lights in all ULB areas and Vathanan advised the engineers to work with commitment and transparency.

The official asked the attendees to ensure that no area in their jurisdiction is without LED lights



and all must glow. “You are not only electrical engineers, but coordinators and responsible for street lights in your respective areas,” Vathanan said.

Vathanan also warned the engineers to refrain from getting involved with unholy alliances in implementation of the street light projects. He advised the engineers to trust their own merit and said they should work without any fear or favour. Vathanan also said that reviews, grievance redressals and performance evaluation will take place on a monthly basis.

Director municipal administration, Sangramjit Naik in his address said a clean road in the morn-

ing and bright lights in the evening are the symbol of good urban locality. “As electrical engineers it is your responsibility to that see that all the street lights glow properly,” Naik pointed out. “Similarly in case of electrification of kalyan mandaps and colour lights in parks, you all have a greater responsibility,” added Naik.

Financial Adviser Sanjaya Kumar Parmanik talked about the availability of funds for expenditure and emphasised on timely release of payments, so that things can run smoothly.

Director and joint secretary SUDA, Sarada Prasad Panda placed special emphasis on the 5T mantra in implementation of the projects. He informed that there are five lakh smart LED lights that have replaced conventional lights. Proper maintenance and supervision of these lights are the responsibility of the engineers. He highlighted that Odisha is the only state in India where all street lights have been replaced by LEDs.

Govt asks depts to fill up vacant posts

Continued from P1

In addition to this, the OPSC initiated the process for recruitment of another 5,893 officers of Group A and B, and OSSC started the process for recruitment of 2,376 Group-B and Group-C officers of state cadre.

Similarly, the OSSSC also would recruit 2,841 officers of Group-B and Group-C belonging to district cadre.

Mostly, a good number of junior engineers, stenographers, SIs of excise, data entry operators, block social security officers, auditors, RIs, ARIs, amins, forest guards, excise constables, nursing officers, and live-stock inspectors would be recruited.

Besides, officers in Odisha civil service cadre, assistant professors for medical colleges, assistant agriculture officers, post graduate teachers, geologists, and assistant professor of government colleges would also be recruited soon, the sources said.

Director General of Police Sunil Kumar Bansal, chairman of the recruiting agencies and secretaries of various departments attended the meeting.

CUO organises campaign against drug addiction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav the Central University of Odisha (CUO) celebrated ‘Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan’ on its campus Friday.

On this occasion the faculty and staff, under the leadership of SK Palita, Vice-Chancellor I/C and Asit

Kumar Das, Registrar attended an on-line interaction session hosted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) on ‘Nashe Se Azadi’ (freedom from addiction).

Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment department, Virendra Kumar, Minister of State for the same Ramdas Athawale, Pratima Bhowmik, A Narayanaswamy and

secretary, R Subrahmanyam interacted with the 75 universities including CUO, 700 educational institutions and more than 1,00,000 youth participants. CUO organised a series of events including a public address gathering at the University campus on the theme of ‘Nashe Se Azadi’ under the national campaign of ‘Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan’.

Palita attended the programme as chief guest and advised the students to keep away from drugs. He said, “Drugs not only destroy the life of an individual, it drastically ruins the family and society as well.” He urged students and staff not to use drugs and become a good citizen of India and contribute to the process of nation-building.

MoU signed to strengthen health services in state



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ABJ Foundation and Enraf Nonius at the Press Club of Odisha here Friday to strengthen the healthcare infrastructure across the state in extension to the Odisha Health Mission 2025. On the occasion, a healthcare scheme Araogyam Bharat-Health For All was also launched

The partnership will establish a chain of international standard, super-specialty hospitals, high-end diagnostics centres at the district level on pan-India basis for underprivileged masses, which aims to get facilitated with 100% insurance-based cashless and zero per

cent hidden cost benefits and guarantees.

Odisha being the home of the project, the first scheme of the above module will be launched in the state. Enraf Nonius, a world leader in healthcare has consented to be executing the partner of this project said Jitendra Kumar Hati, chairman of ABJ Foundation.

As per the MOU, a tentative budget of rupees 10,000 crore will be invested in the healthcare sector in Odisha within a time frame of seven years. Once the project is up and running the face of healthcare will change and Odisha will be a role model of the country, informed ABJ Foundation officials during the press meet.

As per the MoU, the plan is to cre-

ate and improve long-term public healthcare infrastructure, which may be developed uniformly across the nation. There are also plans to develop a chain of super specialty hospitals with 2,000-plus beds and medical college and allied institute in the state capital and upgrading of district headquarters hospitals and diagnostic centres.

Hati said the objective is to provide 360 degree support for rural health and wellness centres in all district headquarters hospitals. The comprehensively designed super specialty hospitals will be fully equipped to cater to the needs of all BSKY beneficiaries of EPL/ BPL/ EWS/ Pvt hospital health insurance. People will also have access to a full range of diagnostic services in the public healthcare system through placements of integrated network of laboratories.

The foundation proposed to have a PPP Module agreement with the Central and state governments for operating the facilities on a 50-50 basis. The hospitals and diagnostic services will accessible to all echelon of the society.

CBI arrests DGM of Odisha firm, 3 others in bribery case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: The CBI has arrested four people, including a Deputy General Manager (DGM) of Orissa Stevedores Limited, in a Rs 25 lakh bribery case involving a Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Paradip Port Trust, officials said Friday.

Saroj Kumar Das, Chief Mechanical Engineer of Paradip Port Trust, had allegedly demanded Rs 60 lakh as bribe from the company through his conduit Sumanta Rout to let it off without paying for the repair of a conveyor belt at the port that was damaged during unloading of its goods, they said.

The CBI team has arrested Rout, Das, a private person Sankha Subhra Mitra, and DGM of Orissa Stevedores Limited (OSL) Surya Narayan Sahu in connection with the case, the officials said.

The CBI has also named Debapriya Mohanty of KCT Group, Charchit Mishra, Director of OSL, and the private company Orissa Stevedores Ltd in the FIR, they said.

During searches at 15 locations, the CBI also seized Rs 84.5 lakh in cash, they said.

FOOD FEST

Guests during the inaugural occasion of 10-day-long Jashn-E-Khaas Food Festival at Hotel Swosti Grand's Aqua restaurant in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

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Crocodiles wandering near Satkosia gorge in Angul district, Thursday

OP PHOTO

SHORT TAKES

Man kills father

Jharsuguda: A man killed his father Friday over domestic feud at Banjhipalli under Rengali police limits in Jharsuguda district Thursday night. The deceased was identified as 65-year-old Kartik Giri and the accused is his son Dillip Giri. Reports said Dillip came home drunk and picked up a quarrel with his wife Nilam. Feud was routine at his house and this happened again Thursday evening. Upset, Nilam drank phenyl following which she was rendered critical and hospitalised. Kartik reprimanded his son, holding him responsible for Nilam's condition. High on liquor, Dillip attacked his father. As his father fell flat, Dillip danced on his chest, leading to his death. Dillip has been arrested, said the police.

Eviction drive

Daringbadi: The administration has taken steps to remove encroachments on land demarcated for various developments projects in Daringbadi of Kandhamal district. G Udayagiri MLA Saluga Pradhan, block chairperson Sushant Kumar Pradhan, BDO Gadadhar Patra, tehsildar Charls Nayak, IIC Koushik Majhi and several people's representatives took part in demarcation of encroached lands in the area. The administration has decided to evict squatters for renovation of Daringbadi bus stand. Besides, land has been identified for a Kalyan Mandap and a shopping mall.

FUND FOR LEMON FARMING SWINDLED

Dy director of Horticulture department assures probe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, August 5: Large-scale irregularities have allegedly been committed in lemon farming under Horticulture department in Nayagarh as an RTI query has revealed about one such scam in Tendabadi panchayat under Dasapalla block in this district.

As per reports, farmer Krupasindhu Pradhan of Poibadi village had applied to the Horticulture department for lemon cultivation on one hectare land. The department had assured him to provide help but suggested him to plant lemon saplings by using his own fund.

Accordingly, Pradhan procured 400 lemon saplings at ₹32 each and planted them. He spent ₹12,800 in the lemon cultivation, besides spending a few thousands towards fertilizer and pesticides.

However, the department did not provide him anything as promised for which the saplings died. Meanwhile, it was revealed through Right to Information (RTI) queries that the fund had been cleared for Pradhan's lemon farming in FY 2013-14. However, the fund was misappropriated by some others.

There is need for an investigation which can unearth the number of people who have been defrauded in similar fashion at several other places of the district, said the locals.

When contacted, deputy director of the Horticulture Manjula Tripathy said that the scam in lemon farming will be investigated.

Erosion-hit Podampeta seeks help

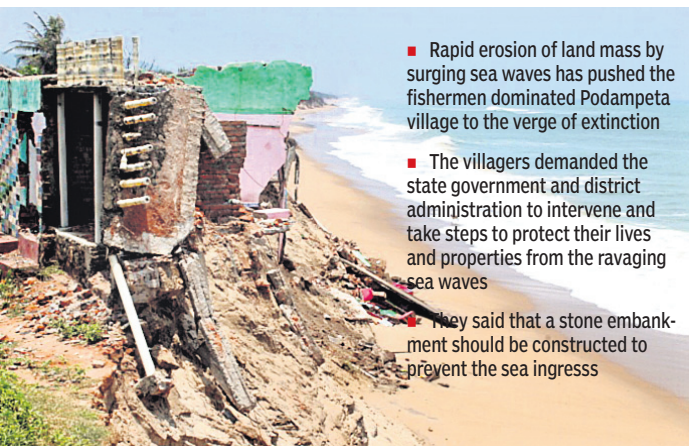
POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur/Berhampur, August 5: At least 12 villages near Podampeta in Ganjam district face serious erosion threat from surging sea waves, spreading panic among the residents who are spending sleepless nights now.

Reports said rapid erosion of land mass by surging sea waves has pushed the fishermen dominated Podampeta village to the verge of extinction. The village was once populated by over 500 families.

As the erosion threat is increasing day by day, several families have deserted the village. The remaining residents said they also earn their livelihood from the cashew forest near the sea coast, apart from fishing. They also said that they would lose their livelihood if they leave the village.

The rest of the families have been shifted and rehabilitated at New Podampeta. However, the residents at New Podampeta complain about lack of drinking water facilities.



- Rapid erosion of land mass by surging sea waves has pushed the fishermen dominated Podampeta village to the verge of extinction
- The villagers demanded the state government and district administration to intervene and take steps to protect their lives and properties from the ravaging sea waves
- They said that a stone embankment should be constructed to prevent the sea ingress

Earlier, the distance between the sea and Podampeta was about 2km but with the sea surface often remaining rough after a series of cyclonic storms, the distance between the sea and the village has been reduced to a few metres now.

This has sparked concern and fear among the residents. They demanded the state government and district administration to intervene and take

steps to protect their lives and properties from the ravaging sea waves. They said that a stone embankment should be constructed to prevent the sea ingress.

Recently, high altitude tidal waves ravaged the area by damaging houses that were washed away into the sea. Earlier, over 30 houses in three settlements of the village have been washed away by the sea waves.

4G services soon in hilly areas of Narsinghpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Narsinghpur, August 5: Poor mobile connectivity will be a thing of past soon for the people in remote pockets of this block in Cuttack district as these areas will be connected with 4G services.

Telecommunication is still a dream in many hilly pockets under this block. Locals have been complaining of poor network while official services are being severely affected. Their long-pending demand is going to be realised as 11 mobile towers will be set up in the area to provide 4G services so as to push the digital India campaign in remote areas.

As per decision, the block administration has identified places



like Khol, Nuapatana, Bada, Kushal, Phulapada, Muraripur, Barabhaya, Brahmani, Bahada, Benipathar and Nuagaon where towers will be set up.

Locals said that scores of tourists visit Dianjhar waterfall in Olab panchayat, but they face a lot of difficulties in staying connected with their near and dear ones at far-off places. Earlier, a delegation of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had written to Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw about the network issues in the area.

Man gets 10 yrs in jail for raping elderly woman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baripada, August 5: A court in Mayurbhanj district sentenced a 23-year-old man to 10 years of imprisonment Friday for raping an elderly woman.

Baripada additional district and sessions judge Durga Charan Mishra also imposed a fine of ₹5,000 on Manoj Singh, special public prosecutor Manoranjan Pattnaik said.

On the night of November 7, 2018, the 60-year-old woman was returning home alone after performing a community puja at a village in Barasahi police station area when the accused forcefully took her to a paddy field and raped her.

The judgement was based on the medical report, and the statements of the woman and 23 witnesses.



₹11cr Biju Setu lies unused in Nilagiri



POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilagiri, August 5: Although two years have passed since completion of a Biju Setu over Sona river in Begunia panchayat of this block in Balasore at a cost of ₹11 crore, locals fail to use it as the approach road work is getting delayed due to land hurdle.

Reports said after years of demand and protests by people of riparian pockets, the state government decided to set up the bridge across

Sona river. The rural development department sanctioned ₹11 crore in 2018 and the contractor completed the bridge two years ago.

Construction of an approach road on one side of the bridge is hanging fire due to hurdles in land acquisition. Some private land owners are said to be reluctant to spare their land.

The road can provide direct communication to some pockets of Mayurbhanj district. In monsoon, the riparian villages fail to venture

Construction of an approach road on one side of the bridge is hanging fire due to land acquisition hurdles

out as the river remains in spate. People of Dobati, Kusunpur, Haripur, Pathargad, Sujupur, Nishankhapur, Sansapal, Dumaganandira, Bhakatnandapur, Totapada and Durgadevi under Remuna block will also get communication facility once the approach road is completed.

SDO of Rural Development division Iswari Prasad Das said that private lands of nine people need to be acquired for the project. "We are in talks with some of the land owners to sort it out," he added.

5 poachers nabbed from Debrigarh

AGENCIES

Sambalpur, August 5: Five suspected poachers have been arrested from Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Bargarh district early Friday, a forest official said.

The poachers entered the wildlife sanctuary late Wednesday for hunting sambar deer and bison for their horns and skin, he said. Acting on a tip-off, an 18-member night patrol team apprehended the suspects near Ushakothi area under Hirakud Wildlife Division. A sambar horn, an axe, wire traps and motorcycles were seized from them.

Debrigarh has a significant population of leopard, bison, wild boar, sambar, peacock and chousingha or the four-horned antelope.

Interrogation of the poachers and data analysis of their mobile phones revealed that they were regularly involved in the trade of wildlife skin, horn and hair. The body parts of the animals are smuggled mostly to neighbouring Chhattisgarh, the official said, adding that further investigation was underway.

Vigilance glare on PET in Berhampur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, August 5: Vigilance officials Friday raided 13 places associated with Danardan Sahu, Physical Education Teacher (PET) of Sri Dibyasimha Bidyapitha here in Ganjam district, on charges of acquiring assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. However, the value of the seized assets is yet to be ascertained.

On the strength of search warrants issued by Special Vigilance Judge, Berhampur, separate teams of the anti-graft wing led by four deputy superintendents of police (DSPs) and 12 inspectors conducted simultaneous searches at 13 places associated with Sahu.

A three-storey and a two-storey building at Ananta Nagar, a double-storey building at Jayantipur village, a two-storey post office building at Jayantipur, four shops near Jayantipur bus stand, an Indian

Oil filling station at Jayantipur, a market complex at Balarampur, a godown at Jayantipur, a gas agency at Jayantipur, a residential house of his friend at Talamuha Sahi at Jayantipur and two residential houses of his cousins at Jayantipur were raided.

The search operation was underway when the last report came in. Vigilance SP Ganesh Pradhan said that value of his assets will be ascertained after raids are over.

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For registration, please contact: Sanket Swaroop, Mobile: 99370 81778.

Registration is compulsory.

The registration time will be from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm.

It is mandatory to follow the COVID safety guidelines during the event.

No walk-ins will be allowed.

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Department of Social Justice and Empowerment

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Government of India

Vayoshreshtha Samman

Inviting nomination for National Award, 2022

The last date for receipt of nominations is 29th August, 2022

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India invites nominations on the National Awards portal (<https://awards.gov.in/>) for conferment of **"Vayoshreshtha Samman (National Award)", 2022** for eminent senior citizens and institutions involved in rendering distinguished services for the cause of elderly persons, especially indigent senior citizens.


- Detailed eligibility criteria, proforma for nomination for the Awards and the procedure for nomination etc., are available on the website of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment as indicated: <http://socialjustice.gov.in>.
- Nominations in the prescribed proforma complete in all respects with the requisite supporting documents of the nominee, photograph and bio-data of the nominee (in the case of individual category), may be uploaded on <https://awards.gov.in/>. No physical applications shall be entertained.
- The last date for receipt of nominations is 29th August, 2022. Self nominations and applications from individuals or institutions not recommended by the prescribed agencies/individuals will not be entertained and shall be liable to be summarily rejected.

CBC 38104/11/0020/2223

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Bank of India Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015 | POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule-8(1)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002 |
| Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Concerned Branches under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrowers/Co-Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagor in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Co-Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrowers/Co-Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Concerned Branches for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets. | | |
| BRANCH / Name and Address of Borrowers/ Co-Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagor | Liabilities due as per Notice | Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession |
| NABAKALEBAR ROAD BRANCH / Borrower/Mortgagor : Mrs. Mamata Nayak , W/o.: Mr.Hadibandhu Nayak, Co-Borrower: Mr. Hadibandhu Nayak , Both are At: Chudanga Sahi, Ward-1, Puri-1 | ₹ 4,02,129.03 + interest & expenses thereon | 09.11.2021/ 02.08.2022 |
| Dist.: Puri, Standing in the name of Mrs. Mamata Dei (Nayak) , W/o.: Mr. Hadibandhu Nayak, Bounded by North: Road, South: Chudanga Pokhari, East: Biswanath Mishra & Satyabhama Mishra, West: Chinmayee Dei & Sushrita Senapati. | | |
| NABAKALEBAR ROAD BRANCH / Borrowers : 1) Mrs. Banita Mohanty , W/o.: Mr. Biren Mohanty, 2) Mr. Sangram Mohanty , S/o.: Mr. Biren Mohanty, Both are At: Sarbodaya Nagar, PO/Dist: Puri, Odisha /Guarantors: 1) Mr. Biren Mohanty , S/o.: Late Kalu Charan Mohanty, At: Sarbodaya Nagar, Charupattanaik Lane, Gundicha Vihar, Puri, 2) Mr. Rabindra Kumar Mohanty , S/o: Mr. Laxmidhar Mohanty, At: Telipada, Narua, Gop, Puri, 3) Mr. Swadhin Mohanty , S/o.: Mr. Biren Kumar Mohanty, At: Sarbodaya Nagar, Charupattanaik Lane, Gundicha Vihar, Puri | ₹ 9,99,927/- + interest & expenses thereon | 15.12.2018 / 02.08.2022 |
| Corresponding to Sabik Khata No.: 266, Sabik Plot No.: 1014 (Sub Plot No: 27) at Mouza: Balukhanda, PO.: Baliguali, Area: Ac.0.022 Dec. within the SRO/Tahasil/Dist.: Puri, in the name of Mrs. Banita Mohanty , Bounded by North: Road, South: Sub Plot No: 33, East: Sub Plot No: 26, West: Sub Plot No: 28 | | |
| PARADEEP BRANCH / Borrower : Mrs. Sailia Das , Co-Borrower: Mr. Dillip Kumar Das , Both are At: Rangiaragar, PO.: Jhimani, Paradeep, Jagatsinghpur-754142 / Guarantor: Mr. Pabitra Kumar Das , At: Rangiaragar, PO.: Jhimani, Paradeep, Jagatsinghpur-754142 | ₹24,85,070.32 + interest & expenses thereon | 31.05.2021/ 03.08.2022 |
| the Registration District of Jagatsinghpur, in the name of Mrs. Sailia Das , Bounded by North: Krushna Das, South: Shree Shree Chandrasekhar Mahadev, East: Naresh Bhol, West: Road | | |
| Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 06.08.2022 | | Authorised Officer, Bank of India |

In absolute silence sleeps an absolute power

SRI AUROBINDO



Babus’ Paris Trip

Jet-setting babus splurging taxpayers’ money on conferences in exotic foreign locales is not a secret. True, the guidelines of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) clearly state that participation of officials in international fairs/exhibitions/workshops and conferences should be discouraged, and if considered essential, only the officer directly dealing with the subject shall be deputed. But the guidelines are easily flouted as this episode reported in the media shows.

The reports quoting information received from a RTI plea state that three senior Chandigarh bureaucrats spent well above their sanctioned allowance to splurge on a week-long trip for a three-day meeting in Paris back in 2015. The three IAS officers – UT Advisor Vijay Dev, Home Secretary Anurag Agarwal and Personnel Secretary Vikram Dutt upgraded their stay from a 5-star hotel in Paris to a luxury property and changed their return tickets to business class, spending 40 per cent more than their allowance. To add a cherry on top, a month after the Paris trip the three officers approved the additional expenses for each other through modified orders. At present, Dev is the State Election Commissioner of Delhi and Chandigarh, Dutt is CMD of Air India Asset Holding Ltd and Anurag Agarwal is the Chief Electoral Officer in Haryana.

This is obviously not a stray incident. Babus from the Centre and the states are regularly crisscrossing Europe and other continents in the “line of duty”. And clearly, not all of them are prone to “live it up” abroad, yet it is understandable why the public is outraged over the waste of tax money at a time when everyone is feeling the pinch of runaway inflation and economic distress.

Reshuffles in UP an ongoing exercise

After the eruption of major charges against certain officers and certain ministers, the Uttar Pradesh government seems to have gone into overdrive to shuffle its administration team. But how well planned are these transfers of IAS officers? Last week, the UP government reshuffled 13 IAS officers, including 10 of the rank of district magistrates and CDOs, with immediate effect. Additionally, the state government transferred 20 PCS officers. Oddly, however, barely 24 hours later the state government cancelled the transfer orders of two of these officials in so-called “public interest”.

Kushal Raj Sharma, the district magistrate of Varanasi, will stay on, after all. He had been transferred as Commissioner of Prayagraj. Likewise, S. Rajlingam will remain as the district magistrate of Kushinagar instead of moving to Varanasi as ordered earlier. As a result of this volte-face, Ravindra Kumar Pratham who had been asked to be Rajlingam’s successor, will now stay as Special Secretary Food and Civil Supplies Department.

Clearly, when such things are done in a hurry they don’t work out as efficiently and some backpedaling was inevitable. Meanwhile, the Centre too has pitched in by approving the repatriation of Minority Affairs Secretary Renuka Kumar to her parent UP cadre with immediate effect.

But don’t hold your breath. Yogi is likely not done with the reshuffling yet.

Speculation over CIC secy’s resignation

Though Juthika Patankar, Secretary of Central Information Commission (CIC), has reportedly put in her papers for personal reasons, the speculation in babu corridors suggests that the 1988 batch UP cadre IAS officer was unhappy in her current assignment.

Those in the know say that besides personal reasons, Patankar apparently did not find her assignment at the CIC sufficiently motivating and felt at a career dead end. Perhaps the cause of her discontent can be traced back to last year, sources have informed DKB, when Patankar, who was then additional secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, was repatriated to the parent cadre but following her empanelment for a secretary-equivalent post in October 2021, the Centre revoked its decision and later appointed her as Secretary of CIC.

It’s not often, in the Modi sarkar, that a senior bureaucrat decides to quit the service barely a year and a half before superannuation. Resignations at the level of secretary do not send out positive signals, and in fact, suggest that all may not be well in the upper echelons of government.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](#). Let’s multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

- An ounce of patience is worth more than a tonne of preaching
- MAHATMA GANDHI
- The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.”
- WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
- My Best Friend is a person who will give me a book I have not read
- ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WORDSWORTH

■ Albertopolis

Albertopolis is a group of cultural sites in South Kensington, London, that includes the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal College of Art, the Royal College of Music, the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, Imperial College and the Royal Albert Hall. Following the success of the Great Exhibition of 1851, which made a substantial profit, Prince Albert proposed that land should be bought to continue the aims of the Exhibition and to extend “the influence of Science and Art upon Productive Industry” by building museums, colleges, schools, concert halls, and premises for learned societies. In 1852 the Commissioners for the Great Exhibition (who still exist) acquired eighty acres of farmland, but most of the scheme was completed only after Prince Albert’s untimely death in 1861. The term Albertopolis seems to have been invented in the 1860s as a slang term for this emerging cultural area, but quickly vanished again and reappeared only as the result of an unsuccessful proposal in the 1990s to extend Albert’s vision.

Zoochosis

You’re likely to find this word used by animal rights activists in reference to what they see as the degrading effect of zoos on the animals they contain. Many animals, especially the large carnivores, become deeply depressed, even psychotic, as the result of captivity. Symptoms of zoochosis include nervous pacing, head rocking, and self-mutilation. The problem is perhaps most acute with polar bears, which have proved especially difficult to keep sane, and which often show disturbed behaviour such as swimming for hours in small circles. (The Central Park Zoo in New York had to call in an animal psychologist to find ways to give its polar bear, Gus, a more varied and challenging environment.) The word, a blend of zoo and psychosis, seems to date from the early 1990s, but is still fairly specialist and hasn’t – so far as I know – yet made it to any dictionary.

PUTIN’S ROLE IN DRAGHI’S FALL

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s fingerprints appear to be all over the recent political developments that culminated in Mario Draghi’s resignation as Italy’s Prime Minister.

Following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in late February, Draghi responded decisively by supporting strong sanctions against Russia and by offering political, financial, and military support to Ukraine. But both acts required overcoming resistance from populist parties within his own national-unity governing coalition: namely the Five Star Movement, led by former Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, and Matteo Salvini’s League party. And as the war dragged on, the backlash from these pro-Putin forces grew.

Presumably seeing an opportunity, the Russian embassy in Rome has been courting Salvini for months, even buying him a plane ticket to Moscow for a “peace mission” this past May (which he did not bother to inform Draghi about). While that trip was abandoned at the last minute following a public outcry, Salvini had dinner with the Russian ambassador in early March, just a week after Russia’s invasion.

Similarly former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, a longstanding personal friend of Putin, had at least one phone call with the Russian ambassador in the days leading up to Draghi’s ouster. And in May an official from Berlusconi’s party, Forza Italia, and a senior Russian diplomat both reportedly asked an emissary from the League when Salvini planned to quit the Draghi government.

We know all this because Italy’s political system is too chaotic and packed with amateurs to be opaque. Many parties and politicians simply lack the discipline for secret machinations. Accordingly, more details about Russian efforts to encourage Draghi’s removal are likely to



Kremlin is known to meddle in Western democratic politics, from interfering in the 2016 Brexit referendum and US Presidential election to financing Marine Le Pen’s far-right National Rally in France

come to light.

Such dealings are nothing new. In 2018, officials from the League traveled to Moscow to seek funding from Russia; and in early 2020, Conte’s government allowed Putin to send a massive military mission to Italy on the pretext of providing pandemic humanitarian aid. Given these suspicious past dealings, Italian political observers and operatives now simply take it for granted that the Kremlin pressured its Italian proxies to get the Draghi government out of the way. After all, the Kremlin is known to meddle in Western democratic politics, from interfering in the 2016 Brexit referendum and US Presidential election to financing Marine Le Pen’s far-right National Rally in France. There is no reason to think it would not pursue similar tactics in Italy, given the opportunity to sow division within the European Union.

In a similar vein, the Wagner Group, the Kremlin-linked mercenary organization, is allegedly facilitating refugee flows to Italy from the Libyan territories where it operates, giving Salvini a pretext for running on his usual anti-immigration platform ahead of this September’s snap elections.

Again, this is nothing new: Belarus deployed the same strategy against Poland and Lithuania last year; almost certainly with Putin’s acquiescence.

Recent opinion polls have given a clear advantage to a right-wing coalition comprising the League, Forza Italia, and the “post-fascist” Brothers of Italy, under the leadership of Giorgia Meloni. But what remains to be seen is whether Russia’s apparent role in Draghi’s downfall will affect the Italian election. While the revelations so far did create a stir, the issue fizzled quickly.

To be sure, a recent poll shows that Putin is deeply unpopular in Italy, with 56% of Italians blaming Russia for the war. But Italians are not unique in their tendency to vote on bread-and-butter issues, rather than in response to international intrigues, and here, the right-wing coalition offers something for everyone. While those who are pro-Russian can vote for the League or Forza Italia, those who feel more pro-Western and pro-Ukrainian can cast their ballot for the Brothers of Italy, which is now firmly

leading in the polls.

Though Meloni opposed sanctions against Russia in the 2018 elections, she has since taken a different position, both supporting Draghi’s decision to supply Ukraine with weapons and warning against allowing Italy to become “the weak link in the Western alliance.” But it is unclear what a Meloni-led government’s foreign policy would look like.

Meloni owes her political ascent largely to personal charisma and a consistently vague “god, family, and fatherland” agenda, which has allowed her to avoid offering details about what she really thinks or intends to do in office. She has said almost nothing about her economic policy agenda, her own party’s fascist roots, or her friendly relations with Hungary’s authoritarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, and the Spanish neo-Francoist party, Vox. As such, many Italians have taken her declarations of pro-Western loyalty at face value.

But would Meloni really follow Draghi in enforcing or even tightening sanctions on Russia? Most likely, she would be far less committed to the sanctions regime than Draghi was. Earlier this spring, she argued not just that Italy should receive “compensation” from the EU for the cost of sanctions, but also that the United States should not expect Italy to serve as the “workhorse of the West” by reducing its exports to Russia.

Regardless of how much more we learn about Russian efforts to engineer Draghi’s downfall, one thing is already clear: the Kremlin must be looking at the prospect of a Meloni-Salvini-Berlusconi government with hope and glee.

The writer is an economics journalist and editor-at-large at *Corriere della Sera* and author of *Sul Vulcano* (Longanesi, 2020).

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SPECTRUM PVT COACHING CENTRES

Govt must halt unholy nexus

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education has recently recommended to the government to curb the growing unholy nexus between colleges and coaching centres, a trend academics attribute to centralised entrance tests. The Committee highlighted other challenges with higher education such as cheating in examinations, leakage of question papers and student-examiner connivance, which too need the government’s urgent attention.

In its report, it has referred to the “disturbing trend of many colleges associating with coaching centres to prepare their enrolled students in certain cities, making the learning process a farce through this unholy nexus”. The committee recommended that the government develop a mechanism to curb this trend and de-recognise the institutions involved. It also suggested the ‘establishment of a study group to assess the ground realities.’

The report also stated that certain states and deemed universities and local colleges are engaged in a tough competition to attract students and have asked the government to bring a halt to it. This practice, said the report, has led not just to crass confusion but a feeling of being cheated amongst the students and their guardians.” Experts are of the opinion that students are no longer interested in serious study and attending classes regularly and instead are interested in getting admitted into ‘dummy’ schools that collaborate with coaching centres to receive suggestions and/or question papers. The House panel underlined that question paper leaks, student-examiner collaboration were vitiating the examination process in many state universities.

Going deeper into the matter, it is quite discernible that the very motive of coaching institutes or coaching centres has only promoted ‘commercialisation of education’ in the country. It is well-known that students need to cough up a huge amount of money in the form of fees to get into such institutes. At the same time, whether the student can pay such a huge fee is of no concern to those who are at the helm of affairs in such institutes. In this way, money motive guides such institutes in its day-to-day affairs. Education, which is considered to be a right of every individual, has unfortunately turned out to be a commercial product. In such a scenario, imparting education is in the grip of commercial coaching centres thereby, making a mockery of the very divine nature of attainment of education insofar as India is concerned.

With the commercialisation of education, it has been seen that such coaching centres are mostly

located in the vicinity of government aided educational institutes. This lures both the teachers and the pupils/students of such educational institutes to turn to these coaching institutes instead of developing their own educational institutes. There are hoardings/banners of the coaching classes near schools and colleges. In the long run, such commercialisation instigates both the teacher-student combine to coaching classes.

Presently, the situation has come to such a pass that, in most cases, classrooms in the educational institutes, mostly government, are empty as the pupils/students are busy in house-packed coaching institutes. In some coaching classes, the number of pupils/students is even more than the regular classes of schools or colleges.

The mushrooming of coaching centres is a fast-track mechanism invented to earn a fast buck and thus there are ills associated with it. First, it is advertently or inadvertently deviating students from their normal procedure of studies by inculcating the habit of studying for a few weeks as they are promised success in exams through ‘shortcut coaching.’ Second, many below average students avoid making the effort to make up on their learning process by attending regular classrooms only.

The astute teachers, finding an opportunity to exploit and make

a buck, run or teach in private shops or tuition centres at their homes or big coaching institutes, influence students they would be provided with ready-made notes and suggestions which they have to memorise or rote learning for the exams. This is blocking the independent thinking abilities of the students in different perspectives as they concentrate solely on the written notes sold & supplied to them.

Thirdly, teachers too get enticed and deviate from their basic paid responsibilities of teaching and training students in schools and colleges. Most of these teachers do not take the pains to teach properly in their institutions and may also not be punctual in their attendance. Clearly, their attention is diverted to the coaching centres where they spend time teaching and earning extra money. Thus private coaching centres do a roaring business by turning normal dedicated honest teachers to wealthy elite ‘educationists’. These so-called ‘elite-teachers’ have converted education into a purely commercial activity that is harming our society.

Therefore, it is critical that the government strictly ensure that in all classes, the stipulated syllabus be completed to the satisfaction of students. Only then the importance of private coaching centres may come down.

INFA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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Striking balance

Sir, India has successfully managed to ‘sit on the fence’ on Russia and China, although Jaishankar denies it. India does not condemn Russia but calls the war in Ukraine an unacceptable violation of sovereignty. India now does not change its one China Policy but is supportive of a free and open Indo-Pacific through the Quad. Specifically, India has not criticised Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan. These are delicate subjects and India is deft at handling them. But, for how long? China and Russia have not disguised their one-sided narrative on border issues and this tightrope walking will become impossible. The bravery with regard to Pakistan is always missing when it comes to China. Instead of this hide and seek, an open stand in support of an ‘Asian Giant’ with 4,000 kms of sharing land borders will solve a number of problems for India. But wrong notions with egoistic attitudes promoted by the US and Western lobbies always stand in the way of fresh thinking.

Jayanthy Subramaniam, COIMBATORE

Vested interest

Sir, History has witnessed the fact that, a country attacks another country when it has a vested interest in it. In the present capitalism and imperialism era the character of every country has become imperialistic. The same situation is with America and China. A vivid example of this is the Russia - Ukraine war which is still going on. So what are those interests of the US and China to keep a watchful eye on Taiwan? The big reason for the obsession with Taiwan is the manufacturing of semiconductors, a key component of mobile and PC, of Taiwan. Sixty five percent of the world’s chips are built in Taiwan alone. The largest chip company in Taiwan is ‘tsmc’ that is responsible for half the semiconductor business of the world. So, both China and the US are eyeing on this goose that lays golden eggs. US-China relations have never been nice. Both countries supported different nations in war and there is economic rivalry as well. The US has also alleged espionage on part of China, as per Cox report. China stole designs of thermonuclear weapons. Trump used to dislike China and relations worsened after the pandemic. Now even in the Biden administration the relationship is bad. So business is everything. It is the character of the system.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

of the day quote

Some people only make announcements and some only do work, that is the big difference

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | RAILWAY MINISTER

India is set to take a giant leap in the 75th year of its Independence and nobody will be able to stop it from becoming a great nation

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

The Centre must give a financial package to Punjab to compensate its farmers for the huge losses suffered by them due to recent flooding following incessant rains as well as repeated crop failures

HARSIMRAT KAUR | BATHINDA'S AKALI DAL MP

SHORT TAKES

Cops recover arms, ammunition

Gadchiroli (Maharashtra): Notching a major success 10 days before Independence Day, the Maharashtra Police have recovered a large cache of arms, ammunition and explosives buried by Maoists in the dense forest, a top official said here Friday. Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police Ankit Goyal said that the recoveries came soon after the Naxal Shaheed Saptah (Naxals Martyr Week) that is observed annually from July 28 - August 3 by the banned CPI (Maoist) in various regions.

Civilian killed, soldier injured

Srinagar: A civilian was killed and a soldier injured during an encounter between security forces and terrorists in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir Friday, police said. The security forces had launched a cordon-and-search operation in the Redwani area of Kulgam district following inputs about the presence of militants there, a police official said. The official said the search operation turned into an encounter after the terrorists opened fire on the security personnel, who retaliated.

CBI raids 30 locations

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is conducting search operations at more than thirty locations including in Jammu, Srinagar and Bengaluru in connection with the irregularities in the exam for sub-inspectors in the Jammu and Kashmir police. The paper was allegedly leaked by the accused. The exams were being conducted in March. The CBI after getting a complaint about the leak filed a case against 33 accused. "Dr Karnail Singh of BSF who is a medical officer, Avinash Gupta owner of tutorial classes and Narayan Dutt who runs Merit Trax Private Limited Bengaluru which conducted the exams are the main culprits in the FIR," the CBI said.

Woman raped

Gurugram: A Kolkata-based executive was allegedly raped by a man who she met at a Gurugram club, police said Friday. The woman arrived in the city a week ago for work and checked into a guest house located in Sector 40. The victim, in her police complaint, said that on Wednesday night, she had visited a club located in Sector-29, where a man befriended her and offered her wine and cigarettes. Later the duo went to another club and left the venue late at night in the accused's car. On the pretext of having dinner, the man took her to a hotel in Noida, where he allegedly raped her, police said.



Formalities are being carried out ahead of the appointment of the next Chief Justice of India

KIREN RIJU | CABINET MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

FIGHT AGAINST COVID

Ten crore people have taken the precaution dose against Covid so far, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said Friday



CURBS LIFTED



Crowded Vizhinjam fishing harbour after the two-month trawling ban was lifted in Thiruvananthapuram

PTI PHOTO

Cong stages nationwide stir on price rise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: Congress leaders hit the streets Friday as they staged nationwide protests against price rise and unemployment, with over 300 of them including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra detained by police for over six hours in the national capital.

Wearing black clothes, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi led the charge in Parliament where party MPs took out a protest march and were detained by the police at Vijay Chowk while they were on their way to Rashtrapati Bhavan. Priyanka Gandhi led at the AICC headquarters here, where hundreds were detained by the police amid dramatic standoffs. Sonia Gandhi did not participate in the march due to ill-health.

While several BJP leaders called the protests an attempt to save the Gandhi family, Home Minister Amit Shah linked the protest in black clothes to the party's "appeasement" politics to convey its opposition to the Ram temple foundation laying by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on this day in 2020.



Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, wearing black clothes, during a protest march as part of the party's nationwide protest over price rise, unemployment and GST hike on essential items in New Delhi

Shah said the Congress was using the issues like ED action and price rise only as excuses. The Congress hit back saying only a sick mind which can produce such bogus arguments and give a malicious twist to the protests. "Home Minister has made a desperate attempt to divert, distract, polarise and give a malicious twist to today's democratic protests of @INCIndia against price rise, unemployment & GST. It's only a sick mind which can produce such bogus arguments. Clearly the protests have hit home!" party general secretary Jairam Ramesh tweeted.

The Congress workers and leaders were released by Delhi Police after more than six hours of detention in various police stations, where they were taken away from the protest sites in the national capital. According to Delhi Police, 335 protestors including 65 MPs were detained. Similar actions happened in various parts of the country, while water cannons were also used at some places including in Chandigarh.

While Congress leaders in Delhi had planned to gherao the prime minister's residence and a protest march to Rashtrapati Bhavan, party workers across the country staged protests and dharmas outside Raj Bhavans.

The protesting MPs raised the issue in both houses of Parliament and disrupted the proceedings. They then gathered outside gate number 1 of Parliament House and raised slogans against the government demanding that the GST hike on essential items be withdrawn. Party chief Sonia Gandhi also joined women MPs holding a banner there.

6 countries keen on buying Tejas: Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: The US, Australia, Indonesia and the Philippines are among six countries, which have shown interest in India's Tejas aircraft while Malaysia has already shortlisted the jet under its acquisition programme, the government said Friday.

The other two countries that have evinced interest in the aircraft are Argentina and Egypt, according to Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt. Tejas, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, is a single-engine multi-role fighter aircraft capable of operating in high-threat air environments.

In February last year, the defence ministry sealed a Rs 48,000 crore deal with HAL for the procurement of 83 Tejas light combat aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF). Replying to a question in Lok Sabha on Tejas, Bhatt said the HAL responded to a Request for Information (RFI) or initial tender received from Royal Malaysian Air Force in February 2019.

Subsequently, the HAL responded in October 2021 to a Request For Proposal (RFP) issued by Malaysia for 18 aircraft, adding the twin-seater variant of the Tejas was offered. Malaysia is procuring the aircraft to replace its ageing fleet of Russian MiG-29 fighter planes. The number of aircraft that Malaysia is looking at procuring is not immediately clear.

"Other countries which have evinced interest in LCA aircraft are Argentina, Australia, Egypt, USA, Indonesia, and the Philippines," he said. Last month, the then Chairman and Managing Director of HAL R Madhavan said the Tejas aircraft has emerged as the top choice for Malaysia. To a separate question on whether the government proposes to manufacture a stealth fighter jet, Bhatt said "yes" and added the "autonomous flying wing technology demonstrator" has been successfully tested by the DRDO.

Mamata meets PM, seeks funds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday and raised a host of issues concerning her state, including GST dues and timely release of funds by the Centre under various schemes.

The Prime Minister's Office shared a picture of the meeting, which lasted about an hour. In a memorandum to the prime minister, Banerjee said she had repeatedly sought his intervention for urgent release of funds due to the state on account of the implementation of the rural job scheme MGNREGA, PM Awas Yojana and the PM Gramin Sadak Yojana. The amount due to the state under these schemes now stood at about Rs 17,996.32 crore, she said.

In her memorandum, Banerjee has tabulated the total amount due to the state under different schemes and benefits. The amount that is due to the state from the central government as on 31st July, 2022 has been estimated to be around Rs 1,00,968.44 crore. Banerjee has often accused the BJP-led central government of delaying the payment of Goods and Services Tax (GST) dues to states, especially the ones ruled by opposition parties.



After the meeting, Banerjee directly went to meet President Droupadi Murmu. Banerjee, who arrived here on a four-day visit on Thursday, is likely to attend a Niti Aayog governing council meeting on August 7 to be chaired by Prime Minister Modi. She did not attend the meeting last year.

Banerjee's meeting with the prime minister came close on the heels of the Enforcement Directorate arresting now-removed

Partha, Arpita sent to jail till August 18

After hearing all the parties concerned, the special court rejected Chatterjee's bail application and ordered 14 days judicial custody for the duo

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, August 5: A special Public Money Laundering Act court (PMLA) Friday sent former state minister Partha Chatterjee and his aide Arpita Mukherjee to 14 days judicial custody in connection with the multi-crore West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) recruitment scam.

Both will have to be presented at the same court on August 18. Chatterjee's counsel sought to counter the argument of Enforcement Directorate (ED) counsel that bail should not be granted to Chatterjee because of his "influential connections" as a former minister and heavyweight leader of the ruling party, arguing Chatterjee had already been stripped of his ministerial and party portfolios and hence the argument of "influential connections" does not really hold ground. "My client is even ready to resign as an MLA. He will not abscond under any circumstance. No wealth recovery had been done from his residence and hence, he should be granted bail considering his age as well the different medical complications that he had been suffering," counsel argued. He also claimed that the different documents about properties or insurance policies jointly held by Chatterjee and Mukherjee were forged.

However, ED's counsel argued that throughout his tenure in the central agency custody, Chatterjee had been in a total non-cooperation mood and hence, there is a requirement to question him further. It also sought the permission of the court so that the central agency sleuths can visit the correctional home where Chatterjee will be housed and interrogate him there.

On the other hand, Mukherjee's counsel did not move any bail plea for his client. Rather, he appealed for a division one category status inmate in the jail where she will be housed since a threat to her life in the prisons is apprehended. Even the ED counsel said the central agency too has similar information. "My plea to the court is that the food and liquid that will be served to Arpita Mukherjee in the prisons should be examined first and then served," the ED counsel argued.

After hearing all the parties concerned, the special court rejected Chatterjee's bail application and ordered 14 days judicial custody for the duo.

Trinamool Congress's state General Secretary and party spokesman, Kunal Ghosh said that Chatterjee should not be granted any special status in the prisons and should be treated at par with other inmates. "Not jail hospital but an ordinary prison cell should be allotted to him. If I come to know that Partha Chatterjee is enjoying special status or facilities in the prisons, I will protest again," Ghosh said.



FIR against magazine for Shiva, Kali images

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur (UP), August 5: Police here have lodged an FIR against The Week amid a row over an "objectionable picture" of Lord Shiva and Goddess Kali that led Hindu activists to burn copies of the magazine and economist Bibek Debroy end his association with it.

The city's Kotwali police registered the case against the editor and management of the magazine following a complaint Thursday by former BJP state vice-president Prakash Sharma, who accused them of hurting religious feelings.

Bajrang Dal workers burnt copies of the magazine at the city's Bada Chauraha on Friday, seeking action against the editors of the magazine brought out in English by the Malayala Manorama group.

Bibek Debroy, who heads the Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister, on Thursday ended his association with the publication as a columnist over the illustration tagged to his article "A tongue of fire" in the July 24 edition. The magazine has apologised on its website.

Anaemia cases in kids rose from 58% to 67% in about 5 yrs: Centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: Prevalence of anaemia among children aged six months to five years has increased by more than nine per cent in about five years, the Centre told the Lok Sabha Friday quoting NFHS-5, conducted during 2019-21.

According to National Family Health Survey-4 carried out in 2015-16, the percentage of anaemia cases in this age bracket was 58.6. However, this has increased to 67.1 per cent in the Union Health Ministry's latest survey.

Responding to a question, Union Health Minister Mansukh

Mandaviya in a written reply said according to NFHS-5, prevalence of anaemia among children aged six months to five years is highest in Ladakh (90 per cent), followed by Gujarat (80 per cent), Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (76 per cent), Madhya Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir (73 per cent), and Punjab and Rajasthan (71 per cent).

Mandaviya said the government implements Anaemia Mukti Bharat (AMB) strategy under POSHAN Abhiyaan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition) with the target of reducing anaemia in the six population groups - children (6-59 months),



Responding to a question, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in a written reply said according to NFHS-5, prevalence of anaemia among children aged six months to five years is highest in Ladakh

children (5-9 years), adolescent girls and boys (10-19 years), pregnant women, lactating women and women of reproductive age group (15-49 years) in lifecycle approach.

Some of the major interventions by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are to address anaemia under AMB, include prophylactic iron and folic acid supplementation, deworming, intensified year-round behaviour change communication campaign, testing of anaemia using digital methods and point of care treatment, addressing non-nutritional causes of anaemia in endemic pockets with special focus on malaria, hemoglobinopathies and fluorosis and monitoring progress in states and Union territories using Anaemia Mukti Bharat dashboard among others, Mandaviya said in the written reply.

of the day quote

Members of Parliament do not enjoy any immunity from arrest in criminal cases when the House is in session and they cannot avoid summons issued by law enforcement agencies

Entire world and country has accepted taxi aggregators, Goa cannot be different from it

I appeal to the Central government to provide financial help to the state for controlling the lumpy skin disease spreading among the cattle

SHORT TAKES

Six of family killed

Yadgir (Karnataka): Six members of a family, including a baby, were killed during a head on collision between a car and lorry in Karnataka's Yadgir district. The accident took place late Thursday night near Gurmitkal town. The deceased have been identified as Mohammad Majar Hussain (79), Noor Jahan Begum (70), Mohammad Wajid Hussain (39), Heena Begam (30), Imran (22) and Umeja (six-months old). The car's driver Mohammad Fazil Hussian was severely injured and admitted to GIMS hospital.

Jawan ends life

Srinagar: A Border Security Force (BSF) constable allegedly shot himself dead at a camp in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir Friday, officials said. N Hazarika, 43, shot himself fatally from his service rifle at his deployment post in a school in the said district around 11:30 am, they said. The deceased was posted to the F Company of the 108th battalion. The constable joined the BSF in 2004 and hailed from Jorhat district in Assam.

Body found

Bhagalpur (Bihar): A woman was found dead on a platform of Bhagalpur railway station with her five-year-old son sleeping on her lap, unaware of her demise. The matter came to light when the child on waking up began crying and screaming. The passengers at the platform who were witness to the heart wrenching sight informed the GRP, who took away the body. "The GRP found the body of the unidentified woman with the boy sleeping on her lap with his hands around her neck on a platform on Monday. Her body was kept in the mortuary for several hours but nobody came forward to help the police to ascertain her identity," said Anil Kumar, the in-charge of GRP, Bhagalpur railway station said Friday.

Fisherman nabbed

Ahmedabad: The Border Security Force (BSF) Friday apprehended one Pakistani fisherman and seized five boats from Harami Nala creek area close to the Indo-Pak border in Gujarat's Kutch district, an official said. The development came a day after the BSF seized two fishing boats abandoned by Pakistani fishermen in the same area. During their patrolling, the BSF troops observed movement of some fishing boats near the international border early this morning. Despite the increased water level due to high tide, the BSF personnel reached the spot, a release by the BSF said. While other fishermen were successful in escaping towards the Pakistan side, the BSF managed to nab one Pakistani national and seized five abandoned boats, it added.



BJP does not have the capacity to compete with me or face me in the election or reply to the questions I have raised so far. They always contest elections with some support. Why BJP is not contesting the election in Bihar alone? If BJP leaders have guts and strength, they should contest elections alone

TEJASHWI YADAV | RJD LEADER

UDDHAV BACK

Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray has come back as the Chief Editor of the party newspapers -- the multi-edition Marathi 'Saamana' and the Hindi language 'Dopahar Ka Saamana'



India, China hold military talks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: India has firmly conveyed its concerns to China over certain instances of Chinese combat jets flying close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, official sources said Friday. The concerns were conveyed during a special round of military talks on August 2, they said.

In the dialogue that took place at the Chushul-Moldo border point in eastern Ladakh, the Indian delegation strongly pressed for avoiding flying activities within 10 km of the LAC on both sides, the sources added.

The Indian team, comprising an Air Commodore and a number of senior Army officials, highlighted the need for focusing on confidence-building measures to avoid any untoward incident, the sources said. The Chinese team also deployed a senior official from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force.

The special round of talks took place over a month after the instances of Chinese combat aircraft flying close to the LAC in eastern Ladakh that had prompted the Indian Air Force (IAF) to scramble its jets. "The Indian team highlighted the need for having confidence-building measures and, have a better understanding between the two sides," said a source, adding it was conveyed that both sides should not fly within 10 km of the buffer zone from the LAC.



The last round of Corps Commander-level talks took place last month but it failed to achieve any concrete outcome

A Chinese J-11 fighter jet flew close to the LAC in eastern Ladakh in the last week of June following which the IAF also initiated counter-measures

A Chinese J-11 fighter jet flew close to the LAC in eastern Ladakh in the last week of June following which the IAF also initiated counter-measures. There were reports of similar incidents earlier as well.

The sources said both sides held meetings like the one on August 2 including between ground commanders after the face-off in eastern Ladakh erupted in May 2020. They said it was for the first time in the recent past that an IAF officer joined the talks. Indian and Chinese troops are engaged in a standoff at a number of friction points in eastern Ladakh for over two years.

The two sides carried out disengagement process in several areas in the region as a result of high-level military talks. However, both sides are yet to make any breakthrough in ending the face-off in the remaining friction points.

The last round of Corps Commander-level talks took place

last month but it failed to achieve any concrete outcome. The 16th round of military talks was held 10 days after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Bali.

At the one-hour meeting on the sidelines of a conclave of foreign ministers of the G20 nations, Jaishankar conveyed to Wang the need for an early resolution of all the outstanding issues in eastern Ladakh.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas. Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry. As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides had completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area.

Seven die in hooch tragedy in Bihar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chhapra (Bihar), August 5: At least seven people died and 15 others fell ill with some of them even losing their eyesight in a suspected hooch tragedy in Saran district of dry Bihar, officials said Friday.

It is, however, not known when the spurious liquor was consumed as the family members of victims are not ready to share information. Saran district magistrate Rajesh Meena said all the cases were reported from villages falling under Maker police station area and more than 10 people among the seriously ill have suffered loss of vision.

"Prima facie it appears that the villagers had consumed spurious liquor. Five people died here while two deaths occurred at Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) where those who have fallen seriously ill were referred on Thursday," he said.

Saran Superintendent of Police Santosh Kumar said "We are conducting raids in Maker, Marhaura and Bheldi police station areas to nab the suspected bootleggers. We will be able to state the number of arrests after the operation is over." Asked when the deceased and the ill had consumed the liquor, the SP said that it will be known after investigation. "Family members are not forthcoming with the information," he said.

To another query, Kumar said that two victims died at PMCH on Thursday. "We are not sure of the other deaths as the bodies were cremated without informing the police or a post mortem".

Couple buries infant fearing expenses



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sabarkantha, August 5: Couple accused of burying infant Friday admitted that they took the inhuman step as she was premature, unhealthy and they didn't have money to bear the medical expenses which would have been required.

Sabarakantha District Superintendent of Police Vishal Vaghela told mediapersons that during primary questioning, infant's mother Manjula Bajania admitted that she had buried the baby girl and her husband Sailesh was keeping a watch that no one finds them committing offence.

"Moment after the baby girl was rescued and admitted in the hospital for treatment, police had formed three teams to search culprits who buried the baby girl. During search, police team learnt that a pregnant woman and her husband from Chamunda nagar of the Gambhoi village are missing from the village since morning. Police launched a search for them and they were

The infant was noticed by a farmer when he reached his field in the morning

picked up late Wednesday night." Shailesh, who used to work as a farm labourer in neighbouring Gandhinagar district, lost his job recently after which the couple returned to Manjula's parental home in Gambhoi as she was pregnant.

Over 7.5 month pregnant, Manjula gave birth to a baby girl on Wednesday morning at 6 a.m. As the baby was pre-mature and underweight, the couple decided to bury her fearing medical expenses on the new-born.

The infant was noticed by a farmer when he reached his field in the morning. On seeing a tiny arm outside the mud, he dug the area with the help of others only to find an alive infant. They then rushed the baby to Himatnagar civil hospital, where it is being treated.

Teacher held for forcing student to drink alcohol

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Vadodara, August 5: The police here have arrested a tuition teacher for physically assaulting a girl student and forcing her to drink Vodka with him during classes.

The incident was reported to the police Wednesday night and after the teacher's negative corona report, he was arrested Thursday night.

Fatehganj Police Inspector K.P. Parmar told the local media, "Prashant Khosla is running tuition classes in the Nizampura area, where on Wednesday, after tuition hours, Khosla insisted a Class 10 girl student sit with him and have a drink. He forced the girl to accompany him and they drank alcohol. As the girl fell unconscious, around 9.30 p.m. he dropped her home. The girl's parents rushed her to a private hospital, where she is being treated."



After gaining consciousness the victim narrated the entire incident to the Women Police Sub Inspector A.K. Valvi, after which the tuition teacher Prashant was picked up. "It was found that the teacher was drunk and did have control of himself," said the officer.

Two separate cases have been registered against the teacher, one under the prohibition act, and another under the IPC sections, Juvenile Justice Act and POCSO's section 11.

In another shocking incident in Gujarat's Rajkot city, a landlord in Meera Udhvognagar area fed alcohol to the two-year-old son of a neighbour.

Women deprived of taking oath in MP



In a video which surfaced on social media, as many as seven men sporting a tilak on their foreheads can be seen taking the oath, pledging equality and rights for all

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, August 5: During the last assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh earlier this year, a slogan - "Ladki Hoon, Lad Sakti Hoon", had become popular, especially among the women. That time, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's political catchphrase was acknowledged and was used in Madhya Pradesh too.

However, a video of an oath taking ceremony at a village in Madhya Pradesh revealed that though the women got elected by the people, they could not even take their oath of office. In the rural areas, it is an undeniable fact that even though the women get elected with mandatory reservation under the Constitution, it is their male relatives (not in all cases) who operate the levers of power directly or indirectly.

But what if the elected women are deprived of even taking oath and their male relatives like husband and in-laws take the oath in place of the constitutionally elected representatives. This happened in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district where husbands, brothers-in-law, fathers were seen taking oath as

panchayat members in place of the elected women.

In a video which surfaced on social media, as many as seven men sporting a tilak on their foreheads can be seen taking the oath, pledging equality and rights for all. IANS was informed that 21 members were elected (one sarpanch and 20 panches), out of which 10 members were women. The panchayat elections in Madhya Pradesh concluded two weeks back.

However, during the oath taking ceremony held a couple of days back, only three out of the 10 women were present at the swearing-in. The oath for the rest was taken by male members in the family.

Another example of mockery of the Panchayat Raj system was reported in Damod district, where a newly elected sarpanch's husband took the oath of office. The swearing-in ceremony was conducted by a block level government official.

After the video went viral, the district administration swung into action and ordered an enquiry into the matter. "Panchayat officials hurriedly administered the oath in the Panchayat Bhavan late in the night by calling the women sarpanch and Panch. An inquiry has been ordered into the matter," said an officer in Sagar district.

Such incidents are being reported despite the Centre and state governments running several programmes in the name of "Women Empowerment". Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) can also be found empowering the women to make them capable of deciding for themselves.



Students wade through a flooded street following monsoon rains in Amritsar

PTI PHOTO

THIRD ANNIV OF ARTICLE 370 ABROGATION

PDP, Congress stage protests, seek rollback of move

Mehbooba said her party was determined not only to fight for the restoration of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir but also work for lasting solution to the issue of Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 5: The Peoples Democratic Party and the Congress staged protests Friday to mark the third anniversary of the repeal of Jammu and Kashmir's special status and reiterated their resolve to fight for its restoration.

The National Conference held a meeting on the occasion and pinned all its hopes on the Supreme Court reversing the decisions taken by the Centre on this day three years ago.

Life was normal across Kashmir on Friday with markets, schools and other establishments remaining

open. "Paying no heed to Bandh Call, all shops are open and it is absolutely normal in Srinagar District. These visuals are from Lal Chowk area," Srinagar Police tweeted alongside a 13-second video of Lal Chowk showing scenes of normalcy.

Mehbooba and her party workers assembled at the party office near the Sher-e-Kashmir Municipal Park here to protest against the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir into Union territories and abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution which accorded special status to the



PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti participates in a protest demanding to restore the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on the third anniversary of abrogation of Article 370 and 35A in Srinagar

erstwhile state. They tried to march towards Lal

Chowk but were prevented by the police personnel deployed on law

and order duty. Carrying placards and banners demanding the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, the protesters were allowed to briefly camp outside the PDP office. They later dispersed peacefully.

Talking to reporters, Mehbooba said her party was determined not only to fight for the restoration of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir but also work for lasting solution to the issue of Kashmir.

"In the coming time, they will destroy the Constitution and foundations on which this country stands. They will make this a theological state and replace the tricolour with saffron flag. They will change the national flag as they did with our Constitution and flag. But we are determined to fight for restoration of what has been snatched from us," she said.

The PDP president later took to Twitter saying that the BJP's designs for Jammu and Kashmir have unravelled. "As BJP's malicious designs for J&K have unravelled, the pattern of suppression & fear is now knocking at the door in rest of the country too. Weaponising their pet agencies & using terror laws to stifle dissent has become the norm," she said.

"Your silence & complicity emboldened GOI to wreck havoc. Today they are trampling upon Indian democracy by subverting every pillar that supported it. BJP's so called integration of J&K which never happened has cost us heavily," the former chief minister said, apparently referring to political parties from the rest of the country. She claimed that Jammu and Kashmir has slipped on development indices.

of the day quote

We participate together with the Chinese People's Republic in the recently created Group of Friends for the Protection of the UN Charter

SERGEI LAVROV | RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

Ukraine's foreign minister will make a tour of African states this autumn

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE

US and Hungarian conservatives must join forces in 2024 elections to take back institutions in Washington and Brussels from liberals who threaten western civilization

VIKTOR ORBÁN | PRIME MINISTER OF HUNGARY

SHORT TAKES

China summons European envoys

Beijing: China says it summoned European diplomats in the country to protest statements issued by the Group of Seven nations and the European Union criticising threatening Chinese military exercises surrounding Taiwan. The Foreign Ministry on Friday said Vice Minister Deng Li made "solemn representations" over what he called "wanton interference in China's internal affairs". China has dispatched navy ships and warplanes and launched missiles into the Taiwan Strait in response to a visit this week by US Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan, which China regards as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

Khadka to visit China

Kathmandu: In the midst of rising tension between China and Taiwan after the visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Nepal's Foreign Minister Narayan Khadka is visiting China from August 9-11, Nepal's Foreign Ministry announced Friday. At the invitation of Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Yi, Dr Khadka is visiting China from August 9 to 11, the ministry said.

Lightning strike near White House

Washington: Two people who were critically injured in a lightning strike outside the White House have died, police said Friday. Two others remained hospitalized with life-threatening injuries. James Mueller, 76, and Donna Mueller, 75, of Janesville, Wisconsin, died of their injuries after the lightning strike in Lafayette Park, located directly outside the White House complex, the Metropolitan Police Department said. The two other people, a man and a woman, were in critical condition, the police department said. Their identities were not immediately released.

Erdogan, Putin to meet for talks

Gaza City: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin are scheduled to meet Friday in the seaside resort of Sochi. Turkey's planned military incursion to attack a Kurdish militia in northern Syria will top the agenda among other regional issues, dpa news agency reported citing Ankara's state broadcaster TRT as saying. Moscow had recently advised against such an offensive.

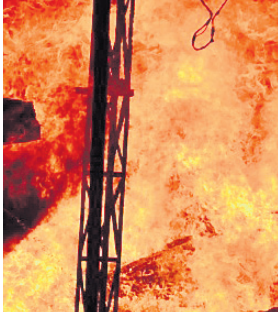


The current exceptional drought is depriving many communities of water and is a tragedy for our farmers, our ecosystems and biodiversity

ELISABETH BORNE | FRENCH PRIME MINISTER

FOREST FIRE RAGES IN BERLIN

Firefighters are battling a blaze that broke out in Berlin's Grunewald forest followed by numerous explosions at a police munitions storage facility



China slaps sanctions against Pelosi

THE SANCTIONS AGAINST PELOSI WERE REGARDED AS SYMBOLIC AND IT BANS HER AND HER FAMILY MEMBERS FROM TRAVELLING TO CHINA. EARLIER, CHINA HAD IMPOSED SANCTIONS AGAINST 28 FORMER TRUMP ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE THEN US SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO

AGENCIES

Taipei, August 5: China Friday announced sanctions on US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her immediate family in retaliation to her high-profile visit to Taiwan this week and cancelled talks with Washington on defence, climate change and a range of other issues.

Pelosi, 82, the highest-ranking US official to visit Taiwan in 25 years, visited the island Tuesday, which Beijing claims as part of it and vows to integrate with the Chinese mainland.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry, which stridently criticised her visit and lodged stern protests against the US by summoning its Ambassador to China Chris Burns and announced four-day high-intensity military drills in Taiwan Strait, issued a statement Friday imposing sanctions against Pelosi and her family.

"In disregard of China's grave concerns and firm opposition, Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi insisted on visiting China's Taiwan region," the statement said.

China also announced Friday it was halting dialogue with the United States in a number of areas, including between theater-level military commanders and on climate talks.

China's foreign ministry said it was also suspending cooperation with Washington on prevention of cross-border crime and drug trafficking, an area along with climate change where US officials see opportunity for cooperation.



- CHINA STAGING UNPRECEDENTED MILITARY DRILLS AROUND TAIWAN
- CHINA SAYS IT IS HALTING SOME COOPERATION WITH WASHINGTON
- CHINA TELLS WASHINGTON NOT TO ESCALATE CRISIS
- PELOSI, IN JAPAN, JOINS PM KISHIDA IN CONDEMNING CHINA

portunity for cooperation.

Taiwan's defence ministry said Friday a total of 68 Chinese military aircraft and 13 navy ships were conducting missions in the sensitive Taiwan Strait. Some of them, they said, crossed an unofficial buffer separating the two sides, a move the ministry described as "damaging the status quo".

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Washington has repeatedly made clear to Beijing it does not seek a crisis over Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, which took place

Wednesday during a congressional tour of Asia.

On Friday, China's military conducted air and sea drills to the north, southwest and east of Taiwan "to test the troops' joint combat capabilities", the Eastern Theater Command of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) said in a statement.

Blinken emphasised that the United States would not take actions to provoke a crisis, but it would continue to support regional allies and conduct standard air and maritime transit through the Taiwan Strait.

'EVIL NEIGHBOUR'

Taiwan condemned its "evil neighbour" Friday after China fired multiple missiles into its surrounding waters, as many as four of which flew over the island's capital Taipei in an unprecedented escalation during live-fire exercises. China launched its largest ever military drills in the seas and skies around Taiwan Thursday, a day after US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi enraged Beijing by making a solidarity trip to the self-ruled island that China claims as its own. Some Taipei residents, criticised the government for not putting out a missile alert, but one security expert said that could have been done to avoid stoking panic and playing into China's hands.

Japan, US pledge close cooperation

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and visiting US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi met in Tokyo Friday to reaffirm their commitment to working together closely to maintain peace in the region, as tensions in the Taiwan Strait continue to rise. On Thursday, five missile shells were fired into Japan's exclusive economic zone by China's People's Liberation Army from the waters off Taiwan, reports dpa news agency. China's behaviour had "serious implications for peace and stability in the region and the international community", Kishida was quoted as saying by Japanese media reports. Japan has refrained from taking an official stance on Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, and has instead advocated for a peaceful resolution to the island's issue through dialogue.

US condemns China's action

The United States has condemned the Chinese military drills in Taiwan Strait and described it as an action that is at odds with the longstanding goal of maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and in the region. "Overnight, the People's Republic of China launched an estimated 11 ballistic missiles towards Taiwan, which impacted to the northeast, the east, and southeast of the island," John Kirby, National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communications told reporters. "We condemn these actions, which are irresponsible and at odds with our longstanding goal of maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and in the region," Kirby said.

CLOSE FOCUS



A boy holds binoculars at the 68-nautical-mile scenic spot, one of mainland China's closest points to the island of Taiwan, in Pingtan island, Fujian province, China

REUTERS

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill 9

AGENCIES

Gaza City, August 5: Israel unleashed a wave of airstrikes in Gaza Friday, killing at least eight people, including a senior militant, and wounding dozens, according to Palestinian officials. Israel said it was targeting the Islamic Jihad militant group in response to an "imminent threat" following the arrest of another senior militant in the occupied West Bank earlier this week.

The targeted killing of the senior Palestinian militant appeared likely to draw rocket fire from Gaza, which would push the sides closer to all-out war. Israel and Gaza's militant Hamas rulers have fought four wars and several smaller battles over the last 15 years at a staggering cost to the territory's 2 million Palestinian residents.

A blast was heard in Gaza City, where smoke poured out of the seventh floor of a tall building Friday afternoon.

UK PM race: Sunak wins over voters in TV debate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 5: Former Chancellor Rishi Sunak convincingly won over an audience of Conservative Party members in a head-to-head television debate with rival Foreign Secretary Liz Truss in the leadership contest to elect a new Tory party leader and British Prime Minister.

It will come as a boost for the British Indian ex-minister who has been trailing Truss in most recent opinion polls, with the last survey putting her around 32 percentage points ahead of Sunak among Tory members. He was asked by an audience member and potential voter if he planned to step aside in the race at any point, given the polling figures.

"The quick answer is no, and that's because I'm fighting for something I really believe in and I'm taking my ideas around the country," Sunak replied. "I'm going to fight incredibly hard until the last day of this campaign for each

The 'Battle for Number 10' on 'Sky News' Thursday night brought the finalists face to face with Conservative members who are entitled to vote in the election but are mostly undecided on their choice

After the two contenders put forward their arguments for why they should replace Boris Johnson at 10 Downing Street, the audience members were asked who they thought had won the argument and they picked Sunak in a show of hands



and every one of your votes. The stakes are really high," he declared.

He was also asked why so many senior Tory ministers and figures were endorsing Liz Truss. "Every stage of the parliamentary process, I had the broadest and biggest support," Sunak pointed out.

"We're all one team, we're all one family, we're going to come together after this and we're going to take it to [Opposition Labour Leader] Keir Starmer and win the next election, because that's the real prize. Plenty of people sat around the Cabinet table also support me. I've been really humbled actually,"

he said.

The former finance minister stuck to his central plank and focussed his message on the need to get a grip on soaring inflation before cutting taxes. "But it all starts with not making the situation worse. Because if we just put fuel on the fire of this inflation spi-

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Istanbul, August 5: Three more ships carrying thousands of tons of corn left Ukrainian ports Friday, in the latest sign that a negotiated deal to export grain trapped since Russia invaded Ukraine nearly six months ago is slowly moving forward. But major hurdles lie ahead to get food to the countries that need it most.

The ships bound for Ireland, the United Kingdom and Turkey follow the first grain shipment to pass through the Black Sea since the start of the war. The passage of that vessel heading for Lebanon earlier this week was the first under the breakthrough deal brokered by Turkey and the United Nations with Russia and Ukraine.

The Black Sea region is dubbed the world's breadbasket, with Ukraine and Russia key global suppliers of wheat, corn, barley and sunflower oil that millions of impoverished people in Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia rely on for survival.

While the shipments have raised hopes of easing a global food cri-



sis, much of the grain that Ukraine is trying to export is used for animal feed, not for people to eat, experts say. The first vessels to leave are among more than a dozen bulk carriers and cargo ships that had been loaded with grain but stuck in ports since Russia invaded in late February. And the cargoes are not expected to have a significant impact on the global price of corn, wheat and soybeans for several reasons. For starters, the exports under the deal are off to a slow, cautious start due to the threat of explosive mines floating off Ukraine's Black Sea coastline.

And while Ukraine is a major exporter of wheat to developing nations, there are other countries, such as the United States and Canada, with far greater production levels that can affect global wheat prices.

14 killed in Thai nightclub fire



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bangkok, August 5: Fourteen people were killed and dozens badly injured when a fire broke out early Friday at a crowded music pub in eastern Thailand, police and rescue workers said. At least a dozen survivors were in critical condition.

Videos on social media showed thick black smoke and then flames pouring from the front entrance as people attempted to flee, some with their clothing on fire. Police said the fire was reported around 12:45 a.M.

The Mountain B pub in Sattahip district of Chonburi province, about 160 kilometers southeast of Bangkok, was lined with flammable soundproofing, and it took two hours for firefighters to put out the blaze, Manop Theprith of a private emergency rescue service group told Thailand's PPTV television news. His group said 40 people had been injured.

Several witnesses described seeing smoke and fire on the ceiling near the stage, followed by explosions. Thirteen people died at the scene and another person with burns over 90% of his body died later, police, rescuers and Queen Sirikit Naval Hospital said.

The hospital said 15 patients required intubation, with most suffering third-degree burns over more than 60% of their bodies. Two patients were transferred to a hospital in Bangkok for advanced treatment.

of the day **quote**

As more tech companies go public and become a more significant part of the indices, it is essential for these two constituents to build a relationship and understand each other better

SUMER JUNEJA | MANAGING PARTNER & INDIA HEAD, SOFTBANK INVESTMENT ADVISERS

OSM is testing its electric tractors at its Korea and Thailand R&D centres and will be bringing new concepts of tractor as a service and leasing for the tier II and III markets by 2023

UDAY NARANG | FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN, OSM

With landmark of ₹100 crore achieved in the early part of the financial year, we are confident of achieving our target of ₹250 crore disbursement in this financial year

SUBHASH ACHARYA | CO-FOUNDER & MD, SEEDS FINCAP

SHORT TAKES

Recession fears drag oil prices

Washington: Oil prices slipped Friday and were near their lowest levels since February as concerns over a possible recession and a fall in fuel demand continued to rattle markets. Brent crude fell 50 cents, or 0.5 per cent, to \$93.62 a barrel. US West Texas Intermediate crude was down 66 cents, or 0.8 per cent, at \$87.88. Prices have come under pressure this week as the market has fretted over the impact of inflation on economic growth and demand, but signs of tight supply kept a floor under prices.

HDFC Ltd raises \$1.1bn social loan

New Delhi: Mortgage lender HDFC Ltd Friday said it has raised \$1.1 billion (around ₹8,700 crore) from a clutch of investors under 'Syndicated Social Loan Facility' to cater to the affordable housing segment. HDFC Ltd has raised the amount by way of external commercial borrowings (ECBs). "This landmark financing further promotes HDFC's longstanding mission to be the leading provider of housing finance in India. Proceeds from the social loan would go towards financing affordable housing loans," the company said.

UCO Bank Q1 net rises 22%

New Delhi: State-owned UCO Bank Friday posted a 22 per cent rise in its net profit at ₹123.61 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, helped by fall in bad loans. The bank had reported a net profit of ₹101.81 crore in the same quarter of financial year 2021-22. However, the total income declined to ₹3,796.59 crore, as against ₹4,539.08 crore in first quarter of the previous fiscal, UCO Bank said in a regulatory filing.

Nykaa net profit rises 42% in Q1

New Delhi: FSN E-commerce, which operates under Nykaa brand, Friday said its consolidated net profit rose nearly 42 per cent to ₹5 crore in the April-June quarter of FY23. The company had recorded a net profit of ₹3.52 crore in the same period a year ago. The consolidated revenue from operations of Nykaa increased by 41 per cent to ₹1,148.42 crore during the reported quarter from ₹816.99 crore in June 2021 quarter. Nykaa said that its Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) during the quarter grew by 47 per cent year-on-year to ₹2,155.8 crore.



The most important of these (gaps) is jobless growth. The Indian unemployment rate is hovering around 7-8%. This is because job growth has not kept pace with GDP growth

ANAND MAHINDRA | CHAIRMAN, MAHINDRA GROUP

EDTECH FIRMS' LAYOFF CONTINUE UNABATED

Layoffs at edtech platforms continue in India and now, one of the industry leaders Vedantu has asked 100 more employees to go and LEAD has also laid off a similar number of staff in the ongoing funding winter. To date, over 6,000 employees have been shown the door by the edtech firms that include Unacademy (1,150 employees), Byju's (550 at Toppr and Whitehat Jr) and Vedantu (724)



AGGRESSIVE STANCE ON INFLATION

More rate hikes by RBI on cards: Experts

Economists and analysts expect the RBI's monetary policy committee to continue with rate hikes till the policy rate reaches the neutral rate of 6-6.5 per cent by the end of this fiscal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 5: The Reserve Bank has adopted an aggressive stance on inflation and may go in for more hikes in the benchmark interest rate in coming months, say experts.

The central bank Friday raised the key interest rate by 50 basis points, the third straight increase since May in an effort to cool stubbornly high inflation and defend the rupee.

The repurchase (repo) rate was raised by 50 basis points to lift the interest rate to the pre-pandemic level. The 5.40 per cent repo rate was last seen in August 2019.

"The RBI has clearly taken an aggressive position on inflation even though there is no change in the forecasts on both inflation and growth. The confidence in growth gives it a strong justification for attacking inflation in a big way," said Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda.

There may be another 50 bps hike during the year in this situation as inflation in the next two

quarters will remain above 6 per cent, he added.

HDFC Bank chief economist Abheek Barua said the RBI delivered a textbook policy announcement today - one that is front-loaded and aggressive in response to inflation that remains high while the growth momentum remains reasonably positive.

He too expects the RBI to continue with its rate hike in the upcoming policies taking interest rate up to 5.75 per cent by the end of the year.

"The bond market rally seen over the last few days is likely to reverse and we expect the 10-year paper to trade closer to 7.3-7.4 per cent by the end of the quarter as markets reprice in RBI action and the supply of both SDLs (state development loans) and central government bonds this year," Barua opined.

Rajni Thakur, Chief Economist, RBL Bank said the markets had

broadly priced in 50 bps hike in repo rate and any forward guidance would have mattered more than the rate action itself. She too was of the view that given the growth-inflation outlook, further hikes towards 6 per cent terminal repo rate seem imminent, even though the pace of hike is likely to be softer going ahead.

"Continued focus on withdrawal indicates further drawdown of excess liquidity as well, in which case, monetary tightening is far from over yet," Thakur said.

Dhruv Agarwala, Group CEO, Housing.Com said the new repo rate will ultimately impact the cost of borrowing for India's homebuyers. However, it is also pertinent to note that past rate hikes and the consequent increase in home loan rates have so far not had any discernible negative impact on the

We believe that the current policy rate hike cycle is expected to continue till the Reserve Bank of India reaches what is known as neutral policy rate

SUNIL KUMAR SINHA | PRINCIPAL ECONOMIST, INDIA RATINGS

We maintain our call for at least another 75 bps hikes by March 2023, subject to inflation nearing its peak in 2QFY23 and gradually easing below 6 per cent in the March quarter

RADHIKA RAO | SENIOR ECONOMIST, DBS

Govt seeks to tighten rules on M&A antitrust scrutiny

THE DRAFT PROPOSES ALL DEALS WORTH OVER ₹20 BILLION SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO ANTITRUST SCRUTINY IF THE FIRMS HAVE SUBSTANTIAL BIZ OPERATIONS IN INDIA

REUTERS

New Delhi, August 5: India aims to tighten rules around the scrutiny of mergers and acquisitions under proposed legislation that could particularly affect global tech firms that do a lot of business there.

The proposal is part of an overhaul of India's competition law in a bill that was introduced in parliament Friday and could be passed as soon as next week.

Under current law, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) reviews mergers and acquisitions (M&A) that surpass thresholds for assets or turnover.

But many high-value deals between technology firms that have a big presence in India have escaped scrutiny because the companies involved have had few assets and low turnover there.

Facebook's acquisition of WhatsApp in 2014 for \$19 billion, for example, required no CCI clearance, even as WhatsApp counted



India as a major market, lawyers say. The draft law proposes all deals worth over ₹20 billion should be subject to antitrust scrutiny if the companies have substantial business operations in India.

"The hotly debated deal value test seeks to attract scrutiny of transactions where parties do not meet the conventional asset and turnover thresholds particularly in the tech space," said Anisha Chand, a partner specializing in antitrust law at Indian law firm Khaitan & Co.

"If passed in the present form, the incoming amendment may likely result in a jump in (the) number of transactions particularly in new age markets to require prior clearance," she added.

The deal value threshold for

scrutiny is in line with antitrust regulations in Germany and Austria, public policy consulting firm Koan Advisory said in a note Friday.

New regulations from the CCI will lay out the process to determine whether an entity has "substantial business operations" in India, according to the bill, which is dated August 2.

As part of the revamp of competition law, the government also proposes reducing the time limit for approving mergers to 150 days from 210 days.

In addition, it plans to introduce a mechanism for entities seeking to reach a settlement with the CCI, the bill says.



WhatsApp message cited in the report said a "forum" of companies had agreed to gradually raise cement prices in some regions by ₹5-10. Senior executives, including from Holcim's ACC and UltraTech, were assigned as the "co-ordinator" for various states.

"Price will go up in each week by equal amount," the message said. The message did not give details but typically, cement is sold in 50 kg (110 lb) bags to retail consumers, and the cost is between ₹350-450 per bag depending on the location and grade of cement.

Markets eke out slim gains after RBI rate hike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 5: Equity benchmarks ended modestly higher Friday after the Reserve Bank raised the key interest rate on expected lines to cool stubbornly high inflation and defend the rupee.

Continuous foreign fund inflows into the capital markets and softening crude oil prices also helped the bourses regain momentum after a day's pause, traders said.

The Reserve Bank Friday raised the key interest rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent - the third straight increase since May.

Rupee appreciated by 16 paise to close at 79.24 against the US dollar

The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 89.13 points or 0.15 per cent higher at 58,387.93 after facing volatility during the fag-end of trade. During the day, it climbed 350.39 points or 0.60 per cent to 58,649.19.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty went up by 15.50 points or 0.09 per cent to finish at 17,397.50.

UltraTech Cement was the top gainer among the Sensex constituents, climbing 2.86 per cent, followed by ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, PowerGrid, Infosys, Wipro and Axis Bank.

On a weekly basis, the Sensex advanced 817.68 points or 1.42 per cent, while the Nifty gained 239.25 points or 1.39 per cent.

Foreign institutional investors remained net buyers in the capital markets as they bought shares worth ₹1,474.77 crore Thursday, as per exchange data.

BIZ BUZZ

IMFA MD meets FM

Bhubaneswar: Indian Metals and Ferro Alloys (IMFA) Limited Managing Director, Subhrakant Panda, Friday, met with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and welcomed FM's decisions made during pandemic and predicted a strong growth for Indian economy. Accompanied by former presidents of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Harsh Pati Singhania and Sandip Somany along with present Director General Arun Chawla, Panda complimented FM on deft handling of the Indian economy during challenging times. "Though many questions were raised about the timing & extent of stimulus measures during the pandemic, the manner of intervention was the right thing to do as is evident from runaway inflation where helicopter money was abundant. Most importantly, no Indian went hungry thanks to the food subsidy," Panda said in a social media post. "The underlying fundamentals of the Indian economy are strong and it is poised to grow 7.0-7.4% depending upon how certain external issues pan out. Inflation will moderate especially given that commodity prices have come off highs," he added. Panda also mentioned that the FM reiterated her support of RBI's policy to have an orderly movement of the currency rather than defend a particular level. "She was also very receptive to the suggestions we made about green financing," Panda said.



AM/NS to sponsor Odisha Juggernauts



Bhubaneswar: ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS) announced an agreement with Odisha Sports Development and Promotion Company, a state government body, to become Principal Team Sponsor of state's Kho Kho franchise - Odisha Juggernauts. The agreement was signed by Shingo Nakamura, Deputy Director, AM/NS India and Ranjit Parida, Director of OSDPC. AM/NS India's sponsorship of the Odisha Juggernauts is an extension of its support and commitment to advance sporting excellence in Odisha and India. In 2021, AM/NS India was the Official Partner of the Hockey Men's Junior World Cup tournament, hosted by Odisha in Bhubaneswar. Shingo Nakamura, Deputy Director, HR & Administration, AM/NS INDIA, said, "AM/NS India believes that sport is a fundamental and integral part of society. We are proud to partner with the Government of Odisha in its maiden venture into professional Kho Kho and are confident that this new national league will go a long way in growing interest and participation in the sport across India and the state of Odisha, especially among young people.

Holcim units, other Indian cement firms fixed prices: CCI

CCI has held top leadership of Holcim units ACC and Ambuja, UltraTech and 17 other firms such as Shree Cement and Dalmia Cement. Together these companies control more than three-quarters of the over 500MT installed cement capacity in India, the world's second-largest producer after China

REUTERS

New Delhi, August 5: Swiss giant Holcim's India units and more than a dozen other cement manufacturers colluded to raise prices and restrict supplies for years, which included regularly inspecting one another to ensure there was no breach of the agreements, according to a federal antitrust probe.

The investigations arm of the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has held top leadership - CEOs or Managing Directors - of Holcim units ACC and Ambuja, market leader UltraTech and 17 other firms such as Shree Cement and Dalmia Cement liable for antitrust violations.

The investigation report, issued last month and seen by Reuters, is the penultimate but most significant stage of the CCI probe that started in 2019. The report will be reviewed by CCI's top three officials who have powers to impose fines and will give companies a last chance to defend themselves. Potentially, the cement giants could be fined millions of dollars.

The report said executives of the companies discussed coordinated price hikes in Zoom calls and in-person meetings at company guest houses, with some officials using personal mail to communicate with rivals. WhatsApp messaging was also extensively used.

One company official's

■ **PROBE FINDS ANTITRUST LAPSES AT 20 CEMENT FIRMS**

■ **EXECUTIVES COORDINATED ON PRICES, PLANT SHUTDOWNS**

■ **COMPANIES CHECKED EACH OTHER FOR COMPLIANCE**

■ **CEMENT GIANTS FACE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN POSSIBLE FINES**

SYSTEMATIC CARTELISATION

Cement production is a lucrative business in India's economy, with high demand especially from rural housing and infrastructure firms.

An official at the Pavers and Blocks Manufacturers Association, whose members sell concrete paving blocks, told Reuters price hikes by cement companies in re-

cent years were coordinated, leaving no scope for cutting costs by switching suppliers. "We sometimes pass the higher cost to consumers," said the official.

Overall, the CCI investigation report concluded the cement companies colluded in 13 states in eastern and southern India, with more than 50 industry executives involved in "cartelisation" activities in an "extremely organised manner".

Cement companies have been accused of price-fixing for over a decade. In 2016, the CCI imposed a \$800 million fine on 10 companies for fixing prices, including the Holcim units and UltraTech, but the decision has been challenged since then at the Supreme Court.

Bajrang, Sakshi, Deepak bag gold

HEARTBREAK FOR ANSHU AS SHE SETTLES FOR SILVER BEFORE DIVYA'S BRONZE-WINNING PERFORMANCE



BAJRANG PUNIA



SAKSHI MALIK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, August 5: Friday turned out to be a splendid day for Indian wrestlers at the Commonwealth Games (CWG) as Bajrang Punia, Deepak Punia and Sakshi Malik clinched gold medals, while Anshu Malik grabbed silver in her maiden appearance at the showpiece event.

Such was Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Bajrang's dominance in the 65kg competition that he won three of his four bouts inside first rounds.

The 28-year-old defending champion beat Naurau's Lowe Bingham and Mauritius' Jean Guyliane Joris Bandou 'by fall' before winning by technical superiority against England's Geroge Ramm. Canada's Lachlan Maurice McNeil fought well against Bajrang but the Indian was far superior in technique and stamina.

Rio Olympics bronze medallist Sakshi turned back the clock to register a dominant victory to bag the yellow metal in the women's freestyle 65kg bout, beating Canada's Ana Godinez Gonzalez by fall.

Sakshi, who seemed to have gone off the boil after her success in the Rio 2016, missing some events and got upstages by younger opponents, made a brilliant comeback both in her bout Friday and her career as

she stomped her authority.

Later, Deepak reigned supreme in the men's 86kg category, getting the better of Pakistan's Muhammad Inam.

Anshu, who has taken rapid strides in her career, reached the women's 57kg final with similar dominance but ended up second-best with a silver medal. The Nidani wrestler, who turned 21 Friday, won by technical superiority against Australia's Irene Symeonidis and Sri Lanka's Nethmi Ahinsa Fernando Poruthotage.

It did not take Anshu much time to measure her opponents. Her trademark aggression and quality was too hot to handle for her rivals till the gold bout.

The World Championship silver medallist though could not breach the defence of Nigeria's Oduwayo Folasade Adekuoroye, losing the gold bout 3-7. The Nigerian was strong with her defence and Anshu could not find a way to make her moves. She left mat with tears in her eyes as it was not the birthday present she wanted to give herself.

Bajrang has been struggling to play freely since last year and his over defensive tactics put a question-mark over his ability to extend his dominance in international arena but Friday he made his moves without inhibition. However, the CWG is not the best



ANSHU MALIK

platform to judge if Bajrang has got his mojo back because of the inferior field quality.

For Sakshi, who has been battling for relevance for long, it was an ideal opportunity to get some confidence back and she used it to optimum level in the 62kg contest. She began by pinning home team wrestler Kelsey Barnes and followed that with a technical superiority win against Cameroon's Berthe Emilienne.

In her two bouts, she did not concede a single point and will now clash with Canada's Ana Paula Godinez Gonzalez for her first CWG gold. She has a bronze and silver in her CWG collection.

Deepak did not look his dominant and quick self in his previous bouts but still won without giving a point to his rivals. The wrestler from Chhara village began with technical superiority win over Matthew Clay Oxenham

from New Zealand and beat Canada's Alexander Moore 3-1.

Divya Kakran defeated Tonga's Cocker Lemalie Tiger Lily in the bronze playoff. She earlier got a tough draw as she found Tokyo Olympic silver medallist and 11-time African champion Blessing Oborududu from Nigeria.

The first round was worth a final though Divya was outplayed by the formidable Nigerian. The Asian Games bronze medallist won her repechage round against Blandine Nyeh Ngiri by fall.

Also fighting for bronze will be Mohit Grewal (125kg), who won against Cyprus' Alexios Kaouslidis 10-1 but lost his semifinal to Canada's Amarveer Dhesi by technical superiority. He is up against Jamaica's Aaron Anthony Johnson.

Para powerlifter Sudhir secures gold medal

BIRMINGHAM: India's Sudhir claimed the gold medal in men's heavyweight para powerlifting event at the Commonwealth Games here Thursday. Sudhir, an Asian Para Games bronze medallist, lifted 208kg in his first attempt before increasing it to 212kg in his second effort to gather 134.5 points and break the Games record. The 27-year-old Sudhir, who has an impairment due to the effects of polio, thus opened India's para sports medal account in the ongoing CWG. Ikechukwu Christian Obichukwu won the silver with 133.6 points, while Micky Yule bagged the bronze with 130.9 points. President Droupadi Murmu Friday congratulated Sudhir for his historic feat. "Congratulations to Sudhir for his historic feat in winning gold in para-powerlifting in CWG. Your spirited performance and dedication has brought you the medal and glory for India. May you shine in your future endeavours," Murmu tweeted.



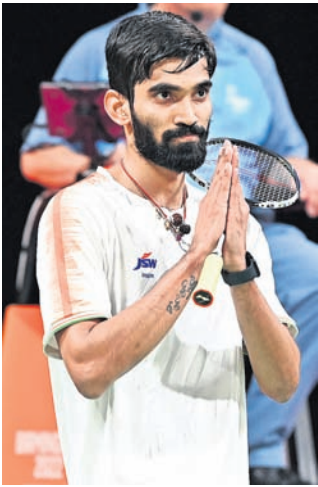
Srikanth, Sindhu march into quarterfinals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, August 5: Star Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth had another easy outing as they stormed into the quarterfinals of the women's and men's singles events respectively with comfortable wins at the Commonwealth Games here Friday.

Sindhu, a silver medallist at the 2018 edition, expectedly faced no resistance from Uganda's Husina Kobugabe, winning 21-10, 21-9 in her pre-quarterfinal match.

Srikanth, who had also finished second best at Gold Coast, too didn't break any sweat on his way to



a 21-9, 21-12 win over Sri Lanka's Dumindu Abeywickrama in the men's singles.

Earlier, Indian women's pairing of Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly had entered the last eight with a 21-2, 21-4 win over Mauritius' Jemimah Leung For Sang and Ganesha Mungrah.

Double Olympic medallist Sindhu will face Malaysia's Goh Jin Wei in the next round for a place in the semifinals. Former World No.1 Srikanth will be up against England's Toby Pent, who is ranked 54th in the world. Gayatri and Treasa will meet Jamaica's Tahlia Richardson and Katherine Wynter next.

BHAVINA IN FINAL

BIRMINGHAM: India's Bhavina Patel cruised to the women's singles class 3-5 para table tennis final and assured herself of a medal at the CWG here, Friday. The Tokyo Paralympics silver medallist thrashed England's Sue Bailey 11-6, 11-6, 11-6 to seal her final berth. She will take on Nigeria's Christiana Ikpeoyi in the final. Sonalben Patel went down to Ikpeoyi 11-8, 6-11, 4-11, 7-11. She will now face Bailey in the bronze medal match. Raj Aravindan Alagar also lost 11-7, 8-11, 4-11, 7-11 to Nigeria's Nasiru Sule in the semifinal. He will face Nigerian Isau Ogunkunle in the bronze medal tie.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, August 5: Indian paddlers Manika Batra and Sreeja Akula entered the women's singles quarterfinals in the table tennis event of the Commonwealth Games (CWG) here, Friday.

Batra steamrolled Australian Jee Minhyung 11-4, 11-8, 11-6, 12-10 to book her place in the quarterfinal. The 27-year-old star paddler will now take on Singapore's Jian Zeng in the last eight-clash.

Sreeja, on the other hand, played out a nerve-wracking encounter against Charlotte Carey from Wales to secure herself a last eight berth. The 24-year-old toiled hard but held her nerves to beat Carey

SREESHANKAR EYES PARIS 2024



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, August 5: He may have missed out on the cherished gold by the thinnest of margins, but the ever-smiling Murali Sreeshankar, who bagged a historic silver medal in men's long jump at the CWG here, said this is just the beginning and he is hungry for more success.

The lanky youngster's road to silver, however, was not that smooth as he slipped to the sixth spot after his 7.84m jump in the third attempt. The 23-year-old endured a further setback when the sport's latest technology, only introduced less than a year ago, caught him committing a foul in his fourth attempt.

With two attempts remaining, the Kerala lad listened to his dad-cum-coach S Murali's advice from the sidelines to execute a perfect 8.08m jump, that rewarded him with a silver.

"I've been waiting for a medal (at a global meet) for a very long time. I was seventh at World Indoor and World Outdoor, sixth at World Juniors, fourth Asian Indoors, sixth at Asian Games," Sreeshankar told PTI.

"Every time I was (finishing) 6th or 7th, so I was really happy with the silver. I have been waiting for a global medal for a very long time, but I kept missing out. This is a small step towards my big goal in the 2024 Paris Olympics and I'm working towards that," he added.

A gold was within his grasp and Sreeshankar knew that as well.

Locked on at 8.08m with eventual gold medal winner Laquan Nairn of Bahamas, Sreeshankar would have won a gold if he had jumped 7.99m in his last attempt.

But to his and the Indian contingent's disappointment, Sreeshankar's foot on the board was found to be ahead of the foul line by 2cm as measured by the laser beam under the newly-introduced foul detector system.

Nairn jumped 7.98m in his final attempt which was his second best of the series while Sreeshankar had 7.84m as his second best. But it seems he has shrugged off his disappointment and termed it a step-by-step process.

"Every athlete has gone through it. (Reigning Olympic champion) Miltiadis Tentoglou told me in Greece that even I too came 7th, 6th and even 4th multiple times" then he went to win the gold (in Tokyo). It's a step by step process," he added.

"At the take-off it even catches the toes getting beyond the 45-degree, otherwise to me it seemed like a 8.10m jump. That's the way it is."

Sreeshankar's medal in men's long jump comes 44 years since Suresh Babu's bronze at the Edmonton Commonwealth Games in 1978. He is also fourth Indian jumper since Babu, Anju Bobby George (bronze at Manchester Games in 2002), and MA Pranjana (silver at New Delhi Games in 2010) to win a medal at the showpiece event.

MANIKA, SREEJA IN QUARTERFINALS

8-11, 11-7, 12-14, 9-11, 11-4, 15-13, 12-10. Sreeja will lock horns with Canada's Mo Zhang in the quarterfinal.

Earlier in the day, both Manika and Sreeja also reached the mixed doubles quarterfinal events. Batra and mixed doubles partner Sathiyam Gnanasekaran humbled Nigerians Olajide Omotayo and Ajoke Ojomu 11-7, 11-6, 11-7. The two will face Malaysia's Javen Choong and Karen Lyne.

Sreeja and her partner Achanta Sharath Kamal, on the other hand, came from behind to beat Malaysia's Leond Chee Fang and Ho Ying 5-11, 11-2, 11-6, 11-5. They will square up against home favourites Liam Pitchford and

Tin-Tin Ho.

Meanwhile, Kamal and Gnanasekaran stormed into the quarterfinals of the men's doubles event after easing past Bangladesh's Bawm Ramhimlian and Ridoy Mohutasin Ahmed. The Indian pair won 11-6, 11-1, 11-4 in their round of 16 clash. Kamal and Gnanasekaran will now take on English pair of Tom Jarvis and Sam Walker.

The pair of Harmeet Desai and Sanil Shetty also was through to the last-eight stage defeating Australian pair of Chambers Dillon and Yan Xin 3-1. Desai and Shetty, who won 11-3, 9-11, 9-11, 7-11, will face Singapore's Clarence Chew and Shao Feng Ethan Poh.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rupal scripts history in U-20 Athletics Worlds

NEW DELHI: Quarter-miler Rupal Chaudhary scripted history by winning twin medals and became the first Indian athlete to win two medals in a single edition of the World U-20 Athletics Championships in Cali, Colombia Thursday. After securing a silver medal in 4x400 mixed relay Tuesday with teammates Priya Mohan, Bharath Sridhar and Kapil, the 17-year-old won the bronze medal in the women's 400m with 51.85s.

Ibrahim in final of first-ever Sim Racing WC

NEW DELHI: India's Mohammed Ibrahim secured his place in the final of the first-ever Sim Racing World Cup by finishing second in the Asian Continental Qualifiers. Ibrahim ended the race impressively with a lap time of 1:33.575 behind top-positioned Thailand's Thanathip Tanalapanan (1:33.561). Interestingly, Ibrahim's finish was also the fifth fastest, globally. The first-ever Sim Racing World Cup is organised by the International Esports Federation in association with Monaco Esports Federation.

India 'A', 'B' post wins in Open section

MAMALLAPURAM: The India 'A' and 'B' teams registered comprehensive seventh round victories in the Open section of the 44th Chess Olympiad here Friday. In the women's section, India 'A' won by 2.5-1.5 margin against sixth-seeded Azerbaijan, despite Koneru Humpy losing on the top board, to remain in the first place. In the open event, Grandmasters Arjun Erigaisi and SL Narayanan secured wins over Abhijeet Gupta and Abhimanyu Puranik as India 'A', the second seeds, outclassed India 'C' 3-1. Armenia continued at the top of the points tally with 13 points. India 'A' and India 'B', USA, Uzbekistan are trailing with 12 points each.

AFI to celebrate Aug 7 as Nat'l Javelin Day

NEW DELHI: The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) will celebrate August 7 as National Javelin Day across the country to commemorate one of the greatest moments in the country's sporting history, Neeraj Chopra's Olympic gold medal. It was August 7 last year that Neeraj produced the 87.58m effort in Tokyo to secure India's first track and field medal in the Olympic Games. The decision was made by AFI upon Neeraj's return from Tokyo. He has now added a World Championships silver medal to his kitty.



NIGHT TO REMEMBER: Gurkirat Singh strikes the ball for a goal at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar

PIC: AIFF TWITTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Gurkirat Singh had a memorable outing as he scored four goals to help India clinch the SAFF U-20 Championship football tournament, for the second consecutive time, at the Kalinga Stadium here, Friday.

The colts thrashed Bangladesh 5-2 in an entertaining final. Gurkirat scored in the first, 60th, 94th and 99th

minutes respectively, while Himanshu Jangra added another one in the 92nd minute. For Bangladesh, Rajon Howladar and Shahin Mia scored in the 44th and 48th minutes respectively.

Drama unfolded right after kick-off as India were awarded a penalty within 20 seconds. Himanshu collected a long pass from the right, sidestepped his marker and unleashed a long ranger which rival

goalkeeper Md Asif managed to block diving low to his right.

Gurkirat, lurking around, was faster to react to the rebound. Asif, in his desperate attempt to keep Gurkirat off, brought the Indian striker down inside the box. Gurkirat gleefully converted from the spot to put India into an early lead.

The lead should have been doubled in the 32nd minute in what was the easiest chance of the half. But



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik greets Indian players before the match

Gurkirat failed to slot home. Taison Singh also missed a chance in the 43rd minute.

The curse of missing chances hit India hard as Bangladesh restored parity at the stroke of half time with Howladar's shot bulging the net. Changing over, Bangladesh took the lead within three minutes. Amandeep mistimed his clearance off a harmless free-kick and it fell to Shahin whose shot hit the post, and rolled in.

The first substitution for India came in the 57th minute – Tankadhar Bag coming in for Maheson Singh – and a series of chances fell India's way thereafter.

The equaliser came when a clearance fell to Gurkirat just outside the

box and he banged it in, this time with his right foot. The match remained 2-2 at the end of regulation time.

India took the lead in the second minute of extra-time. Himanshu followed up a substitute Harsh Patre delectable defence splitting pass and came up with a first-time left-footed finish.

Gurkirat completed his hat-trick a couple of minutes later with Himanshu turning the provider this time. The fifth goal for India came five minutes later as Gurkirat scored another screamer, a worldie to be precise. He turned past a couple of defenders and blasted it home from around 30 yards.