



Adopting sustainability
Actor Khushi Kapoor, unlike her co-stars, embraces sustainable choices to join the growing movement against fast fashion

LEISURE | P2



Maharashtra horror
A jilted lover strikes 18 blows on the head of his girlfriend on a road in Vasai, Friday, even as scores of people watch the gory attack

NATIONAL | P8



Timberlake in trouble
Justin Timberlake was arrested over allegations that the singer drove in an intoxicated condition on New York's Long Island

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Rohit optimistic
India skipper Rohit Sharma says players are keen to do well in the upcoming Super 8 matches of the T20 World Cup

SPORTS | P12



STARTING POINT: Pro-tem Speaker Ranendra Pratap Swain administers oath of office and secrecy to Keonjhar MLA and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the state Assembly in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday (P3)

Death-trap

OPEN DRAIN SWALLOWS 8-YR-OLD BOY

Following the first spell of monsoon showers in the state Capital Tuesday, an eight-year-old boy from Unit III area was swept away in an overflowing open drain. He was later retrieved in an unconscious condition from another drain six km away, before being pronounced dead. The incident, nevertheless, has exposed the blissful slumber of City's civic body as open drains continue to swallow precious lives with no one to bother. Though CM Mohan Charan Majhi announced ₹4 lakh ex-gratia from the SDRF to the victim's family and directed officials to immediately close all open drains, only time will say if such directions would help solve the protracted insensitivity of the civic administration towards the taxpayers' plight

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 18: An eight-year-old boy died after being swept away in an open drain near Jama Masjid in Unit III area here as the City received the first spell of monsoon thundershowers Tuesday afternoon. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia from the State Disaster Response Fund to the victim's family, and directed officials to ensure that all open drains in the City are covered at the earliest.

JULY 19, 2022: Body of a 4-year-old boy of Patitapaban Nagar near Bhuasuni Lane under Ward- 58 was recovered from a drain connecting Gangua nullah

SEPT 20, 2021: A Class X student fell into a drain near Lane 7 at Shatabdi Nagar Bank Colony in Siripur. His body was found after 19 hours of search

JULY 25, 2019: A 65-year-old woman from Salia Sahi was swept away by an overflowing drain near Ekamra Villa of Nayapalli area

AUGUST 14, 2018: A 55-year-old man died after drowning in an open drain near Maa Mangala slum in Ganganagar area

AUGUST 26, 2015: A 9-year-old boy died after falling into an open drain at Behera Sahi under Nayapalli police limits

Deputy Fire officer Abani Kumar Swain identified the deceased as Abu Bakr Shah, son of Sk Jumuti and Rukshana Bibi of Masjid Colony. Swain said a search and rescue operation was launched by two teams of Fire and Emergency Services personnel following the receipt of information at around 3pm. After two hours of search, Shah was found floating in an open drain near Laxmisagar area. "The boy was in a serious condition when we found him. Our men gave CPR to revive him," Swain said, adding that he was

immediately rushed to Capital Hospital, where doctors declared him 'brought dead'. Eyewitnesses said the boy slipped into the drain, which was not visible due to accumulation of rainwaters, while collecting a floating balloon. Tensed scenes were witnessed at the hospital and the neighbourhood in Unit III after residents heard the news about the boy's death. They were angry at Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation's (BMC) alleged apathy in covering the drain due to which it turned into a death-trap. Speaking about the incident, Mayor Sulochana Das said owing to many unauthorised constructions, it was impossible for the BMC to complete covering works on 11 drains, spanning a total length of 77km. The incident comes close on the heels of a meeting convened by Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi with top civic officials, Saturday where discussions were held on ways to fix open drain and waterlogging issues during monsoon. The City has 1,123km of internal drains under 67 wards, of which 663km comes under BMC jurisdiction, and 360km under R&B division. IDCO has control over 65km of internal drains.

3 children drown in river | P3

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No need to mention riots in the textbooks and create violent citizens. We have WhatsApp for that

SHORT TAKES

Alka Yagnik diagnosed with rare hearing disorder

Mumbai/New Delhi: Playback singer Alka Yagnik has revealed that she was diagnosed with a rare hearing disorder some weeks ago, a "sudden, major setback" that she says caught her completely unawares. In a post on Instagram Monday night, Yagnik, 58, said she has been diagnosed with "sensory neural nerve hearing loss" due to a viral attack. "To all my fans, friends, followers and well wishers. A few weeks ago, as I walked out of a flight, I suddenly felt I was not able to hear anything. Having mustered some courage in the weeks following the episode, I want to break my silence now for all my friends and well wishers who have been asking me why I'm missing in action," she said.

Tusker tramples 3 of family to death

Bhubaneswar: A wild tusker reportedly trampled three members of a family to death, and injured as many, while they were asleep outside their house in Saldih village under Paikmal Forest range in Bargarh district, in the wee hours of Tuesday. According to sources, Bipin Baraha and his family members came under the elephant attack when they were sleeping in the backyard of their house due to extreme humid conditions. The tusker trampled Bipin's wife and their two children - three-year-old son, and 10-year-old daughter - to death and injured three others -- Bipin, his mother and a seven-year-old boy.

Internet shut, curfew continues in Balasore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasore, June 18: The state government suspended internet services in Balasore town for 48 hours and extended curfew indefinitely following a clash between two groups that left 10 people injured, Monday.

Balasore SP Sagarika Nath urged residents to stay indoors during the curfew period, emphasising that seven FIRs have been filed and 34 people detained on charges related to rioting since Monday.

To maintain law and order, over 40 platoons of police personnel have been deployed, particularly in areas where the administration suspected possible flare-ups. All six entry and exit points to the town sealed off, the SP said. Flag marches were also conducted in the sensitive areas of the town. Exceptions will be made for those needing to travel for exams or in cases of medical emergencies, provided they can produce necessary documentation

While specific details on the extent of property damage and vehicle destruction during the violence were not disclosed by the SP, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has already in-

tervened, instructing Balasore Collector to take immediate measures to restore calm, officials said.

The conflict initially arose in Bhujakhia Pir area reportedly over alleged animal slaughter and blood on the road.

Additional DGP (Law & Order) Sanjay Kumar has been camping in the town.

According to an official, the decision to suspend internet for 48 hours was taken to prevent dissemination of provocative messages that could exacerbate communal tensions.

Deputy CMKV Singh Deo said, "Chief Secretary and DGP are monitoring the situation in Balasore and apportioning the CM on the matter. We appeal to all to maintain peace."

Balasore MLA Manas Dutta has appealed to people not to believe in rumours and fake posts in social media. "Old photos are being posted in the name of the recent violence in Balasore. I appeal to people not to get swayed by such rumours. The government is taking all steps to restore peace."

Balasore MP Pratap Sarangi also appealed to people maintain peace.

WB train mishap toll goes up to 10

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Siliguri, June 18: The toll in the train accident in West Bengal's Darjeeling district rose to 10, an official said Tuesday.

While eight bodies were brought to the state-run North Bengal Medical College and Hospital (NBMCH) after the accident Monday morning, two persons died during treatment, he said.

Among the deceased was a six-year-old girl who was admitted to the hospital in a "critical condition", doctor Sandip Sengupta, NBMCH's dean of student affairs, said.

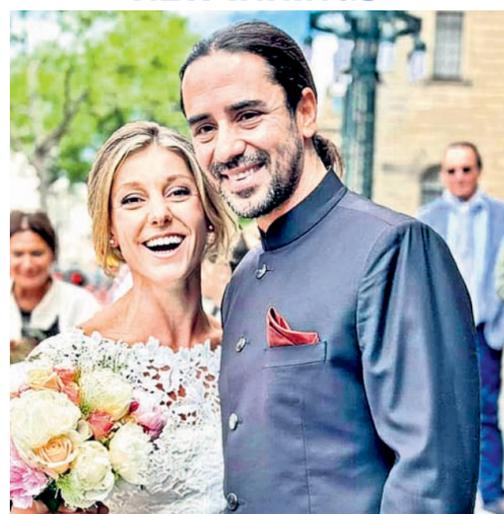
"The girl had fractures in her legs and a liver-spleen injury. She died while undergoing treatment," he said.

Thirty-seven people were admitted to the hospital Monday following the accident, he said, adding that two of them went home after primary treatment.

"Three persons are in the trauma care unit. They underwent surgery. Few patients have fractures. Most of them have superficial injuries. Our challenge is to send them home in good health. Our team is working tirelessly," Sengupta said.

A goods train rammed into the stationary Sealdah-bound Kanchanjunga Express near Rangapani, 30 km from the New Jalpaiguri station in Siliguri, Monday morning.

NEW INNINGS



BJD supremo and former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's nephew Arun Patnaik ties the knot with Nadia in the Dutch capital city of Amsterdam. As per reports, the wedding recently took place in the presence of close family members

PM Kisan coverage within 15 days: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bargarh, June 18: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday announced that all the left-out eligible farmers in Odisha will receive funds under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi within 15 days. Majhi made this announcement

while addressing his first public meeting after becoming the chief minister of Odisha June 12. "All eligible and left out farmers of the state will be included in the scheme in coming days," Majhi said, claiming that, unlike the BJD regime, the BJP administration is farmer-friendly. P4

'No mercy even if 0.001% lapses'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 18: The Supreme Court Tuesday said even if there was "0.001 per cent negligence" on the part of anyone in the conduct of the NEET-UG 2024 examination, it should be thoroughly dealt with.

Observing that students have to labour hard while preparing for these examinations, the apex court said the litigation pertaining to the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate)-2024 examination ought not be treated as adversarial.

"Even if there is 0.001 per cent negligence on the part of anyone, it should be thoroughly dealt with," a vacation bench of Justices Vikram Nath and SVN Bhatti told the advocates appearing for the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA).

The NTA conducts the all India pre-medical entrance test.

The bench was hearing two separate petitions raising grievances, including on grace marks given to students in the examination held May 5.

"We all know the labour which the children undergo, especially in preparing for these exams," the bench said, adding, "Imagine a person who has played fraud on the system becomes a doctor, he is more deleterious to the society."

Rolex watch 'eaten' by cow turns up 50 yrs later

AGENCIES

London, June 18: A 95-year-old farmer, who believed his prized Rolex watch was eaten by a cow, has been reunited with the timepiece half a century later, thanks to a metal detectorist.

James Steele said he lost the watch when the strap broke as he was tending cattle on his dairy farm in Shropshire in the early 1970s.

"One of the cows could have eaten it with a mouthful of grass, the vet said," the BBC quoted Steele as saying.

Yet 50 years later, metal detectorist Liam King discovered the lost watch in a cowpat while comb-



ing Steele's farm, Treflach Hall in Morda, Oswestry, for coins. King later gave it to Steele.

Steele described the discovery as a 'stroke of luck' and said it was 'amazing' after all this time. "I was quite pleased because I never thought I would see the watch

again," he said. "But I have got it now. I only have half the bracelet - the other half must have disintegrated. I have the watch but it is not going. The face has gone greenish but it has not rusted up. It shows how well made it was to survive 50

years under a field," he added.

Steele, praising the metal detectorist who found the watch, said he could have quite easily not owned up to his discovery.

More valuable could still be found, the farmer said, encouraging the metal detectorist to keep working his land.

"I'm not going to bother getting the Rolex fixed. It'd cost a bomb to repair but it'll make a lovely keepsake," Steele said. Steele's son Andrew, who runs the farm with his dad, said the watch has become a part of family history.

Andrew added, "I told King he could come onto the land to look for coins. He didn't find any but instead, he found my dad's watch."

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leisure

CARRIE UNHARMED AFTER FIRE AT HOME

Country music star Carrie Underwood was unharmed after a fire at her Tennessee home. The 41-year-old singer, her husband Mike Fisher and their two sons - Michael, nine, and Jacob, five - have all emerged unscathed, after a blaze broke out at home Sunday night



PARIS: HALLE BERRY TO CARRY OLYMPIC FLAME

Ahead of the Games kicking off next week in Paris, *Monster's Ball* actress Halle Berry is set to carry the Olympic flame down the Croisette in Cannes, France. A source told *Page Six* Halle will "make her way through from 11am to 1pm local time."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

Romance will keep you occupied today. Monetary success will lead to peace and the other way round. You must be careful about expenses and buy only that stuff which you really need. Ganesh says this can save you from putting your money into some dubious schemes.

TAURUS

This day you could be in for some unexpected and unpleasant shocks, warns Ganesh. There is a strong likelihood of getting insulted or humiliated. You must therefore be alert and on your toes. You could that way, manage to avert situations that may threaten your standing and reputation.

GEMINI

It is the time to indulge in luxury and entertainment. You will pay more attention to household matters and tend to your children's needs. You will be concerned about your diet and other health matters in the evening, however, these worries are only of a temporary nature, says Ganesh.

CANCER

You will be ready to understand the meaning of life. You will get new responsibilities in your job or business, which means a promotion and pay hike. You may take an instinctive decision, which you may regret later. Take a calculated and thoughtful step, says Ganesh.

LEO

You will spend time with your friends. You will be helpful to your friends and colleagues. You will work hard according to your capability today. You will experience the satisfaction of a job well done at the end of the day, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Luck will be in your favour as, Ganesh says, nothing will go wrong today, and you will succeed at anything you attempt to do. In certain cases, even without expecting anything, good results will be forthcoming. Bend your back if you must, as being adaptable and flexible will get you a lot of goodwill from others.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will take up a task and complete it by hook or crook. The higher officials and colleagues in your office will be highly impressed by your working capacity and capability. This is reflect when you will be either given a promotion in the office or there may be a rise in your pay scale to the effect.

SCORPIO

Experience is the best teacher and today you should be thankful to your teacher as it is going to handle many new projects. You may even guide your peers and juniors in their work and enhance their imagination power.

SAGITTARIUS

You are on a creative high today. You may be painting or sketching during the first half of the day. You may even find time to go through your past possessions and treasure. And during the later half of the day, you may be busy in giving your cosy corner and home a new look, a makeover.

CAPRICORN

God helps those who help themselves. So, work hard, take care of your health, and keep believing in your dreams, says Ganesh. There are fair chances of you striking an important deal on the behalf of your company, and it will certainly boost the image of your bosses and you both. If you have a hobby or an interest for something, take some time out from your busy schedule for that, too.

AQUARIUS

The wanderer in you has suddenly come alive. You scan through travel magazines, surf internet and probably go on a tracking tour or just randomly go to distant places all by yourself. Take some of your close friends or like minded people along with and double the fun, suggests Ganesh.

PISCES

Your competitors will find it tough to maintain their footing against your onslaught today. You need not worry about their activities for you will come out with flying colors at the end of it all. You are not by nature ill-tempered, but you will have to encounter situations where you will be opposed needlessly and that could rouse your wrath.

Painting expo on Gotipua dancers draws art lovers

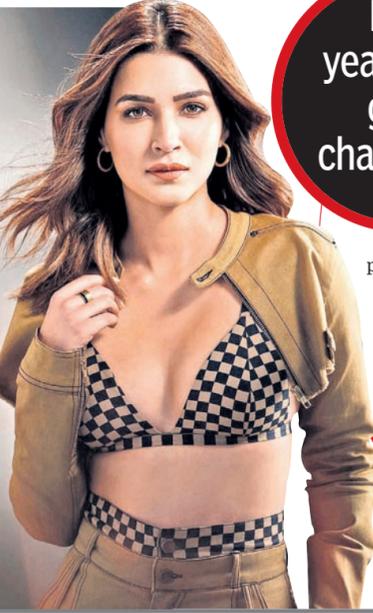


Bhubaneswar: A painting exhibition by acclaimed painter Birendra Pani on the evolution of Gotipua dance and the condition of the performers is under way here at the art gallery of the State Museum. Organised by New Bridge India in collaboration with Odisha State Museum and Ila Panda Centre of Arts (IPCA), the travelling art expo titled *Boy Dancer: Convergence and Continuum - A visiting* is being curated by Dr Rajshree Biswal. The 16-day event, an amalgamation of old and new works of paintings, drawings, photographs, and videos about the Gotipua dancers, kicked off June 14 and the footfall is increasing by the day as this is said to be a one-of-its-kind art exhibition in the City. For the unversed, Gotipua, roughly translated as single-boy, is a traditional dance form of the state that is considered to be the precursor of Odissi dance. It has been performed in Orissa for centuries by young boys, who dress as women to praise Jagannath. The dance is executed by a group of boys who perform acrobatic figures inspired by the life of Radha and Krishna. This exhibition aims at re-signifying the aesthetics, fostering new kinds of viewers and audience, and opening new discursive spaces about this dance in the contemporary times, said the organisers. Apart from New Bridge India's Rajashree Biswal, other luminaries present during the inaugural function included Padma Shri Debi Prasanna Pattanayak, Dilip Routray, Director and Additional Secretary of the of the Odia Language, Literature, & Culture Department, Gotipua Guru Gobinda Pal, Paramita Panda, Founder Trustee, IPCA.

Khushi shuns fast fashion

Mumbai: Khushi Kapoor, the youngest daughter of late actor Sridevi and producer Boney Kapoor, is not just making waves in the film industry with her debut film, but also emerging as a frontrunner for fashion. Unlike many celebrities who chase the latest trends, Khushi embraces a more conscious approach, opting for timeless pieces and reimagining existing outfits. Kapoor's sustainable choices extend beyond red carpets. She's a firm believer in the power of restyling. In an interview with Elle India, she stated, "I think you can wear the same dress a hundred times and make it look different with accessories." This philosophy aligns perfectly with the growing movement against fast fashion, which is notorious for its excessive production cycles and environmental toll. By advocating for outfit repetition with a twist, Kapoor encourages fans to see their wardrobes in a new light, maximising the use of existing clothes and minimising the need for constant purchases. Her personal style reflects this philosophy as well. Khushi has a soft spot

for 90s fashion, a trend that inherently promotes sustainability by giving new life to vintage pieces. In the same interview, she mentioned, "I believe in less is more. A simple black bag can elevate a look in so many ways." She also revealed, "I carry my water bottle with me every single day. There are also so many old clothes that I recycle and reuse in different ways." On the work front, Khushi will star alongside Ibrahim Ali Khan in a Dharma Productions rom-com and another project with Junaid Khan.



Kriti yearns for grey characters

Mumbai: Kriti Sanon is undeniably in the best phase of her career. With two back-to-back hits - *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya* and *Crew* - the National Award-winning actress has cemented her status as one of the hottest and most bankable stars in Bollywood. As she continues to scale new heights, Kriti's aspirations and choices reflect her approach to her craft. In a recent interview, Kriti shared her thoughts on portraying distinct characters, expressing a desire to explore more complex roles. "I'd love to play a complex, grey character - a departure from my own goody-two-shoes persona. So that, in the future, when asked if there's a resemblance between myself and the character I've portrayed, I can confidently say, 'I don't think there is any' - that's something I'm eager to embrace," she revealed. Kriti's passion for the creative process extends beyond acting. Discussing her experience of turning producer with *Do Patti*, which also features actress Kajol, Kriti explained, "I wanted to be a producer because I love the creative process of filmmaking. In a few of my films as an actor - ones that I felt very passionate about - I realised I wanted to be involved in every aspect. It propelled me into production."



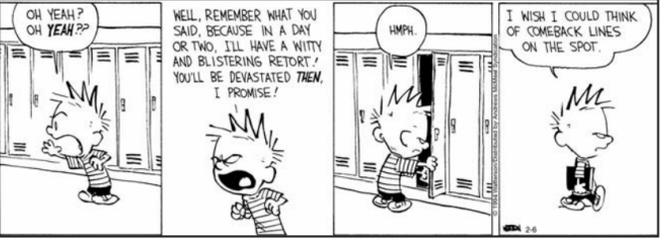
Priyanka's 'every day' inspiration

Mumbai: Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas congratulated Hollywood star Angelina Jolie, who won her first Tony Award, for excellence in Broadway Theatre, for her production *The Outsiders*, and her daughter Vivian. Priyanka shared a candid picture of Jolie and her daughter on her Instagram stories as *The Outsiders* won the Tony Award for Best Musical. "Huge congratulations to this angel, who deserves everything in life and more! Congratulations on winning the Tony for Best Musical for *The Outsiders* and also for multiple awards and 12 nominations! You're a force, and I'm so inspired by you every day. @angelinajolie Congratulations, Vivian," wrote the *Quantico* actor. *The Outsiders* is a 2023 musical told from the perspective of 14-year-old Ponyboy Curtis. It is set in Oklahoma during the 1960s and follows the conflict between two rival gangs, divided by their socioeconomic status. Vivian is one of the six children shared by Jolie and her ex-husband, Brad Pitt. The actress filed for divorce from Pitt in 2016, citing irreconcilable differences.

PEANUTS



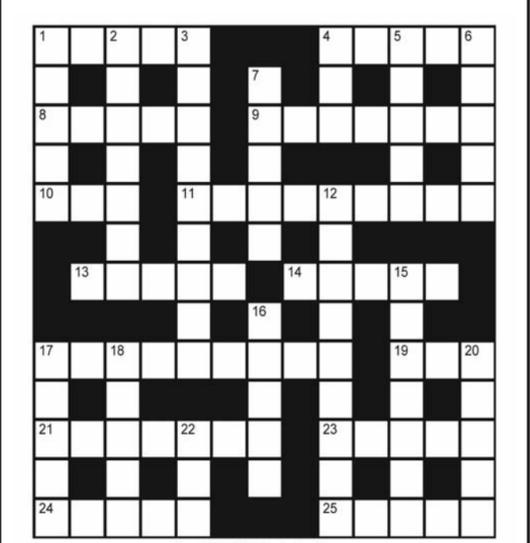
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



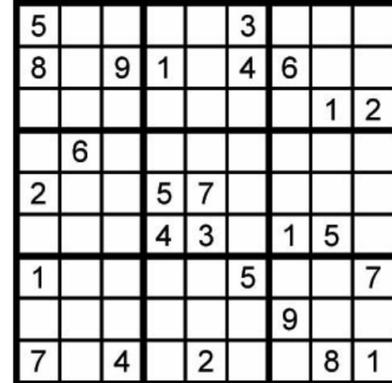
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 ___ del Sol, Spain
 - 4 Karate schools
 - 8 Heavenly gift
 - 9 Really bad
 - 10 Frequently, in verse
 - 11 Edible thistlelike flower
 - 13 Vacant
 - 14 English Channel feeder
 - 17 Move furniture
 - 19 Chop down
 - 21 Wander aimlessly
 - 23 Detached
 - 24 Clan emblem
 - 25 Oktoberfest order
 - Down**
 - 1 Anaglyph
 - 2 Inner follower
 - 3 Mexican onyx
 - 4 Like some humour
 - 5 Kind of jet
 - 6 Soothing ointment
 - 7 Recipe direction
 - 12 Narrow escape (5,4)
 - 15 Board game
 - 16 Ticked off
 - 17 Invoice word
 - 18 Go with the flow
 - 20 Small thin crisp
 - 22 Aswan, e.g.

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

SERF MASSACRE
W H C D A O D
A L I B A B A F A R C E
N N N G E S N
S H O R T C I R C U I T
O I O R C U I T
N O O D L E C A N A P E
G C E I C A N
C A R V I N G K N I F E
S R E D E D R
C R I E R I S R A E L I
A N E O R S A A F
T R A P D O O R A L E E

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

VACATION OVER

Students of Ravenshaw Govt Girls' High School in Cuttack return home after attending classes on the first day reopening of the school post-summer vacation, Tuesday



Oh, you defeated me: Naveen to Bag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 18: BJD president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday greeted newly-elected first-time BJP MLA Laxman Bag, who defeated him in the recently-concluded Assembly polls from Kantabanji seat in Bolangir district.

Patnaik, known for his composed demeanour, was making his way through the House after taking the oath as a member of the Assembly when he came face-to-face with Bag, who stood up from his seat.

"How are you?" Bag inquired with folded hands. As Bag introduced himself, Patnaik responded, "Oh, you defeated me."

Accompanied by Aul MLA and former minister Pratap Keshari Deb, Patnaik congratulated Bag.

The entire House including Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and his deputies - KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida - also stood up from their seats

to greet Patnaik in the Assembly, where he was an undisputed leader for 24 years.

The narrative of Patnaik's defeat was two-fold. Not only had he lost his chief minister's chair, held firmly since 2000, but he also faced an unexpected defeat in Kantabanji, which he contested alongside his traditional Hinjili Assembly seat.

In Hinjili, Patnaik clung to victory by a slender margin of 4,636 votes.

BJP's Bag amassed 90,876 votes against Patnaik's 74,532, securing the seat by 16,334 votes.

Bag, 48, confessed his initial doubts about toppling a political titan like Patnaik. "The voters were silent throughout the campaign, but they voted for me," he recounted, still grappling with the magnitude of his victory.

In a poignant scene, many newly-elected MLAs were seen prostrating themselves before entering the Assembly building, underscoring the gravity and solemnity of the political shift that had just unfolded.

Majhi, Patnaik take oath

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 18: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, deputy chief ministers - Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida - and BJD president Naveen Patnaik took oath as members of the 17th Odisha Legislative Assembly here Tuesday.

Pro-tem Speaker Ranendra Pratap Swain administered the oath of office to the newly-elected MLAs including the Chief Minister and Patnaik here.

The oath-taking by newly-elected members will continue till June 19. The election for the Speaker will be held June 20.

As per tradition, the Chief Minister and other newly-elected MLAs paid floral tribute at the Mahatma Gandhi statue on arriving at the Assembly.

In the recently concluded Assembly elections, the BJP secured a majority by winning 78 Assembly seats, followed by BJD (51), Congress (14), CPI-M (one) and Independents (three). In the 147-member Assembly, as many as 82 are first-time MLAs.

While Majhi is the leader of the House, BJD president and former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is expected to be unanimously elected as the Leader of Opposition (LoP).



NEW INNINGS: Pro-tem Speaker Ranendra Pratap Swain administers oath of office to BJD president Naveen Patnaik, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

HC upholds OSEPA jr teacher merit list



A bench of Chief Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh and Justice Murahari Sri Raman directed the authorities to go ahead with recruitment on the basis of the prepared merit list while prioritising the district preference

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 18: The Orissa High Court Tuesday upheld the merit list prepared by the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) for the recruitment of junior teachers in primary and upper primary schools in January this year.

While hearing the petitions challenging the order issued by a single-judge bench of the HC for preparing a fresh merit list for the recruitment, a division bench of Chief Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh and Justice Murahari Sri Raman directed the authorities to go ahead with recruitment of teachers on the basis of the prepared merit list while prioritising the district preference.

According to sources, OSEPA had September 10, 2023 invited applications for recruitment of junior teachers in primary and upper primary schools of the state. It published the draft merit list January 15 and the document verification was scheduled for January 20 and 21.

A batch of petitions in the court challenged the merit list on the ground that the School and Mass Education department's August 22, 2023 guidelines on engagement of junior teachers provided for preparation of district-wise draft merit list. The OSEPA, however, published a single merit list without adhering to the procedure. And that affected several students, they said.

In an interim order, a single-judge bench of the HC January 19 had allowed verification of the documents but barred OSEPA from final selection and appointment.

The bench had in March this year directed OSEPA to come up with a fresh draft merit list for appointment of over 18,000 junior teachers in primary schools (Class I to V) and upper primary schools (Class V to VIII) in the state.

The bench modified the earlier order delivered by a single-judge bench after examining fresh information furnished by the state government and OSEPA.

3 children washed away in Devi river

AGENCIES

Puri, June 18: In a shocking incident, three minor boys of Balidia village under Astaranga police limits in this district were swept away by the strong currents of Devi river Tuesday.

According to reports, the three children had gone to the river for a bath when the incident took place. The deceased have been identified as Om Behera, 14, Rohan, 13, and Kanha Behera, 12.

The villagers later fished out the bodies from the river. Astaranga police have registered a case and sent the bodies for autopsy. The Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) has announced an ex-gratia of ₹4 lakh to the family of the deceased trio and sought a report from the District Collector in this regard.

5 held for duping govt official of ₹36.34 lakh

Bhubaneswar: The Cyber police Tuesday claimed to have arrested five persons on charges of duping a government official of ₹36.34 lakh. ACP Anjana Tudu identified the accused as Shaik Tajuddin, 38, Muchumari Chitti Baabu, 34, Laleng Zauva Kaipeng, 28, Jiten Kaipeng, 21, and Elvish Tara, 36. "Rs 12 lakh in cash, two laptops, 56 debit cards, 20 mobile phones, 30 SIM cards, a four-wheeler and several bank passbooks were seized from the accused," Tudu said. About the case, Tudu said the accused, posing as crime branch officers, forced the victim to believe that his Aadhaar number was being used to ship illegal contraband from Mumbai to Taiwan. "They later forced him to pay ₹36.34 lakh towards settlement," Tudu said.

State pulls up sleeves to tackle diphtheria

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Health secretary directs Rayagada Collector to take steps to contain the spread of the bacterial infection

Bhubaneswar, June 18: Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) commissioner-cum-secretary Shalini Pandit Tuesday directed Rayagada Collector to take appropriate steps for containment of diphtheria outbreak in Manushpadar village under Kashipur block in the district.

In a letter, Pandit directed Collector Manoj Satyawan Mahajan to take immediate measures to control the further spread of the disease among vulnerable population.

"Daily surveillance, activity for early detection of fever with sore throat cases is to be continued in Manushpur village

as well as neighbouring villages and blocks. Any clinically suspected case is to be referred to DHH, Rayagada for early initiation of treatment. Daily surveillance activity is to be continued for about 20 days after the detection of the last case (i.e., double the incubation period) in the block," Pandit said.

"Micro plan to be prepared for rapid assessment of vaccination coverage in Manushpadar village as well as other hard-to-reach villages in Kashipur block and subsequently, integrated

campus to be conducted for vaccination of all left out/dropout children as per national immunisation schedule and also to provide other essential health services. Adequate medicines and vaccines are to be made available at the block to meet any exigency," she further said.

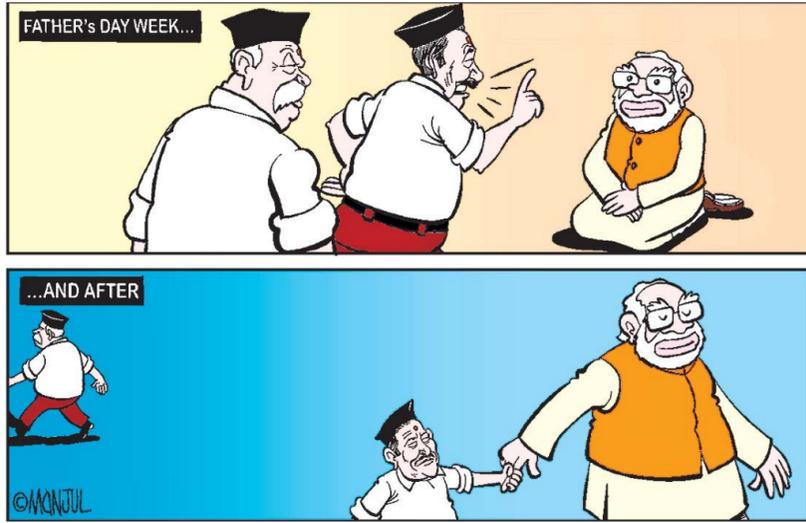
"Inter-departmental convergence meetings at block and district levels are to be continued daily to contain the outbreak. The daily surveillance reports and vaccination coverage reports are to be submitted to the

State Surveillance Unit and Directorate of Family Welfare," Pandit added.

It is worth mentioning that the chief district medical officer and public health officer, Rayagada along with block and SLNMCH medical team recently visited the village, which is 11km from the primary health centre at Dongasli.

During the visit, an activity plan was prepared for strengthening surveillance in the area. This apart, door-to-door visit by teams for assessment of vaccination coverage and further planning for mop-up drives, IEC activities on personal hygiene and preventive measures were also planned.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Fascination with Eng-medium schools suicidal: NCERT chief

The new National Education Policy notified in 2020, recommends that wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade V should be home language, mother tongue, local language or region language

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) Director DP Saklani has lamented that parents remain fascinated by English-medium schools even though many don't have trained teachers, saying it is "no less than suicide" as government schools now provide quality education.

In an interaction with PTI's editors at the agency's headquarter

here, the chief of the NCERT said the practice of cramming content in English has led to knowledge loss among children and distanced them from their roots and culture.

"Parents are obsessed with English-medium schools, they prefer to send their children to such schools even if there are no teachers or they are not trained enough. This is not less than suicide and this why the new (national) education policy has stressed upon teaching in mother tongue," he said.

"Why should teaching be matrihasha adharit (based on mother tongue)? Because till then we will not understand our own mother; our roots, how will we understand anything? And multilingual approach is not like teaching in any language is being ended, the push is to learn multiple languages," Saklani added.

The NCERT chief cited an initiative by the Union education minister to get primers (books)



developed in two tribal languages of Odisha to teach students with help of pictures, stories and songs based on their local nature and culture to improve their speaking skill, learning outcome and cognitive development.

"We are now developing primers in 121 languages which will be ready this year and will help in connecting school-going children to their roots," he said.

"We start cramming up in English and that is where there is knowledge loss. Language

should be an enabling factor, it should not be disabled. So far we have been disabled and now through multilingual education we are trying to enable ourselves," Saklani added.

The new National Education Policy (NEP) notified in 2020, had recommended that wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade V should be home language, mother tongue, local language or region language.

The policy recommended that

teaching in mother tongue should preferably be till Grade VIII and beyond. Thereafter, the home or local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had last year said the use of mother tongue in education has initiated a "new form of justice" for students in India, and termed it as a "very significant step" towards social justice.

The move also attracted criticism from various stakeholders and opposition parties. The education ministry has been maintaining that no language is being imposed on anyone.

According to the new National Curriculum Framework (NCF), notified last year, students of Classes IX and X will now have to mandatorily study three languages, including two Indian native ones while students in Classes XI and XII will have to study one Indian and one other language. The NCERT is at the centre of

a controversy with the revised Class XII political science textbook not mentioning the Babri masjid but referring to it as a "three-domed structure".

The latest deletions in the textbooks include: BJP's 'rath yatra' from Somnath in Gujarat to Ayodhya; the role of kar sevaks; communal violence in the wake of the demolition of the Babri masjid; President's rule in BJP-ruled states; and the BJP's expression of "regret over the happenings at Ayodhya".

The new political science textbook of Class XI, now says that political parties "give priority to the interests of a minority group" with an eye on "vote bank politics", which leads to "minority appeasement".

This marks a complete shift from what was taught until the 2023-24 academic session - that if students "think hard", they will find there is "little evidence" to suggest that vote bank politics favours the minorities in the country.



Speaking on the occasion, Swain said, "Industrialisation is a key driver of economic growth and development. It is crucial that we work collectively and proactively to streamline processes and create an environment conducive to industrial growth. I am confident that with our dedicated team, we can achieve significant milestones in the coming months."

"The department is committed to supporting the industrial sector through robust policies and efficient facilitation. Under Swain's leadership, the department aims to accelerate its efforts to attract and nurture industries, thereby contributing to the overall economic progress of the state," a release issued by the Industries department said.

Govt asks hosps to open social media handle 'X'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 18: The Health and Family Welfare department Tuesday directed all DHHS, SDHS, CHCS and PHCs to open official social media handle 'X'. Health and Family Welfare Commissioner-cum-Secretary

Shalini Pandit wrote to Directors of Capital hospital, Bhubaneswar, Rourkela Government hospital, CDMs and PHOs to open official social media handle 'X'.

In a letter, Pandit said, "As per the instruction of the Health & Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling you are di-

rected to open official social media handle 'X' at all District Head Quarter Hospitals (DHHS), Sub District / Sub Divisional Hospital (SDHS), Community Health Centres (CHCS) and Public Health Centres (PHCs) in the designation of the Medical Officer in-charge of the facility

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Dt.18.06.2024 I, Snehalata Das, W/o. Sudarsan Das, At: Paribasudeipur, P.O.: Bhatpatna, Baliana, District: Khordha, Odisha, PIN - 752115 declares that I have changed my name from Snehalata Das to Swarnalata Das. Henceforth, I shall be known as Swarnalata Das for all purposes. (Swarnalata Das)

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Berhampur, I declare that I, Amalapati Gopal Rao, Service No. 1949, am working as a Barber under AD Static Wksp. C/o 99 APO, Unit Code No. 3830 wherein my name have been recorded as A. Gopal Rao instead of Amalapati Gopal Rao. Amalapati Gopal Rao and A. Gopal Rao are names of the same person.

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Berhampur, I, AMALAPATI UMA MAHESWARI declare that my husband Amalapati Gopal Rao is working at AD Static Wksp, C/o 99 APO, Unit Code No. 3830 as Barber. In the service record of my husband my name have been mentioned as A. UMA MAHESWARI. A. UMA MAHESWARI & AMALAPATI UMA MAHESWARI are names of the same person.

LOST

I, Virendra Yadav, aged about 44 years, S/o- Sri Beersingh Yadav "Yadav" by caste (General) resident of Village-Umerkote, At/P.O.- Raighar, P.O./P.S.- Raighar, Dist.- Nabarangpur (Odisha), do hereby solemnly affirm on oath and state as follows: That, I am the deponent of this affidavit and as such well acquainted with the facts below. That, I am the absolute owner of the landed property Ext. of Ac. 0.08 cents under Plot No.816 (Gharabari) of Khata No.- 394/69 Mouza/Tahasil-Jharigam, P.S.- Jharigam, Dist.- Nabarangpur. That during my last visit i.e. on dtd. 12.06.2024 from Raighar to Umerkote one of my original R.O.R. (Patta), stands recorded in my name has been lost and misplaced somewhere at Raighar market place near my hardware shop. And after due search I could not find the same till date. That the above stated facts are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and no part of it is false.

EWS QUOTA VIOLATION

PARENTS' BODY SUSPENDS STIR

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 18: Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF), which was staging an agitation over alleged violation of Right to Education (RTE) Act by some private schools, Tuesday announced to suspend the stir for two days after getting assurance from School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Nityananda Gond about action in this regard.

According to sources, the S&ME minister assured the OPF delegation of taking appropriate action after conducting a meeting with department officials soon.

The parents' body Tuesday sat on a hunger strike in front of the office of the Director, Elementary Education demanding stringent action against the Director and Block Education Officer (BEO), Bhubaneswar over violation of the provision of 25 per cent admission quota for economically weaker section (EWS) students as mentioned under RTE Act by some private schools in the state.

They were also demanding extension of RTE Act from Class IX to XII in line with Delhi, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh; provision of books, uniforms, shoes by the respective schools and filling of the vacant seats from Class II to VIII through

'RTE Paradarshi portal'.

Earlier, in a letter to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, OPF president Basudev Bhatta said, "We have given sufficient time to work for the parents but the government has failed to protect the rights of parents demanding implementation of RTE in Odisha. We have seen the ignorance. Now, we feel the Director of Elementary Education is the key person behind all the mess which has resulted in deprivation of EWS students from taking admissions to private schools."

The federation alleged violation of RTE Act by Director of Elementary Education and the BEO, Bhubaneswar regarding admissions to 120 seats in Class I of four private schools as per selection via 'Paradarshi portal'.

"As per information in Paradarshi portal, parents have applied for admissions and the Director of Elementary Education has allotted seats in different private schools in Odisha. In the first phase, the director allotted 120 more students in four private schools in Bhubaneswar. However, after allotment, these four schools denied admissions to our students in Class I. We have requested the director several times to take action but to no avail," Bhatta mentioned in the letter.



WSC students embark on exposure trip to Singapore

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 18: The World Skill Center (WSC) here has selected a batch of 24 meritorious students for a six-month paid internship programme for academic year 2024-25. These students, Tuesday evening, embarked on a trip to Singapore where they will gain overseas exposure and hands-on experience that would help enhance their skills and broaden their horizons in the respective fields.

WSC principal T Thambirajah and deputy principal Subhanga Kishore Das extended their heartfelt greetings to the group of 24 youngsters on their internship tour to Singapore. They expressed confidence that this overseas experience would provide the students with a fresh perspective, complementing the skills acquired at WSC. Both



emphasised that the internship would instill a sense of confidence in the students, enabling them to apply their learning in a practical setting.

The students set out for their exposure trip with much excitement and anticipation as they boarded a direct flight to Singapore from here.

Notably, this trip marks the first international travel experience for the students, making the journey even more memorable and thrilling, said sources. Brimming with enthusiasm, they looked forward to the unique



FOR LORD'S WEDDING: Srimandir is bedecked with flowers on the occasion of Rukmini Haran Ekadashi, marking the divine wedding of Lord Jagannath, even as musicians elevate the mood outside the 12-century shrine in Puri, Tuesday

PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi for all within 15 days: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bargarh, June 18: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday announced that all the left-out eligible farmers in the state will receive funds under the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi within 15 days.

Majhi made this announcement while addressing his first public meeting after becoming the chief minister June 12.

"All eligible and left out farmers of the state will be included in the scheme in coming days," Majhi said, claiming that, unlike the BJD regime, the BJP administration is farmer-friendly.

He said 31.62 lakh farmers of the state received ₹632.48 crore assistance till now. Of them, 1,29,357 farmers were from Bargarh district.

Under the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme launched in December 20018, income support of ₹6,000 per year is provided to all farmer families across the country in three equal instalments every four months.

Majhi said that when 1,26,146 farmers of Bargarh had received the benefit under the scheme earlier, 1,29,357 peasants got it during the day.

Prime Minister Modi released the ₹20,000 crore 17th instalment



of the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi for more than 9.26 crore farmers across the country.

Around 40,000 more farmers will get the benefit in the next instalment, Majhi said.

He claimed that the farmers were suffering in Mandis during the BJD government, while the present BJP government will ensure that they get all facilities including ₹3,100 per quintal of paddy as MSP.

Majhi said the state's BJP government, in the first Cabinet meeting, has decided to procure paddy from farmers at ₹3,100 per quintal as promised in the election manifesto.

The chief minister held a meeting attended by farmers of Bargarh and its adjoining districts such as Bolangir,

Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and Subarnapur.

After his arrival at Bargarh, Majhi held a road show. This was Majhi's first visit to any district outside Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. Majhi said that now the people have a chief minister who is approachable to them.

"The people could hardly see the previous chief minister. Now, you have a chief minister who is available for the public service round the clock," Majhi said. Later Majhi listened to the grievances of the people at the local circuit house.

Meanwhile, BJP state president Manmohan Samal thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for providing PM-Kisan Nidhi Samman scheme benefits to 31.62 lakh people of the state.

'Zero tolerance towards corruption'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 18: Zero tolerance is our benchmark on corruption and if government official are found involved in malpractices, stringent action will be taken against them, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said this while paying a surprise visit to the Tehsil Office here, Tuesday.

During his visit, Pujari held discussions with locals, lawyers and government officials regarding the functioning of work. He also asked the officials about their handling of the complaints as well as service delivery to the public.

Talking tough on corruption, Pujari warned officials to desist from corrupt practices. "Strict action will be taken if any proof is found about corruption or bribery in the government work," he said.

"Zero tolerance is our benchmark in this regard. Any suggestions on how to make the revenue administration more accessible to the public would be



welcome. In this case, even if a common man wants to, he can directly meet the Minister and inform him/her about his/her problems," Pujari said in response to various queries from reporters.

The minister promised that a timeline would be set for land, residential, and caste certificate applications and immediate access to these services. Along with this, he directed the officials to prepare a final blueprint to ensure that common people are not harassed while coming to the office for various work and they get all the services.

WORLD SICKLE CELL DAY

Fortnight awareness on SCD across 21 dists from today



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 18: Chief Secretary Pradeep Jena chaired a preparatory meeting on sickle cell disease Tuesday ahead of World Sickle Cell Day, June 19.

On this occasion, the government announced to hold a 15-day sickle cell disease (SCD) screening and awareness across 21 districts in the state. The initiative will start June 19 and conclude July 3, officials said.

While the ST and SC Development department will oversee the activities, the Health department will conduct SCD screening camps at primary and community health centres, they informed.

"To create awareness about the disease, house-to-house campaigns will be organised to reach out to 5 lakh families. Sickle cell genetic status cards will also be distributed to beneficiaries" officials informed.

SCD is a chronic single gene disorder causing a debilitating systemic syndrome characterised by chronic anaemia, acute painful episodes, organ infarction and chronic organ damage and by a significant reduction in life expectancy.

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
SENSEX	77,301.14	↓	308.37
NIFTY	23,557.90	↑	92.30
DOLLAR	83.4450	↓	₹0.11
EURO	89.45	↓	₹0.06
GOLD	₹71,449	↑	₹164
SILVER	₹88,843	↑	₹23

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	41.0°C	26.6°C
Min Temp	29.2°C	15.5°C
Humidity	58%	89%
Rainfall	0.1	Nil
FORECAST		
PARTLY CLOUDY SKY		

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INMATE DIES IN BONAI SUB-JAIL; PROBE GOING ON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 18: An inmate lodged at Bonai Sub-Jail in Sundargarh district died Tuesday morning.

Phiru, 56, a resident of Gurundia, was imprisoned for five years at Bonai Sub-Jail. He went to sleep in his air-conditioned room after dinner as usual. He was allowed an A/C room because of his age.



"As he did not respond to our calls, we finally took him to Bonai hospital where the doctors declared him dead." Jailer Sudhansu Biswal said who received the information around 4am Tuesday morning.

"I immediately informed our medical staff and went to Ward No. 4. He had no diseases. A team from Sundargarh used to come and check him as he had some psychiatric problem and other than that he had no other issues."

The body has been sent for postmortem. His family members also confirmed that he had no diseases and were waiting for the autopsy report to say anything about the death.

Jute cultivation struggles for survival in Kendrapara



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, June 18: Kendrapara district is known for cultivation of fibre crops. However, jute cultivation is inching towards extinction due to the apathetic attitude and negligence of the Agriculture department.

Farmers in the district were cultivating jute, mesta and sesbania (Dhanicha) crops on 2,152 hectare land in 2005. Presence of favourable climatic conditions, suitable soil and proper publicity boosted the cultivation of these crops. As a result, the cultivation expanded to 8,000 hectare farmland by 2015.

This paved way for establishment of a jute research centre on 46 acre land at Jajanga near the district headquarters town. However, the research centre soon got into problems and stopped selling seeds in 2019-20.

Left with no other option, farmers have been buying the seeds from the open market. However, after the seeds turned out to be of sub-standard quality, the farmers are now turning to other crops to eke out a living.

Maheswar Sethi, a farmer of Chatarachakada village under Derabish block, said jute seeds were sold at ₹40 per kg in 2015 while the price has now increased to ₹90 per kg in the open market. This has come as a blow to the jute farmers.

Ramamani Samal, member of a women self-help group at Paripangara village, said the Centre has banned single use plastic since 2015. This announcement has come as a boon for artisans like her involved in jute based cottage industries. The unit manufactures various jute based products but the profit margin is declining as it has to pay more for purchasing the raw material from outside the state. The decline in domestic jute production due to lack of seeds has hit them hard, she said adding that jute cultivation needs to be promoted so that they can purchase the fibre at a nominal price. She demanded the state government to intervene and promote jute cultivation in the district through sponsorship.

Senior citizen Banamabar Sahu said the district lacks major or small industries and agriculture is the main stay of people. Farmers are turning away from jute cultivation due to lack of sponsorship from the state government.

When contacted, district agriculture officer Manoj Chand said the Odisha Seeds Supply Corporation (OSSC) had supplied jute, mesta and sesbania seeds in 2015. Over 7,000 farmers purchased the seeds and cultivated on their farmlands.

Meanwhile, the OSSC has stopped procuring jute and mesta seeds and stopped the supply to the farmers who require 30 quintal seeds per year. However, this year they have received 120 quintal of sesbania seeds only.

Wild tusker tramples 3 of family

In another incident, a herd of 27 elephants has been wreaking havoc, keeping residents of five villages under Karanjia block in Mayurbhanj on edge for the last three days



PNN & AGENCIES

Bargarh, June 18: In a tragic incident, a wild tusker trampled three members of a family to death and injured as many in an attack while the family was sleeping outside the house.

The incident took place Monday night in Saldaha village under Paikmal forest range in

Bargarh district.

According to sources, the wild tusker attacked the family members of one Bipin Bariha, who were sleeping in the backyard of their house due to the hot and humid conditions in the area.

The wild tusker trampled to death Bipin's wife and their two children, a three-year-old son and a 10-year-old daughter, and

injured three others - Bipin, his mother and a seven-year-old boy. The incident has sent shock waves in the village.

Forest officials rushed to the village on being informed by the villagers.

There has been strong resentment among the villagers against the Forest personnel as the latter did not take any initiative to chase away a herd of elephants which was seen moving in the nearby village a few days back.

In another incident, a herd of 27 elephants from Jharkhand has caused havoc and panic for the last three days among the residents in five villages under Karanjia block in Mayurbhanj district.

The villagers have alleged that the herd had destroyed the standing crops and were roaming freely in the nearby forest.

The angry villagers have driven away the herd to Badadeuli forest. The Forest department officials are keeping a close watch and monitoring the movement of the herd.

MAN KILLED BY BROTHER IN-LAW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, June 18: A 30-year-old man was bludgeoned to death by his brother-in-law in Ganjam district, police said Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as B Narasinghalu of Manikapur village under Golanthara police station limits. The accused, D Chelapati (40) of Chati, fled the scene and remains at large, police said.

Bibekanda Swain, inspector in charge of Golanthara police station, said the deceased had gone to his brother-in-law's house Monday to resolve a dispute between Chelapati and his wife. Chelapati, who has been married for about seven years, has allegedly been physically abusing his wife, he said.

After a heated exchange between Narasinghalu and Chelapati, the accused struck Narasinghalu on the head with an iron rod. Narasinghalu was rushed to MKCG Medical College and Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. A search is underway to apprehend the attacker, Swain said.

Cargo vessel crew member jumps into sea, goes missing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandabali, June 18: A male crew member of a cargo ship jumped into the sea and went missing while the vessel was anchoring at Dhamara port near here in Bhadrak district late Monday night.

The missing man was identified as Hajrat Singh, a crew member and second officer of MV Jal Vaibhav ship owned by Sarat Chatterjee from Punjab. Singh, a native of Punjab, was onboard the ship which had anchored at zero point of Dhamara port to load coal for transportation a foreign country.

Dhamara port authorities lodged a written complaint in this regard at Dhamara Marine police station Tuesday. The matter came to the fore after some other crew members of the ship informed its captain about Singh jumping into the sea. Later, the captain informed the Dhamara port authorities about the development through a radio message.

Dhamara port officials and Dhamara Marine police launched a search operation but failed to trace him. The ship's captain has also sent radio messages to Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Indian Navy seeking their help to trace Singh.

Meanwhile, a long time has passed since Singh went missing but he is yet to be traced.

NO VACCINATION IN 12 VILLAGES

Diphtheria spread takes lid off Health officials' blunder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, June 18: Health officials have not conducted vaccination in Munushpadar and 11 other villages under Dangasil panchayat in Kashipur block of Rayagada district where diphtheria has claimed the lives of five kids and affected many.

This was confirmed by Public Health Officer Dr Mamata Choudhury during district-level meeting on disaster mitigation, Tuesday. Earlier, it was alleged that diphtheria could spread in Munushpadar village as children had not been vaccinated. She said that children were required to be given DPT vaccines but no vaccination was conducted in as many as 12 remote villages including Munushpadar. This happened as Health personnel did not visit Munushpadar village located in a remote region. Chatters were abuzz that a host



of diseases have been spreading in various parts of the district at different points of time due to negligence of the Health department.

Sources said MLA Appala Swamy Kadraka visited Munushpadar village and took stock of the situation after diphtheria started spreading in the village. He alleged, not a single

children have been given vaccine under the government's vaccination programme.

The Health department came on its toes after the startling revelation of the MLA. A probe was conducted which nailed the lies of the Health department's tall claims of total vaccination under Mission Indradhanush.

Government of India / भारत सरकार
 Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change / पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय
 Eastern Regional Office/ पूर्वी क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय
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 11th December, 2015

To
 The Principal Secretary,
 Forest & Environment Dept.,
 Government of Odisha,
 Bhubaneswar

Sub - Diversion of 1.65 ha of forest land for construction of 15 MW Small Hydro Electric project on Kolab river near village Tentuligumma in Koraput district of Odisha by M/s Pallavi Power & Mines Ltd., Secunderabad

Sir,
 I am directed to refer to State Govt. letter No. 10F(Cons)/100/2014-14022/F&E dated 06.08.2015 and letter No. 14243/F&E dated 10.08.2015 on the above mentioned subject seeking prior approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change under section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

2. After due consideration of the proposal of the State Government and on the basis of decision of Regional Empowered Committee held on 23.09.2015, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change hereby conveys 'in-principle' approval for diversion of 1.65 ha of forest land for construction of 15 MW Small Hydro Electric Project on Kolab river near village Tentuligumma in Koraput district of Odisha by M/s Pallavi Power & Mines Ltd., Secunderabad, subject to the fulfillment of the following conditions.

- Legal status of forest land proposed for diversion shall remain unchanged.
- The State Govt. shall charge the Net Present Value (NPV) of forest land being diverted under this proposal from the user agency as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 28.03.2008, 24.04.2008 and 09.05.2008 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 202/1995 and the guidelines issued by this Ministry vide its letter No. 5-3/2007-FC dated 05.02.2008 in this regard.
- At the time of payment of the Net Present Value (NPV) at the then prevailing rate, the user agency shall furnish an undertaking to pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.
- Compensatory Afforestation over the non-forest land equal in extent to the forest land proposed for diversion shall be raised over 1.65 ha of non-forest land identified by the State Govt. in village Kianga under Malkangiri Tehsil of Malkangiri Forest Division within two years from the date of Stage-II Clearance as per approved plan/scheme and maintained thereafter by the State Forest Department, at the cost of user agency. The user agency shall transfer the cost of compensatory afforestation and its maintenance for 10 years (revised as on the date to incorporate the existing wage structure) to the Forest Department.
- The non-forest land identified for raising compensatory afforestation shall be transferred and mutated in favour of the state Forest Department before issue of the Stage-II clearance.
- The non-forest land which is transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department for the purpose of compensatory afforestation, shall be declared as Reserved Forest under Section-4 or Protected Forest under Section-29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or under the relevant Section (s) of the local Forest Act. The Nodal Officer must report compliance within a period of 6 months from the date of grant of final approval and send a copy of the original notification declaring the non-forest land under Section-4 or Section-29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, or under the relevant section of the local Forest Act as the case may be, to this Ministry for information and record.
- All the funds received from the user agency under the project shall be transferred to concerned Saving Bank Account of the Ad-hoc CAMPA in Corporation Bank, CGO Complex, Lodi Road Branch, New Delhi-110003.
- The State Govt. shall submit a revised comprehensive CAT Plan, duly approved by the competent authority, before Stage-II approval.
- The State Govt. shall furnish the status of 2.96 ha of Govt. Non-forest land as on 25.10.1980 before Stage-II approval.
- The user agency shall obtain the Environmental clearance as per provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required.
- The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of the Central Government.
- The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal and no circumstances be transferred to any other user agency, department or person.
- The period of diversion under this approval shall be co-terminus with the period of lease to be granted in favour of the user agency or the project life, whichever is less.
- No labour camp shall be established on the forest area.
- The user agency shall provide alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas.
- The boundary of the diverted forest land, shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, forward and back bearing and distance from pillar to pillar.
- Felling of trees on the forest land being diverted shall be reduced to the bare minimum and the trees should be felled under strict supervision of the State Forest Department.
- The user agency shall undertake afforestation along the periphery of the reservoir.
- The Catchment area treatment plan shall be implemented under the supervision of State Forest Department at the project cost.
- The State Govt. of Odisha and the user agency shall ensure that the trees available between full reservoir level (FRL) and FRL-4 meters are not felled.
- The user agency shall provide free water for the forestry related projects.
- The State Government shall complete settlement of rights, in terms of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, if any, on the forest land to be diverted and submit the documentary evidence prescribed by this Ministry in its letter No. 11-9/1998-FC (pt.) dated 03.08.2009, read with letter No. 11-9/1998-FC (pt.) dated 05.02.2013 in support thereof.
- Any other conditions that the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry may stipulated, from time to time, in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife, shall be complied by the user agency.
- The user agency shall submit the annual report on compliance to conditions stipulated in the approval to the State Govt. and the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry.
- The user agency and the State Government shall ensure compliance to provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations and Guidelines, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project.

After receipt of the report on compliance to the conditions stipulated above, from the State Government of Odisha, final/Stage-II approval for diversion of the said forest land under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 will be issued by this Ministry. Transfer of forest land to user agency should not be effected by the State Government of Odisha till final/Stage-II approval for its diversion is issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change.

Sd/- (S. Mohapatra)
 Conservator of Forests (Central)

Copy to :-
 1. The Inspector General of Forests (FC), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Indira Paryavartan Bhawan, Agni Block, Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi - 110 003.
 2. The Director, ROHQ, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Indira Paryavartan Bhawan, Agni Block, Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi - 110 003.
 3. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Forest Department, Govt. of Odisha, Aranya Bhawan, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar.
 4. The Addl. PCCF & Nodal Officer (FC), Forest Department, Govt. of Odisha, Aranya Bhawan, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar.
 5. The Divisional Forest Officer, Malkangiri Forest Division, Koraput, Odisha.
 6. The Director, M/s Pallavi Power & Mines, At: 556(P), Bayababa Lane, Bhubaneswar-751022, Odisha.
 7. Guard file.

Conservator of Forests (Central)

भारत सरकार / Government of India
 पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय / Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
 क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय / Regional Office, Bhubaneswar
 ए. 3, चन्द्रसेखरपुर / A/3, Chandrasekharpur
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 10th May, 2024

To
 The Addl. Chief Secretary,
 Forest & Environment Dept.,
 Government of Odisha,
 Bhubaneswar-751001

Sub - Diversion of 1.65 ha of forest land for construction of 15 MW Small Hydro Electric Project on Kolab river near village Tentuligumma in Koraput district of Odisha by M/s Pallavi Power & Mines Ltd., Secunderabad.

Sir,
 I am directed to refer to State Govt. letter No. 10F(Cons)/100/2014-14022/F&E dated 06.08.2015 and letter No. 14243/F&E dated 10.08.2015, wherein prior approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change for diversion 1.65 ha of forest land for construction of 15 MW Small Hydro Electric Project on Kolab river near village Tentuligumma in Koraput district of Odisha by M/s Pallavi Power & Mines Ltd., Secunderabad, was sought in accordance with Section-2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. After due consideration of the proposal by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and on the basis of decision of Regional Empowered Committee meeting held on 23.09.2015, the in-principle approval for diversion of the said forest land was accorded by Ministry vide this office letter of even number dated 11.12.2015, subject to fulfillment of certain conditions. The Nodal Officer (FCA) of the State Government has furnished the compliance report in respect of the conditions stipulated in the in-principle approval and has requested to grant final approval of the proposal.

2. In this connection, I am directed to say that on the basis of the compliance report furnished by the PCCF & Nodal Officer (FCA), Odisha vide their letter No.636/9F (Energy)-530/2010 dated 10.01.2024 and No. 8464 dated 22.04.2024, **Stage-II/Final** approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is hereby granted under Section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 1.65 ha of forest land for construction of 15 MW Small Hydro Electric Project on Kolab river near village Tentuligumma in Koraput district of Odisha by M/s Pallavi Power & Mines Ltd., Secunderabad, subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions :-

A: Conditions which need to be complied prior to handing over of forest land.

- The State Govt. shall ensure the compliance on FRA, 2006 as per Forest (Conservation) Rules and guidelines issued from time to time.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that NPV of the above proposal has been realized from user agency as per Ministry's direction from time to time.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall obtain the Environmental Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if applicable.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the KML files of forest area to be diverted and CA areas shall be uploaded on the e-Green watch portal with all requisite details before handing over of the diverted forest land to the user agency.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the boundary of the diverted forest land shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS co-ordinates.

B: Conditions which need to be complied after handing over of forest land to the user agency.

- Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the State Forest Department shall carry out compensatory afforestation over 1.65 ha of non-forest land identified in village Kianga of Malkangiri Tehsil of Malkangiri Forest Division within two years from the date of Stage-II Clearance as per approved plan/scheme and maintained thereafter by the State Forest Department, at the cost of user agency. The species to be planted under the CA scheme shall be of native species of the area. At least 18 month old seedlings should be planted. Intensive monitoring of the plantation needs to be done and documented using Geo tagging so that the increase of canopy density and survival and growth of plantation can be evaluated at regular intervals.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the duly approved Catchment Area Treatment Plan shall be implemented under the supervision of State Forest Department at the project cost.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall undertake afforestation along the periphery of the reservoir and canal bank and maintain plantation in consultation with the State Forest Department at project cost.
- The user agency shall pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.
- The State Govt. and user agency shall ensure that the trees available between full reservoir level (FRL) and FRL-4 meters shall not be felled.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall provide free water for the forestry related projects.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the period of diversion under this approval shall be co-terminus with the period of lease to be granted in favour of the user agency or the project life, whichever is less.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall explore the possibility of successful transplantation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled and shall ensure that any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that no labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the user agency shall provide fuels preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas.
- The State Govt. and user agency shall ensure that no additional or new path will be constructed inside the forest area for any activity related to the project work.
- The State Govt. and user agency shall ensure that earth or any material shall neither be brought from nor the debris resulting during construction be disposed of in the adjoining forest area by the user agency.
- The State Govt. and user agency shall ensure that while executing works, the user agency shall not fell any tree or damage forest growth in the surrounding forest area in any manner.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the DFO concerned will monitor and take necessary mitigative measures to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the forests in surrounding area.
- The State Govt. and user agency shall ensure that the layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal and under no circumstances be transferred to any other user agency, department or person without prior approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that no damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall submit annual self monitoring report on compliance of stipulated conditions to the Nodal Officer (FCA) of the State and Regional Office of this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly.
- The State Govt. shall ensure that any other conditions that the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change may impose from time to time in the interest of afforestation, conservation and management of flora and fauna in the area, which shall be complied by the user agency.
- The State Govt. and user agency shall ensure compliance to provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, NGT Order (s) & Hon'ble Court Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project.
- Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in Para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarification issued under Van Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023.

Sd/- (Dr. Padma Mahanti)
 Dy. Inspector General of Forests (C)

Copy to :-
 1. The Inspector General of Forests (ROHQ), Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Indira Paryavartan Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj, New Delhi-110003.
 2. The PCCF & Nodal Officer (FCA), Forest Department, Govt. of Odisha, Aranya Bhawan, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar.
 3. The Director, M/s Pallavi Power & Mines Ltd., Plot No. 779/7510, Durgamadhav Nagar, Shyamapur, Bhubaneswar-751029, Odisha.

Dy. Inspector General of Forests (C)

FOCUS POLITICS

SPECTRE OF NEO-FASCISM



When we talk about fascism today, we should not confine ourselves to the developed West. A similar kind of politics has been ascendant in much of the Global South as well

disintegration, the CPC pursued economic liberalisation but still maintained tight control. Thus, leftists who are sympathetic toward China praise it for keeping capital subordinated, in contrast to the US and European systems, where capital reigns supreme.

But the new fascism is also supported by more recent trends. Beyond Le Pen, another big winner of the European elections is Fidiyas Panayiotou, a Cypriot YouTube personality who previously gained attention for his efforts to hug Elon Musk. While waiting outside Twitter's headquarters for his target, he encouraged his followers to "spam" Musk's mother with his request. Eventually, Musk did meet and hug Panayiotou, who went on to announce his candidacy to the European Parliament. Running on an anti-partisan platform, he won 19.4% of the popular vote and secured himself a seat.

Similar figures have also cropped up in France, the United Kingdom, Slovenia, and elsewhere, all justifying their candidacies with the "leftist" argument that since democratic politics has become a joke, clowns might as well run for office. This is a dangerous game. If enough people despair of emancipatory politics and accept the withdrawal into buffoonery, the political space for neo-fascism widens.

Reclaiming that space requires serious, authentic action. For all my disagreements with French President Emmanuel Macron, I think he was correct to respond to the French far right's victory by dissolving the National Assembly and calling for new legislative elections. His announcement caught almost everyone off guard, and it is certainly risky. But it is a risk worth taking. Even if Le Pen wins and decides who will be the next prime minister, Macron, as president, will retain the ability to mobilise a new majority against the government. We must take the fight to the new fascism as forcefully and as fast as possible.

The writer, Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School, is International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at the University of London.

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The surprise in this month's European Parliament elections was that the outcome everyone expected really did come to pass. To paraphrase a classic scene from the Marx Brothers: Europe may be talking and acting like it is moving to the radical right, but don't let that fool you; Europe really is moving to the radical right.

Why should we insist on this interpretation? Because most of the mainstream media has sought to downplay it. The message we keep hearing is: "Sure, Marine Le Pen, Giorgia Meloni, and Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) occasionally flirt with fascist motifs, but there is no reason to panic, because they still respect democratic rules and institutions once in power." Yet this domestication of the radical right should trouble us all, because it signals a readiness by traditional conservative parties to go along with the new movement. The axiom of post-World War II European democracy, "No collaboration with fascists," has been quietly abandoned.

The message of this election is clear: The political divide in most EU countries is no longer between the moderate right and the moderate left, but between the conventional right, embodied by the big winner, the European People's Party (comprising Christian democrats, liberal-conservatives, and traditional conservatives) and the neo-fascist right represented by Le Pen, Meloni, AfD, and others.

The question now is whether the EPP will collaborate with neo-fascists. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is spinning the outcome as a triumph of the EPP against both "extremes," yet the new parliament will include no left-wing parties whose extremism is even distantly comparable to that of the far right. Such a "balanced" view from the EU's top official sends an ominous signal.

When we talk about fascism today, we should not confine ourselves to the developed West. A similar kind of politics has been ascendant in much of the Global South as well. In his study of China's development, the Italian Marxist historian Domenico Losurdo (also known for his re-

habilitation of Stalin) stresses the distinction between economic and political power. In pursuing his "reforms," Deng Xiaoping knew that elements of capitalism are necessary to unleash a society's productive forces; but he insisted that political power should remain firmly in the hands of the Communist Party of China (as the self-proclaimed representative of the workers and farmers).

This approach has deep historical roots. For over a century, China has embraced the "pan-Asianism" that emerged toward the end of the nineteenth century as a reaction against Western imperialist domination and exploitation. As historian Viren Murthy explains, this project has always been driven by a rejection not of Western capitalism, but of Western liberal individualism and imperialism. By drawing on pre-modern traditions and institutions, pan-Asianists argued, Asian societies could organise their own modernisation to achieve even greater dynamism than the West.

While Hegel himself saw Asia as a domain of rigid order that does not allow for individualism (free subjectivity), pan-Asianists proposed a new Hegelian conceptual framework. Since the freedom offered by Western individualism ultimately negates order and leads to social disintegration, they argued, the only way to preserve freedom is to channel it into a new collective agency.

One early example of this model can be found in Japan's militarisation and colonialist expansion

before WWII. But historical lessons are soon forgotten. In the search for solutions to big problems, many in the West could be newly attracted to the Asian model of subsiding individualistic drives and the longing for meaning in a collective project.

Pan-Asianism tended to oscillate between its socialist and fascist versions (with the line between the two not always clear), reminding us that "anti-imperialism" is not as innocent as it may appear. In the first half of the twentieth century, Japanese and German fascists regularly presented themselves as defenders against American, British, and French imperialism, and one now finds far-right nationalist politicians taking similar positions vis-à-vis the European Union.

The same tendency is discernible in post-Deng China, which political scientist A. James Gregor classifies as "a variant of contemporary fascism": a capitalist economy controlled and regulated by an authoritarian state whose legitimacy is framed in the terms of ethnic tradition and national heritage. That is why Chinese President Xi Jinping makes a point of referring to China's long, continuous history stretching back to antiquity. Harnessing economic impulses for the sake of nationalistic projects is the very definition of fascism, and similar political dynamics can also be found in India, Russia, Turkey, and other countries.

It is not hard to see why this model has gained traction. While the Soviet Union suffered a chaotic



Slavoj Žižek

IF ENOUGH PEOPLE DESPAIR OF EMANCIPATORY POLITICS AND ACCEPT THE WITHDRAWAL INTO BUFFOONERY, THE POLITICAL SPACE FOR NEO-FASCISM WIDENS

G7 Warns China

The just concluded G7 summit in Italy confirms how politics can impact economic and military interests of top global players. The G7 group which includes the US, UK, Germany, France, Italy, Canada and Japan had gathered in Italy to discuss how best their economic interests could be served. But they ended up majorly discussing China, accusing it of aiding Russia on its Ukraine war and threatening to impose further sanctions on it. This only complicated further the political-economic tussle between the world's most advanced countries on the one hand and China and Russia on the other. Its joint statement at the end of the summit categorically stated that China's support for Russia is 'enabling' the latter's war in Ukraine. The warning comes when the US is trying hard to rally Europe behind it to adopt a tougher stance on China. This also could have weighed in further because of Japan pulling the anti-China strings due, in further amounts, to geopolitical considerations.

The G7 was unanimous in its conclusion that China's ongoing support for Russia's defence industrial base is helping continue its war in Ukraine. It did not stop there and issued a veiled threat to China to end the transfer of dual-use materials, including weapons components and equipment that are inputs for Russia's defence sector.

The leaders also threatened further action, including sanctions, to punish Chinese entities that they say are helping Russia circumvent Western embargo. These actors, according to G7 leaders, are materially supporting Russia's war machine, including financial institutions.

China immediately countered all these charges by accusing the US of using the war as 'an excuse to smear China' and cripple its companies. In a statement, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs slammed the G7 position saying it 'manipulated issues' and 'slandered and attacked China.' It questioned the rationale of the continuance of the G7 bloc itself which, in its opinion, has long deviated from the original intention of coordinating and stabilising the international economic environment, and has increasingly become a political tool to maintain the hegemony of the US. Its spokesperson adopted an equally belligerent posture and said the grouping would ultimately shoot itself in the foot by 'weaponising' its trade relations.

The G7 voiced strong opposition to what it calls China's unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion in the East and South China seas. In fact, some of China's neighbours have for some time been expressing concern over its dangerous use of coast guard and maritime militia in the South China Sea and its repeated obstruction of other countries' high seas freedom of navigation. It is only natural that China would not keep quiet when an international body raises the most sensitive issues against it.

The joint statement also lashed out at the alleged suppression of freedom of the populace in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Xizang. China termed the allegations as slanders having no factual basis and clichés with no moral justification.

Be that as it may, the G7 has succeeded in making member nations think about de-linking their economic interests from China's expansionist policies that are part of its strategy to become the world's number one economic power. While China may have been seen above the horizon, it is primarily Russia which has started threatening Western Europe directly and the US a little further away. Adding fuel to fire, Russia's Putin today has pledged support to North Korea in case of hostilities by the US. While the G7 was a serious summit with global consequences, there undoubtedly were present many smaller countries as special invitees or guests who had very little role to play in these crucial deliberations.

WISDOM CORNER

On the mountains of truth you can never climb in vain: either you will reach a point higher up today, or you will be training your powers so that you will be able to climb higher tomorrow
FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of
JIM ROHN

Determine never to be idle. No person will have occasion to complain of the want of time who never loses any. It is wonderful how much may be done if we are always doing
THOMAS JEFFERSON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1913: South Africa implements the Natives Land Act. The law limited the areas of land that could be owned by black people to "native reserve" areas, which comprised less than 10 percent of the country's total area. It was in force until Apartheid was dismantled in the 1990s.

1944: During World War II the Japanese Combined Fleet and the U.S. Fifth Fleet engaged in a major air-and-sea battle, the Battle of the Philippine Sea, which ended the next day with a U.S. victory.

1953: Rosenbergs executed for espionage. After the failure of court appeals and of a worldwide campaign for mercy, husband and wife Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were put to death this day in 1953, becoming the first American civilians to be executed for espionage.

1963: Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to travel in space, returned to Earth in the spacecraft Vostok 6.

1978: Garfield, the lazy cat makes his debut. The first Garfield comic strip by Jim Davis appeared in 41 newspapers on that day. It currently holds the Guinness World Record for the world's most widely syndicated comic strip.

LOL



The golf ball

A golfer, playing a round by himself, is about to tee off, and a greasy little salesman runs up to him, and yells, "Wait! Before you tee off, I have something really amazing to show you!"

The golfer, annoyed, says, "What is it?" "It's a special golf ball," says the salesman. "You can never lose it!" "Whattaya mean," scoffs the golfer, "you can never lose it? What if you hit it into the water?"

"No problem," says the salesman. "It floats, and it detects where the shore is, and spins towards it."

"Well, what if you hit it into the woods?" "Easy," says the salesman. "It emits a beeping sound, and you can find it with your eyes closed." "Okay," says the golfer, impressed. "But what if your round goes late and it gets dark?" "No problem, sir, this golf ball glows in the dark! I'm telling you, you can never lose this golf ball!" The golfer buys it at once. "Just one question," he says to the salesman. "Where did you get it?" "I found it."

IN JEST THIS

Crows are smarter than we think



Melvin Durai

IN MANY CITIES AROUND THE WORLD, THESE NOISY CREATURES GIVE A BOOST TO HUMAN PRODUCTIVITY EVERY MORNING, ENSURING THAT NOBODY OVERSLEEPS

If you conducted a survey and asked people to name their favourite birds, hardly anyone would mention crows. Being aggressive scavengers with strident "caw-caw-caw" calls, crows have a bad reputation. But in many cities around the world, these noisy creatures give a boost to human productivity every morning, ensuring that nobody oversleeps.

Crows are extremely intelligent creatures, as scientists are discovering. How smart are they? They're so smart that if you took a group of crows into an IKEA store, almost all of them would be able to find their way out. Any crows remaining in the Swedish furniture store would be swiping meatballs from the restaurant or using a crowbar to open a window.

Scientists haven't actually tested crows in IKEA, but have demonstrated the intelligence of crows in many other ways. Most recently, a team of researchers at University of Tübingen's animal physiology lab

in Germany determined that the crows can vocally count to four, much like toddlers do, but with far less drool.

The research team, led by Professor Andreas Nieder from the university's Institute of Neurobiology, conducted behavioural experiments with three carrier crows whom they had trained for a year. After seeing certain numerals or hearing a number of sounds, the birds had to produce one to four calls to match what they saw or heard, and then peck on an "enter" key. "All three birds succeeded in this. They were able to count their calls in sequence," Nieder said. The birds weren't perfect, of course, but Nieder declined to give each crow a grade or reveal which crow was top of the class. No report cards were sent home to Mama Crow, who had a little less to crow about.

The crows did not respond right away, and their response time was dependent on the number of calls they needed to emit. The higher the number, the

longer the response time. The crows had to both recognise the number and plan their vocal response accordingly. "Our results show that humans are not the only ones who can do this," Nieder said, sharing a fact that did not surprise members of the rock band Counting Crows.

Counting is just one of the many attributes of crows. Here are some other amazing attributes:

1. Picking up trash: A company in Sweden designed a machine that rewards crows with a little bit of food whenever they deposit cigarette butts in the machine. "They are wild birds taking part on a voluntary basis," Christian Günther-Hanssen, the founder of Corvid Cleaning, told The Guardian. It's easier to get wild birds to care about the environment than wild humans.

2. Using tools: Scientists have found that crows can not only use tools, they can create tools. In 2018, a group of scientists at Max Planck Institute for Ornithology in Seewiesen, Germany, and the University of

Oxford showed that New Caledonian crows could create a tool and then use that tool to assemble IKEA furniture. No, they didn't assemble any furniture, but they were able to combine four short sticks into a long stick, which they used to retrieve food from a box.

3. Giving free vacations to Supreme Court Justices: You may have heard that Clarence Thomas, one of America's Supreme Court Justices, got free plane rides and vacations. This was no ordinary American crow that gave him this, of course. This was a well-feathered one named Harlan Crow.

4. Reducing waste: Crows are omnivores and will eat just about anything, including insects, fruits, nuts, dead animals and garbage. When a crow spots an open landfill, it's like a human spotting an open China Buffet.

Baby crow: "Mama, why is it called a landfill?" Mama crow: "Because wherever you land, you can get your fill."

EVM controversy

Sir, This refers to "EVM row gathers steam," **Orissa POST**, June 18. The allegations over EVMs have come to the fore again in the wake of US-based billionaire tech magnate Elon Musk's sweeping comment that EVMs should be shunned from using for elections as they are liable to be hacked. The Opposition found fresh ammo to target EVMs. But, it is time for our politicians especially, former AICC president Rahul Gandhi to develop some scientific temper. Rahul and the Congress party first need to explain why the Congress-led UPA government, which was in power between 2004 and 2014, did not abolish it. It has become a fashion for political parties to praise EVMs when they win and blame them when they lose. Whether it is Rahul or anyone else who blames EVMs has so far failed to provide evidence that the machines can be tampered with. Indian EVMs are custom designed, secure and isolated from any network or media. Unlike in some countries where voting machines were built using standard computing platforms with internet connectivity, in Indian EVM has no connectivity, no Bluetooth, wifi, internet, i.e., there is no way in. Factory-programmed controllers cannot be reprogrammed. If at all any debate has to take place it should be on the technology used and the Rahul-led INDIA bloc should come up with proper scientific evidence, not sweeping statements.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Safety neglected

Sir, This refers to the news report "Train tragedy again," **Orissa POST**, June 18. The train mishaps in quick succession sadly expose the fact that Railway safety is not the prime concern of the ruling party at the Centre. It seems the authorities concerned have not learnt lessons from the recent railway accidents which led to huge loss of lives. I am at a loss why the Prime Minister fails to address the issues with the seriousness it deserves. The Railway Minister looks helpless whenever any accident occurs for he knows to what extent the railway safety is getting systematically neglected.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Priyanka's presence in Parliament will be huge asset to Cong: Tharoor



He said Priyanka could have been a wonderful candidate in Varanasi as well, especially looking at how good the Congress candidate did against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"I think right now, by winning in Wayanad, which she should do comfortably I believe, she is going to bring a very strong voice to the Parliament. We have all seen her speaking during the election campaign. She is one of the most impressive speakers and campaigners we have got and to have her in the Lok Sabha would be a huge asset to the party," Tharoor said.

He said it is unfortunate to single out one family and accuse them of 'parivarvaad', when this system is ingrained in our culture. He said according to reports, 15 BJP MPs are from political families and it would be an underestimation as many more would be coming from political families.

"In our culture, dentists want their children to be dentists, artists want their children to be artists and it is there in politics as well," Tharoor said.

It is unfortunate to single out one family and accuse them of 'parivarvaad', when this system is ingrained in our culture

SHASHI THAROOR | CONGRESS MP

had to choose one or the other. "I certainly can mention that this was my own preference for some weeks now when it became clear that he had to choose one or the other and I thought it was the right choice and I applauded it wholeheartedly," Tharoor said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, June 18: Priyanka Gandhi's presence in the Lok Sabha would strengthen the Opposition benches and Wayanad would have a very strong person to represent them in Parliament, Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram Shashi Tharoor said Tuesday.

Tharoor, speaking to the PTI on the sidelines of his 'thanksgiving' campaign in Neyyattinkara Assembly constituency, said Priyanka has been a very effective orator during the election campaigns and he was happy that she decided to enter electoral politics from Kerala. "I think Rahulji absolutely had to keep Rae Bareilly, it is a very important signal to the people of Uttar Pradesh and of North India in general. At the same time, he did not want to feel that he was abandoning the people of Wayanad and it is better to entrust it to his own sister. So I think it is a wonderful decision," Tharoor said as he travelled through the constituency in an open vehicle, thanking the voters. He said the same was his preference for the last few weeks, when it was clear that Rahul

BJP blasts Priyanka's Wayanad move

Thiruvananthapuram: The BJP in Kerala Tuesday continued to mock the Congress party's decision to field Priyanka Gandhi in Wayanad, which was vacated by Rahul Gandhi, and said the grand old party may consider her husband Robert Vadra in the upcoming by-poll in Palakkad Assembly segment. BJP state chief K Surendran and senior leader V Muralaeeharan criticised the Congress leadership over their decision and alleged that they had cheated the people of Wayanad. Surendran, who had contested against Rahul Gandhi in the April 26 Lok Sabha polls in the hill constituency, said it is once again proven beyond doubt that the Congress is the only "tool" for the so-called Nehru-Gandhi family to serve their family's interests. Speaking to reporters here, Muralaeeharan said the people of the state won't accept the Congress party's attitude that there is no need to show any democratic decorum or justice towards them.



Farmers stage a protest march demanding cancellation of the proposed Nagpur- Goa Shaktipeeth Highway, in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, Tuesday

Chhatrapati scion leads farmers' march

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolhapur (Maharashtra), June 18: Congress MP Chhatrapati Shrimant Shahu Maharaj here Tuesday led a massive farmers' protest march, organised by all political parties, to the district collectorate to voice strong opposition to the proposed Nagpur-Goa Shaktipeeth Expressway.

The procession included Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs and state legislators from the ruling MahaYuti and opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance, besides independent farmers' leaders who marched from Dasara Chowk to the collector's office.

Thousands of affected farmers joined the protest from the 12 districts through which the planned Rs 86,500 crore, 802 km long inter-state (Maharashtra-Goa) expressway would slice through, in what is billed as Deputy Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' pet project.

Chhatrapati Shrimant Shahu Maharaj said, "Wherever the farmers are, I shall be with them."

He said he would raise their concerns with the government on the expressway.

KERALA GEARS UP FOR BYPOLLS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, June 18: After Rahul Gandhi decided to give up the Wayanad seat, Kerala will now have one vacant Lok Sabha and two Assembly seats that will go to the polls again whenever the Election Commission of India (ECI) decides.

In the Wayanad constituency sitting member Rahul Gandhi Monday decided to vacate it and field his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Congress as the Congress



candidate. None doubts about the outcome and the only thing which is looked up is whether will she cross the margin that her brother had in 2019 which was over 4.30 lakh votes. In the 2024 Lok Sabha election result this time Rahul Gandhi's victory margin came down to 3.6

lakh votes. Besides the Wayanad LS seat, there are two Assembly seats - Palakkad and Chelakkara reserved constituency in Thrissur district - where bypolls will be required.

Marathas will seek quota in OBC category: Jarange

Activist Manoj Jarange has been demanding that Kunbi certificates be issued to all Marathas, making them eligible for quota benefits



The ongoing agitation (of OBCs) is vindictive. We will not intensify our agitation or make it bigger because of them, but we will take reservation from the OBC category and that too from the current quota of 50 per cent

MANOJ JARANGE | ACTIVIST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, June 18: Activist Manoj Jarange Tuesday claimed the agitation by Other Backward Classes activists for protecting their quota was "vindictive" and asserted Marathas would seek reservation under the OBC category.

Speaking to reporters here, Jarange also claimed the OBC agitation will help the Maratha community members to forget their differences and unite for their reservation demand.

Activists Laxman Hake and Navnath Waghmare have been sitting on a hunger strike at Wadigodri village in Jalna district since June 13, seeking an assurance from the government that the OBC quota will not be affected in view of the Maratha reservation demand.

In February this year, the Maharashtra legislature unan-

imously passed a bill providing 10 per cent reservation for the Marathas in education and government jobs under a separate category.

Jarange has been demanding implementation of the draft notification that recognises Kunbis as "sage soyare" (blood relatives) of Maratha community members and a law to identify Kunbis as Marathas.

Kunbi, an agrarian group, falls under the OBC category, and Jarange has been demanding that Kunbi certificates be issued to all Marathas, thus making them eligible for quota benefits.

Jarange suspended his indefinite fast over the Maratha quota and set a deadline of one month

before the Maharashtra government to accept the community's demands June 13.

Speaking to reporters at a private hospital in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar where he is undergoing treatment, Jarange Tuesday said, "The ongoing agitation (of OBCs) is vindictive. We will not intensify our agitation or make it bigger because of them, but we will take reservation from the OBC category and that too from the current quota of 50 per cent."

He said the OBC activists were agitating even as they have reservation.

"Then how much should we fight when we don't have any? This agitation (of OBCs) will help the people of Maratha com-

munity to forget their differences and unite for quota," he said.

Hake and Waghmare have said they are not against the reservation for Marathas, but it should not disturb the OBC quota.

The OBC activists have been demanding scrapping of the government's draft notification that recognises Kunbis as "sage soyare" (blood relatives) of Maratha community members.

Caste census demanded

Mumbai: Veteran OBC leader and Maharashtra Minister Chhagan Bhujbal has reiterated that the Marathas cannot be given reservation from the quota for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community. Talking to reporters Monday, the state's food and civil supplies minister also renewed his demand for a caste census in the state. Bhujbal's statement has come amid the stir by quota activists Laxman Hake and Navnath Waghmare, who have been on hunger strike for the last six days. Bhujbal said, "The Maratha community cannot be given reservation from the OBC quota. We are not saying this, but the past four commissions (on reservation) have stated the same. Even the Supreme Court said no to it."

Kerala Minister Radhakrishnan quits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, June 18: Kerala Minister K Radhakrishnan, who has been elected to the Lok Sabha, resigned from Pinarayi Vijayan's Cabinet Tuesday, but not before issuing a landmark order to remove colonial names for places where people belonging to SC/ST communities live.

Radhakrishnan, who held the Devaswom, Welfare of SC, ST and Backward Classes and Parliamentary Affairs portfolios, handed over his resignation to Chief Minister Vijayan at his official residence here.

His resignation as MLA was handed over to Speaker A N Shamseer later. Before resigning, the Left leader, in his capacity as minister, issued a significant order in which he directed not to use the words "colony", "sanketham" and "ooru" to describe the places predominantly inhabited by families belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The order said such words evoke disrespect, so new names in accordance with time are appropriate.

Instead of such words, new names like "nagar", "unnathi" and "prakriti" should be used to describe such areas. The order said that names of regional interest in respective areas can also be used.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA "e" - PROCUREMENT NOTICE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PURI (R&B) DIVISION, PURI

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL, CUTTACK BENCH C.P. (CAA) No.6/CB OF 2024 Connected with C.A.(CAA) No.11/CB of 2023

Army doctor turns saviour for ill man on Chandigarh flight

CLINICALLY, THE PATIENT WAS IN 'FLUID OVERLOAD' AND WAS GETTING DROWSY. HE ALSO HAD ACCELERATED HYPERTENSION, TACHYCARDIA, TACHYPNOEA AND GRADUALLY STARTED GASPING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 18: An Army doctor saved the life of a 27-year-old critically ill man onboard a Pune-Chandigarh flight by resuscitating him, giving emergency medicines and also requested for an emergency landing in Mumbai.

Major Simrat Rajdeep Singh, a medical officer with the Western Command Hospital, Chandimandir (Haryana), said while he was travelling from Pune to Chandigarh by an Indigo flight Monday, a co-passenger, who boarded in Goa, started experiencing respiratory distress mid-air at an altitude of 39,000 feet.

"I asked about the previous medical history of the patient, who was from Belgium, from his brother who was also travelling with him. The medical reports showed the



patient has small kidneys with poor renal function," Singh told PTI over phone Tuesday.

Clinically, the patient was in "fluid overload" and was getting drowsy. He also had accelerated hypertension, tachycardia, tachypnoea and he gradually he started gasping, the medical officer said. "The crew had most of the necessary equipment and drugs available in their medical emergency kit," he said.

Singh said that he administered the required emergency drugs to the patient through intravenous line access and kept him on continuous oxygen support for an hour.

He also requested the flight captain to lower the altitude and make an emergency landing at the nearest place, as Chandigarh was still two hours away.

"Since Mumbai was the nearest airport, the flight made an emergency landing here. Preparations

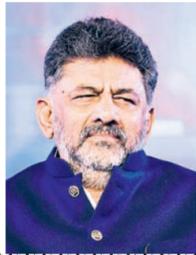
were made in the meantime to rush the patient to hospital as soon as the flight landed," he said.

The patient was rushed to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation-run R N Cooper Hospital.

"Maj Simrat Rajdeep Singh of #WesternCommandHospital,Chandi mandir while on board @Indigo6E724 from Goa to Chandigarh saved the life of a 27 year old critically ill patient. He resuscitated the patient & requested for an emergency landing at #Mumbai," Indian Army's Western Command said in a post on X Monday.

Singh said he spoke to the doctor treating the man here. An emergency dialysis was conducted on him and he was feeling better, he added.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. A-46 DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, KENDRAPARA IRRIGATION DIVISION, KENDRAPARA, DISTRICT: KENDRAPARA



EVMs have played a role in BJP-JD(S) securing higher than expected seats in Karnataka. EVMs must go. Ballot boxes must return. The results must be investigated
D K SHIVAKUMAR | KARNATAKA DEPUTY CM

PM MODI VISITS VARANASI

Visiting his Varanasi constituency which elected him to the Lok Sabha for a third consecutive time, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday said it appears that mother Ganga has now adopted him. Addressing a PM Kisan Samman Sammelan at Mehndiganj here, he said the mandate given by the people in this Lok Sabha election is "truly unprecedented and has created history"



of the day quote

Sinisterful forces are operating in small numbers in the country and outside
JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE-PRESIDENT

We are looking to dedicate the memorial to people January 23, the birth anniversary of Balasaheb Thackeray
UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF

Waterfalls are an important part of our hinterland tourism. Not just tourists, but locals too like to visit these waterfalls. Some Delhi-based forest department officer cannot just issue a circular banning entry there citing safety reasons
ROHAN KHAUNTE | GOA TOURISM MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

NGO seeks ban on OTT

New Delhi: An NGO led by former information commissioner Uday Mahurkar Tuesday demanded a ban on popular OTT platforms and social networking sites, alleging that such platforms are broadcasting sexually explicit and obscene content. Mahurkar-promoted Save Culture Save Bharat Foundation claimed that "unlawful acts" of OTT platforms and social networking are threatening to tear apart India's character and cultural heritage. The foundation also demanded that the upcoming Digital India Bill include provisions for immediate ban on any propagation and streaming of "sexually-perverted content" by any platform.

Search ops in Poonch

Jammu: Security forces launched a search operation following reports of firing of few rounds in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district Tuesday, officials said. However, they denied any exchange of fire between the troops and the terrorists in the area. There was firing of a few rounds in Buziaz forest area prompting the security forces and the police to launch a search operation, they said. The operation was going on when reports last came in from the area.

ASI kills self

Faridabad (Haryana): A 42-year-old Haryana Police ASI allegedly hanged himself at the police line in Faridabad's Sector 30, officials said Tuesday. Assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Umrao Singh, a resident of Rohdai village in Rewari district, was posted at the police line, they said. It is being said that he was under mental stress. The reasons for Singh killing himself are being investigated, they added. Singh had been employed with the Haryana Police for about 23 years. He was posted at the police line where he lived alone. He was suffering from diabetes and other ailments, the police said.

750 join JMM

Medinipur (Jharkhand): As many as 750 people joined the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in the presence of Kalpana Soren, newly elected Gandey MLA and wife of incarcerated former chief minister Hemant Soren, in Palamu district Tuesday. State Drinking Water and Sanitation Department Minister Mithilesh Thakur also attended the event. Addressing the gathering, Soren accused the BJP-led central government of plotting to imprison those advocating for water, forest, and land rights, allegedly to secure a monopoly for its allies over the state's forests and minerals.

MAHA HORROR Jilted lover bludgeons woman to death on road

AGENCIES

Palghar (Maharashtra), June 18: A jilted lover struck 18 blows on the head of his girlfriend with a spanner, killing her on a road in Vasai Friday, even as scores of people watched the gory spectacle, police said. "The accused attacked the woman with an industrial spanner. There were 18 wounds on her body," senior inspector Jai Raj Ranaware of Valiv police station said.

The man, Rohit Yadav (32) and the woman Arati Yadav (22) were neighbours and in a relationship for the last few years, police said. Of late, she had stopped contact with him, and he suspected that she was having an affair with someone else.



▶ Taking serious note of the incident, Deputy Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis directed the Mira Bhayander-Vasai Virar Police to probe the incident thoroughly and ensure stringent punishment to the culprit

▶ The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders slammed the ruling MahaYuti government for the breakdown of law and order in the state with such crimes taking place in full public view

CCTV footage of the incident shows a large crowd watching the attack, but no one intervening to help the woman as the man repeatedly struck her head with the spanner

"Kyun kiya aisa mere saath (why did you do this to me)," the man kept saying as he continued to hit her lifeless body with the spanner. Except for a person who ventured out to intervene, the scores of bystanders remained mute spectators.

CCTV footage of the incident shows a large crowd watching the attack, but no one intervening to help the woman as the man repeatedly struck her head with the spanner, police said.

The Valiv police have registered a murder case and arrested the accused.

A video of the attack that took place around 8.30 am in the

Chinchpada locality of Vasai surfaced on social media. The victim and the man lived in the same neighbourhood and worked at an industrial estate, police said.

She was on her way to work Friday morning when the assailant accosted her and began attacking her after a quarrel, an official said.

The man continued to attack her even after she collapsed on the road. He did not flee the scene and sat near the body, the official said. A team from the Valiv police rushed to the spot and sent the body for a post-mortem. Police have also detained a man and a woman who shot videos of the attack and uploaded them on social media. Arati Yadav's sister claimed her family had complained to police about the man beating up the victim Saturday but the cops did not register their complaint.

Speaking to media, she said the man had previously attempted to attack her sister.

"The family had approached the police, who made us wait for hours and then informed us that the man would not cause any further harm," she said.

Video footage of the incident went viral on social media, prompting indignation from the public and people's representatives.

Maharashtra Legislative Council deputy chairperson Neelam Gorhe said there is a need to implement the "zero tolerance for crimes against women" policy.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sushma Andhare said the reason why nobody came forward to stop the attacker may have something to do with their apprehension of "making rounds of the police station" as witnesses.

Speeding truck mows down 5 women farmers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Solapur (Maharashtra), June 18: At least five women farmers were mowed down while two others were critically injured after a speeding truck ran over them on the Karad-Pandharpur highway in Solapur, the police said Tuesday.

As the women waited on the roadside for a state transport bus to Phatfal, a truck loaded with coal suddenly came speeding on the highway and ran over them

The tragedy occurred at around 4.15 p.m. when the seven women farm workers were returning to their homes in Phatfal village in the Sangola area after completing their day's work, Inspector Bhimrao Khandale told IANS from the accident spot.

As the women waited on the roadside for a state transport bus to Phatfal, a truck loaded with coal suddenly came speeding on the highway and ran over them near Bandgarwadi village before crashing to a halt some distance away. On hearing the screams, other farmers and villagers rushed to the spot and informed the Sangola police.

They also got hold of the truck driver and handed him over to the police, who arranged for an ambulance to shift the injured women to a hospital in Pandharpur.

Khandale said that a huge crowd of angry villagers had gathered at the accident spot, demanding stringent action against the truck driver.

As per preliminary information, the truck driver reportedly lost control while negotiating a bend on the road and rammed into the women waiting for a bus on the roadside.

NITISH TO SEE 'SON-RISE' SOON



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Patna, June 18: Speculations are rife in Bihar that the only son of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the JD(U) president who is known to be against "dynasty rule", could enter active politics.

Nishant Kumar has been a reclusive figure, seen in public with his father on rare occasions. For the past few weeks, there have been murmurs that the 73-year-old leader could agree to "demands from within the party" that Nishant formally join the JD(U), which lacks a second young leadership that could take over from the supreme once he decides to hang the boots.

The speculations intensified Monday, when Vidyannand Vikal, who is associated with the party and heads the State Food Commission, came out with a social media post. "Bihar needs young leadership in the new political scenario. Nishant Kumar has all the requisite qualities. I share the view expressed by many JD(U) colleagues that he take the initiative and get active in politics," Vikal wrote.

However, when questions were posed in this regard to Vijay Kumar Chaudhary, former state JD(U) president and one of the

most influential ministers in the Nitish Kumar cabinet, he claimed the speculations were "baseless". "I would also urge people in the party not to go public on this very sensitive issue, which has no basis but may create doubts in the minds of people," said Chaudhary, who is known to have the eyes and the ears of the Chief Minister.

When reporters pointedly asked whether the topic has ever come up for discussion in his meetings with the CM, Chaudhary said, "What I have already stated is a sufficient reply to the question".

Meanwhile, the JD(U), which has emerged as the second largest ally of BJP in Lok Sabha polls, is bracing for the national executive meeting scheduled in Delhi later this month.

A senior JD(U) functionary told PTI: "As per the party constitution, national executive meetings need to take place at regular intervals. Ideally, it should have been held in the beginning of June, but political developments may have come in the way". "We are not expecting any major decision in the meeting," said the functionary, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

SNIPPETS

Bishnoi's viral vedio call; govt orders probe

Ahmedabad/Chandigarh: A video purportedly showing gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, lodged in Ahmedabad's Sabarmati Central Prison since August 2023, speaking to Pakistan's gangster Shahzad Bhatti on a video call surfaced Tuesday, prompting the Gujarat government to order a probe. In the 19-second unverified video, Bishnoi is purportedly seen extending wishes on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha (observed in India June 17) to Bhatti, who tells the former the festival will be celebrated in Pakistan the following day. On hearing this, Bishnoi tells Bhatti he will call him tomorrow to extend Eid wishes. As the clip went viral on social media platforms, the state government stepped in and ordered a probe.

Jolt to Congress in Haryana

Chandigarh: In a jolt to the Congress in Haryana where Assembly polls are due in October, senior leader Kiran Choudhry and her daughter Shruti Choudhry quit the party and will join the ruling BJP Wednesday. Both Kiran Choudhry and Shruti Choudhry resigned from the primary membership of the Congress Tuesday. Shruti Choudhry was also the working president of the Haryana unit of the Congress. Kiran Choudhry, who is also a sitting MLA, told PTI that both she and Shruti, a former MP, will be joining the BJP Wednesday.

Assam flood situation worsens, 1.61L affected

Guwahati: Assam's flood situation worsened Tuesday as over 1.61 lakh people were affected in 15 districts while another person died and fresh areas were inundated, according to a government bulletin. One person died in Haikandi taking the total death toll to 35 due to floods, rains and storms in the state since May 28. Over 1.05 lakh people across eight districts were affected by the calamity Monday. Karimganj is the worst affected district with 1,52,133 people reeling under flood waters, a bulletin by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority said.



A portion of a newly constructed bridge over the Bakra river in Bihar collapsed in Araria district Tuesday. There have been no reports of any fatality. The bridge, constructed by the Rural Works Department (RWD) at a cost of ₹10 crore, was not opened to the public as approach roads were yet to be constructed

41 airports get hoax bomb threat on email

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Forty-one airports in the country received bomb threat emails Tuesday and each of them was declared a hoax following anti-sabotage checks by security agencies that lasted for hours, official sources said.



The emails were received at the airports around 12.40 pm from the email id exhume-dryou888@gmail.com. The airports scrambled contingency measures, carried out anti-sabotage checks and swept the terminals following the respective Bomb Threat Assessment Committee recommendations, the sources told PTI.

An online group called "KNR" is suspected to be behind these hoax threat emails. The group reportedly issued similar emails to several schools in the Delhi-NCR May 1, they said.

Sweltering heatwave broils swathes of north, east India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Large parts of northern and eastern India remained in the grip of a sweltering heat wave Tuesday, driving power demands to record highs with warmer-than-usual nights further exacerbating people's distress.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions prevailed in parts of Uttar Pradesh, south Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab and pockets of north Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and the Jammu division.

Maximum temperatures ranged from 44 to 46 degrees Celsius in many parts of Punjab,

Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and some parts of north Madhya Pradesh, south Bihar and north Rajasthan.

Delhi, facing a severe water crisis, recorded a maximum temperature of 44 degrees Celsius over five notches above the normal. The minimum temperature in the city was 33.8 degrees Celsius, at least six notches above what is normal for this time of the year.

The national capital's peak power demand Tuesday afternoon reach 8,647 MW, the highest ever for the city. According to officials, cooling load due to the increased use of air conditioners and other cooling appliances amid the relentless heat wave has led to the record rise in power demand. IMD officials said high mini-



mum temperatures or warm nights are exacerbating the impact of the deadly heat.

High night temperatures are considered dangerous because

the body does not get a chance to cool down. Increasing nighttime temperature is more common in cities because of the urban heat island effect, in which metro

India is experiencing one of its hottest summers this time

Multiple heatwaves have pushed millions in the country to their limits and many states have reported heat-related deaths

According to IMD, around 40 per cent of the country has recorded double the number of heatwave days than it usually does

areas are significantly hotter than their surroundings.

At least 10 places in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab and Haryana reached or surpassed 45 degrees Celsius Tuesday, with Orai in Uttar Pradesh being the warmest place in the country at 46.4 degrees Celsius. "This is scaring me. The min-

imum temperature in cities is not going down. People are not getting a chance to recover which means that we are getting more deaths at night than during the daytime, because normally the minimum temperature would fall and you would be able to recover to go back to work the next day, just not getting that," noted environmentalist Sunita Narain told PTI editors here.

Rajasthan has hit 50 degrees Celsius twice over the last few weeks, and Delhi has recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius for 36 consecutive days.

The IMD also said heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to continue over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Assam and Meghalaya during the next two days.

national



The US and India have got to remain at the forefront of technology in case we need to protect and defend our value systems and it is part of a larger strategic interest

AJIT DOVAL | NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

COURT REMANDS PRAJWAL TO JUDICIAL CUSTODY TILL JUNE 24

A special court here Tuesday remanded former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of rape and sexual abuse, to judicial custody till June 24. The 42nd Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court had June 12 remanded him to the custody of the Special Investigation Team (SIT), which is probing the cases against him, till June 18



of the day quote

Over the past one month, I have encountered first-hand pain and isolation a survivor faces when she fights for justice... I would like to seek your time to discuss this pertinent issue

SWATI MALIWA | RAJYA SABHA MP

I am deeply grateful to Hon'ble MLAs from People's Party of Arunachal (PPA), Shri Nabam Vivek Ji and Shri Oken Tayeng Ji for their unconditional support to @BJP4India government in Arunachal, as they handed over their letter of support

PEMA KHANDU | ARUNACHAL PRADESH CM

The NCERT has decided to replace Babri Masjid with the words three domed structure. It has also decided to call the Ayodhya judgement an example of consensus. India's children should know that the Supreme Court called the demolition of Babri Masjid an egregious criminal act

ASADUDDIN OWAIISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

X POST OF THE DAY

At least four Indian spies have been expelled from Australia after reports of attempts to infiltrate political networks in the country. Modi administration has been building a 'nest of spies' to influence Australian lawmakers while sending threats to voices of dissent

@BHAVIKAKAPOORS

SHORT TAKES

Ashwani appointed MCD commissioner

New Delhi: The Union home ministry has appointed senior IAS officer Ashwani Kumar as MCD commissioner. Kumar will succeed Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Gyanesh Bharti, who was transferred to the Union women and child development ministry as additional secretary in March. Kumar is currently serving as the Delhi divisional commissioner and the additional chief secretary (home) in the Delhi government. He was the first special officer of the unified Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

Four killed in lightning strike

Gwalior: Four persons were killed and one injured after lightning struck them in Karhiya village under Bhitwar tehsil in Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh Tuesday evening, a police official said. The incident took place when the victims were measuring their field along with the revenue officials. Suddenly, a windstorm coupled with rains started, additional superintendent of police (ASP) Niranjan Sharma said. In order to protect themselves, they took shelter under a tree and a hut when lightning struck them, killing four persons and injuring one, he said.

3 killed in road crash in Punjab

Kapurthala (PB): Three persons were killed while three others injured in a head-on collision between a motorcycle and a scooter near Tibba village here, police said Tuesday. The incident took place Monday night. The injured have been admitted to the civil hospital.

WB TRAIN MISHAP

Cong accuses govt of 'destroying' Rlys



The Opposition party also took a swipe at Vaishnav for reaching the accident site riding pillion on a motorcycle, asking whether he is a Rail minister or a 'reel minister'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 18: Accusing the government of "destroying" Indian Railways, the Congress Tuesday demanded Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav's resignation in the wake of the Kanchanjunga Express accident, saying he has no moral right to remain in the position.

The Opposition party also took a swipe at Vaishnav for reaching the accident site riding pillion on a motorcycle, asking whether he is a Rail minister or a "reel minister". The Congress alleged that "criminal negligence" perpetrated by Modi government had "doomed the Railways".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said whenever there is a train accident, Modi government's Railway Minister reaches the spot under the glare of cameras and behaves as if everything is fine. "Narendra Modi ji, tell us who should be held accountable, the Railway Minister or you?" the Congress chief asked.

Kharge posed seven questions to the government and demanded answers. After a major accident like Balasore, why was not even a single kilometer of the much-

Train services fully restored at accident site

Kolkata: Train services on both the up and down lines at Rangapuri near West Bengal's New Jalpaiguri station were fully restored Tuesday, a day after a goods train ramed into the Kanchanjunga Express from behind, killing 10 people. Electrical traction was restored at the accident site and trains with electric locomotives have started plying on the stretch from Tuesday afternoon, Divisional Railway Manager of Katihar S Kumar said. He said that trains were moving through the accident spot with speed restrictions, following repair of the tracks and other components. The Monday morning collision of the two trains had caused extensive damage to tracks and electric traction poles, officials said.

hyped "Kavach" anti-train collision system added, he asked. "Why are nearly 3 lakh posts vacant in the Railways, why were they not filled in the last 10 years? According to the NCRB (2022) report, 1,00,000 people have died in rail accidents between 2017 and 2021 alone! Who will take responsibility for this?" the Congress chief asked.

The Railway Board itself has admitted that the long working hours of loco pilots due to acute shortage of manpower are the main reason for the increasing number of accidents, he said and asked why were the posts not filled.

"In its 323rd report, the Parliamentary Standing Committee had criticised the Railways for the 'neglect' shown by the Railway Board towards the recommendations of the Commission of Railway Safety (CRS). It was underlined that the CRS investigates only 8-10% of accidents, why was the

lice force against the people 'overcrowding' rail coaches. But does he not know that 2.7 crore people had to cancel their tickets last year due to abysmal shortage of seats - a direct result of Modi government's policy to reduce coaches?" Kharge said. Did the Modi government merge the railway budget with the general budget in 2017-18 to avoid any kind of accountability, he asked.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinat said the Railways is perhaps the most preferred mode of transport as far as the middle class, lower middle class and the poor are concerned simply because it is the most economical means of transportation. She showed pictures of the Balasore train accident last June and of Monday's accident, and asked what had changed between this period.

The Railway Ministry said the implementation of Automatic Train Protection System, also known as Kavach, is going on in a rapid manner on 3,000 route kilometer, and once completed it will help prevent such accidents

RENUKASWAMY MURDER CASE

No need for CBI probe: K'taka Home Minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chitradurga (Karnataka), June 18: Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara Tuesday said there was no need to hand over the Renukaswamy murder case to the CBI as the police were doing a good job in their investigation without succumbing to any pressure. Parameshwara and a State BJP delegation led by its President B Y Vijayendra met the parents and wife of Renukaswamy, whose body was found in Bangalore June 9, separately and consoled them.

Bangalore Police Commissioner B Dayananda indicated that Renukaswamy was

murdered in a "horrific, brutal and barbaric" manner. Speaking to reporters here, Parameshwara said 17 people, including Kannada actor Darshan and his friend Pavithra Gowda, have been arrested in connection with the case.

According to police sources, Renukaswamy, a fan of Darshan, had allegedly sent some obscene messages to Gowda on social media, which infuriated the 47-year-old actor. "I came here to console the family. This is a painful incident not only for the family but also for all of us. So far, 17 people have been arrested. They are being interrogated thoroughly," Parameshwara said.

Police to chargesheet Arundhati next week

New Delhi: Delhi Police is likely to file a chargesheet next week in a case registered against author Arundhati Roy and a former professor in Kashmir under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for their alleged provocative speeches in 2010, official sources said Tuesday. Roy and former Central University of Kashmir professor Sheikh Showkat Hussain were booked for allegedly delivering inflammatory speeches at a conference organised under the banner of 'Azadi - The Only Way' at LTG Auditorium, Copernicus Marg October 21, 2010. The FIR was registered at Tilak Marg Police Station on a complaint made by Sushil Pandit, a social activist from Kashmir, following the orders of the Court of Metropolitan Magistrate, New Delhi.

SNIPPETS

SC to organise special Lok Adalat

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will organise a special Lok Adalat from July 29 to August 3 to facilitate amicable settlement of suitable pending cases. The special Lok Adalat will be organised in the 75th year of the establishment of the apex court, which came into existence January 26, 1950 with the coming into force of the Constitution. In a statement, the apex court said Lok Adalats are an integral component of judicial system in the country, enhancing alternative dispute resolution as a means of expediting and fostering amicable settlements. "In the 75th year of its establishment, the Supreme Court of India is organising a Special Lok Adalat from July 29, 2024 to August 3, 2024 to facilitate amicable settlements of suitable pending cases," it said.

Assam Home Secy kills himself in hospital

Guwahati: Assam Home Secretary Siladitya Chetia Tuesday shot himself dead inside the ICU of a private hospital where his wife passed away moments earlier, police said. Chetia, who had earlier served as SP of Tinsukia and Sonitpur districts, killed himself with his service weapon, they said. "In an unfortunate turn of events, Sri Siladitya Chetia, IPS 2009, Secretary Home and Political took his own life this evening, a few minutes after the attending physician declared the death of his wife who was battling cancer for a long time. Entire Assam Police family is in deep grief," DGP G P Singh said in a post on X. A team of forensic and CID officials has also been sent to the hospital.

9 in 10 professionals facing learning barriers: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 18: Around nine in 10 professionals in India (91 per cent) are facing barriers such as feeling burnt out or family responsibilities that are getting in the way of learning new skills, a report showed Tuesday.

Top barriers include a lack of time due to family responsibilities or other personal commitments (34 per cent), busy work schedules (29 per cent) and feeling overwhelmed



According to LinkedIn data, skills needed for a job in India are expected to change by 64 per cent by 2030

by the amount of learning resources available (26 per cent), according to new research from professional networking platform LinkedIn. In this era of AI, professionals must develop new skills to advance their careers. However,

they are facing roadblocks in their learning journey. According to LinkedIn data, skills needed for a job in India are expected to change by 64 per cent by 2030, so it is vital for professionals to be super-focused on learning, according to the report. Meanwhile, 'Loud Learning' -- the act of being vocal and intentional about learning ambitions in the workplace -- has emerged as a promising solution to this problem. Around eight in 10 (81 per

cent) professionals in India said this practice can help them dedicate time to improve their skills. The key ways include sharing their learnings with teammates, sharing their learning journey or accomplishments on LinkedIn and informing their team members of their learning time blocks. Eight in 10 (81 per cent) professionals in India said that seeing their peers engage in 'Loud Learning' will motivate them to do the same, the report mentioned.



AAP demands SC monitored probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders staged a protest at the Jantar Mantar here Tuesday against the alleged irregularities in the NEET exam.

The AAP leaders demanded the cancellation of the exam and a Supreme Court monitored probe over the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the test.

The protesters burnt copies of the NEET paper and raised slogans against the Central government.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh lashed out at the Centre and alleged the NEET exam shows its corruption. "The Ministry of Education and the NTA under it, along with its leaders in BJP-ruled states, have messed up with the future of lakhs of children of the country. Therefore, our demand is that this NEET exam should be cancelled and the exam should be held again," he said.

Singh claimed that the NEET results were to come June 14, but were released 10 days earlier June 4. "So that the media remains busy with the election results and there is no discussion about the BJP's paper leak. There should be an investigation as to why the NEET results were released June 4 instead of

NEET EXAM ROW



Rahul slams Modi

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Tuesday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for maintaining "silence" on the NEET exam issue and asserted that his party is committed to strongly raising the voice of the youth from the streets to the Parliament for ensuring strong policies against paper leaks. The former Congress president said the arrests made in Bihar, Gujarat and Haryana clearly show that there has been organised corruption in the examination in a planned manner and added these BJP-ruled states have become the "epicentre" of paper leaks.

June 14," he said. The AAP leader exhorted the youth and students of this country to come forward and raise their voice.

"All of you raise your voice at your own level. How long will you remain entangled in these fake questions?" he added.

Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said that 24 lakh children of the country have been cheated.

Rahul Gandhi resigns from Wayanad seat, retains Rae Bareilly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has resigned from the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat of Kerala and retained the Rae Bareilly constituency in Uttar Pradesh, the Lok Sabha Secretariat said Tuesday.

A Lok Sabha bulletin said his resignation has been accepted with effect from June 18.

Ending speculation on the issue, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge announced Monday the decision on the two seats after the party's top brass held discussions at his residence in the national capital.

Rahul Gandhi's sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will make her electoral debut by contesting the Wayanad bypoll.

Following Rahul Gandhi's resignation from one of the two seats he had won, the Congress' tally in the Lower House now stands at 98. This is the first vacancy to be created in the just-formed 18th Lok Sabha. "Shri Rahul Gandhi, an elected member of Lok Sabha from two constituencies viz Wayanad and Rae Bareilly parliamentary constituencies of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, respectively, has resigned his seat in Lok Sabha



from Wayanad parliamentary constituency of Kerala and his resignation has been accepted by the speaker with effect from June 18," a Lok Sabha bulletin said. If Priyanka Gandhi is elected from Wayanad, it will be the first time that all three Gandhi family members -- Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi -- will be in Parliament together. Sonia Gandhi is now a member of the Rajya Sabha.

Before a 1996 amendment in the electoral laws, there was no bar on the number of seats a person could contest. If a candidate wins from two seats, he or she has to quit one within 14 days of the election or faces the possibility of losing both the seats. The winning candidates will take oath as Lok Sabha members June 24 and 25. The first session of the new Lok Sabha commences June 24.

international

of the day quote

There's alignment on a number of big issues that we need to work on as, as democracies as a global community. But now that he (Modi) is through his election, I think there is an opportunity for us to engage, including on some very serious issues around national security

JUSTIN TRUDEAU | PM, CANADA

Israel's relentless strikes in Gaza are causing immense suffering and widespread destruction, and the arbitrary denial and obstruction of humanitarian aid have continued

VOLKER TURK | UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

We must be fully alert to China's continued military harassment and grey zone threats and must always understand China's constant salami-slicing attempts to unilaterally change the status quo

WELLINGTON KOO | DEFENCE MINISTER, TAIWAN

SHORT TAKES

NATO troops join military exercise

Warsaw: Some 9,000 troops from 20 NATO countries have been participating this month in military exercises in the Baltic Sea region, which has become strategically sensitive following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Sweden, which had joined the drills in the past, took part in the Baltops exercises for the first time in June as a full NATO member after joining the trans-Atlantic military alliance earlier this year. The exercises by navy, air force and ground troops are being held on the Baltic Sea, as well as in Sweden and its strategic island of Gotland, and in Lithuania, Poland and Germany.

Boeing's CEO to face questions

Washington: US lawmakers are expected to press Boeing's chief executive Tuesday about the company's latest plan to fix its manufacturing problems, and relatives of people who died in two crashes of Boeing 737 Max jetliners plan to be in the room, watching him. CEO David Calhoun is scheduled to appear before the Senate investigations subcommittee, which is chaired by Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., a Boeing critic.

4 Indian fishermen held in Sri Lanka

Colombo: Four Indian fishermen were arrested and their trawler seized early Tuesday by the Sri Lanka Navy for allegedly poaching in the island nation's waters, taking the total number of such arrests to more than 180 this year. "In the latest incident of alleged poaching by Indians, one Indian trawler was seized and four fishermen were arrested early Tuesday around the northern islet of Delft in the Jaffna peninsula," Sri Lanka Navy said here.

Professor found guilty of spying

Tallinn: A university professor was jailed Tuesday in Estonia after being found guilty of spying for Russia. Viacheslav Morozov, a Russian citizen, taught at the Baltic country's most prestigious university and was sentenced to six years and three months in prison for collecting information about Estonia's defense and security policy and the people and infrastructure related to it, Harju County Court said.



We will exert our utmost in order to fulfill our sworn mandate to protect our territorial integrity, sovereignty, and sovereign rights. It should now be clear to the international community that China's actions are the true obstacles to peace and stability in the South China Sea

GILBERTO TEODORO JR | DEFENSE SECRETARY, THE PHILIPPINES

PROTECTION FOR AMAZON

Brazilian President Lula signed a \$58.7M measure to tackle Amazon deforestation, urging swift action to boost security and fight criminal organizations



TIBET POLICY BILL US outreach to Dalai Lama irks China

THE BILL SEEKS TO COUNTER CHINA'S NARRATIVE ABOUT ITS CONTROL OVER TIBET AND PROMOTE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND THE DALAI LAMA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, June 18: China Tuesday urged US President Joe Biden not to sign the Tibet policy bill, warning of resolute measures, as it expressed "strong concern" over the visit of a high-level US Congress delegation to Dharamshala to meet the Dalai Lama.

A bipartisan US congressional delegation, led by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaulis, is visiting India to strengthen bilateral ties and to meet the 88-year-old Tibetan spiritual leader.

Former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is part of the delegation that reached Dharamshala, in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, Tuesday. Dharamshala is the seat of power for Tibet's government in exile since the spiritual leader stepped into India six decades ago.

The US House of Representatives voted 391-26 last Wednesday to approve the Promoting and Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act, which was passed by the Senate, a media



report said, adding, that the bill would direct funds to counter what it calls "disinformation" from Beijing about Tibet's history, people and institutions.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Lin Jian, while reacting to the US delegation visit, told a media briefing here "The 14th Dalai Lama is not a pure religious figure, but a political exile engaged in anti-China separatist activities under the cloak of religion."

"We are gravely concerned over the relevant reports and urge the US side to fully recognize the anti-China separatist nature of the Dalai group, honour the commitments the US has made to China on issues related to Xizang, have no contact with the Dalai group in any form, and stop sending the wrong signal to the world", he said.

China officially refers to Tibet as Xizang.

Lin also urged Biden not to sign the bipartisan Tibet policy bill adopted by both the US Senate and the House of Representatives.

The bill awaits Biden's signature to make it into a law, according to media reports in Washington.

The bill seeks to counter China's narrative about its control over Tibet and promote dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama.

Claiming that Tibet has been part of China since ancient times, Lin said it always remained China's territory and "Tibet related affairs are purely China's internal affairs that brook no external interference."

"No one and no force should ever attempt to destabilise Tibet to contain and suppress China. Such attempts will never succeed," he said.

"We urge the US side to adhere to its commitments of recognising Xizang as part of China and not supporting 'Xizang independence.' The US must not sign the bill into law. China will take resolute measures to firmly defend its sovereignty, security and development interests," he said without elaborating.

NK receives warning shots from South Korea

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, June 18: South Korean troops fired warning shots to repel North Korean soldiers who briefly crossed the rivals' heavily fortified land border Tuesday for the second time this month, the South's military said. Both incursions were believed to be unintentional.

Around 20 to 30 North Korean soldiers who were doing construction work crossed the military demarcation line that serves as the border between the two countries in the Demilitarized Zone, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. The soldiers retreated after the South broadcasted warnings and fired warning shots, and the South's military didn't spot any suspicious activity after that, the joint chiefs said.

The border area is dense with overgrown trees and plants, and the North Korean soldiers may have not known exactly where the border was, according to the South's military, which said it doesn't believe the soldiers deliberately crossed into the South. The North did not return fire.

The intrusion comes as tensions rise between the rivals, who in recent weeks have engaged in Cold War-style psychological warfare and made it clear they are no longer bound by their landmark military agreement in 2018 to reduce tensions.

Troops from the South also fired warning shots June 11 after another group of North Korean soldiers briefly crossed the border. The Joint Chiefs of Staff said that Tuesday's incursion occurred in a different area along the central front-line region.

Israeli forces kill 17 Palestinians



Public outcry against Netanyahu

Thousands of Israelis protested against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government Monday over the Gaza war and failure to negotiate the release of scores of hostages still held in the Palestinian territory. Armed with drums, horns and placards calling for fresh elections, protesters called for a ceasefire to bring the remaining Gaza hostages home

REUTERS

Cairo, June 18: Israeli airstrikes Tuesday killed at least 17 Palestinians in two of the Gaza Strip's historic refugee camps and Israeli tanks pushed deeper into the enclave's southern city of Rafah, residents and medics said.

Residents reported heavy bombardments from tanks and planes in several areas of Rafah, where more than a million people had taken refuge before May. Most of the population has fled northwards since then as Israeli forces invaded the city.

"Rafah is being bombed without any intervention from the world, the occupation (Israel) is acting freely here," a Rafah resident and father of six told Reuters via a chat app.

Israeli tanks were operating inside Tel Al-Sultan, Al-Izba, and Zurub areas in Rafah's west, as well as Shaboura at the heart of the city. They also continued to occupy the eastern neighborhoods and outskirts as well as the border with Egypt and the vital Rafah border crossing.

"There are Israeli forces in most areas, there is heavy resistance too and they are making them pay dearly but the occupation is not ethical and they are destroying the city and the refugee camp," the resident said. Palestinian health officials

said one man was killed in the morning by Israeli fire on the eastern side of Rafah. Medics said they believed many others had been killed in the past days and weeks but rescue teams could not reach them.

The Israeli military said it was continuing "precise, intelligence-based activity" in Rafah, killing

The Israeli military statement did not comment directly but said forces continued to operate against militant factions in central Gaza areas

The air force struck dozens of targets across the Gaza Strip in the past day, it added.

In the central Gaza Strip, two separate Israeli air strikes on two houses killed 17 Palestinians in Al-Nuseirat and Al-Bureij, two designated refugee camps that are home to families and descendants of people who fled to Gaza in the 1948 war around the creation of Israel, medics said.

"Every more hour of delay, Israel kills more people, we want a ceasefire now," said Khalil, 45, a teacher from Gaza, now displaced with his family in Deir Al-Balah city in the central Gaza Strip.

"Enough of our blood, I say it to Israel, America, and our leaders too. The war must stop," he told Reuters via a chat app.

Intoxication puts Timberlake in soup

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, June 18: Justin Timberlake was arrested early Tuesday on allegations that the singer was driving while intoxicated on New York's Long Island, authorities said.

Timberlake was released from custody later in the morning after being arraigned in Sag Harbor, on the eastern end of Long Island. He was charged with one DWI count, with his next court date scheduled for July 26, the Suffolk County district attorney's office said.

Timberlake's lawyer and representatives did not immediately return requests for comment from The Associated Press.

Sag Harbor is a coastal village in the Hamptons, around 160 kilometers from New York City. In the summer, it is a hot spot for wealthy visitors.

He has won 10 Grammy awards and four Primetime Emmy Awards.

Last year, Timberlake was in the headlines when Spears released her memoir, "The Woman in Me." Several chapters were devoted to their relationship, including deeply personal details about a pregnancy, abortion and painful breakup. In March, he released his first new album in six years, the nostalgic "Everything I Thought It Was," a return to his familiar future funk sound.



Britain's King Charles III prepares to present trophies to the owner and trainer of Asfoora ridden by jockey Oisin Murphy, the winning horse of the King Charles II Stakes horse race on the first day of the Royal Ascot horse race meeting at Ascot, England, Tuesday

Biden unveils new rules to ease immigration

According to the White House, this program will protect approximately half a million spouses of US citizens, and approximately 50,000 non-citizen children under the age of 21 whose parents are married to a US citizen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 18: President Joe Biden Tuesday issued a massive immigration relief to non-

citizens offering a path to citizenship to the non-citizen spouses and children of American nationals, a move that will protect approximately half a million spouses of US citizens, several thousands of whom are Indian-Americans.

"This action will protect approximately half a million spouses of US citizens, and approximately 50,000 non-citizen children under the age of 21 whose parents are married to a US citizen," the White House said.

Biden has directed the



Department of Homeland Security to take action to ensure that US citizens with non-citizen spouses and children can

keep their families together.

This new process will help certain non-citizen spouses and children apply for lawful permanent residence - status that they are already eligible for, without leaving the country, the White House said.

Biden has also directed to allow individuals including DACA recipients and other Dreamers, who have earned a degree at an accredited US institution of higher education in the United States, and who have

received an offer of employment from a US employer in a field related to their degree, to more quickly receive work visas.

Opposing the move, the rival Trump campaign said that Biden's mass amnesty plan will undoubtedly lead to a greater surge in migrant crime, cost taxpayers millions of dollars they cannot afford, overwhelm public services, and steal Social Security and Medicare benefits from American seniors to fund benefits for illegals.

IDF knew of Hamas' plan weeks before Oct 7 assault: Report

AGENCIES

Tel Aviv, June 18: A recently surfaced document has exposed that the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and intelligence networks possessed extensive information regarding Hamas' scheme to infiltrate Israel and abduct 250 individuals weeks ahead of the tragic events of October 7, 2023. The report, originating from the Gaza Division, delineated Hamas' plans and was familiar to high-ranking intelligence authorities, as stated by a report from Kan News.

Entitled 'Detailed End-to-End Raid Training,' the document was disbursed September 19, 2023, and provided thorough insights into the manoeuvres carried out by Hamas' specialised units. These activities encom-

passed assaults on military outposts and kibbutzim (Israeli communal settlements), the seizing of both soldiers and civilians, and the management of hostages upon their admission into the Palestinian enclave of Gaza Strip.

The report by Kan News stated, "Security sources told Kan News that the document was known to the intelligence leadership, at the very least in the Gaza Division."

Following extensive backlash regarding the October 7 attack that led to substantial casualties and hostages, the document's revelations unveiled the IDF's awareness of Hamas' plans. Despite having clear intelligence on the imminent threat, inaction prevailed within the security establishment due to preconceived notions and potential



negligence from high-ranking officials. The report also highlighted how Israeli intelligence closely monitored Hamas' actions, detailing their strategies

post-infiltration into Israeli territory and occupation of military installations. As per the document, the anticipated number of hostages was estimated to be

between 200 and 250 individuals.

"Israeli intelligence officials who monitored the exercise detailed in the document the next steps after breaching into Israel and taking over the posts, determining that the instruction is to hand over the captured soldiers to the company commanders. The expected number of hostages, it states, is between 200 and 250 people," Kan News reported.

Despite having detailed prior knowledge of the enemy's plans and bolstering security with a new and advanced barrier completed two years earlier, it was believed that such an attack was unlikely. However, the Hamas assault revealed a significant flaw in intelligence and security, as the barrier failed to stop

the intrusion. The general staff's investigation team is set to deliver preliminary findings on this security breach to the Chief of Staff soon, as the nation endeavours to comprehend how such a security lapse could transpire. As of now, some 120 hostages are still being held captive in Gaza.

The conflict between Israel and Hamas erupted October 7 when Hamas initiated an assault, sending a large number of militants across the Gaza border to seize over 240 hostages in the Gaza Strip. Tragically, over 1,200 Israelis and foreigners lost their lives during the attack, with more than 350 casualties occurring at the Re'im music festival alone, and numerous Israeli civilians in border communities falling victim.

of the day quote

“Our culture is far from perfect, but we are taking action and making progress.”

DAVID CALHOUN | BOEING CEO

Plant-based products present a significant opportunity for Nestle India, which has been operating here for 112 years. It is also expanding its presence and through RUrban journey its direct coverage has gone beyond two lakh villages.

SURESH NARAYANAN | NESTLE INDIA'S CMD

Our clients want to tap into new avenues of growth, while deepening customer intimacy, efficiently, in near-real time. They understand the role that modern agile marketing, enabled by data and AI, can play to accelerate their strategy and disintermediate execution

SATISH HC | EWP INFOSYS



Green manufacturing embodies our commitment to sustainable development. By reducing our footprint and utilising resources judiciously, we have consistently set industry standards over the years

RAGHUPATI SINGHANIA | JK TYRE AND INDUSTRIES CMD

HOUSING RENT GROWTH MODERATES: ANAROCK

Average monthly rent for residential properties has risen 2-4 per cent so far this quarter compared with the January-March period across seven major cities, according to Anarock. The real estate consultant said that the growth in housing rent across the top seven cities -- Delhi-NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Chennai, Kolkata, Pune, Hyderabad and Bangalore -- has moderated because of improvement in housing supply.



Markets continue record run

SENSEX, NIFTY CLIMB TO FRESH LIFETIME HIGHS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 18: Benchmark Sensex closed above the 77,000 level for the first time, and broader Nifty scaled a fresh peak Tuesday as key equity indices stayed on the record-breaking run powered by a rally in index majors ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and Infosys.

Besides, renewed foreign fund inflows amid a firm trend in global equities boosted investor confidence, traders said.

In a range-bound session, Sensex and Nifty settled at their new closing all-time high levels amid intense demand for realty, consumer durable and utility stocks.

Rising for the third straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 308.37 points or 0.40 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 77,301.14. During the day, it jumped 374 points or 0.48 per cent to hit the fresh lifetime peak of 77,366.77.

As many as 2,167 stocks advanced while 1,836 declined and 147 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The NSE Nifty went up by 92.30 points or 0.39 per cent to hit a record closing high of 23,557.90 for the fourth straight session. It rallied 113.45 points or 0.48 per cent to hit the new all-time high of 23,579.05 during the day trade.

“The Indian market touched record highs again and is gradually expanding the gains achieved following the national election. It is responding positively to the upcoming budget, which is anticipated to strike a balance between growth and populism. Similarly, it is also taking cues from positive global market trends, with the US mov-



Mcap of BSE-listed firms hits ₹437.24L-cr

New Delhi: The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit a new record high of ₹437.24 lakh crore Tuesday amid an optimistic trend in equities where the BSE Sensex maintained the record-breaking run and hit another lifetime closing high level. In four days, investors' wealth has risen by ₹10.29 lakh crore. “Key benchmark indices continued their record-breaking spree as renewed FII buying interest coupled with moderating domestic inflation has raised hopes of a rate cut by this year-end. Although monsoon has made a steady start, investors are hoping for a pick-up in rain activity over the next few weeks that would boost consumption, particularly rural areas, and prop up overall growth in the remaining quarters of this fiscal,” Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

ing steadily towards the presidential election in November. Market volatility has decreased over the month, which is contributing to a short-term trend,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among the 30 Sensex compa-

nies, Power Grid, Wipro, ICICI Bank, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, Infosys, JSW Steel and State Bank of India were the biggest gainers.

In contrast, Maruti, UltraTech Cement, Tata Steel, Tata Motors, ITC and Tata Consultancy

Services were among the laggards.

“Indian equities are trading at an all-time high zone led by positive macros and US markets scaling to new highs. Further, 27 per cent growth in advance direct tax receipts for the Q1 FY25 supported the sentiments,” Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.96 per cent, and midcap index climbed 0.43 per cent.

Among the indices, realty jumped 2.11 per cent, utilities (1.05 per cent), telecommunication (1 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.90 per cent), bankex (0.83 per cent), services (0.74 per cent) and capital goods (0.73 per cent).

On the other hand, auto, metal and oil & gas were the laggards.

Fitch ups India's FY25 growth forecast to 7.2%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Fitch Ratings Tuesday raised India's growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.2 per cent, from 7 per cent projected in March, saying elevated consumer confidence will drive spending, besides increased investments.

In June update to its global economic outlook report, Fitch said it expects inflation to decline to 4.5 per cent by end of this year and RBI to cut policy interest rates by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent.

“We expect the Indian economy to expand by a strong 7.2 per cent in FY24/25 (an upward revision of 0.2 pp from the March GEO),” Fitch said in its global economic outlook report.

Investment will continue to rise but more slowly than in recent quarters, while consumer spending will recover with elevated consumer confidence, it said.

For the fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27, Fitch projected growth rates of 6.5 per cent and 6.2 per cent, respectively.

Fitch's estimates for FY25 are in line with that of RBI which earlier this month projected Indian economy to expand 7.2 per cent in the current fiscal on the back of improving rural demand and moderating inflation.

While the Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimates growth at 7 per cent, S&P Global Ratings and Morgan Stanley project

growth rate of 6.8 per cent.

Moody's Ratings and Deloitte India estimates India's GDP to grow at 6.6 per cent in 2024-25 fiscal.

The Indian economy grew 8.2 per cent in the last fiscal (2023-24), with a 7.8 per cent expansion in March quarter.

Fitch said purchasing managers survey data point to continued growth at the start of the current financial year.

It said signs of the coming monsoon season being more normal should support growth and make inflation less volatile, though a recent heatwave poses a risk.

“We expect growth in later years to slow and approach our medium-term trend estimate,” it said, adding growth will be driven by consumer spending and investment.

Consumer price inflation has only edged down since the start of the calendar year, with annual inflation at 4.7 per cent in May from 5.7 per cent in December 2023.

According to official forecasts, rainfall during June-September is likely to be above average, Fitch said, adding this should limit the inflationary risks from food price spikes.

“We expect headline inflation to continue declining to 4.5 per cent by calendar year-end, and average 4.3 per cent in 2025 and 2026, staying slightly above the midpoint of its target range (4 per cent +/- 2 per cent),” Fitch said.

As per government data, retail inflation in May eased to 1-year low of 4.75 per cent.

SHORT TAKES

NTPC's green coal project

New Delhi: State-owned power giant NTPC has roped in Macawber Beekay to supply charcoal (green coal) to help the energy giant reduce carbon emissions while generating electricity, the waste-to-energy firm said Tuesday. In a statement, Macawber Beekay Private Ltd (MBL) said it has “bagged three NTPC's Green Coal projects in Noida (Uttar Pradesh), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), and Hubballi (Karnataka)”. Green coal is charcoal made using municipal solid waste (MSW) through a thermal treatment process called torrefaction, which is carried out in an oxygen-deficient environment, MBL said. To supply the material, MBL said it will set up three green coal manufacturing units having the capacity to treat 900 tonnes per day (TPD) MSW in Noida, 500 TPD in Bhopal and 400 TPD in Hubballi. This is in addition to a similar project bagged from NTPC in Varanasi earlier, the company said.

HUDCO raises \$200 million

Mumbai: Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) has raised USD 200 million (JPY 30 billion) in its maiden foray into the syndicated loan market, its arranger said Tuesday. The state-run body has raised the five-year money as part of its inaugural “social loan”, Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) said. The deal, led by SMBC's Singapore branch, saw an oversubscription with a total of nine lenders, and was upzipped from its original launch size of JPY 15 billion to JPY 30 billion after exercising the greenshoe option, an official statement said. The inaugural social loan will enable further expansion of HUDCO's social housing platform to improve the quality of life for the Indian community and enhance infrastructure facilities in urban areas, the statement said.

PNB Housing Fin to raise ₹10k-cr

New Delhi: PNB Housing Finance Tuesday said its board has given approval for raising ₹10,000 crore from Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) to fund its business growth. The fund would be raised through NCDs on a private placement basis, in one or more tranches, PNB Housing Finance said in regulatory filing. The mortgage firm aims to grow its loan book by 17 per cent with focus on the affordable segment. PNB Housing closed the fiscal FY'24 with a loan book of ₹63,000 crore.

Direct tax mop-up rises 21 per cent to ₹4.62L-cr



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Net direct tax collection grew 21 per cent to ₹4.62 lakh crore so far this fiscal on higher advance tax mop-up, the income tax department said Tuesday.

The first instalment of advance tax, which was due on June 15, showed collections rose 27.34 per cent to ₹1.48 lakh crore. This includes Corporation Tax (CIT) at ₹1.14 lakh crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT) at ₹34,470 crore.

The net direct tax collection of ₹4,62,664 crore (as of June 17, 2024) includes CIT at ₹1,80,949

crore and PIT (including Securities Transaction Tax) at ₹2,81,013 crore, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

Refunds amounting to ₹53,322 crore have also been issued in the FY 2024-25 till June 17, 34 per cent higher than refunds issued during the same period in the preceding year.

For April-June 17, gross collection of direct taxes (before adjusting for refunds) stood at ₹5.16 lakh crore compared to ₹4.23 lakh crore in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year, showing a growth of 22.19 per cent.

Too premature to shift RBI policy stance: Das

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 18: The Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das Tuesday said it is ‘too premature’ to change the monetary policy stance and the apex bank has to shun ‘adventurism’ approach on the rates front.

Speaking at broadcaster ET Now's Leadership Dialogues here, Das said the Reserve Bank is monitoring the high trading volumes in the futures and options segment along with Sebi, but any action on it will be taken by the markets regulator.

He also said that there is a possibility that the current account deficit for the March quarter, scheduled to be announced next week, will come below the figure of 1.2 per cent for the first nine months of fiscal year 2023-24.

For the first nine months of the fiscal, CAD moderated to 1.2 per cent of GDP, from 2.6 per cent of GDP in the corresponding period a year ago on the back of a lower merchandise trade deficit.

Amid talks of increased inflows after the country's inclu-



sion in global bond indices, the Governor said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will keep on building reserves to act as necessary tools to contain volatilities in the future. As part of its reserves diversification strategy, it will continue adding gold.

The RBI is confident of the

economy growing at its projection of 7.2 per cent in FY25, Das said, underlining that the number is a conservative estimate and its internal analysis is pointing to higher-than-estimated growth in the June quarter.

On inflation, he said even though the core inflation has

come down, the food inflation continues to be elevated and there are uncertainties around that as well.

It is too premature to change the stance of the policy, and any form of adventure must be shunned, Das said, adding that the central bank continues to be watchful on this front.

The six-member rate-setting panel has persisted with the current ‘withdrawal of accommodation’ stance and held on to the current repo rate by opting for a status quo in eight consecutive bi-monthly reviews.

However, the number of dissenters in the committee has grown to two now.

Reiterating his comments made earlier, Das said it is the last mile of inflation which is the most sticky.

Inflation is moderating but at a fairly slow pace, he said, adding that the RBI is confident that the downward journey of inflation will continue albeit at a slow pace. “If the downward move on inflation were to be fastened, we will have to take into account the sacrifices on the growth front,” he said.

Study finds global luxury goods sales flattening

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, June 18: The post-pandemic surge in global sales of luxury handbags, shoes and apparel is set to stall this year amid a creativity crisis and price hikes as brands shift focus to the biggest spending customers, a new study by the Bain consultancy said Tuesday.

Bain is forecasting flat worldwide luxury sales in 2024 following a slight first-quarter dip, according to the study commissioned by the Altgamma association. The consultancy cited political uncertainty during a presidential election year in the United States as well as economic uncertainty in China that has brought on a phenomenon of “luxury shaming.” Beyond socioeconomic factors and rising geopolitical tensions, the slowdown is also partly “self-inflicted,” said Bain partner Claudia



D'Arpizio. She cited a ‘creativity crisis,’ in the sector, as a number of major fashion houses are transitioning creative directors, and a new focus on the super-wealthy customers, at the expense of the

aspirational middle class and Gen-Z youngsters who fuelled growth before the pandemic.

“There is a lack of clarity for many of these brands. They are making attempts to regain focus.

It is five, six brands under turnaround, big ones. This is not helping the overall excitement,” D'Arpizio told The Associated Press. “This is a supply-driven industry. When you have the brands really in tune with customer needs, it usually reacts quickly.”

She said some “tweaks” are needed on strategy and price points, adding that “you can't grow without the middle class and younger generations.”

While inflation is one element of price hikes, D'Arpizio said brands are also refocusing on the estimated 6 million to 8 million consumers at the top of the pyramid as they search for better profit margins. At the same time, there has been less rejuvenation in the offerings. Steep price increases for items that don't show significant innovation, and feel like something they have seen before, leaves customers

“upset and puzzled.”

Nvidia becomes world's most valuable company

REUTERS

San Francisco, June 18: Nvidia became the world's most valuable company Tuesday, dethroning tech heavyweight Microsoft, as its chips continue to play a central role in a race to dominate the market for artificial intelligence.

Shares of the chipmaker climbed 3.2% to \$135.21, lifting its market capitalisation to \$3.326 trillion, just days after overtaking iPhone maker Apple to become the second most valuable company.

The stock has surged about 173% so far this year, compared with a rise of about 19% in Microsoft shares, with demand for its top-of-the-line processors outpacing supply. Tech giants Microsoft, Meta Platforms and Google-owner Alphabet are racing to build out their AI com-

puting capabilities and dominate the emerging technology.

The surge in shares pushed the stock to a record high, adding over \$103 billion to Nvidia's market capitalisation Tuesday.

Increasing the appeal for its highly valued stock among individual investors, Nvidia recently split its stock ten-for-one, effective June 7.

“A stock split can reduce the price per share, making it more affordable for individual investors to buy. With Nvidia doing a 10:1 stock split, retail investors are the real winners here,” said Sam North, market analyst at investment platform eToro.

The company's market value expanded from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion in just nine months in February, while taking just over three months to hit \$3 trillion in June.

BCCI favours Gambhir

Board accepts conditions put down by former opener to become India head coach

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 18: Former India opener Gautam Gambhir was Tuesday interviewed by the BCCI's cricket advisory committee (CAC) for the national team's head coach position. The interview took place over a zoom call with both Gambhir and chairman of the CAC, Ashok Malhotra attending it virtually. "Yes, Gambhir appeared for the interview with the CAC. One round of discussions happened today (Tuesday). There is another round expected tomorrow," a BCCI source told this agency. Gambhir is believed to be the only candidate who is in contention and the announcement of his name is a mere formality which could happen in the next 48 hours. This in spite of the CAC being thoroughly impressed with WV Raman's presentation. He was the second person to be interviewed on the day.

The specifics of Gambhir's interaction with Malhotra and his colleagues Jatin Paranjpe and Sulakshana Naik were not immediately known. Both Paranjpe and Naik are based in Mumbai.

The discussion, it is believed, was focussed on the roadmap Gambhir has in mind for the next three years, which will feature three ICC tournaments across formats.

There is a BCCI apex council meeting Tuesday evening and it is understood that secretary Jay Shah will apprise the members about the coach selection process before the final announcement is made.

The 42-year-old Gambhir recently guided Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to the IPL trophy as the team's mentor.

Current India head coach Rahul Dravid will be stepping



down at the end of the team's T20 World Cup campaign in the Americas.

Sources meanwhile said that Gambhir has laid down certain conditions to succeed Dravid. They added that the BCCI has accepted all the terms and conditions put up by Gambhir for becoming the head coach of the Indian cricket team and that the announcement of his name is just a formality.

Among the conditions Gambhir has put up are full control on the team selection, separate teams for white ball and red ball matches

I would love to coach the Indian team. There is no bigger honour than coaching your national team

GAUTAM GAMBHIR

The BCCI officially invited applications for the India head coach's post with May 27 set as the deadline. As per the job description, the new India men's head coach would be for all three formats from July 2024 till December 2027.

During a recent event in

Dubai, the former India opener suggested that, "there is no bigger honour than coaching the national team".

"I would love to coach the Indian team. There is no bigger honour than coaching your national team. You are representing 140 crore Indians and those across the globe as well," the 42-year-old had said

Incidentally Gambhir was part of India's T20 World Cup winning team in 2007 and the 2011 ODI World Cup side. In both the finals, he was the top-scorer for India against Pakistan and Sri Lanka respectively.

Players determined to do something special: Rohit

INDIAN SKIPPER ADMITS SCHEDULE IS HECTIC, BUT DOESN'T WANT TO USE IT AS AN EXCUSE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bridgetown (Barbados), June 18: India captain Rohit Sharma has conceded that the T20 World Cup's Super 8 stage is going to be a 'little hectic' but his players are prepared for the grind as there is 'real keenness' among them to do 'something special'. India will open their Super 8 campaign against Afghanistan June 20, followed by games against Bangladesh (June 22, Antigua) and Australia (June 24, St Lucia).

"Once we play our first game, we are going to play the next two in a span of three or four days," Rohit said in a video uploaded by the BCCI. "It is going to be a little hectic but we are used to all of this. We travel and play a lot so that is never going to be an excuse," the 37-year-old added.

The Indian team had an extended practice session Monday here with senior players like Virat Kohli and Rohit spending more-than-usual time in the nets.

"There is real keenness in the group to go and do something special. That's a good way to start the second stage. It clearly shows that everyone wants to make a difference and we take our skill sessions quite seriously," Rohit stated. "There is something to achieve in every skill session that you do," he added.

The Indian team endured hostile batting conditions during the US leg due to the drop-in pitches used by the organisers.



UNWINDING: Virat Kohli has something to laugh about during a beach volleyball session in Barbados

Rohit said the ongoing Caribbean leg brings with it a sense of familiarity and his team would look to make the most of it.

"We have seen and played a lot of games here (in West Indies). So everyone understands what one needs to do to get the result in our favour. Everyone is looking forward and are quite excited as well at the same time," Rohit said.

SCHEDULE	
Vs	
Afghanistan	June 20
Bangladesh	June 22
Australia	June 24
All games on Star Sports	
Timings: 8.00pm (IST)	

Bowlers need to be miserly: Trott

Gros Islet (St Lucia): Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott said his team will have to ensure that they don't end up conceding 60 runs in two overs against India in their Super 8 clash like they did in the final group match against the West Indies in the T20 World Cup here. Afghanistan conceded 36 runs in the fourth over and 24 in the 18th over. "If we don't start an over well, we have to do something different. Today we had two overs in total that went for 60 runs, and that swings the game massively. We cannot afford that against India," Trott stated.

SHORT TAKES

Neeraj bags gold at Paavo Nurmi Games

Turku (Finland): India's Olympic and World Champion javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra won his maiden gold medal at the Paavo Nurmi Games here Tuesday, returning to action in style after being laid low for a month due to a niggle. Chopra, who claimed the silver here in 2022, produced the winning effort of 85.97m in his third attempt to lead the field for a major part of the competition, which also featured 19-year-old German prodigy Max Dehning who is the youngest member of the 90m club. Home favourite Toni Keranen claimed the silver with a best throw of 84.19m, while his compatriot and last edition's gold-medallist Oliver Helander took the third spot with 83.96m.

NRAI names shotgun squad for Olympics

New Delhi: Senior trap shooter Prithviraj Tondaiman will spearhead the Indian shotgun team in the upcoming Paris Olympics as the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) announced Tuesday a five-member squad for the mega event, with all of them appearing in their maiden Games. The other members of the team are Rajeshwari Kumari, Anantjeet Singh Naruka, Raiza Dhillon and Maheshwari Chauhan. Maheshwari and Anantjeet will also feature as the sole Indian pair in the skeet mixed team event.

Title for Ergaisi

New Delhi: Indian Grandmaster Arjun Ergaisi delivered yet another domineering performance to clinch the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 chess tournament title in Jermuk, Armenia with a round to spare. The 20-year-old, India's highest-rated chess player, defeated Russian GM Volodar Murzin in 63 moves in the eighth and penultimate round to move to six points with four wins and as many draws. He now has an unassailable lead of 1.5 points over three players tied for second spot.

EB recruit David

Kolkata: Super Cup champions East Bengal announced Tuesday the signing of rising forward David Lalhiansanga on a three-year contract. One of the most prolific young strikers in India, David was the top scorer in last year's Calcutta football league and the Durand Cup, and also played a pivotal role in Mohammedan Sporting's maiden I-League triumph. "East Bengal have millions of fans across India. I love playing in front of passionate fans," said David in a statement.

Stimac warns AIFF over 'illegal' sacking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Former India football coach Igor Stimac termed Tuesday his sacking 'unilateral', and threatened to file a lawsuit against the national federation in the FIFA Tribunal if it fails to clear his dues within the next 10 days.

Stimac lashed out at All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey and accused him of breaching his contract multiple times. He also held him squarely responsible for the Indian team's failure to progress beyond the second round of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers. The Croat said his stint in India left him with serious health problems and he never wants to hear from the AIFF again.

"I kindly ask you to immediately, but not later in next ten (10) days, organise payment to me for this termination of the contract without just cause in the amount which will represent a residual value of my employment contract that was prematurely terminated from AIFF side..." Stimac said.

"This amount should represent the remaining value of my employment contract prematurely terminated by the AIFF, in accordance with Article 6 of Annex 2 of the FIFA Regulations

I don't want hear from AIFF anymore because it has caused me enough health problems with its acts

IGOR STIMAC

on the Status and Transfer of Players. Otherwise, I will start proceedings against the AIFF before the competent FIFA football tribunal and file a lawsuit," Stimac added.

The 56-year-old Stimac, who has been at loggerheads with Chaubey for a while now, blasted the AIFF in a notice for removing him from the post without 'just cause'.

"Publishing something like this (his termination) prior to reaching the conversation with me is blatantly unprofessional and unethical," Stimac said.

Stimac, who was appointed as the head coach in 2019, was given an extension until 2026 by the AIFF in October last year. In the absence of a severance clause in his new contract signed October 5, 2023, if the AIFF is required to pay the entirety of his remaining contract value, it will amount to a whopping rupees six crore.

Pointing out the 'several acts of contract breach' by the AIFF in the past, Stimac charged Chaubey with 'changing my public statement given to AIFF media'.

Mbappé injury sparks concern

AGENCIES

Dusseldorf (Germany), June 18: Kylian Mbappé suffered a broken nose during France's opening game Monday against Austria at the European Championship and he will have to wear a face mask, if he wants to play on in the tournament. Officials of the French Football Federation said Tuesday that Mbappé will not need surgery but did not specify how long it will take before he is available to play again.

"He (Mbappé) will undergo treatment in the coming days, without undergoing surgery immediately," the federation said in a statement. "A mask will be made so as to allow the No. 10 of the French team to consider resuming competition after a period devoted to treatment."

The federation said the decision not to carry out surgery came after Mbappé was treated by Dr Franck Le Gall at a hospital here following France's 1-0 win against Austria.

Mbappé stayed on the ground after his face collided with the shoulder of Austria's Kevin Danso as he attempted a header during the Group D match at the Dusseldorf Arena. His nose was badly swollen and blood poured from his face, turning much of his white jersey red.

Austria goalkeeper Patrick Pentz signalled for urgent medical assistance. "We're worried



Kylian Mbappé lies on the ground with a bloodied nose during the game Monday against Austria

to see Kylian leave the field like that," France midfielder N'Golo Kante said after the game.

France coach Didier Deschamps could not immediately say if Mbappé's tournament was over when questioned by media after the game. "I don't have the elements in my hands," he said. "I cannot at this stage give the answer."

Mbappé's injury is a big deal for France, as the country's best

player and the biggest star of the tournament. It's a concern for Real Madrid, too, after he left Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) as a free agent to sign for the Spanish club in the off-season.

Mbappé is widely regarded as the heir to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo as the best player in the world and led his country to the World Cup title in 2018 at the age of 19. He became only the second player in his-

tory to score a hat-trick in a World Cup final four years later in Qatar as France was runner-up to Messi's Argentina.

Meanwhile Maximilian Woeber's own goal was enough to give France victory. Woeber diverted Mbappé's cutback into his own net seven minutes before half time to allow the French, one of the leading contenders to win the tournament, to come through a stiff test.

Chhetri's void worries Vijayan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 18: Filling the huge void left by the iconic Sunil Chhetri's retirement is the biggest challenge facing the Indian football team at the moment, the legendary IM Vijayan said Tuesday while playing down the sacking of head coach Igor Stimac.

The high-profile Stimac was removed Monday by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) due to lack of results in recent times but former stars Vijayan and Climax Lawrence are not worried about the decision that brought to an end the Croatian World Cupper's five-year reign as the head coach of the senior men's team.

The absence of a ready replacement for Chhetri is a bigger cause for concern for them, who are now part of the AIFF's technical committee with Vijayan



SUNIL CHHETRI

heading it. Both Vijayan and Lawrence's view is that a coach can be appointed at any time but a striker, of the calibre of Chhetri, cannot be unearthed overnight.

Vijayan and Lawrence, who have served the Indian team with distinction, know that the sacking of Stimac was on expected lines following a forgettable AFC Asian Cup. The AIFF

brass, including the members of the executive committee and those in the technical committee, was on the same page as far as Stimac was concerned.

"It was a unanimous decision," said Vijayan. "The coach will be appointed as early as possible so that the team do not lose out on anything before the next FIFA window in September. We will soon start the process of finding a coach," Vijayan, one of India's finest players, said.

"However, how do you find a replacement for Chhetri. That is going to be very difficult as a great player like Chhetri comes rarely. We have some good strikers, and we are trying to get them to play as much as possible. The biggest issue is that our strikers don't get a lot of playing time in domestic leagues, be it the ISL or the I-League," added Vijayan.

TOUGH OPENER FOR MANCHESTER CITY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 18: Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola will come up against a familiar face in his team's opening match of their Premier League title defence. Man City will start the season away at Chelsea, whose new manager is Enzo Maresca - an assistant to Guardiola at in the 2022-23 season. The game is part of a tough start for City, who also host Arsenal and visit Newcastle away in the opening six games.

The season will kick off August 16 when Manchester United host Fulham.

New Liverpool manager Arne Slot will travel to promoted Ipswich for his first game in charge in the early kick-off the following day.

Nayagarh beat Cuttack-A

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 18: Nayagarh defeated Cuttack-A in a two-day match of the Kalahandi Cup cricket tournament which ended Tuesday at the DREIMS Stadium. It was a shock defeat for the Cuttack-A team as they are one of the contenders for the trophy. Nayagarh had folded for a low score of 126 all out on the first day of the game. However, their bowlers shot out Cuttack-A for only 110 runs. Biswajit Guru (4/27) and Prasanta Rana (4/34) shone with the ball for Nayagarh.

However, the honour of the best bowling performance of the day was bagged by Sk Azharuddin (5/42). Playing for Rest of Odisha-D, Azharuddin bowled magnificently to restrict Rest of Odisha-B to 181 runs.



Sk Azharuddin

Earlier when they batted on the first day, Rest of Odisha-D had scored 292 in their first innings riding on a fine century by Anil Parida (124).

In other matches that ended Tuesday, Balasore defeated Bhadrak by 113 runs and Rest of Odisha-A trounced Rest of Odisha-C by 135 runs. Balasore after scoring 282 in their innings bowled out the opposition for 169. Udaynath Patra (3/19) and Ashutosh Marandi (3/38) were the star bowlers for Balasore.