

## General Dwivedi new Army Chief

**New Delhi:** Gen Uppendra Dwivedi, who has vast operational experience along the frontiers with China and Pakistan, Sunday assumed charge as the 30th Chief of the Army Staff at a time India is facing myriad security challenges including along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Gen Dwivedi succeeds Gen Manoj Pande who superannuated after more than four decades of service. He brings with him, a wealth of experience and a proven track record, of effectively planning and executing for the unexpected, the Army said. He was serving as the Vice Chief of the Army since February 19. Before becoming the Vice Chief, he was serving as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Northern Command from 2022 to 2024.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



## CURTAINS ON BRITISH-ERA LAWS

# New criminal laws in force

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 30:** Three new criminal laws will come into effect across the country from Monday, bringing widespread changes in India's criminal justice system and ending colonial-era laws.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) will replace the British-era Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act (IEA), respectively.

The new laws will bring in a modern justice system, incorporating provisions such as Zero FIR, online registration of police complaints, summonses through electronic modes such as SMS and mandatory videography of crime scenes for all heinous crimes.

They have tried to address some of the current social realities and crimes and provide a mechanism to effectively deal with these, keeping in view the ideals enshrined in the Constitution, official sources said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who piloted the laws, said the new laws would give priority to providing justice, unlike the British-era laws that

### KEY POINTS OF CHANGE

- Judgement in criminal cases within 45 days of completion of trial
- Charges must be framed within 60 days of first hearing
- Statement of rape victims must be video recorded by a female police officer
- Organised crimes and acts of terrorism defined
- Sedition replaced with treason
- Video recording of all search and seizure mandatory
- Death sentence introduced for gang rape of minor, mob lynching
- Specific provisions for crimes such as false promise of marriage, chain snatching
- Incidents can be reported by electronic communication
- Zero FIR can be filed at any police station, regardless of jurisdiction
- Arrested individual can inform a person of his choice about his or her situation
- Arrest details to be prominently displayed within police stations
- Forensic experts must visit crime scenes for serious offences
- Women entitled to regular updates on the progress of case within 90 days
- Guaranteed free first-aid, medical treatment to victims of crimes against women and children
- Summonses can be served electronically
- Both accused and victim entitled to receive details of case
- Courts can grant a maximum of two adjournments
- Mandatory implementation of witness protection schemes
- Definition of gender now includes transgender
- Women, minors, senior citizen and disabled exempt from attending police stations
- Digital records to have same effects as paper records
- Community services introduced as punishment



gave primacy to penal action. These laws are made by Indians, for Indians and by an Indian Parliament and marks the end of colonial criminal justice laws, he said.

Shah said the laws were not just about changing the nomenclature but bringing about a complete overhaul.

"Soul, body and spirit of the new laws is Indian," he said.

Justice is an umbrella term that encompasses both the victim and the culprit, the Home Minister said and added these new laws would ensure political, economic and social justice with an Indian ethos.

According to the new laws, judgement in criminal cases has to come within 45 days of completion of trial and charges must be framed within 60 days

of first hearing. Statement of rape victims will be recorded by a female police officer in presence of her guardian or relative and medical reports have to come within seven days.

Organised crimes and acts of terrorism have been defined, sedition has been replaced with treason and video recording of all search and seizure have been

made mandatory. A new chapter on crimes against women and children has been added, buying and selling of any child has been made a heinous crime and there is a provision for death sentence or life imprisonment for gang rape of a minor.

The offences against women and children, murder and offences against the State have been given precedence in the new law.

Overlapping sections have been merged and simplified and there will be only 358 sections in BNS against 511 in the IPC, the sources said.

For example, definitions scattered from sections 6 to 52 have been brought under one section. Eighteen sections already stand repealed and four relating to weights and measures are covered under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009.

Instances of false promise of marriage, gang rape of minors, mob lynching, chain snatching, etc are reported but the IPC did not have specific provisions for dealing with such incidents. These have been addressed in the BNS, the sources said.

A new provision has been made for cases such as abandonment of women after making sexual relations on the false promise of marriage. More P3

## Ahuja takes charge as Chief Secretary

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Senior IAS officer Manoj Ahuja Sunday took charge as the Chief Secretary of Odisha. He assumed charge from Pradeep Kumar Jena who retired from service during the day at the Lok Seva Bhawan here.

The previous government had extended the tenure of Jena, who was slated to retire from services December 31, 2023, by six months till June 30.

"I relinquished charge of @SecyChief today at 3.30pm. I welcome Manoj Ahuja, one of my good friends from the 1990 batch (from my Kalahandi days) my successor Sub-collector Dharamgarh & I'm happy to have been succeeded by him today to hold the post of @SecyChief. Wish him all the best," Jena said in a post on X.

Soon after assuming charge of the office of Chief Secretary, Ahuja visited Lord Jagannath temple in Puri and offered prayers before 'Patidians' (replica of Lord Jagannath) as the deities now stay on 'Anasara' (quarantine) after taking bath on Snana Purnima. The state Department of General Administration & Public Grievance through a notification Friday announced the name of Manoj Ahuja to succeed Jena as the new Chief Secretary of the state.



DSPL-31

## ନୂତନ ଭାରତର ନୂତନ ଆଇନ

# ନୂତନ ଅପରାଧିକ ଆଇନର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରিতା

## ୧ ଜୁଲାଇ ୨୦୨୪

**ଭାରତୀୟ ନ୍ୟାୟ ସଂହିତା, ୨୦୨୩**  
ଇଠିଆନ୍ ପେନାଲ କୋଡ୍, ୧୮୬୦ ବଦଳରେ

---

**ଭାରତୀୟ ନାଗରିକ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ସଂହିତା, ୨୦୨୩**  
କୋଡ୍ ଅଫ୍ କ୍ରିମିନାଲ ପ୍ରୋସିଜିଚର, ୧୯୭୩ ବଦଳରେ

---

**ଭାରତୀୟ ସାକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଅଧିନିୟମ, ୨୦୨୩**  
ଇଠିଆନ୍ ଏଭିଡେନସ୍ ଆକ୍ଟ, ୧୮୭୨ ବଦଳରେ

ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ପାଠିତଙ୍କୁ ସୁନିଶ୍ଚିତ ନ୍ୟାୟ

ମହିଳା ଏବଂ ଶିଶୁଙ୍କ ସୁରକ୍ଷାକୁ ପ୍ରାଧାନ୍ୟ

ତ୍ୱରିତ ନ୍ୟାୟ ପାଇଁ ସଠିକ୍ ସମୟରେ ମାମଲାର ବିଚାର

ଅନଲାଇନ୍ ଏଫ୍‌ଆଇଆରର ସୁବିଧା

ଡିଜିଟାଲ ପ୍ରମାଣର ବ୍ୟବହାର

ମଫ୍ ଲିଷ୍ଟିଙ୍ଗ୍ ଏବଂ ସଂଗଠିତ ଅପରାଧ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ଅପରାଧିକ ଆଇନରେ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଭୁକ୍ତ

ସ୍ତମ୍ଭ ଓ ସ୍ତମ୍ଭ ଅନୁସନ୍ଧାନ ପାଇଁ ସାକ୍ଷୀର ବିବୃତି ଏବଂ ଯାଞ୍ଚର ଅଧିକ- ଭିଡିଓ ରେକର୍ଡିଂ

OIPR-12069/13/0001/2425

# leisure

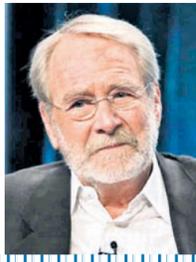


## KEVIN COSTNER FILMED *HIDDEN FIGURES* ON A MORPHINE DRIP

Actor-director-producer Kevin Costner, despite severe kidney stones and requiring a morphine drip, maintained his work ethic during the filming of *Hidden Figures*, reports *People* magazine.

## MARTIN MULL PASSES AWAY AT AGE OF 80

Actor and comedian Martin Mull, who has worked in shows such as *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, *Roseanne*, and *Clue*, has passed away at the age of 80. Martin died at his home after reportedly a valiant fight against a long illness, his daughter, Maggie Mull, announced on social media.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
You will find some decisions difficult to make, but be intent and resolute. Emotions may put you off rail, but once you have resolved, don't stray from it. Besides, Ganesh advises you to learn to endure setbacks in a mature manner.

**TAURUS**  
Today Ganesh sees you overdoing your aggression, domination bit and urges you to keep your assertiveness in check. This day is not a favourable one for new ventures and undertakings. Don't therefore attempt anything new. Talk pleasantly. Harshness, roughness in your tone is only going to antagonize and alienate valuable friends. Above all, don't lose your temper. Stay calm. Act normal. Yoga and meditation will help.

**GEMINI**  
Ganesh advises that while today will be a day filled with a lot of festivity, you still need to guard against getting carried away. You will spend the day socialising with friends and family. You might end up neglecting your household duties in organizing some function or picnic, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
A hectic day, combined with domestic pressure will make you exhausted. You feel a heavy burden on mind and heart. Don't be too emotional, says Ganesh. Take care not to pass domestic burdens on to your career or business, and thereby mar your capacity and efficiency.

**LEO**  
You will pay more attention to the younger members in the family. You will guide the children in improving their daily schedule. An occasion to celebrate will present itself. You will be desirous of participating in some competition or program, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
A fear of the unknown will keep lurking in your mind today. The shadow will only grow larger as the day progresses. You may find yourself spending too much on your foreign friends. Ganesh advises you to be cautious in this regard today.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says your children will gain achievements that will have you feel proud of them. You will get monetary benefit either by increment in salary or by inheritance. You will be able to gain substantial gains by investing in real estate or buying insurance policies.

**SCORPIO**  
Ganesh asks you to practice caution today. There are strong possibilities that an evil eye may attack you in some or other way. So, keep a watchful eye. And remember, every day brings along an experience and a lesson with it. Learn and move on.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your stars are aligned in a way that you may have to travel long distance, either for business or for leisure. Socially, you are active as you are likely to attend a function and take the centre stage. You may also participate in religious activities and give importance of rites and rituals, if need be, informs Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
After all the drudgery you endured in a bid to reach a certain point in your career, it's time to sit back and enjoy the rewards, says Ganesh. Today, you can expect to get a transfer, a promotion, a pay hike or all the three. But these will be accompanied by added responsibilities and work, leaving you wondering if it really was an achievement or a bait used to trap you.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will tackle complicated issues with infinite ease! But you will also find people passing the buck onto you. It irks you no end, having to take the blame for others' mistakes. But here's a chance, says Ganesh, to turn a weakness into a strength.

**PISCES**  
The focus today will be on self-improvement. You may find yourself attending seminars or workshops. Self-employed people are likely to find lucrative deals landing in their laps in the afternoon. Quality time with your family in the evening will give you a sense of balance and of belonging, says Ganesh.



## Nargis sums up her career journey

**Mumbai:** Nargis Fakhri, known for her breakout role in Imtiaz Ali's *Rockstar*, has earned a significant fanbase in the entertainment industry with her glamour and acting skills. In a recent interview, she reflected on her career journey, emphasising the pivotal role *Rockstar* played. Reflecting on her journey, Fakhri shared, "*Rockstar* itself was a pivotal film in my career as it allowed me to showcase my acting abilities in a high-profile project directed by Imtiaz Ali and alongside Ranbir Kapoor. The film received critical acclaim, and my performance was appreciated despite being my debut. It has been the most challenging role of my entire career. It challenged me to push my limits as an actor and set a benchmark for the kinds of roles I could take on in the future. Looking back, some of the proudest moments and achievements

in my career include my debut in *Rockstar*, which was a defining moment and opened many doors for me in the industry." In fact, she also revealed that becoming a Bollywood actress wasn't something she had planned for or pursued conventionally. "It happened unexpectedly, and each step along the way felt like a series of fortunate events and opportunities aligning perfectly. From that initial email to navigating auditions and eventually landing roles, I embraced each moment with gratitude and a willingness to learn and grow. While the path to success in the film industry can be unpredictable and demanding, I've cherished every aspect of this journey. It's been a testament to the power of seizing opportunities and trusting in the journey that unfolds before you," she wrapped up.

## Parul owes career to social media

**Mumbai:** Actress-entrepreneur Parul Gulati opened up on how she owes her career to social media and managing acting and business together. "I call myself social media ki den, be it my acting career or business. I got selected for my first acting gig through Facebook at the age of 17, and my whole business is on social media," she said, adding that the virtual world has helped in the growth of her hair care business and get recognition for her work. "I am facing the same addiction as earlier; the algorithm didn't know what you wanted to watch, but now it does. Algorithm aapki need chura raha hai. I open my Instagram and do mindless scrolling for hours, and it's out of my control," she said, pointing out that as an entrepreneur, she can't even stay away from it. "The young audience is there on social media, and it's imperative we get their attention. You get to know so much through social media, including new promotional techniques. It gives me ideas too," she added. Gulati recently faced social media backlash after a video surfaced of her discussing plans to buy an investment property in Goa and turn it into an Airbnb. Criticised by locals for commercialising the state, she responded, "I'm just saying what everyone else is doing. I haven't even done it yet; my property will be ready by December. It's a business decision since Goa has become a business hub. I invested there because buying a villa in Mumbai is unaffordable, costing around 100 crores," she concluded.



## Shalini's harrowing experience during *Maharaj* shoot



**Mumbai:** Actress Shalini Pandey, in an interview with a media agency, discussed how filming the harrowing 'charan seva' scene in the film *Maharaj* impacted her deeply. Reflecting on her experience filming the scene, she revealed that she initially didn't grasp its emotional impact. However, after completing the shoot, she felt overwhelmed and needed time outdoors to ease her anxiety. In the film, Shalini portrays Kishori, a woman who becomes a victim of sexual exploitation by the religious guru Maharaj, played by Jaideep. The scene highlights how leaders misuse 'charan seva' (service) to manipulate followers. The actress also noted that initially, she perceived Kishori as naive, but as she immersed herself in the role, she understood the depth of the character's conditioning. She emphasised that Kishori wasn't foolish; rather, she was deeply influenced and believed in what she was taught. Reflecting on this realisation, Shalini expressed hope that Kishori could have recognised the truth of her situation. She also mentioned her sensitivity to current events and her tendency to avoid news and social media. The film *Maharaj*, which explores the 1862 Maharaj Libel Case, is currently streaming on Netflix.

## Celebs cheer Men in Blue

**New Delhi:** A galaxy of film stars, led by Chiranjeevi, Mohanlal, and Kajol Devgn, and a galaxy of other celebrities from all walks of life joined a delirious nation to cheer Team India on for pulling off an incredible T20 World Cup win against South Africa at the Kensington Oval, Barbados, Saturday night. Tollywood's Mega Star Chiranjeevi could not contain his joy, like every other Indian. Going on X, he commented, "INDIA ON TOP OF THE WORLD!!! What an ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC way to win the ICC T20 World Cup after 17 long years!!! Bravo



Virat Kohli!" Superstar Mohanlal, of Malayalam cinema and an avid cricket fan, had this to say, "And that ends India's 11-year wait for an ICC trophy! Team India brings home glory from Barbados, thanks to incredible teamwork, a crucial partnership between Virat Kohli and Axar Patel, and a devastating spell from Jasprit Bumrah, serving up a gripping game that kept us on the edge of our seats until the very last ball! Couldn't be prouder of this team!" Bollywood diva Kajol took to Instagram to share her fangirl moment: "I'm still screaming and can't get the smile off my face ... So so happy and so so proud! So many heroes who performed at this match ... truly a team effort!" Rising Bollywood star Varun Dhawan had more to say. Taking to Instagram, he wrote: "What a team what performances @rohitsharma45 leading from the front in every game @virat.kohli the #goat playing his last T20 for India bringing so much joy to every Indian. Rahul Dravid was always one of my most favourite players and now to see him win a World Cup as a coach hits the spot. Bharat Mata ki JAI."

### PEANUTS



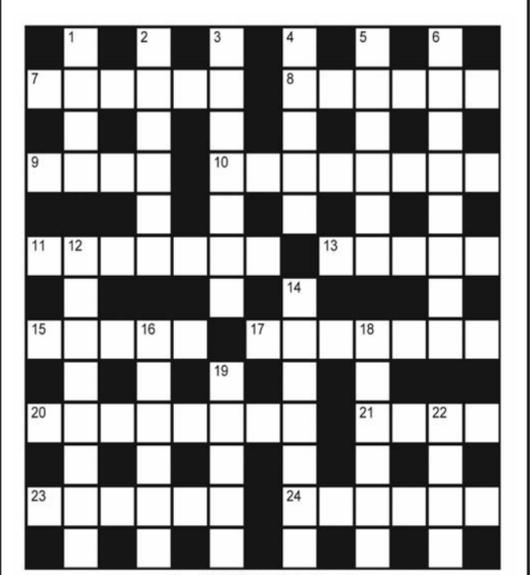
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY

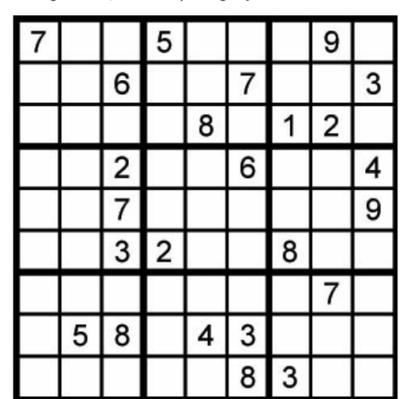


### FUN post CROSSWORD

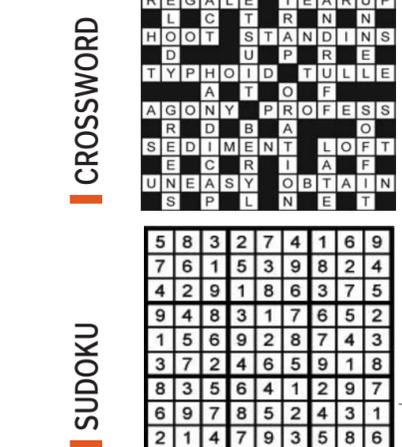


- Across**
- 7 Caldera
  - 8 Strait of Dover port
  - 9 Coin toss
  - 10 Part of Tanzania
  - 11 Chuckle
  - 13 Breakwater
  - 15 Wise guy
  - 17 Literary genre
  - 20 Netherlands sight
  - 21 Vortex
  - 23 Yukon Territory town
  - 24 Fletcher Christian's crime
  - 4 British biscuit
  - 5 Miner's box
  - 6 AKA Dhania or coriander
  - 12 Hilo native
  - 14 Sheepskin
  - 16 One of the Gorgons
  - 18 Pact
  - 19 Pottery ovens
  - 22 Fender blemish
- Down**
- 1 Like some surgery
  - 2 Daze
  - 3 Light rain

### SUDOKU



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown

## Ratna Bhandar reopening soon: CM

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday said that Ratna Bhandar (treasury) of Puri Srimandir will be reopened soon and an inventory of the valuables stored inside it will be made. He also said that 'Subhadra Yojana', a financial assistance scheme promised by the BJP in its election manifesto, will roll out September 17, the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Majhi was addressing a programme organised by Odisha BJP here to felicitate the party's newly elected MPs and MLAs in the state.

"Subhadra Yojana will be launched on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday September 17," the CM said.

Under the scheme named after Lord Jagannath's sister, cash vouchers of ₹50,000 will be provided to women of the state.



"The Ratna Bhandar will be opened soon and an inventory of the valuables of Lords will be made. If any irregularities are found, stern action will be taken against the guilty," Majhi said. The reopening of Ratna

Bhandar, located in the basement of the 12th-century shrine in Puri, was a major political issue in the state during the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The previous BJD government had promised that the treasury would

be reopened for inventory and repair work during this year's Rath Yatra next month.

An inventory of the treasury was last made in 1978.

In August last year, the Congress had alleged that there is a "glaring mismatch" between the figures of the quantity of gold and silver ornaments stored in Ratna Bhandar mentioned by the BJD government in the state Assembly and by the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) in an affidavit in the Orissa High Court.

Auditing of Ratna Bhandar's inventory was also in the manifesto of the BJP.

The Chief Minister said that for proper management of the Puri Jagannath temple, his government has decided to create a ₹500 crore corpus fund.

He said all promises made by the BJP in its manifesto will be covered in the 100-day action plan of the BJP government.

Majhi said his government has also announced to procure paddy from Odisha farmers at an MSP of ₹3,100 per quintal from this Kharif season.

Odisha BJP president Manmohan Samal indicated that more welfare would be announced by the state's saffron party government when it would complete 100 days.

Four major decisions on the Jagannath temple and farmers' issues were taken by the BJP government in its first cabinet are "just trailers", Samal said.

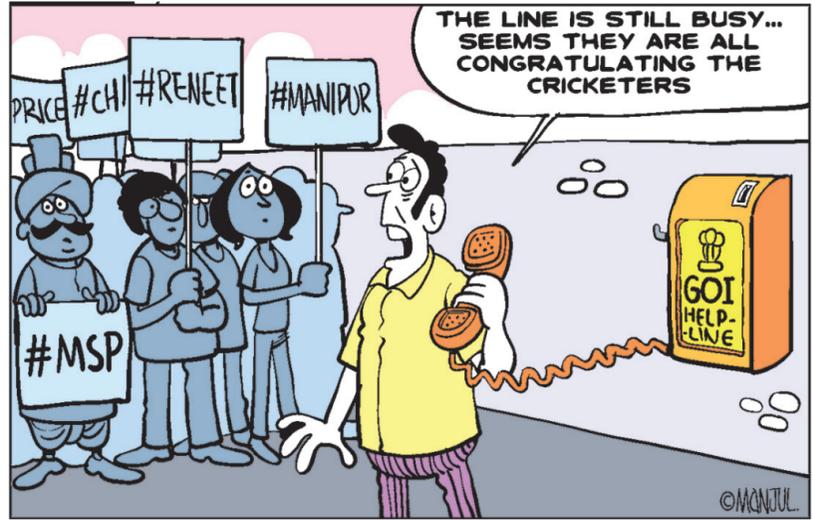
"Wait for the 100th day to see the picture," he said thanking the people of Odisha for bringing the BJP to power. "We will have to work hard in the next five years," Samal said.

### POURING WOES

Severe waterlogging on Rasulgarh-Bomikhal stretch following a brief spell of rain puts motorists to utter inconvenience, Sunday



### POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Pradhan likens Majhi to Lord Jagannath

**BHUBANESWAR:** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Sunday courted controversy by likening Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to Lord Jagannath, and the Deputy Chief Ministers KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida to the sibling deities - Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra. It may be recalled that BJP leader and Puri MP Sambit Patra had said during the campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections that Lord Jagannath was the devotee of PM Narendra Modi, which he later admitted that it was a slip



of tongue and a blunder. Pradhan said this while addressing a ceremony organised by Odisha BJP here to felicitate the party's 20 MPs and 78 MLAs elected in recently held Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state. The Union minister said,

"Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and two Deputy Chief Ministers KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida are like Lord Jagannath and his siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra who have been given a big responsibility for the development of the state."

A lot of first-time MLAs and MPs have been elected in this election and the state, for the first time, has CM and Deputy CMs belonging to the BJP. With this team, a new Odisha will be built which will help in building a 'Viksit Bharat', Pradhan said.

## Rlys to invest ₹1L cr in Odisha: Vaishnav

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said new railway projects worth ₹1 lakh crore will be implemented in Odisha in the next five years.

The Congress government and then the BJD government have neglected the development of the railway sector in Odisha. So, with the formation of a double-engine government of BJP in Odisha and Centre, now, the gap created during the past years, will be met by creating a new record in these five years, he said.

Though many mega railway projects have been sanctioned, those were delayed due to delay in land acquisition by the previous BJD government, said



Vaishnav, adding, "Now double engine government is formed and the pace of the railway projects will be accelerated."

The Union minister said the allocation to Odisha in the railway budget has been enhanced

from ₹800 crore during the UPA government tenure to over ₹10,000 crore during Modi government.

During the past three consecutive years, more than ₹10,000 crore has been allocated to the state in the railway sector, he said.

Vaishnav further said that a new railway line of 1,826 km was constructed in Odisha during the last 10 years, which is higher than the total railway network of Sri Lanka (1,700 km).

He also said that 315 special trains will run to and from Puri during the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath for smooth travel and convenience of the pilgrims. Last year, 222 trains were run during the Rath Yatra. The special trains have been planned from 25 districts of Odisha, he added.

### HUL DIWAS

## President, PM remember heroes of Santhal rebellion

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday paid their respects to the valiant fighters of Santhal rebellion on the occasion of Hul Diwas, Sunday. They commemorated the indomitable spirit of Santhal rebellion's leaders like Sidhu-Kanhu, Chand-Bhairav and Phoolo-Jhano whose heroic deeds are immortalised in history.

"I pay my respectful tribute to all the immortal fighters of the Santhal rebellion on Hul Diwas. The immortal stories of sacrifices of heroes like Sidhu-Kanhu, Chand-Bhairav, and Phoolo-Jhano who fought a historic war

against injustice are written in golden letters. The ideals of those revolutionaries will always remain a source of inspiration for all of us countrymen," first tribal President Murmu wrote in X.

Hul Diwas marks the anniversary of the Santhal rebellion, a significant uprising in 1855-56 by the Santhal tribe against British colonial rule and exploitative practices. The rebellion, led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, was one of the earliest movements against colonial oppression in India. Murmu's tribute reflects the importance of remembering and drawing inspiration from the revolutionary ideals of the Santhal leaders in contemporary India.

## 1 dead, 4 injured as car rams into truck

**BHUBANESWAR:** One person died while four others sustained severe injuries when the car they were travelling in ramed into a truck in Patrapada area under Tamando police limits here, Sunday. According to Tamando inspector in-charge Subrat Kumar Meher, the incident took place around 7:30pm. "The car (OD02-CC-2580), with five occupants, was heading towards Bhubaneswar from Khurda when the driver lost control over the vehicle following which it jumped the divider and ramed into a truck coming from the opposite side," Meher said. The collision was so intense that one of the occupants, Biswajit Ray, died on the spot while four others were battling for life at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, he added.

## NEW CRIMINAL LAWS IN FORCE

CONTD FROM P1...

The three laws were based on justice, transparency and fairness, the sources said.

Under the new laws, a person can now report incidents by electronic communication, without the need to physically visit a police station. This allows for easier and quicker reporting, facilitating prompt action by the police.

With the introduction of Zero FIR, a person can file a First Information Report (FIR) at any police station, regardless of jurisdiction.

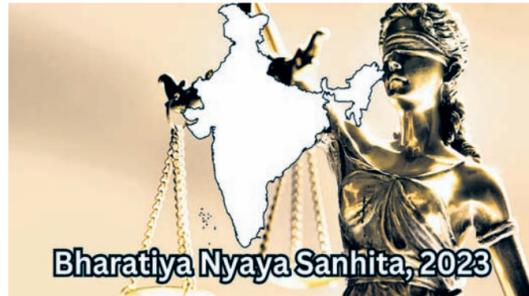
This eliminates delays in initiating legal proceedings and ensures immediate reporting of the offence.

An interesting addition of the law is that in the event of an arrest, the individual has the right to inform a person of his choice about his or her situation.

This will ensure immediate support and assistance to the arrested individual.

Besides, arrest details will now be prominently displayed within police stations and district headquarters, allowing families and friends of the arrested person easy access to important information.

To strengthen cases and in-



vestigations, it has become mandatory for forensic experts to visit crime scenes for serious offences and collect evidence.

Under the new laws, victims of crime against women are entitled to regular updates on the progress of their case within 90 days.

This provision keeps victims informed and involved in the legal process, enhancing transparency and trust.

The new laws guarantee free first-aid or medical treatment to victims of crimes against women and children at all hospitals.

This provision ensures immediate access to essential medical care, prioritising the well-

being and recovery of victims during challenging times.

Summonses can now be served electronically, expediting legal processes, reducing paperwork and ensuring efficient communication among all parties involved.

For certain offences against woman, statements of the victim are to be recorded, as far as practicable, by a woman magistrate and, in her absence, by a male magistrate in the presence of a woman to ensure sensitivity and fairness, creating a supportive environment for victims.

Both the accused and the victim are entitled to receive copies of the FIR, police report, charge sheet, statements, confessions,

and other documents within 14 days.

Courts grant a maximum of two adjournments to avoid unnecessary delays in case hearings, ensuring timely justice delivery.

The new laws mandate all state governments to implement witness protection schemes to ensure the safety and cooperation of witnesses, enhancing the credibility and effectiveness of legal proceedings.

The definition of gender now includes transgender individuals, promoting inclusivity and equality.

By conducting all legal proceedings electronically, the new laws offer convenience to victims, witnesses and accused, thereby streamlining and expediting the entire legal process.

To provide more protection to the victim and enforce transparency in investigation related to an offence of rape, the statement of the victim shall be recorded through audio-video means.

Women, persons below 15 years, persons above 60 years and those with disabilities or acute illnesses are exempt from attending police stations and can receive police assistance at their place of residence.

## Dhal new Addl Chief Secy to CM

**Bhubaneswar:** Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Odisha and 1993-batch IAS officer Nikunja Bihari Dhal has been appointed the Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi. The General Administration and Public Grievances department notification said "Nikunja Bihari Dhal, IAS (RR-1993), Chief Electoral Officer and ex-officio additional chief secretary to the government, Home (Election) department, is appointed as Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister, Odisha." Dhal, an Odisha cadre IAS officer, was appointed the CEO in March 2023.

## Gun salute for traffic cop killed in road mishap

DEBADURLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** A day after the tragic death of traffic constable Madhusudhan Kirshani in a road mishap, Bhubaneswar Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Prateek Singh and other police officials accorded guard of honour and gun salute to the departed soul during a funeral ceremony held at Reserve Police Ground here, Sunday.

Madhusudhan, a native of Malkangiri, died after being run over by a heavy vehicle near Kailnga Stadium around 10pm, Saturday. The incident took place when he was returning home from Ram Mandir Square to his residence near Khandagiri following the completion of his duty, a police official said.

On being informed about the mishap, the DCP and IIC of Nayapalli police station rushed to the spot and made necessary arrangements for immediate treatment of Kirshani at Capital Hospital. However, the doctors declared him 'bought dead'.

A hit-and-run case has been lodged by Nayapalli police. Besides, the cops are scanning the footage captured by CCTVs installed nearby that would help nab the accused driver. Kirshani's funeral ceremony was attended by his father and elder brother. He is survived by three sons.

## Aortic aneurysm 3rd leading cause of sudden cardiac death

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 30:** Aortic aneurysm, which is often asymptomatic, is the third leading cause of sudden cardiac death, said experts Sunday stressing the need for raising awareness on the fatal heart condition.

Aortic aneurysms are ballooning of the major blood vessel aorta, which carries blood from the heart to the whole body.

It affects approximately 2 to 3 per cent of the population, but the risk increases with certain factors like atherosclerosis (collection of cholesterol in the blood vessels), hypertension, and generic deficiency in certain patients.

"Aortic aneurysms represent a critical yet under-recognised health concern that ranks as the third leading cause of sudden cardiac death, trailing only behind heart attacks and cardiac arrests," Niranjan Hiremath,

a senior consultant cardiovascular and aortic surgeon at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi, told IANS.

"When the aorta's wall weakens, it can dilate to twice or even three times its normal diameter, creating a significant risk of sudden rupture, which can result in immediate death, or lead to aortic dissection, another severe complication," he added.

In India, awareness about cardiac risks predominantly revolves around heart attacks and cardiac arrests, but the dangers posed by aortic aneurysms have not received comparable attention.

"The lack of awareness is a concern, especially considering that about 75 per cent of aortic aneurysms are asymptomatic and go undetected until they present a sudden, life-threatening emergency. These aneurysms are often discovered incidentally during examinations for other medical conditions," Niranjan said.



"Most intact aortic aneurysms do not produce symptoms. As they enlarge, symptoms such as abdominal pain and back pain may develop. Untreated, aneurysms tend to become progressively larger and can pres-

ent with life-threatening complications," added Shiv Choudhary, Executive Director - Adult Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgery, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, Okhla Road, New Delhi.

Aneurysms can develop in any segment of the aorta, but

most commonly affects the abdominal aorta. The experts noted that genetic predispositions, trauma or infection, and tobacco can also contribute to the risk of aortic aneurysms.

"It weakens the wall of the aorta and finally leads to aortic rupture. In rupture, massive internal bleeding happens, and, unless treated immediately, shock and death can occur. The other fatal complication is a dissection of the aorta. In dissection, the layers of the wall of the aorta are split. This can result in mal-perfusion to the brain or visceral organs or eventual rupture. In both situations emergency intervention is warranted," Shiv told IANS.

Open surgery used to be the major form of treatment.

Recently, there has been a paradigm shift to minimally invasive techniques of endovascular stent implantation, which is associated with low risk, minimal morbidity, and low mortality, (Surg Cmde) V S Bedi, NM Chairman & Senior Consultant Institute of Vascular & Endovascular Sciences, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital New Delhi, told IANS.

"The aneurysms are required to be treated once the size of the aorta increases to more than 5cm because an increase of more than 6cm can cause sudden leak/rupture which can be fatal," the doctor added.

The experts also advised strict control of blood pressure for patients with the condition and prohibition of tobacco in any form. Patients with diagnosed aneurysms should avoid intense physical sports and isometric exercise but can walk and indulge in light aerobic exercises.

# Solar boats to ply on Chilika waters



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** With an aim to make Chilika Lake a zero-emission zone, the state government has decided to introduce solar/ electric powered boats in the lake soon.

For the purpose, the Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) has invited e-tender for design, engineering, manufacturing and deployment of 20-seater solar or electric boats, with zero emission including comprehensive maintenance for two years at various places of Chilika.

In a letter, OREDA director Niharika Nayak said, "The government has invited e-tenders from eligible bidders for converting diesel boats into solar/electric boats through proper design, engineering, manufacturing and retrofitting for the purpose of promoting

decarbonisation of fishing sector and eco-tourism in Odisha."

The last date for online tender submission is July 12 while hard copies can be submitted by July 18, official said.

"The pilot project is aimed at finding an alternate and viable green mobility solution for the existing boats that cause pollution due to oil spill in the region. Due to this, the number of migratory birds has been decreasing every year," they said.

Crux Power Private Limited managing director Chandrashekar Mishra said, "Solar boat in Chilika is a noble initiative for eco-friendly and sustainable development in the area and to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. At the same time, we should provide sufficient number of charging stations around the area with proper maintenance plans. To make it a success, multiple vendors with

The pilot project is aimed at finding an alternate and viable green mobility solution for the existing boats that cause pollution due to oil spill in the region

a similar track record should be engaged and the government should keep a tab on the operations along with incentivising the vendors performing better."

It is to be mentioned that Chilika Lake is the largest brackish water lake along the east coast of India. It is the largest lagoon in India and counted amongst the largest lagoons in the world. It is the largest wintering ground for migratory waterfowl found anywhere on the Indian sub-continent. The Lake is a productive ecosystem, with fishery resources and is spread in three districts- Puri, Khurda and Ganjam.

Based on highly productive ecosystem, rich biodiversity and socio-economic importance, Chilika was designated as a Ramsar site in 1981. Some rare, vulnerable and endangered animal species listed in the IUCN (International Union of Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) inhabit the lagoon area for the whole or at least part of their life cycle.



**LORD'S BLESSINGS:** After assuming charge, newly-appointed Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja visits Srimandir where he is greeted by Puri Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain and SP Pinak Mishra, Sunday

## Three-day Mangrove Patha Utsav in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Taking a step towards building sustainable coastal ecosystems, through innovative strategies and collaborative efforts in the state, a three-day 'Mangrove Patha Utsav' organised by Socratus Foundation and Nature's Club, started here, Sunday.

The event was organised in collaboration with the department of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, State Museum, Enhancing Climate Resilience of



India's Coastal Communities (ECRICC), Bakul Foundation and other network partners in Bhubaneswar. Bringing together representatives from communi-

ties, government departments, think tanks, market operators, practitioners, academicians and civil societies, the event focused on developing and implementing sustainable solutions and coastal economy for the state's mangrove landscapes.

The opening day featured consultations with ECRICC project implementers. Outgoing Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena inaugurated a booklet on 'Climate Recipes'. The booklet is concise, intimate and comprises different ideas from architects, jour-

nalists, scientists, activists, artists and farmers that suggest different ways of reorienting vision for a flourishing planet and coastal ecosystem.

Socratus Foundation director Devjit Mitra said, "The opening day sessions highlighted the critical need for collaborative efforts and innovative solutions to address the challenges faced by Odisha's coastal ecosystems. The launch of the 'Climate Recipes' is a testament to the collective wisdom and dedication of all stakeholders involved."

## SIP ABACUS PRODIGY 2024 Young mathematicians solve complex numbers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Witnessing young minds transform into arithmetic wizards, was the awe-inspiring spectacle at the SIP Abacus Prodigy competition here, Sunday.

The state-level competition was held at East Coast Railway (ECoR) Indoor Stadium. Over 1,100 participants, aged six to 14 years from across the state participated in the event.

Managing director of SIP Abacus India and International, Dinesh Victor described the competition's unique essence and said, "SIP Prodigy is one of the largest of its kind competition in India. What sets it apart is

the sheer scale and complexity. Imagine children not just solving arithmetic, but tackling 300 sums in just 11 minutes. It's truly amazing to see these young minds master arithmetic with such confidence and speed."

Regional head of eastern India SIP Abacus Shubhajit Mullick said, "SIP Abacus Prodigy is happening for the first time in Odisha. We are very happy to see such a large gathering of students and parents from all over the state."

SIP Abacus state head Sunil Nayak said, "The competition is a stepping stone, but the real reward is the confidence and joy it sparks in these young mathematicians."



## Vaishnav reviews status of ongoing ECoR projects



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav Sunday conducted a comprehensive review of the ongoing projects in the region with a particular focus on the East Coast Railway (ECoR) jurisdiction. The review meeting highlighted several key areas of progress and concern, emphasising the importance of infrastructure development.

Vaishnav stressed the identification and resolution of problem areas in ongoing projects. For

early completion of the Khurda Road-Bolangir Rail Line, the tunnel works will be constructed from both sides.

"Steps will be taken to connect NH in the route with the major tunnel of about seven kilometres long so that the construction works will be done at the earliest. Apart from this, the construction work on the Talcher-Bimalagarh New Line will be done from both sides, i.e. from the Talcher side and the Bimalagarh side simultaneously," Vaishnav said.

Focusing on the redevelop-

ment of Amrit Stations he said that review for ongoing construction works for the said purpose will be done shortly.

"Apart from this, Railway Ministry will conduct a review meeting with the CM's office in near future to sort out the pending issues regarding the early completion of ongoing railway projects," Vaishnav said.

"The minister said that Prime Minister Modi has given special focus to Odisha and sanctioned 10,536 crore for infrastructural development in the field of railways, which is an all-time-high budgetary provision," Vaishnav said. "Steps have been taken to connect all districts to the railway network, he said adding that that 1,826 track kilometres of rail line have been constructed in the state during the last 10 years," he added.

The review meeting was attended by ECoR General Manager Parmeshwar Funkwal and all Principal Heads of ECoR departments including senior officials from ECoR Headquarters. Khurda Road divisional railway manager HS Bajwa was also present.

## Moderate rain till July 6: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 30:** Following the weakening of low pressure area into a cyclonic circulation over north-west Bay of Bengal (BoB), the state is likely to experience moderate rain till July 6, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Sunday.

IMD has issued yellow warning for heavy rain at one or two places in Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Puri and Koraput districts.

Bhubaneswar will also witness cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershower. Notably, showers in the last three days have brought down the rainfall deficit to 27 per cent and accelerated the agricultural activities in the state. While Malkangiri has received 38 per cent excess rain, Mayurbhanj is the only district recording a large deficit of 60 per cent or less. Deogarh, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur, Nayagarh, Subarnapur, Boudh, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, Rayagada and Koraput fall in the normal rain category.



**SCINTILLATING SHOW:** Artistes from Naba Prativa organisation perform on the occasion of 'Utkalshree Samman Samaroh' in Puri, Sunday

## UFO sightings: Are we closer than ever to an answer?

It was a rainy day in Pembrokehire in February 1977 when a group of pupils from Broad Haven Primary School claimed to see an unidentified flying object (UFO) outside.

David Davies, who was just 10 at the time, remembers his fellow students coming inside throughout the day "trying to alert the headmaster that there was something strange going on".

The schoolboy was sure there was a logical explanation for what they had seen. "My intention was to go out there and completely prove them wrong," David says. But when he went to investigate, he says he saw a 'silver, cigar-shaped object' about the size of a bus, with a domed upper section and a 'red pulsating glow'

on top.

"I had this overwhelming urge to run away," David says of the sighting that lasted about 10 seconds. This event in south-west Wales is explored in the latest series of the BBC's Paranormal. Across four episodes, host Sian Eleri investigates alleged UFO sightings in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

It comes as claims about extraterrestrial life have captured the public imagination yet again. Last year, the US Congress convened a landmark panel on the topic, mysterious monoliths continue to appear in the UK and around the world, and social media is home to viral trends about 'alien bodies'. On TikTok, for example, there are more than a million posts with the



hashtag 'UFO'.

And one aerospace expert tells the BBC that in 2024, thanks to everyone having a phone in their pocket and many people using apps to follow air traffic, we are in 'a much stronger position to be able to track what's known and what's unknown'.

So is there a simple explanation for why we see UFOs? And should they be investigated?

UFOs have held our attention for decades, ever since reports of alleged extraterrestrial debris in Roswell, New Mexico in 1947, the movie 'The Flying Saucer' being released three years later

and the Space Race between the United States and the Soviet Union gaining steam throughout 1950s.

Ciaran O'Keefe - the head of the school of human and social sciences at Buckinghamshire New University - says there was also a 'huge peak of interest' in UFO sightings around the 1980s that resulted in 'a lot of UFO hunting'.

Reported sightings were covered by media around the world - and the alleged sighting at Broad Haven Primary School was picked up by publications as far as New Zealand.

The Broad Haven incident was one of a wave of sightings in the area in 1977 - dubbed the Dyfed Triangle. In the past, a number of theories have been

put forward to explain them, including the work of a 'local prankster'.

While sightings like the one in Broad Haven captured mass attention, O'Keefe says there may be plausible explanations.

"The key fundamental psychological explanation for what's going on is around eyewitness testimony," says O'Keefe, who also consults on the BBC's Uncanny, adding that eyewitness testimony can be prone to errors.

However, the UFO sighting at Broad Haven Primary School was not just one eyewitness; it was a group of pupils. Here, O'Keefe explains the idea of 'contagion' and group conformity could be behind a mass UFO sighting.

## Constable dies in road accident

**Bhubaneswar:** A traffic police constable was killed after his motorcycle was hit by an unknown vehicle here, an officer said Sunday. The deceased was identified as Madhusudan Kirshari, a native of Malkangiri district. Kirshari was returning home after completing his duty on his motorcycle when an unknown vehicle hit him near Jaydev Vihar square Saturday night, the police officer said. The Nayapalli police station has registered a case and is examining CCTV footage of the area to track the vehicle and the accused.

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	32.0°C	30.2°C
	MIN	25.7°C	24.5°C
Humidity		100%	92%
Rainfall		5.9	8.0
Forecast		PARTLY CLOUDY	SKY

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**

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

## Cow vigilantes stop truck carrying suspected beef

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, June 30:** The police Sunday seized a container truck full of meat in Odisha's Ganjam district after local cow vigilantes stopped the vehicle suspecting that it was beef.

The driver of the vehicle, identified as A Khan of Haryana, was arrested since he did not have any document related to the consignment, a police official said. The police sent samples for testing to find out what kind of meat was in the container.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the container was on its way to Andhra Pradesh from Khurda when activists of a cow protection group accosted the vehicle near Pokadibandh in Chamakhandi police station area, suspecting that it was carrying beef. "We reached the spot and seized the meat-laden vehicle. The driver was arrested as he could not produce valid documents authorizing him to transport the meat," said Bidya Bharati Nayak, inspector-in-charge of Chamakhandi police station.

She said that the police started a detailed investigation into the matter. The container was carrying around 18 tonnes of meat.

## 3 held for gangrape of tribal woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chandbali, June 30:** A tribal woman, working as a farmhand, was gangraped by three men at Nuagaon village under this block in Bhadrak district, police said.

The matter came to the light following the arrest of the trio, Sunday. They were later produced in a magistrate court which remanded them to judicial custody at Bhadrak jail.



The accused were identified as Jagannath Das, 36, Pradip Das, 28, and Padmalochan Das, 22 - all of Nuagaon area in Bhuinbruti panchayat under Chandbali block in the district. Medical examination on the sur-

vivor and the accused men have been carried out, they added. Police arrested the accused persons after their alleged plans to shift the blame of the crime on unknown miscreants were frustrated during a probe.

According to police, the survivor, who hails from Bhadrak, had gone to Chandbali to tend to farm works at Nuagaon village, June 25. On previous occasions too she worked on fields in the village.

The incident occurred when she was on her way back to Chandbali from the village. An officer investigating the case said the three accused waylaid her, before taking turns to rape her. Later, they allegedly tried to mislead the police by informing over phone that they found a woman having been raped by unidentified persons.

However, the police got suspicious about their claims and after sustained questioning they broke down and confessed to the crime. They were subsequently put under arrest, the officer added.



**AT LORD'S SERVICE:** Servitors and devotees make an Ayurvedic preparation 'Dashamula' as offerings to the Trinity during the 'Anasar' rituals at Jagannath temple in Brahmapura, Jhduapada of Sambalpur town, Sunday

## Major NH stretches await plantation drive



RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, June 30:** Some major portions of two national highways passing through Sundargarh district are in dire need of plantation drive at present.

A large number of mature and very old trees were felled for the construction of two major highways projects - NH 143 (Barkot-Biramitrapur) and NH 215 (Rajamunda-Koira) - in the district.

The rules stipulate that plantation should be carried out on 1:10 ratio, meaning - for one tree felled ten trees should be planted. More than 30 thousand trees had been cut down for both the highways.

The National Highways Authorities of India (NHAI) took upon the responsibility of providing the saplings to the Orissa Forest Development Corporation (OFDC). The NHAI provided ₹28 crore to the OFDC as per the one-to-ten ratio. Back in 2019-20, three lakh saplings were sanctioned for plantation alongside the two highways. At that point of time, works were in progress on both the highways and the Forest department could not undertake plantations at some

**More than 30,000 trees had been cut down for construction of both the highways**

major places. "Due to this, a total of over one lakh saplings were shifted, of which 60,000 were taken to Jharsuguda, while 40,000 went to Jajpur since there was shortfall in those areas," said General Manager OFDC, Biswajit Raouray.

After completion of the constructions, 2, 29,000 saplings were planted. These trees are of 18-month variety (for maturity) and will grow up to six feet.

The GM informed, "For plantation on NHs 215 and 143 we require another 70,000 saplings." When asked about the delay, he said, "We are a corporation, we can only put forth our requirements. I am going put the request with the NHAI once again so that they might provide us with the saplings for plantation."

And in the absence of any vegetation, the Rajamunda Chowk, Biramitrapur and Barkot stretches wear a complete barren look these days.

## Toxic mines' waste water poses threat to farmlands, people

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, June 30:** Farmlands in Sukinda and Kalinganagar areas of the district are facing imminent hazards with chemical laced waste water from plants and mines are flowing into them with the onset of monsoon. The development, in turn, has also exposed people living in these areas and their livestock to various health dangers.

According to reports, Sukinda block has many chromite mines, while Kalinganagar has presence of various steel and other plants. No sooner did the monsoon set in than chemical laced water got mixed with rainwater and flowed into farmlands. It is feared that the toxic water will adversely affect the fertility of farmlands and turn them unfit for cultivation.

Sources said that the waste water discharged from Sukinda mines has a significant presence of chromium and nickel. The waste water is also affecting the groundwater and the life and livelihood of over 10,000 people residing in villages under mining zone like Kamarda, Mashasahi, Hatisahi, Saruabila, Gurujanga, Ostapal, Kuchidabanka, Kusumghuta, Kalrangi and Ramshola in Jajpur district, and Krushnapur, Odisa,

Barua, Mathakhoksha and Balijhati villages under Bhuban block in neighbouring Dhenkanal district.

As per the directives of Central and the state governments, plants and mining authorities are required to install machines on their premises to filter the toxic waste water before discharging those outside. These waste water flow into Damshala and Gonda nullahs and later into Brahmani river. In the absence of any compliance to the waste disposal norms, the river water has turned toxic and unfit for consumption.

The non-compliance has been happening despite the state pollution control board (SPCB) pulling up industries for discharging waste water outside, but they are still to budge.

This has put the people in the area to imminent health hazards as they regularly use the river and nullah water for their daily chores and for rearing their livestock.

Reports said that the waste water discharged from Sukinda mines has a significant presence of chromium and nickel. The water is flowing straight into the Damshala nullah which is known as the lifeline of people living in the mining areas.

Many of the mines are yet to



install effluent treatment plants (ETP) while the rest are yet to upgrade it. These mines have also not installed a real time monitoring system (RMS) and not abiding by the directives on ensuring data connectivity with the SPCB server, reports stated.

Notably, the Orissa High Court in April 2014 had directed to stop discharging waste water from mines into the human habitats and agricultural lands. Later, the Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), SPCB and the deputy director, Mines at Jajpur Road conducted a joint probe into the charges on the basis of the high court order between December 17

and December 19, 2014.

During the probe, it was found that the rainwater flowing from mines were not being properly treated. The toxic waste water of the mines was getting mixed with rainwater and flowed into human habitats and farmlands and proved hazardous for their health and livestock. The SPCB directed these mines management to install ETPs and treat the waste water emanating from their mines.

Meanwhile, though some of the mines have installed ETPs on their premises, many more have refused to comply and continue discharging waste water outside. As a result, the dis-

charged waste water is getting mixed with rainwater and flowing into human habitats and farmlands.

Similarly, the toxic waste water from many industrial plants in Kalinganagar is also flowing into the farmland every year. This toxic waste water flows into Gonda nullah, and subsequently into Brahmani and Kharasota rivers and turn their water toxic. The residents have been drawing the attention of the district administration and the SPCB, but their pleas are yet to be addressed.

As recently as Friday, waste water of a plant was found being discharged in the open on Biju Patnaik Marg near Jakhapura in Kalinganagar. The residents immediately lodged a complaint with SPCB alleging that the waste water flowed via Jakhapura, Aanlapal, Balungabandhi, Rungurunga, Mangalpur, Kharadi villages before finally flowing into Gonda nullah at Nuagaon.

When contacted, Pramod Kumar Behera, regional officer, SPCB at Kalinganagar said that water samples will be collected and sent for examination. "Appropriate steps will be taken after receiving the examination report," he said.

## 5 students go missing in Saptasajya forests

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal, June 30:** Five college students reportedly went missing in the Saptasajya forest range of Dhenkanal district while trekking deep inside the forests, Sunday.

According to sources, a group of seven youths from Bhubaneswar had gone on a trip to Saptasajya, Sunday. Five of

them ventured up above a hill in the forest range and eventually lost their way back to the foothills.

Sources said when the remaining two could not establish contact with their friends till evening, they informed the police. Three teams comprising

personnel drawn from Sadar police station, Gobindapur police outpost and Sadar Forest department were formed immedi-

ately and a search operation was launched. Sadar Ranger Bibhudananda Mishra said while trekking in deep forest the youths lost their way and failed to. However, efforts are on to trace them, he said.

"It is suspected that while trekking in the hill, the five youths unwittingly covered a lot of distance and later lost their way," said Sadar police station IIC Dipak Lenka.

## Protests at MSP sponge iron plant withdrawn after mgmt assurance

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, June 30:** The two-day-long protest by workers at the MSP sponge-iron factory near Haladiaguna under Sadar block of the district was temporarily withdrawn Sunday following assurance by the management to 'settle' their demands within seven days.

The workers claimed that the agitation was over administrative negligence by factory authorities. They alleged that two security guards misbehaved with them when they, along with the local sarpanch, went to discuss about their demands with the plant authorities, June 26.

This sparked resentment among the workers, following which they launched a protest demanding fulfillment of their various demands and apologies over mistreatment. They staged a sit-in and did not allow officials to enter the factory for two days. Police had to be deployed near the plant after tension escalated. This led to disruption of work in the factory.

The workers' demands included withdrawal of the unfair dismissal of 20 workers, and their re-induction into the factory works, payment of minimum wages, provident fund (PF) and ESI benefits, eight-hour of duty schedule instead of 12 hours, dust protection allowance, other allowances and identity cards for all. They also demanded issuance of payment slips, canteen facilities, and provision of basic services, and a gratuity system after retirement.

They alleged that due to the arbitrariness of some senior officials resentment among workers



is plaguing the factory for the past six months and the establishment might close down if the agitation continued. It is alleged that resentment is also brewing among local residents due to an increase in air and water pollution as plant authorities are not implementing any developmental activities in the area under its corporate social responsibility programme.

The company had been running smoothly for 25 years before it was hit by labour agitation which is threatening to derail its functioning.

The workers alleged that the 20 of their colleagues were dismissed from service after Arpit Lohia and Biswa Ranjan Nanda took charge as executive director and president, respectively. Their complaint before the owner of the company led to the dismissal of the 20 workers, they alleged.

Meanwhile, Sanjay Sahu, head of Human Resources of the company said the management is seized with discussions over the demands and appropriate steps will be taken soon within a week.



**SWIM FOR GLORY:** Participants diving into the Biju Patnaik swimming pool on the Rameshwar Stadium premises in Sonepur town during the third district level swimming competition, Sunday

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

# DRAMATIC SHIFTS



India's position in the context of geopolitics is its commitment to maintain a harmonious economic and political relationship with both USA and Russia

cluded in the basket of currencies by IMF.

Russia with crude oil reserves (geo-economic leverage) and a strong military base (geopolitical leverage) is geopolitically sensitive. India's position in the context of geopolitics is its commitment to maintain a harmonious economic and political relationship with both USA and Russia. This is evident from the revival of rupee trade with Russia. With regards to USA, India's total foreign trade during 2022-23 accounted for 24.44% of the total (17.41% share in exports and share in 7.03% imports). India's trade with China accounted for 17.18% of the total foreign trade (3.39% share in exports and 6.47% share in imports).

Broadly, in the blocs as mentioned above, where does India stand? Is it USA-leaning, China-leaning, non-aligned or ready for partnerships everywhere and anywhere? The official stance is that India's foreign policy objective is to move to multi-alignment from the conventional non-alignment leaning.

This is corroborated by India's foreign trade data during 2022-2023, as published by the RBI. Excluding USA and China, India's foreign trade to other countries accounted for 58.38% of the total foreign trade during 2022-23, of which the share of the EU in foreign trade was 21.70%, and OPEC countries 33.4%. As against this, a decade ago (2013-14) the share of total foreign trade excluding USA and China, was 83.3% of which the share of the EU in foreign trade was 13.24%, and OPEC countries 31.26%.

In sum, efficiency gains from trade specialisation and globalisation are under threat from retreating globalisation. India is working to rediscover itself in this phase and the shifts we see are nothing short of dramatic.

*The writer is a former central banker and Professor at Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune. Views are personal.*

©THE BILLION PRESS

India's geo-economic and geopolitical ambitions are growing, and with this has come a shift that challenges long-held, time-tested positions and alignments that have been built during the Nehruvian era and have been strengthened over the first 75 years of the republic. This change in India's positions is probably best seen in the growing closeness to the Israeli regime of Benjamin Netanyahu which has been accused of a continued and relentless genocide in Gaza. There isn't much consensus on this deep policy change internally in India.

The need for consensus is probably less felt in areas of foreign policy, geopolitics and geo-economics, all of which aren't the hot topic of discussion in the country. The average citizen or student isn't typically engaged in the nuances of foreign policy, trade relations or political leanings and their interplay with economics. Yet, the significance of this shift needs to be underlined, as also a lack of debate or consensus in India on the realignment that is distinctly underway. This comes at a difficult time in global affairs.

Consider that the RBI Annual Report for 2023-24 released last month has emphasised escalating geopolitical tensions, rising geo-economic fragmentation and the inefficiencies that this brings in a world where globalisation appears to be in retreat. "Geopolitics" and "geo-economics" as terms appear 16 times in the report dated May 30, 2024, a pointer to how economics is being constrained by politics in the context of the demands and exigencies of geopolitics. The emphasis (or overemphasis as some might call this) tells us that an entire gamut of issues like the external sector which comprises trade, capital flows and currency movements, crude prices and their movement, global financial markets, global inflation and the foreign exchange market, are so deeply interwoven globally that any retreat from the principles of globali-

sation into an era of deglobalisation will bring big new and serious economic challenges.

Yet, these challenges are coming in a world riddled with rising tensions and the potential threat of closing of borders, a reinforcement of national agendas, and priorities of a strong nation-state as a force against globalisation and multilateralism. We see that already "trade and investment flows are being redirected along geopolitical lines," according to the first Deputy Managing Director of IMF, Gita Gopinath. In her May 2024 speech at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, she noted that China's share in US imports declined by eight percentage points and the US share in China's exports dropped by about four percentage points between 2017 and 2023 following a flare-up in trade tensions. Direct trade between Russia and the West collapsed following the conflict with Ukraine and subsequent sanctions on Russia.

Geopolitical tensions are of course not new; they surfaced during the World Wars and resurfaced during the 1970s in the form of a Cold War between the then superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union. The economic consequence of this manifested in the patterns and directions of foreign trade,

cross-border capital flows, currency movements and migration of labour. The collapse of the USSR, the emergence of China as a new economic power, the formation of the European Union, the emergence of USA as a hegemon and most recently, new questions on the Israel-Palestinian conflict that is increasingly being seen as genocide has resulted in a paradigm change in the world political and economic order, threatening multilateral co-operation and multilateral systems of economic governance.

The term "geo-economics" was first used by Edward Luttwak in 1990. Luttwak argued that cold war ideological rivalries have been replaced worldwide by economic competition, in which trade and finance overshadow military power. Geo-economics as a branch of knowledge emerged from geopolitics as international economic relations are guided by political relations.

Among the BRICS countries, China has emerged as a new economic power and geopolitical force, giving us the IMF classification of blocs as USA-leaning countries, China-leaning countries and non-aligned countries. China has occupied a position for itself in geopolitics. Reflecting this, the Chinese currency renminbi has been in-



RK Pattnaik

**THE OFFICIAL STANCE IS THAT INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVE IS TO MOVE TO MULTI-ALIGNMENT FROM THE CONVENTIONAL NON-ALIGNMENT LEANING**

## Debate Debacle

What men call knowledge, is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances. Wisdom looks behind the veil and sees

SRI AUROBINDO



US President Joe Biden's disastrous debate with former president Donald Trump in Atlanta has created doubts, even among his supporters, whether the 81-year-old would be able to put a tough fight in the November presidential election. Biden, seeking a second term in the White House, stumbled and fumbled during the televised debate with his predecessor. In contrast, the 78-year-old Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, was aggressive right from the word go. Interestingly, during the debate, Biden even with facts on his side faltered most of the time, while Trump, true to his demeanour, lied most of the time with confidence. Nevertheless, the 90-minute debate provided enough fodder for serious commentary, opinions and memes on social media.

Now, there is a growing clamour for Biden to step down from the presidential race both within the Democratic Party and the mainstream media in the United States. The New York Times put it succinctly in an editorial: "To serve his country, President Biden should leave the race," while The Atlantic wrote: "Dropping out is Biden's most patriotic option." Moreover, the undecided voters, who were unable to make a choice between Biden and Trump before the debate, seem to have now made up their minds.

Biden is yet to be officially nominated, allowing room for potential changes. Various possibilities remain open: he may opt to withdraw before his nomination, face challenges from others seeking to sway the delegates he has accrued, or step down post the Democratic convention in Chicago from 19 to 22 August, leading the Democratic National Committee to select an alternative candidate.

While Vice President Kamala Harris is a probable top contender, she has faced challenges such as a rough beginning in her job and low poll numbers. According to the US Constitution, the vice president assumes the presidency in the event of the president's death or incapacitation, but it does not offer guidance on selecting a nominee within the same party. Others like California Governor Gavin Newsom, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear, and Illinois Governor JB Pritzker's names have been suggested, but they are currently supporting and campaigning for Biden.

Amid the mounting pressure to step down, Biden, with his inner circle firmly standing by him, has asserted that he is not giving up. "I get it. I didn't have a great night, but I'm going to be fighting harder," Biden told his fundraisers in New Jersey.

Biden's inner circle may be with him, but age certainly is not by his side. The fragile and confused looking POTUS has to take a call in the larger interest of the world's oldest democracy. If not, a convicted felon may return to the White House and it will be a first in US history. Nothing could be more disastrous for democracy and its admirers. With geopolitical tensions and trade wars flaring across the globe and the axis of China-Russia threatening to rip apart the established democratic global order, the world can ill-afford a return of Trump.

In brief, with Trump back at the Oval Office which inevitably would result in America going down, it might prove disastrous not only for the US but for the entire free world.

## Price of Freedom

Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks has, after a 14-year-long tortuous legal journey, walked free. The trade-off between him and the US administration for his release, however, does not bring good news for freedom of speech and expression. As part of the deal the 52-year-old arrived at a federal court in Saipan, a Pacific territory administered by the US by a private plane from his London prison. He was accompanied by former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, who is now the ambassador to Washington. He pleaded guilty to the crime of 'obtaining and disclosing national defence information.' This was part of the out-of-court settlement negotiated with the US Justice Department. He admitted to encouraging his "source," former military officer Chelsea Manning, to provide him with "classified material," which was State Department and Pentagon documents classified as "secret." WikiLeaks made these documents public between 2009 and 2011. He got a five-year sentence, which only enabled him to regain his freedom, as it was adjusted to the time he had spent in prison in the UK. He immediately flew back to his family in Sydney with the declaration that he would never set foot in the United States of America ever again.

The freedom was obtained through lobbying of President Joe Biden by current Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. This is certainly good for the man who spent 12 years in captivity under the threat of an extradition request from the US justice system. The 18 charges brought against him meant he ran the risk of getting a 175-year prison sentence. After taking refuge for seven years in the Ecuadorian embassy in London, he was arrested by British police in 2019 and has been imprisoned since then.

His disclosure was hailed as one of the biggest triumphs of journalism. What he achieved is a dream of every investigative journalist. Several internationally acclaimed newspapers published a selection of State Department diplomatic cables from a pool of some 250,000 documents provided by WikiLeaks. This publication revealed and threw light on important aspects of US foreign policy. This completely changed popular perception of undercover operations practised by the US which seem detrimental to many democratic institutions and countries.

Assange's guilty plea agreement is a serious threat to the freedom of speech and expression as he has been convicted under the Federal Espionage Act. The application of the provisions of the Act runs counter the spirit of the First Amendment to the US Constitution on freedom of expression. Whatever Assange may think about his guilty plea in lieu of securing his freedom, the fact remains that revealing war crimes, as was made possible by WikiLeaks' 2007 release of a Pentagon video featuring the deliberate targeting and killing of civilians in Iraq, including journalists, is not espionage but the right to information. Ideally, he should never have been charged with espionage by the US. The Biden administration's keenness to get a controversial case off its plate, particularly in an election year, is understandable.

The whole deal has deep global implications for journalism. Using espionage charges is indeed a bad and cynical move. The hundreds of thousands of leaked documents about the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and diplomatic cables made public by WikiLeaks revealed appalling abuses by the US and other governments, which would not otherwise have been exposed. National security laws are necessary. But that cannot be allowed to serve as a pretext to prevent public scrutiny of government acts of omissions and commissions. India has seen plenty of such cases in recent times and many citizens are still incarcerated under flimsy cases.

Alarmingly, the Espionage Act allows no public interest defence that prevents defendants from discussing the material leaked, why they shared it, and why they believe the public should know about it. The US administration, which claims itself a champion of Press freedom globally, has not covered itself with glory by applying the Act in Assange's case.

However, Assange walking free is a great happy event for journalists across the globe.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

## Epidemic of silent suffering

As societies around the world grapple with aging populations, elder abuse is increasingly recognised as the pervasive issue affecting millions of senior citizens worldwide. This widespread prevalence in its various forms including physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse (verbal assaults, threats, harassment, and intimidation), sexual abuse, financial exploitation (illegal or improper use of an elder's funds, property, or assets), and neglect (failure to fulfill a caretaking obligation, including inadequate provision of food, shelter, healthcare, and protection) combined with the severe consequences for victims, has led experts to describe the sufferings of senior citizens as an epidemic.

The WHO estimates that 1 in 6 people aged 60 and older experience some form of abuse in community settings each year. This figure is likely underreported due to the stigma and fear associated with reporting abuse. The WHO's data suggests that psychological abuse is the most common form, followed by financial exploitation, neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. While 11.6% of seniors are reported as victims of psychological abuse, 6.8% are reported

for financial exploitation and 4.2% of the elderly population are neglected. Similarly, while 2.6% elderly people are physically abused, 0.9% seniors are sexually harassed.

The prevalence of elder abuse in India is alarmingly high, often rooted in deep-seated cultural and social issues. According to the 2011 Census, India had 104 million people aged 60 and above, projected to reach 300 million by 2050. A comprehensive survey by HelpAge India in 2018 providing a detailed picture says that 25% of seniors are experiencing overall abuse. While 52% of those are the victims of verbal abuse, 34% are neglected and 12% are physically abused. In toto, financial exploitation is reported by 10%. More importantly, elder abuse prevalence is reported higher in urban areas (29%) compared to rural areas (23%), possibly due to the breakdown of traditional family structures in cities. A study conducted in June 2020, by the NGO Agewell Foundation, 71 per cent of India's elderly reported an increase in maltreatment during the first COVID-19 induced lockdown. As a result, now the concept of old-age home is mushrooming in Indian society where the neglected parents are being sheltered

which is too piteous. According to the Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections for India and States 2011-2036, there are nearly 138 million inclusive of 18 million homeless elderly persons in India in 2021 and it is further expected to increase by around 56 million elderly persons in 2031. Moreover, women are more likely to experience abuse, particularly financial and physical abuse, due to gender-based power imbalances. Studies have shown that abused seniors have a 300% higher risk of death when compared to those who have not been abused, leading to increased hospitalisations and use of medical services.

Globally, several international agreements and principles address the rights and protection of senior citizens. The United Nations' Principles for Older Persons (1991) is a cornerstone document that outlines key rights, including independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment, and dignity. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted by the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002, further emphasises the need for action to ensure the well-being of older persons. In India, the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act,

2007 is a pivotal piece of legislation. It mandates that children and heirs provide maintenance to senior citizens and parents, ensuring their basic needs are met. It imposes a duty on the state to ensure the well-being of senior citizens through the creation of old age homes and healthcare facilities. Additionally, the Act criminalises the abandonment of senior citizens and prescribes penalties for non-compliance with maintenance orders.

The protection of senior citizens is a multifaceted issue that requires a combination of strong legal frameworks, effective support services, public awareness, and robust data collection. While significant progress has been made in many countries, there is still much work to be done to ensure that seniors can live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation falling which this epidemic of silent suffering would spread like anything leading to family breakdown, increased stress for caregivers, loss of trust within communities and weak social fabric.

*The writer is General Secretary, Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and Workers, Odisha State Coordination Committee.*



Bruhaspati Samal

**THE PREVALENCE OF ELDER ABUSE IN INDIA IS ALARMINGLY HIGH, OFTEN ROOTED IN DEEP-SEATED CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

Orissa POST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

### Triumphant return

Sir, India clinched a resounding victory over South Africa in the T20 World Cup 2024 final, marking a triumphant return to World Cup glory after a long 13-year wait since their last ICC trophy in 2011. Under the astute leadership of Rohit Sharma, the team dominated throughout the tournament, showcasing their prowess and resilience with consecutive winning streak. This victory was particularly special as it served as a grand farewell for two stalwarts of Indian cricket, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli as well as for Indian head coach Rahul Dravid, who had not previously won any World Cup trophy in his cricketing career. Both Rohit & Virat announced their retirement from T20 internationals, making the win an emotional and proud moment for all Indians. Rohit's tactical brilliance and Virat's consistent performances have been instrumental in India's cricketing success over the years, and their departure marks the end of an era. This victory will be cherished as one of the most emotional and proud moments in the history of Indian cricket.

Bishal Kumar Saha, MURSHIDABAD

### Lunar exploration

Sir, China's Chang'e-6 lunar probe successfully returned to the earth on 25 June, landing in inner Mongolia. This marks a significant achievement in lunar exploration. The mission was launched from Hainan on 3 May. It aimed to collect samples from the moon's far side, specifically targeting the Apollo Crater in the South Pole-Aitken basin. The South Pole basin is of particular interest to scientists due to its unique geological features, which are significantly different from those on the near side of the moon. The probe collected approximately 2 kilograms of lunar soil and rock using a drill and a robotic arm. These samples were transported back to earth via a return rocket. The samples are expected to provide valuable insights into the moon's geological history and the differences between its near and far sides. This could help scientists understand the formation of the moon and other planets billion of years ago.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

DEBT TRAP

# Telangana weavers resort to suicide

Weavers turn to taking on debts to meet their expenses and face distress when they are unable to repay the loans

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Karimnagar (Telangana), June 30:** The 'recent suicide' of a weaver at Sircilla in Telangana has brought to the fore the alleged lack of work and adequate income in this textile hub, with the issue leading to a war of words between the Opposition BRS and the Congress.

Kudikyala Nagaraju recently died by suicide as he was unable to repay his debts and this came as a reminder of the tragedy of weavers ending their lives in the past.

While it is being claimed 10 weavers have ended their life so far this year, the government has pegged the number at six, even as the BRS attacked the ruling Congress over the matter. Nagaraju (47), a weaver, took his life by consuming acid at Sircilla recently.

"My husband borrowed some amount and failed to repay the lenders. He did not have the livelihood to take care of me and our two sons," Nagaraju's wife Lavanya told PTI.

Similar is the story of Adicherla Sai Kumar (25) who committed 'suicide' in April this year as he was unable to repay the money he borrowed.

"My brother was working in a powerloom in Sircilla. He had no work for some time due to



WHILE IT IS BEING CLAIMED 10 WEAVERS HAVE ENDED THEIR LIFE SO FAR THIS YEAR, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PEGGED THE NUMBER AT SIX, EVEN AS THE BRS ATTACKED THE RULING CONGRESS OVER THE MATTER. BRS DEMANDS EX-GRATIA OF RS 25 LAKH EACH TO THE KIN OF THE DECEASED WEAVERS. NAGARAJU (47), A WEAVER, TOOK HIS LIFE BY CONSUMING ACID AT SIRCIILLA RECENTLY.

the closure of powerlooms in the area. He borrowed money and failed to repay it," said Mahender, sibling of the deceased.

Sircilla, located in Telangana's Karimnagar is now home to about 10,000 powerlooms, down from the 27,000 in the past. About 9,000 to 10,000 families are dependent on them for livelihood, CITU's Powerloom Workers Union State President Musha Ramesh said.

The workers had orders during the previous government to make sarees and school uniforms which used to be distrib-

uted to the poor free of cost. But, the powerloom workers are without work now, he claimed.

They resort to taking debts to meet their expenses and face distress when they are unable to repay the loans, Ramesh said.

According to him, 10 weavers took the extreme step in Sircilla district during this year.

The 'suicide' of Kudikyala Nagaraju also led to a war of words between BRS Working President KT Rama Rao, who represents Sircilla in the state Assembly, and Telangana Textiles

Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao. In an open letter addressed to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Rama Rao accused the government of being responsible for the alleged suicides of weavers due to lack of work.

The deaths of weavers are not mere suicides but 'government-induced deaths', he charged. He too claimed that about 10 weavers have ended their lives in recent times due to lack of work and income.

The BRS government had ensured livelihood to the weavers by placing orders to make school uniforms and also sarees which were given to the poor on the occasion of festivals, he said.

Rama Rao alleged that the Congress government's failure to continue the welfare schemes and orders for work initiated by the previous administration has resulted in weavers losing their livelihood and facing severe financial distress.

He demanded an ex-gratia of Rs 25 lakh each to the kin of the deceased weavers.

Rama Rao urged the government to immediately resume and implement the welfare schemes and support programmes implemented by the previous BRS regime, the powerloom subsidies and orders for school uniforms to boost the weavers' employment.

# Tharoor, Rajeev Chandrasekhar spar over Kerala AIIMS promise

Tharoor asserted that no MP can unilaterally decide the location of the medical institution, while Chandrasekhar criticised Tharoor for not fulfilling promises to Thiruvananthapuram



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, June 30:** The war of words between Congress MP Shashi Tharoor and BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar continued over establishment of AIIMS in Kerala with the former saying that no MP can promise to set up the prestigious medical institution in the place of his choice.

In a social media post Sunday, Tharoor said despite his best efforts for Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha constituency, the central government has accepted Kerala government's proposal to set up AIIMS in Kozhikode district.

State Health Minister Veena George has informed the state Assembly that the Centre has accepted the proposal to set up an AIIMS at Kinalur in Kozhikode, he pointed out on X. "I stated during the election campaign that no MP can prom-

ise to set up an AIIMS in any location of his choice - it depends on what the state government proposes and the central government agrees to. Despite my best efforts, and intensive lobbying for an AIIMS in my constituency, I honestly told voters that the state government had opted for Kozhikode and that was the sole choice before the Centre," Tharoor said.

"Shame on those BJP candidates who misled voters by promising otherwise!" Tharoor added.

In his reaction, Chandrasekhar said the Congress MP, who has represented Thiruvananthapuram for 15 years, has kept none of his promises.

Chandrasekhar claimed that the situation would have been different if it was a BJP MP representing Thiruvananthapuram and he would have fought for it.

"This Cong MP who has represented Thiruvananthapuram for 15 yrs and has kept none of his promises - from making

Barcelona, High court bench etc etc (list is embarrassingly long), is talking tdy (almost in relief) that Kozhikode is getting an AIIMS - that wud not hv been case if a BJP/NDA MP had represented & fought for TVM - which i will."

"Reality that @BJP4Keralam, PM @narendramodiji & I will do more for ALL people of Thiruvananthapuram in next 5 years than the smooth talking, do-nothing, Lying types who hv squatted there for so many years," Chandrasekhar said.

In the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the NDA candidate for Thiruvananthapuram seat Rajeev Chandrasekhar had assured that he will make every effort to bring AIIMS to the constituency once elected as the MP.

After a neck-and-neck fight, Congress' Shashi Tharoor won Thiruvananthapuram LS seat against BJP's Rajeev Chandrasekhar for a record fourth term.

MOST LITERATE STATE

# Min criticises Kerala's education standards



Fisheries Minister says SSLC students lack skills to read, write; Education Minister rejects

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Alappuzha (Kerala), June 30:** Kerala Fisheries Minister Saij Cheriyan has strongly criticised the state's education standards, saying many students who cleared the SSLC exam lack the skills to write or read properly.

A day after his remarks went viral, General Education Minister V Sivankutty outrightly rejected it and said the observation was not factual.

Speaking at an event here Saturday, Cheriyan recalled that earlier it was challenging to secure the minimum pass mark of 210, but now all students were able to clear the examination.

"But, a significant percentage of them do not know how to read or write properly," he said.

Expressing concern that if anyone flunked the examination, it would be portrayed as the failure of the dispensation, the minister said it was good for the government to be liberal in the evaluation for the SSLC examinations.

But, the present General Education Minister Sivankutty,

who already made it clear that the practice was not right, is expected to bring reforms, Cheriyan added.

In a statement Sunday, Sivankutty said Kerala is the state that provides pre-primary, primary, upper-primary, high school and higher secondary education in the best manner in the country.

"Kerala will not compromise on academic excellence. Kerala still ranks first in the Centre's development indic in terms of school education," he noted.

Sivankutty also said a controversy has now been brewing over some remarks made by Minister Cheriyan.

"If you listen to the entire speech, it is clear that he has expressed his opinion to take the public education sector to a higher level," the Minister added.

He also listed out various initiatives being taken up by his department to better the school education system in the state.

A pass percentage of 99.69 per cent was registered in the Class 10 Secondary School Leaving Certificate examinations in Kerala for the academic year 2023-24 when the results were announced last month.

A total of 4,25,563 students cleared the examination for an overall pass percentage of 99.69 per cent, officials said.

# Telangana to appoint one teacher for every school with 10 students

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad, June 30:** The government of Telangana will appoint one teacher for every government school with a strength of one to 10 students.

The state government has started an official exercise for the transfer of teachers taking into consideration the number of students studying in every government school.

The process of the transfer of teachers is aimed at improving the quality of educational standards in all government schools. The previous government had issued two orders in 2015 and 2021. As per the orders, one teacher was appointed for a school with 0-19 students, two teachers for a school with 20 to 60 students and three teachers for a school with 61 to 90 students.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, the present state government has allotted teacher posts by taking into consideration the strength of the students to provide quality education in each school.

One teacher has been allotted for a school with a strength of 1 - 10 students. Two teachers for a school with 11 to 40 students and three teachers with 41 to 60 students in a school.

Web options have been made available to fill all sanctioned teacher posts in schools where the student strength is above 61.

Teacher posts have not been allotted to the schools with zero strength of students. The number of teacher posts will also be increased in the schools where the student strength will increase compared to the present.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has said that, unlike the previous government, his government would not close down single-teacher schools. The schools were shut down due to lack of students and this situation prevailed because of lack of focus on developing infrastructure in schools, he had said June 10.

# PM releases three books on Naidu

From being farmer's son to VP, Naidu's journey inspiring, says Modi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, June 30:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday released three books on the life of M Venkaiah Naidu and recalled his contributions, including the fight against imposition of Emergency and as Union Minister and Vice President.

Recalling that the 50th anniversary of Emergency was observed recently, he said Naidu was even in jail for about 17 months during the fight against Emergency. The Emergency was imposed by the Congress by tarnishing the image of the country's Constitution, he said.

The books, including a biography, were released on the eve of Naidu's 75th birthday.

Expressing happiness over releasing the biography and two other books, Modi exuded confidence that the books would inspire people and show the right direction for national service.

The journey of Naidu, from being a farmer's son to occupy-



ing high-ranking positions as Union Minister and Vice President, is filled with many experiences, he said.

Naidu chose to take up the Rural Development ministry in the cabinet of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, despite being a senior in the party, as he wanted to serve the villages, farmers and the poor, he said.

During Naidu's tenure as Urban Development Minister as his senior cabinet colleague, several initiatives, including Swachh Bharat Mission and Smart Cities Mission, were started, Modi said.

Praising Naidu's oratory, wit-tiness, alertness and spontaneity, he recalled the latter's comment of 'ek hath me BJP ka jhanda aur doosre hath me NDA ka agenda' (BJP's flag in

one hand and NDA's agenda in another hand) during the Vajpayee regime.

During Naidu's tenure as Chairman of Rajya Sabha, the bill to abolish Article 370 was passed with majesty, dignity and honour though the government did not have majority in the upper house, he said.

BJP grew as a 'vatvriksh' (banyan tree) that it is today, due to the efforts of lakhs of activists like Naidu, he said.

He hoped that the country would emerge as a developed nation in 2047 when Naidu celebrates his 100th birthday.

In his response, Naidu thanked the Prime Minister for releasing the books. Appreciating Modi's endeavour for the country's development, he said skill development is the need of the hour.

The books, including a biography, were released on the eve of Naidu's 75th birthday

"Development and welfare must go hand in hand. We should not be tempted by these freebies and then make the people lazy. Yes, we must give them a helping hand. You have been giving free ration to crores of people across the country. That should continue as long as it is required. But, at the same time, skill development is the need of the hour," the former Vice President said. Naidu also favoured promoting Indian languages.

The books released by the PM include biography of the former Vice President titled "Venkaiah Naidu - Life in Service," "Celebrating Bharat - The Mission and Message of Shri M Venkaiah Naidu as 13th Vice-President of India", a photo chronicle and a pictorial biography in Telugu titled "Mahaneta - Life and Journey of Shri M Venkaiah Naidu."

Venkaiah Naidu, several other leaders and prominent personalities attended the event in Hyderabad.

# Drug abuse: Patrolling to strengthen around schools

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, June 30:** The Kerala Excise Department has issued directions to strengthen surveillance around schools in the state to prevent the spread and use of drugs.

The directions were issued Saturday at a meeting of district-level officers and above, chaired by State Excise Minister MB Rajesh.

Rajesh said since schools are in session, diligent vigilance and special monitoring must be ensured.

"Special efforts should be made



to prevent the spread and usage of drugs. Enhanced monitoring should be implemented in all educational institutions, including schools. Women officers should be appointed to monitor schools, and a special squad can be formed if necessary," the minister was quoted as saying in a release issued by the department. The minister also suggested

that female excise officers receive special training for this purpose. Directions were issued to intensify the surveillance of shops within school premises.

In the wake of the recent spurious liquor disaster in Kallakurichi in Tamil Nadu, the meeting also decided that special measures should also be taken in Kerala to prevent such incidents.

"Special attention should be given to districts bordering neighbouring states. A district-level special squad should be formed to tighten inspections. Efforts should be made to curb the spread of drugs and illicit alcohol," the release said.

# Taking Reddy's advice, Centre extends Smart Cities Mission till March

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, June 30:** Responding positively to the appeal made by Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy recently, the Central government has extended the Smart Cities Mission till March 2025.

A press release from the CMO said during his recent visit to the national capital, Reddy met Union minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar and requested him to extend the deadline for Smart City Mission till June, 2025.

"In the larger interests of the public, CM Revanth Reddy pleaded with the Central government for the extension of the Smart City Mission until the works are completed. In a positive response, the Union government wrote a letter to the states Saturday extending the Smart City Mission till March 31, 2025," the release said.

The Centre has earlier set the target of the completion of the Smart City mission by June-end. Several works have been taken up in Warangal and Karimnagar under Smart Cities Mission in the state. As many as 45 works have already been completed in Warangal while another 66 at the cost of Rs 518 crore are under progress.

# PM highlights Karthumbi umbrellas made by tribal women

It has been around eight years since this umbrella brand made by around 70 tribal women at Attappadi in Palakkad district was launched

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Thiruvananthapuram, June 30:** The tribal women in Kerala's Attappadi, who manufacture Karthumbi umbrellas, got the biggest boost when Prime

Minister Narendra Modi Sunday highlighted them in his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat'.

"Umbrellas have a special significance in the culture of Kerala...Umbrellas are an important part of traditions and rituals there...But the umbrella I am talking about is the Karthumbi umbrella...and these are prepared in Attappadi of Kerala...These colourful umbrellas are spectacular...And the speciality is that these umbrellas are made by our tribal sisters of Kerala...Today,



Karthumbi Umbrellas are completing the journey from a small village in Kerala to multina-

tional companies...What can be a better example of being 'vocal for local'?" said PM Modi.

Incidentally it has been around eight years since this umbrella brand made by around 70 tribal women at Attappadi in Palakkad district was launched.

This innovative project has been promoted by Thampu, an organisation engaged in community projects and Peace Collective, an online community. Another organisation playing its role is a group of IT professionals under the name of Progressive Techies which is engaged in marketing the umbrellas.

Starting on a modest note,

today those behind this project have started to train around 350 women who will be able to soon ply this trade.

These umbrellas, which are sold through online sites, cost around Rs 350 to Rs 390. The major sales happen during the monsoon season during which around 15,000 pieces are sold annually.

With PM Modi now highlighting the Karthumbi umbrellas, those behind this innovative venture are cheered up and expect the sales to grow steeply.



**TRUCK PLUNGES INTO RIVER AS BRIDGE COLLAPSES**  
A bridge over the Imphal River in Manipur's Imphal West District collapsed when a wood-laden truck was crossing it Sunday, sending the vehicle plunging into the water, officials said. Police said the truck's driver is currently missing and rescue operations are underway



## of the day quote

The agony and anguish of Manipur continue. The non-biological PM has time for everything else but visiting the troubled state or even talking to its elected representatives face-to-face

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

If plundering of our natural resources continues, there will be a day in this world when only humans will be around - not animals, avian species and plants. Just think about what will happen to our future if such a situation arises. We must work towards saving the planet

BHUPENDER YADAV | UNION ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

Reiterated Modi Govt's commitment to protecting the interests of our farmers and deliberated on innovative & collaborative strategies to drive sustainable growth in the tobacco sector

PIYUSH GOYAL | UNION COMMERCE MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### HC to pass order on Bibhav's plea today

**New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court will Monday deliver its verdict on the issue of maintainability of a plea by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's close aide Bibhav Kumar challenging his arrest in connection with the alleged assault on AAP MP Swati Malwani at the CM's residence. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma had reserved order on the maintainability of Kumar's petition May 31 after hearing his counsel as well as the lawyers appearing for the Delhi Police. Kumar, presently in judicial custody, allegedly assaulted Malwani May 13 at Kejriwal's official residence. He was arrested May 18.

### Pvt bus overturns; 1 dead, over 30 hurt

**Bilaspur:** A newborn died, and more than 30 passengers sustained injuries after a private bus overturned in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district Sunday, police said. The accident occurred near the Lalkhadan flyover under Torwa police station limits here when the bus was heading to Sarangarh town from Bilaspur city around 11 am, an official said. Some passersby called an ambulance and informed the police, he said. A newborn died, and injured persons were rushed to the Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS) and other hospitals, he said.

### J'khand: Girder of bridge collapses

**Giridih:** A girder of an under-construction bridge over the Arga river collapsed and a pillar got tilted in heavy rain in Jharkhand's Giridih district, an official said Sunday. There was no report of any injury, he said. The incident took place in Deori block, around 235 km from Jharkhand's capital Ranchi, Saturday night. The bridge is being constructed on Fatehpur-Bhelwagati road to connect Dumritola and Karipahri villages.

### NIA arrests two

**New Delhi:** The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Sunday arrested two men, associated with international pan-Islamist organisation Hizb-ut-Tahrir, for allegedly radicalising youngsters in Tamil Nadu. The arrested men have been identified as Abdul Rehman alias Abdul Rahman and Mujibur Rehman alias Mujibur Rahman Altham Sahib, both from Thanjavur district, a statement issued by the NIA said.

## KANGAROO COURT IN WEST BENGAL

# Couple assaulted, video goes viral



PRES TRUST OF INDIA

clip shows the man beating up the woman who grimaced in pain. The accused also thrashed a man with the stick. The Opposition BJP and CPI(M) accused the TMC of being involved in the incident and termed it "bulldozer justice" under the rule of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. "This is the ugly face of Mamata Banerjee's rule in West Bengal. The guy in the video, who is beating up a woman mercilessly... is famous for giving quick justice through his 'insaf sabha' and is a close associate of Chopra MLA Hamidur Rahman," BJP IT Cell head Amit Malviya said in a post on X. He claimed that there is a Sandeshkhali in every village of West Bengal and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is a "curse for women".

**Raiganj (WB), June 30:** The West Bengal Police Sunday registered a case after a video clip of a brutal assault on a couple allegedly engaged in an illicit relationship went viral.

The man who was seen in the video beating up the two with a bamboo stick was allegedly a local TMC leader of Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur district where the incident occurred following a decision of a 'salishi sabha' (Kangaroo court). PTI could not independently verify the authenticity of the video which triggered widespread outrage. Islampur Police Superintendent Joby Thomas K said the police have watched the video clip on social media and have registered a case after verification. "We have initiated raids to arrest the culprit and will investigate the reason behind the act promptly," he said. The video

The man who was seen in the video beating up the two with a bamboo stick was allegedly a local TMC leader of Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur district where the incident occurred following a decision of a 'salishi sabha' (Kangaroo court). PTI could not independently verify the authenticity of the video which triggered widespread outrage. Islampur Police Superintendent Joby Thomas K said the police have watched the video clip on social media and have registered a case after verification. "We have initiated raids to arrest the culprit and will investigate the reason behind the act promptly," he said. The video

State Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury alleged that attacks on ordinary people and the TMC's political opponents are continuing in West Bengal, though Congress won the Trinamool Lok Sabha elections in the state. "How can a woman be beaten up in this way? Attack on any woman is barbaric and deplorable," he said. "Such incidents of violence are giving a bad name to West Bengal," the senior Congress leader said. Local TMC MLA Hamidur Rahman denied he has any connection with the accused and distanced himself from the incident. He said it was a village matter and not related to the party. TMC district president Kaniyal Agarwal attributed the incident to the couple's alleged illicit relationship, which "did not go down well with the villagers".



Participants during 'Shakti Run' rally, organised for the cause of gender justice and women's safety in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

## Soren declares 'rebellion' to drive out 'feudal forces'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhognadih (Sahibganj), June 30:** Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Sunday declared a "rebellion" against "feudal forces", asserting that the Opposition INDIA bloc will drive out the BJP from across the country. "I have stepped out of my home for the first time post my release to address you on 'Hul Diwas'. It is a day of inspiration for all of us. Like the Santhal uprising against the British, we declare 'Hul rebellion' to drive out feudal forces not only from Jharkhand but across the country," he said.

The day marks the 1855 Santhal rebellion against the British. "I was implicated in false cases... The Centre unleashes its probe agencies to harass those who raise their voice against it. It is only two days that I am out of jail, but the BJP is jittery. Top party leaders are frequenting Jharkhand and conspiring against me again," he said.



The JMM executive president also asserted that Jharkhand is known as a land of revolutionaries and "we are not afraid of jail, lathi or execution". "It has come to my knowledge that they (BJP) are making plans to pre-empt Assembly elections (in Jharkhand)... I dare them to conduct the elections any day they wish to... We are prepared. They will face a crushing defeat," he said, urging people to be ready to face "testing times ahead". Soren, who began his speech with 'Hul Johar' - a salutation in Santhal language meaning 'revolutionary solution', claimed that when he started demanding

the rights of tribals, including ₹1.36 lakh crore from the Centre in lieu of coal resources, he was sent behind bars. "But, the task I initiated and the war I waged will not stop," the former CM asserted.

He said a legislation will be brought in, which will ensure that benefits of the mines and minerals reach the people of Jharkhand first, contending that resources from the state were "making other places rich while its inhabitants were forced to live in poverty and backwardness". Soren also hit out at the Centre, alleging that prices of essential commodities were soaring, and examination papers were getting regularly leaked. The former CM was released Friday from the Birsra Munda Jail after the Jharkhand high court granted bail to him in a money laundering case. He was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) January 31 in connection with a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam.

## Cong, Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP) to jointly fight: Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Pune, June 30:** NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar Sunday said his party, Congress, and the Shiv Sena (UBT) led by Uddhav Thackeray will jointly contest the Maharashtra Assembly polls, due in October this year. Addressing a news conference here, Pawar also said it is the moral responsibility of the major Opposition parties in Maharashtra to protect in the state Assembly polls the interests of smaller allies, which were part of the coalition in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The NCP (SP), Congress and the Shiv Sena (UBT) are constituents of the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), which was in power in the state from November 2019 till June 2022 before the collapse of the

Thackeray-led government. Pawar said the Opposition will keep a collective face before the people of Maharashtra. There is need for a change in the state and it is the moral responsibility of the Opposition coalition to discharge it, Pawar said. "As Arjuna's target (in the epic Mahabharata) was an eye (of a fish), our eyes are all set on the elections in Maharashtra. The Congress, NCP (SP) and Uddhav Thackeray's Sena (UBT) will jointly contest the Vidhan Sabha polls," he said. The former Maharashtra Chief Minister said talks on seat-sharing in the state have not begun, but will commence soon. "But like these three parties, the Left parties, Peasants and Workers Party (PWP) were also a part of the coalition but we could not give them seats in the Lok Sabha. It

## MAHA ASSEMBLY POLLS



is our moral responsibility to protect the interests of these parties," he said. "So the efforts will be to go ahead with them (in the state Assembly polls)," Pawar added. Asked about the state budget presented Friday by the Eknath Shinde government, the NCP (SP) chief said, "What happens if you go with an empty pocket in a market? It's a matter of a few days, reality will be seen soon." A monthly allowance of ₹1,500 to women in the 21 to 60 age

group, three free LPG cylinders a year for households, farmer-friendly steps and a stipend of ₹10,000 per month to youths for skill training were highlights of the Maharashtra government's budget for 2024-25 presented Friday, four months ahead of the state polls. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar Friday said the state government will send a proposal to United Nations agency UNESCO for world heritage nomination for the annual Pandharpur 'wari' which has a tradition of 1,000 years. He said the government will also set up a separate corporation to provide facilities to devotees of Lord Vitthal (called warkaris), who undertake the annual pilgrimage from Alandi and Dehu in Pune district to the Vitthal-Rukmini temple in Pandharpur.

## Three of family drown in Lonavala; 2 kids missing

AGENCIES

**Pune (Maharashtra), June 30:** A family outing turned tragic when a woman and two girls drowned at a waterfall close to Bhushi Dam in Pune's Lonavala area Sunday. Two children in the 4-9 age group remain missing. A heart-wrenching video of the incident shows a group of people, including those who lost their lives, being swept away by gushing water caused by intense rainfall in the region. According to the police, 16-17 members of a family from Sayyad Nagar in Pune's Hadapsar area had hired a private bus to visit the scenic



spot near Lonavala for a picnic on the rain-soaked day. Inspector Suhas Jagtap of Lonavala police station said about 10 people were swept away around 12.30 pm due to sudden flooding. While some of them managed to escape, one girl was rescued by other revellers.

# Cancer patients prefer to take second opinion: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 30:** About 67 per cent of cancer patients availing treatment in private hospitals and about 33 per cent being treated at government hospitals sought a second opinion to find if their treatment is on correct course and to check availability of latest treatment and medicines, a survey has found. The survey was carried out by the Cancer Mukht Bharat Foundation, a Delhi based NGO on 1,769 cancer patients across India who called on its Cancer helpline number from March 1 to May 31 this year. The maximum number of calls were from Hyderabad followed by Meerut, Mumbai and New Delhi. Dr Ashish Gupta, a senior on-

cologist who is heading the Cancer Mukht Bharat Campaign, said, "In the field of cancer care, new medicines are approved almost every week. So this is the main reason to get another opinion." "Since the launch of the free of cost National Cancer Helpline number 9355520202, it is proving to be a support system for cancer patients across India. We get more than 50 calls every day from across all Indian states asking about latest treatment methods for their respective cancer diagnosis," he said. The campaign aims to reduce incidence and impact of cancer on individuals and communities through education and early detection, Dr Gupta stated. The helpline is operational



from 10 am to 5 pm from Monday to Saturday. Cancer patients can call on this number to speak to leading oncologists directly or even place a video call to discuss about the cancer treatment without paying any fees.

The survey found that patients from both government and private hospital were keen to take second opinion for their cancer treatment. Dr Gupta said 67 per cent patients who called on this helpline

**THE SURVEY WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE CANCER MUKHT BHARAT FOUNDATION, A DELHI BASED NGO ON 1,769 CANCER PATIENTS ACROSS INDIA WHO CALLED ON ITS CANCER HELPLINE NUMBER FROM MARCH 1 TO MAY 31 THIS YEAR**

**THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CALLS WERE FROM HYDERABAD FOLLOWED BY MEERUT, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI**

new medicines almost every week which can treat cancer in better way leading to better outcomes and good quality of life for cancer patients. "So second opinion can assure the use of latest medicines and treatment methods that usually differ from hospital to hospital," he said. Cancer requires a comprehensive and accurate approach to diagnosis and treatment. In recent years, there has been increase in demand for second opinions in cancer care. This shift is driven by advancements in technology, increased awareness among patients, and the presence of internationally trained cancer experts practising in the country, Dr Gupta elaborated.



The Kuwait government has started a special programme on its national radio. And that too in Hindi. It is broadcast every Sunday for half an hour on Kuwait Radio. It includes myriad shades of Indian culture. Our films and discussions related to the art world are very popular among the Indian community there  
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

### FREE BUS TRAVEL FOR WOMEN

Andhra Pradesh's Minister for Transport, Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy said Sunday that the state government will soon roll out free travel facility for women in Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) buses



### of the day quote

The Araku coffee is grown with love and devotion by our tribal sisters and brothers. It represents a blend of sustainability, tribal empowerment, and innovation. It's a reflection of the boundless potential of our people of Andhra Pradesh. Thank you for sharing this, Hon'ble PM Narendra Modi Ji, and for endorsing a truly Made in AP product. I look forward to enjoying another cup with you  
N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

There is a #Sandeshkhali in every village and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is a curse for women. There is no semblance of law and order in Bengal. Will Mamata Banerjee act against this monster or defend him like she stood up for Sheikh Shahjahan?  
AMIT MALVIYA | NATIONAL CONVENER OF THE IT CELL OF THE BJP

I am standing before you with the pride of having won all 40 seats (39 in TN and the lone Pondicherry constituency)... Though it was a parliamentary election, the Opposition parties targeted me and criticised this Dravidian model government  
M K STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

## Parl should pass law on quotas to exceed 50-pc cap: Congress

In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said throughout the Lok Sabha poll campaign, the Opposition party has been saying that all state laws related to reservation for the SCs, STs and all backward classes should be included in the 9th Schedule, as was the case for a Tamil Nadu law in 1994

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 30: The Congress Sunday said Parliament should pass a law to enable reservations to exceed the 50-per cent cap, a day after NDA constituent JD(U) demanded that the quota increase in Bihar be included in the 9th schedule of the Constitution.

At a meeting of the Janata Dal-United's national executive here Saturday, the party expressed concern over a recent Patna High Court verdict striking down the Bihar government's decision to increase the quota for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 65 per cent from 50 per cent.

In a political resolution passed at the meet, the JD(U) urged the BJP-led Centre to put the state's law under the Constitution's 9th Schedule to rule out its judicial review.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said throughout the Lok Sabha poll campaign, the Opposition party has been saying that all state laws related to reservation for the SCs, STs and all backward classes should be included



in the 9th Schedule, as was the case for a Tamil Nadu law in 1994. "It is a good thing that JD(U) has made the same demand in Patna yesterday. But its ally BJP, both in the state and at the Centre, is completely silent on this matter," Ramesh said. "However, bringing reservation laws beyond the 50 per cent limit into the Ninth Schedule is also not a solution, because according to a 2007 Supreme Court decision, such laws are also subject to judicial review," the former Union minister said, adding that a Constitution amendment law is required for the purpose. "In such a situation, the only way out is for the Parliament to pass a Constitution Amendment

Bill which will enable the reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and All Backward Classes to exceed 50 per cent," he said. Ramesh said the current limit of 50 per cent is not explicitly mandated by the Constitution, but has been decided through various Supreme Court decisions. "This was and remains one of the main guarantees of the Indian National Congress for the Lok Sabha elections." "Will the non-biological Prime Minister clear his stand? Our demand is that such a bill should be introduced in the next session of Parliament. JD(U) should not be limited to just passing resolutions," he added.

## India plans 1st comprehensive list of fauna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

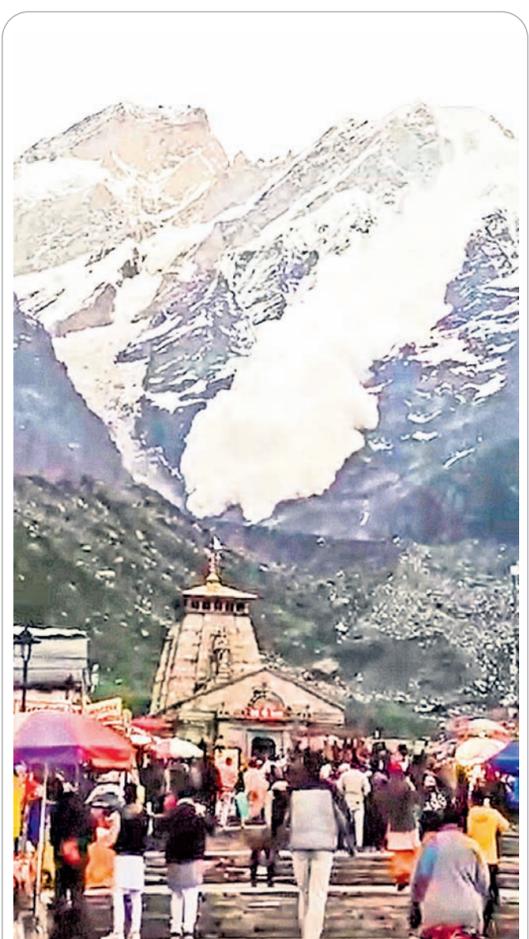
New Delhi, June 30: India has prepared a checklist of its entire fauna, covering 1,04,561 species, becoming the first country in the world to do so.

Launching the "Fauna of India Checklist Portal" on the occasion of the 109th Foundation Day of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Kolkata Sunday, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said the first comprehensive document on the faunal species in India will position the country as a global leader in biodiversity documentation.

He said the faunal checklist will be an invaluable reference for taxonomists, researchers, academicians, conservation managers and policymakers. The document comprises 121 checklists of all known taxa, covering 36 phyla. Endemic, threatened and scheduled species have also been included in the list.

The minister said India is a global champion in biodiversity conservation, as reflected by the fact that "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" was the first major programme undertaken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after winning a third term at the Centre.

Yadav also highlighted the government's initiatives, such as the International Big Cat Alliance to preserve biodiversity and species, and said the relocation of cheetahs to India is one such successful project.



Snow comes down a cliff during an avalanche after a glacier broke down as devotees offer prayers at Kedarnath dham in Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand. Devotees who went to the temple this morning captured the avalanche, which occurred around 5 am near the Chorabari glacier, on their mobile phones  
PTI PHOTO

## X POST OF THE DAY

This is not Uganda. This is not even Papua New Guinea. This massive development is results of 32 yrs of BJP ruled Gujarat..  
-A pregnant lady is been carried in Sack in #Chottaudepur, Turkheda village.  
NOTE : Modi was 3 time CM of this state.  
@mshahi0024

### SHORT TAKES

#### Modi resumes 'Mann Ki Baat'

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday resumed his monthly radio broadcast 'Mann Ki Baat' after taking a break during the Lok Sabha elections. In a post on X, he said, "Delighted to connect with people through Mann Ki Baat once again..." This was his first 'Mann Ki Baat' after taking charge as the Prime Minister for a third consecutive term. The PM paid homage to the martyrs of the Santhal Rebellion on the occasion of Hul Diwas and mentioned that Sidho and Kanho organised a movement against the British in 1855, two years before 1857.

#### 2 killed, 12 hurt as water tank collapses

Mathura (UP): Two people died and 12 others were seriously injured Sunday after a water tank in a residential colony here collapsed, officials said. The incident took place at around 6 pm in Krishna Vihar Colony, developed by the Uttar Pradesh Awasthi Parishad, they said. The casualties are likely to rise as some people, including children, got buried under the debris of the 2.5 lakh litre tank, the officials said, adding some nearby houses also came under the rubble. District Magistrate Shailendra Kumar Singh said the injured were taken to the district hospital for treatment. Apart from the fire service and police personnel, teams of revenue, municipal corporation, and health department are engaged in the rescue work, the DM said.

### SNIPPETS

#### Maharashtra gets first woman Chief Secy

Mumbai: Senior IAS officer Sujata Saunik Sunday took over as Maharashtra's Chief Secretary, becoming the first woman in the state's 64-year-old history to occupy the top post. Saunik, an IAS officer of the 1987 batch, succeeds Nitin Kareer who retired as the chief secretary Sunday. She will have a year's tenure before retiring in June next year, an official said. Kareer handed over the charge to Saunik at a ceremony held at Mantralaya, the state secretariat in south Mumbai Sunday evening. Before her elevation as the chief secretary, Saunik, whose husband Manoj Saunik is also a former state Chief Secretary, was the additional Chief Secretary in the state home department.

#### Monsoon advances in Gujarat, Rajasthan

New Delhi: Heavy rains lashed several parts across India, including Gujarat and Rajasthan, Sunday affecting normal life as monsoon further advanced towards the northern states. Several deaths were reported across the country due to rain-related incidents like lightning strikes and drowning. Maharashtra, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh were among the states that witnessed heavy downpour Sunday, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Gujarat is experiencing a wet spell due to cyclonic circulation over the northeast Arabian Sea adjoining the Saurashtra region, it said. In Rajasthan, several parts were lashed by heavy showers, with Churu recording the highest rainfall - 51.4 mm - Sunday even as the temperatures remained high in the city at 40.2 degrees Celsius. In the last 24 hours, some parts of the Bharatpur division recorded heavy to very heavy rainfall. The Met Department has predicted heavy rains in some parts of eastern Rajasthan and light to moderate rains in some parts of western Rajasthan in the next 4-5 days.

#### TISS restores jobs of over 100 faculty members

Mumbai: The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Sunday said it has withdrawn the notices given to 55 teaching and 60 non-teaching staff of non-renewal of contracts and asked them to continue their work. In the circular, the TISS said all 55 faculty and 60 non-teaching staff were appointed under programs funded by Tata Education Trust (TET) and were on a contractual basis with exact programme period. The contracts of the teaching and non-teaching staff at four TISS campuses - Mumbai, Tuljapur, Hyderabad and Guwahati were due to end June 30 (Sunday). Ongoing discussions with Tata Education Trust have provided assurance that resources will be made available to TISS to resolve this issue, the circular said, adding TET has committed to releasing funds for salaries of TET project/programme faculty and non-teaching staff.

## Stormy scenes in Parl from today



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 30: Parliament is set to witness heated debates on a range of issues like the NEET paper leak row, the Agnipath initiative and inflation when both houses reconvene Monday.

Besides the paper leak matter, the Opposition is also likely to raise the issue of unemployment. In the Lok Sabha, BJP member and former Union Minister Anurag Thakur is set to initiate the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

The Motion will be seconded by first term Lok Sabha member Bansuri Swaraj, the daughter of BJP stalwart late Sushma Swaraj. The Lok Sabha has allocated 16 hours for the debate on the Motion of Thanks, which will conclude with the reply by Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday. In the Rajya Sabha, 21

### Parliament has been rocked by protests over the NEET issue

hours have been set aside for the debate and the prime minister is likely to reply Wednesday. NEET-UG was conducted by the NTA May 5 with around 24 lakh candidates appearing. The results were announced on June 4, but they were followed by allegations of question paper leaks in states such as Bihar, besides other irregularities. Initiating the debate in the Rajya Sabha, BJP member Sudhanshu Trivedi had described Modi as "atunliya" (matchless) and asserted that there was a vast difference in his approach towards dealing with issues facing the nation and the one adopted by the first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. BJP member Kavita Patidar seconded the motion and nine others have participated in the

discussion so far. Opposition INDIA bloc members forced adjournment in the Lok Sabha Friday, when the House was to take up the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, demanding a dedicated discussion on the NEET issue.

The Rajya Sabha had witnesses vociferous protests during the debate with the opposition demanding a discussion on the NEET row and Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge trooping into the Well of the House to join fellow members.

Congress member Phulo Devi Netam from Chhattisgarh fainted in the Rajya Sabha while raising slogans, apparently due to high blood pressure, and was rushed to the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

Opposition members slammed the government for not adjourning the proceedings of the House and showing lack of concern for the health of a Rajya Sabha member.

### NEET-UG EXAM CASE

#### CBI arrests pvt school owner from Godhra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Godhra, June 30: The Central Bureau of Investigation, probing the alleged malpractices in conducting the NEET-UG exam at a private school in Godhra of Gujarat in May, Sunday arrested its owner.

With the arrest of Dixit Patel, owner of Jay Jalaram School situated near Godhra in Panchmahal district, the number of persons arrested so far five of them were held by Gujarat Police- has gone up to six.

Jay Jalaram School was one of the designated centres where the NEET-UG exam was held May 5.



Patel was arrested in the early hours of Sunday from his residence in Panchmahal district, said public prosecutor Rakesh Thakor. "As the case has been handed over to the CBI by the Gujarat government, a CBI team will produce him (Dixit Patel) before a designated court in Ahmedabad to acquire his remand," said Thakor.

Patel is the sixth person to be arrested in this case wherein the accused had allegedly demanded ₹10 lakh each from at least 27 candidates to help them clear the test.

The other five persons, who were arrested earlier by the Panchmahal police, include Vadodara-based education consultant Parshuram Roy, Jay Jalaram School principal Purushottam Sharma, school teacher Tushar Bhatt, and alleged middlemen Vibhor Anand and Arif Vohra.

After taking over the probe a week back, the CBI had sought custody of four accused except Roy. The Godhra district court Saturday remanded Sharma, Bhatt, Anand, and Vohra to CBI's custody till July 2.

A preliminary investigation by the CBI has uncovered that the accused persons had asked candidates willing to adopt illegal means to obtain high scores in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-Under Graduate) to opt for Jay Jalaram School as the exam centre.

## Google Maps 'misguides' Kerala youths into river

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kasaragod (Kerala), June 30: Two youths, who were on their way to a hospital using Google Maps to find their way, drove their car into a swollen river but had a miraculous escape as the vehicle got stuck to a tree in Kerala's northernmost Kasaragod district.

The visuals of Fire Force personnel pulling them to safety from the overflowing river in Pallanchi here the other day went viral on social media platforms Sunday.

They could escape and contact the Fire Force personnel only because their vehicle, which



was carried away by the water currents, got stuck in a tree. The rescued youths said they were on

their way to a hospital in neighbouring Karnataka in the wee hours the other day and were

proceeding using Google Maps. Abdul Rasheed, one of the youths, said Google Maps showed a narrow road and they drove their car through it. "Using the vehicle's headlight, we felt that there was some water in front of us. But, we didn't see that there was a river on both sides and a bridge in the middle. There was also no side-wall for the bridge," he told a TV channel. The car suddenly began to get carried away in the water currents but later got stuck in a tree on the shores of the river. By this time, they managed to open

the car door, come out of the vehicle and contacted the Fire Force personnel by sending them the location.

Later, Fire Force personnel rushed to the place and pulled out the two men to safety using ropes. "We never thought that we could come back to life. We truly feel that it is a rebirth," Rasheed added. Last month, a group of tourists from Hyderabad drove into a swollen stream near Kuruppanthara in Kottayam apparently after using Google Maps.

All four managed to escape unharmed due to the efforts of a nearby police patrol unit and local residents, but their vehicle was completely submerged.

THE RESCUED YOUTHS SAID THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY TO A HOSPITAL IN NEIGHBOURING KARNATAKA IN THE WEE HOURS THE OTHER DAY AND WERE PROCEEDING USING GOOGLE MAPS

# international



There is a threat in all elections, and indeed we see it in this election from hostile state actors seeking to influence the outcome of the election campaign. Russia is a prime example of this, and this is a classic example from the Russian playbook  
OLIVER DOWDEN | DEPUTY PM, UK

**BERYL SPIRALS TOWARDS CARIBBEAN**  
Hurricane Beryl is forecast to strengthen into a powerful Category 4 storm as it approaches the southeast Caribbean, which began shutting down Sunday amid urgent pleas from government officials for people to take shelter



## of the day quote

This is a time for Republicans to prepare and get ready for what's to come because there is no way there will be a surviving Democratic Party if they allow Joe Biden to continue to be the candidate  
NIKKI HALEY | FORMER SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR, US

Pakistan hoped for cooperation from the Afghan government, however, the latter was not ready to take action against the militants  
KHAWAJA ASIF | DEFENCE MINISTER, PAKISTAN

We urge all countries not to abandon the Afghan people in difficult times, and actively participate in Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic strengthening  
ZABIHULLAH MUJAHD | CHIEF SPOKESMAN, TALIBAN GOVERNMENT

## SHORT TAKES

### SA nears Cab deal

**Johannesburg:** South African parties are close to reaching a deal on who gets which cabinet posts, local media reported Sunday, the last hurdle to setting up a government after the ruling party lost its majority in an election for the first time in three decades. The Sunday Times and City Press both reported that President Cyril Ramaphosa's African National Congress (ANC) were broadly in agreement with the main opposition Democratic Alliance (DA), after the latter backed down on a demand to take the trade and industry portfolio.

### Xi to attend SCO

**Beijing:** Chinese President Xi Jinping will attend the 24th summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Kazakhstan's capital Astana this week, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced Sunday. He will also pay a state visit to Tajikistan, it said. From July 2 to 6, President Xi will attend the 24th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO in Astana, the ministry said. Officials say the situation in Afghanistan, the Ukraine conflict and boosting overall security cooperation among the SCO member countries are expected to figure in the summit.

### EAM Jaishankar meets Qatar PM

**Doha:** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Sunday met Qatar's Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani in Doha and reviewed bilateral relationship, with a focus on political, trade, investment, energy, technology, culture and people-to-people ties. Jaishankar, who arrived here on a day-long visit, also exchanged views on regional and global issues with Sheikh Mohammed, who also holds the portfolio as Foreign Minister. "Delighted to meet PM and FM of Qatar in Doha this afternoon. Conveyed the greetings and warm wishes of PM @narendramodi to The Amir and him," Jaishankar said in a post in X.

### 7 killed in road accident in Pak

**Karachi:** At least seven persons were killed when an overspeeding coaster lost control and the vehicle overturned after crashing into a pavement in Karachi. The accident occurred in Sindh province Sunday when a trailer took a U-turn and the coaster, coming from behind, rammed into it and overturned, police said.

# High-stakes French polls begin

**STRONG TURNOUT IN FRANCE'S 1ST ROUND OF ELECTIONS AS SUPPORT FOR THE FAR RIGHT GROWS**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Paris, June 30:** Voters across mainland France were casting ballots Sunday in the first round of exceptional parliamentary elections that could put the government in the hands of nationalist, far-right parties for the first time since the Nazi era. The outcome of the two-round elections, which will wrap up July 7, could impact European financial markets, Western support for Ukraine and how France's nuclear arsenal and global military force are managed.

Many French voters are frustrated about inflation and economic concerns, as well as President Emmanuel Macron's leadership, which they see as arrogant and out-of-touch with their lives. Marine Le Pen's anti-immigration National Rally party has tapped that discontent, notably via online platforms like TikTok, and dominated pre-election opinion polls.

A new coalition on the left, the New Popular Front, also poses a challenge to the pro-business Macron and his centrist alliance Together for the Republic. It includes the French Socialists and Communists and the hard-left France Unbowed party and vows to reverse a deeply unpopular pension reform law that raised the retirement age from 62 to 64, among other economic reforms.

There are 49.5 million registered voters who will choose 577 members of the National Assembly, France's influential lower house of parliament, during the two-round voting.



Turnout at midday at the first round stood at 25.9 per cent according to interior ministry figures, higher than the 18.43 per cent at midday during 2022 legislative elections.

Macron voted in Le Touquet, a seaside town in northern France, along with his wife, Brigitte. Le Pen cast her ballot in her party's stronghold in northern France.

The vote takes place during the traditional first week of summer vacation in France, and absentee ballot requests were at least five times higher than in the 2022 elections.

The first polling projections were expected at 8 pm, when the final polling stations close. Early official results were expected later Sunday night.

Voters at a Paris polling station had issues from immigration to inflation and the rising cost of living on their minds as the country has grown more divided between the far right and far left blocs, with a deeply unpopular and weakened President in the

political centre. The blitz campaign was marred by rising hate speech.

"People don't like what has been happening," said Cynthia Justine, a 44-year-old voter. "People feel they've lost a lot in recent years. People are angry. I am angry."

Macron called the early elections after his party was trounced in the European Parliament election earlier in June by the National Rally, which has historic ties to racism and antisemitism and is hostile toward France's Muslim community. It also has historical ties to Russia.

Macron's call was an audacious gamble that French voters who were complacent about the European election would be jolted into turning out for moderate forces in national elections to keep the far right out of power.

Instead, pre-election polls suggested that the National Rally is gaining support and has a chance at winning a parliamentary majority. In that scenario, Macron would be expected to name 28-

# NK calls SK, US, Japan 'Asian version of NATO'

The country has long condemned joint drills between the US, South as a rehearsal for invasion and proof of hostile policies



REUTERS

**Seoul, June 30:** North Korea criticised a joint military exercise by South Korea, Japan and the United States held this month, state media said Sunday, saying such drills show the relationship among three countries has developed into "the Asian version of NATO".

On Thursday, the three countries began large-scale joint military drills called "Freedom Edge" involving navy destroyers, fighter jets and the nuclear-powered US aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt, aimed at boosting defences against missiles, submarines and air attacks.

The exercise was devised at the three-way summit at Camp David last year to strengthen military cooperation amid tensions on the Korean peninsula stemming from North Korea's weapons testing.

Pyongyang will not ignore the strengthening of a military bloc led by the US and its allies and will protect regional peace with an aggressive and overwhelming response, North Korea's foreign ministry said in a statement, according to KCNA news agency.

The ministry also said Washington was continuing its effort to link up South Korea and Japan to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), adding South Korea's attempts to supply weapons to Ukraine is one example of that effort.

Seoul's defence ministry said in a statement that the "Freedom Edge" exercise was in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile program while dismissing Pyongyang's criticism. South Korea said it would review the possibility of supplying arms directly to Ukraine, in protest against a recent mutual defence pact signed between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

South Korea and the United States have accused the North of supplying weapons to Russia that are being used in the Ukraine war. Both Russia and North Korea deny any such transactions.

North Korea has long condemned joint drills between the United States and South Korea as a rehearsal for invasion and proof of hostile policies by Washington and Seoul.

# Suicide bombers kill 18 in Nigeria

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Maiduguri, June 30:** At least 18 people were killed and 30 injured, including 19 seriously, in coordinated attacks by suspected female suicide bombers in the northeastern Nigerian town of Gwoza Saturday, local authorities said.

The first suicide bomber detonated an explosive device during a marriage celebration at about 3 pm. Barkindo Saidu, director-general of Borno State Emergency Management Agency, told reporters.

"Minutes later, another blast occurred near General Hospital," Saidu said, and then there was a third attack at a funeral service by a female bomber disguised as a mourner. Children and pregnant women were among those killed.

No one has so far claimed responsibility for the attacks, but Gwoza is in Borno state, which has been heavily impacted by an insurgency launched in 2009 by Boko Haram, an Islamic extremist group.

The violence, which has spilled across borders around Lake Chad, has killed over 35,000 people, displaced over 2.6 million and created a massive humanitarian crisis.

# Amid scepticism, Orbán set to take over EU presidency

Hungary PM has long been accused of dismantling democratic institutions and violating the EU's standards on the rule of law

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Budapest, June 30:** When Hungary takes over the helm of the European Union July 1, many politicians in Brussels will have the same thing on their minds whether populist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will use the role to further his reputation as the bloc's main spoiler.



Orbán in recent years has seemed to relish opportunities to block, water down or delay key EU decisions, routinely going against the grain of most other leaders on issues like the war in Ukraine, relations with Russia and China, and efforts to defend democracy and the rule of law.

His public opposition to EU policies and stances has long frustrated his partners in the bloc and pushed him to the margins of the continent's mainstream. Hungary's motto for its presidency, Make Europe Great Again, raised eyebrows for its resemblance to the famous tagline of former US President Donald Trump.

The EU presidency rotates among its member countries, and while the post holds little real power, it does allow countries to put their priorities high on Europe's agenda.

"Now, as Hungary resides over the 27-nation bloc for the coming six months, it will likely keep up its anti-EU rhetoric," said Dorka Takácsy, a research fellow at the Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy.

"But the timeline of its presidency, beginning with a lengthy summer break and a transitional period of forming a new European Parliament and executive commission, will give Budapest few opportunities to derail the bloc's priorities significantly", she said.



A firefighting helicopter drops water over a wildfire at Keratea area, southeast of Athens, Greece

# Temple trail: Sunak, Starmer woo British Hindu voters

The move follows a 'Hindu Manifesto' being launched by an umbrella group of British Hindu organisations for the first time ahead of a British general election, calling on elected representatives to take proactive steps to protect Hindu places of worship and tackle anti-Hindu hate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, June 30:** On the final weekend of campaigning ahead of the UK general election Thursday, both Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the man who is fighting for his job at 10 Downing

Street, Labour Leader Keir Starmer, have hit the temple trail to woo British Hindu voters.

While 44-year-old Sunak was at the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Neasden Sunday to promise to keep trying to "make the community proud", 61-year-old Starmer chose another north London Swaminarayan Temple in Kingsbury Friday to reiterate his commitment to building a "strategic partnership with India".

"This mandir stands as a great statement of the contributions that this community makes to Britain," said Sunak, in his speech at the iconic Neasden Temple, where he offered prayers and sought blessings from the elderly in the gathering.

"Education, hard work, family, those are my values. Those are your values. Those are Conservative values," he declared in his election pitch.

Meanwhile, Starmer was wel-



comed to the tunes of an India-Scottish pipe band at the Kingsbury Temple, where he also began his speech in the same way as Sunak with "Jai Swaminarayan".



that there is "absolutely no place for Hinduophobia in Britain".

Education, hard work, family, those are my values. Those are your values. Those are Conservative values  
RISHI SUNAK | PM, UK

If we're elected next week, we will strive to govern in the spirit of sewa to serve you and a world in need  
KEIR STARMER | OPPN LEADER, UK

to engage with and support the Hindu community in their constituencies," says the Hindus for Democracy group behind the initiative. "It highlights the contributions of Hindus to the UK's social, cultural and economic fabric and seeks to build a future where these contributions are recognised, valued, protected and promoted for a better future for all," the group said.

While the incumbent Sunak-led Tories have been trailing in all pre-election surveys, how the diaspora votes line up this time with Britain's first Indian heritage Prime Minister in the race

remains to be seen. "For the Conservative Party, obviously, they have Rishi Sunak, a British Indian leader, for the first time. It's an unknown factor how much it will matter to British Indian voters that the leader of the party is from their background," notes Sunder Katwala, Director of the British Future think tank. With just days to go before polling day Thursday, both leaders are expected to undertake a so-called campaign blitz, zig-zagging different parts of the United Kingdom including other places of worship to clinch any remaining undecided votes.

## of the day quote

I don't think about competition and certainly don't think about it in encouraging or discouraging terms. If we focus on ourselves, the market is big enough for us to succeed

VINAY DUBE | CHIEF, AKASA AIR

We have travelled a long way. If I go 10 years back, we were quite behind the globe, but now, we are a close number four as a single country business across the globe, which means in a couple of years, maybe we can be number three

SUNIL NAYYAR | MD, SONY

AI is like any other tool, you can use it for good purposes, or you can use it for bad. So one needs to be careful. I am not scared but I would definitely recommend caution. I would recommend that we are careful about what we do with AI, and how we do it

ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA | CEO & CHAIRPERSON, SALESFORCE INDIA

## SHORT TAKES

### PSB plans to raise ₹2,000 cr via QIP

**New Delhi:** State-owned Punjab & Sind Bank plans to raise ₹2,000 crore in the second half of this fiscal via Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) to fund business growth. "The board has already given approval, and merchant bankers should be on-boarded by August," Punjab & Sind Bank managing director and CEO Swarup Kumar Saha told PTI. The fundraising can be concluded in the second quarter or third quarter, depending on market conditions. The QIP would help improve the Capital Adequacy Ratio of the bank, he said. The bank's capital adequacy ratio stood at 17.10 per cent at the end of March 2024.

### Skoda lines up new models, plans EV

**Prague:** Czech car maker Skoda is lining up new models, expanding sales network and also looking to forge partnerships to scale up business in India, the most important market for the brand outside Europe, according to global CEO Klaus Zellmer. The company, which currently sells models like Kushaq and Slavia in the country, aims to drive in an all-new compact SUV early next year hoping to almost double its sales volume in the market. Skoda Auto India sold around 49,000 units last year. India is the world's third-largest passenger vehicle market with annual dispatches surging to 42 lakh units in FY24. The automaker, a part of the Volkswagen Group, is also looking to introduce electric vehicles in the country.

### Mcap of nine of top-10 cos jumps

**New Delhi:** Nine of the top-10 most valued firms together added ₹2,89,699.42 crore in market valuation last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest gainer, in line with a rally in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,822.83 points or 2.36 per cent. The BSE Sensex recorded the best monthly gain in June by climbing 7.14 per cent. The Sensex breached the historic 79,000 mark Thursday. While Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever and ITC were the gainers, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) emerged as the laggard.



In terms of growth momentum and inflation trajectories Indian economy is poised for potentially a stable high growth phase. It is also in a strong position in the context of significant risks that are also facing us

SHASHANKA BHIDE | MPC MEMBER, RBI

### GAIL'S PIPELINE COMPLETION DELAYED

The construction of the ₹12,940-crore 'Urja Ganga' gas pipeline, India's most ambitious project taking environment-friendly fuel to eastern parts of the country, has been delayed by nine months and will now be completed by March 2025, state-owned GAIL (India) Ltd said. The 3,306-kilometre Jagdishpur-Haldia-Bokaro-Dhamra pipeline was originally targeted for completion by June 2024



# GST simplified compliance, improved tax buoyancy

Fake invoices, fraudulent registration still a challenge to curb tax evasion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 30:** Introduced seven years ago, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has simplified compliance, improved tax buoyancy and increased states' revenues, but fake invoices and fraudulent registration remain a big challenge for policymakers trying to curb tax evasion.

Rollled out July 1, 2017, Goods and Services Tax (GST) streamlined 17 taxes and 13 cesses into a 5-tier structure, simplifying the tax regime.

The turnover threshold for registration rose to ₹40 lakh for goods and ₹20 lakh for services (up from ₹5 lakh on average under VAT). GST also reduced 495 different submissions (challan, forms, declarations, etc) across states to just 12.

In seven years, the number of registered taxpayers has risen to 1.46 crore from 65 lakh in 2017. Average monthly GST revenues, soared from around ₹90,000 crore in 2017-18, to about ₹1.90 lakh crore in 2023-24. According to the government data, GST has improved tax buoyancy from 0.72 (pre-GST) to 1.22 (2018-23). Despite compensation ending, state revenues remain buoyant at 1.15.

Without GST, states' revenue from subsumed taxes from fiscal 2018-19 to 2023-24 would have been ₹37.5 lakh crore. With GST, states' actual revenue amounted to ₹46.56 lakh crore.

The effective weighted average GST rate has consistently fallen since 2017 and GST lowered taxes on many essential items com-

### 7TH ANNIVERSARY

Number of registered taxpayers has risen to 1.46cr from 65L

Average monthly GST revenues, soared from around ₹90K-cr, to about ₹1.90L-cr

GST has improved tax buoyancy from 0.72 (pre-GST) to 1.22 (2018-23)



The total Gross GST collection for FY 23-24, amounting to ₹20.18 lakh crore, with an average monthly collection of ₹1.68 lakh crore, signifies a maturing GST ecosystem

RANJEET KUMAR AGARWAL | PRESIDENT, ICAI

pared to pre-GST rates.

Common items like hair oil and soaps saw tax cut from 28 per cent to 18 per cent. Tax on electrical appliances was lowered to 12 per cent as against 31.5 per cent before. GST has exempted many essential items and services, such as unbranded food items, certain life-saving drugs, healthcare, education, public transport, sanitary napkins, hearing aid parts, agricultural services, etc. As evaders find newer modus operandi to defraud the exchequer, tax officers have been grappling with generation of fake invoices and fraudulent GST registrations.

In 2023, the Directorate of GST Intelligence (DGGI) detected tax evasion of more than ₹1.98 lakh crore and arrested 140 masterminds who were involved in defrauding the exchequer. Significant GST evasion was de-

tected in diverse sectors like online gaming, casinos, insurance and secondment (import of manpower services).

The setting up of GST appellate tribunal is expected to streamline and fast-track the dispute resolution process for the industry. However, the principal bench and the state benches of the GSTAT are yet to be operationalised.

Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) President Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal said, "Our efforts in capacity building, including training over 6,800 officials across various government departments, have been pivotal in promoting an efficient and transparent indirect tax regime."

"The total Gross GST collection for FY 23-24, amounting to ₹20.18 lakh crore, with an average monthly collection of ₹1.68 lakh crore, signifies a maturing GST ecosystem. As Chartered Accountants, we remain committed to guiding businesses through the complexities of GST compliance, fostering a culture of transparency, and contributing to India's growth trajectory," Agarwal said.

### LEAD IN WORLD TOP 10

## Equity markets surge 14% in June quarter

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, June 30:** Indian stock indices gave a stellar performance in the June quarter of FY 2024-25. During the April-June period, Indian stock market capitalisation increased by 13.8 per cent, the highest among the top 10 stock markets.

Currently, the Indian equity market is the fifth largest stock market in the world with a market capitalisation of \$5 trillion. Between April and June, the market valuation of US markets, the world's largest stock market, increased by 2.75 per cent to \$56 trillion.

The valuation of China's equity market, the world's second-largest stock market, has declined by 5.59 per cent between April and June. The capitalisation of the Chinese stock market has reduced to \$8.6 trillion.

After India, the markets of Taiwan and Hong Kong surged by 11 per cent and 7.3 per cent respectively between April and June. The market valuation of Taiwan and Hong Kong has increased to 2.49 trillion and 5.15 trillion respectively.

At the same time, the valuation of the United Kingdom's stock market has increased by 3.3 per cent to \$3.2 trillion.

Among the top 10 markets, Saudi Arabia's stock market valuation has declined the most by 8.7 per cent to \$2.67 trillion. After this, the valuation of the French stock market fell by 7.63 per cent to \$3.18 trillion. At the same time, the valuation of Japan's stock market has fallen by 6.24 per cent to \$6.31 trillion.

The Indian stock market is witnessing a bullish trend from 2023 onwards. Last year, the valuation of India's stock market increased by more than 25 per cent. In June, both Sensex and Nifty rallied by nearly 7 per cent.

## EPFO new members addition dips 4% YoY

The data shows that in the last five fiscal years, the gross new members addition by EPFO had not recovered to pre-covid level



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

FISCAL YEAR	NEW SUBSCRIBERS
2023-24	1,09,93,119
2022-23	1,14,98,453
2021-22	1,08,65,063
2020-21	85,48,898
2019-20	1,10,40,683
2018-19	1,39,44,349

**New Delhi, June 30:** Retirement fund body EPFO's gross new subscribers addition declined by over 4 per cent to 1.09 crore in 2023-24 compared to a year ago, as per a report by Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

According to the report 'Payroll Reporting in India: An Employment Perspective - January to April, 2024', the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) recorded 1,09,93,119 gross addition of new members in 2023-24 compared to 1,14,98,453 in 2022-23.

The gross addition of new members was affected due to the pandemic and declined from 1,10,40,683 in 2019-20 to 85,48,898 in 2020-21. It bounced back to 1,08,65,063 in 2021-22.

The Centre as well as states had imposed lockdown restriction in 2020 and 2021 to curb the spread of deadly coronavirus in the country, which had hit economic activities as well as employment.

The data shows that in the last five fiscal years till 2023-24, the gross new members addition by EPFO had not recovered to pre-covid level of 2018-19.

The gross addition of new members was 1,39,44,349 in 2018-19. Since April 2018, the min-

istry has been bringing out the employment related statistics in the formal sector covering the period September 2017 onwards, using information on the number of subscribers who have subscribed under three major schemes, namely Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Employees' State Insurance (ESI) and National Pension Scheme (NPS).

The numbers of subscribers are from various sources and there are elements of overlap. Therefore, the estimates from various sources are not additive, it stated.

The report also showed that the gross addition of members of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) also dipped to 1,67,60,672 in 2023-24 from 1,67,73,023 in 2022-23.

However, according to the report, the new addition of subscribers increased under NPS to 9,37,020 in 2023-24 from 8,24,735 in 2022-23.

## SPORTS

### 2ND INDIAN BOWLER TO TAKE 8 WICKETS IN AN INNINGS OF A TEST MATCH

# Rana show sinks Proteas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, June 30:** Top-order batter Sune Luus (109, 203b, 18x4) struck a fine century as South Africa fought their way to 232 for two in the second innings after India enforced follow-on, courtesy spinner Sneha Rana's (8/77) exemplary bowling in the visitors' first innings on day 3 of the one-off women's Test here Sunday.

South Africa still trail India by 105 runs, after they were bundled out for 266 in the first innings chasing India's 603 for six. However, SA found some fight in their second essay through Luus and skipper Laura Wolvaardt (93 batting, 252b, 12x4). The two put on 190 runs for the second wicket.

Resuming at the overnight score of 236 for four, Marizanne Kapp (74) and Nadine de Klerk (39) could not sustain the momentum as the former soon fell to Rana.

Kapp's wicket opened the floodgates as the Proteas were bowled out in the subsequent 17 runs. Rana and Deepti Sharma got



Sneha Rana celebrates after dismissing a South African batter Sunday PTI PHOTO

the job done with ease.

Rana's figures were the second-best in a women's Test innings for India after record-holder Neetu David's eight for 53 against England in Jamshedpur in 1995. Overall, Rana holds the third-best Test innings figures, with Australia's Ashleigh Gardner (eight for 66) preceding her.

The visitors were 29 for one at the lunch break and they batted till the tea break without further damage to take SA to 124 for one.

In the post-tea session, when their partnership surpassed 138, it also became the highest stand for the tourists against India in Test cricket.

Meanwhile, Luus brought up her maiden Test century, as she became only the second South African to hit a Test ton against India after Mignon du Preez (102) in Mysore in 2014.

Eventually, Indian captain Harmanpreet Kaur broke the partnership, getting rid of Luus when the score was 206 for two.

The dismissal brought Kapp together with the skipper and they batted out the remainder of the day. India took the new ball just three overs before stumps but did not do any wonders.

**Brief scores:** India 603 for 6 decl; South Africa 266 (Marizanne Kapp 74, Sneha Rana 8/77) and 232 for 2 (Sune Luus 109, Laura Wolvaardt 93 batting). Match to continue.

## Swiss stun defending champs

AGENCIES

**Dortmund, June 30:** A Kai Havertz penalty and a Jamal Musiala strike gave Germany a 2-0 win over Denmark as the host nation reached the Euro 2024 quarterfinals here after a dramatic game that was delayed by almost half an hour in the first half due to a violent storm.

However, in the other game played on the night, defending champions Italy crashed out of the tournament losing 0-1 to Switzerland at Berlin. Switzerland scored early on into the second session through Ruben Vargas' brilliant strike. Strangely, the defending cham-

pions looked completely out of sync and never could launch an assault on the opposition goal.

Havertz stroked home from the spot early in the second half in Dortmund following a handball by Joachim Andersen, the unlucky Danish defender who had a goal disallowed at the other end only moments earlier.

Musiala, of Bayern Munich, then ran away to stroke in the second goal midway through the second half as Germany's class told in the last-16 tie. At one point it looked as if the game could be abandoned as English referee Michael Oliver stopped play in the 35th minute and took the teams off due to the storm.

## Sindhu eyeing 3rd Olympic medal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 30:** Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu is physically and mentally in best shape but realises she needs to be 'much more smarter' in her pursuit of a third medal at the Games.

Sindhu had claimed a silver and bronze medal at the last two Olympics at Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo and will be heading into Paris with the aim of becoming the first Indian to win three Olympic medals.

"It is challenging, it's not easy but, at the same time, it's not impossible," Sindhu said dur-

ing an interaction conducted by Sports Authority of India (SAI), the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI).

"Going into the third Olympics, I need to be smarter. I have a lot of experience on my side and so I am very optimistic about getting a medal for my country," the shuttler added.

Sindhu is currently training at the Hermann-Neuberger Sportschule in Saarbrücken, Germany after her proposal was cleared by the Sports Ministry. She will be heading to Paris directly from there when the Games begin July 26.



"... Physically and mentally I am right there, I just have to be smarter and my coach Agus (Dwi Santoso) has been taking care of that, my trainer has been taking care of my physical part," Sindhu stated.

"I am working on all the strokes, whether it is defence, or attack or netplay, it is important to be perfect in all things.

So I'm not focusing on just one stroke or technique, because you never know what it is going to be, there are players who are smart enough to change and move to plan B. So you need to be prepared for it and I am focusing on practicing to make everything perfect," Sindhu pointed out.

Asked why she picked Germany as her training base ahead of the Games, Sindhu said: "Prakash (Padukone) sir, and we all discussed and thought, it will be a good place, it is near to Paris, it is in between nowhere, so I am much more focused," Sindhu informed.

# All hail Men in Blue

# Finally Dravid has a winner's medal

**PNN & AGENCIES**

**New Delhi, June 30:** Eminent persons from all walks of life took to various social media platforms both Saturday and Sunday to congratulate the Indian cricket team for winning the T20 World Cup at Barbados. It ended India's 11-year wait for winning an ICC trophy. The last time India had finished best was in the Champions Trophy in 2013. Everyone was emotional, but for a cricket crazy nation it was a Saturday which will be forever etched in everyone's memory. Here's what some of the eminent personalities had to say.



**TIME TO REJOICE:** Fans celebrate India's victory in the T20 World Cup in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

a brilliant catch! Rohit, this win is a testament to your leadership.

**Jagdeep Dhankar:** Bharat is elated by the spectacular victory of the Men in Blue in the #T20WorldCup2024! The stupendous performance by Team India throughout the tournament is a testament to their dedication.

**MS Dhoni:** WORLD CUP CHAMPIONS 2024. My heart rate was up, well done on being calm, having the self belief and doing what u guys did. From all the Indians back home and everywhere in the world a big thank you for bringing the World Cup Home. CONGRATULATIONS. Thanks for the priceless birthday gift (Birthday July 7).

**Sachin Tendulkar:** Every star added to the Team India jersey inspires our nation's starry-eyed children to move one step closer to their dreams. India gets the 4th

star, our second in T20WC. Life comes full circle for Indian cricket in the West Indies. From our lows in the 2007 ODI World Cup to becoming a cricketing powerhouse and winning the T20WC in 2024.

**Sunil Gavaskar:** It is a great win after such a long time. Earlier, I kept saying that India was getting 90s but not getting centuries because they were reaching semifinals and finals. Now, they have got a century and what a wonderful century this is.

**VVS Laxman:** Congratulations Team India on becoming the T20 World Champions. Been the best team in the tournament remaining unbeaten throughout.

**Ravichandran Ashwin:** We are champions!

**Yuvraj Singh:** You did it boys! @hardikpandya7 you are a hero! @Jaspritumrah93 what an over

to bring India back in the game! Extremely ecstatic for @ImRo45 great captaincy under pressure! @imVkohli #Rahul Dravid and the whole team.

**Sourav Ganguly:** Heartiest congratulations to Rohit Sharma and his team... what a game to win... may be a World Cup in 11 (13) years but the talent the country has, they will win many more. Bumrah is absolutely magic. Well done Rahul Dravid and the support staff.

**Harbhajan Singh:** YEH MERA INDIA. WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS. SO PROUD OF YOU GUYS. (This is my India. We are the champions, so proud of you guys).

**Neeraj Chopra:** T20 World Champions again! What a game. Congratulations, #TeamIndia!

**Amitabh Bachchan:** WORLD CHAMPIONS... INDIA !!! T20

WORLD CUP... 2024... the excitement and emotions and the apprehension... ALL DONE and over... the TV was not seen... we lose when I do...! Nothing more enters the cerebrum... just the TEAM!

**Ranveer Singh:** The King dropped the anchor: What a way to cap an incredible career. And for this guy (Rohit Sharma). No words. Just pure emotion.

**Kamal Haasan:** When the going got tough, the Men in Blue showed what they are made of! King Kohli's anchoring innings, every ball delivered from the magical hands of Jasprit Bumrah, Surya Kumar's catch that will go down as cricketing legend! And Hitman Rohit Sharma's captaincy!

**Alia Bhatt:** Tears of joy, tears of everything!!!! Congratulations team INDIA.

**'THE WALL' ENDS HIS COACHING STINT AS 'CHAMPION', SOMETHING HE NEVER ACHIEVED AS A PLAYER**

AGENCIES

**Bridgetown, June 30:** The great Rahul Dravid was not his usual restrained self after India's T20 World Cup glory and couldn't thank his wards enough for helping him live what he 'wasn't lucky as a player' to experience - the heady feeling of being a World Champion.

With head coach Dravid watching the action from the dugout, skipper Rohit Sharma marshalled his resources beautifully as India held their nerve to eke out a seven-run victory over South Africa in a thrilling finale and win the T20 World Cup title.

"I really have felt short of words over the last few hours. I just could not be more proud of this team, the way we had to fight difficult situations," Dravid said after the triumph.

"Even today I think it was a great testimony... for the team to lose three wickets in the first six overs, to be in the kind of position we were in, but the boys just kept fighting, they kept believing. You know, as a player, I was not lucky enough to win a trophy, but I tried my best whenever I played and it happens, it is a part of sports," the 51-year-

old added. The triumph in the Caribbean is also a sort of redemption for Dravid, under whose captaincy India endured a forgettable first-round exit in the 2007 ODI World Cup in this part of the world. But Dravid said he doesn't believe in words or things like redemption.

"First, there is no redemption. I am not one of those guys who think about redemption and those kinds of things. There are a lot of other players I know who have not been able to win a trophy," Dravid said.

"I was lucky to be given the opportunity to coach, and I was lucky that this bunch of boys made it possible for me to be able to win a trophy and celebrate. Nice feeling, but it's not like I am aiming for some redemption, it's just a job that I was doing. I loved doing the job, I loved working with Rohit and this team," the departing head coach added.

Dravid's fantastic equation with Rohit went a long way in building the kind of atmosphere needed for a team to succeed at the top level. Both have tremendous respect for each other and Rohit dedicated the victory to Dravid. The latter said he will miss Rohit the person most.

"I will miss him (Rohit) as a person. Forget the cricket, forget the captain and everything. I just hope we will still be friends. I think what's really impressed me is the kind of person that he is, the kind of respect he has shown me, the kind of care and commitment he has had for the team," Dravid stated.



## FORMERS LAUD KOHLI, ROHIT'S CONTRIBUTION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 30:** Gautam Gambhir, who is the frontrunner to succeed Rahul Dravid as India head coach, congratulated Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma for bowing out of T20Is with a World Cup win. He said their exit was better than a pre-written script.

"They have retired with the World Cup win, and probably better than any script that was written. Both players are great. They have done a lot for Indian cricket, and I congratulate them and wish them all the best," Gambhir stated Sunday.

However, Gambhir hoped that both the stalwarts would keep churning out grand performances in Tests and ODIs.

"But they are going to play two more formats - Tests and ODIs. I am sure they are going to keep contributing to the country and the team," said the former opener.

The legendary Sachin Tendulkar, who has seen the ca-

reers of both Kohli and Rohit from close quarters, patted the Mumbai-mate for his 'unwavering commitment'.

"I've witnessed your evolution from a promising youngster to a World Cup-winning captain from close quarters. Your unwavering commitment and exceptional talent have brought immense pride to the nation. Leading to T20 World Cup victory is the perfect culmination of your stellar career. Well done, Rohit!," Tendulkar wrote on X.

Tendulkar hoped that Kohli will have more glorious moments in Tests and ODIs. "You have been a true champion of this sport. You may have had a rough time earlier in the tournament, but last night you proved why you're truly one of the greats of the gentleman's game," Tendulkar added.

"Competing in six World Cups and clinching victory in the last one is an experience I know well. I hope to see you continue winning matches for India in the longer formats of the game," he added.

## Rohit, Jadeja hang up T20I boots

AGENCIES

**Bridgetown, June 30:** India skipper Rohit Sharma and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja have announced their retirements from the T20 format. While Rohit announced his decision to quit the T20 format Saturday, his teammate declared Sunday that he will not play the shortest format for the country anymore.

Rohit made the announcement after India's win in the T20 World Cup describing it as the perfect time to 'say goodbye'. "This was my last game (T20). No better time to say goodbye. I wanted this (trophy) badly. It's very hard to put in words," Rohit told the post-match press conference.

"This is what I wanted and it happened. I was very desperate for this (the title) in my life. Happy that we crossed the line this time," Rohit added.

Rohit leaves T20Is with 4,231 runs from 159 matches, having made five hundreds and 32 fifties. He however, will continue playing in Tests and ODIs.

Rohit asserted that the hard work for the last 3-4 years finally



Rohit Sharma hugs Hardik Pandya as Jadeja rushes in to join the celebrations

	M	R	100s	50s	SR	W
Rohit Sharma	159	4231	5	32	140.9	
Ravindra Jadeja	74	515	0	0	127.16	54

paid off. "I am completely lost and can't say what kind of emotions I am going through. I can't explain it in words. Let this sink in.

Last night (Friday), I couldn't sleep as I was desperate and wanted it so badly. But I managed myself well inside the ground,"

he said after the game

The 37-year-old didn't forget to credit the team management and his fellow players for responding to his call. "We wanted this really bad, a lot of minds need to come together, very proud of the bunch of boys and the management, giving us the liberty to play and that trust. It starts from management, coach, captain, and the players," Rohit said.

The Indian skipper also praised Jasprit Bumrah stating that he does not know how the pacer manages to maintain his skill-set.

"Don't know how Bumrah does it day in day out. It's just masterclass. He backs his skills which is more than enough, and is a confident lad. Class act," Rohit said about the 'Player of the Tournament'.

Meanwhile the 35-year-old Jadeja took to Instagram to announce his retirement from T20Is. He will continue to play ODIs and Tests.

"With a heart full of gratitude, I bid farewell to T20 internationals," Jadeja wrote underneath a picture of him holding the trophy.

## ₹125 crore for Indian players

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 29:** BCCI secretary Jay Shah hailed Sunday India's epochal title win in the T20 World Cup and announced prize money of ₹125 crore for the team for their monumental feat in the just-concluded ICC showpiece.

"Under the exceptional leadership of Rohit Sharma, this team have shown remarkable resolve and resilience, becoming the first team in the history of the ICC T20 World Cup to win the tournament unbeaten," said Shah in a statement.

"They have faced and silenced their critics with stellar performances time and again. Their journey has been nothing short of inspirational, and today they join the ranks of the greats," he added.

Shah later took to social media to announce a cash reward of ₹125 crore for the team. "I am pleased to announce prize money of INR 125 crore for Team India for winning the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024," Shah wrote on X. "The team have showcased exceptional talent," he added.

## Hardik wants 'graceful' critics

Star all-rounder not bothered by criticism of people who do not know him

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bridgetown, June 30:** Hardik Pandya believes in leading his life with a lot of grace and he has no issues with people who don't know him one per cent but said a lot about him in the middle of his disappointing campaign as Mumbai Indians (MI) captain in the IPL.

"I believe in grace. A lot was said by people who don't know even know me one per cent as a person. People have spoken, no issues but I have always believed in life that you never respond with words, circumstances can respond," Hardik said after the final.

"Even difficult times, they



don't last forever. It is important to be graceful, whether you win or lose. It is time for fans and everyone else to learn that (to be graceful). We need to find better ways to conduct ourselves. I am

It is time for fans to realise the pressure we go through and they should learn better ways to conduct themselves

HARDIK PANDYA

sure the same people will be happy," Hardik added. Hardik defended 16 runs in the last over to ensure a famous win for his team. "To be honest, I was enjoying. Very few get these life-changing opportunities. It could have gone the other way as well today (Saturday) but I see it glass half full and not glass half empty, I was not taking pressure at all," Hardik stated.

## Keeping calm helped: Bumrah

**PACER FINISHES WITH 15 WICKETS FROM 8 GAMES, THIRD AMONG WICKET-TAKERS**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bridgetown, June 30:** Little surprisingly, lead pacer Jasprit Bumrah was adjudged the 'Player of the Tournament' for his impeccable impact on India's triumphant T20 World Cup campaign.

Stats would show that Bumrah is third on the wicket-takers' chart with 15 scalps from eight matches but his value remained immeasurable for India in the ICC showpiece, which they won



after 17 years, beating South Africa by seven runs.

Bumrah underlined his value for this side taking the wickets of Reeza Hendricks early and

Marco Jansen at the end as he kept SA run-making in check.

"I tried to keep calm. We play the sport for this, I am really over the moon, my son is here,

my family is here. We've been working really hard towards this, no better feeling than that. We play sport for the big stages," said Bumrah during the presentation ceremony.

Bumrah said the significance of the occasion fired him up to do even better.

"On the big day, you have to give more, throughout the tournament I felt very clear and calm. At my peak mindset I think of one ball at a time. The emotions can take over, but now the job is done. I am very happy at the way things turned in our favour," Bumrah stated.

Bumrah, however, admitted once the job was done he too was unable to keep his emotions in control while his teammates wept with joy.