

### Kavita's resentment

Actor Kavita Kaushik quits TV industry saying she doesn't want to be part of it as the content shown are very regressive

LEISURE | P2

### No special status

Centre rules out special status to Bihar, a long-standing demand by the state-based parties including BJP's key ally JD (U)

NATIONAL | P8

### Leaders laud Biden

World leaders thank US President Joe Biden for his bold steps and global leadership during challenging times

INTERNATIONAL | P10

### Gambhir's hope

New head coach Gautam Gambhir expects both Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to play on till the 2027 ODI World Cup

SPORTS | P12

# WELCOME DRAGON

## Assault on ASO: Min promises swift action

AGENCIES

### New Delhi, July 22:

Amid strained ties with China since 2020 after border skirmishes, the Economic Survey tabled in the Parliament by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday made a strong case for seeking Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the neighbouring country to boost local manufacturing and tap the export market. Following



- ### HIGHLIGHTS
- Growth pegged at 6.5-7% in FY25 versus 8.2% in 2023-24
  - Economy on a strong wicket and stable footing
  - Reaching agreements on key global issues like trade, investment and climate has become extraordinarily difficult
  - Short-term inflation outlook benign, but India faces deficit in pulses and price pressures
  - Hardships caused by higher food prices for poor and low-income consumers can be handled through direct benefit transfers or coupons for specified purchases valid for appropriate durations
  - Survey suggests ways to explore whether India's inflation targeting framework should target the inflation rate excluding food items

entrepreneurs picking up know-how and at one point also becoming self sufficient," Nageswaran added.

### Cautious approach

The Survey has taken a more cautious stance than private economists on the outlook for growth this fiscal year, predicting the world's fifth-largest economy will expand between 6.5% and 7%. The projection is lower than 8.2% robust growth seen in the year ended March and a weaker range than estimates of 6.8% to 7.2% from economists. The RBI is also more upbeat, forecasting growth of 7.2%.

"Global growth and trade volume are difficult to come by," Nageswaran told reporters after the release of the annual report citing geopolitical risks, growing protectionism and concerns about supply chains. The Indian economy is on a strong wicket and stable footing, and the real GDP was up by nearly one fifth from pre-pandemic levels, he said.

Meanwhile, the Congress alleged that the Survey presents a 'cherry-picked' view of the economy and claimed that India is experiencing its "most precarious and difficult" economic situation in many years. The CPI(M) said the Survey is disconnected from reality. **MORE P11**

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** A few minutes after Opposition BJD and Congress members boycotted Governor Raghuraj Das' address to the Assembly alleging inaction against his son despite allegations against him of assaulting an assistant section officer (ASO) at Puri Raj Bhavan July 7, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan Monday assured the people that swift action would be taken against those involved in the incident.

The incident, where Governor's son Lalit Kumar allegedly assaulted ASO Baikuntha Pradhan during President Droupadi Murmu's visit, prompted strong demands for accountability from Opposition BJD and Congress.

He clarified that the Governor's Secretariat had instructed the Puri Collector to conduct a comprehensive investigation and submit a report within 15 days, emphasising that subsequent actions would be based on the probe.

Earlier in the day, BJD and Congress lawmakers staged a walk-

out during the Governor's address, citing dissatisfaction with the response to the assault and alleging inaction by the police. Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik expressed dismay over what he perceived as a 'breakdown of law and order' under the BJP government in the state.

"We were deeply shocked by this. Law and order seems to have completely broken down in our state," Naveen told reporters.

He further said immediate action was taken against ministers, MLAs, MPs, senior government officers whenever they broke law during the previous BJD regime. "The state government should take action according to the law," Patnaik said.

Reacting to Harichandan's assurance, former Law minister and BJD leader Pratap Jena said he wanted to know why no police case was registered against the Governor's son.

"Does the Law minister mean that all the criminal cases will now be probed by the District Collector instead of police? Is it the Odia 'asmita' (pride) based on which the BJP came to power?" Jena posted on X.

## ECONOMIC SURVEY '23-24

Galwan clashes, India had banned over 200 Chinese mobile apps such as TikTok, and rejected a major investment proposal from EV maker BYD. Visas for Chinese nationals also slowed. However, the focus of the Survey, which pegs a conservative growth forecast of 6.5% to 7%, on fresh ties with the neighbour hints at BJP-led government's economic compulsions.

The Survey said as the US and Europe are shifting their immediate sourcing away from China, it is more effective to have Chinese companies invest in India and then export the products to these markets rather than importing from the neigh-

bouring country.

India faces two choices to benefit from 'China plus one strategy' - it can integrate into China's supply chain or promote FDI from China, said the Survey.

"Among these choices, focusing on FDI from China seems more promising for boosting India's exports to the US, similar to how East Asian economies did in the past. Moreover, choosing FDI as a strategy to benefit from China

plus one approach appears more advantageous than relying on trade. This is because China is India's top import partner, and the trade deficit with China has been growing," it added.

It also said that increased foreign direct investment inflows from China can help increase India's global supply chain participation and push exports.

When asked about the issue, Chief Economic Advisor V

Anantha Nageswaran said that through this, he is urging the Centre to re-examine the policy with regard to FDI from China. He said that India has a large trade deficit with China and if India continues to import, the trade balance will widen further.

"It also means that you are making yourself vulnerable...Choose the areas in which you can have investments, then you also have a chance of Indian

## Ex-soldier hacks six of his family to death

**Ambala, July 22:** In a nerve-chilling incident, an ex-serviceman allegedly hacked to death six members of his family, including his mother; brother; a nephew and two nieces, while they were asleep at Naraingarh in this district of Haryana over a land dispute, police said Monday.

Accused Bhushan Kumar also allegedly tried to burn the bodies in his house after committing the gruesome crime, they said, adding the retired soldier has been arrested.

Police said the deceased have been identified as Kumar's mother Saroopi Devi, 65, brother Harish Kumar, 35, sister-in-law Sonia, 32, and their three children - Pari, 7, Yashika, 5, and Mayank (6 months). An SIT has been formed to conduct further investigation into the case.

## Man kills wife, mom-in-law

**Redhakhole, July 22:** A man killed his wife and mother-in-law with a crowbar following a heated exchange of words over a domestic dispute at Podabolanda village under Ward No-5 of this NAC in Sambalpur district Monday.

The accused, Mithun Sahu, 25, surrendered before Redhakhole police carrying his 18-month-old son in his arms after committing the crime. The victims were identified as Mithun's wife Gayatri Sahu, 22, and his mother-in-law Rukmini Sahu, 50. Police rushed to the spot with a forensic team and started an investigation.

Police said Mithun, a native of Jamudali under Athamallik police limits in neighbouring Angul district, had tied nuptial knot with Gayatri of Podabolanda three years ago.

Mithun had to migrate outside in search of jobs after their marriage. He used to visit home at times. However, there were intermittent fights between them over financial issues. His wife had

alleged that he was not paying her money to meet family expenses. Gayatri and her mother were reportedly forcing him to sell off his ancestral properties at his native village and settle with them.

"Gayatri and Rukmini were torturing me mentally," Mithun revealed before police during interrogation.

A bitter altercation had broken out with his wife and mother-in-law Sunday night. The two women also picked up a fight with him Monday morning. Enraged, Mithun picked up a crowbar and shoved his wife and mother-in-law to death.

Later, he took up his son in his arms and surrendered before Redhakhole police, who arrested him following a complaint filed by Gayatri's uncle.

Police seized the blood stained crowbar used in the crime.

The bodies have been kept at Redhakhole hospital for post-mortem that will be conducted Tuesday, Redhakhole inspector in-charge Sabitalata Sethi said.



## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I don't want us to become a developed country. There, public opinion can force an aged leader out

## NEET-UG: SC asks IIT Delhi to set up team of experts

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Monday asked the IIT-Delhi's Director to set up a team of three experts that would go into a particular question appeared in the NEET-UG 2024 and submit a report on the correct answer by Tuesday noon. The top court took note of the submissions of some aspirants that a question related to an 'atom' and its characteristics had two correct answers and a set of examinees, who gave one particular answer out of the two correct ones, were awarded four marks. This, the petitioners contended before a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, would have a significant impact on the final merit list of successful candidates. **P8**

## Kanwar Yatra row: SC stays nameplate diktat

**New Delhi:** The apex court Monday ordered an interim stay on the directives issued by BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand asking eateries along the Kanwar Yatra routes to display the names of their owners, staff and other details, a move the opposition has claimed is intended to promote religious discrimination. Issuing notice to the twin governments, and Madhya Pradesh, where the Ujjain municipal body has issued a similar directive, a bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti, however, said eateries may be required to display the kind of food they are serving like they are vegetarian or non-vegetarian. No one appeared for the governments in the SC. **P9**

## Mercury may be a diamond treasure

**Washington DC, July 22:** A recent study suggests that a thick layer of diamonds may exist hundreds of miles underneath the surface of Mercury, according to a report.

A report in a television channel quoting 'Live Science' said Yanhao Lin, a staff scientist at the Centre for High-Pressure Science and Technology Advanced Research in Beijing and co-author of the study said Mercury's extremely high carbon content made him realise that something special probably happened within its interior.

"The first planet of our solar system has a magnetic field. However, it is much weaker than Earth. Further, NASA's Messenger spacecraft discovered anomalously black areas on Mercury's surface that it recognised as graphite, a type of carbon," said the scientist. The results of the study were published in the journal 'Nature Communications' and could provide light on the composition and unusual magnetic field of the planet.

The planet most likely formed from the cooling of a hot lava ocean, similar to how other terrestrial planets developed. This ocean was probably rich

in silicate and carbon in Mercury's case. According to the investigations, minerals like olivine most likely developed in the mantle. However, the group also found that the chemical mixture only solidified at substantially higher temperatures when sulfur was added. Diamond formation is more likely to occur under such circumstances. Further, the models suggested that diamonds might have formed during the solidification of Mercury's inner core. According to the estimates, if diamonds are present, they form a layer that is typically roughly 15 km (9 miles) thick.

OrissaPOST PRESENTS

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# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You delight in meeting new people, and today you will find yourself mingling with a lot of intelligent people. Ganesha says you will continue to be a perfectionist. Besides this, you will end up spending a huge sum of money on a gift for your beloved today.

**TAURUS**  
This day, your expenses are likely to outrun your budget, your earnings. So says Ganesha. In terms of expenditure, the situation can very well get out of hand, causing you a lot of monetary anxieties. Think twice before spending even a penny. If you have surplus funds in your hand, it is advisable to invest them sensibly instead of frittering them away uselessly.

**GEMINI**  
You need to guard against hurting the sentiments of anyone today. You need to pay greater attention to the problems of your elders and solve their issues. Post noon you may find yourself busy in religious or intellectual pursuits, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
You may face a hurdle, as you tend to intervene in others' matters. But your tact will save you from any untoward incident. By evening, a good news from your kin or intimate friends will cheer you up.

**LEO**  
You will receive mixed results for your labour today. Partnerships in business may see some lows. Traders will see a slow-down in sales. For those who are employed, issues related to progress may crop up. You need to carefully consider the advice given to you by your elders.

**VIRGO**  
Being open-minded with your beloved about your likes and dislikes, as much as about your ambitions, will be crucial today. You will feel very energetic. Ganesha advises you to give enough respect to customs and traditions, and pay heed to calls of higher education. People will appreciate the connoisseur in you.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says that you will gain popularity and prestige with certain people today. Today you may be in a situation where you are amongst strangers in a strange situation but you will be able to handle it perfectly well without getting scared or tensed. There may be work stress all day long but in the evening you may be able to spend time with your beloved.

**SCORPIO**  
Keeping your personal and professional life different would prove beneficial to you, says Ganesha. Commitment and dedication towards your work will win you accolades. This definitely calls for a celebration in the evening. Raising a toast to your success story followed by candlelit dinner with your beloved would be just perfect to end the day.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The day in itself may not materialise into anything substantial, but it will definitely provide hope for a better tomorrow. Take up a part-time course and hone your skills. This may give you room to know yourself. Ganesha advises you to keep your aspirations alive.

**CAPRICORN**  
You know your cards well, now it all depends upon how you play them to your advantage and boost your business, feels Ganesha. You have an efficient team working for you, but you will need to examine their talents without any biases. If they perform well in absolute terms, you can expect the productivity you require from them, today.

**AQUARIUS**  
It is time to catch up some friends and have a good time. You discuss a variety of topics with them, ranging from music to spirituality, from social system to human values, and from politics to career prospects.

**PISCES**  
You will find yourself experiencing problems with taking critical decisions urgently. You will need to carefully weigh the pros and cons of every alternative, before you pronounce your verdict. This is a better practice than to take decisions on a whim, even if slow. You will also plan on making some changes to your personal life. This is a good period for you, make the most of it, says Ganesha.



## JESSIE J DIAGNOSED WITH OCD, ADHD

Pop star Jessie J has revealed she has been diagnosed with obsessive compulsive-disorder (OCD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) after welcoming her first child - son Sky - last year.

## DOHERTY'S DIVORCE FINALISED TWO DAYS AFTER HER DEATH

American actress and director Shannen Doherty's divorce was finalised two days after her death after she managed to agree a settlement with her ex Kurt Iswarienko shortly before she passed away following a battle with cancer. *The Beverly Hills, 90201* star passed away July 13 at the age of 53.



**Mumbai:** Actor Shahid Kapoor's wife Mira Rajput Kapoor, who is currently on a family vacation to Europe, has shared some glimpses from her shopping spree, revealing her obsession with the crockery set.

An avid social media user, Mira, who has 4.7 million followers on Instagram, took to the Stories section and shared a peek into her vacation. She dropped a snap of crockeries - colourful plates.

She has captioned it as: "It is an obsession..."

In another post, Mira shared a picture of flowers and a couch. It is captioned as: "A day for wellness."

Earlier, she also gave a peek into her 'delicious vegan summer lunch' in a London cafe.

Shahid married Mira in July 2015. The couple have two kids - daughter Misha, and son Zain.

Shahid made his debut with the 2003 romantic comedy film *Ishq Vishk*, directed by Ken Ghosh.

The film also starred Amrita Rao and Shenaz Treasurywala.

He was last seen in the science fiction romantic comedy *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya*.

Shahid will be next seen as a police officer in the upcoming adrenaline-pumping action thriller, *Deva*. The movie also features Pooja Hegde and Pavai Gulati.

**Mumbai:** Kavita Kaushik is known for portraying the iconic character of inspector Chandramukhi Chautala in *FIR*. The actor has now decided to quit the television industry as she stated grueling work hours as one of the reasons.

Kavita, in an interview with a news portal stated that she is only been offered to play daayan (witch) in TV shows.

Kavita, while speaking about the reason she decided to bid adieu to TV industry, opined, "I am not interested in working in TV industry at all. I can't do 30 days of work. I am open to doing web shows or movies but I am not a typical looking heroine who can easily get cast in all kinds of shoot. There are only few kinds of roles that suit my personality. I keep getting offered TV projects on daayans (witches) like *Shaitani Rasmein*."

Kavita further said, "TV content is so regressive too and that's why I don't want to be a part of it. There was a time when TV was progressive. But now, the kind of content we're showing is really bad for the young generations to watch. The kind of regression we show in our reality shows and drama makes people hate each other." The actress was a contestant in *Bigg Boss 14*.

**Mumbai:** Actress Tabu recently captured attention with her brief appearance in the teaser for *Dune: Prophecy*, a prequel series to the acclaimed film. With a career spanning over three decades, Tabu has established herself as a versatile performer known for portraying complex characters.

In a recent interview, Tabu addressed the issue of insecurity among actors. "Even if I say it's important (to have secure actors), it's not necessary that you be blessed with secure co-actors," she remarked, adding that actors must adapt to the dynamics of their working environment.

Tabu acknowledged that she has encountered a wide range of personalities throughout her career, stating, "I have met all kinds of people—good, bad, ugly. You have no option. Ideally, it would be great to have a good atmosphere on set, but I also feel insecurity is a very primal human emotion."

Despite the challenges of working with various personalities, Tabu emphasized the importance of commitment to her projects. "When you take up a project, you will have to complete it. Now you do it happily, or be upset about it, have a good experience or bad, it gets completed on its own. That's your commitment to the project," she explained.

# Janhvi embodies flirtatious energy

**Mumbai:** The makers of the upcoming Janhvi Kapoor and Gulshan Devaiah-starrer film *Uljah* have released the first song from the film Monday.

The song, titled *Shaukan*, is a dance number and has been crooned by Jubin Nautiyal, Neha Kakkar, and Shashwat Sachdev.

The song has been composed and produced by Shashwat Sachdev, with lyrics penned by Kumaar.

The music video shows Janhvi in sultry outfits, embodying flirtatious and playful energy as she parties.

Talking about the song, Janhvi said: "I have always been a fan of Neha's songs, and collaborating with her for the first time on *Shaukan* is one thing off my wish list. This song is incredibly upbeat and will make you want to hit the dance floor. It's hot, glamorous, and groovy. I think Shashwat, Jubin, and Neha have created another masterpiece."

For Neha Kakkar, singing *Shaukan* along with Jubin was a terrific experience.

The singer said: "Kudos to Shashwat for making this banger. *Shaukan* is not just another party number; it's a vibe. Can't wait for my fans to hear the song and groove to the beats."

## Mira spills beans on her obsession



## 'Have met all kinds of people- good, bad, ugly'

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## Kavita bids adieu to TV



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

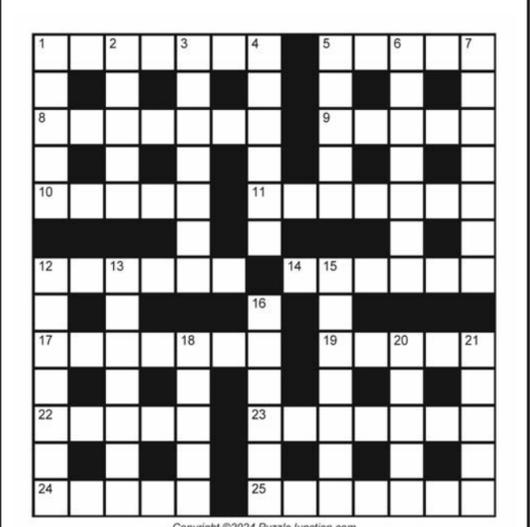


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



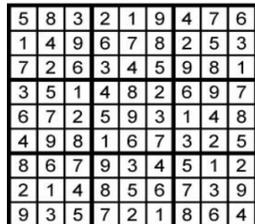
- Across**
- 1 Tabloid topic
  - 5 Helicopter part
  - 8 After trial or weather
  - 9 Leaves at the altar
  - 10 Crazy bone
  - 11 Popular salad ingredient
  - 12 Melon-like tropical fruit
  - 14 Type of lounge
  - 17 Backache
  - 19 Faithful
  - 22 French romance
  - 23 Kind of exam
  - 24 Figure skater
  - 25 Mysterious
  - 5 Cowboy exhibition
  - 6 Kettle drum
  - 7 Deep-fried meat or fish dish
  - 12 Neutron stars
  - 13 Pretentious
  - 15 Vacation
  - 16 Type of rays
  - 18 Main artery
  - 20 Fancy vessel
  - 21 Air freshener option
- Down**
- 1 Scimitar
  - 2 Off-the-cuff (2-3)
  - 3 Threshold
  - 4 Four-wheel covered carriage

## SUDOKU

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



## SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown

## NEW GOVT CHIEF WHIP

**Bhubaneswar:** Boudh MLA Saroj Kumar Pradhan was appointed the as government Chief Whip in Assembly Monday, according to a notification. Remuna MLA Gobinda Chandra Das was appointed the Deputy Chief Whip in the Assembly, according to the notification issued by the Parliamentary Affairs department.

## FINE ACT

Artistes from City-based troupe International Theatre present Odia play 'Agami' during the drama festival organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Monday



# Oppn boycotts Guv's address

# 'Govt to fill 1.5L vacant posts'

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** The first session of the 17th Assembly started on a stormy note, with both the Opposition parties, BJD and Congress, boycotting Governor Raghubar Das' address to the House Monday over alleged inaction against his son despite allegations of him assaulting an official at the Puri Raj Bhavan.

As soon as the House assembled, Leader of Opposition and BJD president Naveen Patnaik led a walkout of the party lawmakers.

The BJD members were followed by Congress MLAs who also staged a walkout led by its legislature party leader Rama Chandra Kadam.

The Opposition parties boycotted the Governor's address over the alleged assault on Baikuntha Pradhan, then posted as an ASO at Puri Raj Bhavan, by Das' son Lalit Kumar July 7. Speaking to reporters outside the Assembly, Patnaik said, "My party and I were disappointed and surprised to find that the present government has taken no action against the Governor's son who had meted out violence to a government officer. We were deeply shocked by this. Law and order seems to have collapsed in our state."

"When I was in the govern-

## Mike switched off during Naveen's address: BJD

Opposition BJD Monday alleged that the microphone was switched off when Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik was speaking. It is an effort to suppress the voice of the Opposition in the House, Opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik asserted. "We have made a written complaint to the Speaker as to how the microphone and camera were switched off when Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik was speaking in the House," Mallik told reporters. Patnaik was a former chief minister. Stating that the party condemns such behaviour, Mallik said they expect justice from Speaker Surama Padhy. Congress MLA Sofia Firdous also made a similar allegation, claiming that the microphone was turned off when party leader Rama Chandra Kadam was speaking in the Assembly. Both the leaders had attempted to speak something in the House before staging a walkout protesting against the alleged assault on an ASO by the Governor's son and police 'inaction' in the matter.



ment, immediate action was taken if ministers, MLAs, MPs or government servants broke the law. The state government must act according to the law. Because of this, my party members staged a walkout from the House at the beginning of the session," he said.

The Congress said Odia Asmita was hurt as the official, who is an Odia, was allegedly assaulted by the Governor's son, who is a non-Odia.

Party lawmaker Tarapasrad Bahinipati said, "The Governor's son, who is a non-Odia, has assaulted an official, who is an Odia. The Governor was yet to take action in this regard even though he was immediately informed. Das had promised of

taking action against the culprit within seven days. But, no action has been taken so far. Where was the BJP's Odia Asmita when the Governor was reading out his speech in Hindi?" Bahinipati also rushed to the well of the House demanding the arrest of the accused in the alleged assault case.

At their respective legislative party meetings, both the BJD and Congress decided to raise the alleged mismanagement during Rath Yatra, the assault case involving the Governor's son and the 'unprecedented' rise in prices of essential commodities during the session, which has 27 sitting days.

The Governor's son had allegedly physically assaulted

Pradhan, who has now been transferred to the Home department, in Puri when he was on duty for President Droupadi Murmu's visit. A complaint was lodged at the Sea Beach police station in the Holy city the next day, but no action has been taken against the accused.

The Opposition members, however, later participated in the proceedings when the House made obituary references for former Governor Muralidhar Chandrakant Bhandare, former deputy speaker and ex-ministers Surendra Nath Naik, Damodar Rout, Dambardhar Ulaka, Kamala Das, and former members V Sugnana Kumari Deo and Aditya Madhi, Padma Shri organic farmer Kamala Pujari and constable Himansu Sekhar Rath, who was killed in a Naxal attack.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik, CLP leader Rama Chandra Kadam and CPI(M) leader Laxman Munda were among the members who were present when the obituary references were made, following which Speaker Surama Padhy adjourned the proceedings till Tuesday.

The House will reassemble at 10.30am Tuesday, Padhy said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** Governor Raghubar Das Monday said the state government will fill 1.5 lakh vacant government posts in a fair and transparent manner, with 65,000 positions set to be filled within the next two years.

He made these remarks during the inaugural session of the newly-formed 17th Odisha Legislative Assembly.

In a bid to transform Odisha into a vibrant manufacturing hub, the state government will prioritise industries such as automobile, electric vehicle (EV), semiconductors, and IT/ITES under the 'Make in Odisha' initiative, he said, adding such a move will generate over 3.5 lakh jobs by 2029, thereby boosting economic growth and employment opportunities across the state.

Das emphasised the government's commitment to enhancing skill development and apprenticeship opportunities for youth to equip them with essential experience and expertise.

Highlighting the empowerment of SC and ST youths, Das underscored the government's efforts to foster entrepreneurial initiatives among these communities.

Recognising women as pivotal to family and societal fabric, Das outlined plans to create 25



lakh successful entrepreneurs (lakhpati didis) in Odisha by 2027.

"This will be achieved through establishing industrial clusters for self-help groups (SHGs) and providing comprehensive support for product marketing and promotion," he added.

Despite challenges such as teacher vacancies and limited access to quality digital learning resources in the state's education system, Das announced the adoption of a state-level education policy aligned with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020), aiming for comprehensive reforms including the introduction of legal, medical, and engineering courses in Odia.

He said the state will formulate a flood control and management policy and state climate strategy to address long-term climate change challenges, and green industrial policy to incentivise industries with

zero carbon emission.

"My government will stay faithful to this vision and will work tirelessly with a broad vision of a Viksit Odisha for a Viksit Bharat. The motto of my government will be Reform, Perform, and Transform, a mantra that can usher in a new era of inclusive, sustainable and rapid development," the governor said.

In healthcare, the state plans to implement the Ayushman Bharat scheme and appoint 3,000 new doctors, with each community healthcare centre (CHC) complemented by a mobile health unit to ensure accessible healthcare delivery.

The state also aims to build 10 lakh houses in rural areas and 5 lakh houses in urban regions under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). For low-income groups not covered under PMAY, the government will launch another scheme to ensure housing for them, he added.

Other initiatives include the construction of Odia Samudaya Bhawans in major cities across the country, implementation of a 'senior citizen first' policy to ensure that the elderly receive priority in benefits and services delivery.

Concluding with a vision for inclusive and sustainable development, Das urged cooperation among all legislative members to ensure comprehensive growth and progress for all sections of society in Odisha.

# Naveen backs Pandian again

# Heavy rainfall to continue for 4 more days: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** Former chief minister Naveen Patnaik Monday once again backed BJD leader and his key aide VK Pandian, saying the bureaucrat-turned-politician has served the state and party with utmost dedication, efficiency and integrity, and rejected a media report of a split in his party as 'completely false, motivated, defamatory and malicious'.

He was reacting to the report that claimed that he had asked Union Home Minister Amit Shah 'not to entertain' Pandian.

"This is completely false, motivated, defamatory and malicious. As I have stated earlier, Pandian has served the state and party with utmost dedication,

efficiency and integrity and is known and respected for the same," he said in a post on X.

The saffron party too rejected a claim made in the report that Patnaik had assured Shah of BJD's support in the Rajya Sabha where the NDA lacks a majority.

BJP vice president Biranchi Narayan Tripathy said, "BJP doesn't need any help from the BJD as it has the majority in the state and at the Centre."

After the BJD's debacle in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, Patnaik had said that Pandian

is a person of integrity and honesty and should be remembered for that.

A section of BJD leaders had blamed Pandian, a bureaucrat-turned-politician from Tamil Nadu, for the party's poor performance in the polls.

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast heavy rainfall across many parts of the state over the next four days, owing to a persistent low-pressure area over north Chhattisgarh and adjoining areas, official sources said Monday.

"The low-pressure area formed over north Chhattisgarh and neighbourhood, persisted over east Madhya Pradesh and adjoining Chhattisgarh. Under its impact, heavy to very heavy rainfall would occur during the next four days," the IMD's regional centre here said.

It has issued yellow warnings for several districts such as Bargarh, Boudh, Subarnapur, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Deogarh, Nayagarh, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, and Kendrapara for Tuesday, anticipating heavy to very heavy rainfall. Heavy rainfall warning has been issued for Kendrapara,



WATER EVERYWHERE: Massive volumes of rainwater being discharged through Jobra barrage in Cuttack, Monday

Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Angul, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur,

Sambalpur, Mayurbhanj, and Keonjhar districts for July 24. The weather bulletin predicted light to moderate rainfall in

other parts of north and south Odisha over the next two days, with similar conditions expected July 25 and 26. As of Monday,

Puri recorded the highest rainfall at 46mm, followed by Malkangiri, Angul, Gopalpur, Rayagada, and Nuapada.

# Congress demands inclusion of Sarna religious code in Census

# Top Fisheries official in soup

# 'MAA RAMA DEVI SYMBOL OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT'



## Odisha needs to approach MoCA with DPR

**Bhubaneswar:** Odisha government needs to approach the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) with a Detailed Project Report (DPR) and an application for 'in principle approval' of the proposed international airport in Puri, Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu said Monday. Responding to a question of BJD member Sasmit Patra, Naidu said the Centre September 22, 2023 granted site clearance to the state government for setting up of an International Greenfield Airport at Puri. "As per the Greenfield Airports (GFA) Policy, 2008, the responsibility of implementation of airport projects, including funding and land acquisition, rest with the concerned airport developer - state government," the minister said. Odisha government needs to approach the MoCA with a DPR containing development plan, project cost, traffic projections and timeline for completion along with an application for obtaining in-principle approval, he said.

of Adivasis... There are crores of Adivasis in India whose religious traditions, identity, faith and fundamental rights are being denied because in the Census there is no column for the nature-worshipping Adivasi faith," Bhagat said.

"The government is counting animals and tigers but Adivasis are not counted. This is an irony. To protect the rights of Adivasis, I request that their religious belief, the Sarna religious code, should be included in the Census," he said.

Earlier in the morning, Bhagat also staged a demonstration in the Parliament complex, displaying placards demanding that a col-

umn on the Sarna religious code be added to the Census document.

Meanwhile, Raj Kumar Roat, Bharat Adivasi Party MP from Rajasthan's Banswara, raised concern over forest land being given to private corporations for mining.

Raising the issue in the Zero Hour in Lok Sabha, he said, "In the last five years, 18,922 hectares of forest land had been given to 189 companies. We are facing the brunt of pollution and talking about planting trees, but forest land is being given to private companies for mining."

"This should be stopped and tribals should not be displaced," he said.

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** Vigilance sleuths Monday carried out simultaneous searches at five locations linked to a Deputy Director of Fisheries following allegations of misappropriation of government funds to the tune of ₹1.05 crore against him.

Vigilance sources said an inquiry was conducted based on the credible information of embezzlement of funds to the tune of ₹1.05 crore by Basanta Kumar Dash, Deputy Director of Fisheries (Brackish Water), Directorate of Fisheries in Cuttack.

"During enquiry, it was revealed that Dash being the Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO), transferred ₹1.5 crore from government account to his personal account being maintained at SBI's Puri branch, and withdrew as well as misappropriated the same," they said.

During the course of investigation, simultaneous searches were conducted by Vigilance Monday to unearth documents relating to the misappropriation of money and investments made or assets acquired out of the misappropriated amount.

At least five teams, led by five DSPs, four inspectors, nine ASIs and other staff, were engaged in the searches at, Bhubaneswar, Puri and Bhadrak.



RESHMI YADAV, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** Noted freedom fighter Maa Rama Devi's sacrifices and contributions to the country's freedom struggle has been a symbol of women empowerment for all, said eminent actor and director Nandita Das, Monday.

Speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural function of a two-day national seminar on 'Maa Rama Devi's Vision in Navigating Challenges in Contemporary Times', organised at the Rama Devi Women's University here, Das said Rama Devi's contributions will always be cherished and remembered in the hearts of everyone. "Women somewhere leave

their dreams behind as they always have to put others before themselves. It is more important to make your identity before contributing towards society as construction of society starts from us," she said at the seminar which is being organised to observe the 39th death anniversary of the late freedom fighter.

Speaking on the occasion, Chandi Charan Rath, chairperson, PG Council of the university, said Maa Rama Devi was the first woman freedom fighter of Odisha who made significant sacrifices towards the freedom movement as well as social service in the state.

"She denounced many awards, rewards and remunerations. She

was above titles, epithets and any sort of greed. Her entire life was dedicated for the welfare of this land and its people," he said.

In her address, Sucheta Priyabadini, professor Maa Rama Devi Chair, said the late freedom fighter will continue to be referred to as 'Maa' by the people of Odisha.

"Her contributions towards society and women are immensely remarkable," she added. Registrar of the university, Shyamali Mohapatra and Vice Chancellor Aparajita Chowdhury also spoke on the occasion.

Many distinguished personalities, including Padma Shri Guru Aruna Mohanty, were present on the occasion.

UNION BUDGET 2024

# Citizens pin hope on spl grant, infra plans



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** As Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman prepares to present the first budget of the Narendra Modi government 3.0 Tuesday, the people in the Capital city are looking forward to some special grants that could significantly impact the state's economic and infrastructure landscape.

They are also of the opinion that budget may see income tax relief for the common man, middle class and salaried taxpayers.

**Orissa POST** talked to a cross-section of people to know their views and expectations.

**Chandrashekhra Mishra**, a solar entrepreneur by profession, said, "All banks including private banks should be mandated to have minimum exposure to Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMESE) in all regions of the country especially for Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

including small construction companies.

He further said, "For addressing speedy infrastructure growth, small construction companies should be given project finance with government guarantee backed by promoters' profiling."

Educationalist and chairperson of SAI International School, **Silpi Sahoo** said, "The previous budget (2023-24) allocated approximately 2.9 per cent of the nation's GDP to education and higher education, an eight per cent increase from the previous year, which is relatively modest in absolute terms. To meet the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), it is essential to continue this upward trend in funding."

"Higher budget allocations are necessary to effectively implement new programmes and initiatives, particularly to improve the quality of education in

rural schools," she emphasised.

On the other hand, **Sankar Prasad Pani**, an environment lawyer drew attention to the alarming situation in the country due to the climate change. "Considering India a vulnerable country to the climate change, our preparedness to face the consequences must reflect in the budget."

"More allocation in research in terms of adaptive to the climate resilient agriculture, thrust on renewable energy and transition from coal should be in the government's priority list," he added. Expecting a green budget, **Prafulla Samantara** an environment activist said, "The source of revenue in the budget should not be more dependent on mines and minerals, so that there will be less mining to protect forest and water resources in the interest of tribals' socio economic security."

"There should be more provision of initiatives to farmers who adopt organic farming," he said.

**Amrit Pattajoshi**, a health expert, said goods and services tax (GST) on health insurance should be brought down from 18 per cent to 12 per cent as it would support the vision of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) for universal insurance coverage by 2047.

"For a growing country like India, the government should commit to spend roughly 3 to 5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) on healthcare as it would ultimately impact the capacity and our ability to become the fastest-developing economy. The budget allocation for preventive and rehabilitative services should also go up," he added.



FOR GREENER FUTURE: CMC Mayor Subhash Singh along with students during a tree plantation programme at Christ College in Cuttack, Monday OP PHOTO

# 'Plastic surgery key factor in healthcare'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** Plastic surgery has emerged as an essential factor in healthcare, providing life-changing solutions for various conditions, including burns, cancer, lymphedema, and cosmetic procedures, said experts during a special programme organised recently by the department of burns and plastic surgery at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar.

The event, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Week, was held under the auspices of the Association of Plastic Surgeons of India (APSI). The week-long event featured a series of specialised days dedicated to various subspecialties within plastic surgery.

During the event, the depart-



ment performed various surgeries and awareness programmes and felicitated burn and cancer survivors. Notable

Department HoD Sanjay Giri said, "We have achieved significant milestones, such as reducing huge lymphedema through compression therapy, excising a massive synovial cell sarcoma of the scalp, and utilising allografts from skin banks in Mumbai, Bangalore, and Kolkata for patients with 50 to 70 per cent burns. We also successfully reimplanted forearms and fingers."

Institute's executive director Ashutosh Biswas said, "The state-of-the-art burns unit has been instrumental in treating severe burn injury patients from Odisha and neighbouring states. The unit has demonstrated excellence in providing top-notch care and performing complex surgeries, solidifying its reputation as a crucial component of the healthcare system."

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
SENSEX	80520.00	↓	102.57
NIFTY	24509.25	↓	21.65
DOLLAR	83.66	↑	₹0.04
EURO	91.01	↓	₹0.05
GOLD	₹72,649	↓	₹341
SILVER	₹ 89,118	↓	₹528

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	
Max Temp	29.8°C	29.0°C	
Min Temp	26.2°C	25.0°C	
Humidity	91%	85%	
Rainfall	8.1mm	1.2mm	

FORECAST  
GENERALLY CLOUDY SKY WITH HEAVY RAIN

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Bhanjanagar Vide No. 989/Dt-19.07.2024, I have changed my surname from Sahu to Sethi. Henceforth, I shall be known as Babula Sethi instead of Babula Sahu S/o Musa Sethi, Village/Post - Gamundi, PS - Bhanjanagar, District - Ganjam, in all purposes in future and to rectify my name from Babula Sahu to Babula Sethi in all Educational Certificates and documents.

# MoU inked for setting up mini tool rooms

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** In order to setup mini tool rooms (MTRs) in advanced manufacturing sector at government-run polytechnic, Jajpur and ITI, Barkote, an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Director of Technical Education and Training (DTE/T), Odisha and Central Tool Room & Training Centre (CTTC), Bhubaneswar, Monday.

The MoU was signed between DTE/T director Reghu G, and CTTC general manager L Rajasekhar in presence of Skill Development of Technical Education (SDTE) Minister



Sampad Chandra Swain and Principal Secretary Usha Padhee. The tool rooms will be set up using the Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) fund.

The minister said, "Training and manufacturing are the key factors of employment. So, the

government has decided to set up the tool rooms."

"Vikashit Bharat and Vikashit Odisha solely depend on growth and employment generation. Employment linked incentives should get top priority" he said.

Padhee said, "More training is vital as skill development and

# CSIR-IMMT hosts BET 2024 workshop

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 22:** CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (CSIR-IMMT) organised a Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)-sponsored skill development workshop on 'Building capabilities in context to energy materials and devices' (BET 2024) here, Monday. The workshop will conclude July 27.

A large number of students from across the country attended the event to explore and advance the boundaries of energy materials and technologies, officials said.

Speaking on the occasion, CSIR-IMMT director Ramanuj Narayan, said that from the dawn of civilisation to our ongoing quest

for energy, we draw inspiration from nature and learn how to utilise its resources effectively.

Elaborating on the workshop Narayan said, "It will provide a pivotal platform for understanding fundamental to latest developments, breakthroughs, and challenges in the field of energy materials."

"Over the next five days, participants will engage in a rich programme featuring keynote addresses, technical sessions, and panel discussions designed to address both current needs and future requirements of our nation in areas such as piezoelectric energy harvesting, electrochemical devices, thermoelectric waste heat recovery and green energy generation," he added.

# Rapamycin could extend women's fertility by five years

A drug that could extend female fertility by five years is safe for a young, healthy population, according to early results of a study.

The study, which is being conducted by researchers at Columbia University in the US, is investigating the potential of using rapamycin - an existing immunosuppressant drug which is currently used to treat tumours and to prevent the recipient of a kidney transplant's body from rejecting the new organ.

Labelled the Validating Benefits of Rapamycin for Reproductive Aging Treatment (Vibrant) study, the research is investigating whether the drug can slow down the ageing of the ovaries, therefore extending fertility, delaying menopause and dialling down the risk of age-related diseases.

The study, which will eventually include more than 1,000 women, now has 34 participants

aged up to 35, with more women joining every day.

Yousin Suh, a professor of reproductive sciences and professor of genetics and development at Columbia University and Zev Williams, associate professor of women's health and the chief of the division of reproductive endocrinology and infertility at Columbia University Irving Medical Center, co-led on the study.

Suh said early results suggested it was realistic to hope the drug could decrease ovary ageing by 20 per cent without women experiencing the side effects which commonly impact those who take the drug, such as high blood pressure, infections, headaches and nausea.

"These early results mean we now have a clear shot at our ultimate goal: using rapamycin to extend the lifespan of the ovary and thereby delaying the menopause, while also extending the lifespan of the woman and



improving her health and quality of life," she added.

Suh noted that participants in the randomised, placebo-controlled study self-reported improvements in their energy levels, memory and quality of their skin and hair. Such findings are consistent with other studies

Results suggest that it was realistic to hope rapamycin could decrease ovary ageing by 20 per cent without women experiencing the side effects which commonly impact those who take the drug, such as high blood pressure, infections, headaches and nausea

those with age-related fertility problems now have hope when before, they didn't," Suh said.

Suh said the team of at least 12 scientists working on the study, which will cost more than \$1m (£750,000) in total, had "great confidence in the results being just as exciting when we scale the study up".

"In a way, our results are too good to be true - except, because rapamycin is so well-studied, we know they are true," she said. "These results are like a dream come true."

"Ovarian ageing is the fundamental driver of ageing in women," said Suh. "HRT is a Band-Aid for ageing that has al-

ready taken place but if women take rapamycin in their 30s, when their ovaries start to decline but there aren't yet any symptoms, they can actually slow the whole ageing process."

Vibrant will report in two years and be followed up by a much bigger, 'phase 2' study: "Our vision is women in their 30s and older can make a simple visit to their family doctor if they want to have more freedom over when they have babies," said Suh.

The findings have been celebrated by Dr Jennifer Garrison, a neuroscientist at the Buck Institute for Research on Aging and the founder of the Global Consortium for Reproductive Longevity and Equality.

"This research is remarkable and marks a paradigm shift in biomedical research for women," she said. "It is the very first in what needs to be many studies to solidify the idea that we can prolong ovarian function."

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# Rly siding spews deadly dust

In the last 10 years, more than 100 people have allegedly died of respiratory diseases at Gauda Sahi, Suanla and Manpur villages, which are in proximity to the railway siding



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, July 22:** Severe dust pollution at Manpur railway siding at Kalinganagar in Jajpur district has reportedly caused over 100 deaths during last 10 years in the nearby villages.

The area is always enveloped with a thick layer of coal and mineral dust. Dust pollution has come to such a pass that it becomes difficult to breathe when one travels on the road nearby. In the last decade, more than a hundred people have died of respiratory and other related diseases at Gauda Sahi, Suanla and Manpur villages, which are in proximity to the railway siding. It is alleged that hundreds of people in the area are suffering from tuberculosis and jaundice. Tribal women in the villages

are the worst sufferers as around 60 of them have untimely lost their husbands and are forced to live a life of helplessness with their children. The sufferings of the children and students of the Anganwadi centre and schools near the railway siding are no less as they bear the brunt of severe dust pollution.

Locals held the consultancy agency in charge of loading and unloading coal and minerals responsible for the development. They said the irresponsible attitude and wrong handling of coal and minerals by the agency has led to severe dust pollution at the railway siding.

They alleged that the agency is transporting coal and minerals overlooking the pollution norms. It is apprehended that the death toll in surrounding villages might

**A case (34/2020) has been filed before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in this regard but to no avail**

go further up in future if the state pollution control board (SPCB) does not take measures to address the problems.

In this context, the regional officer of the SPCB at Kalinganagar, repeatedly pulled up the railway authorities and had asked them to keep the pollution under check. However, no step has yet been taken to address the concerns.

It is alleged that an effluent treatment plant (ETP), sprinklers and equipment to wash the wheels of the coal and min-

eral laden trains on the railway siding premises are not being put to proper use. As a result, dust of iron ore, coal and gypsum spreads in the air and leads to severe pollution.

Residents of Gauda Sahi, Munda Sahi, Nilapada and Manpur have been demanding to curb the dust pollution from the railway siding but to no avail. A case (34/2020) has also been filed before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) but nothing has happened so far.

Sources said coal is being exported from other countries and transported to various plants in Kalinganagar from this railway siding. Over 200 trucks ply from this railway siding daily for their destinations.

Locals alleged that the connecting road of the railway siding is not sprinkled with water on regular basis. Pollution is worsened due to lack of a boundary wall of proper height and absence of green cover in the area. Meanwhile, the agency ferrying minerals and coal from the siding has denied the charges.

When contacted, Pramod Kumar Behera, regional officer of SPCB at Kalinganagar said that his department is conducting probe at the railway siding in regular intervals and action is taken whenever environment norms are violated.

# RGH irregularities: NHM team submits inquiry report to govt

**THE REPORT, IT IS LEARNT, CLEARLY IMPLICATES THE HOSPITAL MANAGER**

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, July 22:** The three-member team of the National Health Mission (NHM), which visited Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH) to inquire into the gross irregularities, has submitted its report to the state government.

According to sources, the NHM team has clearly blamed the hospital's manager Mohit Srivastav for all the major scandals involving laundry bill, theft of freezers from the mortuary and deployment of outsourced staff in the hospital, thereby resulting in huge financial corruption.

It is learnt that the team has issued the third show-cause notice to Srivastav. Previously two show-cause notices have been issued to him May 29 and June 6, when such irregularities indicating his involvement were found and reported by the present director of the RGH Dr Ganesh Dash.

As per the third show-cause notice, Mohit was supposed to reply by Monday evening. The NHM authority's future course of action will be based on the reply.



Little did the present director realise that gross irregularities of such proportion would come to front while doing some regular enquiries.

"I was surprised to find the daily load of washing by the agency Mediaid, who was given the extension without retendering. This led to my suspicion," Dr Dash had said previously.

The manager had persuaded the previous director and his subordinates to pass the bill of M/s Mediaid Ancillary to give the agency an increment of 10 per cent on yearly basis for providing excellent service.

However, there was no mention of it in the actual agreement or tender but was devised by the manager. The current director discovered that the agency was paid ₹20,39,790 without the approval of the hospital's finance officer.

However, Srivastav ran out of luck November 11, 2022, when he again persuaded the finance officer and deputy superintendent this time to write a letter to Mediaid to return the money. The vendor agreed to pay back the amount at ₹56, 661 per month for 36 months, as it was allowed an extension of three years.

Besides, the director found the manager's direct involvement in theft of freezers from the mortuary.

"He accepted before me that he had sold those to the vendor from Mumbai who had supplied the new freezers," said Director Dash.

As per the service condition of the hospital manager, he should have called a meeting of the Rogi Kalyan Samiti, which he never did because the governing body would have unearthed his wrongdoings much before.

# Unknown bikers gun down youth

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal/Satamail, July 22:** A youth was shot dead by two unknown bikers on Nuabag village road under Hindol police limits in Dhenkanal district, Monday afternoon.

The victim was identified as Subhash Sahu, 23, alias Rinku, a native of Mahalunda village and employee of a private finance firm.

The incident occurred when Subhash had gone to Nuabag village for some work. He was walking down the road when two bikers came close and fired bullets at him. He bled profusely and collapsed on the spot after a bullet pierced his chest on the right side. Locals rushed him to the Hindol sub-divisional hospital where the doctors pronounced him dead.

Police rushed to the spot and launched an investigation but failed to ascertain immediately the reason behind the murder. Meanwhile, police arrested one of the accused and seized a gun from his possession. A manhunt has been launched to nab the other accused.

"One of the accused has been arrested while a manhunt is on to nab the other accused. Very soon police will crack the crime," SP Sandip Madkar said.

# 135 people rescued in flood-hit Malkangiri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Malkangiri, July 22:** Around 135 people were rescued from different areas of the flood-affected Malkangiri district Monday and moved to relief camps, an official said.

After visiting the affected areas, Collector Sachin Pawar said the flood situation in the district has improved and vehicular movement on the Pangam and Potteru bridges

has started after the water receded.

However, flood water was flowing over the Kangurukonda bridge due to which the connectivity between Malkangiri and Kalimela has been affected, he said.

As the Godavari river in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh is in spate, there is a possibility of flood in the Mottu area, he said, adding that water from the Polavaram dam project was also

flowing towards Mottu.

Pawar said he was in touch with the Irrigation department of Andhra Pradesh and closely monitoring the situation in the district.

Many roads and bridges in the district have been damaged in the flood. While 95 houses have been damaged, the extent of the cropland affected due to the flood will be known after the water recedes, he said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Steel City doctor heads IFUMB

**Rourkela:** Dr Rajat Ray, one of the most established and well known gynaecologists of Rourkela, has been appointed as the All India President of Indian Federation of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology (IFUMB), for the year 2024-25. He is the first doctor from Odisha to be appointed as the president of this prestigious body for a one-year term. Dr Ray was previously the president of IMA, Odisha branch and also the vice-president of the All India Gynaecologist Association. He has been invited to many international seminars in India and abroad to present his papers. He is also the first doctor from Odisha to be national dean of the Indian Medical College of Ultrasound. "I am proud as an Odia that I have brought this glory to my state," Dr Ray said.



### Stray bull gores septuagenarian

**Patana:** A 70-year old man sustained critical injuries after a stray bull attacked him at Ghatbalijodi village of Dumuria panchayat under this block in Keonjhar district, Monday. The critically injured elderly man was identified as Gurucharana Mohanta of the village. According to reports, a stray bull attacked Mohanta and flung him on the ground when he was walking on the village road. Sources said the bull attack rendered him critical as his abdomen was punctured by the bull's horn. Mohanta was rushed to a local hospital and later shifted to the district headquarters hospital (DHH) at Keonjhar.

# Bike ambulances turn life saver in remote, hilly areas of Mayurbhanj



So far, bike ambulances have assisted over 5,000 patients, serving senior citizens, pregnant women, children and road accident victims till March 2024

This initiative bridges the gap where traditional ambulances struggle to operate.

"Living in an area marred by geographical barriers, regular ambulances struggle to reach us. Thus, the bike ambulance has been a real lifesaver," says Saunru Marandi from Sanjharan village under Bijatala block.

Stationed at nearby Community Health Centres (CHCs) with designated drivers, the bike ambulances are facilitated by local ASHAs in times of emergency.

This initiative ensures residents have timely access to necessary medical care as four wheeler ambulances often struggle to reach remote locations during emergencies.

"But, the OMBADC-supported bike ambulance has been a blessing, allowing us to reach those in need swiftly and efficiently," says Meena Mahanta, an ASHA from Sanjharan village.

In addition to addressing emergency healthcare needs, the bike ambulance service exists alongside Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances in Mayurbhanj district.

The ALS and BLS ambulances, equipped with advanced medical facilities for initial patient care, ensure that critical patients receive timely transport between hospitals as required.

Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) under the state government, bike ambulance service, launched in 2021, is currently active in Rairangpur, Jashipur, Kusumi, and Bijatala blocks.

Each block has one dedicated ambulance, which operates under the Zilla Swasthya Samiti; ensuring residents have access to emergency medical services.

So far, bike ambulances have assisted over 5,000 patients, serving senior citizens, pregnant women, children and road accident victims till March 2024.

PNN & AGENCIES

**Baripada, July 22:** Hindered by challenging terrain, the interior and remote blocks of tribal dominated Mayurbhanj district have received bike ambulances, crucial for emergency healthcare.

This unique initiative will overcome geographical barriers; ensuring medical services for the most remote communities. It will also save the golden hour in case of ferrying victims of trauma to the nearest medical facility.

Supported by the Odisha Mineral

**Indian Bank**  
Zonal office: Sambalpur  
**CORRIGENDUM**  
With reference to our "E-Auction Sale Notice" published in "Orissa Post" on 10.07.2024, in the property description of Borrower: M/s. Siyaram Agencies, property stands in the name of Sri Ram Singh Vedi Should be read as Land instead of Land & Building. All other facts remain unchanged.  
Date: 22.07.2024 Authorised Officer

रजिस्ट्री सं: डी. एन.-33004/99 REGD. NO. D. L.-33004/99  
**भारत का राजपत्र**  
**The Gazette of India**  
सो. डी. डी. एन.-अ.-04072024-255128  
CG-DL-E-04072024-255128  
असाधारण  
**EXTRAORDINARY**  
भाग II - खण्ड 3 - उप-खण्ड (II)  
**PART II - Section 3 - Sub-section (II)**  
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित  
**PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY**  
सं. 2407 नई दिल्ली, मंगलवार, जुलाई 2, 2024/आषाढ 11, 1946  
No. 2407 NEW DELHI, TUESDAY, JULY 02, 2024/ASHADHA 11, 1946

**भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान खड़गपुर**  
**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR**  
Advt. No.: R/10/2024 dated July 01, 2024  
The Institute invites Online Applications from Indian Nationals, PIOs, OCIs for various Faculty positions.  
For details and updates visit: [www.iitkgp.ac.in](http://www.iitkgp.ac.in)  
कुलसचिव/ Registrar  
CBC 21255/12/0006/2425

**GRAM-UTTHAN** **ReNew**  
Kalyani Bhawan, Plot No- 606/2112, Bharat Villa, At-Rudrapur, Po- Naharakanta, Via- Baliaanta, Bhubaneswar-752101, Odisha, Website: [www.gramutthan.org](http://www.gramutthan.org)  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
ReNew Power Synergy Pvt Ltd and Gram Utthan is intended to develop a voluntary carbon project titled "ReNew TARU (Trees for Agriculture, Resilience and Upliftment)", from its Agroforestry interventions. The project will increase the vegetation cover and restore the degraded farmlands and enhance farmers' livelihoods. The project will have significant contributions toward several sustainable development goals (SDGs) and livelihoods enhancement opportunities for the local communities. As the community has a significant stake in the overall success of the project, it is essential to record the opinions offered and concerns raised by the stakeholders. Therefore, Stakeholders' Consultation (Public Meetings) are scheduled on:  
**Meeting 1:** Date: 21st August 2024; Time: 10.30 AM; Venue: Old Zilla Parishad Hall, Office of the Municipal Council, District Dhenkanal, Odisha, 759001 and **Meeting 2:** Date: 23rd August 2024; Time: 10.30 AM; Venue: Rama Chandra- Kalpana Mahavidyalaya, Prakruti Vihar, Kamaguru, At/Po-Kamaguru, Ps- Jankia, Block- Tangi, Dist- Khordha, Pin- 752021. All concerned farmers and people are invited to attend the meeting. For any further clarifications on the project activity, please get in touch with our representative details given below. It should also be noted that people who would be unable to attend this meeting in person can send their concerns to the below E-mail ID:  
**Contact details:**  
Name: Govind Chandra Dash, Secretary,  
Organization : Gram-Utthan  
E-mail: [secretary@gramutthan.org](mailto:secretary@gramutthan.org)

**OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, REMUNA, BALASORE**  
e-mail : [remuna-nac@gov.in](mailto:remuna-nac@gov.in) Tel. No. - 06782-291978  
BID Identification No. RN\_01\_2024\_25 Vide Letter No. 1168 Dt. 20.07.2024  
No.C-242 : The Executive Officer on behalf of Notified Area Council, Remuna invites tenders in Single Cover System. Bid documents consisting of specification of the Schedule of Quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen the Govt. Website i.e <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>  
1. Number of Civil works : 01 (one) number  
2. Estimated Costs : 53.26 lakhs  
3. Period of completion : As per NIT  
4. Date and time of availability of the bid documents in the portal : From 11.00 A.M. on dt. 22.07.2024 upto 05.00 PM of 05.08.2024  
5. Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal : Upto 05.00 PM on 05.08.2024  
6. Bids will be opened on : 11.00 AM on Dt. 07.08.2024  
7. Name and address of the officer inviting bid : Executive Officer, Remuna NAC.  
Sd/- Executive Officer  
Remuna NAC  
OIPR-13204/11/0001/2425

**MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS NOTIFICATION**  
New Delhi, the 2nd July, 2024  
S.O. 2542(E).—Whereas by the notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, S.O. No.1860 Dated:26/04/2024, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii) issued under sub-section (1) of section 3A of the National Highway Act, 1956 (48 of 1956) (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), the Central Government declared its intention to acquire the land specified in the Schedule annexed to the said notification for building (six-laning), maintenance, management and operation of Newly Proposed Raipur Visakhapatnam NH-130 CD Economic Corridor on the stretch of land from Km. 239.650 to Km. 366.500 (O/o- Tahasilard, Koraput) in the district of KORAPUT in the state of ODISHA.  
And whereas the substance of the said notification has been published in "Orissapost" and "Dharitri" both dated 09.05.2024, under sub-section (3) of section 3A of the said Act;  
And whereas the Competent Authority has received objections filed under Section 3-C, considered and settled the same appropriately;  
And whereas, in pursuance of sub-section (1) of section 3D of the said Act, the competent authority has submitted its report to the Central Government;  
Now, therefore, upon receipt of the said report of the competent authority and in exercise of the powers conferred by the sub-section (1) of section 3D of the said Act, the Central Government hereby declares that the land specified in the said Schedule should be acquired for the aforesaid purpose;  
And further, in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 3D of the said Act, the Central Government hereby declares that on publication of this notification in the Official Gazette, the land specified in the said Schedule shall vest absolutely in the Central Government, free from all encumbrances.  
And whereas, the said declaration has been published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, bearing No.2542 dated 02.07.2024 as required under Section 3D of the said Act ;  
Now, therefore, in compliance of sub-section (3) of Section 3G, the Competent Authority hereby invites all the landowners or persons interested in the land being acquired under these proceedings to submit their claims in respect of the land mentioned in the Schedule given here-in-below within a period of 15 days (by 07.08.2024) from the date of publication of this Public Notice in the office of the Competent Authority i.e. Tahashil Koraput.  
All the persons interested [owner of the lands and other interested person(s)] in the lands specified in the Schedule given below are hereby called upon to submit their claims in the said land (their share, area of land, any assets attached thereto e.g. structures/ trees etc. and state the nature of the respective interest in such lands along with relevant records. The said landowners or persons interested therein shall also furnish the particulars of their Bank Accounts to which they would like their compensation amount to be credited. The claims may be submitted in the following indicative format:  
Name of the Village/ Town, Name of the Land owner/ interested Person, Field Survey No., Area of land in his share, Any structures/ trees/tubewell attached to the land, Name of the Bank & Branch in which he/she holds the Account, Particulars of the Bank Account No., IFSC Code of the Bank Branch

**SCHEDULE**  
Brief description of the land to be acquired, with or without structure, falling within the Newly Proposed Raipur Visakhapatnam NH-130 CD Economic Corridor in the stretch of land from Km. 239.650 to Km. 366.500(O/o- Tahasilard, Koraput) in the district of KORAPUT in the state of ODISHA.  
  
File No. NHAI/11013/LA/PIU-Sambalpur,Odisha/Newly Proposed/Notif.(3a)/Koraput/3D/1 ABHAY JAIN, Dy. Secy. District: Koraput  
<https://egazette.gov.in>  
Publication date:04.07.2024  
[https://egazette.gov.in/\(S\(hrfqyc5ce4mgdwwt1hmvo5as\)\)/](https://egazette.gov.in/(S(hrfqyc5ce4mgdwwt1hmvo5as))/)  
ViewPDF.aspx  
[https://bhoomirashi.gov.in/auth/revamp/show FileDf.cshmt?notification\\_id=55122&file\\_id=27323](https://bhoomirashi.gov.in/auth/revamp/show FileDf.cshmt?notification_id=55122&file_id=27323)

**“** The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught

SRI AUROBINDO



## Biden Bids Adieu

Apparently wilting under tremendous pressure from within his party, US President Joe Biden has finally announced he would not be in the presidential race this November and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris to succeed him. Democrats heaved a sigh of relief that Biden has opted out of the race after having doggedly insisted that he would seek re-election. Efforts were being made by several Democrat leaders, including former President Barack Obama, to dissuade Biden from going ahead with his plan to contest in the election, but he was adamant. It was indeed a difficult call since quitting in the middle of the campaign would have created the impression that the President had run away in the face of sure defeat at the hand of Trump, even if it could have been a close contest. He and his party were seemingly looking for an alibi as his statements during the past few days did indicate. The opportunity appeared to have come when Biden had a COVID attack and was confined to his private house. Now the argument that he would be too debilitated by the virus to campaign at the advanced age of 81 would appear plausible.

The rival camp of the Republican candidate former President Donald Trump was gloating over the likely defeat of Biden after the latter's disastrous showing in a nationally televised debate with Trump. The way he fumbled, broke off in the middle of sentences and presented an image of a too old, doddering and infirm candidate, his party senators, top leaders and supporters were aghast and feared he would be no match for Trump. Whatever vestiges of hope some of them had were dashed after the attempt on the life of Trump that triggered a wave of sympathy for the former President and hugely boosted his chance of winning. That seemingly made the demand for Biden's abandoning the re-election bid even more raucous. The share market responded favourably for Trump and donations for his presidential race increased by leaps and bounds.

At this stage the emergence of Vice President Kamala Harris as the Presidential candidate will force Trump and his campaign managers to redraw their strategy which has so long focused on attacking Biden for his age and policy paralysis. Harris accepted the challenge with glee and said within hours of Biden's announcement that she would seek the nomination in his place. Many Democrats quickly lined up behind her.

If Trump thought he was much ahead of Biden, now it would be a different ball game with Harris on the scene. The words of both Biden and Harris are redolent of new hope and determination. Biden gave a call to fellow-Democrats and said: "It is time to come together and beat Trump. Let's do this." Harris immediately raised the pitch of her campaign and echoed her boss: "Together, we will fight, and together we will win."

No sitting American president has dropped out of a race so late in the election cycle. The Democratic National Convention, where Biden was to have been formally nominated by nearly 4,000 delegates, is scheduled to begin 19 August in Chicago. Harris has certain built-in advantages. She has often been at her best politically when she has taken on the role of prosecutor-in-chief and as a senator on the Judiciary Committee where her intensive cross-examinations went viral. During the campaign she can project herself as the best suited to "prosecute the case" against Trump who still faces more than one future criminal trial.

Another strength of Harris is her strong advocacy of the rights of Afro-American and Asian population. She has also forcefully taken up the right to abortion that shook the women of the country when Trump's camp followers created a situation when women had to travel to distant Democrat ruled States to avoid the ban on abortion in their native Republican state.

Harris will have to cross the hurdle of getting her party's nomination. There are some heavyweights in the party who are maintaining a studied silence on the issue. Only about 100 days are left and the Democrats will have to decide on their candidate without any further delay if they want to have a real fighting chance against Trump.

### WISDOM CORNER

- There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self  
**ALDOUS HUXLEY**
- Every moment there is creation, every moment destruction. There is no absolute creation, no absolute destruction. Both are movement, and that is eternal  
**RAMANA MAHARSHI**
- Humanity has the stars in its future, and that future is too important to be lost under the burden of juvenile folly and ignorant superstition  
**ISAAC ASIMOV**

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1903:** Ford Motor Company sold its first automobile, a Ford Model A; five years later it introduced the hugely influential Model T.
- 1952:** Egyptian monarchy toppled by coup. On this day in 1952, the Free Officers, a nationalistic military group led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, engineered a coup that overthrew King Farouk I of Egypt, ending the monarchy and bringing Nasser to power.
- 1962:** First live transatlantic television signal. Telstar 1, a communications satellite relayed the world's first transatlantic television signal in the form of a show that featured Walter Cronkite.
- 1972:** Landsat 1 launched. The first satellite in the US's LANDSAT program, the Landsat discovered an uninhabited island off the eastern coast of Canada in 1976. The island is now called Landsat Island.
- 1982:** International Whaling Commission bans commercial whale hunting. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) passed a resolution to restrict commercial whaling and ban it completely after 1986. 25 countries voted to put the restrictions and ban in place.
- 1992:** Abkhazia declares independence from Georgia. The Republic of Abkhazia, is a disputed territory of Georgia and is recognized as an independent state by only a handful of counties including Russia, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Nauru, Tuvalu.

### LOL

#### Prisoner with skills

Several years ago, Andy was sentenced to prison. During his stay, he got along well with the guards and all his fellow inmates. The warden saw that deep down, Andy was a good person and made arrangements for Andy to learn a trade while doing his time. After three years, Andy was recognized as one of the best carpenters in the local area. Often he would be given a weekend pass to do odd jobs for the citizens of the community.... and he always reported back to prison before Sunday night was over.

The warden was thinking of remodeling his kitchen and in fact had done much of the work himself. But he lacked the skills to build a set of kitchen cupboards and a large counter top which he had promised his wife. So he called Andy into his office and asked him to complete the job for him. But, alas, Andy refused. He told the warden, "Gosh, I'd really like to help you but counter fitting is what got me into prison in the first place".



### SPECTRUM SOCIETY

## Gen Z's growing consumer power



Wolfgang Fengler

**THE DIGITAL NATIVES OF GEN Z WILL HAVE MORE INFORMATION AT THEIR FINGERTIPS AND MORE FREEDOM TO SPEND THAN ANY PREVIOUS GENERATION**

As the father of three children who fall right in the middle of Gen Z – anyone born between 1997 and 2012 – I have tried to prepare them for the uncertainties and complexities of twenty-first-century life. Like every parent, my wife and I have wondered where their path will lead them once they become fully independent, and how they will reshape society and the economy.

To be sure, the outlook is not entirely rosy. Having lived through a global pandemic and confronting a worsening climate crisis, members of Gen Z are often portrayed as grappling with a profound sense of pessimism. There is a reason that Greta Thunberg is one of the generation's most prominent voices.

But a recent report by World Data Lab and NielsenIQ, "Spend Z: Gen Z Changes Everything," paints a very different picture. It found that Gen Z will be the largest – and wealthiest – generation in history, and that these benefits will be more evenly dispersed around the world. In addition to examining Gen Z's val-

ues and behaviour, the report documents how its current and future spending will shape the consumer-goods industry.

Gen Z comprises two billion people, or roughly a quarter of the total global population. As figure one shows, it will likely be the only generation to reach this level (although Millennials came close in 1998, when they peaked at 1.9 billion). And, thanks to the dramatic reduction in child mortality rates over the last 30 years, Gen Z will maintain its dominant demographic position much longer than previous generations.

Moreover, despite the doom-and-gloom proclamations that children will no longer be better off than their parents (a severe blow to the narrative of perpetual progress that took hold after World War II), members of Gen Z are in fact enjoying a relatively prosperous life. Even given the long list of global challenges, from violent conflicts to economic crises, Gen Z has more spending power than the generations that preceded it – and that is true across

all continents.

To gauge Gen Z's spending power, the Spend Z report compared the mean spending per capita of today's 25-year-olds to that of Gen Xers and Millennials when they were the same age (in 2017 dollars at purchasing power parity). As table one shows, members of Gen Z spend around 25 per cent more than Millennials in North America and Europe, and roughly twice as much in the Asia-Pacific region.

Of course, most members of Gen Z are younger than 25 and still enrolled in secondary school or university, which is why the generation's current spending power is only 40 per cent that of Baby Boomers, 54 per cent that of Gen Xers, and 70 per cent that of Millennials. But the report predicts that total Gen Z spending will rise sharply once the entire cohort enters the job market, from \$9.8 trillion today to an estimated \$12.6 trillion already by 2030.

Lastly, unlike previous generations, Gen Z's consumer power will be concentrated not in the West, but in emerging markets.

According to ILO's calculations based on official government data, the average real monthly wage of a regular worker decreased from ₹12,100 in 2012 to ₹10,925 in 2022.

In reality, black money holders have more disposable income which is diverted to physical assets like real estate and gold as a hedge against inflation. This is unproductive and inflationary. Major parts of disposable incomes of rich and middle-class people are diverted towards luxurious consumption including purchase of flats and automobiles. People are feeling discouraged to save in banks, post offices and insurance as they have to pay taxes on interest of bank deposits, premium of insurance policies and in certain cases maturity of insurance policies. Tax rebate under section 80C for savings was not enhanced in tandem with rise of inflation and now it has been removed under the new tax regime. Taxing insurance premium which is a risk protection and some sort of social security measure is reprehensible. Further, it is easy to generate resources by taxing savings. However, those who maintain their livelihoods based on returns from savings are the worst hit. The government is not worried about the poor and vulnerable and it wants GDP to grow. This can happen if the rich become richer and the poor become poorer.

Our economy has now been converted into a consumption economy from a savings economy. This does not portend well for the future. There is a need to encourage financial savings. Provision for tax rebate for savings, abolition of tax on interest of deposits and insurance premiums should be considered in the Budget.

*The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist. Views are personal.*

### FOCUS ECONOMY

## ENCOURAGE SAVINGS

On 19 July, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das flagged concerns over the widening gap between credit and deposit growth saying it will expose the system to structural liquidity issues as household savings are increasingly moving away from the traditional bank deposits to capital markets and other financial intermediaries. Shaktikanta Das has said the RBI has been reviewing the liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) framework to address the emerging issues. The LCR is a measure intended to force financial institutions to set aside enough highly liquid capital to get them through the early stages of a financial crisis. If successful, that could prevent the crisis from spreading and causing greater economic harm.

Similarly, SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri had earlier flagged risk of a bubble in the stock market and said that there are "signs" of price manipulation in Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) segment. Advising caution to investors, she said bubbles in the market are not good for retail investors.

While bank deposits continue to remain dominant as a percentage of financial assets, it can be noted that deposits accretion by banks have been falling way behind lending. Since the pandemic, households have been parking their savings in higher return assets like stocks and mutual funds, forcing banks to either offer higher prices for deposits or raise debt capital like long-term infra bonds.

Savings are important in the Indian context as India is a savings economy and that is why it was decoupled from the global financial crisis of 2008-09. The savings of a nation is known as national savings. In the case of India, it is known as Gross Domestic Savings (GDS) which is measured only in current market prices and originates from three distinct sectors – public, private, and



Household debt levels have significantly risen after the COVID period along with financial liabilities reflecting growing household financial distress

household. The GDS which peaked to 37.8% in 2007-08 has declined to 29.7% of gross net disposable income (GNDI) in 2022-23, with households being the primary savers and forming 60.9% of aggregate savings, lower than the 10-year average during 2013-2022 which stood at 63.7%.

According to the June edition of RBI's Financial Stability Report, India's overall household savings declined to 18.4% of GDP in 2022-23 from an average of 20% during 2013-2022.

The share of net financial savings in total household savings fell to 28.5% in 2022-23, from an average of 39.8% during 2013-2022. In addition to a rise in financial liabilities, net financial savings declined to nearly all time low of 5.3% of GDP in 2022-23, down from an average of 8% in 2013-22.

What is disconcerting is that household debt levels have significantly risen after the COVID period along with financial liabilities reflecting growing

household financial distress. India's overall debt stands at around 40.1% of GDP, low when compared to other EMEs. But RBI notes that this is "comparatively" high in relation to GDP per capita.

The greatest danger is rising household financial distress and declining financial savings. If by any means, people's income doesn't rise, they will fail to repay household debt resulting in banking collapse and financial apocalypse.

Now the question arises how the government will bridge its fiscal deficit through borrowing if financial savings declines. Corporate investment will get thrashing too. Already private investment has declined. Hence it is imperative on the part of the government to encourage financial savings. Today due to growing expenditure on health, education, surplus incomes have been eroded. Lack of job opportunities, decline in real wages with concomitant inflation have exacerbated the situation.

### Stakes are high

Sir, This refers to "Biden ends run for presidency," *Orissa Post*, July 22. The prospects for Vice-President Kamala Harris becoming Democratic nominee for US Presidential election is almost certain, but not without risks. Public opinion surveys show Harris' approval ratings are about as low as Biden's. Harris has had a rocky time as VP. Early in the administration, she was given the task of addressing the root causes of the migration crisis at the US-Mexico border. In this daunting challenge, a number of missteps and misstatements opened her up to criticism. However, no matter who the nominee is, the Republicans are sure to blame the Democrats for covering up Biden's age-related weaknesses - and putting the nation at risk. Add to this, Harris has already run for national office - her 2020 bid for the Democratic presidential nomination - and stumbled badly. While she surged early, a combination of fumbled interviews, a lack of clearly defined vision and a poorly managed campaign led her to drop out before even the earliest primaries. Opting for Harris is a risk for Democrats, but at this point there are no safe options. And the stakes – a possible Donald Trump victory – are as high as they get.  
**N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE**

### Combating deforestation

Sir, India is fast losing its forests. The Global Forest Watch, which is an open source web application to monitor global forests in real-time, says that India has lost 354-kilo hectares of tree cover over the last two decades. Given that millions in rural India depend on forests for their livelihood, there is a need for regular monitoring to ensure a balance between development and conservation of forests. In this context, satellite data and analysis help in the fight against deforestation. You cannot stop deforestation if you cannot "see." Though forest guards play a critical role in the fight against deforestation, it is expensive and time-consuming for monitoring extensive areas, let alone stopping deforestation on time. Satellites, on the other hand, are a more effective tool for deforestation as they image vast areas of forests in a short time.  
**Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI**

## 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, Rasulgandhi Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

## 14-HOUR WORK DAY

## IT industry exerting pressure on govt, says Labour Minister

Karnataka State IT/ITES Employees' Union has urged the Siddaramaiah-led government to reconsider the plans to extend the working hours, strongly opposing the proposed amendment which, it said, poses an 'attack on the basic right of any worker to have a personal life'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, July 22:** Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad Monday said the proposal to extend the working hours of employees in the IT/ITES/BPO sector has come from the IT industry, and the government will take a decision after looking into opinions shared by all stakeholders including leaders in the field and employees.

Stating that the IT employees union has expressed their dissent, he urged industry veterans and captains to also come out and share their views.

The proposed 'Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments (Amendment) Bill 2024' seeks to normalise a 14-hour work day. The existing act only allows a maximum of 10 hours work per day including overtime.

"It is not the Minister who has brought himself (the proposed bill). The industry is pressurising. (They) are asking and they want it. Since there is pressure from the industry, the bill has come to us. We are still evaluating it at the Labour department. The question is for all the heads of the industry to discuss this," Lad said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "The matter is in open domain, people are free to discuss this. They (industry leaders) express (opinion) for every thing, so I want all the big heads (of the industry) to debate and express their view. There is dissent from IT employees. I want people to have their opinion. Based on



**“It is not the Minister who has brought himself (the proposed bill). The industry is pressurising. (They) are asking and they want it. Since there is pressure from the industry, the bill has come to us. We are still evaluating it at the Labour department. The question is for all the heads of the industry to discuss this**

SANTOSH LAD | LABOUR MINISTER, KARNATAKA

## CM can't take decisions unilaterally, says BJP

The BJP Monday slammed the Karnataka government regarding proposed policies for the IT and ITES sectors, saying that it should be worried about its underperformance across sectors. Speaking to reporters at Vidhana Soudha in Bangalore, state BJP President, BY Vijayendra stated that the issue needs to be discussed and the CM cannot take decisions unilaterally. Vijayendra said, "My request to the CM is that Bangalore is a global IT hub, and whatever decisions need to be taken, every stakeholder should be taken into confidence. And the CM cannot take decisions unilaterally." He further slammed, "Let them set right the inefficiencies in Karnataka government first. Last week CM Siddaramaiah stated that more reservation should be given in the private sector. We are not against it or opposing it. We welcome that move. However, the doubt is whether the CM was really serious on giving reservations to Kannadigas in the private sector."

that as a department we will look into what has to be done."

Karnataka State IT/ITES Employees' Union (KITU) that has urged the Siddaramaiah-led government to reconsider the plans to extend the working hours, strongly opposing the proposed amendment which, it said, poses an "attack on the basic right of any worker to have a personal life."

This amendment will allow the companies to go for a two shift system instead of the currently existing three shift system, and one third of the workforce will be thrown out from their

employment, it claimed.

To a question on the impact of this proposed extended workers on the health, social and personal life of the employees, the Minister said, "Let the IT heads, the so-called big heads of the country, discuss. For everything they come out. I want the IT heads, IT company owners, Directors - let them come and share their opinion, whether it is required or not. The dissent is coming from the union, let the IT industry people, the heads have to speak about it positive or negative, and the government will look into what has to be done."

## 'EXTERNAL COOPERATION' ROW

## Kerala govt responds to BJP's criticism

BJP had slammed the LDF govt for giving an IAS officer additional charge of matters connected with 'External Cooperation'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, July 22:** A day after the BJP attacked the Kerala government over giving an IAS officer extra duties related to 'External Cooperation', the Left government responded Sunday by referring to a 2016 Lok Sabha document where the BJP-led Central government talked about a new division to help states promote exports, tourism, and attract foreign investments.

The BJP in Kerala slammed the LDF government Saturday for giving an IAS officer additional charge of matters connected with 'External Cooperation', and termed it an appointment of a "foreign secretary of the state". The Chief Secretary had responded saying it was nothing new.

The chief minister's office Sunday shared an unstarred question answered May 5, 2016, by then Minister of State for External Affairs Gen VK Singh, who had said that the ministry has set up a new division - "states Division"



**Attacking CM Vijayan over the development, BJP state president K Surendran had said the Marxist veteran should not consider the southern state as an independent country**

- in October 2014 to coordinate with states and union territories for further facilitation of their efforts to promote their exports and tourism and attract more overseas investments and expertise.

"The division is headed by a joint Secretary, assisted by two deputy secretary-level officers and supported by a section," Singh had said.

"The objective of the division is to coordinate facilitation of efforts in these areas between our mission/post(s) governments as well as foreign diplomatic and trade missions in India."

"It aims to assist states and union territories by sharing with them, where required, this ministry's experience and expertise through training and capacity building in areas relating to external linkages relating to trade, investment, cultural and other such areas," the document read.

The state government released the document a day after Kerala Chief Secretary Venu V, in a Facebook post, said that 'External Cooperation' has been in existence for some time and was created for better coordination with delegates coming to the state from other nations.

Attacking Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over the decision to appoint an IAS officer for the purpose, BJP State President K Surendran said the Marxist veteran should not consider Kerala an independent country.

Venu had said that many foreign agencies, multilateral agencies, institutions working in embassies of other countries and delegations regularly contact the Kerala government and other state governments. When the CM or ministers from the state go abroad and hold discussions there, representatives of those countries come to Kerala, and to deal with them has been the responsibility of various departments earlier, he had further said. However, as the number of such discussions increased, the need for better coordination was felt and therefore, a division called External Cooperation was created for that purpose.

Principal Secretary, Industries, Suman Billa was given the responsibility of that division in 2023 prior to which former OSD Venu Rajamony had that charge, the chief secretary had said in his post. After Billa went to the Central services, the responsibility of that division was handed over to K Vasuki who is the Secretary of Labour and Skills Department, he had further said.



Farmers protest against Karnataka government, demanding loan waiver and release of fund for their damaged crops due to heavy monsoon rains, in Bangalore, Monday

PTI PHOTO

## 'Growth in Union govt revenue is not reflected in states'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, July 22:** If the growth rate of the country is as recorded by the Economic Survey, then it should reflect across the country, in every state, Kerala Finance Minister KN Balagopal said Monday.

Talking to PTI after the Economic Survey 2024 was tabled in Parliament by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Balagopal said, "As per the preliminary overview (of the Economic Survey), the (high) growth rate is there. But the most important thing (to note) is that the revenue growth of the Union government is not reflected in the states."

He said India's manufacturing segment, a sector thought to drive the economic boom, is still hovering around 17 per cent.

"Even though for the last 10 years we have been saying 'Make in India', the sector has not grown like that. Countries like China, which are leaders in manufacturing, have been registering steady growth. India can also do that, but we need to promote Make in India to give a boom to the manufacturing sector," Balagopal said.

He said the Government of India should make some "serious interventions" to control inflation. He hoped there would be some measures announced in the Union Budget Tuesday in this regard.



## LANDSLIDE TRAGEDY

## As political slugfest erupts, Army joins rescue operations



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, July 22:** Amid a political slugfest between the ruling Congress and the Opposition over the handling of the landslide tragedy on the Shirur highway in Karnataka's Uttara Kannada district, the Army Monday joined the local authorities in rescue operations.

The district authorities have estimated the official death toll to be 10, with seven bodies recovered, and an operation has been launched to track three more.

Meanwhile, the Army has sent a team of 40 soldiers to join the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) to retrieve the bodies trapped under the debris of the massive landslide.

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, HD Kumaraswamy, has criticised Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar for his comments regarding his visit to the landslide site.

Taking to X, Union Minister Kumaraswamy said Monday, "When I visited Shirur village in Uttara Kannada district, where seven people died due to a landslide, Saturday, the Deputy Chief Minister of the state, DK Shivakumar, had made a mockery of the situation. He lightly commented that the military

should have been called in and questioned what one person alone could do."

"In his eagerness to speak lightly about me, the honorable Deputy Chief Minister also insulted our proud army. This is an unfortunate incident," Kumaraswamy said.

He further stated, "I did not say that the district administration is not carrying out rescue operations. I did not criticize the government either. Nevertheless, over 40 brave soldiers of our proud military have rushed to the rescue operations, speeding up the efforts, moved by the tears of the bereaved families. Does the Deputy Chief Minister have any objections to this He should answer to this."

"We are in a federal system. Saying 'I' is arrogance; saying 'we' is culture. If a person who holds the position of Deputy Chief Minister does not understand such a simple principle of harmony, then there is no greater folly than this," he charged. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during his visit to the tragic site had stated that Karnataka would write to the Centre regarding the sub-standard national highway. The BJP criticised CM Siddaramaiah for visiting the site six days after the incident and blaming the Centre for hiding his government's failures.

## K'taka govt to issue guidelines to malls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, July 22:** Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar Monday said the government will issue guidelines to malls and other establishments, in the wake of a farmer being denied entry because of his attire.

The government July 18 ordered closure of the GT World mall here for seven days after the incident, which drew strong condemnation from members cutting across party lines in the Legislative Assembly.

It had also termed the alleged insult to the farmer as infringement of "dignity and self respect" of an individual, and said it cannot be tolerated.



FARMER'S INSULT

"There had been discussion last week in the Assembly over a farmer from a village being denied entry into a mall owing to his attire - wearing a 'panche' (dhoti) - which is our cultural attire. Following the incident, orders were issued for its closure. We have also decided to issue guidelines in this regard, whether it is a mall or any other place --

**JD(S) floor leader CB Suresh Babu requested the Deputy Chief Minister to bring private clubs too under the guidelines**

small or big. 'Panche' is part of our culture," Shivakumar told the Assembly Monday.

He said "Notice was issued to the mall for its closure; they also had some tax dues, we have taken a written explanation from them and also apology. They (mall) have also given a cheque to pay the tax dues. To ensure that such incidents don't repeat anywhere in the state,

we will issue guidelines."

"The mall had tax dues to the tune of ₹two crore; they had paid in between; some amount was pending to be paid for which July 31 was the last date; we have taken cheque from them and we are allowing them (to operate)," Shivakumar added.

The incident reportedly happened July 16 when septuagenarian Fakeerappa from Haveri district visited the mall along with his wife and son to watch a movie at a multiplex.

Fakeerappa was reportedly wearing white shirt and 'panche' (dhoti), and the security staffer at the mall allegedly told him and his son that he won't be allowed inside in a 'panche', and to "wear trousers and come."

## Kerala boy survives amoebic meningoencephalitis

**A HIGHLY RARE BUT EXTREMELY LETHAL CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM INFECTION, AMOEBIC MENINGOENCEPHALITIS, HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A THREAT TO HUMAN HEALTH**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kozhikode (Kerala), July 22:** Amidst concerns over the outbreak of deadly virus infections like Nipah in Kerala, the state Monday reported a rare case of recovery from amoebic meningoencephalitis, which has a 97 per cent mortality rate.

State Health Minister Veena George announced that a 14-

year-old boy undergoing treatment for the disease has recovered.

She described this as a rare occurrence in the country, given the high mortality rate of the disease.

Only 11 people worldwide have recovered from amoebic meningoencephalitis, George noted, praising the team that led the co-ordination and treatment efforts.

A highly rare but extremely lethal central nervous system infection, amoebic meningoencephalitis, has been identified as a threat to human health.

Caused by free-living amoebae, this deadly infection is typically contracted from freshwater sources such as lakes, rivers, and streams.

According to an official statement here, when the case was reported, a meeting was convened under the health minister's leadership, and special caution-



RARE RECOVERY

ary instructions were issued. Health workers at the Primary Health Centre in Melady in this district suspected that the boy's symptoms might be meningoencephalitis and alerted the authorities.

"The boy had an epileptic seizure and was admitted to a private hospital in Kozhikode on

the same day. The Health department provided Miltefosine medicine (a broad-spectrum antimicrobial used to treat free-living amoeba infections), and he recovered after three weeks of treatment. Early detection and access to available treatments contributed to his recovery," the statement said. Following the

Only 11 people worldwide have recovered from amoebic meningoencephalitis

Caused by free-living amoebae, the deadly infection is typically contracted from freshwater sources such as lakes, rivers, and streams

outbreak of disease, preventive measures were strengthened.

A special meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan led to instructions for molecular testing facilities to confirm the disease in its early stages July 5.

The health minister called a meeting to prepare treatment guidelines under expert leadership May 28, resulting in the release of a treatment protocol for amoebic meningoencephalitis July 20.

This was the first comprehensive treatment protocol for the disease in the country, the state Health department claimed.

# national

## of the day quote

The people of the state have rejected the politics of toppling the elected government through money power and shown the mirror to the BJP

Why keep asking the Opposition parties about their stand on the Maratha quota? The BJP should clarify whether Marathas are going to get the reservation or not

MANOJ JARANJE | QUOTA LEADER, MAHARASHTRA

Please do not host the Olympics. Greece and Brazil conducted the Olympics and faced severe hardships after conducting (it). It is a great drain

KARTI CHIDAMBARAM | LEADER, CONGRESS

## SHORT TAKES

### Sardar Sarovar Project: 230 villages submerged

**New Delhi:** Due to the construction of Sardar Sarovar Project, 230 villages got submerged, four fully and rest partially, the Jal Shakti ministry said Monday. Responding to a question in Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Jal Shakti Rajbhusan Choudhary said, so far 32,552 families have been resettled or extended the 'Resettlement & Rehabilitation' (R&R) package in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. "Due to construction of Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP), 230 villages got submerged, four fully and rest partially," Choudhary said in a written response.

### Sisodia to stay in jail

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court Monday extended till July 26 the judicial custody of AAP leader Manish Sisodia in a corruption case related to the alleged excise scam. Special Judge Kavari Baweja passed the order after Sisodia was produced before the court on expiry of his judicial custody granted earlier. The court had April 30 dismissed the bail pleas of Sisodia in the corruption and related money laundering cases, lodged by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED), respectively, in the alleged scam.

### Nipah scare in Kerala

**Kozhikode:** The number of people at risk for contracting Nipah in the contact list of the 14-year-old boy who lost his life to the rare infection, has been increased to 350, out of which 101 are in the high-risk category, Health Minister Veena George said Monday. The Kerala Health Department is waiting for the test results of 13 people, whose samples were sent to the Kozhikode Medical College virology laboratory and the Advanced Virology Institute at Thiruvananthapuram for testing.

### 51 on no-fly list

**New Delhi:** The civil aviation ministry Monday said 51 passengers have been placed under the no-fly list of airlines for unruly behaviour this year till July 1. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has norms in place for handling unruly/disruptive passengers, including procedures for placing unruly passengers on the no-fly list. A total of 300 passengers have been placed on the no-fly list in the last five years, including 51 people this year till July 1, according to data provided by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol to the Rajya Sabha.



The minister (Dharmendra Pradhan) has blamed everybody except himself. I don't even think he understands the fundamentals of what is going on here ... the issue is there are millions of students in this country who are extremely concerned about what is going on and who are convinced that the Indian examination system is a fraud

RAHUL GANDHI | LEADER OF OPPOSITION

## COMMUNAL HARMONY AT NUH YATRA

The VHP's Braj Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra that was marred by violence last year concluded peacefully Monday as it passed through Nuh amid tight security arrangements, with members of both Hindu and Muslim communities welcoming the procession at different points



# No special status to Bihar, reiterates Centre in LS

Govt cited an inter-ministerial group report prepared in 2012 to assert that a case for granting special category status to Bihar is not made out; a stand which came a day after BJP's allies from Bihar demanded the status for the backward state

**New Delhi, July 22:** The Centre Monday ruled out special status to Bihar, a long-standing demand by the state-based parties

including BJP's key ally JD (U). The rejection of special status resulted in pointed jibes from Lalu Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) which also demanded the resignation of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The Centre's response came on a question put by JD (U) MP Rampriti Mandal in Lok Sabha. The JD (U) had asked the Finance Ministry whether the government proposes to provide special status to Bihar and other most backward states to promote economic growth and industrialisation. Replying to the question, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary stated, "The Special Category Status for plan assistance was granted in the



past by the National Development Council (NDC) to some States that were characterised by a number of features necessitating special consideration." The Minister further stated, "Earlier, the request of Bihar for Special Category Status was considered by an Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) which submitted its Report on 30th March 2012. The IMG came to the

finding that based on existing NDC criteria, the case for Special Category Status for Bihar is not made out." The rejection of special status demand for Bihar, despite Nitish Kumar-led JD(U) in alliance with the BJP in the state as well as the Centre, prompted Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) to hit out at the ruling party in Bihar. The RJD in a post on X, mocked the BJP-JD(U) alliance and said that Narendra Modi and Nitish Kumar have given the Bihar 'special state' toy. It further said that Nitish Kumar bowed down to the BJP and lowered demand from special state to special package but that was also refused. The party also demanded that

Nitish Kumar appears to have compromised Bihar's aspirations and the trust of its people for the sake of power. He had promised to secure special status for Bihar, but now that the Centre has denied it, he should resign

LALU PRASAD | RJD SUPREMO

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar tender his resignation for failing to get special category status. RJD leader Manoj Jha said that Bihar needed both - special category status as well as special package and doing away with any one thing will be 'injustice' to the state.

## VIOLENCE-STRICKEN

### Indo-Bangla trade through Bengal land ports remains stalled

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, July 22:** Trade between India and Bangladesh via West Bengal's land ports remained suspended for the second consecutive day Monday due to ongoing violence in the neighbouring country, although there was limited movement of passengers, officials said.

Goods trucks have not moved since Sunday with the Bangladeshi side of the Petrapole land port remaining non-functional due to a government-declared holiday, except for emergency services.

Petrapole, located in Bongaon in North 24 Parganas district, serves as South Asia's largest land port and plays a crucial role in facilitating trade between India and Bangladesh, with hundreds of trucks crossing daily under normal circumstances.

While trade remains stalled, passenger movement continued in low numbers.

"Trade is yet to resume. However, movement of people, mainly students, continues across borders. So far, more than 700 students have arrived at Petrapole from Bangladesh," said Kamlesh Saini, manager of the Land Port Authority of India (Petrapole) told PTI.

So far, more than 4,500 Indian students have returned home from Bangladesh as the neighbouring country continues to reel under violent clashes that have killed over 100 people.

Saini said a help desk has been set up at Petrapole to assist arriving students with basic necessities such as snacks and water.

The BSF South Bengal Frontier has also set up special help desks at Integrated Check Posts (ICP) along the border to ensure the safe return of students amidst the unrest in Bangladesh.

Trade through other land ports in West Bengal, including Gojaldanga, Fulbari, and Mahadipur, also remains suspended as Bangladeshi Customs offices are closed.

## NEET-UG

### SC asks IIT Delhi to set up team of experts

Top court seeks report on right answer to question

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 22:** The Supreme Court Monday asked the Director, IIT-Delhi to set up a team of three experts that would go into a particular question asked in the NEET-UG 2024 examination and submit a report on the correct answer by Tuesday noon.

The top court took note of the submissions of some aspirants that a question related to an "atom" and its characteristics had two correct answers and a set of examinees, who gave one particular answer out of the two correct ones, were awarded four marks.

This, the petitioners contended before a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, would have a significant impact on the final merit list of successful candidates.

Referring to the question, the bench said, "As indicated in the question as framed, of which students had to select one op-



tion as their answer. In order to resolve the issue as regards the correct answer, we are of the considered view that an expert opinion should be sought from IIT-Delhi."

"We request the Director of IIT Delhi to constitute a team of three experts of the subject concerned. The expert team constituted by the Director is requested to formulate the opinion on the correct option and remit the opinion to the Registrar by 12 noon tomorrow," the bench said.

It asked the Registrar General of the apex court to communicate the order to the Director of IIT-Delhi.

The bench will resume hearing Tuesday the pleas related to the controversy-ridden medical entrance exam.

# Cong calls eco survey 'cherry-picked' view

India in its most precarious economic situation, says the party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 22:** The Congress alleged Monday that the Economic Survey released by the government presented a "cherry-picked" view of the economy and claimed that India is experiencing its "most precarious and difficult" economic situation in many years.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey 2023-24, along with the statistical appendix, in the Lok Sabha Monday. The Economic Survey is an annual document presented by the government ahead of the Union Budget to review the state of the economy

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge hit back at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his remarks, alleging that his government "crushed the aspirations" of 140 crore Indians



in the last 10 years.

"You were lamenting today about (your voice) being 'throttled for two-and-a-half hours', but the truth is that - your government has crushed the aspirations of 140 crore Indians in 10 years! Today's Economic Survey is like a shiny hollow envelope to gloss over the failures of the Modi government!" Kharge said in a post on X.

"Today the future of the youth is in limbo. The unemployment rate is at 9.2 per cent. There is a stampede for jobs. The back-breaking inflation has pushed the savings of the country's families to the lowest level in 50 years. Food inflation is at 9.4 per cent,

The Economic Survey tells a blatant lie by claiming that poverty has almost been eradicated. The truth is that the gap between the rich and the poor in the country is the highest in 100 years!

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | PRESIDENT, CONGRESS

grain inflation is at 8.75 per cent, pulses inflation is at 16.07 per cent and vegetable inflation is at 29.32 per cent," the Congress chief said.

"The condition of farmers is bad. Today's news says that now the Modi government wants to re-implement the three anti-farmer black laws through the back door. The national average monthly agricultural income of the farmers who provide food is only Rs 5,298!" Kharge said.

Imports of Chinese goods into India have increased by 68 per cent since 2020 and the trade deficit with China has gone up by 75 per cent, the veteran leader said.



Bihar Pradesh Congress Seva Dal Young Brigade members during a protest march towards Raj Bhawan over alleged harassment of Dalits and Mahadalits people, criminal incidents, rising inflation and other issues in Patna, Monday

# State stalls, monuments replica: Slice of India at WHC pavilion

INDIA HAS 42 PROPERTIES INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST WHICH INCLUDE 34 CULTURAL SITES, SEVEN NATURAL SITES AND ONE MIXED HERITAGE SITE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 22:** Scale models of forts associated with Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji, colourful stalls of various states, and live display of craftsmanship were part of a thematic pavilion at World

Heritage Committee meeting venue here to display the spirit of 'Incredible India'.

The 46th session of the World Heritage Committee being hosted by India from July 21-31 got underway Sunday with the opening ceremony attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Director General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay, among others.

Parallel to the plenary session being held at the main hall of the Bharat Mandapam, an 'Incredible India' exhibition has been set up at hall number 14 depicting heritage landmarks and cultural legacy of the country.

The main gateway to this pavilion is a replica of an ornate gateway in Jaipur, with a softly illuminated 'Incredible India' mounted on its top. As one enters the pavilion,



moving images of iconic cultural heritage sites of India have been depicted on digital walls on both sides.

The gateway leads to a wide open space where different aspects of India's heritage have been displayed, from replicas of monumental sites such as Jantar

Mantar of Delhi to Unakoti, the chiselled 'Angkor Wat of the North-East' region that was put on the Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2022.

"We have created this 'Incredible India' pavilion to showcase to the delegates and

other visitors a slice of India and its diverse cultural flavour under one roof here at the venue of the World Heritage Committee meeting. It has replicas of monuments, virtual reality experience and much more," a senior official of the Ministry of Tourism told PTI.

The main entrance also has giant cut-outs of several UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India from the churches of Goa to temples of south India, and Mahabodhi temple of Bihar to Humayun's Tomb of Delhi.

The special exhibition highlights India's rich cultural heritage, age-old civilisation, geographical diversity and tourism destinations along with modern developments in the fields of information technology and infrastructure, officials said.

Adding a splash of colour to this kaleidoscope of culture is the presence of stalls from various states and Union Territories

"We have divided them into five zones, north, south, east, west and central. In the East zone, one can see stalls of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal, among others," the official from the Tourism Ministry said.

Next to the West Bengal stall, a panel depicting Durga Puja with idols of Goddess Durga and other deities has been mounted. Kolkata's Durga Puja finds a place on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage.

Various state stalls besides showcasing their tourism destinations are also letting guests sample some delicacies from their respective regions.

## of the day quote

BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) is an anti-Dalit party. In the recent Lok Sabha polls, one of the objectives of the BJP was to end reservation. Why were they giving the slogan of 400 paar? Dalits across the country voted against the BJP

ATISHI | DELHI MINISTER

Even though we are allies in Lok Sabha and state assembly, Mahayuti members are free to contest local bodies polls independently

AJIT PAWAR | DEPUTY CM, MAHARASHTRA

In recent years, India has witnessed a troubling rise in the competitive exam paper leaks, undermining the integrity and credibility of the education and recruitment system

HIBI EDEN | CONGRESS MP

## X POST OF THE DAY

Om Birla was fine when NEET scam was being discussed in the house. He got angry and stopped everyone as soon as UPSC scam was mentioned

Do You know why?

Google Anjali Birla IAS (2020)

@ROSHANKRRAI

## SHORT TAKES

### In 4 yrs, 9 deaths in paragliding mishaps

New Delhi: Nine people died in paragliding incidents in Himachal Pradesh from 2020 to July 2024, the tourism ministry said Monday. Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said these fatalities, involving both tandem and solo flights, were attributed to paragliders crashing, according to the Himachal Pradesh Department of Tourism. "Department of Tourism, Government of Himachal Pradesh has conveyed that nine deaths have been reported w.e.f. 2020 to 19.07.2024 in tandem and solo flights," he said in a written response.

### CBI's charge sheet against Kavitha

New Delhi: BRS MLC K Kavitha had not only collected upfront payment in the Delhi excise policy scam but also played a role in the transfer of the ill-gotten money to Goa in 2021-22 to be used in the election campaign of the Aam Aadmi Party, the CBI has alleged in its supplementary charge sheet. Special judge for Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cases Kaveri Baweja took note of the charge sheet Monday observing that there was sufficient evidence to proceed against her in the case. The judge also directed the CBI to supply copies of the supplementary charge sheet to Kavitha, who was produced before the court through video conference.

### Another hit and run case in Mumbai

Mumbai: A speeding Audi car, driven by a man allegedly in an inebriated state, rammed into two stationary autorickshaws in Mumbai's Mulund area Monday, leaving four persons injured, police said. The police arrested the accused, Dattatray Gore (43), a resident of Kanjurmarg, from his sister's house after he fled the scene, leaving the vehicle behind, an official said.

## EATERY NAMEPLATE DIRECTIVE

UP, Uttarakhand last week issued directives to eateries and food stalls along the Kanwar Yatra route to display the names of their owners

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 22: The Supreme Court Monday ordered an interim stay on the directives issued by BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand asking eateries along the Kanwar Yatra routes to display the names of their owners, staff and other details, a move the opposition has claimed is intended to promote religious discrimination.

Issuing notice to the governments of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh, where the Ujjain municipal body has issued a similar directive, a bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti, however, said eateries may be required to display the kind of food they are serving like they are vegetarian or non-vegetarian.

A large number of devotees travel from various places with 'kanwars' carrying holy water from the Ganga to perform 'jal-abhishek' of Shivlings during the Hindu calendar month of 'Shravan'. Many believers shun consuming meat during the month they consider holy.

The significant order comes amid an escalating row over the directives, with even BJP ally Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) join-

# SC stays Kanwar Yatra diktat



ing the chorus for their withdrawal and opposition parties resolving to raise the issue in Parliament.

The opposition has alleged that the orders were "communal and divisive" and intended to target Muslims and Scheduled Castes by forcing them to reveal their identity, but the BJP maintained that the step has been taken keeping in mind law and order issues and the religious sentiments of pilgrims.

"We deem it appropriate to pass interim order prohibiting the enforcement of the above directives. In other words, food sellers may be required to display kind of food, but must not be forced to display names of owners, staff employed," the bench said and posted the matter for further hearing Friday.

No one appeared for the state governments in the apex court Monday.

The Central Government needs to make three key announcements for farm welfare in the upcoming Budget: Raise MSP for 22 crops that come under MSP, in line with the C2+50% formula as recommended by the Swaminathan Commission

JAIRAM RAMESH | GENERAL SECRETARY, CONGRESS

## 20 HOURS EARMARKED FOR BUDGET

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are each likely to have a 20-hour discussion on the Union budget, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present Tuesday, with the Lower House expected to have separate debates covering ministries of railways, education, health, MSME and food processing, sources said



## INS Brahmaputra severely damaged in fire; sailor missing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 22: Indian Navy's frontline guided missile frigate INS Brahmaputra sustained severe damage and tilted heavily to one side following a fire onboard the ship while it was undergoing refit at the naval dockyard in Mumbai.

One junior sailor went missing following the fire Sunday evening and rescue operations are going on to trace him, Navy officials said, adding the warship is now resting on her left side.

Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi Monday apprised Defence Minister Rajnath Singh about the fire incident and the damages caused to the ship.

Singh's office said the defence minister prayed for the safety of the missing sailor and that he directed the Navy chief to take "appropriate action".

INS Brahmaputra is the first of the indigenously built 'Brahmaputra' class-guided missile frigates and it was commissioned into the Indian Navy in April 2000.

The nearly 3,600-tonne ship is fitted with an array of weapons including surface-to-air missiles, surface-to-air missiles, medium range guns, anti-submarine rockets, radars, sonars and state-of-the-art electronic warfare systems.

"A fire had broken out onboard Indian Naval Ship Brahmaputra, a multi-role frigate, on the evening of July 21 while she was undergoing refit at the naval dockyard," the Navy said.

# Ban on govt workers in RSS activities lifted

RSS, BJP HAIL ALLOWING GOVT EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN SANGH'S ACTIVITIES; OPPN SLAMS MOVE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 22: The BJP and the RSS Monday hailed the Centre's move to lift a ban on government employees from participating in activities of the Hindutva organisation, while opposition parties slammed the decision, alleging that it is aimed at politicising employees around an ideology.

In a statement, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) said the revocation of the ban would strengthen the country's democratic system and accused previous governments, mostly headed by the Congress, of furthering their political interests by targeting the RSS.

The order barring government employees from attending the activities of the RSS was issued in 1966, when the Congress was in power.

Union minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Piyush Goyal alleged that the ban was



RSS members swear on Hindu nationalism. So this is against Indian nationalism

ASADUDDIN OWAISSI | AIMIM CHIEF

driven by political reasons and that the Congress has always had a negative mindset towards nationalist organisations in its pursuit of appeasement politics.

Criticising the Narendra Modi government's decision, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on X. "We know how BJP is using RSS to institutionally take over all constitutional and autonomous bodies. By lifting the ban on government employees from participating in RSS activities, Modi wants to politicise government offices and employees on ideological basis."

This will be a challenge to the sense of neutrality of public

servants in government offices and the supremacy of the Constitution, the Congress chief said.

The government is probably taking these steps because the people of the country defeated its "nefarious intent to change the Constitution", he said.

"The Modi government continues its efforts to take control over constitutional bodies and work its way in through the back door and tamper with the Constitution," Kharge alleged.

Union minister Giriraj Singh lauded the decision, saying the RSS has always worked for social harmony and national integrity, and its volunteers have taken

the lead in helping people hit by natural disasters and other such tragedies.

A day after a government order about the ban being lifted became public, RSS spokesperson Sunil Ambekar said in a statement, "The present decision of the government is appropriate and strengthens the democratic system of India."

The RSS has continuously been involved in the reconstruction of the country and service to the society for the last 99 years, he added.

Priyanka Chaturvedi of the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) called the lifting of the ban "shameful".

"With this order, the ED, the IT department, the CBI, the ECI and other sarkari officers can officially prove their Sanghi credentials. It is such a shame. Instead of aligning only to Bharat Mata's interests, the BJP is leading them towards keeping ideological interests first," she said.

The original order dated November 30, 1966, banned the association of government servants with the activities of the RSS and the Jamaat-e-Islami.

Office-bearers of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind said they are studying the changes made in the official order and will formulate their response soon.

# 16 exams postponed by NTA since inception

COVID, LOGISTICS AMONG REASONS: EDUCATION MINISTRY IN LS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 22: The National Testing Agency (NTA) postponed at least 16 exams due to different reasons since its inception in 2018, the Ministry of Education informed the Lok Sabha Monday.

The reasons for postponement included Covid-19 pandemic, administrative reasons, logistical reasons, and technical issues.

The information was shared by Minister of State for Education Sukanta Majumdar in response to a written question in Lok Sabha asked by DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi.

"Since its inception in 2018, NTA has successfully conducted over 240 examinations involving over 5.4 crore students. Since most of the examinations conducted by NTA are held in multiple-subjects, multiple-shifts and span over a number of days, there have been instances due to unforeseen circumstances like Covid-19 pandemic, logistical



and technical issues, administrative issues, legal orders etc, when examination dates initially notified in respect of specific subjects or shifts could not be adhered to," the Minister said.

According to the data shared by the minister, four exams -- JEE-Main (2020), NEET-UG (2020), JEE-Main (2021) and NEET-UG (2021) -- were postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic.

CSIR UGC-NET (2020), UGC-NET (December; 2020), UGC-NET (May, 2021) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) AIEEA (2020) were postponed due to "Covid-19 pandemic and logistical challenges".

Delhi University Entrance Test (DUET) 2020 for admission to UG, PG-MPhil and PhD courses was postponed as the registration process was put on hold by DU due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

# Jawan, civilian hurt as troops foil twin terror attacks in J&K

This was the 14th terror attack in the Jammu region. Ten security personnel and nine pilgrims have been killed and 58 people injured in these attacks. Five terrorists were neutralised by the forces

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajouri, July 22: A soldier and a civilian were injured as security forces foiled twin terror attacks on an Army post and the house of a Village Defence Group (VDG) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district early Monday, officials said.

A cordon and search operation is underway to trace the terrorists, they said.

The area was cordoned off by a joint team of the Army, police, Central Reserve Police Force and VDGs following intermittent exchanges of fire with terrorists

throughout the day, they said.

"Terrorists attacked the house of a VDG member at Gunda, Rajouri. An adjacent Army column reacted swiftly, leading to a firefight," the Army's White Knight Corps said on X. Operations are ongoing, it said.

The Army acted preemptively based on intelligence, anticipating a threat to a village defence guard in a remote area of Rajouri-Reasi, it said.

"Tactical teams swiftly intervened, ensuring the safety of the VDG member and his family," it said.

The officials said the terrorists first opened fire on the house of the VDG member in the Gundha area of Khawas tehsil. As the security personnel returned fire, the terrorists lobbed grenades.

Around 4 am, the terrorists attacked a newly established Army post in the area, resulting in a fresh exchange of fire, they said.

# 'Burden of lung diseases may be higher'

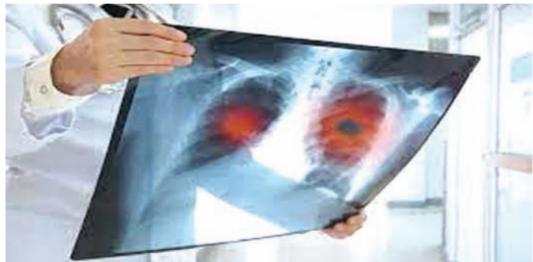
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 22: Indian doctors have expressed concerns that the burden of lung-related disorders in the country may be higher than projected by a recent Lancet study, due to high levels of air pollution and tobacco consumption.

According to the study published in May, ischaemic heart disease will continue to be the leading cause of death around the world, followed by stroke, diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). In ischaemic heart disease, narrowing of vessels in the organ reduces blood flow.

The study projected that men and women around the world could live longer by up to five and four years, respectively.

"It is going to remain the number one killer and disabling disease with continued bad lifestyle and increasing stress. Yet, there is a lack of under-



standing of the exact mechanism of formation of these blockages (in the heart's blood vessels). Till we understand the mechanism, the solutions cannot be found," said Dr Atul Mathur, Executive Director, Interventional Cardiology and Chief of Cath Lab, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, New Delhi.

However, the doctors also cautioned that the overall chest disease burden in India will be much higher than what the study predicts, owing to con-

tinuing earlier challenges of infectious diseases, along with air pollution and smoking.

"This is because we continue to struggle with the earlier problems of infectious diseases, including tuberculosis. On the other hand, we have started seeing a massive increase in new age diseases like lung cancer," said Dr Arvind Kumar, Chairman, Institute of Chest Surgery, Chest Onco Surgery and Lung Transplantation, Medanta

Hospital, Gurugram. High levels of air pollution and tobacco consumption could be reasons why COPD would be one of the top leading causes of mortality, according to Dr. Lancelot Pinto, Consultant Pulmonologist and Epidemiologist, PD Hinduja Hospital and Medical Research Centre, Mumbai.

"Air pollution, use of indoor biomass fuels and poor lung development in childhood are all significant risk factors for the disease, and unless we take preventive health more seriously, our health systems will not be able to cope with the huge burden of the disease," said Pinto.

"As life expectancy (is expected to) increase, our overall exposure to various agents causing COPD, will also increase. Smoking, despite all efforts, still continues to be rampant and it is the number one contributor to COPD," said Kumar.

# international

## of the day quote

We are all aware that food insecurity remains a pressing concern in Gaza. This latest tranche of aid represents our continued and steadfast commitment to alleviate the suffering in Gaza

VIVIAN BALAKRISHNAN | MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SINGAPORE

In the face of challenges to our territorial sovereignty, we will assert our rights and interests in the same fair and pacific way that we have always done

FERNINAND MARCOS JR | PRESIDENT, THE PHILIPPINES

You also would have noticed that now, China is issuing grants to the Maldives. We are prioritising providing free aid to the Maldives, so as not to further increase Maldives' debt

WANG LIXIN | CHINESE AMBASSADOR TO THE MALDIVES

## SHORT TAKES

### Anti-whaling activist detained

**Stockholm:** A US-Canadian anti-whaling activist, Paul Watson, has been detained in Greenland and faces possible extradition to Japan which has issued an international warrant for his arrest, the Arctic island's police said in a statement. Watson's foundation in a statement Monday said it believed the extradition request was linked to his past actions to block Japanese whaling, Japan, which says eating whale meat is part of its culture, resumed commercial whaling in 2019 and has since modernised its fleet and expanded its catch list.

### Gunshot kills 3 in US' Mississippi

**Mississippi:** At least three people were killed and 16 others were injured after a gunman opened fire near a nightclub in the US state of Mississippi, local media reported. The mass shooting was reported from Church Street in Indianola, Mississippi. Witnesses heard dozens of gunshots during the shooting which occurred in the vicinity of the nightclub, reported BNO News.

### Militants blow school in Pak

**Peshawar:** Unidentified militants blew up a government girl's school in a tribal district in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province Monday, officials said. There was, however, no loss of life in the explosion. The militants blew up the Govt Girls Middle School in North Waziristan tribal district, bordering Afghanistan, on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Minister Faisal Khan Tarakai said.

### Iraq hangs 10 men on terrorism charges

**Nassiriya:** Iraq Monday hanged 10 militants sentenced to death on terrorism charges, security sources said. The executions were carried out at a prison in the southern Iraqi city of Nassiriya and all those executed were Iraqi nationals, the sources said. The 10 men were convicted of joining the Islamic State militant group and carrying out "serious terrorist crimes", they added. Iraq has put hundreds of suspected jihadists on trial and carried out several mass executions since defeating Islamic State fighters in a US-backed military campaign in 2014-2017.



A massive illegal, political mafia rose to sabotage the operation (new counter-terrorism operation) and the first move of that mafia was to make the operations controversial through false and fake arguments

AHMAD SHARIF | ARMY SPOKESPERSON, PAKISTAN

## 'GOAT PLAGUE' OUTBREAK

More than 16,500 goats and sheep have been tested for a viral infection known as goat plague in central Greece, after nine animals tested positive last week in farming units in the area



# World leaders thank Biden

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Washington, July 22:** Describing US President Joe Biden as a great man who loved his country, world leaders Monday thanked him for his bold steps and global leadership during challenging times.

Biden Sunday announced that he is exiting the 2024 presidential race and backed his deputy Kamala Harris to be the Democratic Party's presidential candidate in the November 5 election.

In a post on X, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he respects President Biden's decision and looks forward to working together for the remainder of his term.

"I know that, as he has done throughout his remarkable career, he will have made his decision based on what he believes is best for the American people," said Starmer, who met with Biden this month in Washington.

Former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said in a post on X that he saw Biden's "love for America and dedication to service" firsthand while working with him. He also outlined some achievements between the US and the UK.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in a post on X thanked Biden for his leadership and ongoing service.

"The Australia-US Alliance has never been stronger with our shared commitment to dem-



## US VP scrambles to lock up WH bid

**Washington:** US Vice President Kamala Harris was moving swiftly Monday to try to lock up the Democratic presidential nomination, the day after President Joe Biden, 81, abandoned his reelection bid in the face of growing opposition by his own party. Harris, 59, was due to speak at the White House Monday. Campaign officials and allies have already made hundreds of calls on her behalf, urging delegates to next month's Democratic Party convention to join in nominating her for President in the November 5 election against Republican Donald Trump. "My intention is to earn and win this nomination," Harris said in a statement. "I will do everything in my power to unite the Democratic Party and unite our nation, to defeat Donald Trump." Biden, the oldest person ever to have occupied the Oval Office, said he would remain in the presidency until his term ends January 20, 2025, while endorsing Harris to run in his place.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau thanked Biden for being a partner to Canadians and a true friend.

## Gaza death toll crosses 39k

ISRAEL ORDERS EVACUATION IN HUMANITARIAN ZONE

ASSOCIATED PRESS



**Deir al-Balah, July 22:** The Israeli military ordered the evacuation Monday of part of a crowded area in the Gaza Strip it had designated a humanitarian zone, saying it is planning an operation against Hamas militants there.

Thousands of Palestinians, many carrying backpacks and accompanied by children, walked down dusty roads under the scorching sun, navigating dilapidated cars with belongings tied on top. Many Palestinians have been uprooted multiple times in search of safety during Israel's air and ground campaign.

"We do not know where we are walking," said Kholoud Al Dadas, as she clutched her children. "This is our seventh or eighth time we have been displaced. While we were sleeping in our homes, they started shooting at us, bombing from everywhere." Moments later, she collapsed in exhaustion. The Israeli military said it is planning to begin an operation against Hamas militants who have embedded themselves in the area and used it to launch rockets toward Israel. The area includes the eastern part of the Muwasi humanitarian zone in the southern Gaza Strip. Earlier this month, Israel es-

## Harris will be easier to defeat: Trump

**Washington:** Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump said Sunday he thinks Vice President Kamala Harris will be easier to defeat in November's election than Democratic President Joe Biden, who earlier in the day stepped aside as his party's candidate. "Harris will be easier to beat than Joe Biden would have been," Trump told CNN. Trump and his campaign later also attacked Biden and Harris on social media while saying Biden was unfit to continue serving as President. On his Truth Social platform Sunday, Trump said Biden "was not fit to run for President, and is certainly not fit to serve." Trump, in a post on his Truth Social platform, said, "We will suffer greatly because of his (Biden's) presidency, but we will remedy the damage he has done very quickly."

"I've known President Biden for years. He's a great man, and everything he does is guided by his love for his country. As President, he is a partner to Canadians and a true friend. To President Biden and the First Lady thank you", Trudeau posted on X along with a photograph of him with Biden.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said, "I refrain from commenting directly on this issue because it involves domestic politics in the US but I recognise that President Biden's decision is based on his desire to make the best possible political decision."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his country is grateful to President Biden for his unwavering support for its fight for freedom, which, along with strong bipartisan support in the United States, has been and continues to be critical.

"Many strong decisions have been made in recent years and they will be remembered as bold steps taken by President Biden in response to challenging times. And we respect today's tough but strong decision," he said on X.

Taking to X, Israeli President Isaac Herzog described Biden as a "true ally of the Jewish people" and thanked him for his friendship and steadfast support for the Israeli people over his decades-long career. "As the first US President to visit Israel in wartime, as a recipient of the Israeli Presidential Medal of Honor, and as a true ally of the Jewish people, he is a symbol of the unbreakable bond between our two peoples. I send him, @FLOTUS Jill Biden, and all his family, my warmest wishes from Jerusalem," Herzog wrote.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's office said it does not wish to comment on domestic political situations in other countries, but added that the South Korean government "will continue to work closely with the US to further develop the South Korea-US global comprehensive strategic alliance".

## UK to fast-track return of illegal migrants to safe nations like India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, July 22:** The asylum applications of migrants entering the UK illegally from countries on its designated safe states list, including India, will be fast-tracked to deport them back speedily under new Labour government proposals.

UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper has said she has begun the work to move staff from the previous Conservative-led government's now-abolished Rwanda scheme to a new Returns and Enforcement programme. In place of the policy of trying to fly out illegal migrants to the African country, the Home Office plans to increase the returns to the countries of origin, starting with an increase in raids on businesses employing illegal workers.

"We are drawing up new plans for fast-track decisions and returns for safe countries," Cooper wrote in "The Sun on Sunday".

"Most people in this country want to see a properly controlled and managed asylum system, where Britain does its bit to help those fleeing conflict and persecution, but where those who have no right to be in the country are swiftly removed," she said. India was added to the UK's "Safe States" list last November, which would speed up the process of returning Indians who travel from the country illegally.

# Bangladesh protests pause

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



**Dhaka, July 22:** The Bangladeshi student group leading demonstrations that have spiralled into deadly violence suspended protests Monday for 48 hours, with its leader saying they had not wanted reform "at the expense of so much blood".

What began as demonstrations against politicised admission quotas for sought-after government jobs snowballed into some of the worst unrest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's tenure.

A curfew has been imposed and soldiers are patrolling cities across the South Asian country, while a nationwide internet blackout since Thursday has drastically restricted the flow of information to the outside world. "We are suspending the shutdown protests for 48 hours," Nahid Islam, the top leader of the main protest organiser Students Against Discrimination, told AFP from his hospital bed.

He was being treated for his injuries after being beaten by people he accused of being undercover police, he said. "We demand that during this period the government withdraws the curfew, restores the internet and stops targeting the student protesters." On Sunday, the Supreme Court pared back the number of re-

We started this movement for reforming the quota. But we did not want quota reform at the expense of so much blood, so much killing, so much damage to life and property

NAHID ISLAM | TOP LEADER OF MAIN PROTEST ORGANISER

served jobs for specific groups, including the descendants of "freedom fighters" from Bangladesh's 1971 liberation war against Pakistan.

"We started this movement for reforming the quota," Islam said.

"But we did not want quota reform at the expense of so much blood, so much killing, so much damage to life and property."

At least 163 people have died in clashes, including several police officers, according to an AFP count of victims reported by police and hospitals.

Sporadic violence continued Monday, with four people brought

to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital with bullet injuries, an AFP reporter at the scene saw.

Government officials have repeatedly blamed the protesters and opposition for the unrest.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police spokesman Faruk Hossain told AFP that "at least 532" people had been arrested in the capital since protests began, including some leaders of the opposition Bangladesh National Party.

Ali Riaz, a professor of politics and leading Bangladesh expert at Illinois State University, described the violence as "the worst massacre by any regime since independence".

"The atrocities committed in the past days show that the regime is entirely dependent on brute force and has no regard for the lives of the people," he told AFP.

"These indiscriminate killings cannot be washed by a court ruling or a government announcement."

# Taiwan starts annual war games, aiming to closely mimic actual combat

Kicking off the first day of exercises, soldiers practiced laying mines and nets to stymie the landing of enemy forces, part of a series of drills designed to prevent the capital being seized

REUTERS

**Tamsui, July 22:** Taiwan carried out anti-landing drills on a strategic river Monday at the start of the annual Han Kuang war games, which this year aim to be as close as possible to actual combat with no script and simulating how to repel a Chinese attack.

China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its territory, has been staging regular exercises around the island

for four years to pressure Taipei to accept Beijing's claim of sovereignty, despite Taiwan's strong objections.

Taiwan's drills this year have cancelled elements that were mostly for show, like scripted firepower displays, while there will be intensified nighttime exercises and practising how to operate with severed command lines.

Kicking off the first day of exercises in Tamsui at the mouth of a major river leading to Taipei, soldiers practiced laying mines and nets to stymie the landing of enemy forces, part of a series of drills designed to prevent the capital being seized.

"We are trying our best to slow them down as much as possible," military office Chang Chih-pin told reporters, referring to a scenario where the enemy was trying to make landfall by sending rubber boats into the Tamsui River.



"The slower they move, the better for us," he added.

Earlier Monday in nearby Taoyuan, outside of Taipei and home to Taiwan's main international airport, reservists gathered to get their orders as they would during a war, and civilian vans were pressed into service

to carry supplies. On Thursday, Taoyuan airport will close for an hour in the morning for the drills, though a typhoon is expected to be impacting the island that day meaning that the exercise could be delayed.

Taiwan's defence ministry

also published video of air force fighter jets at the Hualien air base on the island's east coast, which has hangars cut out of the side of a mountain to protect aircraft from aerial attack.

Live fire drills will only take place on Taiwan's outlying islands, including Kinmen and Matsu which sit nestled next to the Chinese coast and were the scene of on-off clashes during the height of the Cold War.

The five-day war games will be happening in conjunction with the Wan'an civil defence drills, where the streets of major cities are evacuated for half an hour during a simulated Chinese missile attack, and test warning alarms will sound on mobile phones.

The drill scenarios this week include setting up contingency command lines after existing hubs are destroyed and dispersing Chinese forces trying

to land on Taiwan's western coastline facing China, a defence official involved in the planning said.

China held two days of its own war games around the island shortly after President Lai Ching-te took office in May, saying it was "punishment" for his inauguration speech, which Beijing denounced as being full of separatist content.

But China has also been using grey zone warfare against Taiwan, wielding irregular tactics to exhaust a foe by keeping them continually on alert without resorting to open combat. This includes almost daily air force missions into the skies near Taiwan.

China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control. Lai, who says only the Taiwanese people can decide their future, has repeatedly offered talks but been rebuffed.

## of the day quote

We have to look at various avenues for helping tide over the challenge posed by lower deposit growth



**ASHWINI KUMAR TEWARI**  
SBI MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dependency on third parties can also create vendor lock-in situations, where regulated entities become reliant on a single vendor for critical services. This lack of vendor diversification can increase dependency risks and limit the flexibility of entities to adapt to changing market conditions or technological advancements



**M RAJESHWAR RAO** | RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR

India Inc is expecting a major thrust in the forthcoming Budget on consumer demand, especially among the middle-class people, while reforms-friendly policies will continue more vigorously with several investment-oriented and Ease of Doing Business measures



**DEEPAK SOOD** | ASSOCHAM SECRETARY GENERAL

## SHORT TAKES

### CIL bags critical mineral asset

**New Delhi:** State-owned Coal India Monday said it has bagged the first critical mineral asset, a graphite block, in Madhya Pradesh. Owing a graphite asset will give Coal India an advantage in powering green energy transition momentum to an extent, according to a statement. "Coal India Ltd (CIL) has successfully opened its account in domestic critical mineral asset emerging as the preferred bidder for Khattali Chhoti graphite block in Alirajpur district of Madhya Pradesh," the PSU said in the statement. The company accounts for more than 80 per cent of domestic coal output. With the bagging of this mine, CIL has made its foray into the first-ever non-coal mineral mining venture, the coal behemoth said.

### PM-Surya Ghar scheme guidelines

**New Delhi:** Union Minister Pralhad Joshi Monday said the New & Renewable Energy Ministry has issued guidelines to provide ₹4,950 crore incentive to discoms under the PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana. Criteria for incentivising Discoms include achievement of installation of additional grid-connected rooftop solar capacity beyond the baseline level, the New & Renewable Energy Minister said in a post on X. "Rs 4,950 crore incentives to Discoms under @PMSuryaGhar. The guidelines have been issued for effective disbursement of incentives," he said. The scheme guidelines for implementation of incentives to Discoms were notified by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) last week on July 18, an official statement said.

### PE/VC investment rises 8% to \$31.5bn

**Mumbai:** Private equity funds and venture capital funds investments have risen 8 per cent year-on-year to USD 31.5 billion in the first half of 2024, a report said Monday. The amount of funds invested is 30 per cent higher than the July-December 2023 period, the report by industry lobby grouping IVCA and consultancy firm EY said. From a volume perspective, the number of deals increased to 654 during the six months from 441 in the preceding six months and 439 transactions in the year-ago period.



While 7 per cent is eminently doable, there are some risk factors given the way the monsoon has shaped up and financial market risks are rising in the developed world with the spillover effects on India, and also the global geopolitics environment

**V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN** | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

### GTRI FLAGS FDI CONCERNS

Increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) from China in the domestic market may benefit in the short-term but it risks undermining India's long-term economic security and strategic autonomy, says the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI). Dependence on Chinese firms for key manufacturing capabilities could also expose India to supply chain vulnerabilities and geopolitical risks, it says.



## ECONOMIC SURVEY

# GDP to grow at 6.5-7% in FY25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi:** The Economic Survey 2023-24, which was tabled in Parliament Monday, projected India's GDP to grow at 6.5-7 per cent in 2024-25, down from a high of 8.2 per cent in the preceding financial year, while cautioning that escalation of geopolitical conflicts may have bearing on growth prospects.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who tabled the Economic Survey will present the Union Budget in the Lok Sabha Tuesday morning.

The projection in the Economic Survey is a tad lower than the Reserve Bank's growth estimates of 7.2 per cent. However, major global agencies, including the IMF and ADB, have projected the growth at 7 per cent.

The key economic document also suggested that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) should stop looking at



food inflation in deciding interest rates and the government should explore giving coupons or direct cash transfer to poor to deal with higher food prices.

"...the Survey conservatively projects a real GDP growth of 6.5-7 per cent, with risks evenly balanced, cog-

nizant of the fact that the market expectations are on the higher side," the pre-Budget document said.

A normal rainfall forecast by the India Meteorological Department and the satisfactory spread of the southwest monsoon thus far are likely to improve agriculture sector per-

formance and support the revival of rural demand.

However, the monsoon season still has some way to go, the document said, adding that structural reforms such as the GST and the IBC have also matured and are delivering envisaged results.

The Survey, authored by a team led by Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran, said domestic growth drivers have supported economic growth in FY24 despite uncertain global economic performance. Improved balance sheets will help the private sector cater to strong investment demand.

"A note of caution is warranted here. Private capital formation after good growth in the last three years may turn slightly more cautious because of fears of cheaper imports from countries that have excess capacity," it said.

### Tax to tackle inequality

**New Delhi:** Tax policies will have a major role to play in tackling income inequality in the coming years as deployment of technology, like AI, can have a more deleterious impact on employment and income, the Economic Survey said. It said globally, widening inequality is emerging as a crucial economic challenge confronting policymakers.

"Tax policies on the treatment of capital and labour incomes will likely play a more important role in the coming years, especially since the deployment of technology like AI may have a more deleterious impact on employment and income," it added.

### More export destinations

**New Delhi:** Indian exporters are adding more geographies to promote their outbound shipments and tide over the problems emerging due to global uncertainties caused by geopolitical tensions, the Economic Survey said.

Amidst the prevailing geopolitical dynamics, India is expected to benefit from its strong trade relations across countries, it said. "India is adding more export destinations, signalling regional diversification of exports," it said. Citing government data, it said the share of the top 10 countries in India's merchandise exports has registered a declining trend, falling from a high of 61.9% in FY2020 to 50.5% in FY24.

### MSMEs face regulation

**New Delhi:** India's micro, small and medium enterprises continue to face "extensive regulation" and compliance requirements, apart from major bottlenecks in access to affordable and timely funding being one of the "core concerns", the Economic Survey.

Asserting that further reduction in the compliance burden for MSMEs will considerably improve their growth prospects, the Survey recommended "progressively easing the compliance requirements with a single-window mechanism for clearances, digitisation of processes and equipping MSMEs to handle these processes with ease".

### Shun short-term profits

**New Delhi:** Banks should resist the temptation to pursue short-term profits at the expense of the customer, Economic Survey said. As corporate profits are booming, the net interest margins of Indian banks have risen to a multi-year high, it said, adding that profitable banks lend more.

"To sustain the good times, it is important not to forget the lessons of the last financial cycle downturn. The banking industry must aim to lengthen the gap between two NPA cycles. It should also resist the temptation to pursue short-term profits at the expense of the customer," it said.

### Caution over stock market

**New Delhi:** The Economic Survey Monday cautioned against significant increase in retail participation in the stock market, saying expectation of higher returns without real market conditions is a matter of concern. Over the few years, the Indian capital markets have seen a surge in retail activity through direct trading in markets through their accounts and indirect trading through mutual fund channels.

"The significant increase in retail investors in the stock market calls for careful consideration. This is crucial because the possibility of overconfidence leading to speculation and the expectation of even greater returns, which might not align with the real market conditions, is a serious concern," it said.

### F&O driven by 'gambling instincts'

**New Delhi:** The increase in retail investor participation in Futures & Options (F&O) trading is likely driven by humans' gambling instincts, according to the Economic Survey 2023-24. Flagger concerns over rising interest in derivative trading, the survey said speculative trade has no place in a developing country. "Derivatives trading holds the potential for outsized gains. Thus, it caters to humans' gambling instincts and can augment income if profitable. These considerations are likely driving active retail participation in derivatives trading," the Economic Survey 2023-24 said. Recently, Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch also cautioned investors against heavy bets on F&O.

### AI uncertainty for workers

**New Delhi:** The march of AI casts a 'huge pall of uncertainty' over impact on workers across skill levels, the Economic Survey said as it cautioned that alongside other factors this will create barriers to sustained high growth rates for India in coming years and decades. In the preface, Chief Economic Advisor, V Anantha Nageswaran said "in any case, deploying capital-intensive and energy-intensive AI is probably one of the last things a growing, lower-middle-income economy needs. The corporate sector has a responsibility, as much to itself as to society, to think harder about ways AI will augment labour rather than displace workers, he wrote.

### UCO Bank Q1 net profit jumps 147%

**Kolkata:** State-owned UCO Bank Monday reported a 147 per cent year-on-year jump in net profit to ₹551 crore in the April-June quarter. The lender's bottomline in the corresponding period a year ago stood at ₹223 crore. Operating profit in the reporting quarter was ₹1,321 crore, registering a growth of 9.81 per cent over the year-earlier period. The Kolkata-based bank's total business grew 11.46 per cent year-on-year to ₹4,61,408 crore, while gross advances increased 17.64 per cent to ₹1,93,253 crore, it said in a statement. Total deposits rose 7.39 per cent year-on-year to ₹2,68,155 crore in the three months ended June. Advances in retail, agriculture and MSME (RAM) sectors were up 18.65 per cent at ₹1,01,986 crore, it said. The bank also managed to reduce its Gross NPA in April-June by 116 basis points to 3.32 per cent, while net NPA declined by 40 basis points to 0.78 per cent. The statement said capital adequacy ratio stood at 17.09 per cent at the end of the first quarter, with Tier-1 ratio of 14.75 per cent.



## India mulls scouting Pacific Ocean for critical minerals

REUTERS

**New Delhi, July 22:** India will apply for licences to explore for deep-sea minerals in the Pacific Ocean as it competes to secure supplies of minerals critical for energy transition technologies, a top government scientist told Reuters.

The UN-backed International Seabed Authority (ISA) has issued 31 deep-sea exploration licences, including two for India in the Indian Ocean, but is yet to

allow mining because the 36-member body is still working on regulations.

The 36-member ISA council is meeting in Jamaica this month to negotiate the latest draft of a mining code.

M. Ravichandran, the top scientist at India's Ministry of Earth Sciences, said his ministry will work closely with India's mining industry as it readies to apply next year for exploration of seabed minerals in the Pacific. India's critical minerals plans

in the Pacific have not been previously reported.

China, Russia, and some Pacific Island nations have already secured exploration licences for the Pacific Ocean.

India plans to focus on the Clarion-Clipperton Zone, a vast plain between Hawaii and Mexico known to hold large volumes of polymetallic nodules containing minerals used in electric vehicles and solar panels including manganese, nickel, copper, and cobalt. First discovered by British

sailors in 1873, the potato-shaped nodules take millions of years to form. Unlike China, India lacks seabed mining expertise and will take at least three to four years before it is ready to extract minerals from the ocean's depths, experts said.

"We have done a lot of work on the deep sea mining technology but not perfected (it). In that aspect, we are not yet ready," said M. Rajeevan, former chief of India's Ministry of Earth Sciences.

## Indices close lower on muted earnings, Budget caution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 22:** Stock markets closed lower on Monday with benchmark Sensex dropping 102 points due to selling in index heavyweight Reliance Industries and Kotak Bank on muted earnings and caution ahead of the Union Budget.

Falling for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 102.57 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 80,502.08. The barometer fell by 504 points or 0.62 per cent to hit an intraday low of 80,100.65 but recovered most of the losses as Infosys and HDFC Bank advanced.

The broader Nifty of the NSE dipped 21.65 points or 0.09 per cent to 24,509.25. During the day, it dropped 168.6 points or 0.68 per cent to 24,362.30.

Among Sensex shares, Reliance Industries declined over 3 per cent after the company reported a 5 per cent drop in its June quarter net profit.

Kotak Mahindra Bank also fell more than 3 per cent after its June quarter earnings failed to cheer investors. ITC, State Bank

of India, HCL Technologies and IndusInd Bank were the other big laggards in Sensex shares.

However, gains in HDFC Bank after its financial results, and continued buoyancy in Infosys Ltd restricted the losses.

NTPC, UltraTech Cement, and Mahindra & Mahindra also advanced.

HDFC Bank climbed over 2 per cent after the company's consolidated net profit grew 33.17 per cent to ₹16,474.85 crore in the June 2024 quarter.

"The conservative economic growth forecast for FY25, presented in the economic survey, has introduced some spikes in volatility ahead of the budget. Further, the below-estimated Q1 results from certain index heavyweights like RIL added to apprehensions of a slowdown in earnings growth in FY25. Although the budget is anticipated to be favourable, investors will closely monitor whether it continues to tickle traction, given high valuations and the risk of a downgrade in earnings," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.



In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.27 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.83 per cent.

Among the indices, Energy declined by 0.67 per cent, Realty by 0.53 per cent, FMCG by 0.27 per cent and Bankex by 0.27 per cent.

Commodities, Consumer Discretionary, Financial Services, Healthcare, Industrials, Utilities

and Power sector indices were among the gainers.

"After a sharp fall in early trades, markets were on a recovery mode and ended with marginal losses on profit-taking in banking and realty stocks. Investors traded with caution as nervousness gripped in ahead of tomorrow's Budget. However, markets could see volatility dur-

ing the Budget announcement on Tuesday and one may see sector-based action," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

"Benchmark equity indices closed lower for a second consecutive session as investors awaited updates on the final budget and corporate earnings," said Avdhut Bagkar Technical and Derivatives Analyst, StoxBox.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled lower, while Hong Kong ended in the positive territory.

European markets were trading higher in the mid-session deals. US markets ended lower in overnight trade Friday.

According to the Economic Survey, 2023-24 tabled in Parliament Monday, capital markets are becoming more prominent in India's growth story, with an expanding share in capital formation and investment landscape on the back of technology, innovation and digitisation.

Further, Indian markets are resilient to global geo-political and economic shocks, it added.

"Despite heightened geopolitical risks, rising interest rates and volatile commodity prices, Indian capital markets have been one of the best performing among emerging markets in FY24," the Economic Survey said.

The Survey projected India's GDP to grow at 6.5-7 per cent in 2024-25, down from a high of 8.2 per cent in the preceding financial year.

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.08 per cent to USD 82.53 a barrel.

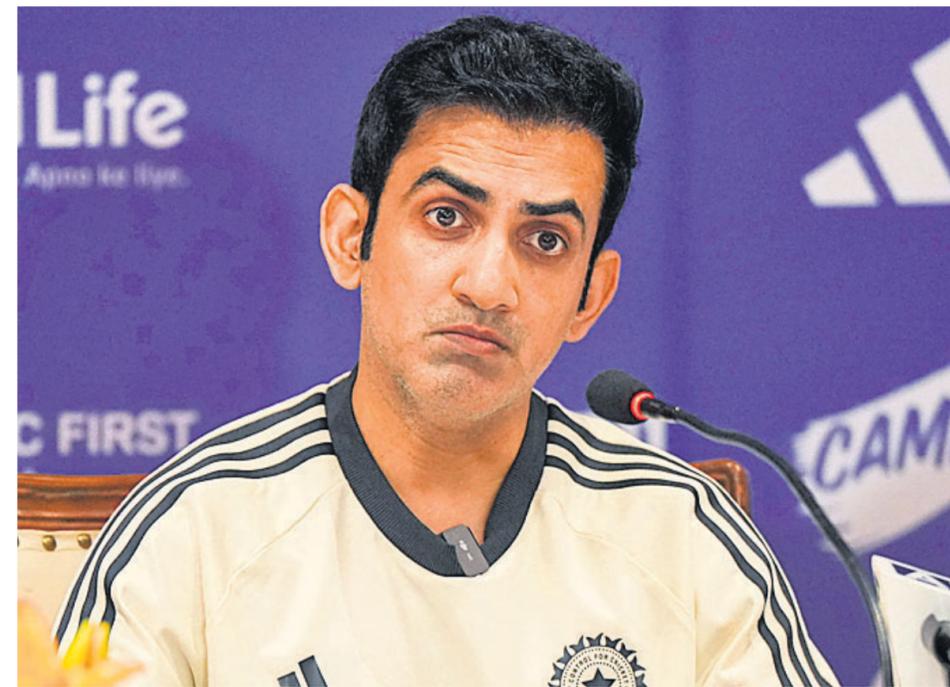
Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹1,506.12 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark hit its new all-time high of 81,587.76 in the initial trade Friday 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.

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 Friday.

# Gambhir's new roadmap

HEAD COACH EXPLAINS HIS EXPECTATIONS FROM PLAYERS



AGENCIES

**Mumbai, July 22:** Newly-appointed head coach of the Indian cricket team Gautam Gambhir said Monday that he expected both Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to be available for most of the ODIs and Tests as the team start preparing for the 50 overs World Cup in 2027. In his first press conference after his appointment, Gambhir stated that with the two retiring from T20Is, they will have enough time to recover between matches of the other two formats.

"Workload management for a bowler like Jasprit Bumrah is important. He is a rare gem and the aim will be that he is available for all the important games," Gambhir stated. "However if a batter is in form he should continue to play all matches and I expect Rohit and Virat to do that. I hope that they maintain their fitness and are available for the 50 overs World Cup in 2027," the head coach added. To put it simply Gambhir made it clear that he was not in favour of players picking and choosing the games that they play in.

Even though Rohit and Kohli were not too keen to play the ODIs against Sri Lanka, both were named in India's squad for next month's three ODIs keeping in mind the Champions Trophy, which is slated for the first

**We try and play hard and more importantly, we try and come back to a winning dressing room. A happy dressing room is always a winning dressing room**

GAUTAM GAMBHIR

quarter of the next year.

"One thing I can be very clear of is that both of those guys have a lot of cricket left in them. More importantly with the Champions Trophy and a big tour of Australia coming up they will be motivated," Gambhir asserted.

Gambhir declared his much talked about relationship with Kohli 'is between the two of us and not for TRPs'. He asserted that they are going to be 'on same page' in the coming times. "Good for the TRP, but my relationship is not public. What kind of a relationship I share with Virat Kohli... I think it's between two mature individuals," Gambhir said ahead of the team's departure for Sri Lanka.

"On the field, everyone has got the right to fight for their own jersey and come back to a winning dressing room. But at the moment, we're representing India, representing 140 crore Indians and I'm sure we're going to be on the same page and try and make India proud," added Gambhir.

## Availability helped Surya get captaincy

**Mumbai:** Fitness, feedback from the dressing room and consistent availability swung the pendulum in Suryakumar Yadav's favour when it was decided to appoint him captain of the Indian T20 team ahead of Hardik Pandya, chief selector Ajit Agarkar said here Monday. "Why Surya was made captain? Because he is one of the deserving candidates. The one we know has been around the dressing room over the last one year; you get feedback from the dressing room a lot. He has got a good cricketer's brain and he is still one of the best T20 batters in the world," Agarkar said. "You (would) want a captain who's likely to play all the games. We think he's a deserving candidate and hopefully we'll see over time how he develops into the role," the chief selector added.

Gambhir said the two share a very good relationship off the field. "...and will continue to do that. But yes, to make it more public, what kind of a relationship... I think it's between two individuals. I've had a lot of chats with him (Kohli)... we've shared messages," Gambhir said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Stimac warns new Indian head coach

**New Delhi:** Smarting from his unceremonious exit, former Indian football team head coach Igor Stimac warned Monday his successor Manolo Marquez that the journey ahead 'won't be easy' but backed the Spaniard to deliver the goods. "Dear Manolo, congratulations on being named the new India head coach. The journey won't be easy, but your experience with Indian players speaks for itself and you are best suited to take the Blue Tigers to the next level! Good luck my friend," Stimac tweeted.

### 3-member panel to review T20 WC

**Colombo:** The International Cricket Council (ICC) formed Monday a three-member committee to 'review the delivery' of the T20 World Cup which was co-hosted by the USA and the West Indies last month. The committee features former New Zealand batter Roger Twose and two other ICC directors Lawson Naidoo and Imran Khwaja. "The ICC board confirmed that there will be a review into the delivery of the ICC T20 World Cup. This will be overseen by three directors, Twose, Naidoo and Khwaja who will report back to the board later in the year," an ICC release stated.

### Jr squash squads lose

**New Delhi:** India's boys and girls lost narrowly in the quarterfinals of the World Junior Squash Championships Team competition in Houston - the sixth-seeded boys going down 1-2 to fourth seed South Korea and the girls losing by an identical margin to third seed Malaysia. Yuvraj Wadhvani got India off to a winning start Sunday with a 3-2 victory over Seojin Oh. However, Shaurya Bawa went down to silver medalist Joo Young Na in four close games. In the deciding tie, Kun Kim proved too strong for Arihant KS.

# Sreejesh decides to quit after Paris Games



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 22:** Celebrated India hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh announced Monday that he will bid adieu to the game after the Paris Olympics, ending a career which spanned 18 years during which he was a pivotal figure in some historic moments for the side.

The 36-year-old, a veteran of 328 international caps, including three Olympic Games, and multiple Commonwealth Games and World Cups, will be playing in his fourth Olympics in Paris beginning July 26.

"As I prepare for my last dance in Paris, I look back with immense pride and forward with hope," Sreejesh said in a Hockey India (HI) press release.

"This journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I am forever grateful for the love and support from my family, teammates, coaches, fans and Hockey India. Thank you for believing in me," Sreejesh further stated.

"My teammates have stood beside through the tough and the ardent times. We all want to give our absolute best in Paris and certainly, the desire is to change the colour of our medal," Sreejesh added, referring to perhaps the biggest moment of his career - a bronze in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Bronze at 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo
- Gold at 2014 and 2022 Asian Games
- 4 gold medals at Asia Champions Trophy
- 2 silver medals at CWG
- Khel Ratna Award in 2021
- World Games Athlete of the Year award in 2021
- FIH Goalkeeper of the Year awards in 2021 and 2022

Sreejesh was one of the main architects of India's historic bronze medal win at the Tokyo Olympics and present captain Harmanpreet Singh said the team will look to secure another medal at Paris to make Sreejesh's last tournament a memorable one.

"Paris 2024 will indeed be a special tournament. We have decided to dedicate our campaign to the legend PR Sreejesh," said Harmanpreet.

"He has been an inspiration for all of us and I still remember his mentorship in 2016 Junior World Cup when we won the title. It was the beginning of many of our careers in international hockey and he has shaped each one in his own way," Harmanpreet added.

**A CHANCE TO BE PART OF**

# METTLE MEET 2024

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# OrissaPOST

**QUIZ Extravaganza**

*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.*

**TODAY'S QUESTION**

In 2015, this singer created an organic, vegan, gluten-free meal delivery service called 22 Days Nutrition. She and her husband went vegan in 2013 as part of a challenge, and she fell in love with the idea. This prompted her to help other people feel as magical as she did. Which celebrity?

**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

**ANSWER TO MONDAY'S QUESTION**

**Paralympic Games**

**THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS**



GAYATRI SAHU



SHIVANI MISHRA

**Others who answered correctly are**  
Chandrasekhar Sahu, Jaba Dasgupta, Alok Kumar Sahoo, Debadatta Tripathy, Purbasha Falguni, Ahaana Paikray, Prithviraj Padhy, Abhijit Raychaudhuri, Akankshya Pradhan, Ashish Agarwalla and Deven Patro

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# TITLE FOR REST OF ODISHA-A

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, July 22:** Rest of Odisha-A defeated Khurda -A by seven wickets in the final of the OCA U-19 Inter-District cricket tournament and emerge champions at the Barabati Stadium here Monday. Riding on a dominating show by their bowlers, the Rest of Odisha team took control of the proceedings from the start of the game.

Amitanshu Mallick (5/18) and Jogeswar Bag (3/27) did not allow any Khurda batsmen to settle down. Against the incisive bowling by the two, Khurda-A, after being asked to bat could only manage 97 all out in 31.4 overs. The batters could not even play out their quota of 50 overs. Swarnav Das (29) and Rudra Prasad (20 n o) were the only two batters to offer some resistance to the opposition. However, they also found the going very tough.

In reply Rest of Odisha-A scored 99 for three wickets in 27.2 overs to win the



game easily. They lost a couple of early wickets, but Pragyan P Samal (36) and Panakala Mokshit (26 n o) dashed whatever aspirations the Khurda-A bowlers had. Even though Samal fell with the team close to the target, Mokshit guided

his team over the finishing line. For his bowling efforts Amitanshu was adjudged the man of the final. Throughout the tournament he picked up wickets at regular intervals, his teammates pointed out.

# Pogacar wins 3rd Tour crown in style

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Paris, July 22:** Tadej Pogacar had no need to attack on the final stage of the Tour de France. Defending a lead of more than five minutes in Sunday's time trial, he was set to comfortably win the race for the third time and first time in three years, anyway. But defense has not been in his vocabulary during this race and he simply could not resist another attack.

With his main rival Jonas Vingegaard unable to challenge him, Pogacar cele-



brated his Tour victory in style with a dominant win in the time trial ending in Nice for the 17th stage win of his already illustrious Tour career. The 25-year-old Slovenian rider also became the first cyclist to secure the Giro d'Italia and

Tour de France in the same year since the late Marco Pantani in 1998.

"To win both together is another level above," said Pogacar, who rides for 'UAE Team Emirates'. "I think this is the first Grand Tour where I was totally confident every day. Even at the Giro I remember I had one bad day. This year, the Tour was just amazing. I was enjoying it from day one," Pogacar said.

Two-time defending champion Vingegaard of Denmark was second overall. He also finished the 21st and final stage in second place.