

True professional
Actor Sonam Kapoor says she doesn't want to get de-aged to play characters much younger than her age in movies

LEISURE | P2

Historic abuses
A public inquiry finds some 2,00,000 children, young people and vulnerable adults were abused in NZ's state and religious care over the last 70 years

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Losing streak
Extending the losing streak to the fourth day, benchmarks Sensex, Nifty decline due to profit booking after Budget announcements

BUSINESS | P11

2030 Winter Olympics
International Olympic Committee announces that the French Alps will host the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2030

SPORTS | P12

18 killed in Nepal plane crash; pilot lone survivor

Kathmandu, July 24: A Nepalese airliner crashed and caught fire shortly after taking off from the Tribhuvan International Airport here Wednesday, killing 18 people aboard, including a child, and seriously injuring the pilot - the lone survivor, in the latest aviation disaster to hit the Himalayan nation.

The Bombardier CRJ-200 aircraft of Saurya Airlines, carrying 19 people, including two crew members and technical staff of the airline, was bound for Pokhara International Airport for regular maintenance service when the accident occurred at 11.11am (local time).

"Shortly after takeoff from runway 02, the aircraft veered off to the right and crashed on the east side of the runway," said a statement issued by the Civil



UP IN SMOKE: Rescue operations are underway at the plane crash site at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal, Wednesday

Aviation Authority of Nepal. It said rescue operations were initiated immediately and fire was brought under control. "One injured person (Captain Manish Ratna Shaky) was rescued and taken to the hospital, and 18 people were found dead," it added.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Why do you want to join the party? You are serving us better as a journalist

Project Cheetah

MP gov't refuses info under RTI

New Delhi: The Madhya Pradesh Forest department has refused to provide information under the RTI Act on management of cheetahs brought from Africa and their cubs born in India. In response to a request filed a wildlife activist, the department cited Section 8(1)(a) of the RTI Act, which allows a public authority to withhold information if its disclosure would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific, or economic interests of the State, relations with a foreign State, or lead to the incitement of an offence.

INS Brahmaputra

Divers find body of missing sailor

New Delhi: The body of Leading Seaman Sitendra Singh, who went missing following a major fire onboard India's frontline warship INS Brahmaputra at the naval dockyard in Mumbai was found Wednesday. The warship was severely damaged and tilted heavily to one side following the fire Sunday evening. "The body of Sitendra Singh, Leading Seaman, has been found today after intensive diving operations," Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said. The Navy Chief has issued directions to make INS Brahmaputra seaworthy and combat ready.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	80148.88	↓ 280.16
NIFTY	24413.50	↓ 65.55
DOLLAR	83.72	↓ ₹0.01
EURO	90.68	↓ ₹0.28
GOLD	₹69,120	↑ ₹610
SILVER	₹85,388	↑ ₹469

WORLD'S HOTTEST DAY TURNS 2ND IN 24 HOURS

New Delhi, July 24: The Earth experienced its hottest day in at least 84 years July 22, with the global average temperature reaching a record high of 17.15 degrees Celsius, according to the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S). This exceeded the previous record of 17.09 degrees Celsius, set just a day before July 21.

These unprecedented temperatures follow a series of monthly heat records -- June marked the 12th consecutive month of global temperatures reaching or exceeding the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold. Every month since June last year has been the warmest on record.

Preliminary data from C3S showed that July 22 was the hottest day since at least 1940.

C3S said global temperatures are now the highest they have been for around 1.25,000 years, as a result of climate change caused by burning coal, oil and gas, and deforestation.

While scientists cannot be certain that Monday was the very hottest day throughout that period, average temperatures have not been this high since long before humans developed agriculture, it said.

C3S data showed that before July 2023, the Earth's daily average temperature record, set in August 2016, was 16.8 degrees Celsius. However, since July 3, 2023, there have been 57 days with temperatures ex-



ceeding that previous record.

Carlo Buontempo, director of C3S, said the difference between the temperatures over the past 13 months and previous records is staggering.

"We are now in truly uncharted territory and as the climate continues to warm, we are bound to see new records in the coming months and years," he said.

Christiana Figueres, the head of UN climate negotiations from 2010 to 2016, said: "The much-used term 'unprecedented' no longer describes the horrific temperatures we are experiencing."

"G20 nations are confronted with a dangerous reality they must address with policies to accelerate the deployment of renewables and prudent phaseout of fossil fuels. One third of global electricity can be produced by solar and wind alone, but targeted national policies have to enable that transformation. Or we all scorch and fry," she said.

Bhabani Shankar Bhoi elected Deputy Speaker

Bhubaneswar: Two-time MLA Bhabani Shankar Bhoi was unanimously elected as the Deputy Speaker of the state Assembly Wednesday. "I declare that Bhabani Shankar Bhoi is duly chosen as the Deputy Speaker of the House," Speaker Surama Padhy said while congratulating Bhoi. Bhoi was elected to the Assembly twice from Talsara constituency in 2019 and 2024. CM Mohan Charan Majhi, Deputy CMs KV Singh Deo and Pravat Parida, LoP Naveen Patnaik and other members congratulated Bhoi.

NK balloons trash into S Korea Prez's office

THIS IS THE TENTH TIME THE NORTH HAS SENT THE BALLOONS ACROSS THE BORDER THIS YEAR

Seoul, July 24: Trash-carrying balloons sent by North Korea hit the South Korean presidential compound Wednesday, security officials told AFP, prompting Seoul to mobilise chemical response teams in the escalating tit-for-tat propaganda war.

It is the first time the South Korean leader's office in downtown Seoul, which is protected by scores of soldiers and a no-fly zone, has been directly hit by any of the thousands of trash-carrying balloons launched by Pyongyang since May.

The chemical, biological and radiological (warfare) response team has safely col-



lected the trash balloons, the presidential security service told AFP.

After investigation, results have confirmed that there was no danger or contamination of the object, it said.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff had earlier confirmed the North was once again

across the border this year in what it claims is retaliation for anti-regime propaganda balloons launched by South Korean activists.

In response to the waves of balloons, South Korea Sunday resumed full scale propaganda broadcasts from loudspeakers along the border, directed at North.

Seoul has also fully suspended a tension-reducing military deal and restarted live-fire drills on border islands and near the demilitarised zone that divides the Korean peninsula.

The two Koreas remain technically at war because the 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Odisha 11th in per capita income: Economic Survey

STATE'S ECONOMY GREW AT 8.5% IN THE 2023-24 FINANCIAL YEAR

Bhubaneswar, July 24: With per capita income of ₹1,61,437 in 2023-24 fiscal — 12.4 per cent less than the national figure of ₹1,84,205 — Odisha stood 11th among the 17 major states, according to the latest Economic Survey report tabled in the state Assembly Wednesday.

State's economy grew at 8.5 per cent in the 2023-24 financial year as against 7.9 per cent in the 2022-23 fiscal, it said. The size of state's economy was estimated to be at ₹ 8.3 lakh crore in the 2023-24 fiscal or around USD 100.6 billion.

The top five states in terms of per capita income were Telangana, Karnataka, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat. The average per capita income of these states was nearly ₹2.92 lakh in 2023-23.

Odisha's agriculture and allied sectors grew at 3.5 per cent, contributing 20.4 per cent to the Gross State Value Added (GSVA). Agriculture and allied sectors serve as the primary source of livelihood for a substantial proportion of state's population, with over 48 per cent of the workforce dependent on agriculture

- Life expectancy rate up by 9.9 years from 60.4 years in 2000-2004 to 70.3 in 2016-2020
- Inflation in Odisha was 6.5 per cent, the second highest after Haryana's 6.6 per cent
- Odisha still has the highest secondary level dropout rate in India at 27.29 per cent
- More than 62 lakh escaped multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21

rectly through strong manufacturing, the report said.

The service sector grew at 9.2 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal, contributing 36.3 per cent to the state's economy, with an employment share of 26 per cent of the total workforce.

In the fiscal year 2022-23, merchandise exports from Odisha reached nearly ₹90,000 crore, ranking the state 10th among the 17 major states, with a 2.5 per cent share of the national total.

According to NITI Aayog, the multidimensional poverty headcount ratio in Odisha has declined from 29.3 per cent in 2015-16 to 15.7 per cent in 2019-21. More than 62 lakh people escaped multidimensional poverty in the state between 2015-16 and 2019-21. However, the state ranks sixth among the major 17 states with a high incidence of poverty headcount, as per the survey report.

Life expectancy rate in Odisha has increased by 9.9 years from 60.4 years in 2000-2004 to 70.3 years in 2016-2020 as per data from the Sample Registration System (SRS). However, there are seven states, out of 17 major states, where the life expectancy is more than Odisha.

OrissaPOST PRESENTS

METTLE MEET 2024

Reviving Quizzing

Let's Get Quizzing

A Quiz Extravaganza

Prelims 3rd August

Grand Finale 4th August

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leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

Today you may want to do only those things that you love to do. You have a very optimistic outlook. Your decision making will be fast, but you may postpone some of them. Ganesh says you may go home dancing if that is what makes you happy.

TAURUS

Ganesh sees you getting saddled with worries and anxieties, stress and confusion right from the start of the day. Before getting overwhelmed, try to go to the root of the problems. Earnest reflection will show you past events are the basic cause of whatever you are facing today. You should, once and for all, delve deep into the past and identify all issues that that been mishandled and therefore need to be resolved.

GEMINI

You will be busy involved in planning for and activities related to travelling. Exposure to various types of people and cultures will provide you with food for thought. You need to guard against being arrogant and be humble, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Ganesh oversees a good news from abroad. You will get pleasant surprise from known or unknown sources. A sage counsel from elders will prove useful all your life. You tend to be quite emotional today.

LEO

Businessmen and traders need to be wary of their competitors. They will be jealous of your progress and will hatch nefarious schemes to pull you down, warns Ganesh.

VIRGO

You will be very open-minded today, very receptive to ideas from everyone. However, when it boils down to taking decisions, it will be the stubborn ones that will prevail. Today is also a time to resolve pending issues at work. But in the evening you may enjoy a nice dinner with your beloved and summon the courage to pop that all-important question.

LIBRA

You may get caught up in relationship issues today, foretells Ganesh. But your discretionary powers will help you steer clear of any misconceptions. Be willing to dig up the maximum support from your subordinates at work, but also keep an eye out on your opponents' moves. It always helps to know what others are up to!

SCORPIO

Chances are your beloved will share the most intimate vibes with you today, says Ganesh. The entire day shall be quiet and peaceful. Ganesh hopes your skilled negotiation will rescue you from being short changed.

SAGITTARIUS

While most of them try hard not to mix business or work with pleasure, you enjoy doing that! And you soon realise that it is working well. Today, according to Ganesh, your actions speak louder than words. All in all, a constructive day in store for you.

CAPRICORN

If you are a civil servant, good times are ahead for you. Also, you may have to deal with the government for your business and it will turn out to be a fruitful transaction, says Ganesh. If you are a lawyer, doctor, or any other professional, you will need to prove you metal and ensure that you utilise the every opportunity coming your way.

AQUARIUS

Your friends will make your day, especially those in high places will prove invaluable. With their assistance, you may even start a new venture without a hitch. If a professional, you will meet with wonderful success.

PISCES

Today, you are likely to sign new agreements and ink new contracts, which will later prove to be milestones in your path to progress. Your financial position is also likely to grow stronger, and your savings ought to become more robust, planning as you are for future exigencies, says Ganesh.



MARY-KATE OLSEN USED TO STRUGGLE WITH FAME

American fashionista Mary-Kate Olsen used to struggle with her fame when she was at the height of her stardom. Olsen shot to fame in the late 1980s. However, she found it all too much to handle, claimed an insider while speaking to this week's edition of *Us Weekly*.

BERRY'S UNIQUE CELEBRATION OF CATWOMAN'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Hollywood actress Halle Berry has stripped and covered her chest with two of her cats to celebrate the 20th anniversary of her *Catwoman*. The 57-year-old actress recently said the one upside of starring in the 2004 superhero flop movie was that she moved from being a lifelong dog fan to a cat lover.



Children's film fest begins with Japanese anime *Spirited Away*

The young participants will get a flavour of some of the best children's films that will expose them to history and storytelling cultures, says Film Society of Bhubaneswar president Subrat Beura

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 24: The 2nd edition of the Children's Film Festival, organised by the Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB), began here at the GKCM Odissi Research Centre, Wednesday. The event aims to promote meaningful cinema among the younger generation and students, shared FSB president Subrat Beura.

Students of several schools, including Loyola and KIIT International School, took active part in the festival. The first day of the three-day event engaged students with hands-on workshops like pop-up artwork and sketching.

Spirited Away, a 2001 Japanese animated fantasy film, written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki, was screened on the first day. The movie's plot revolves around a 10-year-old girl Chihiro and her parents ending up at an abandoned amusement park inhabited



An interactive session held ahead of the event

by supernatural beings. Soon, she learns that she must work to free her parents, who have been turned into pigs.

It was followed by the Irish film *Song of the Sea*, directed by Tomm Moore, which follows the story of a 10-year-old Irish boy named Ben, along with his sister Saoirse, who can transform into a seal, and sets off on a quest to liberate the fairies and protect the spirit world from the forces of evil.

Beura said, "The participants will get a flavour of some of the best children's films that will expose them to history and storytelling cultures and hopefully open up conversations about the world." He went to add, "We, the film enthusiasts, believe exposure to good cinema enables cognitive development leading to lifelong learning and engagement with one's society."

Paris museum honours SRK with customised gold coins



Mumbai: The Grevin Museum in the French capital has honoured Indian top actor Shah Rukh Khan with its set of customised gold coins.

The Grevin Museum at Paris is a wax museum located on the Grands Boulevards on the right bank of the Seine river.

A paparazzi shared the update on Instagram with a photo of the coin featuring SRK's likeness. This makes SRK the first Indian actor to have gold coins in his name at the museum.

The *Dunki* actor has been earlier immortalised in wax statues in the US, the UK, Germany, France, Czech Republic,

Thailand, India, Singapore and Australia. Meanwhile, on the work front, SRK bailed out the struggling Hindi film industry in 2023 with his consecutive blockbusters like *Pathaan*, and *Jawan*. While in *Pathaan* he played the role of the titular spy, he played a cop who doubles up as a vigilante in *Jawan*.

Jawan marked the Hindi debuts of director Atlee and superstar Nayanthara. The film grossed Rs 1,100 crore worldwide according to a box office sources. The megastar is currently busy with the upcoming film *King* in which he will be sharing the screen with his daughter Suhana.



Mumbai: Actress Sonam Kapoor has said that she's happy that people still think of her as someone who's not aged much.

Another role was of a girl in school, who becomes a sports person. I thought the role would be split between a younger actor and me, but they wanted me for both!

Sonam doesn't want to be de-aged

Speaking to an entertainment magazine, the Neerja actress shared, "It's weird though because the roles I'm getting offered are still of a 20-something. I just recently got offered one of a girl whom her parents want to get married. I was like, 'are you sure you want to offer this film to me?' It doesn't make any sense.

"I made it work. I was like, 'no, I can't make it work!' You know, because now they can de-age you. I don't want to be de-aged!"

She gave her much-younger cousins Janhvi Kapoor and Khushi Kapoor's reference, and said, "I mean, obviously I don't look as young as a Jhanvi or a Khushi, but I'm quite grateful for the fact that people think of me as someone who's not aged much. Even though I've had a kid (Vayu) and all of that. I guess because my kid's not been out there for the world to see? And I want to keep it that way."

Sonam was last seen in Shome Makhija's 2023 thriller *Blind* as a visually-impaired investigator. The Hindi adaptation of the 2011 Korean film of the same name featured Purab Kohli as a serial killer.

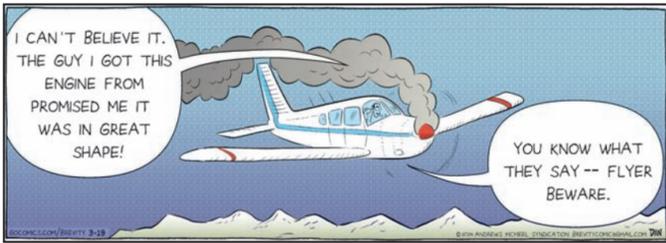
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

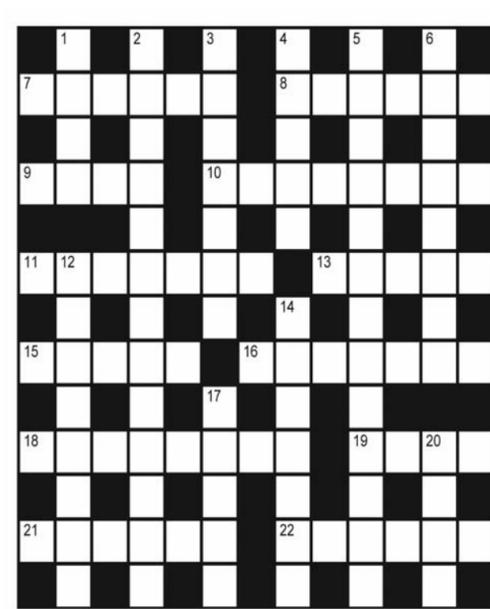


BREVITY



FUN post

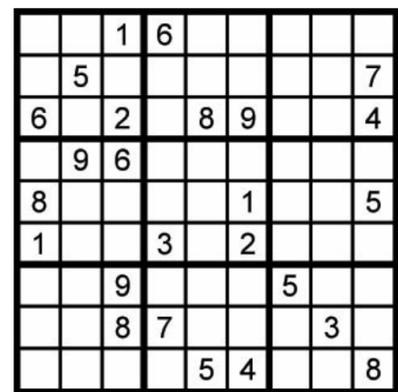
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Caviar source
 - 8 Cattle enclosure
 - 9 Angler's bait
 - 10 Closet resident?
 - 11 Field game
 - 13 Aragon locale
 - 15 Old Roman port
 - 16 Sporting dog
 - 18 Forgetful person?
 - 19 Uncertain
 - 21 Fakes
 - 22 Tuileries, e.g.
- Down**
- 1 Roman Emperor
 - 2 Uzi or sten, e.g. (10,3)
 - 3 Wetlands
 - 4 Felt pain
 - 5 Feckless
 - 6 Medicinal plant
 - 12 Meat seasoning
 - 14 Delivery aid
 - 17 Wash cycle
 - 20 Model's asset

SUDOKU

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

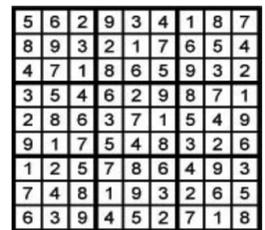


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Artistes from 'Satabdi Ra Kalakar' enact Odia play 'Bitarkita Aparanha' during a drama festival organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

downtown



SWOLLEN MAHANADI: Floodwaters pass through Jobra barrage in Cuttack, Wednesday

PIC: RAIKISHORE MOHANTY

Odisha gets ₹10,586cr for railway sector in Budget

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 24: The Union Budget has allocated ₹10,586 crore for the development railway sector in the state for the 2024-25 financial year, an official release said Wednesday.

Between 2009 and 2014, when the UPA was in power at the Centre, the state received ₹838 crore on average each year for the sector, according to the Railways.

"A remarkable outlay of ₹10,586 crore has been allocated to Odisha in 2024-25 Budget. This will transform rail network into world-class standards and enhance the passenger experience akin to flying," Divisional Railway Manager of Khurda Road in an X post said.

Presently, 40 rail projects are under implementation in the state and the Centre will spend ₹54,054 crore on them, he said.

Meanwhile, the Railways has achieved 100 per cent route electrification in the state and as many as 59 railway stations are being redeveloped as per the Amrit Bharat Station scheme that aims at modernising railway stations.

The official datasheet released by the East Coast Railway said that an average of 53 kilometres of new rail tracks were laid in the state during the UPA period from 2009 to 2014 while at least 183 kilometres of new tracks were drawn in a year during the NDA period.

As many as 427 flyovers and underpasses have been constructed in the state since 2014, the railway official said.

Presently, 40 rail projects are under implementation in the state and the Centre will spend ₹54,054 crore on them. The Railways has achieved 100 per cent route electrification in the state and as many as 59 railway stations are being redeveloped as per the Amrit Bharat Station scheme.

HOUSE STALEMATE FOR 3RD DAY

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 24: Proceedings of the Assembly were disrupted for the third consecutive day Wednesday, as ruckus continued to prevail over the demand by Opposition members for action against Governor Raghubar Das' son for allegedly assaulting a government official earlier this month.

With both BJD and the Congress walking out of the House by boycotting the Motion of Thanks on the Governor's address on the opening day of the session Monday, the debate was held in the absence of the Opposition members.

CM Mohan Charan Majhi criticised the previous BJD government and claimed he has bridged the gap between the CM and the people. He also announced that his government would implement Ayushman Bharat Yojana and New Education Policy which could not be introduced during the previous BJD government.

Before the debate on the Governor's address, the Opposition participated in the proceedings when the House elected Bhabani Shankar Bhoi as the new Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. However, the Opposition MLAs later walked out when the government moved a motion for a debate on the Governor's address.

Earlier in the day, the House witnessed ruckus as it assembled for the Question Hour. BJD leaders staged a walkout alleging police inaction over the assault case, while Congress MLAs trooped into the well of the

High-level discussion on KALIA in progress: Govt

Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA), the state-run financial assistance scheme for farmers, was being discussed at a high level, Deputy CM KV Singh Deo said Wednesday, fuelling speculations on the fate of the programme launched by the previous BJD government.

In the Assembly, BJD MLA Gautam Buddha Das asked whether the scheme will be continued or not. Responding to it,

Singh Deo, who holds the charge of the Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment department, said a high-level discussion was underway for the KALIA scheme, which was launched in 2019.

Over 45.67 lakh small and marginal farmers and 19,12,122 landless agricultural households have received financial assistance under the scheme so far, the Deputy CM told the House, in reply to another question.

Also, the last instalment under PM-KISAN was disbursed to 29.73 lakh farmers of the state June 18, he said.

House, protesting 'neglect' towards Odisha in the Union Budget.

ASO Baikuntha Pradhan was allegedly assaulted by Governor's son Lalit Kumar at Puri Raj

Bolangir AEE held taking bribe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Sonepur, July 24: Vigilance sleuths Wednesday arrested an assistant executive engineer (AEE) in Bolangir district while accepting ₹50,000 bribe.

Vigilance sources said Sujeeet Kumar Padhy, AEE (Class-I) of Patnagarh RW sub-division in Bolangir, has been taken into custody when he was receiving ₹50,000 from a contractor for facilitating release of his final bill towards a government construction project executed by him.

"Despite completion of the project, the AEE was not clearing the bills. He had sought ₹1 lakh from the contractor to clear the bills. With no way out, the contractor gave ₹50,000 a few days back and requested him to clear the bills. However, Padhy demanded the rest amount for



processing the bills," Vigilance sources said quoting the contractor.

The contractor approached the Vigilance following which a trap was laid and the AEE was nabbed while receiving ₹50,000 from the complainant at his office chamber Wednesday afternoon, they said.

"The entire bribe money was recovered from the pos-

session of the AEE and seized in presence of witnesses. Right hand wash of Padhy gave positive chemical reaction, confirming acceptance and handling of bribe money by him. Following the trap, simultaneous searches have been launched at multiple locations related to the AEE," they said.

A case (17/2024) in this regard has been registered at the Sambalpur Vigilance PS under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018.

Padhy entered into government service April 26, 2021 as a direct recruit through OPSC. His service was placed under the disposal of RD department by Works department June 7, 2021. He joined as AEE, Rural Works sub-division, Patnagarh September 1, 2021, they pointed out.

Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence System tested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Balasore, July 24: India Wednesday successfully flight-tested Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence System from off the Odisha coast, the government said in a statement.

The test demonstrated India's indigenous capability to defend against ballistic missiles of 5,000km class, it said.

"The Target Missile was launched from LC-IV Dhamra at 16:20 hrs mimicking adversary Ballistic Missile, which was detected by weapon system radars deployed on land and sea and activated the AD

Interceptor system," it said.

"The Phase-II AD Endo-atmospheric missile was launched from LC-III at ITR, Chandipur at 16:24 hrs. The flight test fully met all the trial objectives validating complete network centric warfare weapon system consisting of Long Range Sensors, low latency communication system and MCC and Advance Interceptor missiles," it added.

The performance of the missile was monitored from the flight data captured by range tracking instruments deployed at various locations, including an onboard ship, the statement said.

The Phase-II AD Endo-atmospheric missile is an indigenously developed two-stage solid-propelled ground-launched missile system meant for neutralising many types of enemy ballistic missile threats in the altitude bracket of endo to low exo-atmospheric regions, it said.

A number of state-of-the-art indigenous technologies developed by various DRDO labs have been incorporated into the system, it said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the successful flight test has again demonstrated the country's ballistic missile defence capability.



FOR A CAUSE: SUCI workers stage a demonstration near PMG Square in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, to press for fulfilment of their demands

PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

City journo ends life

Bhubaneswar: A woman journalist ended her life by jumping in front of a train near Bapuji Nagar railway crossing here Wednesday, sources said. Bhubaneswar GRP IIC Ashok Kumar Gochhayat identified the deceased as Madhumita Parida, 25. Her body has been sent for autopsy to Capital Hospital, he said. Meanwhile, Madhumita's parents blamed her husband for her suicide.

2 students drown

CHOUDWAR: Two Class XII students of a private institute in Cuttack drowned at Damani dam in Mangarajpur panchayat here, Wednesday. The deceased were identified as Srutik Satpathy of Bidanasi area and Swayam Sanket Das of Nuapatna area in Cuttack. Sources said the two, along with a few of their friends, had gone to visit Damadamani Peeth in the afternoon when the mishap took place.

582mn people will be chronically undernourished in 2030: UN report

IN 2023, AROUND 2.33 BILLION PEOPLE GLOBALLY FACED MODERATE OR SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY, A NUMBER THAT HAS NOT CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE THE SHARP UPTURN IN 2020, AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

About one in 11 people or 733 million people globally faced hunger in 2023. This will lead to about 582 million people being chronically undernourished in 2030, a sign that the world is falling significantly short of achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, Zero Hunger, according to the latest State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report published Wednesday by the UN agencies.

The annual report also shows that the world has been set back 15 years, with levels of undernourishment comparable to those in 2008-2009.

Despite some progress in specific areas such as stunting and exclusive breastfeeding, an

alarming number of people continue to face food insecurity and malnutrition as global hunger levels have plateaued for three consecutive years, with between 713 and 757 million people undernourished in 2023 -- approximately 152 million more than in 2019 when considering the mid-range (733 million).

Further, the report showed that the percentage of the population facing hunger continues to rise in Africa (20.4 per cent).

While it remains stable in Asia (8.1 per cent) the region still represents a significant challenge as it is home to more than half of those facing hunger worldwide.

Notably, the report showed



progress in Latin America (6.2 per cent).

"We are off track on all indi-

cators. That's clear. If we project the numbers of today, we will have up to 582 million people

chronically undernourished or hungry by 2030. This is half a billion more than the target, which is 'Zero Hunger'," said Maximo Torero, Chief Economist, at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

"We need to accelerate the process and change if we want to get as close as possible to our target, which was very ambitious from the beginning. We only have six years left. Now, if I observe all the different regions and I see what has happened in South America, I see that this is possible," he added.

Meanwhile, the report also highlighted that access to adequate food remains elusive for billions.

In 2023, around 2.33 billion

people globally faced moderate or severe food insecurity, a number that has not changed significantly since the sharp upturn in 2020, amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Among those, over 864 million people experienced severe food insecurity, going without food for an entire day or more at times, the report said.

The report also underscored the complex challenges of malnutrition in all its forms -- low breastfeeding rates, low birth-weight, wasting and anaemia.

There is "an urgent need for targeted interventions as the world is not on track to reach any of the seven global nutrition targets by 2030", the UN said.

IAN5

Health dept gears up to combat sickle cell anaemia, thalassaemia



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 24: To combat sickle cell anaemia and thalassaemia, a six-day capacity development and sensitization programme was organised by National Health Mission (NHM) Odisha, in collaboration with Unicef. The programme, that concluded Wednesday, was attended by doctors from the districts and managers handling non-communicable diseases (NCDs) among others. State Health System Resource Centre (SHSRC), Odisha team leader Dinabandhu Sahoo, said, "Till now, around 30 lakh screenings have been conducted in 21

Over the next five years, the government aims to screen 80 lakh people aged 0 to 40 years with special focus on tribal communities

districts in which 70,000 people were identified with sickle cell disease. Over the next five years, we aim to screen 80 lakh people aged 0 to 40 years with special focus on tribal communities." "Sickle cell disease is a genetic disorder in which red blood cells contort into a sickle shape. The cells die early, leaving a

shortage of healthy red blood cells, causing sickle cell anaemia," he said.

In his address, Nutrition Specialist in Unicef, Sourav Bhattacharjee emphasised on the importance of patient education and treatment adherence.

"It is essential to treat and follow up patients with sickle cell and thalassaemia at the grass-root level. We need to spread awareness and provide counselling to the targeted families," he said.

According to sources, Odisha is one of the states where there is a high prevalence of sickle cell anaemia and thalassaemia. In 21 districts, the prevalence of sickle cell anaemia ranges from 10 per cent to 40 per cent and thalassaemia six per cent to 10 per cent.

Notably, In 2023, the Central government launched the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission, aiming to eradicate sickle cell disease by 2047.

A total of 4,000 sickle cell genetic status cards have been distributed to beneficiaries for tracking and treatment, sources said.



RAISING VOICE: Members of state's mid-day meal workers' union demonstrate at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, seeking fulfillment of their various demands
PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

'Hindalco to invest over 25K crore in state'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 24: An investment of over ₹25,000 crore is planned by the company in various upcoming projects as well as expansion of already existing industries in the state, said Hindalco Industries Limited Odisha president Ardhendu Mohapatra during a meeting

with Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo here, Wednesday.

Mohapatra said, "Hindalco is setting up a two million tonne per year alumina refinery at Kansariguda in Rayagada district with an investment of ₹8,000 crore. A 1,000 megawatt floating solar power project is planned at Hirakud with an investment of ₹6,000 crore."

He further said that the company is spending about ₹7,000 crore for the expansion of its Aditya Aluminium Smelter plant at Lapanga in Sambalpur.

"Apart from strengthening the economy of the region, the new projects will generate massive local employment," he said.

Mohapatra informed Deo that the company has already in-

vested over ₹33,000 crore in various operational industrial units within the state and has provided direct and indirect employment to over 21,000 people.

Deo assured Mohapatra of all possible support from the government and also urged him to provide employment to local people in all the existing as well as upcoming projects.

Minister seeks Naveen's arrest over 'indiscipline'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, July 24: With the Assembly continuing to witness ruckus for the second day, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling Tuesday sought the arrest of BJD President and Leader of Opposition (LoP) Naveen Patnaik for alleged indiscipline during Governor Raghubar Das' address in the House Monday.

Mahaling accused the LoP of breaching the rules of the House, saying he needs to be arrested for the alleged indiscipline.



Meanwhile, the opposition BJD said the statement made by Mahaling shows BJP's lack of experience in running the government.

Speaking to mediapersons, BJD leader Arun Kumar Sahoo said, "What he referred to shows his lack of experience. I have never seen anyone being arrested in the history of Vidhan Sabha proceedings."

Meanwhile, Speaker Surama Padhy Tuesday adjourned the House till 10:30am Wednesday after the opposition continued to create a ruckus over the alleged assault on an assistant section officer by the son of Governor Das.

The opposition BJD and the Congress MLAs reached the Well of the House and engaged in sloganeering demanding action against the Governor's son after the House proceedings resumed at 4pm Tuesday.

WEATHER		
BBSR	CTC	
Max Temp	30.4°C	29.0°C
Min Temp	26.0°C	24.0°C
Humidity	98%	98%
Rainfall	1.8	1.4

FORECAST
PARTLY CLOUDY SKY

Child protection units will be strengthened: Parida

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 24: The child protection unit will be strengthened and its programmes will be expanded to curb trafficking in the border district of the state, said Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida while holding a review meeting of the District Child Protection Officers here, Wednesday.

The meeting was held in the State Institute of Woman and Children (SIWC) under Department of Women and Child Development.

On this occasion, Parida directed the department officials to pay more attention to sensitive issues like child trafficking and child begging.

She said that a workshop will be organised with the participation of NGOs, voluntary organisations and individuals engaged in child protection work and a plan will be prepared to find a solution to the problem.

She emphasised on the psycho-social support of the inmates of the child care institute and inter-departmental coordination.

In the meeting, Parida highlighted the development of children's mental health expressing concerns over excessive



mobile use by them.

"Efforts should be made to address these sensitive issues and prevent suicide cases by early detection of children's mental health conditions," she said.

She directed the officials to prepare a plan for special homes for intellectual disabled children in four zones of the state in collaboration with Department of Women and Child Development and Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department.

Parida also instructed the officials to give special attention to stress management and anger management of children by including healing centers and yoga programmes in children's institutes.

T'gana & Punjab officials laud state's transport solutions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 24: Delegations from the transport departments of Telangana and Punjab, who are on a visit here, applauded state's robust traffic management systems and its effective implementation.

The delegation, in presence of Transport commissioner Amitabh Thakur and other senior officials, discussed various topics including modernisation of transport services, road safety, e-governance, the Vahan and Sarathi systems.

A report on various measures, effectiveness, and impact undertaken by the State Transport Authority was presented on the occasion.

The delegation expressed happiness over state's efficient heavy motor vehicle training centres, automated driving testing centres, 24-hour toll-free services, and the command and control centres.

The steps taken by the state government in areas of transport services and road safety have greatly impressed the representatives from both states. During the discussions, topics such as electric vehicles, IDTR, SuVahak, IEMS, e-challan, automated driving testing system and paperless DLs were also discussed.

MVAP launched to promote conservation at Chilika Lake

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 24: With an aim to enhance community awareness and promote conservation efforts at Chilika Lake, a Mobile Van Awareness Programme (MVAP) was flagged off, Wednesday, at Gopal Krishna Vigyan Higher Secondary School at Subalaya in Ganjam.

The initiative is part of the Ramsar site conservation programme, aimed at addressing pollution, bird conservation, and preservation of Irrawaddy dolphins.

Guests included, divisional forest officer Amlan Nayak, Balugaon and Rambha forest range officer Rashmita Jena, United Nations Yuwaah advocate Soumya Ranjan Biswal, Principal CH Sudhakar, Youth Red Cross counselor Jagadish Chandra Pal, and educationist Bijay Kumar Biswal.

MVAP, under Community Awareness and Participation for Coastal and Oceanic Habitat Preservation (CAP 4 COP), is executed by the Forum for Integrated Development and Research (FIDR) with support from the US Consulate General, Hyderabad.

The initiative focuses on reducing pollution around Chilika



Lake and to bring changes in community behaviour towards environmental conservation. The mobile van will travel through the villages from Rambha to Mangalajodi in the first phase to motivate local residents for addressing pollution issues and understand the critical role of Chilika's ecosystem in maintaining their livelihoods.

The Odisha Paryavaran Sanrakshan Abhiyan (OPSA) Trust team will moderate the mobile van activities across various villages and public gatherings. The van will deliver audio announcements to educate and engage the communities on the mission. The second phase of the programme will extend to

Satapada area. The CAP 4 COP team has organised three extensive cleanup drives at Mirjapur in Satapada, fishing landing site at Mangalajodi, and Atharbatia in Balugaon. Additionally, murals have been created at various sites to raise community awareness about keeping Chilika pollution-free and preserving its biodiversity.

This awareness programme will try to ensure a sustainable and thriving ecosystem for future generations. A large gathering of students witnessed the commencement of the mobile van's journey, marking the beginning of this programme as one of the significant outreach initiatives.

Komodo dragons use iron-coated teeth to rip & tear up prey

Researchers from King's College London have found that the serrated edges of Komodo dragons' teeth are coated with iron.

It is the first time such a coating has been seen in any animal, and one of the researchers describe as "a striking and previously overlooked predatory adaptation in the Komodo dragon".

The coating was discovered when researchers noticed that the tips and serrated edges of Komodo dragons' teeth were covered in a layer of orange pigment. On closer inspection, the enamel was found to contain concentrated iron that makes the teeth extra hard and resistant to wear, helping the dragons rip and tear their prey just like those of meat-eating dinosaurs.

This discovery sheds light on how Komodo dragons maintain their razor-sharp teeth and may offer insights into how dinosaurs,

such as Tyrannosaurus rex (T-Rex), killed and consumed their prey.

Komodo dragons, native to Indonesia, are the largest living species of monitor lizard, typically weighing around 80 kg. As deadly predators, they have sharp, curved teeth resembling those of many carnivorous dinosaurs.

Komodo dragons consume almost any type of meat, from smaller reptiles and birds to deer, horses, and water buffalo, using their teeth to tear and rip apart flesh.

Researchers discovered that while many reptiles have some iron in their teeth, Komodo dragons have a high concentration of iron along the cutting edges and tips of their teeth, which stains them orange.

In contrast, crocodiles and other monitor lizards have such low iron content in their teeth that it is often invisible.

To understand the chemical



THIS DISCOVERY SHEDS LIGHT ON HOW KOMODO DRAGONS MAINTAIN THEIR RAZOR-SHARP TEETH AND MAY OFFER INSIGHTS INTO HOW DINOSAURS, SUCH AS T-REX, KILLED AND CONSUMED THEIR PREY

and structural composition of Komodo dragon teeth, scientists examined skulls and teeth from museum collections and studied the teeth of Ganas, a 15-year-old Komodo dragon from the ZSL conservation zoo, London Zoo.

Using advanced imaging and chemical analysis, the researchers discovered that the

iron in Komodo dragons' enamel is concentrated in a thin coating on the serrations and tips of their teeth. This protective layer helps keep their teeth's serrated edges sharp and ready for use at any moment.

This research opens up new questions and avenues for investigating how extinct species,

There's an opportunity to use the structure discovered in this work to inform new strategies to regenerate enamel in humans

OWEN ADDISON | PROFESSOR, ORAL REHABILITATION, KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON

such as dinosaurs, lived and consumed their prey.

Aaron LeBlanc, lecturer in Dental Biosciences at King's College London and the study's lead author, said, "Unfortunately, using the technology we have at the moment, we can't see whether fossilized dinosaur teeth had high levels of iron or not. We think that the chemical changes which take place during the fossilization process obscure how much iron was present to start with."

"What we did find, though, was that larger meat-eating dinosaurs, like tyrannosaurs, did change the structure of the enamel itself on the cutting

edges of their teeth. So, while Komodo dragons have altered the chemistry of their teeth, some dinosaurs altered the structure of their dental enamel to maintain a sharp cutting edge."

LeBlanc is of the opinion that further analysis of the reptile's teeth might reveal additional markers within the iron coating that remain unchanged during fossilization. Such markers could definitively determine if dinosaurs also possessed iron-coated teeth, enhancing our understanding of these formidable predators.

Owen Addison, a professor of oral rehabilitation at King's College and the senior author of the study, said the discovery could eventually lead to new dental techniques that could be used in humans. "We think there's an opportunity to use the structure discovered in this work to inform new strategies to regenerate enamel in humans," he said.

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Huge quantities of timber seized, 5 held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 24: Officials of Keonjhar forest department Wednesday seized huge quantities of timber worth several crores of rupees during a raid at a slum in Santarapur village under Ghatagaon block in this district. Five persons have been arrested in this connection, officials said. They added that 15 truckloads of timber of various types were seized during the raid. The officials also confiscated large numbers of cutting equipment.

The raid which started Wednesday morning continued till late into the evening. During the raid timber of various varieties like sal, piasal, acacia and teak were seized. Further investigations are underway to determine the value and volume of the seized timber. More arrests are on the cards, DFO Dhanraj HD said.

Forest department has not revealed the identity of the accused persons as it may affect the investigation, officials said.

The raid was led by Dhanraj along with SP Nitin Kushalkar, SDPO Ghatagaon, Pravat Kumar Tripathy, Ghatagaon tehsildar Bhabani Pradhan and Ghatagaon Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Pravat Kuan among others.

Ten platoons of police were deployed at the scene to avoid any law and order situation.

Moreover, the boundaries of the village were also barricaded during the raid, sources said.

Forest officials meanwhile said that after interrogation of the five arrested, simultaneous raids may be conducted at some other places. The recovery of such huge quantities of timber has come as a huge shock to them.

Environmentalists have questioned how Forest department personnel remained oblivious to the entire development. They pointed out that such huge quantities of timber wouldn't have been possible without large-scale felling of trees. They asked where the Forest department staff was when trees were being felled. They urged for proper and impartial investigation and stringent measures against those involved in felling of trees and timber smuggling.

Sources said that Santarapur village is the hub of timber mafia. They informed that in the past also Forest department personnel had raided various places in the village and seized large quantities of timber. However, despite the raids, smuggling of timber continues unabated.

Environmentalists pointed out that unless the Forest department prevents the felling of trees people in the district will suffer terribly in the days to come as the ecological balance will be affected.

Illegal land grabbing rampant in Kendrapara

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pattamundai, July 24: Grabbing and selling of government land illegally by influential persons have become a headache for the Kendrapara district administration in this block, sources informed here Wednesday. Due to urbanisation of this block the demand for land to built houses is increasing rapidly. Taking advantage of this situation land sharks have encroached on government land and sold approximately 200 acres to buyers.

Sources informed that even tehsildars of many localities are involved in such nefarious dealings. They are playing an important role in selling off government land to private parties in exchange of lakhs of rupees. They are also preventing proper investigation of the deals by suppressing facts and destroying documents, the sources alleged.

A few days back on a visit here, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had instructed the district administration to remove all illegal encroachments from government land immediately. However, nothing has materialised till date and the land sharks continue to flourish, locals alleged.

Eviction notices (Form B) have been issued to a large number of encroachers. The process was initiated in 2010 and is still continuing. However, despite issuing notices land



ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS ON GOBARI RIVER BANK

grabbing continues unabated in the block. Locals stated that the apathy of the administration to enforce eviction has encouraged the land sharks. Some tehsildars stated that the eviction drive is continuing against encroachers, but they have no solid proof to back up their statements. In fact, if one looks into the issue carefully, one will find that construction by private operators is being carried out on government land at many places.

Social worker Ananta Dash informed that in 2009, the district administration had demolished parts of a commercial establishment built on leased out government land. The decision to demolish parts of the building was taken as it had exceeded the leased out area. Despite the Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) cancelling the lease of a market complex in 2021, many shops

still continue to operate. Locals are surprised that the tehsildar of this block has not taken any action against the errant people. More than 15 acres of land around the market complex are still being occupied by encroachers, sources said.

Advocate Soumyaranjan Dhal pointed out that illegal encroachment by land sharks is seriously hampering the development of this block. A proper sewerage system cannot be developed due to lack of land. Due to encroachment, construction of a library and a police station has been suspended, locals said.

Sources added that unless the nexus between the land sharks and government employees is broken, illegal encroachments will continue to flourish. They added that in the process common people are losing out as development remains stalled due to the unavailability of land.

Vedvyas hanging bridge; CM's assistance sought

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 24: Raghunathpalli MLA Durga Tanty and BJP state spokesperson Dhiren Senapaty recently met Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi in Bhubaneswar and urged him to look into the construction of the hanging bridge over Brahmani river near Vedvyas. They also met Works Minister Prithviraj Harichandan on the same issue and requested him to expedite construction as soon as possible. Tanty and Senapaty requested the CM and the Works Minister to sanction an amount of ₹76 lakh for the bridge which will connect Vedvyas with Panposh.

"The Works Minister is very keen about the project and has assured us that he would look into it on a priority basis. He assured us that he would initiate construction as soon as possible after looking into the details," Senapaty said here Wednesday.

Convener of Vedvyas Pitha Vikash Manch (VPM) Badrinarayan Padhi and other members welcomed the initiative by both the local leaders. "The



plan to construct a bridge was actually initiated by Union Minister Jual Oram long back. However, it was shelved for various reasons. I am hopeful that with the BJP government in the state the bridge will be completed soon," Padhi stated.

The former BJD government had carried out the initial groundwork like soil testing, survey and DPR of the project. Funds were allocated for the development of the surroundings of this famous abode of Lord Shiva.

If the proposed bridge comes up then the distance between Vedvyas and Panposh will be reduced by nearly five kilometres, locals said. Experts feel that the bridge will be a huge boost to tourism in Vedvyas and the surrounding areas.

Misutilisation of govt funds comes to fore in Keonjhar



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, July 24: A classic misutilisation of government funds has come to the fore once again in this municipality of Keonjhar district. A total of ₹2 crore has already been spent to dig up a large tank, but then work has been stopped midway with no intimation as to when it will be completed.

The digging up of the large tank was taken up in 11.68 acres of land located between Kamarjoda and Banspani wards in FY 2019-20. Funds worth ₹6.31 crore were sanctioned by Odisha Mineral Bearing Area Development Corporation (OMBADC) for this purpose. However, many now feel that the ₹2 crore spent so far has gone down the drain because of misutilisation and misappropriation by government officials. People of Wards No 11 and No 12 are bearing the brunt of the apathy as they have to go without water on a daily basis.

Chief Engineer Bhaktabandhu Mohanta, who has been working in Joda Municipality for the last 12 years, said the digging work had to be suspended after the state Urban department issued new guidelines. The new

guidelines said that maintenance of the pond will have to be carried out on a daily basis and water in the tank should always be transparent. As the contractor employed was not ready to take additional responsibility, he stopped work. Executive officer Umesh Chandra Sahu said a fresh proposal has been sent to the Odisha government requesting for permission to start the work again under the state-sponsored 'Ama Pokhari Yojana'.

In another case of shoddy planning, the OMBADC has sanctioned ₹1.68 crore for renovation of a pond at Banspani despite knowing that it is the property of the Railways. After work started, Railway officials were quick to intervene and they stopped all renovation work. Locals have now demanded a probe into the incident. They want to know why the amount was sanctioned to renovate a pond which is the responsibility of the Railways.

When contacted, chief engineer Mohanta said that the Railways authorities were informed about renovation of the pond. However, they did not allow the work to be taken up.

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Further details can be seen from the following portals i.e. <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app> or <https://rajapati.odisha.gov.in> or <https://www.paralakhemundimunicipality.com>.
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OIPR-13145/11/0004/2425

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Indicative Advertisement For Workman Permit (Wireman-MV / Lineman-MV / Workman-HT and Endorsement of Cable Jointing & Mining Examination - 2024

No. 833 Date: 24.07.2024
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- Printed copy of application along with documents uploaded online are required to be submitted to concern Additional Chief Engineer-cum-Electrical Inspector Office where the online application was submitted by 07.09.2024, 05:00 PM.
- Candidates must ensure their eligibility before applying.
- Candidates need to upload scanned copy of required documents during the online application process.
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- No individual admit card will be sent to candidates by Post for appearing the Examination.
- The shortlisted candidates shall be intimated by SMS / E-mail and have to download the admit card from e-district portal by logging user name and password. The list of shortlisted candidates shall also be published in our official website <https://eiclectricityodisha.nic.in>.
- These candidates shall have to furnish the original documents for verification on the date of the examination.
- In case of any discrepancy between the documents uploaded (with the online application) and the original documents submitted for verification, the applicant shall be disqualified.
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PART II-Section 3-Sub-section (ii)
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No. 4564/NEW DELHI, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021/AGRAHAYANA 11, 1943

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
NOTIFICATION
New Delhi, the 2nd July, 2024

S.O. 2544(E)— Whereas by the notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, **S.O. No.1898 Dated:02/05/2024**, 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- Tahasildar, Pottangi) in the district of KORAPUT in the state of ODISHA.

And whereas the substance of the said notification has been published in "OrissaPost" and "Odisha Bhaskar" both dated 23.05.2024; 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;

And whereas, 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 has declared that the land specified in the said Schedule should be acquired for the aforesaid purpose;

And whereas, the said declaration has been published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, bearing No. **S.O. No.2544(E) Dated:02/07/2024** as required under Section 3D of the said Act; 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.

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 8th August 2024, 5 pm) from the date of publication of this Public Notice in the office of the Competent Authority i.e. O/o- Tahasildar, Pottangi.

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 village/ Town	Name of the Landowner/ interested person	Field Survey No.	Area of land in his share	Any structures/ 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- Tahasildar, Pottangi) in the district of KORAPUT in the state of ODISHA.

[F. No. NHA/11013/LA/PIU-Sambalpur, Odisha/Newly Proposed/Notif.(3a)/Koraput302] ABHAY JAIN, Dy. Secy.

District: Koraput
<https://egazette.gov.in>
Publication date:04.07.2024
[https://egazette.gov.in/\(S/\(hrqyc5e4mgdwwt1hmvo5as\)\)/ViewPDF.aspx](https://egazette.gov.in/(S/(hrqyc5e4mgdwwt1hmvo5as))/ViewPDF.aspx)
https://bhoomirashi.gov.in/auth/revamp/showFileDF.cshmt?notification_id=55273&file_id=27331

PRASAR BHARATI
(India's Public Service Broadcaster)
Doordashan Kendra: Bhubaneswar

Requirement of Marketing Executive

Marketing Executive are required
Doordashan Kendra at Bhubaneswar on contractual basis.

Interested candidates may apply online on Prasar Bharati web link <https://applications.prasarbharti.org> within 15 days from the date of publication in newspaper along with self attested copies of supporting documents. All details are available on above link.

In case of any difficulty in submission of application, it may be e-mailed to: hrcpbs@prasarbharti.gov.in along with screenshot of error.

STEEL AUTHORITY OF INDIA LIMITED
Rourkela Steel Plant
Rourkela - 769 011, Odisha, India

ENGAGEMENT OF APPRENTICES UNDER THE APPRENTICES ACT, 1961

Rourkela Steel Plant invites applications for 1st Phase from the candidates for Apprenticeship Training as Graduate/Technician Apprentices and Trade Apprentices for a period of 01(One) year under the Apprenticeship Act 1961/1973 in the categories mentioned below:

- TRADE APPRENTICES(ITI Passed out) : 213
- TECHNICIAN APPRENTICES (Diploma Passed out) : 136
- GRADUATE APPRENTICES (B.Tech. Passed out) : 51
- AGE CRITERIA: Minimum 18 years and maximum 28 years as on date 10th August, 2024.
- STIPEND: The apprentices are eligible for monthly stipend as per Apprentices Act, 1961, Apprenticeship Rules 1992 as amended from time to time during their engagement period.
- RESERVATION: As per the guidelines of Govt. of Odisha, shall be followed with applicable age relaxation.
- SELECTION: Selection for engagement of Apprentices for training would be on merit basis, considering their percentage (%) of final marks obtained in the basic prescribed qualifications as applicable to respective branch/trade.
- Last date for applying in the portal: 10th August, 2024.

REQUIREMENT BEFORE FILLING ON-LINE REGISTRATION

- Before applying for above apprentices positions, candidates have to first register themselves in online portals of the following agencies of Govt. of India:
 - For Trade Apprentices: In the link <https://apprenticeshipindia.gov.in>
 - For Graduate/Technician Apprentices: National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) in the link <https://nats.education.gov.in>
- The candidate must have an active email ID and Mobile Number which must be valid for at least next one year. All future communication including Corrigendum/Addendum with regard to this advertisement will take place only through e-mail / SMS Alerts.
- The candidate must ascertain the correctness of all information before filling in the online registration and its final submission.
- The candidate shall be wholly/exclusively responsible for the information provided in his/her online registration.
- After successfully registration/apply online, the candidate must take a print out of the filled-in online application for future reference.

HOW TO APPLY

- For ITI:** Candidates are first required to register in the web portal <http://apprenticeshipindia.gov.in> for registration as candidate. After registering oneself, one can login into the home page in the apprenticeship portal as candidate then go to Apprenticeship Opportunity then click search by Establishments Name (SAIL ROURKELA STEEL PLANT) to click on apply as the prescribed trade against vacancies appearing on the portal. The candidates have to apply for the respective trade through Apprenticeship Opportunity of the establishment SAIL Rourkela Steel Plant. The application will not be accepted without registration and apply on the portal.
- For Degree/Diploma:** Candidates are advised to register as a student online on <https://nats.education.gov.in>. After registering oneself, one can login into the home page of NATS portal as candidate then go to Establishments Requests then click Find Establishments. Candidate should select STEEL AUTHORITY OF INDIA LIMITED, Rourkela Steel Plant, Rourkela apply in passed out branch of engineering appearing on the portal.

Eligible Sundargarh District residents will be given preference over others. Eligible applications from other districts of Odisha & then rest of India may be considered, only if there are any vacancies left after the selection process which cannot be filled by Sundargarh District residents.

Management reserves the sole right to cancel the selection process there under at any point of time whatsoever. Decision of Management regarding the selection will be final. Further Management reserves the full right to fill up or otherwise any or all the vacancies for apprenticeship training depending on the availability of the candidates in any trade/discipline. The vacancies in each apprenticeship trade are indicative and may vary during selection process.

RSP shall have no obligation to offer regular employment to Apprentices during and/or after the completion of the apprenticeship training which is one year from the date of joining.

Registered Office: Ispat Bhawan, Lodi Road, New Delhi 110 003
Corporate Identity Number: L27109DL1973GOI006454, Website: www.sail.co.in

There's a little bit of SAIL in everybody's life



What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion.

SRI AUROBINDO



What Fuels Violence

The shooting of former US President Donald Trump was the second assassination attempt on a populist political leader this year. Just two months ago, Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico was seriously injured after being shot four times at close range, highlighting the danger posed by the resurgence of political violence around the world.

While the attempted assassinations of Trump and Fico have caused many liberals to tone down their rhetoric, such reactions miss the point. The driving force behind the current rise of political violence is not criticism of authoritarians but rather the failure of ostensibly functioning democracies to address accusations of criminality against populist leaders in a timely manner.

Like Trump, Fico was attacked in the midst of an unlikely political comeback, five years after he was forced to step down when his inner circle was implicated in the gruesome murder of investigative journalist Jan Kuciak and his girlfriend.

Regrettably, Slovakia's pro-democracy parties failed to ensure that Fico was held accountable for his actions. In a remarkable 2022 show-down, Slovakia's parliament voted against lifting Fico's immunity from prosecution, preventing the authorities from arresting him on organised-crime charges. A year later, Fico returned to power and resumed his authoritarian agenda.

But while Slovakia's liberals have been outraged by the failure to strip Fico of immunity, in the United States, the Democratic Party seems to be in denial. Many US liberals attribute the slow pace of the criminal cases against Trump to the inherent sluggishness of the justice system, overlooking the errors that have led to these delays.

Chief among these errors is US President Joe Biden's appointment of Merrick Garland as attorney general. As early as 2022, Biden was reportedly frustrated with Garland's reluctance to prosecute Trump for his numerous crimes, privately complaining that Garland was acting more like "a ponderous judge" than an aggressive prosecutor addressing a major threat to American democracy. But Biden, adhering to long-standing norms, apparently did not share these concerns with Garland.

The current resurgence of political violence should make us rethink these norms. While we may never fully understand the motivations of individual assassins, the spectacle of a major political figure being constantly accused of serious crimes yet evading justice for years creates inevitable social tensions. This is why prosecutors do not publicly label individuals as murderers or rapists without prosecuting them: failing to act not only allows potentially dangerous criminals to roam free but also risks stoking public fear and discontent.

In the wake of the attempt on Trump's life, Fox News and other conservative media outlets repeatedly highlighted Biden's comments about Trump being "an existential threat to our democracy" as an example of incendiary political rhetoric. The criticism is partly valid: accusations of fostering insurrection or engaging in other criminal activity should be proven in court, not used as fodder for election campaigns. Conversely, if these allegations are unfounded, it is indeed incendiary for Democrats to repeat them.

Other established democracies have demonstrated that former leaders can be held accountable for crimes they committed. Two former French presidents, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy, were charged and convicted of corruption. In Brazil, former President Jair Bolsonaro was barred from running for office just a few months after his supporters stormed the Supreme Court and National Congress in an attempt to oust his successor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. A year later, Bolsonaro has already been indicted for money laundering and faces multiple criminal investigations.

Poland provides a particularly useful model for countries grappling with an authoritarian past. Since assuming office in December 2023, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk has taken a bold approach to safeguarding democracy, delivering on his promise to sweep away the corruption of the previous government with an "iron broom."

For starters, Tusk appointed former ombudsman Adam Bodnar as the country's chief prosecutor. Unlike Garland, Bodnar did not let misplaced concerns about the optics of prosecuting political opponents deter him from swiftly upholding the rule of law. Bodnar's office did not wait for parliamentary inquiries to conclude before charging key members of the Law and Justice (PiS) party with abuse of power, misappropriation of public funds, and other felonies.

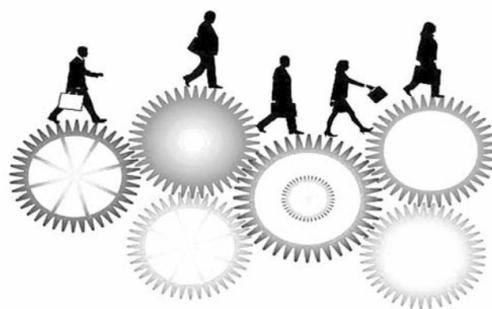
While Tusk refrains from interfering with Bodnar's work or the independent courts, which will eventually determine the fate of the accused, he does not shy away from publicly explaining and defending his government's aggressive prosecutorial efforts. In numerous speeches and social-media posts, Tusk has emphasised that the iron broom is not an end in itself, but rather a necessary step toward national reconciliation. "That is what reckoning looks like. Zero politics, only substance. And after the reckoning and restitution time will come for reconciliation. Just as I promised," he posted on X on 3 July.

So far, Tusk's bold approach has put populists on the defensive. Americans should take notice. As extreme polarisation and political violence threaten to undermine American democracy, it is abundantly clear that authoritarian populists must be held accountable in a court of law, not just in the court of public opinion.

The writer is Associate Professor Law and Strategy at Central European University in Vienna. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

FOCUS UNION BUDGET

THRUST ON JOBS, SKILLING



India needs to invest in human capital massively, for long term, sustainable and inclusive growth. That investment needs to reach a benchmark of 6% of GDP, which is twice of where it is now

This was the first budget of the government led by Prime Minister Modi in his third outing as the PM. It has laid the contours for Modi 3.0 economic policies, which need to get the nod from NDA allies too. It was Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's record seventh presentation. Even though the budget proposals will apply for six months, before a new one is presented next year, they articulate the economic vision of the government. Clearly the emphasis is on job creation, skilling and training, apprenticeships for youth, encouraging small businesses. There is also a mention of India's energy challenge as it makes a transition from coal and fossil fuels to more green and sustainable energy sources. Hence the mention of nuclear power with public private partnership is important, and so is the policy of stored water energy.

The major thrust of the Budget proposal for 2024-25 is on job creation and helping small businesses. The former is through employment and skilling incentives, and the latter is by providing collateral free loans to MSMEs and enabling access to export markets. There is also an increase in tax on capital gains. In some ways one can read this as a pivot toward labour-intensive growth, which includes the enhancement of human capital. For the past few years, the Union government has consciously raised the share of spending on infrastructure such as roads and airports. These hard assets have been created at a rapid pace and are visible. Public spending on infra has been a significant driver of growth. But job creation has not been keeping pace, and rural wages have been stagnating. Small businesses which generate jobs have been struggling. The micro reality behind macro health has been that consumer spending is growing slower than GDP, which is worrying. Instead of only providing incentives to production and

revenues, the government has now focused on job creation and providing incentives for job creation.

India needs to invest in human capital massively, for long term, sustainable and inclusive growth. That investment needs to reach a benchmark of 6% of GDP, which is twice of where it is now. This investment will come both from private and public resources. Public funds are necessary for funding primary education and partly secondary education. This is because of tremendous social spillover benefits that go far. But, college education and beyond including skilling and training cannot be funded by taxpayers. This is because the benefit of higher education and skills accrue largely to the individual and only secondarily to society at large. The spillover benefits of skilling and college degrees and diplomas are in terms of entrepreneurship, innovation and job creation, but are still not a strong justification to provide it all free. The key challenge for skilling India is that the vast majority of the youth hungry to be trained cannot afford the true cost of quality education. Also, most of the skilling hap-

pens as on-the-job learning. Hence the best way is to incorporate it into a national apprenticeship programme, which has portable accreditation. Even the internships for ten million youth in top tier companies will be a step toward learning by doing. The fee for skilling and higher education should be borne by the student, the primary beneficiary. It is here that the Budget does well in ensuring easy and inexpensive access to student loans. In the coming years this should be a dominant way of funding higher education in India. Similarly, collateral free loan schemes have been announced for small businesses, apart from government provided credit guarantees. The small businesses have also been helped in linkage via e-commerce to export markets. Since MSME's provide the lion's share of value added in industry, exports and employment, this thrust is very welcome.

Beyond jobs, skilling and MSME's the prominent macro feature is fiscal responsibility. The FM chose to use half of the fiscal bonanza received from the Reserve Bank of India to reduce the deficit. The commitment to fiscal consolidation

is commendable. India is an outlier when it comes to debt servicing (one third of tax revenues going to meet interest expenses) hence keeping fiscal promises and prudence is very important. If anything, the assumptions about next year's tax revenues look conservative. India needs a comprehensive re-look at income tax strategy. The direct tax net needs to be much wider and the slabs should not go from zero to the top rate within a span of just a few lakh rupees. The top tier must kick in at high incomes, say above 1 crore. But exemptions must go. A new comprehensive economic framework for next gen reforms is forthcoming as the FM said. The new framework for reforms must position India in an advantageous position to exploit global value chains. Hence the trend should be to lower import duties across the board. The import duty on gold was cut from 15 to 6%, because a lot of duty leakage was happening via the route of duty-free imports from UAE into GIFT city. Besides high duties on precious metals are eventually counterproductive since they invite smuggling. It was also good to hear about future looking initiatives such as promoting private-public partnerships in small modular nuclear reactors and on the space economy. And also, a hard realistic assessment of India's difficult transition path away from fossil fuels.

The higher taxes on capital gains might be temporary spoilers for the stock markets. But India's macro performance stands out in the world for its resilience and high growth, with moderate inflation. With policies to incentivise job creation and skilling, along with fiscal consolidation there is no reason why high growth cannot be sustained. Sooner or later the financial markets will acknowledge this strength.

The writer is a noted Pune-based economist. ©THE BILLION PRESS



Ajit Ranade

INDIA'S MACRO PERFORMANCE STANDS OUT IN THE WORLD FOR ITS RESILIENCE AND HIGH GROWTH, WITH MODERATE INFLATION



Maciej Kisilowski

The driving force behind the current rise of political violence is not criticism of authoritarians but rather the failure of ostensibly functioning democracies to address accusations of criminality against populist leaders in a timely manner

SPECTRUM HEALTH SECTOR

Leaving much to be desired

The post-pandemic economic recovery has been exceptional for India with the real GDP growing at 8.2% in 2023-24 and expected to grow at 6.5-7% in 2024-25. India is the fastest growing major economy. However, despite all these, the allocation for health sector has not witnessed a substantial rise. In 2024-25 BE, the finance minister has provisioned ₹94671 cr for health and family welfare ministry, health research and AYUSH together, which is only 2% more than previous year's BE. This constitutes only 2% of the total Central government allocations. An intra-budgetary allocation for 2024-25 BE shows ₹87656 crore for health and family welfare, a 1.76% rise compared to 2023-24 BE, approximately ₹3301.73 crore for health research, an 11% rise from last year BE and ₹3712 crore for AYUSH. Further, compared to the revised estimate of 2023-24, the purposed allocations to health and family welfare witnessed 12.92% rise in 2024-25 BE. Notably, one of the crucial programmes - the National Health Mission (NHM) has not received ample

consideration in this budget and total allocations stand at ₹36000 crore in 2024-25 BE, just 1.16% high compared to 2023-24 BE. Similarly, budgetary provisions to AB-MPJAY shows paltry rise of just 1.4% over 2023-24 BE. This year being the first year of Modi 3.0 is crucial for realising health-related SDGs by 2030. However, the provisions made for health in this budget limits the scope for further expansion of critical health programmes to achieve the SDGs.

In 2018, this government announced AB-PMJAY Ayushman Bharat Yojana for developing comprehensive primary care through health and wellness centres and providing health insurance to the most vulnerable households to protect them against rising cost of hospitalisation. This unparalleled initiative though got health at the forefront of political agenda, health sector allocations and spending in the successive years did not match to this commitment. The first four years of Modi 2.0 observed sluggish growth in health expenditure. The share of health expenditure

including health and family welfare, AYUSH and health research in total national government expenditure was just 2.26% on an average during first four years of Modi 2.0. Moreover, this share declined from 2.46% in 2019-20 to 1.86% in 2022-23 Actuals. Noticeably, the NHM witnessed sizeable decline in its share in the total health and family welfare expenditure, almost 10% decline from 2019-20 to 2022-23 Actuals. The decline in the NHM expenditure in absolute as well as its share in total health and family welfare expenditure is unwarranted when the scheme has led to several health gains especially among the low income states. Several evidences suggest NHM has contributed largely to improve the health system at the primary level, increased institutional delivery and antenatal services, particularly among the poorest socioeconomic groups. Moreover, the mission which has an urban equivalent has a daunting task of improving healthcare delivery for a large populace staying in shanties and other urban locations. Given this reality, the

institutional architecture created over the years at the ground under NHM should be funded adequately and managed suitably so that comprehensive primary healthcare is delivered.

A stark reality that the COVID pandemic has shown us is that if we do not invest in basic healthcare, surveillance systems, and public health functions, the damage would be enormous. In this context, the allocation and expenditure in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were in the right direction. However, this momentum was disrupted in the year 2023-24 BE and 2024-25 BE.

Health is one of the important pillars of achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the priorities should not be out-of-place as the healthcare challenges are many-folded. The momentum created by announcing PMJAY in 2018 should not be halted and the public spending should be stepped up to 2.5% of GDP.

The writer is Professor of Health Economics, Indian Institute of Public Health, Bhubaneswar. Views are personal.



Sarit Kumar Rout

THE PROVISIONS MADE FOR HEALTH IN THIS BUDGET LIMITS THE SCOPE FOR FURTHER EXPANSION OF CRITICAL HEALTH PROGRAMMES TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1956: Tunisia gains its independence from France. The northernmost African country, became a French protectorate in 1881, under the Treaty of Bardo. The path to independence in the country was marred by civil unrest and conflict and was led by Habib Bourguiba, who became the first president of the independent country.
- 1965: At the Newport (Rhode Island) Folk Festival, American singer and songwriter Bob Dylan initially eschewed his acoustic guitar to go electric; the controversial performance is considered one of the most pivotal moments in the history of rock and roll.
- 1978: World's first test tube baby is born. Louise Joy Brown was the first person to be conceived using in-vitro fertilization or IVF technology, pioneered by doctors Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards.
- 1984: Soviet cosmonaut Svetlana Yevgenyevna Savitskaya became the first woman to walk in space. The cosmonaut was part of the Soyuz T-12 mission, which docked at the Salyut 7 Space station. As part of the mission, she spent 3.5 hours in space testing tools. Savitskaya was also the second woman to go into space and the first to go to space twice.

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

Orissa POST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Strategic continuity

Sir, This refers to "Coalition Budget," Orissa POST, July 24. The one key stand-out for me is the fact that the Budget is a testament to strategic continuity and measured progress. While not revolutionary, it marks a significant refinement in our nation's economic approach. It skillfully balances the imperatives of fiscal prudence with the ambitions of growth, setting a tone that diverges subtly yet importantly from recent years. The shift from short-term, populist measures to a focus on long-term growth strategies is particularly noteworthy, reflecting a maturing economic vision for India's future. PM Modi's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047 is very much in sight, and getting closer. The other standout feature is the focus on job creation and economic expansion. The package of five schemes to facilitate employment and skilling opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over five years shows the government's commitment to harnessing our demographic dividend. The emphasis on the manufacturing sector and MSMEs is particularly encouraging. As the backbone of our economy, these enterprises deserve the support. On the taxation front, the reduction of corporate tax rates for foreign companies from 40 per cent to 35 per cent sends a strong signal to international investors.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Health hazard

Sir, Mindless urban planning leading to uncleaned, overflowing garbage has provided street dogs excellent opportunity to thrive. On an average, India accounts for 35 per cent of rabies deaths that occur across the world. The significance of anti-rabies vaccination for dogs cannot be overstated. It reflects poorly on our authorities that only 10 per cent of about 50 million dogs have been sterilised and immunised in India. Since both bites and scratches can infect an individual, awareness is vital. Besides, 40 per cent of those infected with rabies are below 15 years, so this age group needs heightened vigil. Post-exposure prophylaxis by way of vaccination is critical. Also, pre-exposure anti-rabies vaccine is preferable for those who frequently come in contact with dogs due to occupational compulsions. Round the clock availability of anti-rabies vaccine in government hospitals cannot be overstated.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

No RTI on Project Cheetah: MP govt

The much-vaunted cheetah conservation project initially drew criticism following the deaths of the animals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: The Madhya Pradesh Forest department has refused to provide information under the Right to Information Act on management of cheetahs brought from Africa and their cubs born in India.

In response to a request filed by wildlife activist Ajay Dubey, the department cited Section 8(1)(a) of the RTI Act, which allows a public authority to withhold information if its disclosure would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific, or economic interests of the State, relations with a foreign State, or lead to the incitement of an offence.

Dubey had requested the state Forest department to provide "management correspondence records of the Cheetah Project in Kuno and Mandsaur".

In his response, Saurav Kumar Kabra, Public Information Officer in the office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Madhya Pradesh, said, "The information (under point number 2) is related to the management branch, which has decided not to provide information under Section 8(1)(a) of the Right to Information



Act, 2005."

Dubey said this is the first time that information on Project Cheetah has been denied under RTI Act since the launch of the programme with the release of eight Namibian cheetahs into Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park September 17, 2022.

Dubey had previously received information under RTI on the health of the first cheetah cub born on Indian terrain.

Information obtained by Dubey revealed that the cub's right leg was fractured November 28.

"I have been disclosing irregularities in the conservation of big cats since 2013, but this is the first time I received a reply stating that disclosure of information about cheetahs will affect national security or relations with foreign countries," Dubey told PTI.

The first batch of eight cheetahs was introduced in India in September 2022, and the second

The first batch of eight cheetahs was introduced in India in September 2022, and the second batch of 12 cheetahs was flown in from South Africa last February

The government now plans to introduce cheetahs into a fenced area in the Gandhi Sagar wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh, possibly by the end of the year, with a focus on breeding

A proposal to set up a cheetah conservation breeding centre in Gujarat's Banni grasslands was also cleared by the Central Zoo Authority in February

batch of 12 cheetahs was flown in from South Africa last February.

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A proposal to set up a cheetah conservation breeding centre in Gujarat's Banni grasslands was also cleared by the Central Zoo Authority in February.

According to a document released by the Union Environment Ministry earlier this year, the long-term goal is to establish a metapopulation of cheetahs in the Kuno-Gandhisagar landscape (an area of around 9,000 sq km) of 60-70 individuals after restorative measures, prey availability, and scientific management are ensured.

The much-vaunted cheetah conservation project initially drew criticism due to the animals' deaths. However, with the birth of 12 cubs this year, officials say the project is on the right track.

Namibian cheetah Aasha gave birth to three cubs in January. Jwala, another female cheetah from Namibia, also gave birth to three cubs in the same month. She had delivered four cubs last year, but only one of them survived.

With South African cheetah Gamini giving birth to six cubs in March, the total number of cheetahs, including cubs, in Kuno is now 26.

Since last March, seven adult cheetahs, including Shaurya, have died due to various reasons.

The seven adult cheetahs - three females and four males - who died include Sasha, Uday, Daksha, Tejas, Suraj, Dhatri, and Shaurya.

The first six fatalities occurred in a six-month period between March and August 2023.

'Our visit will boost ties of friendship'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, July 24: Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, who along with his King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck wrapped up their three-day visit to Gujarat Wednesday, said the trip would strengthen the ties of friendship between "Bhutan and Bharat".

In the last leg of their programme in the state, the King and PM of the neighbouring nation visited the GIFT City, an upcoming global financial and IT services hub, near Gandhinagar.

Talking to reporters in Gandhinagar before leaving,



PM Tobgay shared his experience during the visit.

"Today, we visited the GIFT City. We are inspired by what has been achieved in such a short time in this Smart City. Our visit here will further strengthen the ties of friendship between Bhutan and Bharat. On behalf of His Majesty, the King of Bhutan, I would like to thank the chief minister of Gujarat Bhupendra Patel for the wonderful arrangements," said Tobgay.

"We visited the Statue of Unity on the day we arrived (July 22). And I can tell you, that I felt like I was on a pilgrimage... to see the gigantic statue (of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel) and experience Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for India," PM Tobgay said.

The delegation led by the Butan King and PM visited Adani Group's flagship infrastructure project sites at Mundra and Khavda Tuesday. The conglomerate operates India's largest commercial port at Mundra, while it is developing the world's largest renewable energy park at Khavda, said officials.

Disabled woman brought from Pak clears Class VIII exam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, July 24: Geeta, a woman with speech and hearing disabilities who had drawn national attention when she returned to India from Pakistan in 2015, has sought a government job after clearing the Class VIII exam in the first division.

Officials said Wednesday that 33-year-old Geeta scored 411 of 600 marks in the Class VIII exam conducted by the Madhya Pradesh State Open School Education Board with special merit in social science and Sanskrit.

"Geeta is very excited about her exam result and is looking forward to her future with hope," Gyanendra Purohit, secretary of the NGO and a sign language expert, told PTI Wednesday.

"The minimum educational qualification for recruitment of Class IV employees of the central and state governments is 8th pass. Geeta is now eligible to apply for government jobs in this category," he said.

Geeta's age is estimated to be 33 years. She had crossed over to Pakistan nearly 23 years ago after accidentally boarding a train as a child. It was due to the special efforts of the then external affairs minister late Sushma Swaraj that Geeta could return to India October 26, 2015.

Over 800 relocated as heavy rains batter Gujarat; trains hit



11 long-distance express trains were 'regulated' due to the rise in water level under a railway bridge in the Vadodara division, Western Railway officials said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, July 24: As many as eight persons were killed in rain-related incidents and more than 800 people evacuated after swollen rivers and overflowing dams cut off several villages and inundated low-lying areas in large parts of Gujarat amid torrential downpour Wednesday, officials said.

Normal life was thrown out of gear as heavy rains pounded south and Gujarat districts like Vadodara, Surat, Bharuch and Anand since the morning, prompting authorities to declare a holiday for schools and colleges in some places for the day, they said.

Train services were also affected in some areas.

"Eight persons have died due to heavy rains which lashed several parts of

Gujarat during the last 24 hours. We have also shifted 826 persons to safer places during that period. In view of the present situation, we have deployed 20 teams of State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and 11 teams of NDRF in affected districts" said state Commissioner of Relief, Alok Kumar Pandey.

In view of the widespread rains and 'red alert' for extremely heavy showers issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for several districts, control rooms are working round the clock to monitor the situation and help stranded people, he said.

Pandey said all the 206 major dams in the state are receiving fresh inflow of water and the Sardar Sarovar Dam, the biggest in Gujarat, is now 54 per cent full.

The administration in rain-battered districts of Vadodara, Surat, Bharuch and Anand deployed personnel from the NDRF and SDRF and local fire brigade teams to rescue people from flooded areas and relocate them to safe places. Many people were shifted to safer places after low-lying areas were flooded, officials said.

Borsad was followed by Tilakwada of Narmada district (213 mm), Padra of Vadodara (199 mm), Vadodara taluka (198 mm), Bharuch taluka (185 mm), Navsari of Chhotaudepur (156 mm) and Nandod of Narmada district (143 mm).

As many as 11 long-distance express trains were "regulated" due to the rise in water level under a railway bridge in the Vadodara division, while four local passenger trains were cancelled, Western Railway officials said.

FORTUNATE STRIKE

Labourer unearths diamond in Panna mine



THE RAW DIAMOND WOULD BE AUCTIONED AND THE PROCEEDS WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE LABOURER AFTER DEDUCTING GOVERNMENT ROYALTY AND TAXES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Panna (MP), July 24: A labourer found a 19.22-carat diamond in a mine in Madhya Pradesh's Panna district Wednesday which could fetch about ₹80 lakh or more at the government auction, officials said.

Raju Gaud said when he set out in the morning to dig mud and sift through it, a daily routine in monsoon

months for the past ten years, he hadn't imagined he would strike a fortune.

"I hope the amount earned (after the auction) will reduce my financial hardships and take care of my children's education," Gaud said.

The labourer said he exulted after finding the precious stone in the leased mine at Krishna Kalyanpur and promptly deposited it with the government authorities.

The gem-quality diamond will be put for sale in the next auction, said Anupam Singh, an official from the Panna diamond office.

District Collector Suresh Kumar said the 19.22-carat diamond Gaud uncovered in a shallow mine could fetch ₹80 lakh or more in the auction.

The gemstone would be put up for open bidding at the next diamond auction, the collector said.

Gaud said he drove a tractor earlier and her family earned a livelihood from labour work.

He has been taking small mines on lease during the rains for the past ten years in the hope of getting lucky someday.

Gaud said he took the mine, where he found the diamond, on lease about two months ago. "I have deposited it at the Government Diamond Office. I'll spend the money on my children's education and buy farmland," he said.

Officials said the raw diamond would be auctioned and the proceeds would be given to the labourer after deducting government royalty and taxes.

The Panna district, located in MP's Bundelkhand region, is estimated to have diamond reserves of 12 lakh carats.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. 16-KUR-TRD-OT-2024-25
NAME OF WORK: OHE MODIFICATION IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF GIRDERS OF 02 NOS. (950UP AND 950DN) IMPORTANT BRIDGES (BGML) IN GANJAM - CHHATRAPUR SECTION IN CONNECTION WITH MISSION - 3000 MT UNDER KHURDARA ROAD DIVISION.
Advertised Value: ₹ 23,92,489.55, EMD: ₹ 47,900/-, Period of Completion: 180 Days.
Bidding Start Date: 25.07.2024
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1300 Hrs. of 08.08.2024.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete information including e-Tender documents and corrigendum is available in website www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), PR-337/P/24-25 Khurda Road

Central Bank of India
Regional Office: Plot No.: 108-B, 1st Floor, Unit - VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003

E-AUCTION NOTICE OF PLEDGED GOLD ORNAMENTS

Whereas the Branch Heads of below mentioned branches of Central Bank of India issued notice(s) calling upon the borrowers to clear the dues in gold loan availed by them. The borrowers had failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned will conduct online auction of the Gold ornaments strictly on "As is What is Basis", "Whatever there is Basis" & "Without Recourse Basis". The auction will be conducted online through <https://egold.auctiontiger.net>.

Date and Time of E-Auction: 09.08.2024 from 12.00 Noon to 03.00 PM.
Last Date & Time of Submission of EMD: 07.08.2024 upto 05.00 PM.
Date and Time of Inspection: 01.08.2024 to 07.08.2024 during Banking hours.

Sl. No.	Name of Branch & Contact Number	Borrower Name / Account No.	Total Amount as on 22.07.2024	EMD Amount	Gross Weight & Net Weight (In grams)
1.	Gania Branch, Mob: 7381024096	Krutarth Swain / 3715776785	₹ 30,740/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.		17.9 & 6.8
2.	Gania Branch, Mob: 7381024096	Sunita Malik / 3806819387	₹ 19,207/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.	₹ 20,000/-	9 & 4.5
3.	Gania Branch, Mob: 7381024096	Sunita Malik / 3706729532	₹ 22,827/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.		13.3 & 6
4.	Gania Branch, Mob: 7381024096	Draupadi Dei / 3527260823	₹ 18,772/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.		8.1 & 3.5
5.	Mahatab Road Branch, Mob: 7381001482	Biswajit Mohapatra / 5270892175	₹ 2,38,456/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.	₹ 20,000/-	79.73 & 59.26
6.	Mahatab Road Branch, Mob: 7381001482	Biswajit Mohapatra / 5294486155	₹ 2,25,015/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.		152.61 & 57.18
7.	Khallikote College Branch, Mob: 7381003241	Sandip Kumar Ghadei / 5294034866	₹ 51,536/- + interest upto date of auction & other charges etc.	₹ 20,000/-	16.45 & 13

EMD DETAILS: A/C NO.: 300451368, A/C NAME: CBI RO BHUBANESWAR, IFSC CODE: CBIN0281969, BRANCH NAME: JANPATH BRANCH

For inspection and any other query please contact to the Respective Branch Head. The bidders have to deposit the KYC documents & EMD per branch on or before EMD Date. Please contact e-Procurement Technologies Limited (Auction Tiger) on 6351896640 or 6359575981 for more information. For detailed terms & conditions please visit <https://egold.auctiontiger.net>.

Place: Bhubaneswar Date: 24.07.2024
Sd/- Nodal Officer
Central Bank of India

Bank of India
Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Ph.: 0674-2362249

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
E-Auction Sale Notice Under SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Where as the Bank acting through its Authorised Officer in exercise of its powers under Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (SARFAESI) has decided to put up for E-auction of the following properties "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for realization of the debts due to the Bank.

Sl. No.	BRANCH/ Name & Address of the Borrowers/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/Mortgagor/ Total Dues	Description of the Properties	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	BHUBANESWAR BRANCH, PH.: 9439180797 / Borrower: M/s. Maa Tarini Fly Ash Bricks, Prop.: Mrs. Sujata Swain, At: Plot No.: 1187, Khata No.: 210/27, Mouza: Bajabati, PO: Thanual, Haridaspur, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-755024 / Guarantor: Mr. Sunil Kumar Swain, S/o.: Golaikha Bihari Swain, At: Nuagaon, PO.: Jarakha, Haridaspur, P.S.: Dharmasala, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-755024 / Total Dues: ₹2,56,53,192.75 + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	Homestead Land and Fly Ash Bricks Plant having Factory Shed: 11,900 Sqft, Office Room: 690 Sqft including P&M over Khata No.: 210/27 & 129/25 & various plots with Plot No.: 1176, 1177, 1181, 1182, 1187 & 5/324, Land Area: Ac. 1.300 Dec. i.e. 56,628 Sqft, KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Bajabati & Jhadasohala, P.S./Tahasil: Dharmasala, Dist.: Jajpur, Odisha. Standing in the name of Mrs. Sujata Swain, W/o.: Mr. Sunil Kumar Swain, Bounded by East: Road, West: Pvt. Land, North: Pvt. Land, South: Pvt. Land.	₹2,25,41,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹22,54,100/- / ₹50,000/-
2.	KANDARPUR BRANCH, PH.: 8249351737 / Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan, S/o.: Late Arun Kumar Pradhan / Co-Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr. Ashish Pradhan, S/o.: Late Arun Kumar Pradhan, Both are At: Danduasipara, PO.: Ayatpur, Dist.: Cuttack-754131 / Total Dues: ₹6,20,737/- as on 07.02.2024 + interest, costs and expenses from 08.02.2024, less any part amount repaid.	Ground Floor Residential Building (RCC: 1135 Sqft, ACC: 370 Sqft) over Khata No.: 463/78, Plot No.: 1006, Land Area: Ac.0.050 Dec. i.e. 2178 Sqft, KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Brahmanabada, P.S.: Cuttack Sadar, Tahasil: Cuttack, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha. Standing in the name of Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan & Mr. Ashish Pradhan, Bounded by East: Nabin Charan Jena, West: Road, North: Siba Charan Jena, South: Canal	₹22,20,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹22,20,000/- / ₹50,000/-
3.	PATIA BRANCH, PH.: 7750931444 / Borrowers : 1) Mr. Tapas Kumar Dalei, S/o.: Mr. Chaitanya Dalei, 2) Mr. Chaitanya Dalei, 3) Mrs. Rajanibala Dalei, All are at Plot No.: 1090 / 2136, Lane No.: 7, Bhipmur, Aerodrome Area, Dist.: Khurda, Bhubaneswar-751020 / Total Dues: ₹17,91,338.33 + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	G+1 Residential Building (GF: 1780 Sqft and FF: 1549 Sqft) over Khata No.: 544/62, Plot No.: 1090/2136, Land Area: Ac.0.046 Dec. i.e. 2004 Sqft, KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Bhubaneswar Town Unit No.: 22 Bhipmur, P.S.: Bhubaneswar (64), Tahasil: Bhubaneswar (234), Dist.: Khurda, Odisha, Standing in the name of Mr. Tapas Kumar Dalei, Mr. Chaitanya Dalei & Mrs. Rajanibala Dalei, Bounded by East: Plot No.: 216/73, West: Plot No.: 216/75, North: Chakradhar Dalei, South: Road	₹87,98,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹8,79,800/- / ₹50,000/-
4.	TAMANDO BRANCH, PH.: 7008280080 / 1) (For Cash Credit) Borrower: M/s. Mamata Variety Store, Prop: Mr. Krupasindhu Pradhan, S/o.: Late Karunakar Pradhan / Guarantor: Late Karunakar Pradhan, 2) (For Housing Loan) Borrower: Mr. Krupasindhu Pradhan, S/o.: Late Karunakar Pradhan / Co-Borrower: Late Karunakar Pradhan, All are At: Plot No.: L-1156, Phase-II, Dumduma Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751019 / Legal Heirs: 1) Mr. Krupasindhu Pradhan (Borrower and Legal Heir of the Deceased Karunakar Pradhan), S/o: Late Karunakar Pradhan, 2) Dhani Pradhan (Legal Heir of the Deceased Karunakar Pradhan), W/o: Late Karunakar Pradhan, 3) Soudamini Pradhan (Legal Heir of the Deceased Dinabandhu Pradhan and the Legal Heir of the Deceased Karunakar Pradhan), W/o: Late Dinabandhu Pradhan, 4) Soudamini Pradhan (On behalf of Shri Satyajit Pradhan, Minor son of the Deceased Dinabandhu Pradhan and the Legal Heir of the Deceased Karunakar Pradhan), W/o: Late Dinabandhu Pradhan, All are At: Plot No.: L-1156, Phase-II, Dumduma Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751019, 5) Mrs. Mamata Patra (Legal Heir of the Deceased Karunakar Pradhan), W/o.: Gadadhar Patra, At/PO: Dumduma, Bhubaneswar-751019 / Total Dues: ₹13,06,242/- as on 29.01.2024 + interest, costs and expenses from 30.01.2024, less any part amount repaid.	G+2 Residential Building (GF: 681.25 Sqft, FF: 681.25 Sqft and SF: 420.11 Sqft) over Khata No.: 517, Plot No.: LIG- 1110(P), House No.: L-1156, Area: Ac.0.026 Dec. i.e. 1125 Sqft, KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Dumduma, Phase-II, P.S.: Khandagiri, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khurda, Odisha, Standing in the name of Late Karunakar Pradhan, Bounded by East: 30' wide Road, West: L-1155, North: 30' wide Road, South: L-1157	₹48,50,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹4,85,000/- / ₹50,000/-

Date & Time of E-Auction: 30.08.2024 From 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. with unlimited extension of 10 (Ten) minutes each.
Last Date & Time for submission of EMD & Documents: 29.08.2024 upto 4.00 P.M.
Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 29.08.2024 with prior appointment of the authorised officer

The sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions and provisions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
This is also a 30 days sale notice to the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) of the aforesaid loan account for settlement of their outstanding dues with the Bank and to participate in the public auction on the above mentioned date. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in (1) <https://www.ibapi.in> (2) <https://www.mstcecommerce.com> (3) www.bankofindia.co.in

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 25.07.2024
Authorised Officer, Bank of India

national

of the day quote

Our manifesto promised a legal guarantee for MSP. We have done a full assessment and it is feasible. We had a meeting and it was decided that we will have a discussion with INDIA bloc leaders and will try and put pressure on the government to ensure that the farmers get a legal guarantee for MSP

I am to state that today at about 12.20 pm at the lower lobby, Tapan Chatterjee, MLA of Purbasthali, rushed towards me and tried to assault me physically and threw abusive language in front of other MLAs and reporters. I felt insecure inside the Assembly precincts

In the Union Budget, several schemes have been announced for the welfare of every section of society. The Budget has also focused on infrastructure. Allocation has been made for construction of one crore houses

SHORT TAKES

Soldier, terrorist killed in encounter

Srinagar: An unidentified terrorist and a soldier were killed in an overnight encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, officials said Wednesday. The Army and police had launched an anti-terrorist operation in the Lolab area of Kupwara a few days ago following information about possible terrorist movements, the officials said. The security forces established contact with the hiding terrorists Tuesday, leading to an encounter, they added.

50-yr-old held for raping minor

Gurugram: A 50-year-old man has been arrested from Madhya Pradesh Wednesday on the charges of raping a three-year-old girl in Gurugram's Rithoj village, police said. The accused was identified as Ratan, a native of Madhya Pradesh, who was carrying a bounty of ₹50,000 on his head. Ratan had previously served ten years jail term for raping a five-year-old girl in Madhya Pradesh in 2005.

Maratha quota: Jarange ends fast

Jalna/Mumbai: Activist Manoj Jarange Wednesday suspended his five-day-old fast stating his community wants him to be alive to fight for the cause of Maratha reservation, and rallied against the ruling BJP, heating up the quota politics ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly polls. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) hit back at Jarange over his statement asking the Maratha community to defeat the saffron party candidates in the upcoming polls, and accused him of working as a "proxy" for the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA).

201 Indians died during Haj

New Delhi: More than 200 Indian pilgrims died during the Haj pilgrimage 2024, with a majority of the deaths being attributed to cardio-respiratory and cardio-pulmonary arrests, the government informed the Lok Sabha Wednesday. Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the government of India has placed significant emphasis on the successful conduct of Haj operations.

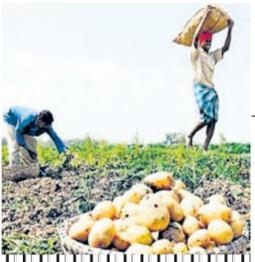


Our parliamentarians are active participants in its various committees, including the executive committee

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT OF INDIA

POTATO TRADERS CALL OFF STRIKE

The indefinite strike by potato traders in West Bengal was called off on Wednesday, and the tuber will be available in markets from July 25, Agriculture Marketing Minister Becharam Manna said. The strike, called to protest against alleged harassment by the state government and local administrations in exporting the tuber to other states, was since July 21



INDIA BLOC PROTESTS AGAINST UNION BUDGET

Besides Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, party chief Sonia Gandhi, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, several MPs of the Congress, TMC, Samajwadi Party, DMK and the Left joined the protest held on the steps leading up to the Makar Dwar of Parliament

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



discriminated against. They snatched away jobs and are now talking of apprenticeships, he said. SP MP Jaya Bachchan also slammed the Budget, saying youth have been given false promises. The protesting MPs raised placards such as 'We want India budget not NDA budget' and 'NDA betrays India in Budget'. "Yesterday, through the budget, the government of India violated all the principles to keep the federal system," Congress general secretary, organisation, K C Venugopal, said. "The aim of the budget was to protect the government. Giving so many sops to just two states. We are not against giving funds to Andhra Pradesh and Bihar but other states should also get justice. That is why we are agitating today. Even the people are agitated with this," he said.

BJP rejects charge

New Delhi: The BJP Wednesday dismissed the Opposition's "discrimination" charge against the Union Budget and said barring a few "sops" for NDA allies, the policy priorities of the budget suggest it has a long-term goal of achieving a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. Participating in the debate on the Budget for 2024-25 in the Lok Sabha, BJP MP Bhartruhari Mahtab said the budget will empower the "neo-middle class" and asserted that the general election results have not "ruffled" the government.

Singh, and CPI(M)'s John Brittas, among others, had attended the meeting.

"The concept of a Budget has already been destroyed by this year's Union Budget. They have completely discriminated against most of the states. So the general sentiment of the INDIA bloc meeting was that we have to protest against this," Venugopal had told reporters after the meeting. Later, in a post on X, Venugopal had said, "The Union Budget presented today was extremely discriminatory and dangerous, which completely goes against the principles of federalism and fairness that the Union Government must follow." In protest, Congress Chief Ministers will be boycotting the NITI Aayog meeting scheduled for July 27.

Lawrence gang wanted to kill me, family: Salman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 24: Bollywood actor Salman Khan has told police that he believed the Lawrence Bishnoi gang carried out the firing at his residence here in April this year with the intention to kill him and his family members. The actor's statement is part of the charge sheet filed by Mumbai Police in a court here in connection with the incident. He heard a firecracker-like sound while being asleep at his residence in Galaxy Apartments in the early hours of April 14, Khan told police. His police bodyguard told him around 4.55 am that two people on motorbike had fired at the first-floor balcony, he said. There had been attempts to hurt him and his family earlier, Khan said, adding that his bodyguard lodged a complaint regarding the firing at Bandra police station. The actor learnt later that gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and his brother Anmol Bishnoi had confessed and taken responsibility of the attack in a Facebook post, the statement said.



Lawrence Bishnoi and his gang members had talked about killing Khan and his relatives earlier too, the statement said, adding, "So, I believe that Lawrence Bishnoi, with the help of his gang members, carried out the firing incident when my family members were sleeping and (they were) planning to kill me and my family members." He and his family had received several other threats in recent years, the actor told police. In 2022, a threat letter was found on a bench opposite his building, while in March 2023, they received an email threat from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, he said.

Bihar CM's address in Assembly draws flak



FACING LOUD PROTESTS, BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER NITISH KUMAR LOST HIS COOL AT THE OPPOSITION IN THE ASSEMBLY WEDNESDAY, VENTING HIS ANGER AT AN RJD MLA AND ASKING, "YOU ARE A WOMAN, DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING?"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, July 24: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Wednesday drew flak from the RJD for shouting at Opposition women members inside the Assembly.

Kumar's outburst came as Opposition members stood in the well of the House, demanding that the state's amended reservation laws be incorporated in the 9th schedule of the Constitution to make it immune from legal scrutiny. Women legislators of the RJD were also in the well shouting slogans like "Nitish Kumar Hai Hai (down with Nitish Kumar)", besides accusing the Chief Minister of being anti-reservation. The septuagenarian Chief Minister lost his cool. Waving his fingers at the legislators, especially at Rekha Devi of RJD, Kumar shouted, "You are a woman. Do you realise that it was only after I assumed power that women started getting their dues in Bihar? You are a woman,

(still) you do not know anything. If you say Hai Hai to me, then it's Hai Hai for all," said the furious CM. "It was at my instance that you all agreed to a caste survey after which quotas for SC, ST, OBCs and the extremely backward classes were hiked," said Kumar.

He told the House that after the Patna High Court set aside the reservation laws, the state moved the Supreme Court. "A formal request has also been made to the Centre for including those in the 9th schedule," Kumar said. The Bihar government urged the Centre to incorporate the hiked reservation for deprived castes from 50 to 65 per cent in state government jobs and educational institutions in the 9th schedule of the Constitution. The 9th Schedule includes a list of Central and state laws that cannot be challenged in courts. In 1992, the Supreme Court capped reservations for the backward classes at 50 per cent.

Outside the house, RJD members slammed the Chief Minister for his behaviour inside the House against woman legislators. Leader of the Opposition in the state legislative council, Rabri Devi, said, "This has not happened for the first time with the CM. People know that he (CM) has no respect for women. Whatever he has done today in the assembly, is sheer insult to women. Leaders of the NDA do not respect women, the former chief minister alleged. "Only RJD and INDIA block leaders have respect for women," she claimed.

INS Brahmaputra fire: Body of sailor found

The warship was severely damaged and tilted heavily to one side following the fire Sunday evening

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: The body of Leading Seaman Sitendra Singh, who went missing following a major fire onboard India's frontline warship INS Brahmaputra at the naval dockyard in Mumbai three days ago, was found Wednesday, officials said.

The warship was severely damaged and tilted heavily to one side following the fire Sunday evening. The warship is now resting on her left side. Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi

visited the naval dockyard Tuesday and reviewed the sequence of events leading to the accident.

The Navy said Admiral Tripathi directed Western Naval Command and the Naval headquarters to make INS Brahmaputra seaworthy and combat ready. "The Chief of Naval Staff was briefed on the mitigating actions taken to limit the extent of the damage, plan to recover and undertake repairs to restore the ship's functionality at the earliest," it said. "The Chief of Naval Staff directed that all actions by the Command and Naval Headquarters to make INS Brahmaputra seaworthy and combat ready are to be initiated immediately," the Navy said in a statement.



PROTEST TURNS UGLY: Police personnel wield batons against Youth Congress activists during their Vidhan Sabha march in Patna, Bihar

India rises to 82nd rank in Henley Passport Index

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST RANKING BY THE UK-BASED HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX, INDIA'S PASSPORT NOW RANKS AT AN IMPROVED 82ND SPOT. THE RANKING IS BASED ON DATA FROM THE INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (IATA)

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 24: India has been ranked at 82nd spot on a global passport index, allowing Indians visa-free entry to 58 countries, including popular destinations like Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. According to the latest ranking by the UK-based Henley Passport Index, India's passport now ranks at an improved 82nd spot. The ranking is based on data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). The Henley Passport Index is a global ranking of countries according to the travel freedom allowed by those countries' ordinary passports for



their citizens. Singapore was ranked the leader on the passport index, reclaiming its title as the world's most powerful passport in the latest ranking. "The city-state also sets a new record score, with its citizens now enjoying access to 195 travel destinations out of 227 around the world visa-free. France, Germany, Italy, Japan,

and Spain drop to joint-2nd place, each with visa-free access to 192 destinations," according to the Index. An unprecedented seven-nation cohort, each with access to 191 destinations without a prior visa - Austria, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, South Korea, and Sweden - now sit in 3rd place on the ranking. The UK was in fourth place along with Belgium, Denmark, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, despite its visa-free destination score falling to 190. "The US, on the other hand, continues its now decade-long slide down the index, dropping down to 8th spot, with access to just 186 destinations visa-free,"

said the Index. According to IATA, airlines will connect nearly 5 billion people over 22,000 routes on 39 million flights in 2024, and the air cargo transported will reach 62 million tonnes, facilitating an \$8.3 trillion in trade. "Our industry expects to record revenues of almost \$1 trillion this year. Expenses, however, will also be at a record high of \$936 billion. Net profit will be \$30.5 billion," said IATA Director General, Willie Walsh. The UAE made it into the Top 10 for the first time, having added an impressive 152 destinations since the index's inception in 2006 to achieve its current visa-free score of 185.

10% reservation for ex-Agniveers in CAPFs, Assam Rifles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: The government has decided to reserve 10 per cent of vacancies in the Central Armed Police Forces and Assam Rifles for ex-Agniveers, the Rajya Sabha was informed Wednesday.

A provision has been made for relaxation in the upper age limit and exemption from the Physical Efficiency Test in the recruitment to the post of constable (general duty) and rifleman in the CAPFs and Assam Rifles for ex-Agniveers, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said in response to a written question.

Rai said the ministry has been taking and will continue to take earnest steps to fill up the vacancies expeditiously through the Union Public Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission and the forces concerned.

The minister said 67,345 people have been recruited between April 2023 and February 2024. The minister said a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the SSC for the early recruitment for the post of constable. Besides, a nodal force each for recruitment in the rank of constable, sub-inspector, and assistant commandant (all general duties) has been nominated on a long-term basis for coordinating recruitment to general duty posts. To fill vacancies, the minister said, directions have been issued to all CAPFs and AR to undertake recruitment against vacant posts in non-general duty cadres in a "time-bound manner", and timely conduct of Departmental Promotion Committee meetings for filling up of promotional vacancies.

national

of the day quote

Out of 236, the total sanctioned strength of entry grade officers in the state, at present there are only 130 such officers with a deficit of 106 officers in the rank of circle officers (COs)

There are 185 Kanwar camps that have been set up across Delhi, where all the facilities like waterproof tents, sleeping arrangements, clean water, and toilets are being provided

Despite recent weather conditions affecting some roads, most of the roads across the state have remained accessible

X POST OF THE DAY

Mumbaikars walking on railway tracks to reach their office due to failure of local train service. Just ask a simple question: Can you even imagine torture of citizens like this in any civilised country?

SHORT TAKES

K'taka BJP to hold overnight dharna

Bangalore: The BJP in Karnataka Wednesday announced that it would stage "day-and-night" dharna in both Legislative Assembly and Council over not allowing discussion regarding the alleged fraudulent allotment of sites to land losers by Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), which involves plots given to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife. The Opposition was not allowed to discuss the issue in both the Houses today. The legislature session is slated to end Friday. Assembly Speaker U T Khader rejected the Opposition's adjournment motion notice on the matter.

Guj: Three killed as building collapses

Ahmedabad: An elderly woman and her two granddaughters were killed after a dilapidated three-storey building collapsed in Jam Khambhalia town in Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka district amid heavy rainfall in the state's Saurashtra region, police said Wednesday. The incident occurred Tuesday evening in Gagwani Fali locality of the town and bodies of the three victims were brought out after a nearly six-hour-long rescue operation that continued till midnight, and five persons were rescued, they said.

Darshan's wife meets Shivakumar

Bangalore: Darshan Thoogudeepa's wife Vijayalakshmi Wednesday met D K Shivakumar at his residence here, a day after the Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister said he would help the Kannada actor if injustice has been meted out to him. Darshan, his friend Pavithra Gowda and 15 associates are currently lodged in jail in the Renukaswamy murder case. Later speaking to reporters, Shivakumar said the meeting was regarding admission of their son Vineesh Thoogudeepa in his school.



We are not worried about Kashmir, we are now worried about Jammu...LG administration is responsible for the current situation and as long as he and people around him remain where they are, there will be no improvement

OMAR ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT

5,833 NEW EV CHARGING STATIONS

The country now has 5,293 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations along the national highways and has set a target of establishing 5,833 more along the highways out of a total of 7,432, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said Wednesday



SHAMBHU BORDER ROW

SC asks Punjab, Haryana to find solution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: Observing that there is a trust deficit between farmers and the central government, the Supreme Court Wednesday proposed the constitution of an independent committee comprising eminent persons to reach out to the protesters at Shambhu border and address their demands, including a legal guarantee of MSP.

A three-judge bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said there is a need for a "neutral umpire" who can inspire confidence between farmers and the government. "You have to take some steps to reach out to farmers. Why would they otherwise want to come to Delhi? You are sending Ministers from here and despite their best intentions there is trust deficit," the bench also comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan said. "Let appropriate instructions be taken within a week. Till then let parties maintain status quo



at the site to prevent flaring up of the situation at the Shambhu border," the bench said while posting the matter after a week. The top court was hearing the Haryana government's plea challenging the high court order asking it to remove within a week the barricades at the Shambhu border near Ambala where protesting farmers have been camping since February 13. During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that earlier the roads were blocked against the three agricultural laws and now they have new demands. The top court said the Centre has to examine the demands of the farmers as

a welfare state. "Some demands may be genuine, others may not be acceptable," the bench said. The apex court remarked that the state cannot keep the highway blocked all round the year. Mehta submitted that over 500-600 tanks, which have been modified as "armoured tanks" are positioned at the protest site. He said if they are permitted to travel to the national capital, law and order situation may arise. Punjab Advocate General Gurminder Singh submitted that while Haryana can regulate the movement but the blockade of national highway was resulting in huge ramifications for the economy of Punjab.

Govt focuses on border villages, allocates ₹1,050cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: As the government continues its thrust on comprehensive development of villages located remote areas along the border with China, the Union Budget has allocated ₹1,050 crore for the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) that will benefit select villages in 19 districts in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

The government approved the VVP as a centrally-sponsored scheme February 15, 2023, with an outlay of ₹4,800 crore for 2022-23 to 2025-26 for development of these villages in 46 blocks abutting the northern border. The Budget, presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Tuesday, has earmarked ₹1,050 crore for the VVP for 2024-25. The objective of the programme is comprehensive development of these villages to improve the quality of life of people and thereby reversing out-migration, officials said. The VVP, which is being implemented by the Union home ministry, envisages focused areas of interventions for creation of opportunities for livelihood generation through promotion of agriculture, horticulture, tourism and cultural heritage, skill development and entrepreneurship, development of co-operative societies for managing livelihood opportunities including agriculture, horticulture, cultivation of medicinal plants and herbs, road connectivity, housing and village infrastructure, energy including renewable energy, television and telecom connectivity, financial inclusion, etc.



POOR ROAD: A motorcycle moves on a road wrecked by rainfall at Dadar Station in Mumbai, Maharashtra PTI/PHOTO

HALDWANI ENCROACHMENTS

Make rehabilitation plans: Top court to U'khand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

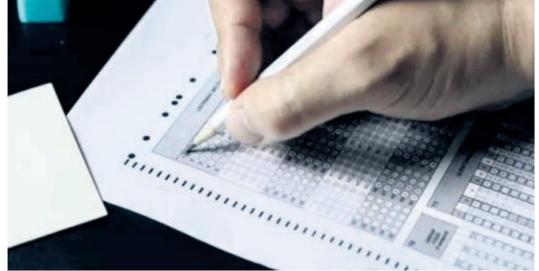
New Delhi, July 24: The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Uttarakhand chief secretary to hold a meeting with the Centre and railways to rehabilitate over 50,000 people who have encroached on railway land in Haldwani. The top court was hearing a plea filed by the railways seeking vacation of the apex court's January 5 last year's order which stayed the Uttarakhand High Court order for removal of encroachments from 29 acres of land claimed by the railways in Haldwani. The plea submitted that a strip of the land be made available on urgent basis to facilitate the railway operations as a retaining wall protecting the tracks was demolished during the last year's monsoon.



A three-judge bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said the state government will have to provide the scheme as to how and where these people will be rehabilitated. "Assuming that they are encroachers but they are human beings and have been living there since decades. They have constructed 'pucca' houses. So how

to deal with this situation. "The courts can't be ruthless and at the same time it can't encourage people to encroach. This is a very peculiar situation," the bench, also comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan, said. The top court directed the state government to identify the strip of land required for upgradation of in-

Bihar Assembly passes Bill to curb paper leaks



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, July 24: The Bihar Assembly Wednesday passed a Bill aimed at curbing the scourge of question paper leaks and other malpractices in recruitment tests conducted by the state. The Bihar Public Examinations (PE) (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, was moved by state Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary and passed through voice vote amidst a walkout staged by the Opposition.

The new legislation targets curbing malpractices in competitive examinations, including the leak of question papers, in the state which, incidentally has also been at the centre of the NEET 2024 paper leak controversy. The bill stipulates severe punishment for those involved in such malpractices, including a prison term of three to five years and a fine of ₹10 lakh.

Service providers, a term used to describe agencies entrusted with conducting such tests, could be slapped with a fine of Rs 1 crore besides debarment of services for up to four years and even attachment of properties, Chaudhary told the House. A portion of the total cost of conducting such an examination will also be recovered from the offending service provider, the minister said. He also said the Bill, "brought with the future of lakhs of young men and

The Bihar Public Examinations (PE) (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, was passed through voice vote amidst a walkout staged by the Opposition

women in mind", provided that investigating officers in such cases shall "not be below the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police". It may be recalled that the state has, of late, been in the news for the Bihar Public Service Commission's (BPS) Teachers Recruitment Exam (TRE 3.0) paper leak case. The new legislation also comes in the backdrop of stringent anti-paper leak laws enacted by the Centre and states like Uttar Pradesh. In February 2024, the Centre had passed the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, to curb malpractices in public examinations. Assam, Arunachal and Rajasthan have passed similar Bills. A Bihar government official said, "The most recent trigger for bringing the anti-cheating law is the NEET-UG paper leak. The state government was left embarrassed because of the involvement of the Nalanda solver gang. Earlier this year, there had been cancellation of teachers recruitment examination in the wake of a paper leak."

India and UK firm up ambitious Technology Security Initiative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: India and the UK Wednesday firm up a mega Technology Security Initiative (TSI) that sets out a bold new approach for collaboration in crucial areas of critical minerals, clean energy, telecommunication, semiconductors and new technologies with a broader aim to elevate their strategic partnership to the next level.

The decision on the UK-India Technology Security Initiative was made public following wide-ranging talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his visiting British counterpart David Lammy.

The two sides also deliberated on galvanising negotiations for a free trade pact.

The talks also focused on shoring up cooperation in areas of trade, defence and security, clean energy, digital domain and mobility of people.

"Recognising the increasing role of technology in national security and economic development, the prime ministers of India and the United Kingdom are launching a new 'Technology Security Initiative' (TSI) to elevate the strategic partnership between the two countries to the next level," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

The TSI builds upon the ambitious bilateral cooperation agenda set out in the India-UK Roadmap 2030, and will bring into sharper focus collaboration in critical and emerging technologies across priority sectors. The MEA said the TSI will be coordinated by the NSAs of both countries through existing and new dialogues.

Under the TSI, India and the UK will collaborate in areas of telecommunication, critical minerals, semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technology and healthtech and advanced materials.

'Next-generation climate plans need adequate funding'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: The presidencies of the previous COP and the next two UN climate change conferences have said there are "clear challenges" in delivering climate ambition without the necessary means of implementation in place.

In a letter to countries that are signatories to the United Nations convention on climate change and its Paris Agreement, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Azerbaijan and Brazil have said adequate means of implementation are needed to support the next round of national climate plans (nationally-determined contributions or NDCs) to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. They said climate action should reflect fairness and equity, recognising the special needs of vulnerable countries. The hosts of COP28, COP29 and COP30 urged the countries in their let-



ter to step forward with greater ambition in the next generation of NDCs due by February 2025. These NDCs must be truly transformational, should mainstream climate action into broader development planning, catalyse investment for effective climate action and support the sustainable development goals, they said. "It is acknowledged that 1.5 degrees Celsius-aligned NDCs

will be essential to meet our collectively-agreed goals. Furthermore, SB60 also evidenced the clear challenges to deliver ambition without the necessary means of implementation in place," the letter read. Poor and middle-income countries often argue that the current global warming and climate change impacts are disproportionately caused by the historical emissions of green-

- At the 2015 UN climate talks in Paris, world leaders committed to limiting the global average temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average to avoid the worst impacts of climate change
- The Earth's global surface temperature has already increased by around 1.2 degrees Celsius due to the rapidly-increasing concentration of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide and methane, in the atmosphere

house gases by developed countries during their industrialisation phases. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world could experience a warming of nearly 3 degrees Celsius by the end of the century if current trends in GHG emissions con-

tinued without significant reduction efforts. Developing nations argue that they cannot be expected to reduce GHG emissions faster if developed countries - historically responsible for climate change - do not provide enhanced financial support and technology.

The COP Troika said course correction to keep the 1.5 degrees Celsius goal within reach in a nationally-determined manner and build global resilience requires "transforming the world's current development model, encompassing different pathways and approaches". This transformation must respond to the latest science and be guided by equity, ensuring that climate ambition can also drive social inclusion and economic prosperity and ensure a just and equitable transition for all in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, they said.

international

of the day quote

You know that the Russian side has never refused to negotiate, has always maintained its openness to the negotiation process, but details are important here that you and I do not yet know

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

Our new defence declaration between the UK and Germany will kickstart a deep, new defence relationship, built on our nations' shared values

SHORT TAKES

Kenyan President appoints Oppn mins

Nairobi: Kenya's President Wednesday incorporated the opposition in his new Cabinet, appointing four ministers from the main opposition party in a bid to form a broad-based government that would address governance issues raised in deadly protests. The weeks of turmoil in East Africa's economic hub have led to dozens of deaths, the firing of most Cabinet members and calls for Ruto's resignation. Protests began with Kenyans' rejecting a proposed bill to impose more taxes as millions in the country barely get by amid rising prices.

Mudslides kill 299 in Ethiopia

Addis Ababa: Mudslides triggered by heavy rain in a remote part of Ethiopia have killed at least 229 people, including many who tried to rescue survivors, local authorities said Tuesday, in what the prime minister called a "terrible loss." Young children and pregnant women were among the victims in Kencho Shacha Gozdi district of southern Ethiopia, said Dagmawi Ayele, a local administrator, adding that at least five people have been pulled out alive.

Khan refuses polygraph test

Lahore: Pakistan's jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan has refused to undergo polygraph and voice matching tests as part of an investigation by Lahore police in connection with a dozen cases related to the unprecedented May 9 riots last year. A 12-member forensic team reached Adiala Jail Tuesday to conduct the polygraph test on the 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician. The Punjab Forensic Science Agency experts were to perform polygraph, voice matching, and photogrammetry tests on the former Prime Minister.

Iran summons German envoy

Dubai: Iran's foreign ministry summoned the German ambassador in Tehran Wednesday over Berlin's decision to ban the Islamic Centre Hamburg (IZH) association, the official IRNA news agency reported. Germany's interior ministry said Wednesday it had banned the organisation and its subsidiaries. The German ministry said the IZH acted as a direct representative of Iran's Supreme Leader and sought to bring about an Islamic revolution in Germany that would create theocratic rule.



President Biden and I believe that a fully-resourced Pandemic Fund will enable us to better prevent, prepare for, and respond to pandemics, protecting Americans and people around the world from the devastating human and economic costs of infectious disease threats

JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

BACK TO NORMALCY

Offices reopened and broadband internet was largely restored in Bangladesh capital Dhaka Wednesday, as a curfew was eased after four days of nationwide shutdown that followed deadly protests against quotas in government jobs



Indian-origin Canadian MP receives threat from Khalistani extremists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ottawa, July 24: A prominent Canadian MP of Indian origin Wednesday said the country was being polluted by Khalistani extremists who were abusing the freedoms guaranteed under the Charter of Rights, days after a Hindu temple was vandalised in Edmonton.

Amidst rising Hinduphobia in Canada, the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir was vandalised with alleged hateful and anti-India graffiti Monday morning in Edmonton in Alberta state, about 3,400 km west-northwest of here.

Chandra Arya, a Member of Parliament from Nepean in the House of Commons, said in a post on his X account that separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun of Sikhs for Justice released a video demanding that Arya and his Hindu-Canadian friends go back to India after he (Arya) condemned the vandalism of the Hindu temple and other acts of hate and violence by Khalistan supporters in Canada.

"We Hindus have come to our wonderful country Canada from all parts of the world. From every country in South Asia, many countries in Africa and Caribbean, and many other parts of the world, we have come here and Canada is our land," Arya, a member of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party, wrote.

"We have made and continue to make immense positive and productive contributions to the socio-economic development of Canada. With our long history of Hindu culture and heritage, we have enriched the multicultural fabric of Canada," he said.

"Our land is being polluted by Khalistani extremists abusing our freedoms guaranteed by our Canadian Charter of Rights," Arya added. Arya's statement comes against the backdrop of severe strain in India-Canada ties over the killing of Khalistan extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was gunned down in Surrey British Columbia, in June last year.

The relations between the two countries came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September last year of a potential involvement of Indian agents in Nijjar's killing.

2L kids, vulnerable adults abused in NZ care

The inquiry detailed a litany of abuses in state and faith-based care, including rape, sterilisation and electric shocks, which peaked in the 1970s

REUTERS

Wellington, July 24: New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon apologised and promised reforms Wednesday after a public inquiry found some 200,000 children, young people and vulnerable adults were abused in state and religious care over the last 70 years. Nearly one-in-three children and vulnerable adults in care from 1950 to 2019 experienced

some form of abuse, the report said, a finding that could leave the government facing billions of dollars in fresh compensation claims.

"This is a dark and sorrowful day in New Zealand's history as a society and as a state, we should have done better, and I am determined that we will do so," Luxon told a press conference.

An official apology would follow November 12, he added. Survivors and their supporters filled the public gallery of the country's Parliament as the report was debated, while still more watched from a separate room.

After Luxon spoke, likening the abuse against children to torture at one state care facility, Lake Alice, many stood and sang an Indigenous Maori song about love and unity. The report by a Royal Commission of Inquiry



This is a dark and sorrowful day in New Zealand's history as a society and as a state, we should have done better, and I am determined that we will do so

CHRISTOPHER LUXON | PM, NEW ZEALAND

spoke to more than 2,300 survivors of abuse in New Zealand, which has a population of 5.3 million. The inquiry detailed a litany of abuses in state and faith-based care, including rape, sterilisation and electric shocks, which peaked in the 1970s.

Those from the Indigenous Maori community were especially vulnerable to abuse, the report found, as well as those with mental or physical disabilities. Civil and faith leaders fought to cover up abuse by moving abusers to other locations and

Twice-a-yr anti-HIV drug shows 100% efficacy: Journal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: An HIV-preventive drug showed 100 per cent efficacy and no safety concerns in women, according to a study published in The New England Journal of Medicine.

Lenacapavir, injectable twice a year, is developed by the US-based biopharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, Inc as a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) drug. These drugs prevent the spread of infection in people not yet exposed to the disease-causing agent.

The study, a phase-3 trial involving teenage girls and young women in South Africa and Uganda, showed that lenacapavir demonstrated zero (HIV) infections and 100 per cent efficacy, Gilead Sciences, Inc said in a statement.

HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus, spreads from the body fluids of an infected person. Untreated, the infection can progress to AIDS or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome over years. In the PURPOSE 1 trial, 5,338 participants, who were HIV-negative, to begin with, were divided into three groups - 2,134 receiving lenacapavir injections 26 weeks apart, 2,136 receiving the daily oral tablet Descovy (FTAF).

DEBUT RALLY

AGENCIES

Milwaukee, July 24: US Vice President Kamala Harris assailed Donald Trump Tuesday at her first campaign rally since replacing President Joe Biden as the Democratic presidential candidate.

In a 17-minute speech, Harris aggressively went after Trump's vulnerabilities, comparing her background as a former prosecutor to his record as a convicted felon. Harris ticked through a list of liberal priorities, saying that if elected she would act to expand abortion access, make it easier for workers to join unions and address gun violence, drawing a sharp contrast with Trump, the Republican nominee for President in the November 5 election.

"Donald Trump wants to take our country backward," she told a cheering crowd of several thousand at West Allis Central High School in a Milwaukee suburb in Wisconsin, a battleground state with a pivotal role in deciding the election outcome.

"Do we want to live in a country of freedom, compassion and rule of law, or a country of chaos, fear and hate?"

The raucous rally was a notable contrast to the smaller, more subdued events Biden held, un-

Harris hits out at Trump



Do we want to live in a country of freedom, compassion and rule of law, or a country of chaos, fear and hate

KAMALA HARRIS | VICE PRESIDENT, US



abortion in 2022. Trump and his allies have tried to tether Harris to some of Biden's more unpopular policies, including his administration's handling of the surge of migrants at the southern border with Mexico.

In a conference call with reporters Tuesday, Trump expressed confidence in his ability to defeat Harris, noting that her previous presidential run in 2020 did not even survive until the first statewide nominating contest.

Trump offered to debate Harris multiple times. Trump and Biden had one more debate scheduled September 10 after their encounter June 27. Biden's poor performance that night led to Democratic calls for him to step aside.

B'desh minister slams Mamata's remarks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, July 24: Bangladesh has communicated to India through diplomatic channels its displeasure over West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's recent remarks on offering shelter to people in distress from the neighbouring country, saying her comments could create "confusion" and "mislead" the people.

In an address at a public event in Kolkata recently, Banerjee, referring to violence-hit Bangladesh, said she would keep the doors of West Bengal open for people in distress from the neighbouring country and offer them shelter. She also posted similar comments from her ac-

count on platform X. Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry has communicated with the Indian government through diplomatic channels, noting that Banerjee's remarks on social media could create confusion among people, digitalised wire service United News of Bangladesh reported Tuesday.

"With due respect to West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, I would like to say, we have excellent relations with her. We have deep relations. But her remarks created confusion to some extent, and there is scope to be misled. We have given a note to the Govt of India on this issue," Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud said.

US revises travel advisory for India

The country has asked its citizens to avoid travelling to Manipur, J&K, India-Pak border and Central & East India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 24: The US has asked its nationals not to travel to Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir, the India-Pakistan border, and parts of central and eastern parts of the country where Naxalites are active.

In a revised travel advisory for India, the State Department said it has updated to reflect information on the northeastern states. "Exercise increased cau-

tion in India due to crime and terrorism. Some areas have increased risk," it said.

Overall India has been placed at Level 2. But several parts of the country have been placed on Level 4: Jammu and Kashmir, India-Pak border, Manipur and parts of Central and East India.

"Do not travel to, The union territory of Jammu and Kashmir (except the eastern Ladakh region and its capital, Leh) due to terrorism and civil unrest, within 10 km of the India-Pakistan border due to the potential for armed conflict, portions of Central and East India due to terrorism and Manipur due to violence and crime," the travel advisory said.

In addition, it recommended Americans to reconsider travel



to the northeastern states due to terrorism and violence.

"Indian authorities report that rape is one of the fastest growing crimes in India. Violent crime, such as sexual assault, has happened at tourist sites and other locations. Terrorists may attack with little or no warning. They target tourist locations, transportation hubs, markets/shopping malls, and government facilities," the travel advisory said.

Placing Manipur at "Level 4, Do Not Travel", the State Department

said, "Do not travel to Manipur due to the threat of violence and crime. Ongoing ethnic-based civil conflict has resulted in reports of extensive violence and community displacement. Attacks against Indian government targets occur on a regular basis. US government employees traveling in India require prior approval before visiting Manipur."

Similarly, terrorist attacks and violent civil unrest are possible in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. "Do not travel to this state (with the exception of visits to the eastern Ladakh region and its capital, Leh). Violence happens sporadically in this area and is common along the Line of Control (LOC) between India and Pakistan.

NATO finds gaping holes in defences of Europe

The findings show NATO faces a slog to achieve its goals at a time when its unity could be tested by budgetary constraints among senior European members

REUTERS

Brussels, July 24: The war in Ukraine and the looming US presidential election dominated a NATO summit in Washington this month but, away from the public stage, the alliance's military planners have been focused on assessing the enormous cost of fixing Europe's creaking defences. NATO leaders agreed plans

last year for the biggest overhaul in three decades of its defence capabilities, amid growing fears of Russian aggression. Behind the scenes, officials have since been poring over the minimum defence requirements to achieve those plans, which were sent to national governments in recent weeks, according to one military planner, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The minimum requirements detail the shortfalls in NATO armies in key areas, providing a rough indication of how many billions of euros it could cost to fix, the military planner said. NATO aims to convert these requirements into binding targets for individual governments to provide for the defence of Europe by autumn 2025, when it holds a regular meeting of



defence ministers. Reuters spoke to 12 military and civilian officials in Europe about the classified plans, who outlined six areas the 32-nation alliance has identified as the most pressing to address.

These include shortages in air defences and long-range missiles, troop numbers, ammunition, logistical headaches and a

lack of secure digital communications on the battlefield, the conversations with NATO officials showed.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss security matters more freely. NATO hasn't publicly given an estimate of the overall costs. The findings show NATO faces a slog to achieve its goals at a time

when its unity could be tested by budgetary constraints among senior European members, and differences over how hawkish its stance on Russia should be.

Crucially, this year's US presidential election has raised the spectre that NATO's preeminent power may be led by a man critical of the alliance, former President Donald Trump, who has accused European partners of taking advantage of US military support.

At the July 9-11 Washington summit, some European policymakers publicly acknowledged that, regardless of who wins November's election, the continent will need to hike its military spending.

"We need to recognize that for America, whatever the result of the presidential election,

the priority is increasingly going to shift to the Indo-Pacific, so that the European nations in NATO must do more of the heavy lifting," British Defence Secretary John Healey said on the sidelines of the summit.

NATO is at its highest alert stage since the Cold War, with its more pessimistic officials, including German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius, warning that an attack by Russia on its borders could happen within five years.

While the Russian economy is already on a war footing, European governments may face resistance if they demand more money for defence spending from taxpayers reeling from a cost-of-living squeeze to prepare for a war that seems a distant prospect to many, analysts say.



India's private sector needs to step up and match the government's efforts towards job creation and making young people employable, as in the absence of a collective effort, the country's demographic dividend could become a demographic disaster

ANAND MAHINDRA | CHAIRMAN, MAHINDRA GROUP

META AI ADDS 7 NEW LANGUAGES

Meta AI is now available in seven new languages, including Hindi, according to the social media giant. The move, which extends capabilities of Meta's AI assistant in the multilingual domain, essentially means users will be able to also interact with Meta AI across WhatsApp, Instagram, Messenger and Facebook in these new languages



of the day quote

The idea is to cut short that (clearance and approval) process, we have not yet decided about the sectors where some liberalisation is possible, but certainly there is a view in the government that the processes, where the government route is involved which is through the ministries including DPIIT and the concerned ministries that approval process needs to be speeded up

The initiatives aimed at these 9 strong pillars reflect fiscal prudence and also promise inclusive development for our country. Under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, our government has yet again laid a strong foundation for a more prosperous India!

India is an important market for us, and we will be going in for a product offensive over the next two and half years, between FY24 and FY26

The budget event has gone by leaving a mixed bias while reshuffling of capital gain tax is only a short-term negative surprise. The broad market seems to be losing momentum due to lack of further traction

Q1 RESULTS

Axis misses target

Bangalore: Axis Bank, India's fourth-largest private bank by market capitalisation, reported a smaller-than-expected first-quarter profit Wednesday as higher provisions weighed and margins shrunk. The Mumbai-based lender's standalone net profit - which excludes its subsidiaries - rose 4% year-on-year to ₹60.35 billion for the quarter ended June 30. Analysts had estimated a profit of ₹64.50 billion, as per LSEG data. The bank's gross NPA improved to 1.54 per cent in the June 2024 quarter compared to 1.96 per cent in Q1FY24.

Petronet profit up

New Delhi: Petronet LNG Ltd, India's largest liquefied natural gas importer, Wednesday reported a 40 per cent jump in its first quarter net profit on a rise in gas volumes. Consolidated net profit of ₹1,100.76 crore in April-June - first quarter of current fiscal - compared with ₹787.73 crore earning in the same period a year back, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. Revenue from operations rose 15 per cent to ₹13,415.13 crore.

V-Guard net surges

New Delhi: V-Guard Industries Wednesday reported 54.11 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹98.97 crore for June quarter FY25 helped by improvement in margins with softening commodity prices and cost-effective initiatives. The electrical goods manufacturer had clocked a net profit of ₹64.22 crore in April-June FY24, according to a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations rose to ₹1,477.10 crore during the period under review from ₹1,214.76 crore in the corresponding period a year ago.

BSNL losses narrow

New Delhi: State-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) has reported on-year rise in its Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation or EBITDA to ₹2,164 crore for FY24, while losses narrowed to ₹5,371 crore, Parliament was informed Wednesday. As a result of packages and measures by the government, BSNL/MTNL have started earning operating profits from FY 2020-21, Minister of State for Communications Pemasani Chandra Sekhar said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

Budget jitters dampen D-St

SENSEX, NIFTY CLOSE LOWER ON PROFIT TAKING IN BANKS AFTER BUDGET; FALL FOR 4TH DAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 24: Extending the losing streak to the fourth day, benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 280 points Wednesday due to profit booking in financial and banking shares after the government announced a hike in securities transaction tax and short term capital gains tax in the budget for 2024-25.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 280.16 points or 0.35 per cent to settle at 80,148.88 with 19 of its components closing lower and 11 with gains. During the day, it tumbled 678.53 points or 0.84 per cent to 79,750.51.

The budget event has gone by leaving a mixed bias while reshuffling of capital gain tax is only a short-term negative surprise. The broad market seems to be losing momentum due to lack of further traction

WNOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

The NSE Nifty dropped 65.55 points or 0.27 per cent to 24,413.50.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finserv declined by 2 per cent after its first-quarter earnings failed to cheer investors. Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Adani

Ports, Axis Bank and State Bank of India were the other big laggards.

However, Tech Mahindra, ITC, NTPC, Tata Motors and Sun Pharma were among the gainers. Conglomerate ITC surged to 52-week highs before closing higher by 0.42 per cent in its second straight day of gains after the budget proposed no new tax on tobacco products.

"Profit-taking continued as investors cut their position in banking and automobile stocks, which led to a fall in key benchmark indices. However, markets ended off their lows on selective buying support although concerns of higher valuations continue to weigh," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Analysts said that the ongoing Q1 results, which till date are muted, will decide the near-term trend.

"Nifty fell for a fourth consecutive session on Wednesday logging its worst streak since May 2024," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 1.91 per cent and midcap index climbed 0.68 per cent. Among the indices, bankex,



₹ falls to hit all-time low of 83.71 against \$

The rupee depreciated 2 paise to hit all-time closing low of 83.71 against the US dollar Wednesday, weighed down by a strong dollar against major crosses overseas amid investors' weak appetite for riskier assets. Forex traders said the increase in capital gains tax and removal of indexation benefits announced in the FY25 Budget Tuesday was the main reason for dollar buying as foreign investors sold stocks. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at ₹83.69 and touched an intra-day high of 83.68 and a low of 83.72 against the dollar during the session. It finally settled at an all-time low level of 83.71 against the American currency, registering a fall of 2 paise from its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee declined 3 paise to 83.69 against the US dollar after the government raised tax rates on capital gains in the FY25 Budget. Forex traders said US dollar buying continued to be the theme after the increase in long-term capital gains tax (LTCG) and short-term capital gains tax (STCG) and then the removal of indexation benefits. The government Tuesday proposed reducing the long-term capital gains tax on immovable properties to 12.5 per cent from 20 per cent but removed the indexation benefits to adjust for inflation, a move experts termed as "negative" for sellers.

financial services, auto were the laggards. Energy, health-care, industrials, utilities, telecommunication and power were among the gainers.

Key benchmark indices ended marginally lower in volatile

trade Tuesday as the government proposed to hike the securities transaction tax on futures & options in the Budget for 2024-25.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong

Business activity grows at fastest pace in 3 months



STRONG DEMAND
JOB CREATION ROSE AT THE FASTEST PACE SINCE APRIL 2006

REUTERS

Bangalore, July 24: India's business activity accelerated at its fastest pace in three months in July thanks to strong demand, especially in the services sector, according to a survey that also showed companies hired at the fastest pace in over 18 years.

The data reflected sustained growth in the private sector, which according to the government's first budget since the national election will get incentives to improve skills and spur employment.

HSBC's flash India composite purchasing managers' index, compiled by S&P Global, rose to 61.4 this month from June's final reading of 60.9, marking three years of expansion. The 50-level separates growth from contraction. "The Flash Composite Output Index signalled continued robust growth in India's private sector," noted Pranjal Bhandari,

chief India economist at HSBC. "The rise in output in July was led by a further increase in business activity in the manufacturing sector, while the pace of expansion in services output also accelerated and remained well above its long-run average."

Overall expansion was led by the dominant services industry, whose PMI rose to a four-month high of 61.1 this month from 60.5 in June. Growth in manufacturing was also robust, and the factory PMI increased to 58.5 from 58.3 - its highest since April. The report said favourable market conditions, buoyant client appetite and enhanced technology helped the improvement in private sector activity. Both new business in the services industry and manufacturing orders remained robust.

Job creation rose at the fastest pace since April 2006, supporting overall business confidence at the start of this quarter, which eased to a seven-month low in June.

"Companies turned more optimistic in July, following a moderation in business confidence in June," added Bhandari.

66% taxpayers opted for new ITR regime

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: About 66 per cent of taxpayers out of the over 4 crore filers have opted for the new regime for income tax return (ITR) filing during the current season till now, CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal said Wednesday.

He told PTI during a post-Budget interview that the focus of the government and the direct taxes administration is on "simplification" of the tax processes including filing of ITRs and conduct of other businesses with the Income Tax Department.

"The philosophy (of the government) is that the more you simplify, the more it will make it easy for people to comply leading to increased compliance. This is also reflected from the fact that, as on date, the number of returns (ITRs) that have been filed till yesterday is significantly more than the returns filed during the same time in the corresponding (last) year," Agrawal said.

Last year, the figure of 4 crore ITR filings was crossed July 25 but this time this number was crossed on the night of July 22, he said.

He said there was "sufficient traction" for the new tax regime and about 66 per cent of ITR filings, as of today, were made under the new regime. "We expect that going forward we should get more (under the new ITR regime)..." he said.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) chief said about 7.5 crore ITRs were filed the last time at the end of the deadline July 31.

India raises oil imports from US

MOSCOW CONTINUES TO BE THE LARGEST OIL SUPPLIER TO INDIA, FOLLOWED BY IRAQ, SAUDI, UAE, US

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 24: India's monthly oil imports from its biggest supplier Russia slipped marginally in June while those from the United States rose to the highest since February 2022, data obtained from the industry sources showed.

India is the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, importing more than 80% of its oil needs. Indian refiners had placed orders in May for most of the June-arrival oil barrels.

Refiners in India together shipped in 1.98 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian oil in June, down 3.7% from the previous month, the data showed. However, during the first fiscal quarter ended June 30, India's imports of Russian oil rose by an annual 1.2%, according to the data.

Russia exported more crude



in the June quarter due to outages at its refineries from Ukrainian drone attacks, a trader with an Indian refiner said, but added that supply is expected to fall in the September quarter.

Indian refiners have been gorging on Russian oil, which emerged as an additional outlet after being sold at a discount, following western nations cur-

tailing their purchases and imposing a raft of sanctions against Moscow for invading Ukraine. Indian refiners have already moderated purchase of oil from some traditional Middle Eastern producers who raised prices earlier this year, with imports from Iraq in June falling to their lowest since September 2020, data showed.

Indian refiners received 762,400 bpd of Iraq oil in June, down about 24% from May and 14.6% from a year earlier, data showed.

"It's partly because they (Iraq) does not have extra barrels to allocate," the trader said, adding that Russian supply was also readily available.

Earlier this month, Iraq's oil ministry affirmed its commitment to OPEC's Declaration of Cooperation (DOC) agreement, saying it will compensate for any oil overproduction since the beginning of 2024.

India's monthly oil imports from Saudi Arabia, however, rose 9.7% after a decline to 10-month-low levels in May, the data shows.

Iraq continued to be the second largest oil supplier to India, followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The US emerged as the fourth largest supplier to India.

Imports from Russia have dented the share of Middle Eastern oil in India's crude basket, dragging OPEC's share to the lowest.

EQUITY CASH SEGMENT 70% of intraday traders lost money in FY23: Sebi study

The study highlights a sharp surge of over 300% in the number of individuals participating in intraday trading in the equity cash segment in 2022-23 compared to 2018-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: A study by market regulator Sebi showed that 7 out of 10 individual intraday traders in the equity cash segment made losses in the financial year 2022-23.

At the same time, the study highlighted a sharp surge of over 300 per cent in the number of individuals participating in intraday trading in the equity cash segment in 2022-23 compared to 2018-19.

Interestingly, the average number of trades by loss-makers was higher than the profit-makers. Further, the share of young intraday traders, with less than 30 years of age, has risen significantly

cantly over the period, according to the study released by Sebi Wednesday.

The markets regulator has conducted a study to analyse the trends in participation and profits and losses in intraday trading by individuals in the equity cash segment. It covered the periods of FY2018-19, FY2021-22 and FY2022-23 to comparatively analyse the trends before and after the pandemic.

The study, based on a sample of individual clients of the top-10 stock brokers accounting for around 86 per cent of the individual client count in the equity cash segment during 2022-23, has been peer-reviewed by a working group with represen-



tation from academia, brokers and market experts.

In its study, Sebi found that around one in three individuals who trade in the equity cash

segment, trades intraday. Moreover, the share of young intraday traders, with less than 30 years of age, has grown to 48 per cent in 2022-23 compared to

18 per cent in 2018-19.

"7 out of 10 individual intraday traders or 71 per cent in the equity cash segment incurred a net loss in FY2022-23," the study said, adding that the proportion of loss-makers jumped to 80 per cent for traders with very frequent (more than 500 trades in a year) trading activity.

Over and above the trading losses incurred, loss makers expended an additional 57 per cent of their trading losses as trading costs in 2022-23, while profit makers spent 19 per cent of their trading profits as trading costs.

Further, the percentage of loss-makers among younger traders was higher at 76 per cent in 2022-23 compared to other age groups.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) believes that the study is expected to enhance awareness among individual traders about the risks involved in intraday trading in the equity cash segment.

Earlier a study by Sebi found that 89 per cent of individual traders in the equity F&O segment suffered losses with average losses of ₹1.1 lakh in FY22.

Additionally, there was an exponential increase in the F&O segment participation during the pandemic, with the total number of unique individual traders increasing by over 500 per cent from 7.1 lakh in FY19 to 45.24 lakh in FY21, the study noted.

PARIS OLYMPICS

Archers aim to break medal jinx



On form front, India will have high hopes from the men's team, which won a historic World Cup this year in Shanghai, upsetting Korea for the first time in a final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, July 24: A different year and another Olympics, but for Indian archers, the target will be the same - fetching their first ever medal at the Games.

More or less regular at the Olympics since debuting back in 1988, the archers will kick off the nation's Paris campaign here Thursday with the qualification rounds at the Les Invalides gardens here.

For the first time after London 2012, India will have a full six-member squad after both the men's and women's teams qualified on the basis of rankings. This means they will compete in all the five events.

Veterans Tarundeep Rai and Deepika Kumari, appearing in their fourth Olympics, will lead their young teammates, hoping to securing at least a top-10 finish in the qualification round to ensure a favourable draw.

Each archer will shoot 72 arrows and the scores in the qualification round of 128 athletes from 53 countries will decide the seeds for the main knockout competition beginning with the women's team finals on Sunday.

The qualifying round will be crucial for the Indians, who have often slipped in the seedings and ended up losing to heavyweights Korea, tipped to top the qualifications.

At the Tokyo Olympics, all the male archers finished outside the top-30 and got the ninth seeding as a team. Deepika, the sole woman archer there, also got a ninth place in rankings. Both ended up losing to top-seed Koreans in their respective quarters.

They will have the experience in Rai and Tokyo Olympian Pravin Jadhav, while debutant Dhiraj Bommadevara will be on a high after beating Tokyo Olympics silver-medallist Mauro Nespoli of Italy en route a bronze at the World Cup Stage-3 in Antalya just a month back.

Individually, debutant Dhiraj is seen as a bright prospect as he has tasted success by winning the Asian Games team silver last year, albeit with different teammates.

Known to be "ice cool" in tough situations, Dhiraj would look to overcome the bitter memories of Hangzhou Asian Games where he botched up his release twice to exit in the individual quarters. Deepika will fight against herself in a redemption act.

All eyes would be on her especially after her stunning comeback to win a World Cup Stage-1 silver in Shanghai in April this year, less than 16 months after becoming a mother.

Last time in Tokyo, An San of Korea was her nemesis as she went on to become the gold-medallist. There is no An this time, but they have another Korean in Lim Si-hyeon who has defeated Deepika twice this year including in the Shanghai World Cup final.

"If she gets going, Deepika churns out perfect 10s at ease. But at the same time, she suffers from inconsistency and makes silly mistakes at crunch times. If she overcomes her mental blockade, there is no stopping her," India's high performance director Sanjeeva Singh said.

Dhiraj and Deepika, if they manage to top their ranking rounds, would be an exciting prospect for the recurve mixed team. Dhiraj's composure and Deepika's skills would complement each other well at the highest level.

The women's team, on the other hand, will be low on experience barring Deepika.

Ankita Bhakat and Bhajan Kaur, who have been Indian regulars in this Olympic cycle and won a World Cup

It's emotional every day. It's the fourth time. It's a now-or-never situation for me, and that's what I tell my teammates too. Maybe someone playing his first or second Olympics should think like it's now or never. You have to put in an effort as if it's going to be your last

TARUNDEEP RAI | VETERAN ARCHER

Stage-4 bronze here in 2023, are slated for their respective Games debut.

Twenty-six-year-old Ankita, who hails from Bengal but represents Tata Academy, is relatively more experienced having won a clutch of World Cup team medals including a gold and silver, both in Paris in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

CONTROVERSIAL BUILD-UP

The archers Olympic build-up was marred by their foreign coach Baek Woong Ki's return to India after not getting accreditation to enter the Games. The South Korean, who was contracted by the Archery Association of India for the Olympics at an approximate annual contract of Rs one crore, had accompanied the team to their 10-day preparatory camp in Jaux.

But he had to return after AAI failed to procure an accreditation for him as the sports body was engaged in a blame game with national federation (IOA). While there would be no Baek, India will have men's and women's team coaches in Sonam Singh Butia (Army) and Purnima Mahato (Tata) whose archers have made the side.

In absence of Baek, it remains to be seen how the Indians will cope with crunch moments especially while taking on arch-nemesis Korea in the knockouts.

QUARTERFINAL JINX

Indian archers have never been able to go past the quarterfinal hurdle. The script has been the same all these years, barring in Sydney 2000 where India could not qualify for the Games.

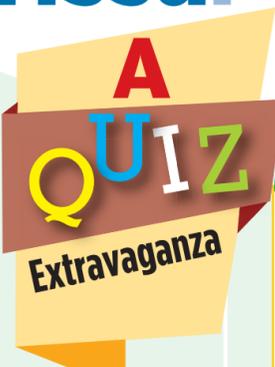
In terms of cumulative performance, the best ever show was at the last Olympics in Tokyo where the India men's team, mixed team and Deepika individually, all fell by the wayside in the quarters.

India were awarded the team quotas after topping the men's and women's rankings among non-qualified nations in the Olympic cycle.

The men's team finals will be Monday, while the individual eliminations will get underway Tuesday. The mixed team finals are slated for next Friday, followed by women and individual finals over the same weekend.

METTLE MEET 2024 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.



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

TODAY'S QUESTION

He joined the British Army at 19 and took part in the Anglo-Boer War, where he first met Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. In 1916, he published a book offering thirty design options and one design was approved by Gandhiji in Vijayawada in 1921. He died uncelebrated in 1964, with his village not even having a statue of his till 1998. Who is he?

ANSWER TO WEDNESDAY'S QUESTION

British East India Company

THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS

Portraits of Jitendra Nath Pradhan and Kaushik Panda. Others who answered correctly are Chandrasekhar Sahu, Gayatri Sahu, Debadatta Tripathy, KV Ramana, Ashish Agarwallah, Omm Swarup Das, Parsuram Swain, Jaba Dasgupta, Akanksha Pradhan, Santanu Kumar Nanda, Abhijit Raychaudhuri, Sunil Kumar Nayak

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SHORT TAKES

5 Oz water polo players test Covid-19 positive

Paris: Five players on Australian women's water polo team for the Paris Olympics have tested positive for Covid-19. Anna Meares, the chef de mission for the Australian team in Paris, said the Covid cases have been confined to the water polo team. She said the affected players are clear to practice when they feel well enough to train. "We treat Covid no differently to any other respiratory illness, but we want to ensure that we have our protocols working as well and dealing with these illnesses and minimizing them is a part and parcel of every Olympic Games," she said Wednesday. The protocols include wearing masks and isolating from other team members outside of training. According to Meares, the whole team has been tested. Paris is the first Olympics since the Tokyo Summer Games in 2021 and Beijing Winter Olympics in 2022 were staged in Covid bubbles with rigorous testing protocols.

Indian men finish 6th, women 7th in squash

New Delhi: India finished sixth and seventh in the men's and women's sections respectively in the World Junior Squash Championships held in Houston, USA. The Indian men lost to England 1-2 in the match for fifth position while their women counterparts beat New Zealand 2-1 in the clash for the seventh on Tuesday. Both the matches went into deciders.

Chameera ruled out

Colombo: Sri Lanka fast bowler Dushmantha Chameera has been ruled out of the white-ball home series against India after failing to recover from bronchitis and respiratory infection, the country's cricket board said Wednesday. Pacer Asitha Fernando has been named as Chameera's replacement.

'Supplementary charge' clause for India

PCB has now left it to the ICC to finalise and announce the tournament schedule and also get confirmation from the BCCI whether the Indian team will travel to Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 24: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has left it to the International Cricket Council (ICC) to convince the BCCI to send its team to Pakistan for the upcoming Champions Trophy, scheduled to be held in the first quarter of next year.

According to a PCB source, while the budget for the Champions Trophy was approved at the recent ICC meetings in Colombo, the schedule and format didn't come up for discussion at all.

"The PCB now has done what

PAKISTAN'S CT PROPOSAL



was required of it as hosts of the Champions Trophy. It has submitted the draft schedule and format for the event and also submitted budget for the event," a PCB insider said.

"It is now up to the ICC how soon they circulate, discuss and finalise the schedule of the Champions Trophy. The PCB for its part in the draft schedule has suggested hosting all of India's games in Lahore including a semi-final (if India qualifies) and final," he said.

Another source said that the PCB has already submitted all details in its expression of interest document with the ICC as hosts of the Champions Trophy.

"The PCB for its part has given in writing to the ICC about the tax modalities, venue selections and clearance from its government for the Indian team to be hosted in Pakistan for the mega event," he added.

The PCB had initially submitted its expression of interest in hosting the event back in 2021

during the tenure of Ehsan Mani as Chairman of the board.

The ICC awarded hosting rights in 2022 and later on when Ramiz Raja was PCB Chairman, the board submitted its final documentation for the host agreement to sign with the ICC.

HYBRID SCHEDULE
The ICC has kept supplementary expenses in its tournament budget to meet any situation where the Indian team have to play their matches outside Pakistan.

The BCCI has always steadfastly maintained that playing cricket in Pakistan is completely a government call and even the 2023 ODI Asia Cup, which was hosted by PCB witnessed India playing all their games in Sri Lanka based on 'Hybrid Model'.

According to the draft schedule, all of India's games including a possible semi-final and final has been scheduled in Lahore. The India vs Pakistan marquee match has been scheduled March 1.

French Alps to host 2030 Winter Olympics, Paralympics

The 2030 Winter Games will be the first time the event returns to France since the 1992 edition. The 2026 edition of the prestigious tournament will be held in Italy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 24: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that the French Alps will host the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2030.

The announced plans are conditional based on the guaran-

tees given by French President Emmanuel Macron that the new office being formed in the country after 2024 will underwrite all the organisational guarantees that must still be signed.

"The French Alps will host the 2030 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games! Thank you to the IOC for its confidence in our country and its mountains. Congratulations to the elected officials and actors who worked for this success. Let's make innovative, sustainable and inclusive Games," Macron posted on X.

The 2030 Winter Games will be the first time the event returns to France since the 1992 edition. The 2026 edition of the prestigious tournament will be held in Italy.



Situated on the French-Italian border, the Alps are widely known for offering some of the world's best snow skiing. This reputation is well-earned. The renowned Mount Blanc, the highest summit in the Alps at 15,700 feet (or over 5,000 meters), is

part of the enormous Alps mountain range.

"Driven by a vision to share the magnificence of the French Alps with the entire world and to enable more French people to participate in winter sport, French Alps 2030 will be the first edi-

Sub-jr East Zone Hockey: Jharkhand, Odisha, Manipur win league matches

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, July 24: Hockey Jharkhand and Hockey Association of Odisha secured wins in the women's category, while Hockey Association of Odisha and Manipur Hockey registered victories in the men's category on Day 1 of the 2nd Hockey India Sub-junior Men and Women East Zone Championship 2024 at Maulana Md Tayabullah Hockey Stadium.

Hockey Jharkhand took on Assam Hockey in the first match of the day and won 18-0 in the Women's category.

In the second match of the day in the Women's category, the Hockey Association of Odisha took on Hockey Bengal. Odisha won the game 15-0. For Hockey Association of Odisha, Ashika Sadam (3', 60'), Eleena Burh (11'), Priyanka Minz (14', 15', 41', 43', 60'), Sonima Goud (21', 32', 53'), Sanjana Kujur (29'), Sanjana Kiro (47', 54'), Sweety Kujur (56') and



were the goalscorers.

Meanwhile, in the men's category, Odisha thrashed Bengal 13-0. For Hockey Association of Odisha, Salman Lakra (2', 27'), Mandeep Kerketta (20', 21', 35', 54', 57'), Arman Soreng (33'), Ranjit Kerketta (39'), Sanjeet Raj Lakra (41'), Subodh Lakra (45', 52') and Leslan Minz (51') were the goal-scorers.

In the second match in the Men's category, Manipur Hockey took on Hockey Bihar. Manipur Hockey won the game 7-1.

2034 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City

Salt Lake City was formally awarded the 2034 Winter Olympics following a Wednesday vote by the International Olympic Committee in Paris, which gives Utah its second Games after hosting in 2002. It was the lone contender the Olympic committee was considering for 2034. Climate change and high operational costs have reduced the number of cities willing and able to welcome the Winter Games. Utah has capitalized on low interest elsewhere, pitching itself to Olympic officials as an enthusiastic repeat host if the committee goes forward with a proposed permanent rotation of Winter Olympic cities. Olympic Games Executive Director Christophe Dubi had said Salt Lake City would be a prime candidate for such a plan. Local leaders had their sights set on hosting multiple times even before Salt Lake City welcomed its first Games, bid team spokesperson Tom Kelly said. Remnants of the 2002 Games are nestled throughout the city and have kept the Olympic fever alive for more than two decades. Organizers of the 2034 Games touted that enduring enthusiasm throughout the selection process and showed visiting Olympic officials how they have preserved the venues used in 2002.

tion of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to fully integrate the principles of Olympic Agenda 2020 and 2020+5," read the statement posted by the International Olympic Committee on their website.