



FOR A CAUSE

Deepika Padukone has shared her 'Period Story' in a short film in order to raise awareness about menstruation taboos

LEISURE P2



G-7'S GREEN MOVE

Officials from G-7 announce they will aim to largely end greenhouse gas emissions from power sectors by 2035

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA EYE REVENGE

India look to avenge their group stage loss to Japan when they face the same opposition in the Asia Cup Super 4 tie today

SPORTS P12

MISHAP CLAIMS 7 SOLDIERS



Indian Army personnel gather at the site after a vehicle carrying 26 jawans fell in Shyok river in Turtuk area in Ladakh. At least 7 jawans were killed while 19 others sustained injuries in the accident. Twenty-six soldiers were on their way from the transit camp in Partapur to a forward location in sub-sector Hanif. The vehicle fell into the river to a depth of approximately 50 to 60 feet from the road. (REPORT P7)

PK MOHANTY TO BE ACTING CHIEF OF LOKPAL

New Delhi: The President has named Justice Pradip Kumar Mohanty, Judicial Member of the Lokpal, to be the acting Chairperson of the Lokpal due to the vacancy created by the completion of the tenure of Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose. Mohanty will head the Lokpal with effect from the date of occurrence of the vacancy i.e. May 28, till the appointment of a new Chairperson, a notification issued Friday said. Mohanty, who was born June 10, 1955, has previously served as Chancellor of both the National Law University Odisha at Cuttack, and the National University of Study and Research in Law at Ranchi before being appointed as the Judicial Member of the Lokpal March 27, 2019.

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NCB clean chit to Aryan

AGENCIES

New Delhi/ Mumbai, May 27: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Friday gave a clean chit to Aryan Khan, son of superstar Shah Rukh Khan, in last year's 'drugs on cruise' case in which he was arrested and spent 22 days in jail.



NCB officials said Aryan Khan and five others were not named in the agency's chargesheet due to "lack of sufficient evidence." The NCB SIT found "grave irregularities" and gaps in the probe, the officials said, adding the agency's first team that arrested Aryan did not follow rules like mandatory medical test of accused, video recording of the raids and corroborative evidence for WhatsApp chats.

Delhi that there were "short-comings" in the investigation and WhatsApp chat of accused had no "physical corroborative evidence" as re-

quired to prove the charges in the court.

The NCB Friday filed a nearly 6,000-page chargesheet before a Mumbai court against 14 accused in the case, but did not charge six, including Aryan Khan, due to lack of sufficient evidence.

"We have filed the charge sheet on the basis of whatever was found by our special investigation team on the last date of filing the charge sheet," Pradhan said.

Don't comment on each other: HC to Anubhav, Varsha

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, May 27: The Orissa High Court Friday ordered Kendrapara MP Anubhav Mohanty to refrain from making any video or comment against his wife Varsha Priyadarshini in any media during the pendency of their divorce proceedings.

The vacation bench of Justices Bibhu Prasad Routray and Mruganka Sekhar Sahoo passed the order while hearing a plea filed by Varsha, alleging that her husband is maligning her image by making a series of videos and releasing them on YouTube. The bench also passed a similar direction against Varsha, it was learnt. Anubhav had filed the divorce petition in the Family Court, Patiala House, Delhi in 2020. The Supreme Court transferred the petition to the Family Court here March 5, 2021.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



He is quite powerless officer. I have seen him. He walks his dog on the streets

High-security plates must for old vehicles

All vehicles registered before April, 2019 will have to fix the HSRP at nearest dealer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: The Odisha government has made affixation of high-security registration plates (HSRPs) mandatory for all classes of vehicles which were registered prior to April 1, 2019.

The HSRP has already been made mandatory for all new vehicles registered on or after April 1, 2019, in the state. Odisha Transport Commissioner Arun Bothra has issued an order for this purpose in accordance with Rule 50 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

Vehicle owners have been given three months' time to fix the HSRP on old vehicles before enforcement is undertaken by the transport department and police officials.

Different deadlines have been set for vehicles as per their registration number. As per the order, August 31, 2022 is the deadline for the vehicles carrying an Odisha registration mark and registration number ending with 1 and 2, while September 31, October 31 and November 30 are the deadlines for the Odisha registration vehicles with numbers ending with 3 and 4, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8, respectively. Similarly, vehicle owners with an Odisha registration mark and registration number ending with 9 and 0 will have to affix the HSRP by December 31, 2022.

To avoid a last minute rush, Bothra advised vehicle owners to affix HSRP on their vehicles as soon as possible but not later than the above schedule. If the vehicle owners fail to replace the existing number plates with HSRP before the deadlines, e-challans will be issued



THE DEADLINES

- **AUGUST 31, 2022** deadline for vehicles carrying Odisha registration mark and registration number ending with 1 and 2
- **SEPTEMBER 31, OCTOBER 31 AND NOVEMBER 30** are deadlines for Odisha registration vehicles with numbers ending with 3 and 4, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8, respectively
- **DECEMBER 31** deadline for vehicle owners with an Odisha registration mark and registration number ending with 9 and 0

against the offending vehicle and it will attract a fine of ₹5,000 or ₹10,000 under Section 192 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the transport commissioner warned.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	54884.66 ↑ 632.13
NIFTY	16352.50 ↑ 182.30
DOLLAR	78.28 ↑ ₹0.06
EURO	83.47 ↑ ₹0.01
GOLD	₹50,940 ↑ ₹69
SILVER	₹62,148 ↑ ₹355

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 37.9°C	39.0°C
	MIN 26.6°C	27.2°C
Humidity	64%	58%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
	Forecast: Partly cloudy sky	

International Booker for Geetanjali Shree



AGENCIES

London, May 27: Author Geetanjali Shree's Hindi novel 'Tomb of Sand' has become the first book in any Indian language to win the prestigious International Booker Prize.

At a ceremony in London Thursday, the New Delhi-based writer said she was "completely overwhelmed" with the "bolt from the blue" as she accepted her prize, worth GBP 50,000 and shared with the book's English translator, Daisy

Rockwell. "Tomb of Sand", originally 'Ret Samadhi', is set in northern India and follows an 80-year-old woman in a tale the Booker judges dubbed a "joyous cacophony" and an "irresistible novel."

"I never dreamt of the Booker, I never thought I could. What a huge recognition, I'm amazed, delighted, honoured and humbled," said Shree, in her acceptance speech.

"There is a melancholy satisfaction in the award going to it. 'Ret Samadhi/Tomb of Sand' is an elegy for the world we inhabit, a lasting energy that retains hope in the face of impending doom. The Booker will surely take it to many more people than it would have reached otherwise, that should do the book no harm," she said.

Reflecting upon becoming the first Hindi work of fiction to make the Booker cut, she said it feels good to be the means of that happening.

LALAT MOHAN PATNAIK TO GET DHARMAPADA AWARD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Eminent painter Lalat Mohan Patnaik will get the Dharmapada Award for the year 2021, the Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi announced Friday.



The Dharmapada Award is the highest honour given to an individual for lifetime achievement and contribution to visual art and sculpture, it said. The Akademi also announced the names of five noted personalities for special felicitations. They are Jyotirmayee Mohanty, Baladev Maharatha, Panchanan Sur, Durga Charan Panda and Debendra Mishra.

The prestigious award carries a purse of Rs 5 lakh, a citation and a shawl. The special awardees will each be felicitated with Rs 1 lakh cash and a citation, the Akademi said.

A textile designer of oriental forms of design in eastern region of India, Patnaik's designs and art forms are influenced by the Kalingan school of temple structure, folk culture of eastern India, Indian classical music, Mughal miniature paintings and martial art of Odisha.

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SHAMIER ANDERSON JOINS TIN SOLDIER CAST

Hollywood actor Shamier Anderson, who will be seen in *John Wick 4*, has been signed for another film. This time, it's the Brad Furman directorial *Tin Soldier*, the shooting for which is currently underway in Greece, reports *Deadline*.

MADONNA WEEPS OVER AMERICAN GUN MASSACRE

Pop icon Madonna, a mum-of-six, shared a video of herself crying alongside a lengthy post about firearms laws, a day after Salvador Ramos, 18, murdered 19 young children at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Some decisions are hard to take, but a firm resolve will help you stay committed. Sentimentality may shake your purpose, but once decided, you must stick to it. Also, learn to take heartbreak in your stride, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
Definitely not a day when you plan to get your feet dirty (maybe a pedicure, though). You might delay the start of a new project. Perhaps, a romantic escape with your sweetheart or a day in the spa grooming yourself with a lavish makeover will validate your lethargy today. Either way, it will be heavy on your pocket.

GEMINI
You will try very hard to strike a balance between logic and emotions. Though you may succeed in doing so in front of the world, you may not be so discreet with your friends. You will have an excellent time with your sweetheart, but your physical appearance will be a cause of concern to you, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Dame Luck will patronise you today. You will gain from land, house or building trade. You will get total support and cooperation from bosses and colleagues in the office. Ganesh indicates it as a very profitable day for you.

LEO
You will be very emotional and sentimental today. Your ego prevents you from expressing your true feelings at times. You need to keep this in mind when attempting to communicate with your beloved. It is a good day for romance, and for those seeking love, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Financial affairs will face a major obstruction today. Ganesh advises you to allow your mind to prevail over your heart. Take extraordinary care of your precious personal possessions, apart from your legal duties and new projects keeping in view their long-term effect on your mind.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that that this is the right time to enhance your personality and prove your talents to the world. Today you will be able to buy new clothes too. It is essential that you pay attention to people close to you. Today is the day you will spend in your dream world.

SCORPIO
You may be bored with the same, old routine. In short, you feel like you are stuck in a rut and desperately need to do something exciting. Hanging out with friends of opposite sex may bring some respite to your restless soul.

SAGITTARIUS
It's time for you to sit back, relax and let your actions do the talking. After all, actions speak louder than words, they say. You will also wrap up with all the pending tasks today, says Ganesh. You play an important role in resolving troubles, either for yourself or for others.

CAPRICORN
Confidence is the key to unlock the doors of success. Today, with your positive attitude you will mark your presence and come one step closer to success, says Ganesh. You're not a carefree person. You value your achievements and make every decision wisely. Adding to your confidence will be your strong determination and fate, and with the help of all of them, you will realise your dreams today, predicts Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You are a workaholic. With a lot of hard work you have achieved your targets. You are not somebody who will fail to differentiate between a pit stop and the final destination. Your success will motivate you to plan for bigger and longstanding goals.

PISCES
Confusion and uncertainty will linger like dark clouds in today's sky which will rain on your decision making parade and make it hard for you to find tangible solutions to problems. Steer clear of controversies and try and delay any important decisions and stick to your daily routine, advises Ganesh.

World Menstrual Hygiene Day today



Deepika shares her 'Period Story' to raise awareness

Mumbai: Ahead of the World Menstrual Hygiene Day, actress Deepika Padukone, who is the member of jury for the 75th edition of Cannes Film Festival, shared her 'Period Story' in a short film in order to raise awareness and overcome the menstruation taboo. In the special video, Deepika can be seen recollecting her childhood story of being educated about the period even before her school started menstrual education. The actress, in the video, says: "I will never forget this moment where my best friend (Divya) and I were sat down by both of our mothers and her mom

took charge of guiding us about periods - from explaining 'what periods are' to 'why it happens'." "I am really grateful for how she took us through this conversation with extreme comfort, empathy, and patience. I look back on it as one of the most notable moments while growing up, and I wish to spread the word across the world in a similar manner", the Chennai Express star added. The *Period Story* is a special video by fem-tech brand Nua. Ravi Ramachandran, Founder, and CEO, Nua, in a statement, called it "a conversation that does not deserve a hushed tone. For children, be it girls or boys, parents need to start the conversation with them early and slowly so that their understanding can be built before puberty hits."

Kiara dodges question on marriage with Sidharth

New Delhi: Actress Kiara Advani, who was in the capital to launch the first song from her upcoming film *Jug Jugg Jeeyo*, dodged the question about when is she tying-the-knot with her rumoured beau and actor Sidharth Malhotra. During the song launch in the New Delhi, Kiara was asked if she was planning to get married anytime soon, the actress replied: "Jab hoga main aapko definitely invite karungi. Filhaal sirf filmon main meri shaadi ho rahi hai aap mujhe dulhan ke roop main yahaan dekh sakte hai. Jab bhi hoga you all will get to know. (Whenever it happens I will invite you. Right now, I am just getting married on screen, you can see me as a bride there. Whenever it happens you'd know)." Kiara and Sidharth are rumoured to be dating for quite some time now. However, neither of them has commented on their rumoured relationship. Slated to release in theatres June 24, *Jug Jugg Jeeyo* is directed by Raj Mehta. The film also stars Varun Dhawan, Anil Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor.



Prithviraj is now Samrat Prithviraj

Mumbai: The Akshay Kumar-led period drama *Prithviraj* will now be titled *Samrat Prithviraj*, Yash Raj Films (YRF) announced Friday following multiple discussions with the Shree Rajput Karni Sena that had objected to the earlier name on grounds that it was disrespectful. YRF's decision comes a day after the Karni Sena wrote to it demanding a title change. The group - its protests had led to a name change for Sanjay Leela's Bhansali's 2018 period film *Padmavat* - wanted the title of the film on the legendary warrior king to reflect his status as Samrat (emperor). "As per the multiple rounds of discussions between us, and to peacefully and amicably resolve the raised grievance, we will change the title of the film to *Samrat Prithviraj*," the production house said in its response to Karni Sena national president Mahipalsingh Makrana. The banner went on to thank the Karni Sena and its members for understanding its 'good intentions' on the depiction of the great warrior in the film, directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi



and featuring Kumar as the Rajput king. YRF added that the team never intended to hurt anyone's sentiments and wished to celebrate the bravery of Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan. The film also stars Sanjay Dutt, Sonu Sood and marks the screen debut of Miss World 2017 Manushi Chhillar, who plays the role of Sanyogita. The film is scheduled to be released theatrically on June 3.

Samantha shuts down troll gracefully

Hyderabad: Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who was trolled by an unknown Twitter user, gracefully blunted the offensive remark aimed at her. Samantha has now responded forcefully to a social media troll who made an offensive remark about her. Under one of Samantha's recent tweets, a netizen commented, "She's (Sam) is going to end up dying alone with cats and dogs." The actress was quick to respond, calmly and effectively shutting down the troll. "I'd consider myself lucky," Samantha's response reads. After the Kushi lady responded with a sarcastic retort, the netizen quickly deleted the tweet. Samantha is one of the few celebrities who aren't afraid to speak out against unwelcome social media trolls. She recently wrapped the first schedule of her highly-anticipated film *Kushi*, in which she co-stars with Vijay Deverakonda. Her other films, *Yashoda*, and *Shakuntalam*, will be released by the end of the year.



PEANUTS



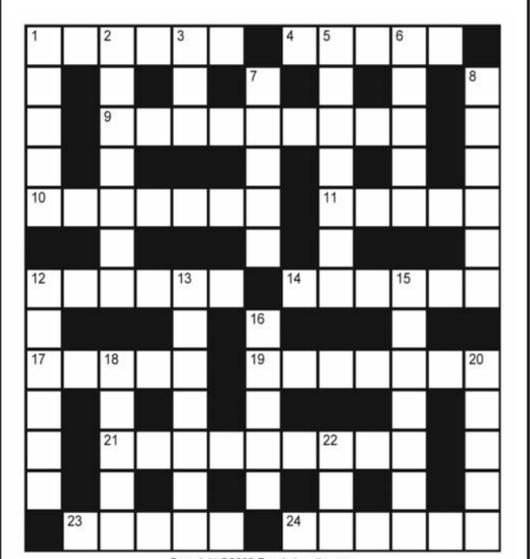
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



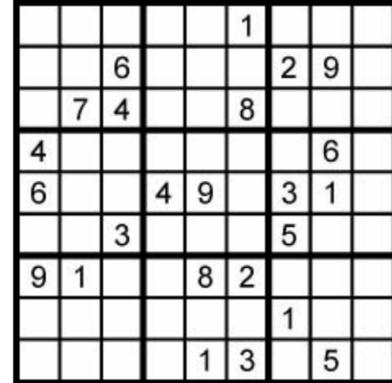
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Quick bread
 - 4 Restive
 - 9 Compliment to a chef
 - 10 Recipe
 - 11 Tennyson poem
 - 12 Gambler's downfall, at times
 - 14 Connected
 - 17 Floor covering
 - 19 Unfavorable
 - 21 Wallflower's problem
 - 23 Bored
 - 24 Diamond covered sock
 - 6 Aggressive
 - 7 Plaudits
 - 8 Unemotional
 - 12 Relish, as the moment
 - 13 Earliest tools
 - 15 Dictatorship
 - 16 Ribald
 - 18 Handrail post
 - 20 Chill-inducing
 - 22 It's mostly nitrogen
- Down**
- 1 Recurring theme
 - 2 Certain lids
 - 3 Not in the pink
 - 5 Perfect in every way

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

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

SUDOKU

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

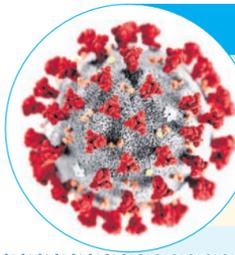
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



CHARIOT WORK

Newly-constructed chariot wheels covered with coconut leaf mats at Puri Rath Yard, Friday, to protect them from the scorching sun



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	53,04,82,511	50,10,71,012	63,08,176
India	4,31,47,530	4,26,07,177	5,24,539
Odisha	12,88,410	12,79,155	9,126

Naveen inaugurates Cyber Security Operation Centre

Set up by the Electronics and IT department and OCAC within just six months, the centre will help protect data, applications and ICT infrastructure of the state from security threats



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurating the Cyber Security Operation Centre in Bhubaneswar, Friday

Features like bug bounty, real-time threat intelligence feed and independent scalable infrastructure make CSOC first-of-its-kind in any government space in the country

At present, the state data centre, statewide area network and secretariat network have been integrated with the CSOC

independent infrastructure, more IT setups can be integrated with it in future, said the official.

Features like bug bounty real-time threat intelligence feed and independent scalable infrastructure make it first-of-its-kind in any government space in the country, added the official. The CM also inaugurated a multilevel car parking facility at Nandankanan Zoological Park, on the outskirts of the City here.

Built with an expenditure of Rs 35.42 crore, the facility will help reduce traffic issues and provide safe parking of vehicles to those visiting the zoo. The three-storey facility can accommodate 583 four-wheelers and more than 2,000 two-wheelers, it was learnt.

Later in the evening, Naveen launched the 'Made in Odisha' Covid-19 Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kit on the premises of IMGEX India in Infocity area here.

The kit has been developed by IMGEX India in collaboration with ICMR-RMRC, Bhubaneswar, it was learnt.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday inaugurated the Cyber Security Operation Centre (CSOC) at Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) here.

Set up by the Electronics and IT department and OCAC within just six months, the centre will help protect data, applications and

ICT infrastructure of the state from security threats, it was learnt.

"Backed with latest security technologies and tools, the system is fully automated and will protect government data from possible threats by hackers," said an official familiar with the development.

At present, the state data centre, state wide area network and secretariat network have been integrated with the CSOC. As it is an

Sex detection racket busted; 13 arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, May 27: Thirteen people were arrested as a major racket of foetus sex determination, which was being done in connivance with some private nursing homes, was busted in Ganjam district, police said Friday.

A police team raided a clinic at Anand Nagar in Berhampur city, around 160 km south of Bhubaneswar, Thursday following inputs about the sex detection test, which is banned in India.

The main suspect, Durga Prasad Nayak, who runs the clinic at his residence, was found conducting tests using ultrasound machine. Eleven pregnant women were present at the first floor of the house for tests, a police officer said.

The 41-year-old was running the centre to determine the sex of the foetus in connivance with some of the nursing homes in the city for the past three years, according to police.

Those arrested include the employees of various nursing homes in the city who allegedly took the pregnant women to the centre, Superintendent of Police Saravana Vivek M said.

A noted public health activist was also among those nabbed. Two other suspects used to pick up the patients from different clinics, the SP said.

They have been booked under the IPC and the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques Act. An investigation is on to nab others who were involved in the racket, the officer said.

Will take up Puri issue with CM, says Swamy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, May 27: BJP leader and MP Subramanian Swamy Friday said he will take up Puri Heritage Corridor issue with Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

"There is a need to end the controversy. I will do whatever is possible," Swamy told reporters after meeting Swami Nischalanand Saraswati of Govardhana Peeth in Puri earlier in the day.

"Temples hold importance in our lives. Even kings used to visit temples and share their views on issues relating to them," the BJP leader said.

The meeting between Swamy and the Shankaracharya was held barely two days after the Govardhan Peeth seer drew the attention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through the media on the issue.

Swamy said the government could intervene in temple activities if there is any financial irregularity. The Puri seer had expressed displeasure over the ongoing heritage corridor project work. He had urged the prime minister Narendra Modi and chief minister Naveen Patnaik to save Puri 'dham' (holy place) and not allow the 'tapohoomi' (place of meditation) to turn into a 'bhogbhoomi' (place of pleasure and amusement).

The seer had expressed concern over destruction of heritage buildings, mostly ancient mutts in the name of development and alleged that Puri is being changed drastically in the name of development.

After the meeting, Shankaracharya said he will not sit



silent if the government allows projects against the spiritual ideals of Puri dham.

Meanwhile, BJD lawmaker Bhagirathi Sethi said that there is no harm in demolishing mutts to clear roads to Jagannath temple, which is visited by lakhs of devotees every year.

BJP general secretary Prithwiraj Harichandan said the state government has insulted the devotees of Lord Jagannath by demolishing mutts, which were closely linked with different rituals of the 12th century shrine.

The heritage corridor project, which aims to transform the pilgrim city into an international place of heritage, ran into controversy when government agencies dug huge pits within 100 metres from the temple boundary categorised as protected zone allegedly without prior permission from Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The government was also accused of starting work without conducting the ground penetrating radar survey to trace archaeological treasures buried underground and the impact assessment study. A case on the matter is pending in Orissa High Court.

MANGROVES ACT AS SHIELD FOR ASTARANG: SATPATHY



Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy, Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and other dignitaries flagging off the Annual Mangrove Walk

POST NEWS NETWORK

Konark, May 27: The mangrove forest at Astarang is a rare creation of the nature and it looks like a 'mini Bhitarkanika', said Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy while flagging off the Annual Mangrove Walk at Astarang in Puri district, Friday.

The four-day walk is being organised by Paryabaran Sangrakhya Abhiyan, Astarang and Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya to create awareness on creation and preservation of mangrove forests among fishermen and residents of at least 15 coastal villages.

"The mangrove forest at Astarang is working as a bulwark against natural calamities," Satpathy said.

Social activist Ramkrushna Mohanty presided over the inaugural ceremony of the annual walk. Orissa POST and Dharitri Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy,



Villagers participating in the programme

OP PHOTOS

social activist Badrika Nath Mahapatra, Brahmakumar Dumasanta Parida, and environmentalists Antaryami Sahu, Akash Ranjan Rath and Soumya Ranjan

Biswal among others also spoke on the occasion. Hundreds of women from Sahana, Gundalaba, Oakha and other villages, members of various social outfits and

officials of Forest department participated in the programme. The dignitaries were felicitated with citations and mementos by the social outfits.

BJD declared income of ₹73.347cr in 2020-21: ADR

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, May 27: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has declared an income of Rs 73.347 crore in 2020-21, which is third highest after DMK and YSR Congress among the 31 regional political parties, said a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The BJD has received 91 per cent of its donations, which is Rs 67 crore, through electoral bonds, said the report.

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According to the audit report submitted by the BJD to the ECI, at least 90 per cent of the BJD's income remained unspent in 2020-21

According to the audit report submitted by the BJD to the Election Commission of India, at least 90 per cent of the BJD's income remained unspent in 2020-21. The ruling party in Odisha

spent Rs 7.015 crore in 2020-21, added the ADR report.

The major sources of BJD's income were donations and grants which amount to Rs 67.0023 crore, bank interests of Rs 6.16 crore and fees and subscription of Rs 0.177 crore, the report said.

The ADR report stated that the BJD has reported a decrease of around Rs 17 crore in its income in 2020-21 as compared to 2019-20. The report claimed that the BJD had declared an income of Rs 90.35 crore in 2019-20.

AIIMS-Bhub gets 7-bed ICU for cancer patients

Bhubaneswar: A seven-bed intensive care unit (ICU) has been inaugurated at the Medical Oncology/Haematology department of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar, an official said Friday. Inaugurating the facility, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar director Mukesh Tripathi said the ICU has been equipped with the latest medical equipment, including a ventilator and a monitor for each bed. Dialysis can also be done at the bedside, he said. According to Medical Oncology/Haematology department head Prabodh Das, the facility will help provide comprehensive care to those with cancer and haematological disorders. "Most of these patients need dedicated critical care which cannot be provided in a combined ICU setting. Hence, the need for a medical oncology/haematology ICU was very essential," said Das.

VSSUT asst prof gets 'death threats', files plaint

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: An assistant professor of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Burla in Sambalpur has lodged a complaint with the Commissionerate Police here alleging that he received death threats from an unknown person over phone.

The caller reportedly asked Dr. Parsuram Nayak of the Department of Civil Engineering at VSSUT to show undue favour towards a PhD scholar. Nayak has approached the twin city Police Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar, seeking justice in the matter.

According to sources, Nayak, a resident of Keonjhar district, had received a call from an unknown person while he was doing some research



THE CALLER REPORTEDLY ASKED DR. PARSURAM NAYAK OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING AT VSSUT TO SHOW UNDU FAVOUR TOWARDS A PHD SCHOLAR

NAYAK HAS APPROACHED THE TWIN CITY POLICE COMMISSIONER AND THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, BHUBANESWAR, SEEKING JUSTICE IN THE MATTER

work in his personal chamber at VSSUT March 4. The caller disconnected the call within a few seconds. The unknown person once again called up Nayak on the same day. But, he disconnected the call without saying anything, sources said.

During the third call, the caller reportedly identified himself as the elder brother of SK Swain, who is now pursuing PhD under Nayak's guidance. Swain is a resident of Khandagiri area in the capital city, Nayak said in his complaint.

"The caller asked me to show undue favour to Swain and clear his PhD degree at the earliest. As it was the midnight, I politely asked caller to contact me on the next morning. Suddenly, he started hurling vulgar languages towards me and sought Rs 10 lakh within two days. The caller also threatened me of dire consequences if I dare to report this matter to police," Nayak said in his complaint.

Nayak has been facing severe mental tension since the incident. He reportedly fell down in the toilet and sustained injuries in his leg, sources said.

"Swain is a resident of the capital city. So, I have lodged a complaint with the Cyber and Economic Offence police station in Bhubaneswar. The Commissionerate Police have not taken any action in this matter," Nayak said.

BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers & Guarantors	Liabilities due as per notice (in Rs.)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Properties
ANGUL BRANCH Borrowers: (1) Mr Bihubati Bhusan Pati, S/o: Amulya Pati, (2) Mr Amulya Pati, S/o: Late Harekrushna Pati, Address: Village/Mouza: Karadapalli, South Balanda, Angul - 759123.	Rs.8,62,344/- as on 31.03.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	17.03.2022 / 24.05.2022	All that piece and parcel of land situated at Khata No.105/332, Plot No.244, Area: Ac.0.140 dec., Village/Mouza: Karadapalli, Tahasil: Talcher, Dist. Angul.
State: Odisha-759123 standing in the name of Mr Amulya Pati, S/o: Late Harekrushna Pati.			
JAGATPUR ECB BRANCH Borrower: (1) M/s Nilanchal Enterprises, At: Kapaleswar, Manguli, Manguli Choudwar, Cuttack-754025. Guarantors: Mr Satyaranjan Behera (Legal Heir of Sri Adhikari Behera), Madhusmita Behera (Legal Heir of Sri Adhikari Behera), Lipsa Behera (Legal Heir of Sri Adhikari Behera), (2) Akshay Kumar Behera, (3) Premalata Behera, At: Godipatna, Daultabad, Choudwar, Cuttack-754026.	Rs.1,11,27,860.35 as on 28.02.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses	17.03.2022 / 25.05.2022	EMG of Land & Building at Mouza: Kapaleswar, Tahasil: Tangi Choudwar, At: Godipatna, PO.: Daulatabad, PS.: Choudwar, Cuttack Thana No.54, Khata No.739 of Plot No.532, Area: A0.31 decimal.
JAGATPUR ECB BRANCH Borrower: Sri Adhikari Behera, (1) Borrowers/Legal Heirs: (i) Mr Satyaranjan Behera, S/o: interest cost & expenses (ii) Madhusmita Behera, (2) Late Sri Adhikari Behera, (iii) Lipsa Behera, D/o: Late Sri Adhikari Behera, (3) Premalata Behera, W/o: Late Sri Adhikari Behera, (3) Akshay Kumar Behera, Address: At: Godipatna, Daultabad, Choudwar, Cuttack-754026.	Rs.77,74,953/- as on 28.02.2022 with further interest cost & expenses	17.03.2022 / 25.05.2022	EMG of Land & Building at Mouza: Nelia, PO.: Harianta, PS.: Tangi Choudwar, Cuttack Thana No.67, Khata No.107 of Plot No.80, Area: A0.26 dec., Khata No.190/86, of Plot No.79, Area: A0.39 dec., & Plot No.57, Area: A0.35 dec.
JAGATPUR ECB BRANCH Borrower: (1) Mahabali Oil & Flour Pvt. Ltd., Address: Birupa Canal Road, Manguli Choudwar, Cuttack-754025. Guarantors: Mr Satyaranjan Behera (Legal Heir of Sri Adhikari Behera), Madhusmita Behera (Legal Heir of Sri Adhikari Behera), Lipsa Behera (Legal Heir of Sri Adhikari Behera), (2) Akshay Kumar Behera, (3) Premalata Behera, At: Godipatna, Daultabad, Choudwar, Cuttack-754026.	Rs.90,86,197.15 as on 28.02.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses	17.03.2022 / 25.05.2022	EMG of Land & Building at Mouza: Nelia, PO.: Harianta, PS.: Tangi Choudwar, Cuttack Thana No.67, Khata No.107 of Plot No.80, Area: A0.26 dec., Khata No.190/86, of Plot No.79, Area: A0.39 dec., & Plot No.57, Area: A0.35 dec.

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 27.05.2022 Sd/- Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India

CP seeks 10-day remand for Rajesh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: The Commissionerate Police have moved the court of Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate (SDJM) here seeking permission to take dreaded criminal Rajesh Mohapatra on remand for 10 days to ascertain his role in the criminal activities of the notorious Katuri gang. Rajesh had surrendered before the SDJM court here Thursday.

Sources claimed that Khandagiri police have moved the court requesting remand for Rajesh in a robbery case in which Rajesh along with other members of the 'Katuri' gang robbed a jewelry shop owner of lakhs at Saubhagya Nagar few days ago. Police had recovered several sharp weapons and a toy gun during a raid at the residence of Rajesh at Pichukoli Basti under Capital police limits here April 14. However, Rajesh and his family members managed to escape before the raid.

Recently, seven members of a robbers' gang including mother of Rajesh were Tuesday arrested by the cops. Similarly, the special squad had also managed to arrest dreaded criminal Chakara Barik, also a ring leader of the group, after a shoot-out at Baramunda May 11.

According to sources in police, Rajesh's family member used to receive and dispose of the booty looted by the gang. They would also distribute the money among the members. There are around 20 cases pending against Rajesh at different police stations in City.

9 new cases in state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Odisha's Covid tally rose to 12,88,410 on Friday as nine more people tested positive for the infection, a Health department bulletin said.

The death toll remained unchanged at 9,126 as no fresh infection was detected.

The state now has 76 active cases, while 12,79,155 people have recovered so far, including 12 in the last 24 hours. Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities so far. The daily positivity rate was at 0.06 per cent as 14,062 samples were tested in the last 24 hours.

CLASSIFIED LOST

I, Subhasmita Panda, 26 years, W/o- Tapas Kumar Dwibedy, residing at RD Colony, Khordha. That on dtd. 18.05.2022 on my way to Begunia I lost my hand bag somewhere containing original sale deed No. 11141801598, Ror Bearing Khata No. 648/3581, Plot No. 201/5841/6175 of seller Kadambini Pradhan, wife of Rajesh Pradhan, Khordha, Finder may please contact on- 7008172566, 7008424871.

By virtue of an affidavit before the Notary Public, Sambalpur, I, Khialdas Poptani (74 yrs.), S/o- Late Lokoomal Poptani, R/O- Sarbeswar Enclave Panchagachhia, PS- Ainthapali, Dist.- Sambalpur hereby affirm that my Landed Property R.O.R. bearing Khata No.207/124, Mouza- Baidarnuapali, PS./Tah./Dist.- Sambalpur & Regd. Sale deed bearing No. 1234 dated 30.06.2002 has been lost somewhere on 24.05.2022 at about 10.00 A.M. while I was going from my home to Baidarnuapali and it is not traceable. Sd./-Khialdas Poptani

Odisha used max DMF funds among states for Cov

DMF is a non-profit statutory trust, which has been set up for the welfare of the districts affected by mining-related activities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: State governments have spent a total of ₹1,459.93 crore from District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds on various activities to curb Covid-19 in the past for more than two years, according to the Union Ministry of Mines.

Of the total amount utilised during the pandemic, Odisha spent the maximum ₹445.54 crore, followed by Telangana at ₹334.08 crore. Karnataka spent ₹199.58 crore, while ₹139.79 crore has been utilised by Andhra Pradesh and ₹91 crore by Chhattisgarh.

The ministry also said that several states, including Odisha,



Telangana and Karnataka, are still using the DMF funds to battle coronavirus.

DMF is a non-profit statutory trust, which has been set up for the welfare of the districts affected by mining-related activities.

It is an initiative of the government to ensure that funds collected under DMF are utilised for the welfare of those affected by mining-related operations.

The total funds available under DMF as on March 28, 2020 was to

The total funds available under DMF as on March 28, 2020 was to the tune of ₹14,694.47 crore

State governments continue to use DMF funds to combat Covid-19, wherein ₹1,459.93 crore has been spent till April 28, 2022

Only Bihar, Harayana and Kerala did not spend funds for activities related to Covid-19 since March 28, 2020 till the last month

the tune of ₹14,694.47 crore, the ministry said.

"State governments are continuing to use DMF funds to combat Covid-19, wherein ₹1,459.93 crore has been spent till April 28, 2022," the ministry said, adding that the

amount was spent between March 28, 2020 and April 28, 2022.

Other states which spent DMF funds to combat Covid-19 are Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

However, Bihar, Harayana and Kerala did not spend funds for activities related to Covid-19 since March 28, 2020 till last month. As on March 28, 2020, Bihar had DMF fund of ₹84.50 crore, followed by Haryana with ₹20.24 crore and Kerala ₹2 crore.

DMF has been created in each district under the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015.

Retired VCs and profs meet Guv

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: A delegation of retired Vice Chancellors and professors met Governor Ganeshi Lal at Raj Bhawan over the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act - 2020 issue Friday.

The delegate asked the governor to direct state government to not violate the Supreme Court order of May 20 that stayed the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act, 2020 through which the state government had sought to control appointment to important academic and administrative posts in state universities, including the recruitment of teaching staff.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) too has cautioned the Odisha government over violation of the stay order.

Cops meet ahead of Rath Yatra



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, May 27: Ahead of Rath Yatra, a preparatory meet was held Friday at State Police Headquarters here under the chairmanship of DGP Sunil Kumar Bansal.

In the meeting, DGP Bansal called upon the officers to be proactive and extra vigilant for the world famous event in Puri. There was also a discussion on various security arrangement related issues in the meeting.

After a thorough discussion, decisions were taken on elaborate security arrangements during major events of the Rath Yatra like Nabajauban Darshan, Sri Gundicha Yatra, Bahuda and Suna Besha.

The RAF and the CRPF will be requisitioned well ahead of time to provide extra coverage. Senior officers will be given specific duties.

Installation of CCTV cameras, x-ray baggage scanners, road dividers/delineators and traffic cones, beach patrolling, issues related to bus-operators, opening of temporary police out posts, timely performance of rituals, issue of cordon passes, regulation of traffic, accommodation of officers/force, counter intelligence squads and VVIPs' security were also discussed in the preparatory meeting.

BMC collects ₹6.37L in drive against C&D waste

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: The week-long drive against collection of Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste saw the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) generate ₹6.37 lakh fine from defaulters in its three administrative zones across the state Capital.

Perceiving the early arrival of monsoon, the civic body began the week-long special drive May 20. Covering different ward areas, the team members also organised small group discussions creating awareness on hazardous effect of C&D waste. The civic authority issued notices to at least 124 defaulters while collecting fine to tune of ₹6.37 lakh.



"Waste lifted from different places was dumped at two identified sites at Kargil Basti and Patia. We request citizen for their cooperation and to add value towards liveability status of the City. Keeping the City clean and safe is a combined responsibility

of public and authority. Such drives help in reducing land space consumption and possible infections," said BMC Mayor Sulochana Das.

It can be mentioned that although the C&D waste management rules came in 2016, they

Perceiving the early arrival of monsoon, the civic body began the week-long special drive May 20 and issued notices to at least 124 defaulters while collecting fine to tune of ₹6.37 lakh

were not being strictly enforced. As per the rules, one has to take BMC's permission in exchange of a fee to keep such waste at a particular place. The BMC has launched several awareness drives against the issue, which somehow remains an ignored one.



The South Asia Women's Conference (SAWC) 2022 was inaugurated Friday at KIIT University in Bhubaneswar. Participated by 70 delegates, the two-day event with the theme "Towards an Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable World" will focus on sustainable networking for development of women and girls in South Asia

More nations must urgently adopt early warning systems: UN forum

In the recent Global Assessment Report, the early warning systems were cited as a critical defence against disasters such as floods, droughts and volcanic eruptions, as the systems predicted 560 disasters or 1.5 disasters a day by 2030, based on the current trajectory

More countries must "Think Resilience", and urgently adopt and improve early warning systems to reduce risks from an increasing number of disasters across the world, a UN forum has concluded.

Some 184 countries gathered in Bali to review efforts to protect communities from a rising number of climate hazards and other catastrophes around the world.

The 2022 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction heard only 95 countries report having multi-hazard early warning systems that give governments, agen-

cies and the general public notice of an impending disaster, with particularly low coverage in Africa, Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing Countries.

Early warning systems were cited as a critical defence against disasters such as floods, droughts and volcanic eruptions in the recent Global Assessment Report, which predicted 560 disasters or 1.5 disasters a day by 2030 based on the current trajectory.

It comes after UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for warning systems to cover every person on planet within five years.



"Early warning systems should be inclusive of communities most at risk with adequate institutional, financial and human capacity to act on early warnings," said the Co-Chairs' Summary, known as the Bali Agenda for Resilience. "A core recommendation is to apply a 'Think Resilience' approach

to all investments and decision making, integrating disaster risk reduction with the whole of government and whole of society."

The Bali Agenda for Resilience came ahead of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction on October 13 dedicated to early warning systems, and was pre-

sented at the end of the three-day Global Platform.

The meeting, which was the first international UN disaster forum since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, was also taking place as the Midterm Review of the UN's Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction got underway.

In light of the pandemic, the Bali Agenda highlighted the need to reassess the way risk is governed and policy is designed as well as the types of institutional arrangements that need to be put in place at the global, regional, and national levels.

"Current approaches to recovery and reconstruction are not sufficiently effective in protecting development gains nor in building back better, greener and more equitably," the summary said.

"Transformative lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic must be applied before the window of opportunity closes."

Delegates also shared progress since the last Global Platform in

2019, with a 33 per cent increase in the number of countries now developing disaster risk reduction strategies and reporting through the Sendai Framework Monitor, which measures progress towards global targets.

"While there has been some progress, such as in the development of new financing mechanisms, and better linkages with climate action, the data still points towards insufficient investment and progress in disaster risk reduction in most countries, especially in investing in prevention," said the Bali Agenda for Resilience.

"Less than half of the countries reporting against Sendai Framework targets indicate having fit-for-purpose, accessible and actionable disaster risk information."

The Bali Agenda for Resilience will be carried through to COP-27, the G-20 and the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Raynair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-977682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

4 get 20-year jail for gangraping woman

Left behind by her husband by mistake, the woman was gangraped by four persons near Kamarei forest in Angul district



POST NEWS NETWORK
Boinda, May 27: Adjudicating a case of gangrape, additional district and sessions judge (Athmalik) Sanjib Ranjan Samant convicted four persons and awarded them 20 years of imprisonment each. However, another accused was acquitted due to lack of evidence. Notably, a woman was gangraped at Kamarei under Handapa police limits in Angul district in 2018.

The convicts were identified as Pilu Behera of Kamarei; Dibyanjan Barik, Sujit Behera of Chhendipada and Nilam Sahu of Thakurgada. The court also imposed a penalty of ₹50,000 each. In default, the convicts would undergo an additional jail term of two years each. Another accused Pradip Pradhan of Katada was acquitted for want of evidence against him. According to the case diary, a

couple from Sambalpur was going in a car to Cuttack May 3, 2018. At around 10 pm, as they were nearing Nakhi village in Angul district, the woman asked her husband to stop the car so that she could relieve herself on the roadside. She returned to the car to collect water bottle in the back seat of the car. After taking the bottle she shut the door of the car. Thinking that his wife had returned to the car, the husband drove away. The accused found the woman, took her to a forest and gangraped her. After driving for some 15 km, the husband realised that his wife was not there in the car following which he drove back to Nakhi but could not locate her. Later, he lodged a missing complaint at the Handapa police station. Police had rescued the woman from Paradip area.

SAYING 'NO' TO TOBACCO



Ahead of World No Tobacco Day, college students raised awareness through paintings, debate and essay competitions in Bhadrak

SHORT TAKES

Man kills mother with wooden plank

Phulbani: In a horrendous incident, a man Friday bludgeoned his 60-year-old widowed mother to death over a petty issue in Phulbani under Town police limits in Kandhamal district. The accused was identified as Jitendra Kanhar, 31. The deceased woman has been identified as Kasturi Kanhar. According to reports, a verbal duel ensued between Kasturi and Jitendra over some family issues. Infuriated, Jitendra hit her mother's head with a wooden plank. Kasturi was rescued from a pool of blood and rushed to Phulbani district headquarters hospital (DHH). However, she succumbed to the injuries during treatment. A complaint has been lodged with Phulbani police who detained the accused while the exact cause of the murder is yet to be ascertained.

Illegal toll gate to be removed

Bargarh: A toll gate on Barahagoda-Nandatikara RD road in Bargarh district will be removed. A decision to this effect was taken by the district administration at meeting here, Friday, after receiving allegations of illegal collection of toll from four-wheelers. The toll gate is being operated by Ashoka Buildcon, a private agency. The administration has made it clear that if the toll gate is not removed with immediate effect, legal action will be taken against the operator. The Highway Users' Forum May 5 had approached the district administration alleging that collection of toll at the plaza is illegal and demanded removal of the toll gate. The Collector has directed Ashoka Buildcon to remove the gate. But it is not stated why this plaza operator was allowed to collect toll from people.

FB LOVE GOES AWRY

Newlywed bride turns out to be man

Basudevpur, May 27: Falling in love on Facebook has proved costly for a young man after the newlywed bride turned out to be a man at the reception party, just a few hours after their marriage. The bizarre incident has been reported from Kasia area under Basudevpur police limits in Bhadrak district. According to sources, Alok Kumar Mistry of North 24 Parganas district in West Bengal had befriended a person on Facebook. The person had identified 'herself' as 'Meghna' Mandal of Rajnagar village under Jambu Marine police limits in Kendrapara district. In just 15 days of their friendship, the two fell in love through Facebook chat and later decided



to get married. May 24, Alok along with his family reached Kendrapara for the marriage. Later, Alok took the newlywed bride to his uncle's house at Kasia under Basudevpur police limits. To welcome the newlywed bride, Alok's relatives hosted a reception party in the evening. However, a few moments after, Alok and his family members went into shock after

a local, who had come to attend the reception party, identified the bride as 'Meghna' and not 'Meghna'. The bride turned out to be a man who had disguised himself as Meghna using duplicate hair and make-up. The villagers then thrashed and stripped the 'bride'. After finding the 'bride' to be a man, the angry villagers cut off his long hair and called the police. A police team later rescued Meghna and handed him over to his family members. Alok and his family members got the shock of their lives after finding out the truth. On the other hand, the reason for Meghna's bizarre step is yet to be known. Reports said that this isn't the first case. Meghna for some reason dresses like a girl and lures men into relationships using social media platforms.

1 falls to death in theft attempt

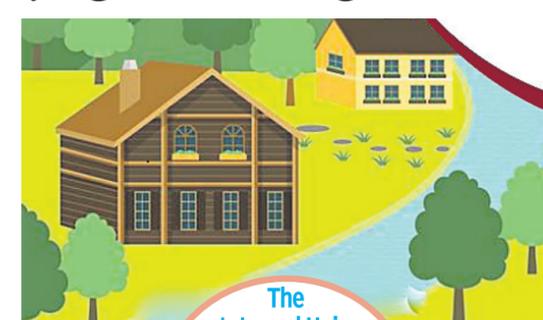
Rajgangpur, May 27: In a bizarre incident, a thief late Thursday night fell off the roof of an iron and steel factory and died while he was trying to steal iron rods at Podasingh under Rajgangpur police limits. The deceased was identified as Chamu Topso. According to sources, the factory has been lying shut for a couple of months now. Thieves routinely steal iron rods from the factory and sell them in the market for meagre prices. As per reports, Chamu had entered the factory at midnight to steal iron rods. After stealing the iron rods, he was trying to get down from the rooftop when he slipped off, leading to his death on the spot. The matter came to the fore after locals spotted his body Friday morning and informed the cops. A case of unnatural death has been registered. Police retrieved the body and sent it for autopsy.

Councillors launch hunger stir over holding tax hike

Deogarh, May 27: At a time when holding tax hike has triggered resentment among residents of Deogarh Municipality, seven councillors have started a hunger strike in front of the civic body office Friday protesting the decision. They have demanded immediate rollback of the holding tax hike. Councillors like Dharmendra Kumar Debta, Parjit Kumar Bhola, Kartik Mahakud, Madhusudan Bag, Pinki Sahu, Itishri Mishra and Sarojini Munda staged a sit-in outside the municipality office, holding placards. They demanded 20 per cent rebate in holding tax, extension of its deadline to June, re-auction of the daily vegetable market and reduction of rent for Kalyan Mandap from ₹18,000 to ₹10,000 per day. They stated that they would continue their protest until their demands are met.

15 more Nayagarh villages under PMAGY

Nayagarh, May 27: Fifteen more villages in Nayagarh district have been included in Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) under which ₹6 crore has been sanctioned for carrying out a slew of development initiatives, as per a report. Reports said the administration has identified 15 villages while three other villages have already been included in the scheme. Bolabani under Sadar block and Surkabadi under Nuagaon block have been declared as Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram while Chadeimara under Nuagaon block is yet to be declared as a model village under the scheme. As per guidelines, the state and Union governments provide ₹40 lakh to develop various modern facilities in selected villages. A district-level committee of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe welfare department held a meeting recently and approved a grant of ₹6 crore for 15 villages. As per guidelines of PMAGY, the villages having a population more than 500 (as per the 2011 census)



and about 50 per cent of their population belonging to the scheduled tribes will be eligible for this scheme. Once included in the scheme, these villages will be provided with facilities like drinking water, provision of sanitation, education, social security, road connectivity, electricity and renewable energy, telecommunication, agriculture, livelihood cre-

pervision of sarpanchs, ward members and officials of the lines departments. Meanwhile, the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Welfare department has got a list of villages that would be included under the scheme. In the first phase, three villages of the district were included in the scheme while two of them were declared model villages. In the second phase, 15 more villages were included in PMAGY. The villages are Laxmanpur, Guanda, Pathadwar, Gadiasahi, Bijaynagar, Roupadapatana, Ostia, Chhadamula, Chhamundia, Patanda, Kandapada, Ambapada, Nandighosepur, Burupaju and Pathuria. A number of projects have been approved and an outlay of ₹6 crore has been sanctioned. Collector Poma Tudu has underscored the need for expediting the works and making provision of garbage pits in all these villages. Officials of line departments are on their toes to start the groundwork. As per provision, central teams may make surprise visits to the villages to take stock of ongoing developmental works.

The state and Union governments provide ₹40 lakh to develop various modern facilities in these villages

Sal trees felled for nursery



Keonjhar, May 27: Alleged felling of hundreds of precious sal trees for construction of sheds in a forest nursery under Kanjipani forest section of Bhuyan Juangpal forest range in Keonjhar forest division has sparked resentment among nature lovers and locals. The chopped-off trees will be used for construction of sheds in the nursery where saplings will be grown for afforestation programmes. Locals and nature lovers have questioned the wisdom behind cutting down of sal trees and using them for growing saplings.

programme for 2023-24 financial year. The sal trunks will be used in construction of sheds to provide cover to the saplings from sun and rain. Locals alleged that the loss of greenery is hard to recover and might take long years to replenish if plantation programme is undertaken in the area. They said when forest officials are arresting a common man for cutting trees in the forest will the same rule apply to them? Environmentalists have urged Keonjhar DFO Dhanraj HD to conduct a probe and take stringent action against the accused forest officials for cutting down such large number of trees. When contacted, the DFO ruled out use of sal trees in construction of sheds. He said the trees used in shed construction are of another variety and are often cleared as they hinder the growth of other trees and plants.

Government of India
Ministry of Rural Development
Department of Rural Development
(Training Division)
Core - 4B (UG), India Habitat Center, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003

Recruitment Notice

National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR), Hyderabad is an autonomous organization under the administrative control of the Ministry of Rural Development. NIRD&PR undertakes training, research, action research and consultancy functions in rural development. It provides an inter-disciplinary academic environment, backed by an excellent infrastructure and State-of-art research and computer facilities. The Ministry invites applications in prescribed format for the Post of Deputy Director General in NIRD&PR, Hyderabad.

1 Pay Band and Grade Pay (6th CPC)	Rs.37,400 - 67,000 (PB4) + GP Rs.10000/-
2 Method of Recruitment	Deputation-cum-Direct Recruitment
3 Tenure	5 years or unit he/she attains the age of 60 years, whichever is earlier
4 Age limit for Direct Recruits	Preferably below 50 years
5 Age limit for appointment by Deputation	56 years on closing date of receipt of applications

Applications in the prescribed format should be sent through the Cadre Controlling Authority/ Department to the Under Secretary (Training), Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Rural Development, Core-4B(UG), India Habitat Center, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003. Details regarding qualifications and experience along with application form may be downloaded from www.rural.nic.in or www.nird.org.in.
LAST DATE: 45 Days from the date of the Advertisement.
Adv. No. 1/2022 (K-15017/04/2021-Trg)

Sd./- (Sanjay Kumar)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
E-mail: sanjay.kmr70@nic.in

davp 35101/11/0002/2223

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Ref: ADVT. NO. IREL/CO/2022-23/02 **TENDER NOTICE**
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davp 48129/12/0004/2223

MUTUAL FUND INVESTOR AWARENESS PROGRAM

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Date and Venue:
Sunday, 29th May, 2022; 11:30 a.m. onwards.
at The Sarovar court, Ispat Market, Ambagan, Sector-19, Rourkela - 769 005.
For registration, please contact: Ranjit Mallik, Mobile: 99370 88035.

Registration is compulsory.
The registration time will be from 9:30 am to 7:00 pm.
It is mandatory to follow the COVID safety guidelines during the event.
No walk-ins will be allowed.

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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
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No. O-354 **E-Procurement Notice**
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. EEDGH-ONLINE-05/2022-23

- Name of Work: Road & Building Works - (05 Nos.)
- Estimated Cost: Rs. 14.15 lakhs to Rs. 34.32 lakhs
- Mode of Submission of Tender: Tender shall be submitted Online in www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
- Availability of tender for Online bidding: 31.05.2022, 11.00 A.M. to 08.06.2022 upto 5.00 P.M.
- Date and time of Opening of Tender: 09.06.2022, 11.00 A.M.
- Other details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
- Corrigendum/Addendum if any shall only be published in the above website.

Executive Engineer,
R.W. Division, Deogarh
OIPR-25087/11/0007/2223

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MAYURBHANJ (R&B) DIVISION, BARIPADA
No. B-236: e-mail - bpd_eerb@rediffmail.com

Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.-E.-12/2022-23

- Number of works - 04 (Four) number of works.
- Approximate estimated cost - 8.91 Lakh to 22.84 lakh
- Period of Completion: - 3 (Three) Calendar month
- Date & Time of availability of bid documents in the portal:- Dt. 01.06.2022 to 07.06.2022
- Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal:- Dt. 07.06.2022 upto 4.00 PM
- Date of Opening of bid :- Dt. 08.06.2022 at 10.00 AM
- Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid :- Executive Engineer, Mayurbhanj (R&B) Division, Baripada
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>.

Sd./- Executive Engineer
Mayurbhanj (R&B) Division
OIPR-34025/11/0003/2223

By your stumbling, the world is perfected.

SRI AUROBINDO



Rising Rivalry

Inter-service tensions have always existed in babudom but remain low-key. The oldest fault line is the perception that the government favours the IAS more than the other all-India services, especially in terms of powers and promotions etc. In recent months though, there was a growing awareness that the Modi sarkar was actively placing officers from the IPS, IFS and IRS services in posts traditionally held by the IAS.

However, seeing the reaction of non-IAS service officers to the recent promotion and empanelling of 25 IAS officers of the 1996 batch and two IPS officers of the 1994 batch to the rank of additional secretary, and the posting of a 1990-batch IPS officer to an equivalent designation, it seems that the rivalry has risen a notch or two.

The move, sources say, has created a gap of six years between parallel ranks in the IAS and IPS, and IPS officers are upset at this 'unprecedented' order. According to a source, the order of appointment mentions two unusual decisions by the appointments committee. It has reportedly promoted two IPS officers Shyam Bhagat Negi (HP cadre) as additional secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat and Vijay Bhatia (UP cadre) as Joint Secretary Personnel in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Being a 1990-batch IPS officer, Negi has been appointed to the same position as two dozen IAS officers of the 1996 batch. Meanwhile, Bhatia who is a batch senior to Negi has been appointed to a junior rank. Also, it is being pointed out that there is only one IPS officer of the 1989 batch of Additional Director General of Police rank, posted as additional secretary. The real issue apparently is that while the government has promoted 1996-batch IAS officers as additional secretaries, in the IPS cadre it has promoted the 1990-91 batches to the same post. Seniority apparently has meant little.

Still, no one is willing to step out and speak publicly on the issue, not even the IAS and IPS associations. But these inter-service tensions must be resolved at the earliest.



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian



Antonio Andreoni

WITHOUT LONGSTANDING COOPERATION BETWEEN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, AND GOVERNMENT PROMOTION AND FUNDING OF RESEARCH, RAPID COVID-19 VACCINE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE

While the COVID-19 crisis brought much suffering and many socio-economic burdens, it has also shown how targeted cooperation between the state and business can speed innovation. Addressing the climate crisis calls for similarly creative collaboration.

In both the cases, accelerating innovation and experimenting with local solutions is necessary but not sufficient. Essential technologies – whether vaccines or renewables – must be diffused globally.

The first COVID-19 vaccines were granted emergency-use authorizations in the United States and the European Union less than a year after the pandemic began. Established innovation systems and adequate manufacturing capacity were important factors. Without longstanding cooperation between private and public institutions, and government promotion and funding of research, rapid COVID-19 vaccine development would not have been possible.

For example, the vaccine developers BioNTech and Moderna are university spin-offs that received substantial public funding during important phases of their development. BioNTech, which grew out of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, received about €17 million (\$18.2 million) in research and start-up funding from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Moderna, founded in 2010 by a group of Harvard professors, secured \$25 million in funding from the US government's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

Equally important were research institutions such as the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom and bodies like the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the US, both of which were directly and indirectly involved in different stages of COVID-19 vaccine development. Research institutions in some middle-income countries, such as Fiocruz in Brazil, also played a significant role.

Building on this existing capacity, governments then provided targeted support to accelerate vac-

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

PANDEMIC LESSONS



In the US public procurement is now an important component of innovation policy and a key driver of financing. The US government spends an estimated \$50 billion annually on innovation-based procurement, equal to nearly one-third of federal spending on research and development

development and de-risk investments in alternative vaccine platforms. First, government funding agencies provided grants. For the development of the joint BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine, Germany's BMBF provided €375 million in milestone-based funding, of which nearly €240 million was disbursed in 2020. This corresponds to about 25% of the two firms' development costs up to the time the vaccine was approved. Moderna, meanwhile, received nearly \$1 billion in US government funding for vaccine development in 2020, and worked closely with the NIH to conduct clinical trials.

Shortly before that, Moderna received \$1 million from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, a public-private initiative established in 2017 to promote vaccine development to combat epidemics. CEPI also provided over \$500 million of funding to different organizations in 2020 for COVID-19 vaccine development. Over 90% of the funding was public, with more than 40% coming from the UK and Germany.

In addition, government advance-purchase agreements ensured that the necessary production facilities could be built in parallel. In the event that a developer secured regulatory ap-

proval for its COVID-19 vaccine, these contracts provided a procurement guarantee for an agreed number of doses.

Complementing the parallel promotion of supply and demand, jurisdictions accelerated their approval processes for vaccine licensing. Public authorities reviewed available data immediately after each clinical trial phase rather than after completion of the overall trial, as is usually the case. They also supported the preparation and implementation of independent control studies.

So, what is the significance for the effort to combat climate change?

Tackling the climate crisis also will require the rapid acceleration of innovation and the associated scaling of production capacities within the framework of a mission-oriented innovation policy. Demand-side funding in the form of advance-purchase agreements could be applied to climate-related innovation, too. In the US, for example, public procurement is now an important component of innovation policy and a key driver of financing. The US government spends an estimated \$50 billion annually on innovation-based procurement, equal to nearly one-third of federal spending on research and development.

Other important building blocks include mission-oriented innovation agencies such as DARPA, the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy (ARPA-E), and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA). US President Joe Biden plans to establish a new agency to promote climate innovation. At the state level, agencies like NY-SERDA (the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) are experimenting with models to crowd in investments in innovative projects to support the green transition.

The dovetailing of R&D funding and public procurement has been central to US innovation agencies' success, including with COVID-19 vaccines, and this model should also be incorporated in the coming years into the European Green Deal and associated sustainable-recovery programs. But policymakers must develop new approaches to achieve an appropriate distribution of costs and benefits between private and public actors.

As with COVID-19 vaccines, the diffusion of new climate technologies and place-based innovations is still not sufficient, and they remain concentrated in a few countries. The rich world is asking low- and middle-income countries to play their part in mitigation and adaptation, but transfers of technology and financial resources – including debt relief and restructuring – currently fall well short of what is needed. Confronting today's mounting climate challenges – like developing safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines – requires innovative forms of cooperation between the public and private sectors, as well as between countries, designed to channel resources toward a new sustainable technological and economic paradigm. Shaping markets and industries via the right policy mix of targeted government financing and procurement promises to open new windows of opportunity and accelerate the green transition.

The author is Associate Professor of Industrial Economics and Head of Research at the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose

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DANICS babus face disciplinary action

The fallout of the fierce political rivalry between the AAP-led Delhi government and the BJP-ruled Centre often is felt by the babus in both governments. Split between loyalty to the government they serve and the rule book, it is babus who often pay the price.

Six DANICS cadre officers working with the Delhi government now face disciplinary action for failing to accept their transfer to the Lakshadweep administration and not joining duty immediately. This, after the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) bench headed by chairperson Manjula Dass, turned down their plea challenging their transfer.

In November last year, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued transfer orders to DANICS officers Sandeep Kumar Mishra, Sravan Bagaria, Shailendra Singh Parihar, Singare Ramchandra Mahadev, Nitin Kumar Jindal and Rakesh Kumar to Lakshadweep, but the babus immediately moved the CAT in the hope of overturning the order. They were served with a reminder earlier in February but this too was ignored. That has not worked. The CAT bench has now noted that there is 'no merit' in their application challenging the transfer. It has ordered the babus to immediately report to the Lakshadweep administration. If they fail to join, the order states that 'disciplinary action as per rules' will be initiated against them without further notice.

The unwholesome tendency of babus not reporting to the place of transfer and resorting to litigation has been viewed seriously even by the Supreme Court. The CAT order, therefore, is not surprising. The babus will have to obey or find themselves in the dock.

More changes in PMO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is continuing to rebuild his team at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Close on the heels of the appointment of former Petroleum Secretary Tarun Kapoor as Advisor to the PM and the induction of two additional secretaries Atish Chandra and Hari Ranjan Rao, 2004-batch IAS officer Vivek Kumar has been named Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Sources say that Kumar, who was earlier a director in PMO, has been appointed at the Joint Secretary level. Most likely, this has been done to rectify the imbalance caused by having five additional secretaries as opposed to four joint secretaries. With Kumar upgraded to the joint secretary level, the balance has been restored. He will join Hardik Satishchandra Shah who is also a Private Secretary to the PM.

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

WISDOM CORNER

Science is a beautiful gift to humanity; we should not distort it. **APJ ABDUL KALAM**

Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a harder battle. **PLATO**

One is never afraid of the unknown; one is afraid of the known coming to an end. **JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI**

WORDSWORTH

Aerotropolis

When this first appeared, from the mind of Professor John Kasarda of the University of North Carolina in 2000, it looked like one of those words whose life would be short and its death unrequited. But it shows signs of achieving some permanence in the vocabulary of aviation, economics, and urban planning. The idea behind the term is that major air transport hubs are now linked with levels of economic importance that were once the preserve of major seaports. The jobs directly generated by the airport itself are obviously significant; much more financially important, however, are the firms that relocate near the hub to take advantage of the speed with which passengers and high-value cargo can be flown all over the world. In several places, new airports are being created explicitly to exploit this, for example the new Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Thailand and the Dubai World Central airport. The term is a combination of aero-, in its aircraft sense, with metropolis. There's some doubt in writers' minds what the plural should be; both aerotropolises and aerotropoli have appeared; both are ugly, though the latter is to be deprecated because it puts a Latin plural ending on a word of Greek extraction.

LOL

Learn to be more polite

One day, Bill and Tom went to a restaurant for dinner. As soon as the waiter took out two steaks, Bill quickly picked out the bigger one for himself. Tom wasn't happy about that: "When are you going to learn to be polite?" Bill: "If you had the



chance to pick first, which one would you pick?" Tom: "The smaller piece, of course." Bill: "What are you whining about then? The smaller piece is what you want, right?"

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Nat'l base for minimum wage must

Dhurjati Mukherjee

THERE IS A NEED FOR A GENUINE TRANSFORMATION THAT WOULD WITNESS PROPER WAGES AND ADEQUATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WORKING CLASS

A recent study commissioned by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) has backed universal basic income to reduce the income gaps as well as devising an urban MGNREGA to rehabilitate surplus labour. While such a policy may help in gearing employment, it is essential to point out here that even in the MGNREGA, there is a lot of disparity as states pay different wages to beneficiaries.

Undeniably, the need for a national minimum wage in the country is an essential necessity. But there have been no efforts in enforcing such a wage policy. There is need for the government to formulate and enforce a minimum wage across the country to minimise labour exploitation at a time when prices of petrol, diesel and other essentials keep rising.

In the last Parliament session, RJD Rajya Sabha member Manoj Jha, raised the issue of revising the minimum wage and referred to the expert committee headed by labour economist, Anoop Satpathy. The 2018 report had recommended fixing the need-based national minimum wage for India at ₹375 per day or ₹9,750 per month. Plus, it rec-

ommended the introduction of an additional house rent allowance (city compensatory allowance) for urban workers over and above the National Minimum Wage.

Regrettably, the Centre did not act on the report and instead announced formation of another expert group for consideration of minimum wage. The Satpathy committee had worked out an evidence based formula of a balanced diet of 2400 calories, 50 grams of protein and 30 grams of fat per day per person. It had added some expenditure towards clothing, education and housing and multiplied the cost by 3.6 to include the spouse, two children and elderly parents. Currently, the minimum wage notified by most of the States is ₹200-odd per day.

Meanwhile, the Centre increased wage rates under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) by 5 to 7%, but the revised accounts still fall short of the minimum wages that had been notified by the states for similar unskilled work. Sikkim has the highest daily payment of ₹333 under the MGNREGA for 2022-23. But MGNREGA

workers in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh will receive a daily wage of ₹204, the lowest among states, up from ₹198, while workers in West Bengal will get ₹223 for a day's work, a hike of ₹10.

The amount varies, based on difficulty of terrain and working conditions. Nikhil Dey of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan in Rajasthan said the minimum NREGA wages remaining lower than the states' payouts amounted to denial of basic standards of living to those opting for the national job scheme. Though an expert committee under Mahendra Dev had in 2014 recommended that MGNREGA rates cannot be lower than the states' minimum wage for agricultural workers, the Centre is not implementing the report. Moreover, the government claims it is doing all it can to ensure better wages and working conditions for the labour class. But the Opposition hits out saying "Modi is doing everything for his capitalist friends; they are earning ₹1,000 crore daily. But he is not interested in creating jobs because he knows he can win by misleading people on emotive issues". While we talk of economic

growth, there is a need for formulating a policy based on wages and employment. The current situation has seen a thrust of our politicians and planners geared towards increasing incomes of the business class and the rich. In pursuing this policy, instead of effective public-private participation, the policy followed by the government is to play into the hands of the private sector by handing them over profitable public sector units.

Understanding of developmental economics is vital for formulating a policy for increasing wages and employment that obviously benefits the lowest segments of society. Unfortunately, the policy makers have for years been either ignorant or prefer to remain indifferent to the needs and demands of the masses.

Thus there is a need for a genuine transformation that would witness proper wages and adequate employment opportunities for the working class. Though the economy has been steadily recovering, a change would mean steady increase in wages commensurate with price increase and slow but steady rise in employment.

Another wicket down

Sir, It's been almost ten years since their back to back defeats, and India's oldest party is still adamant about not correcting its mistakes. Leaders like Kapil Sibal were the pillars of the Congress party, and their leaving the Congress will create a big void in the party. The party's leadership should instead be given to anyone else who is not associated with the Gandhi family to prevent similar occurrences and bring all its lost leaders back to the party. But these are things that will never happen, and we can hardly see the Congress leadership beyond the Gandhi family.

CK Subramaniam, TRICHY

A long way to go

Sir, In Ukraine, people who live in towns and villages near the front lines are struggling to survive with no means of electricity, gas, food or resources of running water. City residents are trying to live a regular normal life but with every step, they face the image of destruction all around. The Russian troops have bombarded many schools and are committing cold-blooded crimes. This shows the cruelty of the Russians-killing the innocent-committing genocide. Russia should use its power morally and should show some mercy. It seems that there is a long way to go to a normal life for Ukrainians.

Swati Pandey, UJJAIN

Sensational Pragu

Sir, India has had a good tryst with the game of chess. There were excellent players who made it big at the world level. A few out of the ordinary International Masters and Grand Masters fell short of their intended goals. Then there was one extraordinary champion who not only made India proud outside but won the coveted world championship five times-Viswanathan Anand. Now we have, 17-year-old Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa, or Pragu, who finished second at the Chessable Masters Online. But he won hearts by his spirited display against China's Ding Liren in the final match. The young Indian Grandmaster shot into fame when he stunned none other than Magnus Carlsen at the Airthings rapid chess championship held in virtual mode in February. An unthinkable achievement considering the prowess of Carlsen who has held the world title from 2013. The young Pragu did it again at the Chessable Masters. After getting the better of Carlsen, Pragu said he "did not want to win that way." Instead of exploiting the opponent's mistake, Pragu's hunger to win on his own ability is so striking in this statement. Pragu is further polishing his skills under Anand, and should go all the way. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

national

of the day quote

Ashamed by the appalling conduct of the CM. Narendra Modi had come as the PM, not for a BJP programme. Our CM was expected to show grace but he ended up disgracing himself

American laws are too lenient on gun control and India too needs to review and tighten laws relating to acquisition and possession of firearms

I will not name the divisive forces who are dividing people of the country and Goa and disturbing peace, but we should be vigilant about them (their acts)

SHORT TAKES

Karti grilled for eight hours

New Delhi: The CBI Friday questioned Lok Sabha member Karti Chidambaram for nearly eight hours on the second day in connection with alleged bribery of ₹50 lakh in the issuing of visas for 263 Chinese workers in 2011 when his father P Chidambaram was the home minister, officials said. He arrived at the CBI headquarters in the morning and during his questioning involving various aspects related to the case, he was confronted with documents, they said.

Former minister kills self

Dehradun: A roadways union leader climbed a water tank and shot himself dead in Haldwani city of Uttarakhand after being accused by his daughter-in-law of molesting his granddaughter. Rajendra Bahuguna, 59, was booked recently under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act on the complaint of his daughter-in-law, Senior Superintendent of Police, Nainital, Pankaj Bhatt said. Bahuguna enjoyed the status of a minister of state for a year from 2004-05 during the chief ministership of ND Tiwari.

Panel formed for UCC execution

Dehradun: Keeping a pre-poll promise, the Uttarakhand government Friday constituted a panel of experts headed by a retired Supreme Court judge to implement a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) for the state. "In accordance with a commitment made in our vision document at the time of the Uttarakhand polls, an expert committee headed by honourable retired Supreme Court Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai has been constituted," Uttarakhand CM said in a Facebook post.

Elephant killed

Hassan: The conflict between man and wildlife has come to the fore in Karnataka once again. Friday, an elephant was shot dead in an agricultural field near Alur taluk in Hassan district. Forest officials are gathering information to trace the culprits.

11 hurt in clash

Mhow (MP): At least 11 persons were injured and 15 motorcycles suffered damages in a clash between the members of two families over some financial dispute in Datoda village of Madhya Pradesh's Indore district, police said Friday. After the incident, a heavy contingent of police has been deployed in the village located in Mhow tehsil, an official said.



If Jagan Reddy does not quit politics, AP would not see good and happy days again. All sections should unitedly raise the slogan of "Quit Jagan" so as to save Andhra Pradesh from future destruction

IN THE OFFING

Officials at the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh are planning to lure rhinos from Nepal to "settle down" in the Mahof forest range's Lagga Bagga area and make it a permanent home



7 soldiers killed in mishap



Anguished by the bus accident in Ladakh in which we have lost our brave army personnel. My thoughts are with the bereaved families. I hope those injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being given to the affected

Deeply saddened by the news of loss of precious lives of our brave Army personnel in Ladakh. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Wish a speedy recovery to the injured

Narendra Modi | Prime Minister

New Delhi, May 27: Seven soldiers were killed and 19 injured in Ladakh's Tuktuk sector Friday when their vehicle skidded off the road and fell into the Shyok river, Army officials said. The accident took place at around 9 am at a place located about 25 km from Thoise, they said, adding that the injured have been shifted to the Command Hospital in Chandimandir in Haryana's Panchkula district.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "anguished" over the bus accident. "Anguished by the bus accident in Ladakh in which we have lost our brave army personnel. My thoughts are with the bereaved families. I hope those injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being given to the affected," Modi said in a tweet.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh spoke to Army chief General Manoj Pande following the tragic incident. General Pande apprised Singh of the situation and the steps taken by the Army to save the lives of the injured soldiers. "Deeply saddened by the loss of lives of our brave Indian Army personnel due to a bus tragedy in Ladakh. We will never forget their exemplary service to our nation. My condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured," he tweeted.

Hours later, all 19 injured personnel were shifted to Chandimandir. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also consoled the death of the soldiers. "Deeply saddened by the news of loss of precious lives of our brave Army personnel in Ladakh. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Wish a speedy recovery to the injured," he tweeted.

Sacked Punjab minister sent to 14-day judicial custody



Chandigarh, May 27: A Mohali court Friday sent to 14-day judicial custody sacked Punjab minister Vijay Singla, who said he worked with 'utmost sincerity', has full faith in his party and will come out clean of corruption charges. Before being taken to the court, Singla told reporters that there may be a conspiracy from some "outsider forces" behind the episode leading to his sacking and arrest.

Singla, 52, was sacked from the state Cabinet Tuesday over graft charges by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. He held the health portfolio and was accused of demanding "one per cent commission" in tenders and purchases by his department. Singla and his Officer on Special Duty (OSD) Pardeep Kumar were arrested by police. Both were produced before the court of Ravtresh

ambitious scheme. "The design work for these trains has already started. We have also given the order for material...By December this year, we will be able to manufacture two of these trains," ICF General Manager A K Agarwal said, adding that an overall target of 25 such trains has been set. The final number of trains will depend on how the initial ones are received by the market, he added. The Railways is planning to target the e-commerce and courier parcel segment through these trains, officials said. Each train will also have refrigerated wagons in the rear end and in the front to carry perishables like milk products, fish, fruit and vegetables. Electricity connection for these wagons will be provided from the coach. The rest of the coaches will have rollers for moving the container. Each coach will have two wide doors for loading and unloading the containers. According to the Indian Brand Equity Foundation, with a turnover of USD 50 billion in 2020, India has become the eighth largest market for e-commerce. "India's e-commerce market is expected to reach USD 111 billion by 2024 and USD 200 billion by 2026 and expected to reach USD 350 billion by 2030," the

1989 abduction case: CBI summons Rubaiya Sayeed

Rubaiya Sayeed, who stays in Chennai, is listed as a prosecution witness by the CBI which took over the investigation in early 1990. Yasin Malik, chief of the banned JKLF is an accused in the case

Jammu, May 27: A special CBI court here has summoned Rubaiya Sayeed, daughter of former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, July 15 in a case related to her kidnapping in 1989, officials said Friday.

This is the first time Rubaiya Sayeed has been asked to appear in the case relating to her abduction on December 8, 1989. She was freed from captivity five days later on December 13 after the then V P Singh government, supported by the BJP at the Centre, released five terrorists from the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) in her exchange.

Rubaiya Sayeed, who stays in Chennai, is listed as a prosecution witness by the CBI which took over the investigation in early 1990. Yasin Malik, chief of the banned JKLF who has recently been sentenced to life imprisonment in a terror funding case, is an accused in the case. The case had gone into virtual



cold storage and was revived after Malik was picked up by the National Investigation Agency in 2019 on charges of terror funding. In January last year, the CBI, with help from Special Public Prosecutors Monika Kohli and SK Bhat, framed charges against 10 people, including Malik, in the Rubaiya kidnapping case that turned out to be a turning point in the Valley's volatile history. The release of the five JKLF members was seen as a morale booster for terror groups, which had started raising their heads at the time.

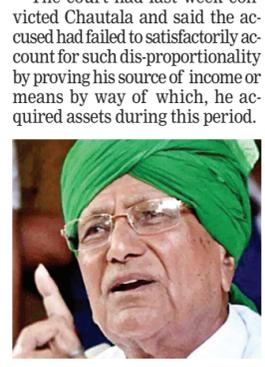
The CBI moved an application summoning Rubaiya Sayeed as she was listed as a prosecution witness. This was agreed to by the special court that has now ordered her to appear before it on July 15, the officials said.

Rubaiya Sayeed was kidnapped by members of JKLF members from Srinagar to ensure the release of their associates lodged in different jails. Other charged in the case are Ali Mohammed Mir, Mohammed Zaman Mir, Iqbal Ahmad Gandroo, Javed Ahmad Mir, Mohammed Rafiq Pahloo, Manzoor Ahmed Sofi, Wajahat Bashir, Mehraj-ud-Din Sheikh and Showkat Ahmad Bakshi.

OP Chautala gets 4-yr jail term in DA case

New Delhi, May 27: A Delhi court Friday awarded a four-year jail term to former Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala in disproportionate assets (DA) case.

Special Judge Vikas Dhull also imposed a fine of ₹50 lakh on the convict in the case of acquiring disproportionate assets from 1993 to 2006. The judge also directed the authorities concerned to confiscate four of his properties. The court had last week convicted Chautala and said the accused had failed to satisfactorily account for such dis-proportionality by proving his source of income or means by way of which, he acquired assets during this period.



The CBI had filed the case in 2005, and a charge sheet was filed on March 26, 2010, accusing him of amassing assets disproportionate to his legitimate income, between 1993 and 2006. According to the CBI's FIR Om Prakash Chautala, while functioning as Chief Minister of Haryana during the period from July 24, 1999, to March 5, 2005, in collusion with his family members and others, accumulated assets, immovable and movable, disproportionate to his known lawful sources of income, in his name, in the names of his family members. The disproportionate assets were calculated to be ₹6.09 crore, 189.11 per cent of his known sources of income.

BOOSTING STRENGTH



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh boards INS Khanderi during his visit to Karwar Naval Base in Karnataka

ED summons Farooq Abdullah

New Delhi, May 27: The Enforcement Directorate has summoned Lok Sabha MP Farooq Abdullah on May 31 at its Srinagar office in connection with a money laundering case linked to alleged financial irregularities in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association, officials said on Friday.

Abdullah (84), a three-time chief minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, had recorded his statement in the same case in 2019, they said. Political parties in the valley said the summons were "common to all opposition" leaders in the country. Reacting to the development, Abdullah's party, the National Conference (NC), said the veteran leader would continue to cooperate with the authorities like he has done in the past. "ED summons to JKNC President Dr Farooq Abdullah nothing new; this is common for all opposition parties in India. He has continued to maintain his innocence in the matter and has cooperated with the investigative agencies and will do so in this case as well," the NC posted on Twitter.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said there was nothing to react to this as it was crystal clear that the voice of the opposition was being muzzled with the help of central probe agencies like the CBI and the ED. The ED had questioned Abdullah in connection with the multi-crore Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association scam case earlier as well.

India's first semi-high speed freight train may chug by year end

Replicating the concept of Vande Bharat trains, the 16-coach 'Gati Shakti' train can clock 160 kmph and will be manufactured at the Integral Coach Factory in Chennai

Chennai, May 27: India's first semi-high speed freight train is likely to hit the tracks by December, officials said Friday.

Replicating the concept of Vande Bharat trains, the 16-coach 'Gati Shakti' train can clock 160 kmph and will be manufactured at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai. In order to implement the PM Gati Shakti initiative in a focused manner, the Railways has created a separate directorate at the Railway Board with its branches at Khurda, Bilaspur, Delhi and Bengaluru divisions to expedite the

perishables like milk products, fish, fruit and vegetables. Electricity connection for these wagons will be provided from the coach. The rest of the coaches will have rollers for moving the container. Each coach will have two wide doors for loading and unloading the containers. According to the Indian Brand Equity Foundation, with a turnover of USD 50 billion in 2020, India has become the eighth largest market for e-commerce. "India's e-commerce market is expected to reach USD 111 billion by 2024 and USD 200 billion by 2026 and expected to reach USD 350 billion by 2030," the

dedicated high speed freight trains. The Indian Railways is aiming to increase its share in freight

official said, adding that Indian Railways plans to capture the small size parcel shipments by running



dedicated high speed freight trains. The Indian Railways is aiming to increase its share in freight

transportation from the present 27 per cent to 45 per cent by 2030 through better infrastructure and business development plans, according to the National Rail Plan. The Indian Railways has identified 74 new 'Gati-Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal (GCT) locations across the country, with 20 of them in the South Indian states under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious 'Gati-Shakti Multi Model Cargo Terminal' policy. The policy was launched in 2021 in order to boost investment in the development of additional terminals for handling rail cargos.



Monsoon likely to reach Kerala in 2-3 days

MOST PARTS OF NORTHWEST AND CENTRAL INDIA ARE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE A GRADUAL INCREASE IN THE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES OVER THE NEXT THREE DAYS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 27: The southwest monsoon is expected to reach Kerala during the next two to three days, marking a sluggish start to the seasonal rains that are the lifeline of India's agri-based economy.

Earlier, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) had forecast the onset over Kerala on Friday (May 27) with help from the remnants of Cyclone Asani, that struck the Bay of Bengal a fortnight ago. The forecast had a model error of four days.

However, the influence of the remnant weather systems, that lingered over the southern peninsula, petered out, dashing the forecast of early onset over Kerala and a swift progress towards the north, the IMD said.

"As per the latest meteorological indications, westerly winds have strengthened in the lower levels over the south Arabian Sea and deepened. As per satellite imagery,



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

there is an increase in cloudiness over Kerala coast and adjoining southeast Arabian Sea. Hence, conditions are becoming favourable for monsoon onset over Kerala during the next 2-3 days," the IMD said.

The weather office declares the onset of monsoon over Kerala if 60 per cent of 14 weather stations in Kerala and Lakshadweep receive 2.5 mm or more rainfall for two consecutive days, aided by favourable windfield and outgo-

ing longwave radiation.

The IMD had declared the onset of monsoon over Andaman and Nicobar Islands May 16.

"The monsoon has now reached the latitude of Kerala. However, the distribution of rainfall in the state is still not proper for the declaration of the onset," Akshay Deoras, a monsoon researcher with Britain-based University of Reading, said on Twitter.

"Forecasts continue to suggest that the onset could happen some-

time between 30 May and 2 June, and it will not be robust," he said.

The IMD has forecast widespread light/moderate rainfall with thunderstorm/lightning over Kerala and Lakshadweep and isolated to scattered rainfall over Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during the next five days under the influence of westerly winds blowing from the Arabian Sea.

The weather office has forecast scattered light/moderate rainfall with isolated thunderstorms over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh during the next four days.

It also said isolated rainfall over Uttarakhand, north Punjab, north Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and East Rajasthan was likely during the next two to three days.

According to the IMD, most parts of northwest and central India are likely to experience a gradual increase in the maximum temperatures by two to three degrees Celsius over the next three days.

Delhi HC: Penalty for mosquito breeding might go up to ₹50K

The court observed that the efficacy of the system of imposition of fines as a deterrent would be completely lost if fines are not imposed on the spot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: The Delhi High Court has asked the Delhi government to examine imposing on-the-spot fines to create deterrence in the minds of the people concerning allowing mosquito breeding in their premises and increasing the quantum of fine imposed upon erring institutions from ₹5,000 to ₹50,000.

A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi, which was hearing its suo motu case concerning large-scale mosquito breeding in the city, asked the city government to examine these aspects at the highest level and state its stand. The court observed that the efficacy of the system of imposition of fines as a deterrent would be completely lost if fines are not imposed on the spot and mere challenging the violators would only lead to the explosion of such cases in the courts. It further noted that while the municipal Corporations had proposed en-



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hancement of fine from ₹500 to ₹50,000 and imposition of on the spot fines, the Delhi government counsel informed that the proposal to increase the fine from ₹500 to ₹5,000 was under process and that there was no spot fine.

"In our view, the GNCTD should seriously examine the proposal for imposition of fines - on the spot, if a deterrence has to be created in the minds of the people to not allow mosquito breeding in their premises. We are also of the view that where institutions are found guilty of such conduct, the quantum of fine should not be limited to merely ₹5,000/-, and should be fixed at ₹50,000/- . The GNCTD shall examine these aspects at the highest level and respond on the next date," said the bench also comprising Justice Jasmeet Singh in its order dated May 20.

"Mr. (Rajat) Aneja (the amicus

curiae) submits, and we entirely agree with him, that the efficacy of the system of imposition of fines as a deterrent would be completely lost, if fines are not imposed on the spot. We may also notice that mere challenging the violators and those found guilty of allowing mosquito breeding in their premises, would only lead to the explosion of such cases in the Courts and adding to the already existing heavy burdens that the subordinate Courts have to deal with," it said.

In March, the high court had expressed displeasure over no action being taken by the Delhi government over the aspect of amending the law and increasing the penalty so that it acts as a deterrent against the breeding of mosquitoes which cause vector-borne diseases, saying its request fell on deaf ears.

A day after arrest, PC George gets bail

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kochi/Thiruvananthapuram, May 27: A day after being sent to the Central jail in Thiruvananthapuram, seven-time former MLA PC George Friday secured bail from the Kerala High Court in connection with an alleged hate speech made early this month.

A local court in Thiruvananthapuram had Thursday sent him to 14 days judicial custody.

While granting bail, the high court asked George not to repeat the mistake and also cooperate with the probes in the two separate cases of the same nature - one made in the capital city May 1 and a few days later at an election rally in Kochi.

On May 1, he was first arrested from his house at Poonjar in Kottayam district and brought to the state capital and released on bail the same day.

A few days later after getting bail, during an election rally in Thrikkakara in Kochi, George again resorted to a hate speech, attacking the minority community. Soon, a fresh case was registered and again he approached the court for bail and Wednesday when he was travelling to Kochi to present himself before the police in connection with the matter, it was learnt that his bail given May 1 has been cancelled by a court in the state capital.

Why do max retirements in Ker take place in May?



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, May 27: Every year, one sees a large number of Kerala government staff retiring May 31 and this year is no different as of the 20,719 staff who are to superannuate at the age of 56 in 2022, a record 10,207 will bow out Tuesday.

According to sources, the primary reason for the 'May phenomenon' is earlier, the official date of birth used to be the day a child was admitted to a school in the new academic year, which begins in June.

"When a child was admitted to the school, the date of birth was what the parents would say. No body would ask for official cer-

Kerala is the only state where government employees retire at 56 years and there are around half a million of government staff in the state

tificate of birth.

Unlike today, most of the births used to take place at homes. Now, births take place in the hospital and are immediately registered with the local body which provides a birth certificate," the source said. All along, the date of birth was

taken as what appeared in the Class X examination mark-sheet, but a birth certificate from the local body is a must during school admission.

Incidentally, all those who are retiring or nearing the superannuation or have already retired in the recent years have all their official date of birth as per school records.

"Since I was very naughty and a handful, I was admitted to school a year early. I was only four but my parents told the school that I was five years. In the bargain, I lost one productive year as even though I am 65 as per records, I am only 64," said a businessman.

But with a large number of government staff retiring May 31, the already cash-trapped state will have over-burned as with over 10,000 government staff retiring, a staggering sum is required to pay of end of service benefits.

A college principal who retires in Kerala after close to three decades of service after commutation of pension, will get around ₹1 crore as end of service benefits and not to mention a monthly pension of above ₹60,000.

REMEMBERING 'CHACHA' NEHRU



Congress interim President Sonia Gandhi pays floral tribute to India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on his 58th death anniversary, at Shanti Van in New Delhi

Inspired by movie, 3 men steal over 40 luxury cars, arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: Inspired by Hollywood flick 'The Fast and the Furious' three men stole over 40 luxury cars using hi-tech tools, including scanners and GPS jammer, police said Friday after arresting them.

The accused have been identified as Manish Rao (42) and Jagdeep Sharma (43), both residents of Uttam Nagar here, and Aas Mohammad (40), a native of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, they said.

Rao and Sharma were nabbed when they came to strike a deal for a stolen car. The car was found stolen from the Paschim Vihar area, Deputy Commissioner of Police (southwest) Manoj C said.

Various instruments, including sensor kit, magnet, LNT keys and eight remote car keys were recovered during the search of the stolen vehicle, they said.

Mohammad, who was the main supplier of these stolen cars, was also arrested, police said, adding that he used to sell these vehicles in Rajasthan.

The accused were inspired by Hollywood movie 'The Fast & the Furious' and used scanners to unlock the cars within minutes and jammer to disable the GPS if it was installed in the car, the DCP said. The trio are members of the infamous 'Ravi Uttam Nagar gang' police said.

The three accused disclosed that they along with their leader Ravi have stolen over 40 cars since April from various areas of the city, including Uttam Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Subash Nagar, Pashim Vihar, Munirka, Dwarka among others and sold them in Rajasthan and Meerut, the DCP said.

After stealing the car, they parked it outside societies, near hospitals and other such places where CCTV camera was not installed, police said.

Electric cycle buyers in Delhi to get incentives

REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: The Delhi government has brought in a scheme under which financial incentive will be provided to those buying electric cycles.

The demand incentive shall be applicable for the first 10,000 e-cycles, both passenger and cargo, it said.

According to the scheme guidelines, e-cycle buyers will get a purchase incentive of 25 per cent of the price with a cap of maximum ₹5,500 a piece. An additional incentive of ₹2,000 will be given to the first 1,000 individual owners of e-cycles.

E-cargo cycles will be eligible for a purchase incentive of 33 per cent of the price (not exceeding ₹15,000 per vehicle).

"The applicable demand incentives shall be available for buyers (individuals and businesses) in the form of reimbursement which will be credited to the accounts of owners by the Transport Department, based on claims made by the buyer through the OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) or dealer after the purchase of the

e-cycles," it said.

The application for incentive shall be made through an online platform by the OEM or dealer on behalf of the buyer and shall be credited within seven working days to the bank account of the buyer.

The demand incentives shall be payable to individual beneficiaries as well as businesses with a valid GST registration.

E-cargo cycles will also be eligible for a scrapping incentive of up to ₹3000 per e-cycle under the Delhi Electric Vehicle Policy, against scrapping of old ICE (internal combustion engine) vehicles.

The scrapping incentive will be given in case of the ICE vehicle being scrapped through someone authorised by the Transport Department and shall be subject to a matching contribution made by the OEM or dealer at the time of sale of the e-cycle(s).

As for the OEMs intending to seek approval of their e-cycles under the policy, they will be required to register themselves with the EV Cell of the Transport Department.

Kerala tourism bounces back

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, May 27: Figures point out that Kerala tourism appears to have bounced back after the Covid pandemic as 3.8 million domestic tourists have arrived in the first quarter of 2022, marking an impressive growth of 72.48 per cent as compared with 2.2 million footfalls during the corresponding period in 2021, said Tourism Minister PA Mohamed Riyas.

Riyas also pointed out that going by the prevailing trend, Kerala tourism is set to attract record number of tourists this year on the



Unsplash

As for foreign tourist arrivals, the number increased from 14,489 in the first quarter of 2021 to 43,547 during the corresponding period in the current year, notching a significant increase of 200 per cent

Five districts -- Idukki, Malappuram, Kasaragod, Pathanamthitta and Wayanad -- registered the highest ever footfall since their formation

strength of its globally-acclaimed assets, new products and initiatives

The Tourism Department has also launched a WhatsApp chatbot 'Maya', which is a virtual tour guide

like caravan tourism and by exploring the unexplored destina-

Beer fly off shelves in Delhi as summer approaches peak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: Beer lovers in the national capital are having a tough time scoring their favourite brands which face a supply crunch due to 'restrictions' from bottlers in neighbouring states amid high demand due to an unusually hot summer.

Since the implementation of new Excise Policy 2021-22 by Delhi government last November, private retail vends have been making attractive offers to the consumers which has led to an increase in demand for all kinds of alcoholic beverages, including beer, officials said.

There are several factors that have fuelled shortage of beer in Delhi, one of which is an early onset of summer, said Vinod Giri,

director general of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies.

Another key reason for shortage is that the manufacturers have been asked to first fulfil the local demand in the neighbouring states like and Rajasthan, Haryana, and Punjab where they are located, before supplying it to Delhi and other places, he said.

"The demand for beer rises during summer in northern parts of the country. In such a situation, supply to Delhi, which has no manufacturing facility, is affected since manufacturers in major supplier states have to meet the local demand too," said the officer.

Giri said that the demand for beer shot up by 30 per cent in March, which recorded several days of heatwave and ended up



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

becoming the hottest March in the last 122 years.

"Normally, the beer is stocked during March for sale during the

SHORTAGE OF BEER IN DELHI IS A NORMAL FEATURE DURING THE SUMMERS BUT THIS YEAR IT IS MORE DUE TO LESS SUPPLY FROM STATES LIKE UTTAR PRADESH

MANY BEER LOVERS COMPLAINED THAT THEY WERE FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO HAVE THEIR USUAL BRANDS AT THE LIQUOR VENDS IN THE CITY

peak summer months of April, May and June. However, as demand started rising from March, shops could not stock up adequate

cases," he said. Many beer lovers complained that they were finding it difficult to have their usual brands at the liquor vends in the city. "The usual brands of beer have gone off the shelf. Men at liquor shops ask you to try new brands which I have never tasted. Due to shortage, you make do with whatever is available, whether it's a can of beer or a bottle," said a man outside a liquor shop in Naraina area of the city.

Usually, the annual sale of beer in Delhi is around 315-320 million cases, out of which about 40 per cent gets sold during the summer months, he said. But with an increased demand, the annual sale of beer this year is expected to go up to 330-340 million cases, he added.

of the day **QUOTE**

There is discrimination in the state between IPS and West Bengal Police Service (WBPS) officers and equality must be ensured between them

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

The leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the contribution of armed forces have changed the perception of the world about India

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Central probe agencies should work in a transparent manner without any interference and not misuse their powers

AJIT PAWAR | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Hybrid terrorist held in Srinagar

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir police and security forces have arrested one hybrid terrorist belonging to the LeT along with arms and ammunition from Bemina area of Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar district, officials said Friday. Police said acting on a specific tip-off about the movement of terrorists Bemina area, a joint checkpoint was set-up by Srinagar Police, Army's 2nd RR and valley QAT CRPF at Bemina crossing.

Rifle, helmet at India Gate shifted

New Delhi: The iconic rifle and the soldier's war helmet, which were part of the Amar Jawan Jyoti at the India Gate, were moved to the National War Memorial Friday. The defence ministry said the armed Forces "shifted the inverted rifle and the helmet from India Gate, which was the symbol of fallen soldiers of 1971 war, to Param Yodha Sthal at National War Memorial". It said the rifle and the helmet were installed in the midst of busts of Param Vir Chakra awardees.

Man arrested

Bijnor (UP): A man was arrested on Friday on charges of killing his intellectually disabled younger brother and burning his body, police said. Accused Ashok (32), a resident of Mubarakpur village here, confessed to the crime, they said, adding that he and his family members were "tired" of deceased Pradeep's (22) behaviour. "A partly burned body of a man was recovered in Mubarakpur Village under Syohara Police station area on May 23.

15 injured in Maha

Palghar: At least 15 persons were injured, five of them seriously, when the bus they were travelling in plunged into a 25-feet deep gorge at Wagobha Khind in Palghar district of Maharashtra on Mumbai-Ahmedabad highway early on Friday, police said. The incident occurred around 6 am when the bus was travelling from Bhusawal in north Maharashtra's Jalgaon district to Boisar in Palghar, a police official said.

One dead in Delhi

New Delhi: A 24-year-old person was killed after a lenter of building collapsed in the Mundka area of the national capital Friday evening, an official said. The official informed that they received a PCR call at 5.19 p.m. regarding falling of a roof at Firni road, Mundka. When the police staff along with senior officials reached the spot, they found that an under construction building had collapsed.



When we met Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year as part of an all-party delegation to press the demand for caste census, the initiative was mine and not that of Nitish Kumar. Does it mean I am ready for an alliance with the BJP? Please do not get too hypothetical

TEJASHWI YADAV | TMC LEADER

NEW TRADITION

The Uttar Pradesh Assembly has decided to felicitate members whose birthday falls during the session. The Speaker said that the name of the member would be flashed on the LED screens in the Vidhan Bhawan



Why is PM silent on drugs haul from Gujarat, asks Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat has become the "gateway of drugs" to the country under his watch, the Congress alleged Friday, questioning the "silence" of the PM and Home Minister Amit Shah and demanding answers agencies tasked to control narcotics smuggling.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khhera said there has been a series of recoveries of drug consignments starting from July, 2017 right up to this week from several ports including Mundra and Pulpav in the state.

Just on Thursday, 52 kilograms of cocaine, worth Rs 500 crore, was recovered from Mundra Port that had come from Iran, he alleged. When under "pressure from the Congress Party", the Mundra port had announced they will not handle cargos from Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, then how the latest consignment of cocaine was recovered from there, he asked.

"The Congress Party has questioned the government over the last eight months on why all these recoveries are taking place in Gujarat alone? Why is Gujarat becoming the gateway of drugs to India," he asked.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khhera said there has been a series of recoveries of drug consignments starting from July, 2017 right up to this week from several ports including Mundra and Pulpav

Khhera said the Congress had to question the government on the post of Narcotics Control Bureau head lying vacant for 18 months, before the appointment was made under "pressure" from the opposition party.

He alleged Gujarat has become a "gateway of drugs" to the country under the watch of PM Modi and Home Minister Shah. "You have the prime minister from Gujarat. You have the home minister from Gujarat. Why are they silent?"

"This is a prime minister who talks more and does less. On this particular issue, (he has said) not a word. Why this silence?" The Congress leader said drugs cannot be traded just at a retail level and this trade is always a part of larger global syndicates which enjoy active political patronage in whichever country they operate.

"We demand answers from the government on what is your blueprint? What is your roadmap to burst this syndicate and who is the El Chapo or Pablo Escobar of this drug syndicate in this country?"

"These are important critical questions because as I said, we are dealing with the future of our next generation, they are destroying it. We owe it to them, if not to ourselves to give them a drug-free future," he said.

The Congress leader said drugs cannot be traded just at a retail level and this trade is always a part of larger global syndicates which enjoy active political patronage in whichever country they operate



Delhi riots accused gets huge welcome

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: Shahrukh Pathan, whose photograph of pointing a gun at an unarmed policeman during the communal riots in Northeast Delhi went viral, received a grand welcome during a visit to his home on parole, according to a video.

The footage, which has gone viral on social media, purportedly shows Pathan being cheered by a huge crowd as he walks through a lane in the presence of security personnel to meet his ailing father Monday. A senior jail officer said Pathan was sent to his home by a court order on a four-hour custody parole. BJP leader Kapil Mishra posted the video on his Twitter account and raved that a person who pointed a gun at the police was being made a hero. "The person who pointed a gun at the police is being made a hero. In Delhi, several places have become mini-Pakistans. This mentality has become the country's enemy. I want to clearly say that we Delhiites are not afraid of them," Mishra tweeted in Hindi along with the video.

'Poor suffered due to indifference to tech use'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: There was an environment of "indifference" towards the use of technology in governance before 2014 due to which the poor and the middle class suffered the most, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Friday.

He asserted the current government has ensured last-mile delivery of services with the help of technology including drones. Addressing a gathering after inaugurating India's biggest drone festival in Delhi, he said, "At a time when we are celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, it is my dream that everyone in India should have a smartphone in his or her hand, every farm should have a drone and every house should have prosperity."

The enthusiasm being seen in India about drone technology is amazing and indicates possibilities of an emerging sector of employment generation, the prime minister said. He said eight years ago "we started implementing new mantras of good governance".

A REASON TO CHEER



Members of Mohila Trinamool Congress in a rally at Kolkata for achieving high employment rate among women, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Hardik hints at joining BJP next week

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, May 27: Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS) convener and former Congress working president Hardik Patel will be joining BJP either on May 30 or May 31 in Gandhinagar. He gave the hint on Friday in Ahmedabad and even hinted at contesting elections.

Patel in a programme on a TV channel has hinted that he is joining the BJP, and the party will decide from which constituency he will contest the assembly elections. He also said that he is going to lead an Ekta Yatra from Somnath temple to the Statue of Unity.

It will be a grand show of Hardik Patel joining the BJP, party sources said. He was given two options on how would he like to join BJP, in presence of National President in New Delhi, or in presence of



Gujarat BJP in-charge Bhupender Yadav or B.L. Santhosh in Gandhinagar. He has selected the second option. Hardik and the BJP are planning to address a large gathering on the day, sources said.

Hardik resigned from the Congress as working president as well as primary member of the party May 18. Since then speculations were rife that he will join the BJP. A day later, at the press conference,

Hardik resigned from the Congress as working president as well as primary member of the party May 18

Patel in a programme on a TV channel has hinted that he is joining the BJP, and the party will decide from which constituency he will contest the Assembly elections

he had told the media that he will announce his decision on Friday.

Since the day Hardik resigned from Congress, he has been attacking the party, saying the party is anti-Patidar and anti-Gujarat. He said that even the party national leaders' action is anti-Gujarat. Hardik Patel has been particularly targeting Gujarat Congress in-charge Raghu Sharma and former GPCC president Bharat Singh Solanki. He said these leaders are not respecting people's sentiments.

ASSEMBLY GOES PAPERLESS

UP MLAs fumble with tablets



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, May 27: The e-Vidhan that has made the Uttar Pradesh state Assembly go paperless, is proving cumbersome for the legislators, many of whom are not tech-savvy.

While the BJP MLAs and ministers are going an extra mile to learn how to operate the tablets installed on their seats and some are even taking classes from their children or others to learn the functioning of the device, opposition members are vocal about their reservations of the new system.

"The Vidhan Sabha officials should have implemented the new system in a phased manner and allowed the house to function in a hybrid mode for some time. We are left grappling with the tablet and tend to miss out on the proceedings," said a SP MLA. Another SP MLA said that the government wanted to leave the opposition grappling with the new system so that focus could be diverted from other important issues. Several MLAs can be seen peering into blank tablets and some SP MLAs managed to fix their party logo on their screens.

A BJP MLA, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that a minimum training of one week was required to make the legislators familiar with operating the tablets. Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) leader Om Prakash Rajbhar was seen peering into a pamphlet to learn how to operate the device on occasions more than one. Senior ministers like Suresh Khanna and Surya Pratap Shahi were also seen seeking help from NIC techies while others were inquiring from each other.



A drone on display at the Bharat Drone Mahotsav, India's largest drone festival at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

"Walking on the path of minimum government and maximum governance, priority was given to ease of living and ease of doing business," Modi said.

During the earlier governments, technology was considered a part of the problem and efforts were made to label it "anti-poor", the prime minister said. "Due to this, there was an environment of indifference towards the use of technology in governance before 2014.

The poor, the deprived, the middle class suffered the most," he said. "Promotion of drone technology is another medium of advancing our commitment to good governance and ease of living. In the form of drones, we have a smart tool that is going to be part and parcel of people's lives," Modi said.

They are not aware of the extreme cold conditions prevailing in the high altitudes. "We have noticed that many of those who died on way to Kedarnath died of hypothermia which is caused by extreme cold conditions," he said. The weather in Kedarnath often turns bad in the afternoon. A bright sunny day in no time gives way to overcast conditions with isolated rains.

As there are no rain shelters within three km radius of Kedarnath, pilgrims often get drenched and are finally down with hypothermia, he said.

Of the 78 deaths so far, Kedarnath has reported the highest number of pilgrim casualties with 41 fatalities. Weak immunity of pilgrims who have Covid history is another reason for the high number of casualties, he said.



"As most of the pilgrims are not used to such high altitudes they should be given a break in their journey at lower heights to help them acclimatise themselves with the kind of weather they are going to confront in higher altitudes." They are not able to cope with the abrupt

climatic change that they experience after coming from lower altitudes to the Himalayan temples located averagely at a height of 10,000 to 12,000 ft," Bhardwaj, a qualified doctor said.

He said many pilgrims do not come with proper clothing as

Deaths during 'Char Dham' yatra worrying: Experts

OF THE 78 DEATHS SO FAR, KEDARNATH HAS REPORTED THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF PILGRIM CASUALTIES WITH 41 FATALITIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, May 27: Resumption of 'Char Dham yatra' after a gap of two Covid-marred years is a welcome development for thousands of people whose livelihoods depend on it, but the death of 78 pilgrims on way to the Himalayan temples in less than a month is causing concern.

Though the death of pilgrims on way to the high altitude shrines in Uttarakhand due to cardiac problems is something which happens

every year, the toll is unusually high this season after the yatra commenced on May 3 with the opening of the Yamunotri and Gangotri temples.

A look at the data of pilgrim deaths in previous years shows that over 90 Char Dham devotees died in 2019, 102 in 2018 and 112 in 2017 during the entire season which lasts nearly six months from April-May to October-November every year.

Pradeep Bhardwaj, who heads Six Sigma Healthcare that provides free medical facilities in Kedarnath, attributed the high number of deaths to a combination of factors, including absence of an acclimatisation mechanism, weak immunity of pilgrims most of whom have Covid history, precarious weather and inadequate arrangements considering the heavy rush of pilgrims.

international



I expressed our country's appreciation for the support India has extended during this difficult period. I look forward to further strengthening ties between our nations
RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | SRI LANKAN PM

FRESH SANCTIONS ON NK

China and Russia vetoed a UN Resolution sponsored by the United States Thursday that would have imposed tough new sanctions on North Korea for its spate of intercontinental ballistic missile launches that can be used to deliver nuclear weapons



of the day quote

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade pact is the best example of an open, inclusive and rules-based trading system
HUN SEN | CAMBODIAN PRIME MINISTER

While the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine was an immediate threat to the international order, the US remained focussed on China because the latter posed the most serious and long-term challenge
ANTONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

China is a big trading partner for Malaysia, we don't want to see any tension, any conflict with China and we hope that the US will realise that China is there, it's not going to disappear, and we have to live with China, which is now richer than most countries in the world
MAHATHIR MOHAMAD | FORMER MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Scribe killing: Al Jazeera to go to ICC

Jerusalem: The Al Jazeera news network says it will submit a case file to the International Criminal Court on the killing of reporter Shireen Abu Akleh, who was shot dead earlier this month during an Israeli raid in the occupied West Bank. The Qatar-based network and the Palestinian Authority have accused Israeli soldiers of deliberately killing her.

SL envoy meets Sitharaman

New Delhi: Sri Lankan High Commissioner Milinda Moragoda Friday met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and explored the possibility of India increasing its financial assistance to the island nation to help it deal with its severe economic crisis. In the meeting, Moragoda reiterated that Sri Lanka would require "bridging finance" until the economic adjustment programme with the IMF could be negotiated and finalised, according to the Sri Lankan High Commission. Moragoda briefed Sitharaman on the present developments in Sri Lanka.

Quake hits Indonesia

Jakarta: A strong 6.5-magnitude earthquake struck off Indonesia's eastern province of Maluku on Friday, but there was no initial report of damage or casualties, disaster officials said. The country's meteorology, climatology and geophysics agency did not issue a warning for a tsunami as the jolts did not potentially trigger giant waves. *Xinhua* news reported. The quake struck at 9.36 a.m., with the epicentre at 85 km southwest of Maluku Barat Daya district with a depth of 104 km, the agency said. The tremors were also felt in the nearby province of East Nusa Tenggara and the neighbouring country of Timor Leste.

50 civilians killed

Ouagadougou: At least 50 civilians in Burkina Faso's Madojari region were killed during an armed attack, according to an official statement. Residents from the Madojari town who were trying to reach Nadiagou, in the town of Pama, were targeted by unidentified armed men, *Xinhua* news agency quoted the statement from the regional government as saying. On May 14, an attack on civilians in the same area left 17 dead and seven injured. On May 19, another attack against the military detachment of Madojari left 11 soldiers killed and 20 others injured.

G-7 pledges put coal on notice, could boost climate assistance

The agreements, which will be put to leaders at the G-7 summit in Elmau, Germany, next month, were largely welcomed by climate campaigners

AGENCIES

Berlin, May 27: Officials from the Group of Seven wealthy nations announced Friday that they will aim to largely end greenhouse gas emissions from their power sectors by 2035, making it highly unlikely that those countries will burn coal for electricity beyond that date.

Ministers from the G-7 countries meeting in Berlin also announced a target to have a "highly decarbonised road sector by 2030," meaning that electric vehicles would dominate new car sales by the end of the decade.

And in a move aimed at ending the recurring conflict between rich and poor nations during international climate talks, the G-7 recognized for the first time the need to provide developing countries with additional financial aid to cope with the loss and damage caused by global warming.

The agreements, which will be put to leaders next month at the G-7 summit in Elmau, Germany, were largely welcomed by climate activists. "The 2035 target for power sector decarbonisation is a real breakthrough. In practice, this means countries need to phase out coal by 2030 at the latest," said Luca Bergamaschi, director of Rome-based campaign group ECCO. Coal is a heavily polluting fossil



fuel that's responsible for a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions caused by humans. While there are ways to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide from the burning of coal, experts say it is almost impossible to reduce it to zero, meaning it will likely have to be the first fossil fuel to be phased out.

G-7 members Britain, France and Italy have already set themselves deadlines to stop burning coal for electricity in the next few years. Germany and Canada are aiming for 2030; Japan wants more time; while the Biden administration has set a target of ending fossil fuel use for electricity generation in the United States by 2035.

A common target would put pressure on other major polluters to follow suit and build on the compromise deal reached at last year's UN

climate summit, where nations committed merely to "phase down" rather than "phase out" coal — with no fixed date.

US climate envoy John Kerry called the agreements reached in Berlin "very comprehensive and forward-leaning."

"I think it will help lay the groundwork for what has to happen at the G-20," he told The Associated Press, referring to a meeting later this year of the broader Group of 20 leading and emerging economies, who are responsible for 80 per cent of global emissions.

Getting all G-20 countries to sign on to the ambitious targets set by some of the most advanced economies will be difficult, as countries such as China, India and Indonesia remain heavily reliant on coal.

Imran booked for riots in Islamabad

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, May 27: The Islamabad Police Friday registered a case against senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, including Chairman Imran Khan, for the riots that took place in the capital during the 'Azadi March'.

Apart from Khan, cases have been registered against Asad Umar, Imran Ismail, Raja Khurram Nawaz, Ali Amin Gandapur and Ali Nawaz Awan, reports Geo News.



'Monkeypox can be contained if we act now'

REUTERS

Geneva, May 27: Countries should take quick steps to contain the spread of monkeypox and share data about their vaccine stockpiles, a senior World Health Organization official said on Friday.

"We think that if we put in place the right measures now we probably can contain this easily," Sylvie Briand, WHO director for Global Infectious Hazard Preparedness, told the U.N. agency's annual assembly. Monkeypox is a usually mild viral infection that is endemic in parts of west and central Africa. It spreads chiefly through close contact and until the recent outbreak, was rarely seen in other parts of the world, which is why the



recent emergence of cases in Europe, the United States and other areas has raised alarms.

So far, there are about 300 confirmed or suspected cases in around 20 countries where the virus was not previously circulating.

"For us, we think that the key priority currently is trying to contain this transmission in non-en-

India-UK FTA could be ready by Diwali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, May 27: The way things are progressing between the two negotiating teams, a free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the UK could be ready by Diwali without the need for an interim early harvest agreement, said Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal during a visit to the UK.

The minister arrived in London from the World Economic Forum in Davos to stock-take and interact with stakeholders and business people ahead of the fourth round of FTA negotiations, set for June 13 in the UK. During a curtain raiser event Thursday evening for the annual UK-India Week by India Global Forum (IGF) scheduled from June 27, Goyal pointed to the FTAs concluded at speed with the UAE and Australia as a sign of things to come. "Canada is progressing well towards an early



harvest agreement. With the UK, we had agreed to do an early harvest agreement — basically, to grab the low-hanging fruits and leave the more difficult elements for the next stage and give the people of both countries the confidence that this agreement is a win-win," the minister said.

TEXAS SCHOOL SHOOTING

Police response, readiness on focus



REUTERS

Uvalde, Texas, May 27: The police response to Tuesday's Texas school massacre came under increasing scrutiny Friday, a day after authorities acknowledged more than an hour passed after the gunman entered the building and killed 19 children and two teachers inside their classroom while barricading himself inside.

Even as the shooting — the deadliest US school attack in nearly a decade — intensified the long-standing national debate over gun laws, the country's leading gun rights advocacy group, opened its annual meeting Friday in Houston. Prominent Republicans, including former President Donald Trump and US Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, were expected to address the convention.

Republican Texas Governor Greg Abbott, who had also been scheduled to speak, will instead provide recorded remarks and head to Uvalde, the site of the shooting, for an afternoon news conference with other officials, according to news outlets.

President Joe Biden, a Democrat who has urged Congress to approve new gun restrictions, will visit Uvalde Sunday.

Authorities Thursday provided fresh details about the assault carried out by 18-year-old Salvador Ramos at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, a community of 16,000

people about 80 miles (130 km) west of San Antonio.

The new timeline, which differed sharply from some previous official accounts of the shooting, fueled new questions about whether police had an opportunity to intervene sooner.

Videos emerged earlier Thursday showing desperate parents outside the school during the attack pleading with officers to storm the building, with some having to be restrained.

At a Thursday news briefing, Texas Department of Public Safety spokesperson Victor Escalon said preliminary reports that Ramos had encountered a school police officer after crashing his pickup truck near the building were wrong. Instead, Ramos scaled a fence and entered through an unlocked door around 11:40 a.m. (1640 GMT), 12 minutes after the crash.

The door, which is normally locked, may have been left open to accommodate parents who were attending an awards day, according to Miguel Cerrillo, the father of a third-grader at the school.

Two responding officers entered the school four minutes later but took cover after Ramos fired multiple rounds at them, Escalon said.

The interval before agents stormed in appeared to be at odds with an approach adopted by law enforcement agencies to confront "active shooters" at schools immediately to stop bloodshed.

Iran seizes 2 Greek tankers in Persian Gulf

Dubai: Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized two Greek oil tankers Friday in the Persian Gulf, just after Athens assisted the US in seizing an Iranian oil tanker over alleged sanctions violations in the Mediterranean Sea. The Guard's announcement comes as tensions remain high between Iran and the West over stalled negotiations regarding its rapidly advancing nuclear program. And while the Persian Gulf has seen a series of attacks since former President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the accord in 2018, there has not been a major incident at sea in months. The Guard issued a statement on its website, accusing the unnamed tankers of unspecified violations.

Russia squeezes Ukrainian strongholds in east

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, May 27: Russian forces Friday pounded the last Ukrainian strongholds in a separatist-controlled eastern province of Ukraine, including a city where authorities said 1,500 people have been killed and 60% of residential buildings destroyed since the start of the war.

Ukraine's foreign minister warned that without a new injection of foreign weapons, Ukrainian forces would not be able to stop Russia from seizing Sievierodonetsk and nearby Lysychansk, locations that are crucial to Russia's goal of capturing all of Ukraine's industrial Donbas region.

The cities are the last areas under Ukrainian control in



Luhansk, one of two provinces that make up the region. Russian forces have made slow but persistent advances as they bombarded and sought to encircle

both Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk. "The Russians are pounding residential neighborhoods relentlessly," regional governor

Serhiy Haidai wrote in a Telegram post Friday. "The residents of Sievierodonetsk have forgotten when was the last time there was silence in the city for at least half an hour." Russian shelling killed four people in the city over the past 24 hours, he said. Mayor Oleksandr Stryuk said late Thursday that at least 1,500 people have been killed in Sievierodonetsk since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24. About 12,000 to 13,000 remain in the city — down from a pre-war population of about 100,000 — and 60% of residential buildings have been destroyed, he said. Stryuk said a Russian reconnaissance and sabotage group entered a city hotel, and that the main road between neighboring Lysychansk and the

city of Bakhmut to the southwest remains open, but travel is dangerous. He said only 12 people were able to be evacuated Thursday.

With Ukraine's hopes of stopping the Russian advance fading, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba pleaded with Western nations to provide his country with more weapons so its defenders were equipped to "push (the Russian forces) back."

"We need heavy weapons. The only position where Russia is better than us, it's the amount of heavy weapons they have. Without artillery, without multiple launch rocket systems we won't be able to push them back," Kuleba said in a video posted on Twitter Thursday night.

Baby formula shortage highlights racial disparities

BLACK WOMEN HAVE HISTORICALLY FACED OBSTACLES TO BREASTFEEDING, INCLUDING A LACK OF LACTATION SUPPORT IN THE HOSPITAL, MORE PRESSURE TO FORMULA FEED AND CULTURAL ROADBLOCKS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Columbia (US), May 27: As parents across the US struggle to find formula to feed their children, the pain is particularly acute among Black and Hispanic women.

Black women have historically faced obstacles to breastfeeding, including a lack of lactation support in the hospital, more pressure to formula feed and cultural roadblocks.

It's one of many inequalities for Black mothers: They are far more likely to die from pregnancy complications, and less likely to have their concerns about pain taken se-

riously by doctors.

Low-income families buy the majority of formula in the US, and face a particular struggle: Experts fear small neighbourhood grocery stores that serve these vulnerable populations are not replenishing as much as larger retail stores, leaving some of these families without the resources or means to hunt for formula.

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 20 per cent of Black women and 23 per cent of Hispanic women exclusively breastfeed through six months, compared to 29 per cent of white women. The overall rate



stands at 26 per cent. Hospitals that encourage breastfeeding and overall lactation support are less prevalent in Black neighbourhoods, according to the CDC. The Association of Women's

Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses also says Hispanic and Black women classified as low wage workers have less access to lactation support in their workplaces.

The racial disparities reach far back in America's history. The demands of slave labour prevented mothers from nursing their children, and slave owners separated mothers from their own babies to have them serve as wet nurses, breastfeeding other women's children. In the 1950s, racially targeted commercials falsely advertised formula as a superior source of nutrition for infants. And studies continue to show that the babies

of Black mothers are more likely to be introduced to formula in the hospital than the babies of white mothers, which happened to Isidoro after her emergency cesarean section.

Physicians say introducing formula means the baby will require fewer feedings from the mother, decreasing the milk supply as the breast is not stimulated enough to produce. Andrea Freeman, author of the book "Skimmed: Breastfeeding, Race and Injustice", said these mothers still aren't getting the support they need when it comes to having the choice of whether to breastfeed or use for-

mula. They also may have jobs that do not accommodate the time and space needed for breastfeeding or pumping milk, Freeman said.

"Nobody's taking responsibility for the fact that they've steered families of colour toward formula for so many years and made people rely on it and taken away choice. And then when it falls apart, there's not really any recognition or accountability," Freeman said.

Breastfeeding practices are often influenced by previous generations, with some studies suggesting better outcomes for mothers who were breastfed when they were babies.



The whole world realises that India is a big market place, a safe place to work with in terms of manufacturing in defence equipment, particularly because we don't insist on technology transfer, we even allow coveted technologies to be owned fully by foreign investors

PIYUSH GOYAL | MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

FOX STAR STUDIOS NOW STAR STUDIOS

Fox Star Studios, one of India's leading movies studios, Friday introduced a new visual identity and announced that the company has rebranded to Star Studios. With this brand refresh, Star Studios plans to present universal story themes with iconic characters and new-age cinematic spectacles backed by cutting-edge technology for theatrical releases as well as direct-to-digital



of the day quote

It is for the customers to decide whether they wish to patronise the said restaurant or not. There is nothing illegal nor is it in violation of the law for restaurants to collect a service charge

GURBAXISH SINGH KOHLI | VICE PRESIDENT, FHRAI

We were initially looking at an investment of ₹4,000 crore from the companies setting up their businesses in our SEZ. However, we have already seen an investment of ₹3,000 crore and we now expect it to be around ₹8,000-10,000 crore

SANJAY SETHI | CHAIRMAN, JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT AUTHORITY

As part of the cooperation, ACME and NYK will explore offering green ammonia to customers globally whereby ammonia would be supplied from ACME-developed projects and NYK will be the shipping partner

RAJAT SEKSARIA | CEO, AMCE GROUP

SHORT TAKES

Nykaa's quarterly net profit falls 49%

Bangalore: Indian beauty products retailer Nykaa reported a 49% fall in quarterly net profit Friday, hit by soaring expenses amid dull demand for its personal care and fashion products. FSN E-Commerce Ventures Ltd, Nykaa's parent company, has reported steep declines in profits in all three quarters since it went public, owing to its efforts to double down on marketing the brand as it emerges from the pandemic.

SpiceJet defers Q4 earning report

Mumbai: No-frills airline SpiceJet Friday said the announcement of its audited standalone and consolidated financial results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, will get delayed due to a ransomware attack on its IT systems. In a regulatory filing, SpiceJet said it has postponed its board meeting May 30, to consider and approve the company's March quarter and FY 22 results to a later date.

Tata Motors files record 125 patents

New Delhi: Tata Motors Friday said it filed record 125 patents related to powertrain technologies in the last fiscal. The company said the number of patents filed in last financial year were the highest ever for the auto major so far. The patents filed entail a diverse range of innovations and developments in traditional and new energy powertrain technologies, safety, connected vehicle technologies, body in white (BIW) and trims along with other vehicle systems, Tata Motors said in a statement.

IIFCL profit surges 80% to ₹514 crore

New Delhi: India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) Friday reported an 80 per cent jump in standalone net profit to ₹514 crore for the fiscal ended March 2022, helped by the increase in lending and reduction of bad loans. The state-owned infrastructure finance company had earned a net profit of ₹285 crore in the previous fiscal. The company recorded a 10-fold rise in profit compared to ₹51 crore recorded in 2019-20, thereby, continuing its turnaround performance, IIFCL managing director PR Jaishankar said while announcing annual financial numbers.

'Banks need to arrest slippages, support credit growth'

In its annual report, the Reserve Bank of India stressed that the future path of growth would be conditioned by addressing supply-side bottlenecks, calibrating monetary policy to bring down inflation and boosting capital spending



We are committed to containing inflation. At the same time, we have to keep in mind the requirements of growth. It can't be a situation where the operation is successful and the patient is dead. We will have to bring down inflation and we can't afford such a big growth shock which will adversely affect inflation. It has to be a balanced call with inflation control as priority

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

SHARE OF ₹2,000 NOTES IN CIRCULATION FALLS AS RBI PRINTS NO NOTES FOR THIRD YEAR

THE CENTRAL BANK RAISES ITS GOLD PURCHASE TO 65 TONNE IN FY22

RBI LOOKING AT PROS AND CONS OF INTRODUCTION OF A VIRTUAL CURRENCY IN THE COUNTRY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 27: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Friday pitched for structural reforms for sustained economic growth amid rising inflationary pressure, and asked banks to remain watchful of possible slippages in restructured loans.

In its annual report, RBI also said the number of ₹2,000 denomination notes fell to 1.6 per cent of the total currencies in circulation as March 2022 from 2 per cent in the year-ago period.

The central bank stressed that the future path of growth would be conditioned by addressing supply-side bottlenecks, calibrating monetary policy to bring down inflation and boosting capital spending.

"Undertaking structural reforms to improve India's medium-term growth potential holds the key to secure sustained, balanced and inclusive growth, especially by helping workers adapt to the after-effects

of the pandemic by reskilling and enabling them to adopt new technologies for raising productivity," it said in the chapter on 'Assessment and Prospects'.

"The immediate impact of geopolitical aftershocks is on inflation, with close to three-fourths of the consumer price index at risk. The elevation in international prices of crude, metals and fertilisers has translated into a term of trade shock that has widened trade and current account deficits," the report said.

On bank credit, the report said the advances to commercial sector improved, aggregate deposits moderated with the ebbing of precautionary savings. The bank credit growth picked up, especially since August 2021, and it was broad-based.

The banks, RBI said, would need to support growth while being watchful of the credit behaviour of entities whose loans were restructured during the pandemic

RBI warns of high WPI fuelling CPI

Mumbai: Sounding a note of caution, the Reserve Bank said Friday said there is a risk of high wholesale price inflation (WPI) putting pressure on the retail inflation, albeit with a lag. "The substantial wedge between wholesale and retail price inflation amidst a sharp rise in manufactured products' inflation poses the risk of a possible pass through of input cost pressures to retail inflation with a lag, although slack in the economy is muting the pass-through," the central bank noted. To control spiralling prices, the government had recently cut excise duty on petrol and diesel and also waived import duty on some raw materials used in the steel and plastic industry. Besides, export duty was hiked on iron ore and iron pellets. A rise in price across all items from fuel to vegetables and cooking oil pushed WPI or wholesale price inflation to a record high of 15.08 per cent in April and retail inflation to a nearly eight-year high of 7.79 per cent. High inflation prompted the Reserve Bank to hold an unscheduled meeting to raise the benchmark interest rate by 40 basis points to 4.40 per cent earlier this month.

period to arrest slippages.

"There is, however, a need to be watchful of the credit behaviour of the restructured advances and possibility of increased slippages arising from sectors that were relatively more exposed to the pandemic," it said.

With the unwinding of support measures, some of the restruc-

tured accounts might face solvency concerns, and the impact on banks' balance sheets would become clear in the upcoming quarters, the report noted.

"Going forward, as the economy recovers and credit demand rises, banks will need to focus on supporting credit growth while being vigilant of the evolving risks. Care

COST OF WAR

₹1,000cr of oil firms stuck in Russia

Oil India Ltd Friday reported its highest-ever quarterly net profit in the three months to March as it got nearly \$100 per barrel price for oil produced and sold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: As much as 8 billion rubles (about ₹1,000 crore) of dividend income belonging to Indian oil firms is stuck in Russia after the Putin administration clamped down on dollar repatriation, officials said Friday.

Indian state oil firms have invested \$5.46 billion in buying stakes in four different assets in Russia. These include a 49.9 per cent stake in Vankorneft oil and gas field



and another 29.9 per cent in TAAS-Yuryakh Neftegazodobycha fields. They get dividends on profits made by the operating consortium from selling oil and gas produced from the fields.

"We had been regularly getting our dividend income from the projects but since the war in Ukraine led to volatility in foreign exchange rates, the Russian government has

put restrictions on repatriation of dollars from that country," said Harish Madhav, Director (Finance), Oil India Ltd, which is one of the partners in the fields.

The dividend from TAAS was paid on a quarterly basis while Vankorneft's earnings were paid half-yearly.

"About 8 billion rubles of dividend income belonging to the Indian con-

sortium is left (in Russia)," he said.

"It is not a very large sum of money" All dividend income prior to the Ukraine war was repatriated but the one that accrued after that is stuck, he said, adding the situation was not alarming and the Indian firms are confident of getting the money once the conflict ends.

ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL), the overseas arm of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), holds 26 per cent stake in Suzunskoye, Tagulskoye and Lodochnoye fields - collectively known as the Vankor cluster in the north-eastern part of the West Siberia.

Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Oil India Ltd (OIL) and Bharat PetroResources Ltd (a unit of Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd or BPCL) hold another 23.9 per cent. Russia's Rosneft is the operator with 50.1 per cent interest.

BUZ BUZZ

UCO Bank ED visits Capital

Bhubaneswar: Ishraq Ali Khan, Executive Director, UCO Bank visited Bhubaneswar Zone May 25 and 26. During his visit he attended the felicitation programme of best performing Bank Branches by Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik. He addressed the newly joined probationary officers at bank's regional training centre here. Khan also addressed the staff members of zonal office and city based branches and advised them to provide better customer service where all the remaining branches were connected through video conference. He inaugurated an ATM of Paikatigiria branch at Gurujanga and encouraged customers to take up digital banking. He distributed the loan sanction letters to the women self help groups and MUDRA beneficiaries.



Paradeep Phosphates debuts at 5%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 27: Shares of Paradeep Phosphates jumped 5 per cent against its issue price of ₹42 in debut trade Friday.

The stock got listed at ₹43.55, a jump of 3.69 per cent against the issue price earlier in the day on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 12.5 per cent to ₹47.25. Shares of the company finally settled at ₹43.95 apiece, a gain of 4.64 per cent.

On the NSE, the stock made its debut at ₹44, up 4.76 per cent. It ended at ₹44.10 apiece, higher by 5 per cent.

In volume terms, 77.31 lakh shares were traded on the BSE and over 9.92 crore shares on the NSE during the day.

The Initial Public Offer (IPO) of Paradeep Phosphates was subscribed 1.75 times last week. It had a fresh issue aggregating up to ₹1,004 crore and an offer for sale of up to 11,85,07,493 equity shares.

The price range for the offer was ₹39-42 per share.

Paradeep Phosphates is primarily engaged in manufacturing, trading, distribution and sales of a variety of complex fertilisers such as Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and NPK fertilisers.

Ola scouts for land to set up cell, electric car factories

THE FIRM IS IN TALKS WITH GOVERNMENTS OF UTTAR PRADESH, MAHARASHTRA, GUJARAT, KARNATAKA, TAMIL NADU, AND TELANGANA FOR LAND ACQUISITION. ALSO THE COMPANY IS LIKELY TO FINALIZE IT AS EARLY AS NEXT MONTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

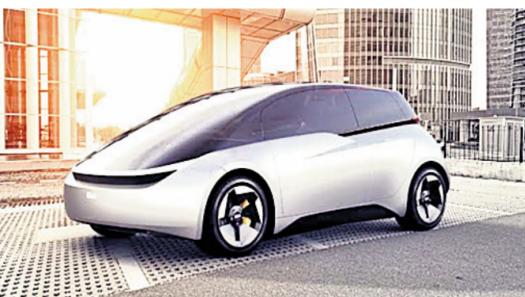
New Delhi, May 27: Mobility giant Ola Electric is scouting for

land to set up its cell and electric car factories and is in talks with multiple states, sources said.

Ola Electric needs 1,000 acres of land to set up its cell gigafactory and electric car factory which is expected to attract an investment of ₹10,000 crore. Some states are already vying, sources aware of the matter said.

The firm already has 500 acre in Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu where it has built its Futurefactory, the world's largest two-wheeler factory.

Ola's current plans for additional 1,000 acre of land are for a separate four-wheeler factory for its much-anticipated car factory and for its proposed cell gigafactory that will supply cells for its 2-wheeler and 4-wheeler product range.



In December 2020, Ola started the production of its electric scooters in Tamil Nadu.

Ola Electric was one of the 10 companies that submitted a bid under the Advanced Chemistry Cell Battery Storage Programme

in India under the production-linked (PLI) incentive scheme for battery manufacturing capabilities with a budget outlay of ₹18,100 crore. It is the only Indian auto and EV company that has been selected by the government

Since its first delivery December 15 last year, Ola Electric has become India's No 1 electric 2W maker

Ola Electric's four-wheeler ambitions are taking a serious shape with some concept designs almost ready

under PLI.

While its cell PLI bid was for the maximum allowed bid capacity of 20 GWh, founder and CEO Bhavish Aggarwal had blogged about the company's plans to set up an even larger 50 GWh gigafactory to support its own 2W (two-wheeler) and 4W (four-wheeler) plans.

Aggarwal has already made public his intention for Ola to launch its first electric car in the next 2-3 years to be produced at a new 4W

factory to be built, separate from the existing Futurefactory for 2Ws.

A new entrant into the domestic EV 2W segment, Ola has now emerged to be the market leader, disrupting the industry with its dealer-less D2C (direct to customer) model of delivery and service.

The company recently introduced a new software upgrade MoveOS2 for the S1 Pro, with features such as the new Eco Mode that increases its range.

A new Eco Mode which will increase the range to an industry-leading 165 km on a single charge, a Companion app unlocks and lock Ola S1 Pro and its boot, a Cruise control feature allows the rider to have a comfortable ride, seamless Navigation and own choice of music playback, all leading to an enhanced ride experience of S1 Pro.

BUTTLER, PRASIDH SEND ROYALS INTO IPL FINAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 27: Jos Buttler (106 n.o, 60b, 10x4, 6x6) extended his dream run this season with a record-equalling fourth hundred as Rajasthan Royals produced a ruthless performance to beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by seven wickets here Friday and reach their first IPL final since the inaugural edition in 2008.

Pacer Prasad Krishna (3/22) came back strongly from the hammering he received in the last game to help Rajasthan restrict RCB to 157/8 in Qualifier 2 despite a stellar knock from Rajat Patidar (58, 42b, 4x4, 3x6).

Buttler, the leading run getter of the tournament by a fair distance, then toyed with the RCB attack to ensure the Royals romped to victory in 18.1 overs. It was only fitting that Buttler hit the winning runs as he clobbered Harshal Patel for his sixth maximum.

With his special innings, Buttler matched Virat Kohli for most hundreds in a single season. Kohli had achieved that feat in 2016.

Royals take on IPL debutants Gujarat Titans in the final here Sunday and would be looking to emulate the special feat of the 2008 batch which lifted the title under the inspirational leadership of the late Shane Warne 14 seasons ago.

The pitch offered extra bounce but after Buttler provided a flying start in the company of Yashasvi Jaiswal (21), the Royals had the game in the bag. RCB, who had raised hopes for a long awaited title with a resurgent run, committed too many errors after Royals put them in to bat.

After a below-par batting effort, their bowlers ran out of ideas against a marauding Buttler. Mohammad Siraj ended a forgettable IPL campaign on a dismal note. He leaked 31 runs in his first two overs, allowing the Royals to run away with game.

Buttler crossed the 800-run mark this season and dispatched bowlers to all corners in his match-winning effort. Jaiswal too played his part as the Royals raced to 67/1 in the powerplay.

Earlier, Patidar extended his stellar run in the IPL but his effort was the lone bright spot of the RCB innings as the other batters struggled on a tricky pitch. Royals gained the upper hand by taking five wickets in the last five overs that went for only 34 runs.



Jos Buttler is delighted after reaching three-figure mark

After smashing a sensational hundred in the Eliminator, Patidar played with supreme confidence after high-profile openers Kohli (7) and Faf du Plessis (25) failed to come up with impactful knocks.

Royals pace duo of Trent Boult (1/28) and Krishna were impressive throughout the innings. While Boult got his inswingers going in the powerplay, Krishna, who had a horror night against Gujarat Titans in the Qualifier 1, got the ball to rise sharply from good length.

Kohli started with a spectacular six off Boult, a whip over deep square leg, before falling to a loose shot off Krishna. Patidar joined Du Plessis in the middle and again played as if he was batting on a different surface. He was dropped by Riyan Parag at backward point early in the innings after he collected two

fours off Krishna in the same over.

He also went after the star spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal in the middle overs and brought up his fifty with a clean strike over long-off.

Glenn Maxwell hit a six each against Ashwin and Chahal before Boult outsmarted him. Royals bowlers were able to stifle RCB in the death overs. Krishna lifted his game in the slog overs as well to dismiss the in-form Dinesh Karthik and Wanindu Hasaranga off successive balls.

BRIEF SCORES

RCB 157/8 (Rajat Patidar 58, Faf du Plessis 25, Glenn Maxwell 24; Prasad Krishna 3/22, Obed McCoy 3/23) lost to RR 161/3 (Jos Buttler 106 n.o, Sanju Samson 23, Yashasvi Jaiswal 21; Josh Hazlewood 2/23) by 7 wickets.

India eye revenge against Japan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, May 27: Having risen like a proverbial phoenix from the ashes, a rejuvenated Indian men's hockey team would like to put up a much-improved performance when it takes on Japan in its first 'Super 4' match of the Asia Cup here Saturday.

Despite facing a below-par Indonesia in its final group league game, the young side coached by Sardar Singh must be lauded for being able to score a whopping 16 goals in just an hour.

It was one more than what India required to put a final nail in Pakistan's coffin as far as harbouring World Cup qualification hopes were concerned. Both India and Pakistan finished on four points each in Pool A behind Japan but the defending champions qualified for the next round due to better goal difference (+1).

But it was not a smooth sailing for India in the first two matches. Having already qualified for next year's World Cup by virtue of being the hosts, India fielded an inexperienced team with as many as 12 debutants for the tournament to gain much-needed experience.

The young boys did not have the best of starts drawing 1-1 with Pakistan before losing 2-5 to Japan, which pushed them on the brink of elimination.

But the Indians were in no mood to bow out without a fight even as they stood at the point of no return. They staged a dramatic turnaround to keep alive their hopes of title defence. They were also aided by Japan, who beat Pakistan 3-2 in their final match.

Their first goal achieved, the



Indians would like to start afresh in the Super 4 stage, where Japan, South Korea and Malaysia are the other three teams.

Revenge would be high on India's agenda having lost to the Japanese in the pool stages. But it would be easier said than done as the nimble-footed Japanese rely mostly on counter attacks to surprise their opponents, a ploy they used to perfection against India in their last outing.

One of the perennial areas of concern for India is poor percentage of penalty corner conversions as this team doesn't have a desig-

ated drag-flicker like Rupinderpal Singh or Amit Rohidas. In fact, even against minnows Indonesia, India failed to convert even half of the 20 plus short corners that they earned.

The Indian defence, led by Lakra, will have to be at its best to stop the speedy Japanese, while the midfield will have to bind the team together to create chances upfront.

Dipsan Tirkey, who scored four goals against Indonesia, has been brilliant with penalty corner conversions but it is an area of concern as India could utilise just nine out

of the 22 short corners they earned in their last game.

Young Uttam Singh needs to be more accurate with his finishing inside the opposition circle, but Pawan Rajbhar has the been star for India so far. He not only created chances with his strong runs but also scored goals.

But to get the better of Japan, the Indians will have to produce a more disciplined performance, which was lacking in the first encounter between the two teams. In other Super 4 stage match, South Korea will take on Malaysia.

MSD'S WC-WINNING SIX 'INSPIRED' KIRAN



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, May 27: MS Dhoni's World Cup winning six resides in India's collective consciousness and it was a shot that changed a lot of lives, including that of little-known Solapur athlete Kiran Navgire.

And so, athletics' loss became cricket's gain as the former Maharashtra state level athlete decided that there is no fun if she can't tonk the ball like her "idol".

Eleven years later, at 28, Navgire, who plays domestic cricket for Nagaland, has found instant star-

dom, with some of the most powerful blows that one has ever seen from an Indian batter.

In her very second big stage game in the Women's T20 Challenger, the right-handed Navgire hit the fastest fifty for her team Velocity and her 34-ball-69 will certainly be remembered for a long time, especially the five sixes.

"I really feel good when I hit sixes and whenever I practise in the nets. I practice hitting sixes. I follow Dhoni sir and I love finishing like him, hitting big sixes," Navgire

told her teammate Yastika Bhatia during an interaction for bcci.Tv.

For her, Dhoni's unbeaten 91 against Sri Lanka made her set new goals as she concentrated more on athletics, kho-kho, kabaddi during her formative years while helping out her father in family farm in Solapur district's Mire village.

"I watched the 2011 World Cup final and Dhoni sir's winning sixer is something that impressed me and remained imprinted in my head. That six inspired me and I always feel that in every match. I can hit a six like that," said the stockily built Navgire, who was a state level shot-putter.

Thursday, Velocity skipper Deepti Sharma sent her up the order at No.3 and Navgire didn't disappoint anyone, taking international bowlers like Poonam Yadav, Salma Khatun and Rajeshwari Gayakwad to the cleaners.

"I don't like playing dot balls and want to score something off every ball and hence I got a good score," her answers were as uncomplicated as her lofted hits.

"In domestic cricket, I hadn't batted up the order but I had a good season there and had some good scores. My game revolves around my power hitting ability and if it's in my arc, I send it out of the park and if there are good balls, I like to rotate strikes playing singles and doubles," Navgire said.

She admitted that she was a bit nervous at the start but coach Devika Palshikar's sound advice did help a lot. "Initially, I was a bit nervous but then everything settled down. The captain (Deepti) and teammates gave me lot of confidence. Coach Devika ma'am said 'you don't need to look at the bowler but at the ball and I did just that,'" she added.

Praggnanandhaa goes down to Ding Liren in tie-break



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 27: Young Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa went down fighting to World No.2 Ding Liren in the tie-break of the Meltwater Champions Chess Tour Chess Masters 2022 online tournament final early Friday.

The 16-year-old from Chennai fought back to win the second set after having lost the opener, but then lost the two-game blitz tie-breaker. The Indian GM, who had lost the first set 1.5-2.5, hit back to win the second 2.5-1.5 and force the blitz tie-break.

The 29-year-old Liren used his experience to trump Praggnanandhaa in the second of the tie-break games. After the first blitz game ended in stalemate, the Chinese player won the next in 49 moves to dash the Indian teenager's hopes.

Earlier in the second set which he needed to win to force a tie-break, Praggnanandhaa got the all-important victory in the second game in 79 moves. The next game saw the two dish out a 106-move draw before another stalemate meant the title would be decided by the tie-breaker.

The Indian GM had defeated the highly-rated Dutchman Anish Giri in the semifinal to become the first Indian player to reach the final of a Meltwater Champions Chess Tour event. He also had beaten World No.1 Magnus Carlsen for a second time during the preliminary phase.

Ligue 1 scold La Liga for attacking PSG, Mbappe



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, May 27: The French league has written to Spanish competition president Javier Tebas complaining about his attacks on Paris Saint-Germain's finances after Kylian Mbappe chose to stay with the team rather than join Real Madrid.

After Mbappe signed a new three-year contract at Qatari-owned PSG, Tebas said the Spanish league would file complaints to UEFA, the European Union and French administrative and fiscal authorities because it believes the "scandalous" agreement attacks the economic stability of the sport.

"We want to express in the strongest possible terms our disapproval, and also our incomprehension, of your latest attacks against Ligue 1 and one of our clubs," French league chairman Vincent Labrune said in a letter to Tebas Wednesday that was obtained by this agency.

"The fact that you publicly and repeatedly take this position against Ligue 1 on this topic and denigrate our league and our clubs is both un-

acceptable and manifestly false." Tebas has long questioned the reliance of PSG on Qatari sponsorships, which he said are of "doubtful valuation," and doubted how the club could comply with rules given heavy losses.

Labrune wrote, "Your attacks on Ligue 1 and one of our clubs Paris Saint-Germain and one of our players Kylian Mbappe are based around your own interpretation of financial unsustainability and competitive imbalance, which you repeatedly attribute to Ligue 1 and one of our clubs."

Labrune pointed out that the European Court of Justice ruled Real Madrid and Barcelona benefitted from illegal state aid and how Spanish top division clubs have spent almost a third more on players than the French league in the last 10 years.

Labrune highlighted how Tebas in his role as a UEFA executive committee member helped to create new European financial sustainability rules. The replacement for Financial Fair Play has no rules blocking funding of clubs from sovereign wealth funds like Qatar.

Halep experiences panic attack during French Open match

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, May 27: Two-time Grand Slam champion Simona Halep said she had a panic attack while leading her second-round match that she eventually lost at the French Open.

The 2018 Roland Garros winner said she "lost it" and couldn't regain focus while playing 19-year-old Qinwen Zheng, who won 2-6, 6-2, 6-1 at Court Simonne-Mathieu.

"I had a break in the second set, but then something happened. I just lost it," the 30-year-old Romanian said in her post-match press conference. "It was just a panic attack. It happened. I didn't know how to handle it because I don't have it often."

Halep said she likely put too much pressure on herself. She also said she was assured by doctors that she's OK physically.

Pramod, Tarun, Manasi, Parul enter quarterfinals

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dubai, May 27: Top Indian para-shooters led by Paralympics champion Pramod Bhagat (MS SL3), Tarun Dhillon, Manasi Joshi and Parul Parmar advanced to the quarterfinals here, continuing their winning march through the group stage at the 4th Fazza Dubai Parabadminton International 2022 here.

Bhagat, the highest-ranked player in Men's Standing Lower (SL3) category, lived up to his billing as he topped the group stage with three wins as the group stage matches ended late Thursday.

The Odisha-born player is also through to the last-8 stage of the mixed doubles along with Manisha Ramadass, who is expected to advance in her women's singles SU5 and women's doubles SL3-SU5 with



Mandeep Kaur.

"It has been a good two weeks so far. I hope to continue the golden run in Dubai as well and keep my winning record here. These com-

petitive matches are important to me as we have the big one later this year, the World Para Championships in Japan," the reigning world and Paralympic

champion Bhagat, who is set to play Indian junior Nihal Gupta in the quarters, was quoted as saying by the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) in a release Friday.

Meanwhile, Tokyo 2020 bronze medalist Manoj Sarkar and Nitesh Kumar, placed in the lower half of the draw in men's singles SL3, and promising Hardik Makkar and Chirag Baretha (both in men's singles SU5) are also through to the quarterfinals.

In men's SL4, Tarun Dhillon will play Korea's Cho Nadan in the quarterfinals and is expected to be challenged by Thailand's Siripong Teamarrom in the semifinals. A summit clash between Dhillon and Indonesian Fredy Setiawan looks likely. Dhillon is also through to the last-8 stage of men's doubles SL3-SL4 and mixed

doubles SL3-SU5 events.

Among other names, top seeds Malaysian Cheah Liek Hou (MS SU5), Hong Kong's Chu Man Kai (MS SH6), Japan's Daiki Kajiwara, and Hong Kong's Chan Ho Yuen (MS WH2), Indonesians Setiawan (MS SL4) and Suryo Nugroho (MS SU5) all topped their groups and advanced to the quarterfinals.

In the women's events, India's reigning world champion Manasi Joshi, and Parul Parmar (women's singles SL3) advanced as did Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan, who should make it to the finals of women's singles SH6.

Promising Manisha Ramadass continued her good run and is through to the women's singles quarterfinals SU5. She is expected to face Denmark's Cathrine Rosengren in the semifinals.