



**On cloud nine**  
To be part of spy film *Alpha* alongside top industry heroines is a dream come true, says actor Sharvari Wagh

LEISURE | P2



**Trump accepts nomination**  
Donald Trump predicts an "incredible victory" in accepting the Republican presidential nomination

INTERNATIONAL | P10



**Markets tumble**  
Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumble as investors rush to book profits after four days of record-breaking rally

BUSINESS | P11



**Uncertainty looms**  
With captaincy gone, Hardik Pandya faces an uncertain future as the new team management seeks stability in the squad

SPORTS | P12

**SHORT TAKES**

**No grievance hearing July 22**

**Bhubaneswar:** There will be no hearing of public grievances at the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell here July 22 (Monday) as the first session of the 17th Legislative Assembly will commence on that day. The General Administration and Public Grievance department has issued a circular in this regard Friday. The public hearing, which is held every Monday, remained shut July 8 due to Rath Yatra. Notably, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi resumed the public hearing July 1 after a gap of 16 years.

**Depression in Bay to bring heavy rain**

**Bhubaneswar:** With a low pressure area (Lopar) in the Bay of Bengal intensifying into a depression, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Friday forecast heavy rainfall across Odisha over the next four days. According to IMD, the depression was centered at 8:30am over northwest and adjoining westcentral Bay of Bengal, situated approximately 70 km southeast of Puri (Odisha), 130 km east of Gopalpur (Odisha), 130 km south-southeast of Paradip (Odisha), and 240 km east-northeast of Kalingapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). Under its influence, the state is likely to experience heavy rain. P4

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



They expect us to work 24x7 365 days a year. We are machines, not some corporate slaves

**MARKET WATCH**

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	80604.65	↓ 738.81
NIFTY	24530.90	↓ 269.95
DOLLAR	83.69	↑ ₹0.03
EURO	91.06	↓ ₹0.40
GOLD	₹73,098	↓ ₹1,057
SILVER	₹ 89,940	↓ ₹1,832

**WEATHER**

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	32.3°C	32.2°C
Min Temp	26.6°C	25.2°C
Humidity	89%	95%
Rainfall	10.4mm	11.4mm

**FORECAST**  
GENERALLY CLOUDY SKY WITH HEAVY RAIN



**AGAINST RESERVATION:** Anti-quota protesters clash with police and Awami League supporters at Rampura in Dhaka, Bangladesh (Reports P8 & 10) REUTERS

## GLOBAL CHAOS

A global IT failure triggered by a faulty software update by CrowdStrike in Microsoft's Windows brought services at airports, banks, healthcare facilities and business houses around the world to a standstill Friday. Chaos marked the day when airline operations were severely hit leading to long queues of passengers at check-in counters and even outside airports. Escalating disruptions continued hours after the technology firm said it is gradually fixing the issue affecting access to Microsoft 365 apps and services

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi/ Mumbai/ Bhubaneswar July 19:** In one of the biggest-ever IT outages, an update of a product offered by global cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike triggered problems with Microsoft's Windows across the planet, hitting operations at financial sector companies and airlines while hospital operations got postponed and some television channels went off air. In India, it led to crashing of airline check-in systems, causing delays and cancellation of dozens of flights. IndiGo alone cancelled around 200 flights. Hundreds of other flights got delayed as bookings, check-in and boarding moved to manual mode. In Odisha, at least six flights



Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru

**The reasons for this outage have been identified and updates have been released to resolve the issue**

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | IT MINISTER

from Bhubaneswar airport were cancelled while arrival and departure of many flights got delayed by two-three hours. Passengers at the airport had to check in manually. Taking to X, Ankita Bhatkhande, a flyer, said, "It is terrible. I am at Bhubaneswar Airport now and the flight to Mumbai is delayed by 2 hours. There is barely any place to sit here." Airports like Chennai, Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad also witnessed chaotic scenes. Web check-in services were not available, leading to long queues at check-in counters and overcrowded lounges at several airports. Sources said 56 out of 3,652

## Criminal case lodged against Puja Khedkar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 19:** The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Friday said it has lodged a criminal case against probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar for faking her identity to fraudulently avail attempts in the Civil Services Examination beyond eligibility, and taken steps to debar her from future selections.

Following a complaint from the Commission, Delhi Police said its Crime Branch has taken up the investigation. "UPSC has filed a complaint with Delhi Police against Puja Manorama Dilip Khedkar for misrepresenting and falsifying facts to obtain extra attempts in the UPSC examinations, beyond the prescribed limit. Consequently, a case has been registered under the relevant sections of the law, and investigation has been taken up in Crime Branch," Delhi Police said in a statement.

Khedkar is accused of misusing power and privileges, by demanding perks and facilities she was not entitled for, during her training in Pune District Collectorate in Maharashtra recently. She was accused of bullying everyone around and of placing a red-blue beacon (in-



dicating high-ranking official) atop a private Audi (a luxury sedan) car used by her that also had 'Maharashtra Government' written on it during her stint.

After the Pune Collectorate flagged the matter, Khedkar was transferred to Washim District Collectorate in Vidarbha region. She was declared qualified in the CSE-2022. Based on the results declared last year by the UPSC, Khedkar was allocated the IAS and her home state Maharashtra as a cadre. Investigations revealed that the 2023-batch IAS probationer fraudulently availed attempts beyond the permissible limit under the examination rules by faking her identity by way of changing her name, her father's and mother's name, her photograph/signature, her email ID, mobile number and address.

## Pitambar Acharya is new Advocate General



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** Senior advocate Pitambar Acharya, who fought the case for reopening of Srimandir Ratna Bhandar, was Friday appointed the new Advocate General of Odisha.

Acharya, 59, had unsuccessfully contested the 2019 Assembly election as the BJP candidate against then chief minister Naveen Patnaik from Hinjili seat.

"In pursuance of Clause (1) of Article 165 of the Constitution of India, the Governor of Odisha is pleased to appoint Sri Pitambar Acharya, Senior Advocate, High Court of Orissa to be the Advocate General of the State of Odisha with immediate effect," a notification said.

Acharya was the advocate of former BJP state president Samir Mohanty who filed a petition in the HC, seeking the reopening of Ratna Bhandar of the 12th-Century shrine in Puri.

Acharya also worked as a journalist in an English daily for some time.

He joined politics during his college days with the Congress-affiliated NSUI. He was the students' union president of the BJB College in 1984 and also headed the students' union of Utkal University Law College in 1987.

He joined the Orissa High Court Bar Association in 1991 and was also the assistant to former AG Gangadhar Rath under the Congress government in the state.

## ED attaches mining lessee's ₹1.52cr assets

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Friday claimed to have attached properties worth ₹1.52 crore belonging to Basanta Das, a mining lease holder, under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

A senior ED official said Das, the proprietor of M/S Das Minerals, held the lease of Kasiabada iron ore mines in Badampahar area of Mayurbhanj district. The Central agency had taken up the investigation after a chargesheet was filed by Odisha Vigilance citing "illegal mining" in Badampahar from 2005 to 2009. On the basis this, ED had earlier booked Anand Kumar for conniving with Das in the alleged scam.

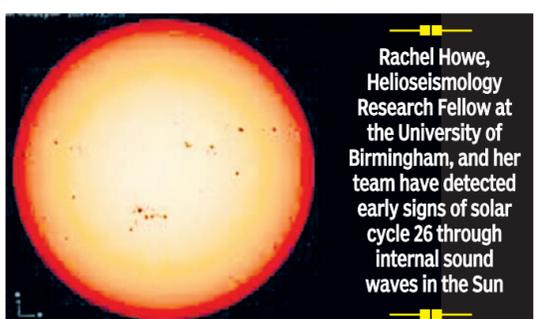
It is worth mentioning that searches were conducted at the residence and office premises of Das as part of the investigations.

## Researchers detect first signs of next solar cycle

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 19:** Even though the Sun is just halfway through its current cycle, a team of researchers from the University of Birmingham detected the first rumblings of its next 11-year solar cycle through sound waves within it. The researchers said this current cycle is now reaching its peak, or solar maximum that occurs when the Sun's magnetic field flips and its poles swap places, until mid-2025, according to a report by 'NDTV'.

ations in the number of observed sunspots on the Sun's surface. It impacts Sun's surface activity, with sunspots, flares and coronal mass ejections all increasing during solar maximum. This causes an increase in electromagnetic energy heading towards Earth, making auroras more visible and at lower altitudes. The current solar cycle, known as Cycle 25, began in 2019. It is not expected to end for another six years but researchers from the University of Birmingham have spotted the first signs that the next solar cycle is beginning. They presented the findings at



the Royal Astronomical Society's National Assistance Astronomy in Hull. Rachel Howe, Helioseismology Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham, and her team have detected early

signs of solar cycle 26 through internal sound waves in the Sun, revealing bands of faster and slower rotation.

This pattern, observed using helioseismic data from GONG, MDI, and HMI since 1995, shows faster-moving material drifting toward the Equator before each solar cycle starts. Comparing data from Solar Cycles 23, 24, and 25, researchers note a repeating but not identical pattern.

Howe, who has been monitoring these changes for 25 years, is excited about the first hints of Cycle 26, expected to start around 2030, offering insights into the Sun's plasma and magnetic fields.

## BJP COMMITTED TO SPEEDY DEVPT OF ODISHA: NADDA

PNN & AGENCIES

**Puri, July 19:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president JP Nadda Friday said his party is committed to speedy development of Odisha and that effective steps would be taken for the empowerment of Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste people of the state. Nadda said this while addressing BJP's state executive meeting here.

The Union minister thanked the people of Odisha for their "overwhelming support" in this year's election as the saffron party formed its maiden gov-

ernment in the state by winning 78 seats in the 147-member Assembly. BJP also won a landslide 20 of the 21 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

The BJP national president said, "BJP will leave no stone unturned to serve the people of Odisha and ensure their welfare. The party will stress on the development of the Schedule Caste people and our tribal brothers."

The Odisha unit of the saffron party is holding its first state executive committee meeting here after forming its government.

# leisure



## KATE HUDSON NEVER WEARS DEODORANT

Hollywood actress Kate Hudson has confessed she never wears deodorant because she prefers to spread her 'natural scent'. The 45-year-old Hollywood actress made the confession during an episode of TV show *Watch What Happens Live* when she was grilled about the hygiene habits of her *Fool's Gold* co-star Matthew McConaughey.

## WHEN SCARLETT REFUSED TO VOICE OPEN AI'S CHATBOT

American actress Scarlett Johansson has revealed she refused to voice OpenAI's chatbot because she worried it would be strange for her kids and it went against her core values.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
Today, you may want to wear your power suit, says Ganesha. If you notice people bending and bowing a bit, understand that your hard work has paid off! If not, then you need to get more organised. Either way, there's work to be done.

**TAURUS**  
This is not a day when you should be fooling around with your health. Do not take your health and fitness for granted, warns Ganesha. You will be feeling lazy and listless all day long. Chances are that you could fall ill on account of carelessness. Both physical exertion as well as mental stress should be meticulously avoided.

**GEMINI**  
An auspicious and progressive day awaits you. Along with your daily work you will also be able to tackle your personal issues as well. You will establish an emotional bonding with some person, or will feel the need to. It is a good day to ponder over issues such as partnership or marriage.

**CANCER**  
Be ready to get into the shoes of a juggler today, says Ganesha. Multi-tasking is the need of the hour, my friend! But, no worries for you will be energetic and deft. Pending pile of work will be finished with ease. Seemingly impossible tasks will be finished in a blink of an eye.

**LEO**  
You will be in a very good mood today. You will inspire others to achieve substantial things in life. While you have been looking to take on an extremely challenging project, you have been unable to find the right opening so far. You ought to start such projects today, says Ganesha. The obstacles in your way will fade away on their own and you will be easily able to find the path to success.

**VIRGO**  
Your driving force will be a single-minded desire to take your destiny in your own hands. Your organisational abilities will be flawless, and a burning desire to succeed will motivate you to keep pegging at your tasks. Ganesha says your managerial abilities will be enhanced by your decision-making and reasoning abilities.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says that you will be able to spend more time with your friend circle. You will be attracted to someone of the opposite sex. In the evening today you will be able to take out your beloved for a romantic evening combined with a drive and dinner at a restaurant.

**SCORPIO**  
A happening day where a lot may happen today, suggests Ganesha. Grey hairs will teach valuable lessons, so keep your ears open to bosses and elders. Seniors will extend their best possible cooperation to you. Stay clear of courtrooms, warns Ganesha, lest the legalities sink you deep.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
A paradigm shift in your temperament and your looks is on the cards today. Your personality will get better as you do some chic attire, jewellery and a rather loud perfume today. You're a magnet today, says Ganesha, and will charm your way through a crowd of admirers who will clamour for your attention.

**CAPRICORN**  
Your investments, inheritance, receipts, etc. will keep your pockets filled with cash. No sooner you try to put them in safe; there will be more than one reason for some expenditure. Keeping a watch on incomes and expenses both will help you avoid any monetary problems, advises Ganesha. Your maturity, practicality and experience will come to your rescue today.

**AQUARIUS**  
You are ambitious, and quite unapologetic about the way you pursue your goals! You will work hard and push your way through if you have to. Not just that, you will see to it that you have all the skills and competency required to make it big. Success is never served on a plate, and you know it, says Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
For those in the creative, marketing or advertising fields, today will likely bring about an important milestone on their path to progress, says Ganesha. Your creativity and ingenuity will be at their peak.

# Ulka shines bright after 43 years

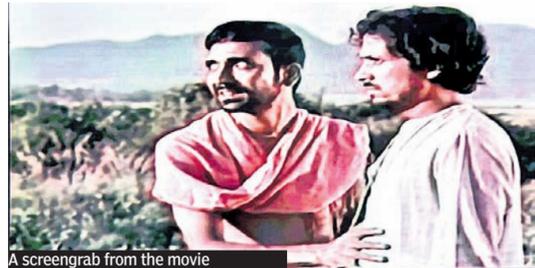


**Bhubaneswar:** Led by film archivist Surya Deo, a National Film Award winner, the Film Journalists' Forum arranged the screening of the restored version of *Ulka* (The Meteor), an iconic Odia film released about

43 years ago, here at Soochana Bhawan, Friday. "The big budget movie was released in 1981, but almost all its prints were lost. However, we managed to find a damaged print at Utkal Cinema in

Berhampur. But it was not suitable for screening. Later, we traced a U-matic video cassette, which was cleaned with care and could be restored," shared Deo. A slew of film personalities,

including Sabyasachi Mohapatra, Tutu Nayak, Partha Sarathi Ray, Sukanta Rath, Harihar Mohapatra, Hara Rath, and Debajani, were in attendance. Presented by Rajlaxmi Production, *Ulka* was jointly directed by Raju Mishra and Surya Mishra. Inspired by the American TV series *Welcome Back, Kotter*, the movie had Mahashweta Roy, Gloria Mohanty, Byomkesh Tripathy, and Radha Panda in key roles. Eminent culture researcher Rajat Kar and Harihar Dash, an English professor at Berhampur University, were part of the cast.



A screengrab from the movie

*Ulka* was the first and last movie, they acted in.

All the songs in the movie were recorded in Mumbai. The entire team of eminent Hindi film music director RD Burman, including Bhupinder Singh, Shivkumar Sharma, and Hariprasad Chaurasia, was in-

involved in the project. Bhanu, who played mouthorgan for Amitabh Bachchan in *Sholay*, also did the same for *Ulka*, informed Deo.

Under the Smrutichhaya programme, *Ulka* is the 21st Odia classic to be restored for screening, he added. BIJAY MANDAL, OP

# I'm like a ball of energy: Sharvari



**Mumbai:** Actress Sharvari Wagh is not feeling the pressure as she enjoys the process of starring in the spy film *Alpha* alongside Alia Bhatt and describes herself as a "ball of energy right now."

Talking about being a part of the same universe as Deepika Padukone, Alia Bhatt, and Katrina Kaif, Sharvari, who will play a super agent, said: "It is hugely overwhelming to be a part of this massive Spy Universe. I'm honestly not feeling a lot of pressure because I'm truly enjoying every bit of the process of just being a part of this universe."

"I'm like a ball of energy right now - too excited to have this opportunity - too excited to be working with one of the greatest superstars of our country, Alia Bhatt."

The actress said she is looking forward to being on set, learning from Alia every day, and delivering her scenes well.

"If I let the pressure get to me, I won't have fun, and I don't want that. To be part of a universe that has my cinematic idols is a dream come true. I look up to Alia Bhatt, Deepika Padukone, and Katrina Kaif. Just the fact that I'm playing a super agent in this galaxy of the greatest icons of cinema is too surreal," said Sharvari.

The film is helmed by Shiv Rawail. The spy universe also includes films such as *Ek Tha Tiger*, *Tiger Zinda Hai*, *War*, *Pathaan*, and *Tiger 3*, among many others. IAN S



# Kim can't get enough of Ash

**Mumbai:** Kim Kardashian and her sister Khloe Kardashian were in Mumbai to attend the lavish wedding of billionaire heir Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant July 12. Apart from her striking desi looks, Kim also grabbed attention for a selfie with Aishwarya Rai. Now, unseen pictures of her posing with Aishwarya at the grand Ambani wedding are out.

A Redditor shared the photos and wrote, "Kim can't get enough of Ash (Aishwarya)." Kim looked at the Devdas actress as she posed for the camera in one of the photos. The two also posed for a group picture with other wedding guests. Aishwarya wore a colourful

ethnic look, while Kim decked up in a pale pink lehenga and lots of diamond jewellery.

A person commented on the Reddit post, "Man nobody can beat Ash's beauty!!! My dad still remembers spotting her at the airport in early 2000's and everybody was in awe..."

Another wrote, "Kim knows her clout. No matter how obnoxious, she's reached this far because she knows what to attach herself to (cue: Paris Hilton)."

A comment also read, "Omg (Oh my God) the way Kim is looking at her (Aishwarya) is literally us looking at queen Ash." A person also said, "Aishwarya lives up to her name." AGENCIES

# Natasa faces backlash post separation

**Mumbai:** Hardik Pandya and Natasa Stankovic have confirmed their separation following weeks of speculation. On Thursday night, the couple posted a statement together on social media indicating that they had 'mutually decided to part ways'.

Hours after Natasa and their son Agastya departed Mumbai, the statement was released. The statement read, "After 4 years of being together, Hardik and I have decided to mutually part ways. We tried our best together and gave it our all, and we believe this is in the best interest for the both of us. This was a tough decision for us to make, given the joy, mutual respect and companionship we enjoyed together and as we grew a family."

Natasa and Hardik kept their comments switched off after posting the statements, but the internet managed to get its voice heard.

Natasa received a wave of hate on social media as soon as the declaration was made public. While one user wrote, "Hard to believe," another commented, "Itne acche insaan ko pehchan nhi paayi."

Another netizen wrote, "He'll find

someone better." A user wrote, "Leave her sir u deserve much better than her." Many misogynistic remarks also began to speculate about Natasa's expected divorce settlement, with one individual posting, "Kitni property le ja rhi hardik bhaiya ye?"

Hardik and Natasa first met in early 2019. On January 1, 2020, Hardik and Natasa got engaged during a romantic yacht trip in Dubai.

Shortly after their engagement, the couple had an intimate wedding ceremony.



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



**FUN post CROSSWORD**

1		2		3		4	5	6	7
				8					
9					10				
11				12					
	13	14			15	16			
17					18				19
20				21		22		23	
24					25				
26								27	

Copyright ©2024 PuzzleJunction.com

**Across**

- 1 Churn
- 4 Stumper
- 9 Rattle
- 10 Rocker
- 11 Violent military offensive
- 12 One of a pair to wear
- 13 Rate an "F"
- 15 Insanely
- 20 Feast
- 22 Rhino relative
- 24 Museum piece
- 25 Leprechaun, maybe
- 26 Assorted
- 27 News flash
- Down**
- 1 Short and blunt
- 2 Boredom
- 3 Skyline
- 5 More upscale
- 6 Bit-by-bit
- 7 Rudderless
- 8 Discourage
- 14 Ointment ingredient
- 16 Belgian port
- 17 Terminates
- 18 Ham's venue
- 19 Hypnotic state
- 21 Gastric woe
- 23 Bohemian folk dance

**SUDOKU**

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

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

**SOLUTIONS**

**CROSSWORD**

S	E	S	A	M	E	E	D	A	M		
T	N	C	S	N	R	T					
R	E	L	I	C	C	Y	C	L	O	N	E
A	A	O	U	Y	M	A					
P	Y	R	A	M	I	D	C	H	A	O	S
G	P	O	L	E							
L	E	E	W	A	Y	F	O	R	C	E	D
O	N	A	P	H							
C	A	P	R	I	C	H	A	R	I	O	T
U	E	S	P	E	N	D	I	N	G	R	
S	U	S	P	E	N	D	I	N	G		
T	J	O	L	T	C	H	A	I	O	Y	

**SUDOKU**

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

# downtown

## TAMPARA: NGT SEEKS REPORT ON REMOVAL OF CONSTRUCTIONS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** Expressing concern over construction of concrete structures in Tampara lake in brazen violation of norms, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the Ganjam Collector to submit a report within four weeks as to what action has been taken for removal of such illegal civil constructions.

The move by NGT's Eastern Zone Bench came July 16 while hearing a plea of Wildlife Society of Orissa (WSO) alleging that in guise of promoting tourism, huge construction activities had already taken place in the lake and its fringes in violation of environmental norms.

Taking cognisance, the NGT had in August last year asked the Ganjam Collector to halt the constructions. The NGT constituted a four-member high-level committee to visit the site and submit a report on the illegal construction.

In its September 25, 2023 report, the Ganjam Collector informed the NGT that construction work has been stopped and that a committee has been formed to look into the issue. "The committee visited the site September 22, 2023 and opined that a detailed analysis on conservation/integrated management plan of Tampara lake for maintaining its water quality and ecology is required," the Ganjam Collector said in its report.

During the July 16 hearing, the NGT questioned as to why the

constructions have not been demolished or removed so far.

"We, therefore, direct the Collector and District Magistrate, Ganjam to file his personal affidavit within four weeks showing what action has been taken for removal of the concrete structures standing inside the Tampara lake waters and its conservation area," the bench of Justice B Amit Sthalekar (judicial member) and Dr Arun Kumar Verma (expert member) said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) informed the NGT that the proposal for development of tourism infrastructure at Tampara lake was approved by the Ministry of Tourism under Swadesh Darshan during September 2016.

It also said a modified DPR of Coastal Circuit in Odisha under Swadesh Darshan covering Gopalpur, Tampara, Barkul and Satapada has been received by the MoEF&CC and the same is being placed before the National Wetland Committee for inputs. The NGT granted 12-week time to MoEF&CC for the process.

The NGT has posted the next hearing to September 2, 2024.

Petitioner's counsel Sankar Prasad Pani had informed the NGT that permanent constructions, including resorts and cottages, were being built in and around the lake by OTDC.

Spread over 751 acre, Tampara, one of the largest freshwater lakes in the state, is a designated Ramsar site since 2021.



**AT LORD'S ABODE:** A huge rush of devotees near the Srimandir Lion's Gate in Puri, Friday

PIC: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

## STATE CELEBRATES RASAGOLA DIBASA

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** Odisha celebrated Rasagola Dibasa on the occasion of Nildari Bije Friday when Lord Jagannath and His siblings returned to Srimandir sanctum sanctorum after the annual Rath Yatra.

The day is celebrated as Rasagola Dibasa because, according to tradition, Lord Jagannath offers Rasagola to His consort Maa Lakshmi on this day to appease her anger.

According to mythology, Goddess Lakshmi was angry with the Lord for not taking her

in the Rath Yatra, said Bhaskar Mishra, a researcher in Jagannath Culture.

Since July 30, 2015, people of Odisha have been celebrating Niladri Bije ritual as Rasagola Dibasa. On this occasion, the Trinity is offered Rasagola as bhog before being taken into the sanctum sanctorum in the ceremonial pahandi procession.

Researcher Asit Mohanty explained that Rasagola originated from Srimandir in Puri as Khira Mohana, which later evolved into Pahala Rasagola. It has been traditionally offered as bhog to goddess Lakshmi at the temple.



According to local legend, Goddess Lakshmi locks Jai Vijay Dwar, one of the temple gates, and prevents the Lord's entry into the sanctum sanctorum of

the 12th century temple.

Historically, references to Rasagola can be traced to the late 15th century in Odia Ramayana written by Balaram Das, also known as Dandi Ramayana or Jagamohana Ramayana.

Over the years, Rasagola Dibasa has evolved into a widely celebrated event, from villages to cities, with people exchanging the sweet dish to mark the occasion. Sweet shops also participate by preparing Rasagola in different flavours, sometimes hosting competitions to showcase their culinary skills.

In 2019, Odisha received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for its version of Rasagola.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi extended warm greetings on the occasion of Rasagola Dibasa and Niladri Bije.

"Many many greetings on the occasion of holy Niladri Bije and Rasagola Day. Chaturdhamurthy will return to Ratna Singhasan after their nine-day-long sojourn. On this occasion, Lord Jagannath offers delicious Rasgulla to his beloved wife Goddess Laxmi to pacify her anger," said the CM.

## Naveen elected BJD Parliamentary party chief

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** Ex-Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was Friday elected the chairperson of BJD's Parliamentary party.

Patnaik held a meeting at his residence with the party's nine Rajya Sabha MPs, in which he was unanimously elected the chairperson, BJD MP Sasmit Patra said.

As the BJD has no MPs in the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha

**The BJD supremo also advised the MPs to take up the demand for special category status for Odisha**

members will take the responsibility of raising Odisha's issues in Parliament, he said.

In the meeting, the MPs discussed the strategies to be

adopted by them in Parliament during the budget session, which will begin July 22, he added.

Patnaik, who is also the BJD president, directed the MPs to play the role of a strong opposition and continue to aggressively counter the BJP-led Centre on issues of Odisha's interest in the Parliament, the party said in a statement.

He also advised the MPs to take up the demand for special category status for Odisha, it added.

Speaking to reporters, BJD MP Sulata Deo said, "We will also raise issues such as the slow progress of national highway projects, negligence towards railway projects, inadequate bank branches in the state, delay in revision of coal royalty, setting up more Kendriya Vidyalayas and Ekalavya Schools."

She said the BJD will exert pressure on the Centre to implement women's reservation in Parliament and assemblies.

## SC: Huge pendency of cheque bounce cases 'serious concern'

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 19:** Expressing 'serious concern' over pendency of a large number of cheque bounce cases, the Supreme Court has said courts should encourage compounding of offences under the Negotiable Instruments Act if parties are willing to reach a compromise.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah set aside the conviction of a man named P Kumarasamy in a cheque bounce case, after noting that the parties have entered into a settlement agreement and Rs 5.25 lakh has been paid to the complainant.

"A large number of cases involving dishonour of cheques are pending before courts which is a serious concern for our judicial system. Keeping in mind that the 'compensatory aspect' of remedy shall have priority over the 'punitive aspect', courts should encourage compounding of offences under the NI Act if parties are willing to do so," the bench said in its July 11 order.

The Negotiable Instruments Act governs all negotiable in-



struments like promissory notes, bills of exchange, and cheques.

Compounding offences are those where a compromise can be reached by the rival parties.

The bench said it has to be remembered that dishonour of cheques is a regulatory offence which was made an offence only in view of public interest so that the reliability of these instruments can be ensured.

"Considering the totality of the circumstances and compromise between the parties, we allow this appeal and acquit the appellants by setting aside the impugned order dated April 1, 2019 as well as the trial court's order dated October 16, 2012. Appellant no.2 (P Kumarasamy), who was exempted from surrendering by this Court, need not surrender and his sureties are hereby discharged," the bench ordered.

The bench noted that in 2006, P Kumarasamy alias Ganesh had borrowed Rs 5,25,000 from respondent A Subramaniam but did not repay the loan.

To discharge the debt, the bench said, Kumarasamy gave a cheque for Rs 5.25 lakh in the name of his partnership firm M/s New Win Export.

"Since the cheque was dishonoured due to insufficient funds, respondent filed a complaint under Section 138 NI Act against the appellants where the trial court vide order dated October 16, 2012 convicted the appellants and imposed a sentence of one year of simple imprisonment each," it said.

It noted Kumarasamy challenged the conviction before the appellate court, which reversed the findings of the trial court and acquitted him and the firm.

"Finally, when the matter was taken to the high court at the instance of the respondent/complainant, the high court in its order dated April 1, 2019 set aside the order of the appellate court and restored the order of the trial court, convicting the appellants," the bench noted.

## 'Technology to be harnessed for legal system'

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 19:** Acting Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court Justice Manmohan Friday said technology has to be harnessed to improve the legal system.

He was speaking at the inauguration of a 'pilot hybrid court with a speech-to-text facility for evidence recording' and the launch of a 'digital court application for judicial officers to access all e-filed cases' in the Tis Hazari district court.

"We have to use and harness technology to improve the legal system to ensure that the people who are accused of crimes are brought to book and the delays have to be cut short... the only way to ensure that the system works properly is to ensure that good technology is brought into the system," Justice Manmohan said.

He said that the speech-to-text facility for evidence recording was a "very powerful tool", having the potential of becoming a "game-changer". "Today when I sit in the court and decide matters, one of the things which strikes me when I look at the big picture is that today technology is being used to circumvent the laws to break the laws to promote infringement," Justice Manmohan said.

"The only way we can deal with violations and bring people in conformity with the law is again to use technology in the right way," he added.



**ALUMNI MEET:** Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy lights the ceremonial lamp during the annual alumni meet of Rama Devi Women's University in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

## 200mn-yr-old dinosaur fossil found after Brazil flood

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Rio de Janeiro, July 19:** Torrential rains causing historic flooding in southern Brazil have revealed a 'very well-preserved' dinosaur fossil dating back some 200 million years, according to the research team who discovered it.

The fossil was first identified in May near the city of Sao Joao do Polesine, some 280 kilometre (170 miles) west of Porto Alegre, in a part of the Brazilian pampas dubbed the country's 'El Dorado' of paleontology.

A team of paleontologists from the Federal University of Santa Maria spent four days excavating the fossil to remove

the block of rock containing a 'near complete' dinosaur fossil to take back to their research centre for the study.

Initial findings have determined the fossil was a specimen of the Herrerasauridae family, which were bipedal carnivores with long tails found in the area of modern-day Brazil and Argentina.

The fossil dates to the Triassic period, between 250 to 200 million years ago.

Rodrigo Temp Muller, who is leading the research effort, told AFP that the fossil is possibly the second most complete fossil of a Herrerasauridae specimen to date.

The most complete was found



in the same part of Brazil in 2014, leading to the identification of a new species with hooked

claws, dubbed gnathovorax cabreirai.

The fossil will undergo several

rounds of analysis before researchers can determine whether the specimen is a member of the same species.

"We have to be very careful with this work, it's very meticulous, almost surgical," Muller said, adding the process could take several months.

"Every little part that we might damage will be a bit of information that we might not be able to recover."

Once the analysis is done, Muller's team will publish the results in a scientific journal.

Erosion acceleration The heavy rains that affected the pampas in May killed more than 180 people in Brazil and caused major damage to infra-

structure.

The floods revealed the fossil much earlier by 'accelerating erosion', a silver lining to researchers, who would not have discovered it until much later, according to Muller.

The downpour is not without its drawbacks, however, as heavy rainfall 'also destroys a lot of the material' from the fossils, especially small fragments.

Paleontologists maintain a close watch on the fossil deposit as a result, especially any fragments that may be exposed, and focus their efforts during excavations to recover these fossils in the best possible condition.

# Heavy rains in state as low pressure intensifies into depression: IMD



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** With a low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal intensifying into a depression, India Meteorological Department (IMD) Friday forecast heavy rainfall across the state over the next four days. According to IMD, the depression was centered over north-west and adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal, situated approximately 70km southeast of Puri, 130km east of Gopalpur, 130km south-southeast of Paradip, and 240km east-north-

east of Kalingapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. "It is likely to move north-westwards and cross Odisha coast near Puri as a depression in the early morning hours of Saturday. Thereafter, it would move west-northwestwards across Odisha and Chhattisgarh and weaken gradually during the subsequent 24 hours," the bulletin said. The IMD also noted that squally weather with wind speed reaching up to 60kmph is likely to prevail over north-west and adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal and along and off north Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal coasts during the next 48hrs. As the sea condition would remain rough, the weather office advised fishermen not to venture into north-west and adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal and along and off Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal coasts during the next two days. Under its influence, the IMD said the state is likely to experience heavy rainfall over the next four days. There is also a warning for extremely heavy rainfall in south Odisha July 19 and very heavy rainfall across the state July 20, an official at the Revenue and Disaster Management department said. The IMD further cautioned about temporary water-logging in low-lying areas and underpasses, reduced visibility during intense rainfall spells, and potential traffic congestion in urban areas.



**RAISING VOICE:** 941 candidates protest at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar Friday, over recruitment delay in Odisha Fire Services even after receiving appointment letters

# Orientation on filariasis elimination for NSS youths



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** An orientation workshop on filariasis elimination campaign under the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) programme, for National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers was organised by state Health and Family Welfare department, in collaboration with Project Concern International and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports here, Friday. "NSS aims to educate through service, with the motto 'Not Me, But You'. NSS volunteers prioritise community over themselves, therefore their role in the MDA programme becomes crucial," an official said. Participants included 34 programme officers and 5 coordinators from eleven districts of the state. On the occasion, NSS regional director Sarita Patel said, "Service is our mantra, service is our resolution, and a filariasis free India is our goal." "NSS team has been supporting the MDA programme since August 2023, raising awareness about the seriousness of the disease in communities, ensuring that all beneficiaries take anti-filariasis drugs in front of healthcare workers during the MDA programme," she added. State director of public health Nilakantha Misra said,

"Filariasis elimination programme of the central government involves two strategies: MDA and Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP). MDA involves administering anti-filariasis drugs under the supervision of trained healthcare workers. MMDP involves the care of individuals with lymphedema and proper treatment of hydrocele patients." At the event, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare senior regional director Suchitra Sasmal said, "To prevent the disease, MDA is conducted in two phases each year. Starting from August 10, the state government will be launching the MDA campaign in 11 selected districts. In these districts, trained healthcare workers will administer free anti-filariasis drugs to all community members, except children less than 2-year of age, pregnant women and ill people, at booths or by visiting every house hold." Project Concern International representative Somnath Banerjee guided the participants on planning MDA-related activities in their respective areas. Attendees included officials from the state's Health and Family Welfare department, NSS officials and representatives from World Health Organisation.

# Railways ferries over 15L passengers during Car Fest

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** Indian Railways has successfully managed and transported more than 15 lakh passengers to and from Puri during the Rath Yatra period. East Coast Railway (ECoR) sources here Friday said with extensive preparations and innovative measures, Indian Railways ensured a smooth and comfortable journey for the devotees attending the festival. It efficiently carried over 15 lakh passengers, ensuring they reached their destinations safely and comfortably during the festival. To accommodate 15,000 pilgrims, temporary and permanent mela sheds were erected at Puri Railway Station, providing resting, toilet, and bathing facilities. Special trains were operated connecting 25 districts to and from Puri, facilitating easy access for devotees. Special trains were operated using an AI-based dynamic scheduling system, allowing railways to provide additional trains to high-demand destinations promptly. Over 315 special trains were operated for the convenience of pilgrims, sources said. Special trains connected neighbouring states, including Visakhapatnam and Palasa in Andhra Pradesh, Jagdalpur and Raipur in Chhattisgarh, and Howrah, Sealdah and Malda in West Bengal, to Puri for the festival. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel were deployed to manage crowd at Puri Railway



**OVER 315 SPECIAL TRAINS WERE OPERATED FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF PILGRIMS DURING RATH YATRA**

Station. A round-the-clock control room was established to address passenger issues and ensure smooth train operations. Additional ticket booking counters, ATM counters, and mobile ticket counters were provided. The UTS mobile app and ECoR yatra app were launched for information related to Rath Yatra facilities. In addition to the food plaza at Puri Railway Station, arrangements were made for selling tea, snacks, water bottles, and Janata

meals. Additional food stalls were functioned at major enroute stations. Adequate arrangements were made for ensuring uninterrupted power supply at Puri Railway Station for the continuous functioning of lights, fans, and other passenger amenities. "The crowd management, facilities provided at Puri Station, and the maintenance of cleanliness and hygiene were keenly taken care of by the Railway administration", told a passenger from Gujarat, Sailendra Ratmakar Kule. "We have come from Rajasthan to witness Rath Yatra this year. We were concerned about shelter before reaching Puri, but the shelter provided by Railways eased our worries. The arrangement also included security facilities", informed a lady passenger from Rajasthan.

# CUO holds nat'l seminar on Gangadhar Meher

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** The Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput, in collaboration with Gangadhar Meher University (GMU), Sambalpur observed the death centenary of Swabhaba Kabi Gangadhar Meher here, recently. On the occasion, a three day national seminar was organised at the CUO campus. The event was coordinated by the department of Odia Language and Literature, CUO under the supervision of associate professor and head of the department Rudrani Mohanty. Dignitaries including CUO vice-chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi, GMU vice-chancellor N Nagaraju, Padma Shri Damayanti Besra and Bhima Bhoi Research Centre, GMU coordinator Pradip Kumar Panda were present at the event. Tripathi, in his inaugural address emphasised on the alluring power of literature to unify the society into a common thread

and lead to creation of a prosperous nation. He lauded the life and works of Gangadhar Meher, who played an instrumental role in revival of our enslaved nation. Chief guest at the programme, Nagaraju said that the Meher's work have transcended Odisha's boundary and reached international audience. He highlighted the importance of organising such seminars in universities and educational institutions. The keynote speech was delivered by Besra, a recipient of Central Sahitya Academy Award in Santhali Language and Literature. She said that Meher's work reflected pure and pristine values. "The works produced by Gangadhar Meher are marked by vivid imagination, in beauty and clarity of language. His writings remain as some of greatest creations in Odia literature till date," Besra added. On the occasion, a book titled 'Gangadhar Meher: Alochana Sangraha' was also released.



# City to host edu fest

**Bhubaneswar:** With an aim to provide guidance to students for studying abroad and provide counseling, Global Edu Fest 2024, organised by Global Focus Education Pvt Ltd is scheduled to take place at Sookhana Bhawan, here July 21. Attendees at the event will have the opportunity to participate in insightful seminars and interactive sessions with experts in the field, making it a significant event for those willing to study abroad. From 2011, the company has been a pioneering force in overseas education consultancy and has successfully guided over 10,000 students to prestigious universities worldwide, in Medical, Engineering, and Management courses. Commitment to excellence and personalised counseling has earned the company a reputation as a trusted partner in the academic journeys of countless students.

# Researchers find textile dyed red with scale insects

*The rare textile, less than 2cm in size, was uncovered in the 'Cave of Skulls' northeast of Jerusalem during excavation*

A new Israeli study that investigated dozens of ancient textiles identified a rare scarlet red-colored one, which was dyed with oak scale insects, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) said in a statement Thursday. Despite written historical evidence about the widespread use of dyeing with scale insects in the ancient world, very few textiles dyed with kermes insects that

predate the Roman period have been found, according to the IAA. In the latest study, the textiles were discovered back in 2016 in the Cave of Skulls in the Judean Desert, west of Dead Sea and south of the West Bank. The research has since then been carried out by the IAA, Bar-Ilan University, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Xinhua news agency reported. Examination of the textile piece, which is less than 2 cm in size, revealed that the red dye was used for the woolen weft threads of the textile, while the warp threads, made of linen, remained uncolored. Lab analysis dated the textile to the Middle Bronze Age (1767-



1954 BCE), making it the earliest evidence of textile dyed with acid produced by kermes, a genus of scale insects that feed on the sap of oak trees, said the researchers. The IAA noted that the scarlet-red color, considered one of the most precious dyes in ancient times, was used for luxurious clothing and cultic purposes. In ancient times, the kermes were collected during one summer month every year

after the female laid its eggs but before they hatched, when the amount of dye was greatest, according to the researchers. They explained that the short collection period, the difficulty in finding them due to their small size of 3 to 8 mm and their camouflage colors, the small amount of dye that can be produced from them, and the beautiful red hue they provide made their use highly prestigious. The researchers said their findings provide significant evidence of ancient knowledge of the dyeing technique, broad international commercial networks, and the presence of an elite society in the Middle Bronze Age.

# NAI hosts 4th monthly talk

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** The fourth monthly talk programme was organised at the eastern branch of the National Archives of India (NAI) here, Friday. On the occasion, renowned Jagannath Culture researcher Alekh Chandra Padhiari had a brief discussion on 'Unknown Aspects of Jagannath Culture'. Padhiari shared his understanding on how Jagannath Culture has contributed to universal patriotism. He discussed the origins of Jagannathism and its unknown aspects, reviewed archival sources and emphasised the antiquity of Jagannathism.

"Jagannath religion binds Buddhist, Hindu, Christian and Muslim religions in a unique and factual manner which is a symbol of all religious harmony," he added. Presiding over the programme, assistant director of Archives Satyanarayan Mishra highlighted the importance of such monthly conference in archives and research aspect of it. Mishra highlighted how data and its reliability make research more efficient, the need for which is made possible by archives. On the occasion, Ramachandra Karan delivered the welcome address. Researchers, professors and students participated in the event.

**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-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-977682449, 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.

# Ring road along river Ib remains a distant dream



RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, July 19:** The proposed ring road in Sundargarh Municipality area remains a distant dream although there is a pressing need for the structure to tackle soil erosion along the banks of Ib river.

Soil erosion along the Ib river banks is not a new phenomenon. In the last twenty years the process has only accelerated, and the river has eroded patches of land at many places. This has made the river banks dangerous for those living in the vicinity of the eroded portions and also visitors.

Incumbent Sundargarh MLA Yogesh Singh had raised the demand for construction of the ring road nearly twenty years back when he was in the Congress party.

foundation stone for the project would be laid at the earliest.

Before the three-tier Gram Panchayat elections, foundation stones for two projects - one bridge-cum-barrage at Kudabaga and another barrage at Semina - were laid by Patnaik. However, the exclusion of the foundation laying ceremony for the ring road sparked discontentment among the residents.

Work on the barrages has started and is going on at a steady pace at present. With the barrages coming up, water storage capacity of the river will enhance extending up to Bhojpur. This will certainly help in easing the water woes of the town.

However, local residents and retired soil conservation officials feel this may worsen the soil erosion on either side of the Ib river. "Once the water level increases, there is every possibility it will lead to large scale soil erosion because of the structure of the soil. The ring road, along with concrete embankment, would have helped in keeping the soil intact," said a former official.

Moreover, the road would have been helpful in easing the traffic problems in the town to a large extent as a sizable portion of traffic could be diverted on this road. Vehicles to Rourkela would have taken this road instead of plying on the road going through the town, said the residents.

In January 2021, the then chief minister Naveen Patnaik had announced the construction of the road encircling Sundargarh town. The government move came soon after Singh joined the BJD. The ring road was supposed to be built at a cost of ₹84 crore and the funds would have been made available from the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) pool. It is learnt that Singh had then taken some initiatives to push the proposal following the announcement.

"No one knows what happened afterwards. The process slowed down and the status of the file is not known at present," said a person versed with DMF functioning, while requesting anonymity.

The announcement for the ring road had brought cheer to all. Everyone hoped that the



**BLOCKED:** Hundreds of vehicles were stranded for over six hours after a cement laden tanker overturned on NH-26 at Dumuriput under Koraput Town police limits, Friday

# Vig nets doctor for taking bribe

**POST NEWS NETWORK**

**Keonjhar, July 19:** Vigilance sleuths Friday nabbed the medical superintendent of Sainkul Community Health Centre (CHC) in this district on charge of accepting ₹20,800 bribe from a CHC official for appointing the latter's sister as Yoga instructor in the health centre and clear his pending salary.

Vigilance sleuths arrested the accused identified as Dr Ranjeeb Kumar Rout, the medical superintendent of Sainkul CHC, after they caught him red-handed while accepting bribe of ₹20,800 from an official for appointment of his sister as Yoga instructor as well as to release his pending salary bill.

This was confirmed by the Vigilance directorate in a press release issued Friday. According to the press release, the accused doctor had withheld the salary



of the complainant without any reason despite several requests. The accused doctor allegedly demanded bribe to release the complainant's pending salary as well as for the appointment of his sister as a temporary Yoga instructor in the CHC.

Left with no option, the complainant reported the matter to

**The doctor allegedly demanded bribe to release the complainant's pending salary as well as for the appointment of his sister as a temporary Yoga instructor in the CHC**

Odisha Vigilance over the anti-corruption agency's toll free number 1064. Vigilance directorate registered a case under Section-7 of Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018, laid a trap and caught the doctor red-handed while accepting bribe. The entire bribe amount has been recovered from the possession of the accused doctor and seized.

As per the press release, search operations were simultaneously

conducted at three locations to find out possession of disproportionate assets.

**Sarpanch arrested**

In a separate incident, Dinesh Rout, the sarpanch of Brundabahal panchayat under Golamunda block in Kalahandi district, was arrested by Vigilance sleuths following allegation of carrying money collected through unethical means. Rout was caught carrying unaccounted cash worth ₹5.4 lakh by the Vigilance while returning home from Golamunda block in a vehicle. Vigilance sleuths seized his vehicle and took him to Nabarangpur for further questioning. Meanwhile, two other teams carried out raids at his house and another location. It is suspected that the amount was a bribe collected by Rout as PC from the contractors executing various developmental projects in the panchayat area.

## Man awarded 20-yr RI for minor's rape

**POST NEWS NETWORK**

**Phulbani, July 19:** The Phulbani Fast Track Court Friday convicted a man in a 2022 rape case of a minor girl and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI). Fast Track Court Judge Kailash Chandra Swain also slapped a fine of ₹60,000 on the convict identified as Taleswar Mallick, a resident of Balikia village under Baliguda police limits. In case of failure to pay the penalty, the convict has to undergo additional three and half years jail term, ordered the judge.

Taleswar had committed the crime March 6, 2022 when the victim, a 13-year-old girl of the same village, had gone to his house to watch TV. Taleswar lured the minor girl promising to give chocolates and took her to a nearby field and raped her. After committing the crime the convict fled the spot leaving the girl unconscious. Another villager Sunil Mallick while going to attend the call of nature had spotted the victim lying on the ground in a critical condition and informed her family. The family members then rushed to the spot and rescued the minor in an unconscious state. After gaining consciousness, the victim narrated her ordeal before her family members. Acting on their complaint, police registered a case (55/23) at Baliguda police station and arrested Taleswar.

The judge pronounced the judgement after hearing statements of 16 witnesses and going through the medical report. The judge also ordered the DLSA to pay ₹5 lakh compensation to the victim, said SPP Banamali Behera.

## Acute water scarcity grips Daringbadi CHC



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Daringbadi, July 19:** Patients visiting the Community Health Centre (CHC) here in Kandhamal district are having a harrowing time due to frequent non-availability of drinking water on the hospital premises.

The hospital is daily visited by hundreds of patients and their attendants. The healthcare officials of the hospital are also bearing the brunt of water scarcity with the water tanks constructed on their official quarters going dry most of the times. This has happened after leakages were reported from a newly built water tank in the hospital.

Funds worth crores were spent in building the water tank but it developed leakages soon after water was filled following completion of its construction. As a result, acute shortage of drinking water has gripped the health centre as authorities are yet to take steps for its repair or make any alternative arrangement for drinking water supply.

Locals alleged sub-standard construction led to such a situation following which two newly

constructed water tanks in the hospital are lying defunct. They further alleged that a water tank constructed in front of Daringbadi police station leaked after water was filled into it. Subsequently, another big tank was constructed on the hospital premises but it soon became defunct and completely disrupted water supply to the hospital. Meanwhile, patients and healthcare staff are relying on the small water tanks constructed upon the official quarters on the hospital premises for their water needs.

However, they face a harrowing time as the small tanks go empty in some hours. Moreover, the situation has led to increased power bills due to frequent running of motor pumps.

When contacted, officials of Health department chose not to respond while RWSS assistant engineer Khirabdhil Rout said she cannot comment on the issue as she is yet to be assigned with responsibilities. Baliguda assistant engineer Sarat Sahu assured to resolve the issue soon. Locals have demanded the district administration to intervene and resolve the drinking water supply problem in the hospital.

## RAIN DISRUPTS NORMAL LIFE IN MALKANGIRI



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri/Kalimela, July 19:** Cross-border road communication from Odisha to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was disrupted here after rainwater over three feet height overflowed on Kangurukonda bridge in Malkangiri district following low-pressure triggered heavy rainfall, Friday.

The district has recorded 83.8mm rainfall. Rain has been lashing the district since Friday morning and led to rise in river water level in Poteru, MV-90, MV-96, Kangurukonda, Kanyashram, Pangam, Tarlakota areas in the district.

As a result, road communication to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was disrupted with three-foot deep water overflowing on the Kangurukonda bridge and hundreds of vehicles were stranded on both sides of the bridge. Meanwhile, the district administration has started evacuating people living in the riparian areas to safety.

## Drunken hubby beats woman to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Oupada, July 19:** In a shocking incident, a woman was allegedly beaten to death by her drunken husband at Adivasi Sahi of Chinchida village under Aghirapada panchayat and this police limits in Balasore district, Thursday night.

The deceased has been identified as Janaki Singh aka Jani and the accused her husband Pandu Singh.

According to sources, Pandu usually returns home in an inebriated state and physically abuses his wife. He returned home Thursday night

and under the influence of alcohol, assaulted Janaki with a wooden plank leading to her death on the spot, alleged Rabana Singh, brother of the deceased, who lodged a complaint at Oupada police station.

As per the complaint of Rabana, a case was registered at Oupada police station.

Police along with a scientific team rushed to the spot and initiated an investigation into the incident.

**INDIAN BANK** ZONAL OFFICE, BERHAMPUR  
Plot No.-704/7172 & 704/7174, 1st Floor, Main Road, Ambapua, Berhampur-760011  
E-Mail: zoberhampur@indianbank.co.in

**CORRIGENDUM**

The following extension has been made in the NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR LEASING OF OFFICE PREMISES required by INDIAN BANK published in the Newspapers on dt. 13.07.2024. The last date for submission of bids is on 26.07.2024 instead of 19.07.2024. All other terms and conditions of the Notice remain unchanged.

Asst. General Manager, Indian Bank, Zonal Office, Berhampur

**ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
OFFICE OF THE SENIOR GENERAL MANAGER (ELECTRICAL), BALIMELA HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT.  
POST : BALIMELA, DIST. : MALKANGIRI (ODISHA), PIN - 764 051  
Phones : 06861-232581(O) / 232441(R), FAX : 06861-232541, E-mail : sunit.head\_balimela@yahoo.com  
REGD. OFFICE : ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LIMITED.  
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)

**ODISHA STATE POLICE HOUSING & WELFARE CORPORATION BUILDING, VANIVIHAR CHOUK, JANAPATH, BHUBANESWAR - 22**  
Tel : 91-0674-2542983, 2542902, 25425226, 2542626; Fax : 254102; GRAM : HYDRO POWER; E-Mail : ohpc.co@gmail.com / mg@ohpcpltd.com; WEB : www.ohpcpltd.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO. BHEP/DE-III/02/24-25 DATED - 18.07.2024

No. CAD-597 : Single part sealed Tenders are invited from the reputed suppliers / agencies for the work 'Procurement of materials (Group-A - Electronic accessories/Group-B-Miscellaneous inventories/Group-C-Clothing inventories/Group-D-Kitchen inventories) for newly constructed Training Hostel, BHEP, Balimela.' Fulfilling the eligibility criteria as per the tender specification for the work as mentioned below.

Sl. No.	Description of Work	Cost of Tender Paper (Non-refundable) in Rs.	EMD (Refundable) in Rs.	Period of availability of tender documents	Last date & Time of receipt of Tender	Date & Time of opening bid
1	Procurement of materials (Group-A-Electronic accessories / Group - B - Miscellaneous inventories / Group-C- Clothing inventories / Group-D- Kitchen inventories) for newly constructed Training Hostel, BHEP, Balimela.' (Seven thousand eightly only)	Rs. 7080/- (Rs. 7000/- + GST@18%)	1080/- (1% of the quoted amount)	25.07.2024 to 08.08.2024	08.08.2024 at 12:00 PM	08.08.2024 at 12:30 PM

For details of the tender documents, terms & conditions, please visit our website www.ohpcpltd.com  
OIPR-04019/11/0015/2425

Sd/- C&P Head, BHEP, Balimela

## Villagers marry off frogs to bring rain

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, July 19:** With farmers failing to get on with agricultural works due to delay in monsoonal rainfall and the situation further worsening with water bodies drying up, villagers in Keonjhar district have started marrying off frogs to appease Indra, the God of rain.

Farmers have resorted to frog marriage as they believe this will help in ensuring rainfall in the district. The matter came to the fore after residents of Godipokhari village under Jamunapasi panchayat of Patana block in Keonjhar district were seen performing the wedding of a pair of frogs (male and female) Wednesday to appease the rain God.

Villagers claimed this is an age-old practice in many villages of Keonjhar district. Sources said 'Sankirtan' is organised and certain rituals are performed to appease village deities in some areas. Villagers resort to traditional rituals like marrying off frogs whenever drought-like situation prevails owing to delay in monsoonal



rainfall, sources added.

The villagers of Godipokhari performed 'Indra Yajna' at the shrine of the village deity and later performed the marriage of a pair of frogs kept in a clay pot. Women of the village went on a procession to the shrine with the pot containing the male and female frogs. The village priest then performed the marriage as per the rituals. All the rituals that are usually followed in human weddings are imitated for

the frogs.

Later, villagers released the frogs in the pond after taking them on a procession accompanied by music and dance. Later they prayed together to Indra, the God of rain, pleading for rain. Kahnei Charan Naik, an elderly villager who supervised the whole programme said that by this time they should be busy in cultivation. However, farmers have failed to start their agricultural works due to lack of rain in many areas of the district. Many who had already started farm activities were forced to abandon it due to lack of water in the fields.

Retired professor and researcher Bimbadhar Behera said marrying off a pair of frogs is an age-old tradition. Earlier, rainfall has been noticed in areas in the district where villagers organise similar rituals, claim the villagers.

Though there is no logic behind this, people in many villages of Keonjhar and adjoining districts strongly believe this tradition, Behera added.

**INDIAN BANK** Jagatsinghpur Branch  
Durga Bazar, Jagatsinghpur, Odisha

**POSSESSION NOTICE**  
(FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued Demand Notice on the date noted against Accounts as mentioned hereinafter, calling upon to Borrowers to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the under noted Borrowers and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described here-in-below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said rules on the dates mentioned against Accounts.

The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Indian Bank, Jagatsinghpur Branch for the amount and interest thereon mentioned against account herein below.

**The Borrowers attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the Secured Assets.**

Name & Address of Borrowers	Description of the Immovable Properties	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession Notice	Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice
<b>Borrowers: (1) Mr Akshay Kumar Ray, Prop. of M/s AK Ray, (2) Mrs Namita Ray, W/o- Akshay Kumar Ray, (3) Mrs Kamini Ray, W/o: Abhaya Kumar Ray, all are residing At-Tahsil Square, Po-Balikuda, Dist-Jagatsinghpur, Pin -754108 .</b>	All the part and parcel of land & building situated on Plot No. 1196, Khata No. 827/757 AU/Mouza-Markandpur, Dist-Jagatsinghpur, Odisha Area Ac.0.07 dcml, the property is bounded by North- Road, South- Natarab Das, East-Muralidhar Pal, West- Chandramani Swain .	13.05.2024	18.07.2024	Rs.57,77,644/- with further interest, costs, charges & expenses thereon
<b>Borrowers:(1) Mr Ramesh Kumar Mallick, (2) Mrs Pravati Mallick, W/o: Mr Ramesh Kumar Mallick, both are residing At-Jasobantapur, Po/ Dist-Jagatsinghpur, Pin-754103 .</b>	All the part and parcel of land & building situated on Plot No. 2571, Khata No. 1010 At/Mouza-Jashobantapur, Dist-Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, Area - Ac.0.110 dcml., the property is bounded by North-Sunakar Pradhan, South- Krupasindhu Majhi, East-Road, West- Krupasindhu Majhi .	13.05.2024	18.07.2024	Rs.3,45,774/- with further interest, costs, charges & expenses thereon
<b>Borrowers: (1) Mrs Swarnalata Mallick, W/o: Mr Amar Kumar Mallick, (2) Mr Amar Kumar Mallick, both are residing At- Jayabada, Po/ Dist - Jagatsinghpur, Pin -754103 .</b>	All the part and parcel of land and building situated on Plot No.41/670, Khata No.298, At/Mouza: Jayabada, Po/Dist-Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, Area : Ac.0.03 dcml, the property is bounded by North-Smt Sushama, South- Approach Road, East-Mrs Radharani, West- Hemant Das .	13.05.2024	18.07.2024	Rs.1,99,242/- with further interest, costs, charges & expenses thereon

Date : 19.07.2024, Place : Jagatsinghpur

Authorised Officer, Indian Bank



Daily we must aspire to conquer all mistakes, all obscurities and all ignorance.

THE MOTHER

## UPSC's Credibility

An IAS success story this may not be. Pooja Khedkar, a 2023 IAS probationary officer, has found herself in hot water. She's under scrutiny for allegedly using a fake visual impairment certificate to secure her position in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) through the UPSC exam. This has cast serious doubts on the legitimacy of her appointment, with a high possibility that her IAS position could be revoked.

Questions are swirling about how she managed to get an IAS post despite opposition from the UPSC and the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT). There's also speculation about which political leaders might have influenced her appointment. Sources have told DKB that reportedly a minister in the previous Union government is supposedly close to the Khedkar family and may have had a hand in getting her an IAS posting as well as Maharashtra cadre. We'll wait for the single-member panel's inquiry report to see what turns up.

This episode underscores that even the UPSC exam can be rigged, suggesting that politicians and former civil servants can sway the selection of their preferred candidates. This concern isn't trivial, especially following the NEEET controversy, which faced intense scrutiny for a paper leak.

Khedkar's case is a significant test for the government as well, particularly the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) which needs to reexamine its verification processes. However, the public information so far suggests that Khedkar may have successfully gamed the system.

Now, it's up to the government to uncover the truth and restore the credibility of the UPSC. Only by addressing these allegations head-on can the integrity of one of India's most esteemed institutions be preserved.

### Naidu's new order

With Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu firmly in the saddle, there's a palpable sense that a new era has begun. The state government is clearly sending a message that things are set to change, starting with the administration itself.



BABUDOM BYTES  
Dilip Cherian

One of the latest moves in this wave of change is the appointment of IPS officer L Subbarayudu who has been deputed from Telangana to Andhra Pradesh for three years on personal grounds. This move, alongside the request for his immediate relieving from Telangana, signals that Naidu's administration is keen on bringing in officers of its choice to implement its vision effectively.

But this is just the beginning. In a significant reshuffle, 19 IAS officers have been transferred within Andhra Pradesh. Chief Secretary Neerabh Prasad issued the relevant orders indicating a major overhaul of the bureaucratic machinery. Among the notable changes, Harish Gupta has been appointed as the DG of Vigilance and Enforcement, and Kumar Vishwajit as the Principal Secretary, Home.

The reshuffle doesn't stop there. Special Chief Secretary (BC Welfare) G. Anantha Ramu has been moved to the Environment, Forests, Science & Technology Department, relieving Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad from additional duties. Similarly, A.P. Human Resources Development Institute Director General Ram Prakash Sisodia is now Special CS (Lands & DM, Registration and Stamps) in the Revenue Department, relieving Ajay Jain from additional responsibilities.

The message is clear: a new dispensation is in power, and it's time for things to change. Naidu is setting the stage for a transformative period, emphasizing efficiency, accountability, and a fresh approach to governance. It also indicates that things will get more difficult for his predecessor and archrival, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

### Buzz around babu's entry into politics

In a move reminiscent of Odisha politics, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's advisor, Manish Verma, officially joined the Janata Dal (United) recently. Verma, a retired IAS officer from the 2000 batch, had taken voluntary retirement in 2018 on Nitish Kumar's advice and has since been working closely with him.

There's a lot of buzz around Verma's entry into JD(U), with many speculating that he's being groomed as the party's future leader. For over a year, Verma has been actively involved in the party's organisational activities. His formal induction into JD(U) took place in the presence of JD(U) working president and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Kumar Jha, as well as state water resources minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary.

Verma played a crucial role in JD(U)'s campaign during the recent Lok Sabha elections. He extensively toured all 16 parliamentary constituencies contested by the party, contributing significantly to their success. The JD(U) emerged victorious in 12 of these seats, solidifying its position as a major ally of the Narendra Modi-led NDA government.

Verma's transition from a bureaucrat to a political leader marks an intriguing chapter in Bihar's politics. The overwhelming question is how his influence will shape the future of JD(U).

Share a babu experience! Follow [@dilipthecherian](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian). Let's multiply the effect

### WISDOM CORNER

- The only solutions that are ever worth anything are the solutions that people find themselves.** SATYAJIT RAY
- For me, the cinema is not a slice of life, but a piece of cake.** ALFRED HITCHCOCK
- There is a fine line between censorship and good taste and moral responsibility.** STEVEN SPIELBERG

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1402:** The forces of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I were defeated by those of the Central Asian ruler Timur in the Battle of Ankara, resulting in the collapse of Bayezid's empire.
- 1944:** During World War II, German military leaders attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler in the July Plot.
- 1969:** The Eagle lunar landing module, carrying U.S. astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, landed on the Moon, and several hours later Armstrong became the first person to set foot on its surface.
- 1976:** The Viking 1 lander touched down at Chryse Planitia on Mars.

### LOL

#### New Yorkers arrived

One day at the entrance to heaven, St. Peter saw a New York street gang, walk up to the Pearly Gates. This being a first, St. Peter ran to God and said, "God, there are some evil, thieving New Yorkers at the Pearly

Gates. What do I do?" God replied, "Just do what you normally do with that type. Re-direct them down to hell." St. Peter went back to carry out the order and all of a sudden he comes running back yelling "God, God, they're gone, they're gone!" "Who, the New Yorkers?" "No, the Pearly Gates."



Dhurjati Mukherjee

THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS SHOWN THAT CONSUMER SPENDING IS DEPRESSED, INFLATION IS RISING WHILE THE GROWTH COMPOSITION APPEARS IMBALANCED

# BUDGET MUSINGS

## FOCUS ECONOMY

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be presenting Union Budget 2024 for this fiscal amidst a lot of challenges, thereby outlining economic priorities for the next five years under the coalition government. Industry bodies and economic experts have put forth several crucial demands they hope will be addressed in the budget to spur growth, improve livelihoods, and simplify the tax structure. While there has to be a lot of focus on the agricultural and rural sector, there are other things that need her attention, which obviously means carrying forward essential reforms to attract manufacturing, specially growth of MSME sectors and those that are labour-intensive.

The present economic situation has shown that consumer spending is depressed, inflation is rising while the growth composition appears imbalanced. These were highlighted during the elections, which transformed a majority government into a coalition. The stress points are visible as sectors like small trade, hospitality, transport, storage and communication decelerated to half its growth rate in the previous year. These service categories are the biggest creators of informal and non-farm jobs, engaging a broad range of semi-skilled and unskilled workforce, including rural migrants. The facts are indeed alarming as the size of this combined segment has expanded by just 10 percent over 2019-20, growing an average 2.5 per cent each year since.

Much of the supply-side growth comes from construction, another mass employer of casual labour. This has grown at around 13 per cent on average in the last three years, more than double its re-pandemic trend. But even this activity has had little effect on consumer spend-



The BJP-led NDA government would have by now made a thorough analysis of the Lok Sabha results and shortlisted the reasons for being much short of the 400-plus mark as claimed

ing. The main challenge is that slower growth of disposable income coupled with food inflation has suppressed real rural wages and affected poorer sections. In fact, these contracted for almost two years due to persistent price pressures.

There are expectations that the budget is likely to give a boost to the affordable housing segment. The definition of affordable homes, it is expected, will be expanded along with tax breaks for developers and incentives for buyers. The ripple effect this sector can have on the larger economy is known to the government and specific steps to balance the interest of all stakeholders could be reflected in the budget. However, the share of affordable home in the overall supply fell to 18 per cent this year from nearly 40 per cent in 2019.

As regards the farm sector, at a recent meeting farm organisations and agriculture experts advised the finance minister to ramp up investment in agricultural research, rationalise fertiliser subsidies and develop infrastructure to enhance the sector's resilience in climate change. The stakeholders called for a substantial increase in the

budget allocation for ICAR from Rs 9500 crore to Rs 20,000 crore.

Meanwhile, it is heartening to note that the pressure on public finances has been greatly relieved by the fiscal windfall from the Central bank, which approved a Rs 2.11 trillion dividend payout to the Central government last month. Thus, fiscal metrics will remain unspoiled while planned corrections in the public balance will continue. Moreover, RBI's recent Financial Stability Report (FSR) has shown that non-performing assets (NPAs) of banks fell to a 12-year low of 2.8 per cent at the end of March.

If inflation can be checked, which obviously the RBI has been trying to do, the economy should have a smooth run. But the problems of the rural sector must be given special attention, which the government is aware of. This is part of the government's plan to boost rural infrastructure spending, but the allocation must be substantial as village communication, i.e. building proper rural roads has been rather neglected compared to the vast needs while the focus has been on building and widening highways.

Similarly, job creation initiatives which appear to be a

key component of the budget, allocation for rural jobs programme may witness an increase but anything below Rs 120,000 crore may not be sufficient to cover the full 100 days a year. It would indeed be a great job if a job scheme, say for 50 days a year, is introduced for the urban poor who could be gainfully used for different sorts of work, especially in municipalities, which are suffering for lack of personnel.

Apart from the rural sector, the other expectations of the budget include boosting consumption, lifting farm export restrictions and simplifying tax regimes. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) very aptly suggested tax cuts for India's lower income brackets to increase disposable income and spur consumption. Although the Indian economy grew at an impressive 8.2 percent in 2023-24, consumption only grew at half that rate. In tune with current thinking, CII also recommended higher wages under the rural job guarantee scheme and increased cash handouts to farmers to support rural spending.

Industry bodies have also recommended simplifying India's complex tax regimes. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has suggested streamlining the capital gains tax regime into two or three broad categories and reforming the GST system, proposing fewer tax slabs and the inclusion of currently excluded sectors.

The BJP-led NDA government would have by now made a thorough analysis of the Lok Sabha results and shortlisted the reasons for being much short of the 400 plus mark as claimed. It is expected to be guided by the electorate's verdict and the Budget could be a beginning.

NFA

## SPECTRUM US POLL

# Will Trump benefit from assassination bid?

Can an assassination attempt improve a candidate's chances of winning an election? Taiwan's experience suggests that it might. During its 2004 presidential election, polls showed then-President Chen Shui-bian trailing his opponent, Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) candidate Lien Chan. But this changed abruptly the day before the vote, when Chen and Vice President Annette Lu were shot during an election rally.



Shang-jin Wei

A MURDER ATTEMPT CAN BE POLITICALLY ADVANTAGEOUS. BUT WITH FOUR MONTHS TO GO BEFORE THE ELECTION, THE IMPACT MAY BE LESS SIGNIFICANT THAN MANY EXPECT

Of the two shots fired, one grazed Chen's abdomen, while the other hit a cast on Lu's knee. These relatively minor injuries led to widespread speculation that the attack was staged to generate sympathy for Chen, who vehemently denied any such plot.

The next day, Chen won the election by a razor-thin margin of 0.25%. Given this unexpected and narrow victory, it is widely believed that the assassination attempt swung the election in Chen's favor.

While the shooter was not arrested at the scene or even seen by other rally attendees owing to loud firecrackers that masked the sound of the gunshots—he was later identified as Chen Yihsiung, a retired construction worker who supposedly committed suicide by drowning before police could arrest him. The alleged assassin reportedly left a suicide note that presumably outlined his motives, but his fam-

ily supposedly burned the note before anyone else could read it. The circumstances surrounding the assassin's death reinforced suspicion that the assassination attempt had been staged. While a subsequent investigation by the Chinese-American forensic expert Henry Lee confirmed that Chen's abdominal injury was caused by a gunshot, an examination of the bullet found in Chen's clothing suggested that the gun had been altered, with the bullet designed to have a weak impact. Consequently, Lee concluded that the shooter did not mean to kill Chen.

Taiwanese authorities cited Lee's investigation as evidence that Chen and Lu were hit by real gunshots but ignored his finding about the weak bullet. Meanwhile, those who believed that the assassination attempt was staged viewed Lee's conclusion as a confirmation. Curiously, the gun itself has never been found.

Chen's unexpected victory suggests that the attempted assassination of Donald Trump could raise the chance of his victory in November's election. One does not need to be a political insider to predict that the Republican Party will try to leverage the shooting to bolster support for Trump and down-ballot Republicans.

While some details are still

foggy, the shooter has been identified as a 20-year-old registered Republican who, armed with an AR-15-style rifle, killed one bystander and seriously injured two others before being killed by a Secret Service sniper. Trump, despite having his face and right ear bloodied, appeared to suffer no serious injuries.

Immediately after the shooting, social media platforms were inundated with conspiracy theories claiming the shooter was working for the Democratic Party, China, Hamas, or illegal immigrants. Republican Representative Mike Collins claimed that US President Joe Biden was behind the assassination attempt, posting on X that "Joe Biden sent the orders." Meanwhile, others have insisted that the shooting was staged. The torrent of rumor and disinformation is unlikely to subside before November.

The big question is whether the shooting will lead to a Trump victory. As Chen's experience shows, an assassination attempt can be politically advantageous. But with four months to go before the election, the impact may be less significant than many expect. The memory of the incident could be overshadowed by other events, or it might have the opposite effect, with American voters blaming Trump for fanning the flames of political violence.

But it is more likely that the shooting will benefit Trump. The tendency of many voters to cast sympathy votes suggests they may prioritize issues they find easier to understand over complex ones that may prove more consequential in the long run. While "Biden is too old" is simple and straightforward, and "Trump took a bullet for us" is easy to understand, "Trump and Biden's tariffs are bad for American households and firms" is a more nuanced argument that requires some understanding of economic policy.

Given this reality, Democrats face a formidable challenge. It is difficult to imagine the Chen Shui-bian effect not working in Trump's favor, especially since Trump was already leading Biden in most polls, both nationally and in many battleground states. Barring a dramatic change, such as an open Democratic National Convention in August that produces a more dynamic presidential nominee than Biden, the party's electoral prospects have just become dimmer.

The writer, a former chief economist at the Asian Development Bank, is Professor of Finance and Economics at Columbia Business School and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE.

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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

### Vulnerability of technology

Sir, A massive Microsoft outage unleashed havoc on computer systems across the world, grounding flights and crippling banks, stock exchanges, payment systems, and emergency services. Microsoft, in a tweet approximately six hours after the outage was first reported, said that "multiple services are continuing to see improvements in availability as our mitigation actions progress". In India, the outage caused widespread disruptions in flight operations, payment systems, and trading, among other services. Flight delays were reported across airports, leading to long queues. The outage is possibly due to the failure of CrowdStrike Falcon, a cybersecurity platform that provides security solutions for Microsoft Windows. The disruptions continued hours after Microsoft said it was fixing the issue. Both Microsoft and CrowdStrike have ruled out claims of cyber attack and said that the outage took place due to a recent update received in the product. However, the outage has laid bare the vulnerability of technology, even for global giant like Microsoft - jeopardizing day to day operations and services.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

### Craziness for publicity

Sir, The tragic death of famous influencer Aanvi Kamdar, after falling into a gorge while shooting a video for an Instagram reel, once again reminds us how today's youth ignore all precautions and lose their precious lives in their craziness for publicity through social media. The present day youth love high adventures, challenges, and also love to set their foot on new horizons. But of late, it is shocking to see that in their quest and craving to cast an imprint on the ventures, they have gone crazy after reels and selfies (or 'killfies' as they are called now), and that too most often risking their lives by attempting superhuman feats on mountain cliffs, waterfalls, sea rocks, deep rivers, and railway tracks for a mere passion to self click and portray themselves on social media and display their courage in front of the world. It is high time we have sign boards at places where our younger generation is prone to get tempted to take selfies and reels. Parents and teachers have a big role to play in safeguarding them and they have to be advised to avoid such life risking challenges.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

ASSEMBLY  
POLLS AHEAD

# Book on 'black deeds' of Maha govt

In its book on the 'black deeds' of the Mahayuti government, the NCP (SP) highlighted 10 'failures' of the ruling coalition while launching a scathing attack on "misgovernance" and "corruption" in the state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 19:** The Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) Friday sounded the bugle for assembly polls in Maharashtra with the release of a book on 'Kale Karname' (black deeds) of the ruling Mahayuti government.

Releasing the book, the party's state president Jayant Patil called it a "trouble engine, not triple engine sarkar".

The ruling alliance in the state comprises the BJP, Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and the NCP headed by Deputy CM Ajit Pawar.

Instead of the Ladki Bahin scheme, which promises a monthly dole of Rs 1,500 to underprivileged women, Patil said a 'Ladki Khurchi Yojana' should be launched to "meet the demands of all those aspiring to be the CM".



**The chief minister goes to Davos and then talks about Rs 4 lakh crore of investment, but these are mere claims. How much of that investment has come into Maharashtra? How many jobs have been created?**

JAYANT PATIL | NCP (SP) PRESIDENT, MAHARASHTRA

Patil released the book alongside Shirur MP Amol Kolhe, the party's manifesto committee chairperson and former Rajya Sabha member Vandana Chavan, and Sunil Gavhane, their student wing president, at the party's office at Ballard Estate in south Mumbai.

"This is not a triple engine sarkar; this is a trouble engine sarkar," said Jayant Patil, quipping that a 'Ladki Khurchi' should be launched in the state.

The Sharad Pawar-founded NCP was split last year after Ajit Pawar broke away with MLAs loyal to him and joined the

government. He later got the party name and its clock symbol.

The book, which features a black balloon with three crows perched on it, was referred to by Amol Kolhe as a "reinvention of Gandhi ji's teen bandar (three monkeys)" in Maharashtra.

While the original monkeys were centred around "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil", the crows in Maharashtra represent a new ideology of "not seeing, not hearing, and not talking" about any positive work in the state, he said.

'My Dream Maharashtra' Besides the book launch, NCP (SP) leaders also launched a campaign to "crowd source" suggestions for their manifesto for the upcoming state polls.

The 'My Dream Maharashtra' campaign will run from July 19 to August 15 and collect suggestions from ordinary citizens across the state that NCP (SP) has promised to consider after the Maha Vikas Aghadi comes to power, he said.

NCP (SP) is a part of the opposition bloc MVA that also has Congress and Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena (UBT) as partners.

"The people of Maharashtra are self-respecting. They have always stood up against oppression. This time, too, they will reject those showing 'gu-

labi swapna' (rosy dreams) and we will remove the dark stain that has tarnished Maharashtra's image for the last two years," said Kolhe.

The manifesto campaign will have three competitions, two digital ones involving reels and posters and one physical in all districts asking the youth how they think the state should be rebuilt, said Sunil Gavhane.

The NCP (SP) is the first party to start its manifesto campaign in the state and is taking an "innovative crowdsourcing approach to attract voters, especially the youth, to its political platform", Patil said.

After winning 8 out of the 10 seats it contested in the Lok Sabha polls, the NCP (SP) has emerged as the outfit with the highest strike rate in the state and has begun preparations to replicate this success in the assembly elections, he said.

The party has already launched a state-wide tour called 'Nishtavan Samvad Daura' (Loyal Outreach Tour), he said.

Similar tours are expected to be launched by other senior leaders, including Sharad Pawar and the party's working president Supriya Sule in the coming weeks, Kolhe said.

Of the 288 assembly seats in the state, the undivided NCP had won 54 in the 2019 state poll.

# 2 Chhattisgarh coal mines ranked among five largest globally

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 19:** Chhattisgarh-based Coal India subsidiary South Eastern Coalfields Limited's Gevra and Kusmunda coal mines have secured the second and fourth spots, respectively, in the list of the world's 10 largest coal mines released by WorldAtlas.com.

Located in Korba district of Chhattisgarh, these two mines produce more than 100 million tonnes of coal annually, accounting for about 10 per cent of India's total coal production, the Ministry of Coal said.

The Gevra opencast mine has an annual production capacity of 70 million tonnes and produced 59 million tonnes of coal in FY 23-24. The mine started operations in 1981 and it has enough coal reserves to meet the country's energy requirements for the next 10 years.

The Kusmunda opencast mine produced more than 50 million tonnes of coal in FY 23-24, only the second mine in India after Gevra to achieve this feat.

These mines have deployed some of the world's largest and



**It is indeed a proud moment for Chhattisgarh that two of the world's five largest coal mines are now in the state**

PREM SAGAR MISHRA | CMD, SOUTH EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED

most advanced mining machines such as the 'Surface Miner' that extracts and cuts coal without blasting for eco-friendly mining operations.

For overburden removal (the process of removing layers of soil, stone, etc. to expose the coal seam), the mines use some of the world's largest HEMMs (Heavy Earth Moving Machinery) such as 240-tonne dumpers, 42 cubic metre Shovel along with Vertical Rippers for environment-friendly and blast-free OB removal.

## RTE QUOTA

### HC junks exemption to private schools

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 19:** The Bombay High Court Friday quashed the Maharashtra government's notification that exempted private schools within a one-kilometre radius of government or aided schools from Right to Education (RTE) Act quota admissions.

A division bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar said the notification dated February 9 was "ultra vires" to Article 21 of the Constitution of India and provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, also known as the RTE.

"The notification is held to be null and void," the court said.

The court, in its judgment, said the mandate of the law casts a duty not only on the government but also on private unaided schools to provide education to children in the age group of six to 14 years from the disadvantaged section of society.

The mandate of the state to provide free and compulsory education under Article 21-A is almost absolute, it held.

Provisions of the RTE Act mandate that private unaided schools shall also be part of such mandatory duty, the court said.

The bench noted that if the purpose of the RTE Act is not achieved fully, it would result in denial of the fundamental right enshrined under Article 21-A of the Constitution of India.

# HC slams Maha govt, stops demolitions in Vishalgad Fort vicinity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 19:** The Bombay High Court Friday slammed the Maharashtra government and ordered a complete halt to all demolition activities in the vicinity of Vishalgad Fort in Kolhapur, which was rocked by violence between two communities earlier this week.

A Division Bench comprising Justice BP Colabawalla and Justice FP Pooniwalla pointed out that the state government was flouting its own notification of razing structures during the monsoon season.

The judges questioned, "How can you raze structures during the rainy season?" and made it doubly clear that "no structure, be it a commercial one or a household should be demolished till further orders."

At one point, Justice Colabawalla even warned that if there was any breach, the court would come down heavily on the government officers and "not hesitate to put the concerned officers in jail".

It may be recalled that around 60-70 structures were pulled down in the Vishalgad Fort vicinity and even in the Gajapur Village, situated more than 3 km away from the fort, sparking communal tension and huge political activities.

The region witnessed a flare-up between the minority and majority communities July 14 and the next day the state PWD officials launched the demolition drive.

Three locals from Vishalgad Fort area - Ayub Kagadi, Abdulsalam Malang and Murad Mahldar - have filed separate petitions on the violence, the al-

leged police inaction and the PWD's demolitions - which were argued by advocate Satish Talekar.

Advocate Talekar informed the court about the clashes, then the bulldozing drive in the disturbed atmosphere in which homes, shops and other structures were flattened, how a huge mob of Right-wing 'outsiders' attacked the locals, climbed up and attempted to damage a local mosque, sparking huge tensions, with the police force present there doing nothing to stop the violence.

After watching some videos, the judges asked Kakade what action was taken on the violence, what was going on there and who were those men - who were referred to as 'Shiv Bhakts' by the petitioners.

The judges said that though the persons seen in the videos were not government officials, they strongly emphasised that "it was the state's responsibility to maintain law and order", and sought to know if any FIR was lodged or any action taken.

The judges further ordered the Senior Inspector of Police, Shahuwadi Police Station in Vishalgad Fort jurisdiction to remain "personally present in the court on July 29", explain the entire situation and the action taken against those who indulged in violence.

The state government's Chief Pleader Priyabhushan Kakade argued that the officials were razing only commercial structures not granted any protection by the courts, but the judges barred the authorities from demolishing any structure till the court's further orders.



Police charge Contractual Assistant Police personnel who had gheraoed Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's official residence, Friday

PTI PHOTO

# Raipur square to be renamed after martyred jawan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Raipur, July 19:** A prominent roundabout in Chhattisgarh capital Raipur will be renamed after Bharat Lal Sahu, the Special Task Force (STF) jawan killed in a blast triggered by Naxalites, as a mark of honour, government officials said Friday.

A decision to rename Mova Bazaar Chowk in the state capital after the fallen jawan was taken at a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai here, they said.

The cabinet also paid rich tributes to Sahu during the meeting, said the officials.

The 38-year-old braveheart was among two constables of the STF, a specialised unit of the state police to combat Naxalism, who died when

Maosists detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) Wednesday night in the Tarrem area of Bijapur district.

Sahu was a resident of the Mova area in Raipur.

In a post on social media platform X, Chief Minister Sai wrote, "To keep the memory of martyred jawan Bharat Lal Sahu ji alive, our government has de-

cidated to rename Mova Bazaar Chowk here as Shaheed Bharat Lal Sahu Chowk. I pay my humble tribute to martyr Bharat Lal Sahu ji."

Impassioned scenes of grief stood out as scores of people followed the funeral cortege of Sahu from his home to a crematorium, filling the air with 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', in Raipur Friday.

# Plantation in loved ones' memory turns village green

## RESIDENTS OF CHHATTISGARH'S PISEGAON HAVE A SPECIAL BOND WITH TREES, WHICH IS RESULTING IN SUCCESSFUL AFFORESTATION IN THE VILLAGE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 19:** At a time when the world is battling the effects of climate change a 'love story' between humans and trees in Chhattisgarh's Durg district is catching everyone's attention.

Residents of Pisegaon, situated on the banks of Shvinnath River have a unique bond with trees, which is resulting in successful afforestation in the village.

The people of this village plant a tree in memory of their deceased loved ones and name the trees after them.

Some consider the tree planted by them as their spouse, while others see them as their parents.

The villagers visit these trees daily, talk to them, worship them, and even hug them, sharing their feelings and problems.

They spend hours sitting near these trees, feeling the presence of their family members whom they have lost.

One such story is of Kumari Bai Deshmukh (55). She planted a Neem tree in memory of her late husband Kanhaiya Lal and considers it her husband.

She visits the tree to worship it every morning. Sitting near the tree and talking to it makes her feel the presence of her late husband.

Madhu Deshmukh lost her mother Lakshmi Deshmukh in her childhood. When Madhu

## UNIQUE TRADITION



grew up she came to Pisegaon after getting married. One day she came to know about this unique tradition and she planted a Madhukamini sapling in the memory of her mother. Now it has grown big and is a source of

comfort to Madhu.

Prerna Sahu, another villager, said, "I had observed my uncle planting trees here since fourth grade. Over time, I also started planting trees myself, dedicating some to my late fam-

ily members."

She visits the trees daily, worships them, and takes the time to sit and enjoy the surroundings.

"Tampering with the environment poses a threat to humankind. We are destroying forests and not making enough efforts to plant trees. Even though many state governments plant a large number of trees, the lack of proper care means that the trees won't survive. It is mandatory to provide proper care after planting trees," said another villager Satish Singh.

"Till now more than a thousand people have planted saplings. And they are also taking care of them regularly," he informed.

As a result of this awareness on the need to care for saplings after plantation and due to the novel tradition of planting a tree in the name of lost loved ones, Pisegaon's afforestation drive is a huge success and earning the villagers laurels.



# national



In 2011, 1.4 crore Muslims were there in Assam. By 2041, Assam will become a Muslim-majority state. It's a reality and nobody can stop it  
HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

## NITISH GOVT OKAYS BIHAR'S FIRST FILM PROMOTION POLICY

The Bihar government Friday approved its first film promotion policy, aiming to provide full institutional backing, including financial support, to movie makers. The decision was taken during a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The proposal came from the state government's Art, Culture, and Youth department



### of the day quote

We have not received any report from the CBI. They have arrested Nagendra. We have the information that he (Nagendra) is being pressured to name so-and-so persons  
SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

Govt. of India is committed to transform the Power & Urban infrastructure and ensure a bright & sustainable future for the people of Himachal Pradesh  
MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | UNION MINISTER

Our Constitution guarantees every citizen that he will not be discriminated against on the basis of caste, religion, language or any other basis  
PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

## WB GOVERNOR MOLESTATION ROW

# SC to examine Art 361 granting immunity to Guvs

The top court's order came on a plea of contractual woman employee of West Bengal 'Raj Bhavan' who has alleged molestation by Governor C V Ananda Bose and her wrongful confinement by the officials

indefinitely till the governor demits office." The plea said the immunity granted to the governors under clause 2 of Article 361 cannot bar the investigation and moreover, the time is the essence in such probes. The Article deals with the protection of President and the governors and its clause 2 reads: "No criminal proceedings whatsoever shall be instituted or continued against the President, or the Governor of a State, in any court during his term of office."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 19: The Supreme Court Friday agreed to examine the contours of Article 361 of the Constitution which grants 'blanket immunity' to governors from any kind of criminal prosecution.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also issued a notice to the West Bengal government on the plea of the woman and granted



her liberty to make also the central government a party. It also sought the assistance of Attorney General R Venkataramani in dealing with the constitutional issue. At the outset, senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for the woman whose name has been redacted from the judicial records, said, "It cannot be that there is no investigation. Evidence has to be gathered right now. It cannot be deferred

The woman petitioner has also sought directions to frame specific guidelines under which governors enjoy immunity from criminal prosecution.

"This court has to decide whether a victim like the petitioner can be rendered remediless, with the only option being to wait for the accused to demit his office, which delay will then be inexplicable during the trial, and render the entire procedure a mere lip service, without any justice to the victim herein," the plea said.

The plea has also sought a probe into the case by the West Bengal Police and protection for her and her family along with compensation from the government for her loss of reputation.

The contractual woman employee of Raj Bhavan had lodged a complaint with the Kolkata Police alleging that she was molested by Bose in the Governor's house April 24 and May 2.

She accused Bose of orchestrating a "ridiculous drama" to deflect attention from his actions, emphasising that he should have provided the CCTV footage from premises to police at the outset of the investigation. Footage from two CCTV cameras positioned at the main (north) gate, from 5.32 pm to 6.41 pm May 2, was shown to a select group of people and journalists at the Central Marble Hall on the ground floor of Raj Bhavan.



FUN TIME: Children play in the Hooghly river in Nadia district, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

## CLASHES IN B'DESH 245 Indians return home

BANGLADESH HAS BEEN REELING UNDER DEADLY PROTESTS WITH PROTESTING STUDENTS DEMANDING THE SHEIKH HASINA-LED GOVERNMENT SCRAP A CONTROVERSIAL JOB QUOTA SYSTEM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, July 19: India Friday described the violent protests in Bangladesh as an "internal" matter of Dhaka but at the same time said it was closely monitoring the situation in the context of 15,000 Indians residing in that country.

The 15,000 Indians including 8,500 students are safe, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing. Official sources said the Indian High Commission in Dhaka is coordinating with local authorities to provide adequate security to Indian students wishing to return to India.

Till 8 PM Friday, 245 Indians including 125 students returned to India, they said, adding the Indian high commission also facilitated the return of 13 Nepali students. "As you are aware, there are ongoing protests in Bangladesh. We see this as an internal matter of the country," Jaiswal said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is himself following the matter closely in the context of safety of the Indians, he added. The India-Bangladesh border crossings - Benapole-Petrapole; Gede- Darshana and Akhaura-Agartala will remain open for students and Indian nationals to return home, the sources said.

The High Commission of India, in coordination with BSF and Bureau of Immigration, is facilitating return of Indian students from Bangladesh, they added. The situation in Bangladesh deteriorated this

week prompting authorities to stop bus and train services and shutting down schools and universities across the country. "We have issued an advisory for Indian nationals, including our students, resident in Bangladesh for their safety and assistance if required," Jaiswal said. The Indian high commission has already activated helpline numbers that are operating 24x7, he said.

"Our High Commission will be providing regular updates. I will also be posting regular updates. I would urge family members to follow us for the latest developments," he said in a statement.

## Patanjali research published in world-renowned journal

Now, one could get away from the adverse effects of allopathic treatment for general fever and benefit from the side-effect-free Ayurvedic medicine 'Fevogrit'. This research has been published in the globally renowned American research publication Wiley's research journal - 'Animal Models and Experimental Medicine'. When the body encounters infection or inflammation, our immune cells release various anti-inflammatory cytokines. According to this re-

search study, Fevogrit can reduce fever without any adverse effects, by targeting the underlying causes of fever. Acharya Balkrishna said that the power lies in Ayurveda; we are merely its medium.

On this occasion, Acharya Balkrishna said that it is a matter of pride for Indian culture and Sanskrit that the names of Indian medicinal plants have been included in the International Journal in Ayurveda's original language, Sanskrit, and in the Devanagari script.



## Sold by aunt 3 yrs ago, girl turns up at PS with infant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, July 19: A 14-year-old girl turned up at a police station here, saddled with a two-month-old baby, and revealed a trail of crimes which began three years ago when she was sold to a man in Haryana by her aunt.

The infant was not the only child in her three years long captivity. She had left her first child, which she gave birth to when she was 12, at the home of the man's family in Haryana.

Since her complaint, three people, including the paternal aunt of the girl, have been arrested for allegedly trading the girl, 11 at the time, police said Friday.

Sandeep Yadav and Satveer Yadav, both residents of Badhwana village of Charkhi Dadri district of Haryana, had "bought" the girl for ₹2 lakh from her aunt three years ago, Murlipura SHO Sunil Kumar said. In the three years she lived in Haryana village, the girl was forced to give birth twice - at 12 and 14.

According to the SHO, the girl managed to escape and lodge a complaint at the Murlipura Police Station here Tuesday.

She said she used to live with her parents in Murlipura but was sent to her aunt in Neemrana after a fight. Instead of taking care of the girl, the aunt sold her to a family in Haryana, the officer said. Acting on the complaint, police arrested Sandeep from a cement factory in Ambala, whereas his father Satveer was arrested by another police team in Badhwana village of Charkhi Dadri in Haryana.

The two were booked on charges of IPC sections 376(2)(N) (rape in context of live-in relationship) and 376AB (rape of a woman under 12 years of age), as well as kidnapping, criminal intimidation, trafficking, and sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO).

## NITHARI KILLINGS

## SC to hear pleas by CBI, UP govt against HC verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 19: The Supreme Court Friday agreed to hear separate pleas filed by the CBI and the Uttar Pradesh government challenging the Allahabad High Court's verdict acquitting Surendra Koli in the sensational 2006 Nithari serial killings case.

A bench of Justices B R Gavai, K V Viswanathan, and N Kotiswar Singh issued a notice and sought a response from Koli on the petitions and tagged them with similar pleas which are already pending before the apex court. "Notice. Tag," the bench said.

The top court July 8 sought a response from Koli on separate pleas filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against the high court's October 16 last year verdict.

The apex court in May agreed to hear a plea filed by the father of one of the victims challenging the high court's order acquitting Koli in the case.

In this case, Moninder Singh Pandher was acquitted by the sessions court while Koli was awarded the death penalty September 28, 2010.

The high court had acquitted domestic help Koli and his employer Pandher in the Nithari serial killings case in which they were facing a death sentence, holding that the prosecution failed to prove the guilt "beyond reasonable doubt" and that the investigation was "botched up".

Reversing the death sentence given to Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in two cases, the high court had noted that the prosecution had failed to prove the guilt of both the accused "beyond reasonable doubt, on the settled parameters of a case based on circumstantial evidence" and the probe was "nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies".

### SHORT TAKES

#### MEA holds phone talks with Dmytro

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Friday held a phone conversation with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba, less than two weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Moscow. Jaishankar said the focus of the conversation was to further develop bilateral relations. The phone conversation between the two foreign ministers came against the backdrop of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's criticism of Modi's visit to Moscow July 8 to 9.

#### Indrani allowed abroad travel

Mumbai: A special CBI court in Mumbai Friday permitted out on bail former media executive Indrani Mukerjea, accused of killing her daughter Sheena Bora in 2012, to travel to Europe but laid down some conditions. The court allowed Indrani Mukerjea to travel once to Europe (Spain and United Kingdom) for ten days between intermittent period for the next three months.

#### Heavy rains lash some Guj districts

Porbandar: Heavy rains lashed Porbandar, Junagadh and Devbhumi Dwarka districts in Gujarat in a 36-hour period ending at 6pm Friday, with Porbandar taluka getting 565 millimetres, officials said. More showers are expected in the region in the next four days, they added. The heavy rains caused water-logging in several areas in these districts, resulting in traffic snarls due to closure of some roads, causeways and underpasses as well as other hardships to people, the officials said.

### SNIPPETS

#### NEET-UG case: CBI arrests RIMS MBBS student

New Delhi: The CBI Friday arrested a first-year MBBS student of Ranchi's Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) for allegedly being part of a 'solver module' working with an engineer who had stolen the NEET-UG question papers, officials said. Surabhi Kumari was taken into custody after two days of detailed questioning by the CBI, the officials said. It is alleged that Kumari was the fifth member of the 'solver module' which was present in Hazaribagh in the morning of May 5, the NEET-UG examination day, to solve the paper stolen by Pankaj Kumar, they said.

#### About 50 Indians want to quit Russian military: Govt

New Delhi: India and Russia are working to ensure early discharge of Indians recruited into the Russian armed forces, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Friday. In his visit to Moscow last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had raised the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin. "We are aware of about 50 Indian nationals who currently wish to end their employment in the Russian armed forces," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "These are cases where the individual or his/her family members have approached us for assistance in securing their early discharge," the spokesperson said during his weekly media briefing. Jaiswal said the matter has been pursued with Russia at various levels including at the leadership level.

# U'khand HC grants protection to inter-faith live-in couple

The judgment shows that live-in couples have full legal sanctity and have access to all rights, as enjoyed by others, as opposed to false claims that the government was meddling in people's personal lives and stopping people from pursuing live-in relationships, a 21st-century reality

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dehradun, July 19: In one of the first cases after the passage of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) law, the Uttarakhand High Court has disposed the writ petition of a live-in couple, over a threat to their lives allegedly from family members because of inter-faith relationship, and granted them police protection.

It has also directed the concerned SHO in Dehradun to provide adequate protection to the petitioners for six weeks to ensure that the live-in couple remains unharmed. After six weeks, threat perception will be evaluated and the police will take action, as it deems necessary.

The court judgment has come as a 'slap in the face' for those spreading lies on the UCC law and those who claimed that it was the BJP government's 'licence' to barge into the bedrooms of people.

The judgment shows that live-in couples have full legal sanctity and have access to all rights, as enjoyed by others, as opposed to false claims that the government was meddling in people's personal lives and stopping people from pursuing live-in relationships, a 21st-century reality.

Notably, the Pushkar Singh Dhama-led government achieved a first of sorts in implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in



Uttarakhand in February this year.

However, right from the drafting of laws to its implementation, it was met with stiff resistance from the Opposition parties and

religious bodies too. While the Congress-led Opposition accused the BJP dispensation of intruding into people's private space, the religious outfits called it a violation of their religious

customs and practices. Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhama himself went to address the 'breach of privacy' under live-in laws, as claimed by many and explained the meticulously chalked out legislation, providing a common law for marriage, divorce, inheritance of property and more.

However, this did little to settle their doubts and misgivings as they kept alleging, "BJP has entered into the bedrooms of people", citing objections over live-in laws in the UCC.

They asserted that the BJP has 'legalised' barging into the bedrooms of consenting adults and can also interrogate them whenever it wants.

Now, with the High Court order granting state protection to the live-in couple, this reinforces the UCC's guidelines and its equal treatment for all citizens.

"It shall be obligatory for partners to a live-in relationship within the state, whether they are residents of Uttarakhand or not, to submit a statement of live-in relationship under sub-section (1) of Section 381 to the Registrar within whose jurisdiction they are so living," the order said.

Also, if the live-in couple fails to get their relationship registered within one month from the date of entering into such relationship, they shall be liable to punishment under Section 387(1) of the aforesaid Act.

# national

## of the day quote

We need to bridge the gap between these two classes of people. It is every government's responsibility to work for the poor, which includes all sections of society such as Dalits, backwards, upper castes and Muslims as well

CHIRAG PASWAN | UNION MINISTER

Climate change is a bomb ticking by the second. We are running out of options. It is no longer a problem waiting to happen

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

Even when he (Oommen Chandy) was on the opposite side politically, his personality of supporting creative proposals is a model for all

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

## X POST OF THE DAY

35 days, 7 terror attacks, 13 soldiers martyred! Why is the Prime Minister silent?

@therantinggola

## SHORT TAKES

### Lokayukta raids 13 officials

**Bangalore:** Mangalore City Municipal Commissioner C. L. Anand was among the 13 government officials raided by Lokayukta sleuths in Karnataka Friday in connection with disproportionate assets cases, a Lokayukta official said. Anand is a senior grade Karnataka Administrative Services (KAS) officer who was posted as Mangaluru City Corporation Commissioner in June, 2023. The government had transferred him July 4 after which he appealed to the state government against it.

### Ruckus in K'taka Assembly

**Bangalore:** Karnataka Legislative Assembly witnessed ruckus Friday over the alleged financial irregularities in a state-run corporation, with Opposition BJP and JD (S) staging a protest against the government, accusing it of "loot" and demanding the resignation of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Amid the Opposition's continued sloganeering from the well of the House, Siddaramaiah sought to defend himself and his government, while accepting that the scam had indeed taken place. He assured that strict action would be taken against the culprits involved.

### Goods train derails near Valsad in Guj

**Mumbai:** A wagon of a goods train derailed between Valsad and Surat stations in Gujarat Friday afternoon but there were no reports of anyone getting injured, a Western Railway (WR) official said. The train was 're-railed' at 5.39 pm, more than two hours after the derailment at 3.05 pm, and the traffic on DOWN main line will resume as soon as it receives a track fit certificate, said a WR spokesperson. The Western Railway's Mumbai division, however, claimed that a trolley wheel of a goods train derailed inside the Dungi station yard, and traffic on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route was not affected.

# BRS income tops, AITC leads spending: ADR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 19:** The Bharat Rashtra Samithi has topped the income chart among regional parties for the financial year 2022-23 with ₹737.67 crore, 42.38 per cent of the total, according to poll rights body ADR.

The top five parties with the highest expenditure are All India Trinamool Congress which spent ₹181.18 crore or 37.66 per cent, followed by YSR-Congress which spent ₹79.32 crore or 16.49 per cent, BRS, which spent ₹57.47 crore or 11.94 per cent, DMK, which spent ₹52.62 crore or 10.94 per cent, and the Samajwadi

After BRS, the TMC had the highest income of ₹333.45 crore or 19.16 per cent, while the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) reported an income of ₹214.35 crore or 12.32 per cent of the total income of the 39 regional parties analysed in the ADR report

Party, which spent ₹31.41 crore or 6.53 per cent of the total expenditure, ADR said.

In a revealing analysis of the financial health of India's regional political parties, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) has disclosed detailed income and expendi-

ture reports for 39 out of 57 regional parties for the fiscal year 2022-23.

After BRS, the TMC had the highest income of ₹333.45 crore or 19.16 per cent, while the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) reported an income of ₹214.35 crore or 12.32 per cent

## KANWAR YATRA EATERIES ROW

# Muzaffarnagar order now extends across UP, U'khand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow/Dehradun, July 19:** Days after Muzaffarnagar Police asked all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names, the Uttar Pradesh government is extending the controversial order across the state and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said similar instructions are already in place there.

The order issued by the Muzaffarnagar police earlier this week has been slammed by Opposition parties and some members of the ruling alliance, who say it targets Muslim traders.

An Uttar Pradesh government spokesperson said Friday a formal order for all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route in the state was likely to be issued soon. In Dehradun, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said the decision was taken July 12 at a meeting to review the preparations for the Kanwar Yatra.

As in Muzaffarnagar, hotels, dhabas and roadside eateries along the yatra route in Uttarakhand have been asked to display their owners' names, addresses and mobile phone numbers.

The Uttarakhand decision will mostly cover Haridwar but some 'kanwariyas' also visit Rishikesh, Neelkanth and Gangotri as part of the yatra which begins July 22.

Dhami said the purpose of the decision was not to target or put anyone in trouble.

"Why should anyone have any problem in introducing themselves," he asked. There have been criminal incidents at Har ki Pauri in Haridwar in the past when tension broke out over some hotel and dhaba operators hiding their true identities, Dhami said, adding that the decision was taken to prevent such situations.

Inspector General of Garhwal K S Nagnyal said the decision was taken to maintain social harmony during the Kanwar yatra. Senior BJP leader and former Chief Minister Trivendra



The order issued by the Muzaffarnagar police earlier this week has been slammed by Opposition parties and some members of the ruling alliance, who say it targets Muslim traders

### Cong slams BJP

**New Delhi:** The Congress Friday termed as "mischief" and "bigotry" the order in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand asking all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names, with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra saying that the move was "an attack on the Constitution". Priyanka Gandhi demanded that the order be withdrawn and strict action be taken against the officials, who issued the order in the first place. Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khara said that such orders were "absolute mischief" and "nothing short of bigotry".

Singh Rawat justified the move, saying it will help the Shiva devotees choose where they want to eat.

Senior Congress leader in the state Harish Rawat said the decision taken by the Uttar Pradesh and the Uttarakhand governments was unfortunate and painful.

"It will foment animosity between communities and bring disrepute to the country," he said in a statement.

In Uttar Pradesh, the Muzaffarnagar police said earlier this week that its advisory to the eateries to display their owners' names was aimed at avoiding any "confusion". "This has been done to ensure that

there is no confusion among kanwariyas and no law-and-order situation arises. All are following this voluntarily," district police chief Abhishek Singh told reporters then.

Justifying the move, V K Mishra, in-charge of the weights and measures department of Meerut, said Friday that as per the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, every restaurant and dhaba 'sanchalak' needed to display the name of the firm, the owner's name and the licence number.

The Muzaffarnagar police advisory drew criticism from several quarters. Union minister and BJP ally Chirag Paswan unequivocally opposed it and said he would "absolutely ... never support or encourage" any divide in the name of caste or religion.

Another BJP ally, the Janata Dal (United), also criticised the advisory. Party leader KC Tyagi said the advisory should be withdrawn as it may cause communal tension and there should be no discrimination based on religion or caste.

Both Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati hit out at the Muzaffarnagar police advisory. Yadav dubbed it a "social crime" and appealed to courts to take suo motu cognisance of the matter.

## INDIA MUST MEDIATE TO STOP WARS: SP MP

India must mediate to stop the war in Gaza and Ukraine as the country has been the biggest example of a humanitarian approach in the world, Samajwadi Party MP Maulana Mohibullah Nadvi has said. In an interaction with PTI editors at the agency's headquarters, the imam of the Jama Masjid across the road from Parliament rued that the world had closed its eyes to the atrocities on the Palestinians in Gaza



## Delhi Police busts kidney racket, 8 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 19:** An inter-state kidney transplant racket has been busted with the arrest of eight people, including its kingpin, following a week-long operation to crackdown on their activities in several places, including in Delhi-NCR, police said Friday.

Besides them, seven others, including donors and recipients, have been "bound down" -- a legal process in which a person is required to appear at a certain date before authorities like a case's investigating officer or a court. Those arrested were part of a gang that used to get transplants done based on forged documents in multiple hospitals in Delhi-NCR, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, police said. The kidney donors were people from lower-income groups and they made the donation in lieu of money, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Amit Goel said.

## SC junks Bilkis Bano convicts' bail pleas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 19:** The Supreme Court Friday refused to entertain a plea of two of the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case challenging the January 8 verdict cancelling their remission.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar termed the plea as "absolutely misconceived" and said how can it sit in appeal over an order passed by another bench of the apex court.

"What is this plea? How is this plea maintainable? This is absolutely misconceived. How can an Article 32 petition be filed? We can't sit in appeal over an order passed by another bench," the bench said.

Advocate Rishi Malhotra appearing for convicts Radheyshyam Bhagwandas Shah and Rajubhai Babul Soni sought permission to withdraw the plea. The bench allowed the counsel to withdraw the plea. Shah has also applied for interim bail.

In March, both the convicts moved the top court contending that its January 8 verdict cancelling remission of their sentence was "in teeth of" a 2002 constitution bench order and sought the issue to be referred to a larger bench for "final" adjudication.

The plea, filed through Malhotra, said while one bench May 13, 2022, categorically ordered the Gujarat government to



consider Shah's application for premature release in terms of the state government's remission policy of July 9, 1992, the bench that pronounced the verdict on January 8, 2024, concluded that it was Maharashtra and not the Gujarat government that was competent to grant remission.

"That with greatest respect the judgment rendered on January 8, 2024, is directly in teeth of the constitution bench decision in Rupa Ashok Hurra's case of 2002 and the same needs to be set aside, as if the same is permitted then it would lead to not only judicial impropriety but to uncertainty and chaos as to which precedence (sic) of law has to be applied in future."

It said a fundamental issue arises for consideration as to whether a subsequent co-ordinate bench can set aside its judgment rendered by its earlier co-ordinate bench and pass contradictory orders/judgments overruling its earlier view or the proper course would have been to refer the matter to a larger bench in case it felt that the earlier judgment was passed in wrong appreciation of law and facts.

## Centre lists six new Bills for Parl's upcoming session

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 19:** The Centre has listed six new Bills for introduction, including the one which seeks to replace the 90-year-old Aircraft Act, to provide enabling provisions for ease of doing business in the aviation sector, in the upcoming Parliament session beginning Monday.

Besides the Finance Bill, the government has also listed 'The Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill' for introduction, consideration and passing. The proposed legislation aims to bring more clarity and convergence in the roles of different organisations working in the field of disaster management, a Lok Sabha bulletin issued Thursday said.

The Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024 seeks to replace the Aircraft Act of 1934 to provide enabling provisions for ease of doing business in the civil aviation sector. The session beginning July 22 will conclude August 12. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget Tuesday, July 23.



TOUCHING SKY: Indian Air Force's (IAF) Sarang Helicopter Display Team perform during a program on the 40th anniversary of the Southern Air Command in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

# India's electricity demand may surge this year: IEA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 19:** With demand for electricity in India expected to surge by a massive eight per cent this year, the world's demand is rising at its fastest rate in years, driven by robust economic growth, intense heat waves and increasing uptake of technologies that run on electricity such as EVs and heat pumps, a new report by the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Friday.

At the same time, renewables continue their rapid ascent, with solar PV on course to set new records. Global electricity demand is forecast to grow by around four per cent in 2023, up from 2.5 per cent in 2022, the IEA's Electricity Mid-Year Update finds. This would represent the highest annual growth rate since 2007, excluding the exceptional rebounds seen in the wake of the global financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The amount of electricity generated by renewables worldwide in 2025 is forecast to eclipse the amount generated by coal for the first time. Solar PV alone is expected to meet roughly half of the growth in global electricity demand over 2024 and 2025 -- with solar and wind combined meeting as much as three-quarters of the growth.

Despite the sharp increases in renewables, global power generation from coal is unlikely to decline this year due to the strong growth in demand, especially in China and India, according to the report.

As a result, carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from the global power sector are plateauing, with a slight increase in 2024 followed by a decline in 2025. However, considerable uncertainties remain: Chinese hydropower production recovered strongly in the first half of 2024 from its 2023 low. If this upward trend continues in the second half of the year, it could curb coal-fired power generation and result in a slight decline in global power sector emissions in 2024. Some of the world's major



economies are registering particularly strong increases in electricity consumption. Demand in India is expected to surge by a massive eight per cent this year, driven by strong economic activity and powerful heat waves. China is also set to see significant demand growth of more than six per cent, as a result of robust activity in the services industries and various industrial

The strong increase in global electricity consumption is set to continue into 2025, with growth around four per cent again, according to the report

Renewable sources of electricity are also set to expand rapidly this year and next, with their share of global electricity supply forecast to rise from 30 per cent in 2023 to 35 per cent in 2025

sectors, including the manufacturing of clean energy technologies.

After declining in 2023 amid mild weather, electricity demand in the US is forecast to rebound this year by three per cent amid steady economic growth, rising demand for cooling and an expanding data centre sector.

By contrast, the European Union will see a more modest recovery in electricity demand, with growth forecast at 1.7 per cent, following two consecutive years of contraction amid the impacts of the energy crisis.

In many parts of the world, increasing use of air-conditioning will remain a significant driver of electricity demand. Multiple regions faced intense heat waves in the first half of 2024, which elevated demand and put electricity systems under strain, the report finds.

# international



Despite the achievements of 30 years of democracy, millions of South Africans remain poor, unemployed and they live in a highly unequal society. The circumstances of South Africa today require that we act together  
CYRIL RAMAPHOSA | PRESIDENT, SOUTH AFRICA

**UAE MALL TO ACCEPT UPI**  
A UAE-based business conglomerate, Al Maya Supermarket, has announced the acceptance of India's Unified Payment Interface payments across its outlets in the country



## of the day quote

We need a decision about long-distance weapons, long range, to use it. We need it very much. They're targeting our hospitals, schools. We just want to answer exactly to the point from where they target us  
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

I expressed my heartfelt gratitude to the Government and the people of India for their steadfast support, with a special mention of their generous assistance for the 13th FYP and the Economic Stimulus Programme  
TSHERING TOBGAY | PM, BHUTAN

On national defence, we must rely on ourselves, this is the precondition. Since the start of Taiwan's democratisation over the past 30 years, we have stood alone against China's threat  
LIN CHIA-LUNG | FOREIGN MINISTER, CHINA

# Trump to lead Republicans

Despite aides promising that Trump would not say Biden's name in the speech, Trump did refer to his opponent and "the damage" he has done



We will have an incredible victory, and we will begin the four greatest years in the history of our country  
DONALD TRUMP | FORMER PRESIDENT, US

Milwaukee, July 19: Donald Trump predicted an "incredible victory" Thursday in accepting the Republican presidential nomination from a party euphoric over his escape from assassination and buoyed by the apparent implosion of Joe Biden's reelection campaign. "We will have an incredible victory, and we will begin the four greatest years in the history of our country," Trump, 78, said at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee. It was his first speech since a 20-year-old man shot at him, causing a wound to one ear and killing a bystander during a rally last weekend. In an emotional retelling of

the shooting, where Trump said he had "God on my side," the ex-President asked for a moment of silence to honour the victim, firefighter Corey Comperatore. Before a hushed crowd, he kissed the late firefighter's helmet on the stage. Trump took the stage to chants of "USA" from a crowd which has spent the week talking of him in near-divine terms.

Warm-up acts included shirt-ripping 1960s wrestling icon Hulk Hogan and conspiracy theorist and far-right media guru Tucker Carlson, who described Trump's survival as a historic moment. After the assassination attempt, Trump became the "leader of a nation," Carlson said. But while the speech had been touted as the launch of a less abrasive, more unity-seeking

Trump, he soon reverted to his familiar painting of America as an apocalyptic ruin that needs saving. Promising to complete a wall on the US-Mexican border, he said an "invasion" of immigrants had brought "destruction" and "misery" to a "nation in decline." He vowed to end Biden's massive spending on fighting climate change, calling it a "scam." He again made his false claim that Democrats cheated in his defeat to Biden in the 2020 election. And, despite aides promising that Trump would not even say Biden's name in the speech, Trump did refer to his opponent and "the damage" he has done.

**Trump flips script**  
Despite a torrent of scandals, impeachment for his unprecedented attempt to overturn the 2020 election, and 34 felony convictions in May at a New York criminal trial, Trump is on the rise in polls ahead of November. Now, with Republicans more in step behind him than ever, he is bullish about a shock return to power. Attempting to flip the script on accusations that he intends to rule as an authoritarian leader, Trump insisted that he is "the one saving democracy" and referred to his criminal investigations as "witch hunts." "We must not criminalize dissent," he said.

## Russia convicts US reporter for 16 yrs over espionage

Yekaterinburg, July 19: Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was convicted Friday of espionage and sentenced to 16 years in a maximum-security prison on charges that his employer and the US government have rejected as fabricated.



The swift conclusion of the secretive trial in Russia's highly politicized legal system could potentially clear the way for a prisoner swap between Moscow and Washington. Gershkovich listened impassively to the verdict but gave an occasional smile. When Judge Andrei Mineyev asked him if he had any questions about the verdict, he replied "No, your honor." After Mineyev finished reading the verdict, someone in the courtroom shouted, "Evan, we love you!" Closing arguments took place behind closed doors and Gershkovich did not admit any guilt, according to the court's press service. Prosecutors requested an 18-year sentence, but the judge opted for a shorter term. US President Joe Biden said after the conviction that Gershkovich "was targeted by the Russian government because he is a journalist and an American." "We are pushing hard for Evan's release and will continue to do so," he said in a statement. "As I have long said and as the UN also concluded, there is no question that Russia is wrongfully detaining Evan. Journalism is not a crime." Gershkovich, 32, was arrested March 29, 2023, while on a reporting trip to the Ural Mountains city of Yekaterinburg. Authorities claimed, without offering any evidence, that he was gathering secret information for the US.

## SHORT TAKES

### SKorea restarts broadcast

Seoul: South Korea said Friday it has restarted blasting propaganda broadcasts into North Korea to retaliate against the North's latest round of trash-carrying balloon launches, a resumption of Cold War-style tactics that are raising animosities between the rivals. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that it used frontline loudspeakers to blare anti-Pyongyang broadcasts over the border between Thursday evening and Friday morning. The broadcasts were the first of their kind in about 40 days.

### Japan, Taiwan coast guards hold drills

Tokyo: Japanese and Taiwanese coast guards conducted what is believed to be their first joint drill off Japan's eastern coast, officials said Friday, a move seen as an effort to expand maritime cooperation amid concern about China's increasingly assertive activity in regional seas. The drill was held amid escalating tension between China and Taiwan. Beijing claims Taiwan as its own territory and has not ruled out using force to take it. However, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi Friday denied the drill targeted any specific country, including China.

### Senior Al-Qaeda leader arrested

Lahore: Pakistani counter-terrorism officials Friday announced the arrest of Amin ul Haq, a senior Al-Qaeda leader and a close aide of slain terrorist Osama bin Laden, from Punjab province and foiling a "large-scale terrorism project" in the country. "The terrorist was apprehended during an intelligence-based operation," DIG Counter-Terrorism Department, Usman Akram Gonadal said. Haq, designated as a global terrorist by the United Nations, was taken into custody from Sarai Alamgir, a town in the Gujrat district.

### Houthi claim drone strike in Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv: Yemen's Houthi rebels Friday claimed responsibility for an early morning drone strike that hit a part of central Tel Aviv near the United States Embassy, leaving at least 10 injured and one dead. The aerial strike rumbled through the streets causing shards of shrapnel to rain down and spreading shards of glass over a large radius.

## B'desh stir escalates



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka, July 19: Police and security officials in Bangladesh fired bullets and tear gas at protesters and banned all gatherings in the capital Friday, as internet and mobile services were cut off after days of deadly clashes over the allocation of government jobs. The protests, which began weeks ago but escalated sharply Monday, represent the biggest challenge to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina since she won a fourth consecutive term in office after elections in January. Main opposition groups boycotted those polls. Somoy TR, a local television channel, reported that four more people died in the latest clashes. This comes a day after the bloodiest day of demonstrations to date when 22 people were killed, according to local media, as protesting students attempted to impose a "complete shutdown" on the country. Authorities could not be reached immediately to confirm figures for the deaths. The chaos has highlighted cracks in Bangladesh's governance and economy and the frustration of young graduates who face a lack of good jobs.

### Student protesters in the central Bangladeshi district of Narsingdi stormed a jail Friday and freed hundreds of inmates before setting it on fire

The government has deployed police and paramilitary forces across the capital to lock down campuses and break up protests. On Wednesday, universities including the country's largest suspended classes and closed dormitories, and Friday Dhaka police said they were banning all gatherings and demonstrations in the capital. An Associated Press reporter saw border guard officials fire at a crowd of more than 1,000 protesters who had gathered outside the head office of state-run Bangladesh Television, which was attacked and set on fire by protesters the previous day. Internet services and mobile data were widely disrupted Thursday night and remained down Friday in the capital, Dhaka. Social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp were also not loading.

## Hindus largest minority community in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, July 19: The population of Hindus in Pakistan increased from 3.5 million in 2017 to 3.8 million in 2023 to make it the largest minority community in the Islamic nation, according to the official data of last year's census. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) released results of the 7th Population and Housing Census 2023 Thursday, the Dawn newspaper reported. The country's total population in 2023 stood at 240,458,089. It showed that the share of Muslims in the total population decreased slightly from 96.47 per cent in 2017 to 96.35 per cent in 2023, while the population of all major religious minorities increased in the past six years.



However, their share in the percentage of the total population gives a mixed picture. The population of Hindus increased from 3.5 million in 2017 to 3.8 million in 2023, but their share in the total population went down from 1.73 to 1.61 per cent, which showed other minority communities increased

at a faster rate. The population of Christians, also increased from 2.6 million to 3.3 million, with their share in the total population also going up from 1.27 to 1.37 per cent. Ahmadiis witnessed a decline in their real population as well as their share in the total population. The size of their community was reduced by 29,053, from 191,737 (0.09 per cent) in 2017 to 162,684 (0.07 per cent). The population of the Sikh community stood at 15,998 and Parsi at 2,348. The data showed that the country's population increased from 207.68 million in 2017 to 241.49 million in 2023 at a growth rate of 2.55 per cent. At this rate, the data showed that Pakistan's population is expected to double by 2050.

## Israel's presence in Palestinian territory is illegal: ICJ

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Hague, July 19: The top UN court says Israel's presence in the Palestinian occupied territories is "unlawful" and called on it to end. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) said in its non-binding opinion issued Friday that Israel has abused its status as the occupying power in the West Bank and east Jerusalem by carrying out policies of annexing territory, imposing permanent control and building settlements. It said such acts render "Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territory unlawful".



It says its continued presence was "illegal" and should be ended as "rapidly as possible". The top United Nations court said Israel's settlement policy

in the West Bank and east Jerusalem violates international law, as it delivered a non-binding advisory opinion on the legality of Israel's 57-year occupation of lands sought for a Palestinian state, a ruling that could have more effect on international opinion than it will on Israeli policies. International Court of Justice President Nawaf Salam was expected to take about an hour to read out the full opinion of the panel, which is made up of 15 judges from around the world. In part of the opinion, he said the panel had found that "the transfer by Israel of settlers to

the West Bank and Jerusalem as well as Israel's maintenance of their presence, is contrary to article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention". The court also noted with "grave concern" that Israel's settlement policy has been expanding. The court also found that Israel's use of natural resources was "inconsistent" with its obligations under international law as an occupying power. Friday's hearing comes against the backdrop of Israel's devastating 10-month military assault on Gaza, which was triggered by the Hamas-led attacks in southern Israel.

## Ultra-rich entrepreneurs threaten to desert Britain over tax

### STARMER'S LEFT-LEANING LABOUR PARTY PLEDGED TO SCRAP BRITAIN'S CENTURIES-OLD 'NON DOM' TAX REGIME

REUTERS

London, July 19: For ultra-wealthy entrepreneur Bassim Haidar, living in London has become an expensive indulgence he can no longer justify. While new British Prime Minister Keir Starmer settles into No. 10 Downing St, Haidar is searching for homes in Greece and Monaco, because a proposed inheritance tax revamp will make Britain a 'no go' zone for the rich, he says. Starmer says the overhaul will make Britain's tax system fairer and raise funds for stretched public services. While supportive of some reform, Haidar says the proposed changes could harm the economy

if international business owners choose to quit Britain, or avoid moving here, undermining its reputation as an incubator for fledgling firms. The recently ousted Conservative government outlined surprise plans in March to phase out Britain's centuries-old 'non dom' tax regime, which spares wealthy individuals from paying tax on income earned overseas. But in the run-up to its July 4 election win, Starmer's left-leaning Labour party pledged to also scrap permanent reliefs 'non doms' born outside the UK could obtain if they put non-UK assets into a trust within 15 years of moving to Britain. Now the dust has settled on



Labour's return to power, Haidar wants Starmer and finance minister Rachel Reeves to rethink these plans, and to replace them with a new six-figure annual tax on people with net worth in excess of 5 million pounds (\$6.52 mil-

To be taxed so heavily on wealth generated outside Britain, perhaps years before people even moved to the UK, is unfair  
BASSIM HAIDAR | ENTREPRENEUR, UK

"The notion that the UK is simply too good to leave is incorrect," the 53-year-old Nigerian-born, Lebanese citizen told Reuters. "To be taxed so heavily on wealth generated outside Britain, perhaps years before people even moved to the UK, is unfair," he said, urging the government to sit down with globally-mobile millionaires and discuss tax reforms that he said may put UK jobs at risk. Organisations like Patriotic Millionaires UK are also campaigning to introduce annual wealth levies on the super-rich. Setting a 2% tax at a threshold

of 10 million pounds a year would impact around 20,000 people, but raise up to 24 billion pounds a year, the group estimates.

**NUMBER CRUNCHING**  
Investment firms, wealth managers and private bankers who provide financial services to around 70,000 UK-based individuals with 'non-dom' status are on high alert for when the historic tax overhaul might begin. The Labour government reckons it can raise an extra 5 billion pounds a year by tackling domestic tax avoidance. Assessing how much more could be raised by changing tax perks on offshore trusts is more difficult. "It is not possible to directly measure how much foreign income non-doms using the remittance basis have, and therefore what the potential tax base is," the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies said in a report published in March.

# business

## of the day quote

At a time when companies are already facing a significant skill crunch, this move will further tighten the talent pipeline. The government's role is to enable ease of doing business. However, this policy might hamper the productivity and efficiency of companies, both big and small, operating in Karnataka

**VISWANATH PS** | MD & CEO, RANDSTAD INDIA

AI presents a distinct opportunity to reshape industries, reimagine experiences, enhance efficiencies, and foster innovation. Our goal is to lead this transformation for our clients as well as within our own organisation

**RISHAD A PREMJI** | CHAIRMAN, WIPRO

The landscape of employee well-being is evolving rapidly, traditional wellness initiatives, while valuable are no longer enough. This report highlights a significant opportunity for Indian corporations to enhance their approach to employee health and wellness

**SATISH KANNAN** | CO-FOUNDER & CEO, MEDIBUDDY

## Q1 RESULTS

### BPCL profit slumps

**New Delhi:** State-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) Friday reported a 73 per cent drop in its net profit in the June quarter as refinery margins dropped and a fuel price reduction slashed marketing margins. Consolidated net profit of ₹2,841.55 crore in April-June -- the first quarter of the current 2024-25 fiscal year -- was compared to a profit of ₹10,644.30 crore a year back, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. The company had last year made extraordinary gains from holding petrol and diesel prices despite a drop in cost.

### Wipro PAT rises 5%

**Mumbai:** IT major Wipro Friday reported a consolidated net profit of ₹3,003 crore (attributable to the equity holders) for the quarter ended June 30, 2024, which was up by 4.6% over ₹ 2,870 crore reported by the company in the year-ago period. The revenue from operations stood at ₹21,964 crore, which was lower by 4% over ₹22,831 crore reported by the company in the corresponding quarter of the last financial year. Wipro's profit after tax (PAT) was above Street's estimates of ₹2,993 crore while the revenue was lower than the estimates of ₹22,258 crore.

### Reliance net falls

**New Delhi:** Reliance Industries Ltd Friday reported a 5 per cent drop in its June quarter net profit, hurt by weak refining margins and fuel cracks as well as higher depreciation cost. The consolidated net profit of ₹15,138 crore, or ₹22.37 per share, in April-June was compared to ₹16,011 crore, or ₹23.66 a share, in the year-ago period, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. Sequentially, profit fell 20 per cent when compared to ₹18,951 crore earnings in the January-March quarter.

### Paytm loss widens

**New Delhi:** Fintech firm One97 Communications, which owns Paytm brand, Friday said its loss has widened to ₹840 crore in the quarter ended June 30, primarily due to continued impact of restrictions on Paytm Payments Bank Ltd. The company had posted a loss of ₹358.4 crore in the same period a year ago.



**Growth is remaining steady. Now, we have to focus clearly and unambiguously on inflation**

**SHAKTIKANTA DAS** | GOVERNOR, RBI

### ADANI, TORRENT EYE IPL TEAM

Private equity firm CVC Capital Partners is in talks with Adani Group and Torrent Group to sell a controlling stake in Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise, Gujarat Titans, people with knowledge of the development said



## India among key drivers for Netflix

The country leads in Netflix paid subscriber additions, ranks third in revenue growth for Q2

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 19:** Propelled by the popularity of titles such as "Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar", "The Great Indian Kapil Show" and "Amar Singh Chamkila", India has emerged as the third country in revenue per cent growth for streaming service Netflix in its second quarter.

The streamer released its second quarter earnings for 2024 Thursday and Indian content seems to have made significant strides this year alongside popular international shows such as "Bridgerton 3", "Baby Reindeer", Korean drama "Queen of Tears" and films such as "Hit Man" and "Under Paris".

India and the UK have had especially strong slates this year, according to the streamer.

For Netflix, India added the second-highest number of paid net subscribers in the world in the April-June quarter. The American streaming platform



also clocked the third-highest revenue growth in percentage terms in India in the second quarter, it said in an earnings call.

The company doesn't disclose country-specific numbers, but said it added 2.8 million new subscribers in the Asia Pacific, and 8.05 million globally, taking its total paid subscriber base to 277.7 million subscribers in Q2. Industry estimates put its India

subscriber count at 10-12 million. (Netflix follows a January to December fiscal year.)

New Approach To be sure, there has been a visible change in Netflix's India approach over the past couple of years, according to media experts, with the company making a conscious effort to get its act together.

In a three-pronged strategy deployed a few years ago, Netflix

India's growth is a story that we see playing out very similarly around the world. The product market fit is what drives our ability to attract members, retain them and monetize them as well

**TED SARANDOS** | CO-CHIEF EXECUTIVE, PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR, NETFLIX

transformed its content approach, cut its subscription prices, and partnered with telcos to reach their users.

For starters, it slashed prices by 18-60% in December 2021 in an attempt to reach more people. Netflix's mobile-only plan, earlier priced at ₹199 per month, now costs ₹149. The basic plan, which allows access to all content on any one device, is priced at ₹199 versus ₹499 earlier. It also tied up with mobile operators such as Airtel and Jio that offer their subscribers bundled packages.

### Forex kitty jumps to all-time high

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 19:** India's forex reserves jumped by \$9.699 billion to an all-time high of \$666.854 billion for the week ended July 12, the RBI said Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the kitty had increased by \$5.158 billion to \$657.155 billion, surpassing the previous high of \$655.817 billion for the week ended June 7.

For the week ended July 12, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by \$8.361 billion to \$585.47 billion, the data released Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves increased by \$1.231 billion to \$58.663 billion during the week, the RBI said.

## ₹ closes at 83.70 against US dollar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 19:** The rupee depreciated 7 paise to settle at its all-time low of 83.70 against the US dollar Friday, weighed down by strong American currency and muted trend in domestic equities.

Forex traders said weak domestic markets and elevated oil prices pressured the rupee, however, likely Reserve Bank of India (RBI) intervention prevented a sharp fall in the domestic unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.64, and touched an intra-day high of 83.60 and a low of 83.70 against the dollar during the trading session.

It finally settled at an all-time low level of 83.70 against the American currency, registering a loss of 7 paise from its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee depreciated 5 paise and settled at a historic low of 83.63 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on weak global markets and a

strength in the US dollar. Weak Asian and European currencies may also weigh on the rupee," Anuj Choudhary -- Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas -- said.

Choudhary said Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) inflows and any intervention by the RBI may support the rupee at lower levels. "USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of ₹83.40 to ₹83.90," he said.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading higher by 0.16 per cent at 104.33.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, were trading marginally lower by 0.07 per cent at \$85.05 per barrel.

Meanwhile, the Asian currencies were all down after a fall in European currencies as the European Central Bank (ECB) kept rates unchanged in its meeting with a possibility of a cut in September, traders said.

FIIs were net buyers in the capital markets Friday as they purchased shares worth ₹1,506.12 crore, according to exchange data.

**We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on weak global markets and a strength in the US dollar. Weak Asian and European currencies may also weigh on the rupee**

**ANUJ CHOUDHARY** | RESEARCH ANALYST, SHAREKHAN

## Markets tumble after record run

**INVESTORS BECOME POORER BY ₹7.94 LAKH CR AS STOCK MARKETS SLIDE AFTER FOUR DAYS OF RECORD-BREAKING RALLY**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 19:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled Friday as investors rushed to book profits after four days of record-breaking rally and the global sell-off triggered by an IT outage that caused devices to crash globally.

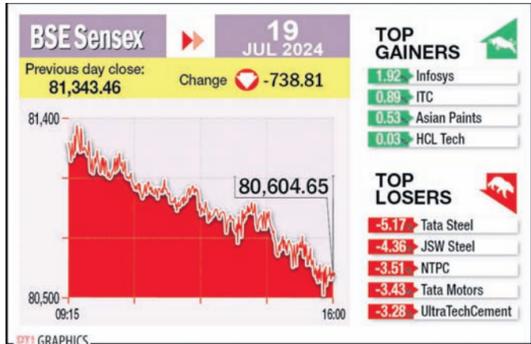
Fall in blue-chip Reliance Industries also dragged the benchmarks lower.

The 30-share BSE Sensex hit its new all-time high of 81,587.76 in the initial trade but failed to carry forward the winning momentum and tanked 738.81 points or 0.91 per cent to settle below the 81,000-mark at 80,604.65. During the day, it plunged 844.36 points or 1.03 per cent to 80,499.10.

The BSE benchmark had hit the 81,000-mark for the first time Thursday.

The NSE Nifty tumbled 269.95 points or 1.09 per cent and ended at 24,530.90 after hitting its fresh record peak of 24,854.80 during the opening bell. During the day, it declined 292.7 points or 1.18 per cent to 24,508.15.

Among the Sensex pack, Tata Steel tumbled over 5 per cent while JSW Steel tanked nearly 5 per cent. Tata Motors, NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Tech



**The domestic market closed today with a downturn due to the global sell-off, triggered by operating system issues that caused devices to crash worldwide. The overvalued market is also experiencing profit booking ahead of the budget next week**

**VINOD NAIR** | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Power Grid, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Reliance Industries were the other major laggards.

ITC, Asian Paints and HCL Technologies were the other gainers.

Microsoft users globally reported massive outages in services Friday, with outage tracking website Downdetector showing users flagging disruptions across various services.

Country's leading stock exchanges NSE and BSE said they are not impacted due to the global outage of Microsoft systems even as disruptions were reported in functioning of several airlines, banks, media outlets worldwide.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge tanked 2.31 per

cent and smallcap index dropped 2.22 per cent. All the indices ended lower, with metal plunging 4.11 per cent, commodities tanking 3.07 per cent, oil & gas (2.87 per cent), power (2.67 per cent), auto (2.53 per cent), utilities (2.51 per cent), realty (2.44 per cent) and services (2.42 per cent).

On the weekly front, BSE benchmark climbed 85.31 points or 0.10 per cent and the Nifty went up marginally by 28.75 points or 0.11 per cent.

The BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 626.91 points or 0.78 per cent to settle at a fresh closing high of 81,343.46 Thursday. The broader Nifty climbed 187.85 points or 0.76 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,800.85.

## Likely winners, losers from upcoming Union Budget

REUTERS

**Bangalore, July 19:** India unveils its budget July 23 in the first major policy announcement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's third five-year term, which could usher in changes to economic priorities.

After a shock election result saw Modis party returned to power relying on allies, the government is expected to boost consumption in Asia's third-largest economy by lowering personal taxes or increasing spending on consumer-focused areas.

While that could benefit consumer goods makers, real estate and housing finance firms as well as infrastructure and auto companies, some sectors could also stand to lose, said brokerages.

Here are some of their winners and losers.

### RURAL-LINKED SECTORS

The government is expected to allocate more funds for rural schemes to stimulate consumption, aiding consumer goods makers like Hindustan Unilever and two-wheeler makers like TVS Motor and Hero MotoCorp, according to Citi.

A less than 5%-7% increase in tobacco taxes could be a positive for ITC, the country's largest cigarette maker, according to Jefferies.

### REAL ESTATE

The government is likely to allocate more funds for affordable housing, benefitting developers such as Macrotech Developers and Suntech Realty, Citi said.

Moreover, the introduction of an interest subsidy scheme for urban housing would boost financiers like Aavas Financiers and Home First Finance, said Jefferies.



### AUTOMAKERS

India doled out subsidies worth ₹115 billion (\$1.38 billion) over five years to drive the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) and Macquarie expects the government to retain both the quantum and tenure in its latest scheme.

That could benefit Tata Motors,

India's top e-car maker, as well as IPO-bound e-scooter maker Ola Electric and e-bus makers Olectra Greentech and JBM Auto.

Conversely, lesser-than-expected EV subsidies could benefit Maruti Suzuki, India's highest-selling car maker and one that has chosen to make hybrid cars over pure EVs.

### MANUFACTURING

The push on production-linked incentive schemes, which incentivises local manufacturing and creates jobs, is expected to continue, according to HSBC.

That will help manufacturers of technology hardware, telecom equipment, electronics and medical devices among others, like Dixon Technologies, Ideaforge Technology and Biocon.

Capital goods companies like Larsen & Toubro and infrastructure firms could benefit from the likely rise in capital expenditure in the budget, according to Jefferies.

### TRADING

Any change in capital gains tax -- either by raising the holding period or tax rate -- could be a dampener for equities, Morgan Stanley said, though it says such moves are unlikely. But, if enacted, they would

increase the tax burden on equity and mutual fund investors, eroding the tax advantage they enjoy over investors in other asset classes.

It could also lead to lower trading volumes, weighing on brokerages Motilal Oswal, ICICI Securities, Angel One, 5 Paisa among others.

The country's mutual fund association has petitioned that mutual fund units be exempted from long-term capital gains tax.

The government and regulators also want to rein derivatives trading -- which has largely powered the stock market's rally since the Covid-19 pandemic -- calling it risky and speculative.

Any move to do so, such as through higher taxes, will not only weigh on the market but also reduce trading volumes and in turn, affect brokerages and trading platforms, Jefferies said.

# Tricky road ahead for Hardik

Star all-rounder's captaincy aspirations nicked for the time being



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 19:** He left the Caribbean basking in the glory of his success in India's triumphant march to their first ICC tournament title in 11 years. However, in a mere three weeks, Hardik Pandya's world has turned upside down.

Elite sport can be ruthless and Pandya found that out when he was pipped by Suryakumar Yadav for the post of captain of the Indian T20 side for the upcoming tour of Sri Lanka while battling problems on personal front.

The vote of 'no confidence' in his leadership ability was so emphatic and in your face that it has left the flamboyant all-rounder facing another big question thanks to one of the most dramatic twists in Indian cricket.

This has happened mainly because of Pandya's injury prone career. Also Gautam Gambhir's entry as India head coach obviously put a spanner in Pandya's national captaincy prospects. Gambhir basically backs a person who will always be available which Pandya is not. Gambhir's association with Suryakumar goes a long way from the time the latter played for KKR under the former's captaincy. Moreover, the selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar wasn't

completely convinced that Pandya is tactically as sound as one expects an international skipper to be.

Sources said that Pandya needs a bit of handholding and Ashish Nehra did that at Gujarat Titans (GT). Mark Boucher wasn't that man at Mumbai Indians (MI), and as per a general feedback, the younger lot in the Indian dressing room have a chance of responding way better to Suryakumar than to Pandya, sources stated.

The question now is whether MI, the franchise with the deepest pocket and biggest say in the IPL Universe, be ready to give one more year to their current preferred leader Pandya, who replaced their most popular captain (Rohit Sharma) in acrimonious circumstances last year?

By leading the team to the T20 World Cup title, Rohit has elevated himself to a position which is second only to Mahendra Singh Dhoni in Indian cricket, barely few months after being dumped by his IPL franchise.

So how do MI deal with Rohit before the mega auction next year and what if the Indian skipper isn't interested in retention. To make matters more intriguing, MI also have the new Indian T20 captain Suryakumar in their roster, and they will have to retain him at all cost going into next

year's mega auction.

So where does all this leave Pandya, who moved to MI after a very successful stint with GT following a much-publicised all-cash deal, only to be booted in every nook and corner of the country during the last IPL.

Those in MI's core management team, with hands on their hearts, will agree that the manner in which Pandya was elevated as skipper didn't end up creating a happy environment, and the last-place finish only strengthened those theories.

What is the road ahead for Pandya right now? A terrific performance first up in the Sri Lanka T20s to drive home a point. Also he can't just wait for India games as he will have to play domestic cricket to improve his below-par international appearance percentage of 50 per cent across two white ball formats in last 19 months (69 games; 46 out of 79 T20s and 23 ODIs out of 59 ODIs since January 22).

Indian cricket is always full of twists and turns and if Pandya wants to go to the Champions Trophy next year, he will have to play the Vijay Hazare Trophy for Baroda in December. However, one shouldn't write Pandya off. In cricket nothing is over till the last ball is bowled.

**A CHANCE TO BE PART OF**

**METTLE MEET 2024**

**OrissaPOST**

It's time for **METTLE MEET** – an initiative by the state's only homegrown English daily to revive quizzing in Odisha. This year, the **Preliminaries** will take place **August 3** and the **Grand Finale August 4**. Like in previous years, most of the top educational institutions of Odisha – both schools and colleges will be competing for the **Grand Prize of ₹1,00,000** in the Junior and Senior segments.

**A QUIZ Extravaganza**

**RULES & REGULATIONS**

- Everyone will have to mail their answers to [mettlemeet@orissapost.com](mailto:mettlemeet@orissapost.com)
- Answers to the questions will follow the next day. The names of the winners will also be announced along with their pictures.
- Answers mailed between 8.00am to 6.00pm each day will be considered valid.
- Orissa POST's decision on all entries will be final. No complaints will be entertained.
- Participants must send their entries with a **passport size photograph, mobile numbers and residential address**. Otherwise the entries will be rejected.
- There can be only one winner from one family.
- Invitation cards to the winners will only be issued on presentation of **Valid ID proof – Voter Card, Aadhaar Card, Driving License, Passport, School ID card** (In case of students till Class XI)
- No employee of **Orissa POST** or their family members can be part of the competition

**TODAY'S QUESTION**

Joseph Baptista was a former Mayor of Bombay who was closely associated with the Home Rule Movement, and was also its first President, heading the Belgaum unit when it first opened. In one of his speeches, Baptista used what line that was later attributed to Bal Gangadhar Tilak?

**ANSWER TO FRIDAY'S QUESTION**

**Tenzing Norgay**

**THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS**



**BHUMIKA SUBHALAXMI**



**TRIPATI NARAYAN MISHRA**

**Others who answered correctly are**  
Ahaana Paikray, Jaba Dasgupta, Ayushi Pradhan, Aashish Agarwallah, Debashish Mohanty, Rashmi Rekha, Abhijit Raychaudhuri, Prithvitat, Padhy and Akankshya Pradhan

**CARMEL ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOL & ASHA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

Carmel Campus, Bodotata 752050, Phone: 9717 313 314, 0674 - 2492206  
[www.carmel-khordha.com](http://www.carmel-khordha.com) | [www.ais-khordha.com](http://www.ais-khordha.com)

**SHORT TAKES**  
**Winning start**

**Houston:** India made a winning start in the World Junior Squash Championships with both the boys' and girls' teams winning their respective fixtures comprehensively. While the boys eased past Kuwait 3-0 in their Group F encounter, the girls team, led by national champion Anahat Singh, defeated Chinese Taipei by an identical margin in Group D here Thursday. The boys will next face Brazil Friday while the girls will take on Brazil and Australia.

**Deal completed**

**Milan:** AC Milan announced Friday the signing of Alvaro Morata from Atletico de Madrid. He is the captain of the Spanish national team that recently won the European Championships. Morata has signed with the Rossoneri until June 2028, with an option to extend for an additional year. Morata has so far played for clubs like Real Madrid, Juventus, Chelsea and Atletico Madrid. He has played 506 matches and have so far scored 172 goals.

# CLINICAL INDIA CRUISE PAST PAK

**DEFENDING CHAMPS, WOMEN IN BLUE START THEIR ASIA CUP CAMPAIGN IN STYLE**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dambulla (Sri Lanka), July 19:** Contenders India started their Women's T20 Asia Cup title defence on a rousing note, demolishing arch foes Pakistan by seven wickets here Friday.

India bundled out Pakistan for a below-par 108 after being asked to bowl and then chased down the target with 35 balls remaining. Indian openers Shafali Verma (40, 29b, 6x4, 1x6) and Smriti Mandhana (45, 31b, 9x4) were at their best as they toyed with the Pakistani attack from the word go and put on 85 runs for the opening stand.

It was an aggressive display of batting from both the Indian openers as they mostly dealt in fours and sixes. The duo of Mandhana and Shafali hit two fours and a six off Tuba Hassan to collect 15 runs in the sixth over. In Hassan's next over Mandhana hit her for five



**Deepthi Sharma**



**Smriti Mandhana**

boundaries. Even though Dayalan Hemalatha (14) didn't last long, Indian reached the victory target quite easily.

"Our bowlers and openers did the job. The first match is always a pressure game that sets the tone. Our entire unit played really well. When we were bowling, we were talking about early breakthroughs. With the bat,

credit goes to Smriti and Shafali. We want to keep playing fearless cricket," skipper Harmanpreet Kaur said after the game.

Earlier, India dished out a fine effort led by experienced off-spinner Deepthi Sharma (3/20), Renuka Singh (2/14), Pooja Vastrakar (2/31) and Shreyanka Patil (2/14) also bowled well to keep the Pakistani batters under check. India tasted their first suc-

cess in the second over when pacer Vastrakar dismissed Gull Feroza, caught by Harmanpreet at mid-on. Vastrakar struck again, dismissing the other Pakistan opener Muneeba Ali with a short-pitched delivery, caught by Jemmimah Rodrigues at cover, reducing Pakistan to 26 for 2 after the fourth over.

Then the two Indian spinners Deepthi and Shreyanka combined to completely derail the Pakistan innings. Only Sidra Amin (25), Hassan (22) and Fatima Sana (22) tried to offer some resistance. In fact Sana hit two sixes off left-arm spinner Radha Yadav in the 19th over to take Pakistan past the 100-run mark. However, in the end it proved to be too little.

**Brief scores:** Pakistan 108 in 19.2 overs (Sidra Amin 25, Deepthi Sharma 3/20) lost to India 109 for 3 in 14.1 overs (Smriti Mandhana 45, Shafali Verma 40) by seven wickets.

# Nadal shows his fighting spirit

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Bastad (Sweden), July 19:** Rafael Nadal recovered from a tumble and a 1-4 deficit in the second set to beat fifth-seeded Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-4 in the second round of the Nordea Open tennis tournament here Thursday.

Nadal fell over in the first game of the second set after attempting to slide on the clay, and needed treatment on a couple of bleeding scrapes. He then went a break down before winning the last five games of the match to reach his first quarter-final since January.

"Great feelings, it's been a while without playing on the tour since Roland Garros and I had a chance to compete against a great player like Cameron," Nadal said. "It's part of the journey today. I haven't been competing often so matches like this help and holding the pressure on the opponent for the whole game is something I need to improve on because I haven't played



enough," the Spaniard added. Nadal is playing at the tournament in Sweden for the first time since he won the title as a 19-year-old in 2005 as he prepares for the Olympic tournament on clay at Roland Garros in Paris. He beat Leo Borg, the son of Swedish tennis legend Bjorn Borg, in the first round Tuesday. It was his first singles match since he lost in the first round of the French Open to Alexander Zverev. He teamed up with Casper Ruud Monday to win a first round doubles match, Monday.

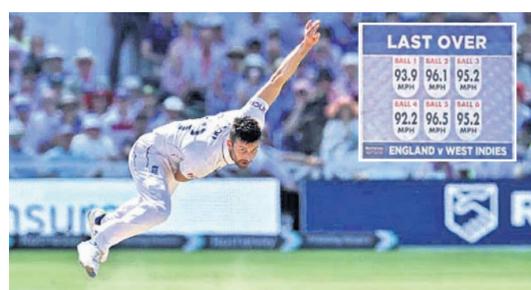
# Woods bowls England's fastest over

**PACEMAN HITS THE 150+ KMPH MARK CONSISTENTLY AGAINST THE WEST INDIES**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Nottingham, July 19:** Mark Wood scripted history as he bowled the fastest recorded Test over by an England bowler during the ongoing day of the second Test against West Indies at Trent Bridge here Friday.

Wood, who replaced retired pacer James Anderson in England's playing XI, set the bar high in his first over as he wasted no time and clocked the speed of 93.9mph (151.1km/h) on the first delivery to opener Mikyle Louis. He bettered it and clocked 96.1mph (154.65km/h) on the second ball, leaving the batter clueless. Wood continued his onslaught with deliveries at 95.2



mph (152.88km/h) and 92.2 mph (148.06km/h) before delivering a searing 96.5mph (155.30km/h) yorker on his fifth ball, which Louis managed to dig out for a single.

The 34-year-old England pacer ended the over with another fast delivery at 95.2mph (153.20km/h) to West Indies skipper Kraigg Louis managed to dig out for a single.

In his second over, Wood ramped up the heat with deliveries clocked at 95mph (152km/h), 93mph (149.66km/h), 95mph (152km/h), 96mph (154.49km/h), 97.1mph (156.26km/h) and 94mph (151.27km/h).

In the third Ashes Test at Headingley last year, the 34-year-old Wood beefed up the tempo when he reached blazing speeds of 91mph, 93mph, 95mph, 93mph, 94mph, and 93mph in an over. In the end, England prevailed by three wickets in the Test.

Wood upped the ante when he hit a short delivery against Louis at 97.1 mph in his third over. The 34-year-old is regarded as one of the world's quickest bowlers across formats.

# Pogacar on cusp of 3rd title

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Paris, July 19:** Tadej Pogacar took a giant step closer to clinching a third Tour de France title after winning Friday another tough mountain stage, pulling away from Jonas Vingegaard to move five minutes ahead of his main rival with two days left. The Slovenian looks almost certain to reclaim the Tour crown from Vingegaard, the two-time defending champion from Denmark, who is five minutes, three seconds behind him. Tour debutant Remco Evenepoel of Belgium is 7:01 adrift in third place.

Pogacar attacked with about nine kilometres left on the final climb of 16 kilometres to the Isola 2000 ski resort. Vingegaard could not follow as Pogacar chased after the Dane's Jumbo



Visma teammate, Matteo Jorgenson. The American rider was alone in front with Richard Carapaz and Simon Yates just behind him. Carapaz and Yates were caught by Pogacar, leaving just Jorgenson ahead. But he was also overtaken with two kilometres left as Pogacar soared to the 15th Tour stage win of his career.

# FAO LEAGUES START JULY 24

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 19:** The first and second division leagues for the 2024 season conducted by Football Association of Odisha (FAO) will kick off July 24 at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, the organising body said in a release Friday. The competition will be played over three months. A total of 91 matches will be played between 33 teams in both the divisions.

A total of 23 clubs have been divided into 'Diamond', 'Gold', 'Silver-A' and 'Silver-B' categories. There are eight clubs in the 'Diamond' category including Sunrise Club, Radharaman Club, Sports Odisha, Rovers Club, Bidanasi Club and Rising Star Club. In the second division there are 10 teams.