

SUICIDAL MOVE



Several trees were felled near Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Saturday, for construction of MLA quarters. OP PHOTO

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



It comes in handy while dealing with public servants. They think PM is keeping an eye on them!

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX		37.8°C	39.6°C
TEMP. MIN		27.4°C	27.0°C
Humidity		76%	64%
Rainfall		Nil	Nil
Forecast		Partly cloudy sky	

DGCA slaps ₹5 lakh penalty on IndiGo

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 28: Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Saturday said it has imposed a fine of ₹5 lakh on IndiGo airline for denying boarding to a specially-abled child at Ranchi airport May 7.

IndiGo had May 9 said the boy was denied permission to board the Ranchi-Hyderabad flight as he was "visibly in panic". As the boy was prohibited from boarding, his parents also decided not to enter the plane.

The DGCA had May 9 formed a three-member team to investigate the incident. "It has been observed that the handling of the special child by the Indigo ground staff was deficient and ended up exacerbating the situation," said a statement by the DGCA.

A more compassionate handling would have smoothened nerves, calmed the child and obviated the need for the extreme step, it mentioned.

Special situations deserve extraordinary responses but the airline's staff failed to rise up to the occasion, and in the process, committed lapses in adherence to the letter and spirit of the Civil Aviation Requirements (regulations), it noted.

DGCA observed that handling of the special child by the Indigo ground staff was deficient that ended up exacerbating the situation



Bengal likely to remove Guv as pvt varsity visitor



Kolkata: After taking a step towards replacing West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as the Chancellor of state universities, the state government is now considering closing the doors of private universities for the Governor. Sources said a process has started to remove the governor from the chair of visitor in private universities and replace him with the state Education Minister Bratya Basu. "The state cabinet members have in-principle agreed on this initiative and now the proposal will be placed in its next meeting for clearance, following which the government will moot a Bill on this count in the floor of the Assembly," a source said. P8

Drug peddler held with doc ID, khaki-clad pics

STF sleuths seize over 1 kg brown sugar worth ₹1.20cr in Capital city

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 28: The special task force (STF) of the state Crime Branch has seized over 1 kg brown sugar valued at ₹1.20 crore during a raid in Bhubaneswar and arrested two persons. One of the accused was carrying fake ID cards and photos with police uniforms, the police said Saturday.

Acting on a tip-off, the STF conducted a raid at Baramunda area of Bhubaneswar Friday evening and seized the narcotic drugs along with ₹17,000 cash from the two drug peddlers, said DSP of STF Sachidananda Rath.

The accused - identified as Kapildev Majumdar, a resident of Kalyani Simanto under Kalyani police limits in Nadia district of West Bengal, and Rasmiranjan Bhol alias Silu of Damabhuiin under Jankia police station in Khurda - have been arrested and forwarded to court, the STF said.



During the raid, the STF sleuths also recovered a fake ID card with Rasmiranjan's photo as a Gynaecology doctor at Bhubaneswar AIIMS, several of his photographs in police uniforms and one ID card as GM of Swastika Event Ltd. The cops also seized one Bullet motorcycle and two laptops from him.

Prima facie, police found that Rasmiranjan used to impersonate different people/officials in order to deceive the police. The STF officials said the duo was



using fake ID cards for running the illegal trade. The STF will seek court's permission to take Rasmiranjan on remand for further probe into the matter.

STF arrested the accused after registering a case (12/22) under Sections 21(c), 29 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 as the duo failed to produce any valid document for the possession of the contraband. The accused were Saturday produced before the court that later sent them to judicial custody.

Lioness dies from 'snakebite' in zoo



POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, May 28: A lioness at Nandankanan Zoological Park here died from suspected snakebite in its enclosure, Saturday.

The 15-year-old African lioness nicknamed 'Ganga' was brought to the zoo from Israel in 2015. The animal suddenly fell ill and the animal keeper noticed its unusual behaviour Saturday morning before he informed the zoo authorities.

A poisonous snake was spotted slithering inside its enclosure due to which it was suspected that the lioness was bitten by the reptile. A veterinary team rushed to the spot and administered anti-venom injection to the animal. Despite efforts by the veterinarians, the lioness died due to thickening of the blood, said the deputy director of the zoo Sanjit Kumar.

With the death of Ganga, the lion population in the zoo has now come down to 16.

Post-mortem of the lioness will be conducted to ascertain the actual reason of her death.

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JHARSUGUDA Sarbahal Road, Jharsuguda	ROURKELA Kesar Bhawan, Main Road	NOWHERE ELSE	

leisure



MEGHAN MARKLE PAYS RESPECTS TO SHOOTING VICTIMS IN TEXAS

The Duchess of Sussex paid her respect at the school where 21 people were killed in a mass shooting in Texas May 24 – 19 of whom were children. While Meghan, 40, hasn't made an official comment on the shooting, she took it upon herself to visit Uvalde, where the ordeal took place.

UVALDE EFFECT: HARRY STYLES PLEDGES \$1 MN FOR GUN SAFETY NONPROFIT

Harry Styles has joined the building-up chorus of civic leaders and Hollywood figures in condemning the epidemic of gun violence in America. He announced he'll be partnering with the nonprofit Everytown for Gun Safety during his upcoming North American tour and donating over \$1 million.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today in the morning you will choose to approach work audaciously. You will churn out fancy ideas. However, Ganesh says, by noon, you will feel disoriented again. Ganesh urges you to take a break to re-energise yourself.

TAURUS
This day, you are likely to be in a mood to extend your business activities, launch new venture. Ganesh urges you to hold your horses today, and reminds you that haste makes waste. It would be a good idea to wait for a few days and, in the meantime plan out your projects meticulously, in detail.

GEMINI
There seems to be a mood of celebration in your family. However, you will be busy handling a business deal while your family enjoys the occasion. You are likely to go on a tour for business purposes later in the day. You will devote time to achieving professional success rather than celebrating a personal achievement, says Ganesh.

CANCER
In all likelihood, today, you are likely to strike a balance between your professional and personal life, predicts Ganesh. The work will be interesting and stimulating, while your time with family will be peaceful and soothing.

LEO
Rise and shine! There is a very bright chance that today will be one of those super energetic and enthusiastic days. Ganesh predicts you will have a great time socialising with neighbours, friends and relatives.

VIRGO
Ganesh foresees a strong probability that you will keep your feet firmly planted on the ground in the face of adversity. The afternoon sun may bring some good returns or much awaited results for you. Love and affection will bring tranquility in your family life. There is a distinct possibility of new relationships developing later in the day, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Ganesh forecasts mostly superficial and thin-skinned issues as the likely cause of your unease and nervousness today. Matters relating to government rules and regulations will be on the table today at your workplace. But evening promises a lighter fare; your fine taste in arts shall receive applause from all quarters.

SCORPIO
There are chances that you may easily get irritated and infuriated today, predicts Ganesh. Keep a lid on your anger or it may lead to irreconcilable differences. Avoid confrontations and unnecessary complications at work as well. You will spend a lot of time in finding out solutions to pending problems.

SAGITTARIUS
You may turn to your family for love and happiness today, predicts Ganesh. But your soul searching will come at a high material cost. In the evening, you may encounter a thrilling love prospect with who you might indulge in some adventurous activity.

CAPRICORN
Work pressure may take a toll on you today, but you will overcome all impediments and excel in whatever work you undertake, says Ganesh. Support and motivation await you at home as family members will be exceedingly tolerant of your actions and endeavours.

AQUARIUS
Action is your forte, so seize the initiative and you will come out a winner! The afternoon sees you happy, but heavy-duty work may take a toll on you. Relax a bit – listen to music, play with your pet, or simply don your best attire and step out to socialise!

PISCES
You are likely to be sweating today at work, and it is neither the weather nor an ill-fitting suit that is the cause, says Ganesh. You will try your best to get your views across, and the post-afternoon lunch siesta is probably the best time to hammer your point home because that is when your boss will have all the energy to argue against.

Disha being the poser

Mumbai: The Malang actress Disha Patani is one of the hottest divas in tinsel town. She is the fittest, coolest and at the same time, hottest lady B-Town has ever seen. More than often, Disha flaunts her gorgeous hot bod by posing in sultry clothes. This time around, Disha Patani has set the temperature blazing by posing in a red bodycon top. The colour red added to her hottest was enough to set the internet on fire.

Earlier, Disha Patani had shared some stunning pictures posing in black corset top and ripped jeans. Keeping her tresses open, Disha Patani has gone all bold and beautiful for her latest photoshoot.

Pulling off sensuous poses, Disha Patani can make any man go weak in knees with that intense look of her. Nobody can match up to Disha when it comes to being a hottie.

On the work front, Disha Patani has Ek Villain 2 next. Directed by Mohit Suri, it will have Disha along with Tara Sutaria, Arjun Kapoor, Aditya Roy Kapur and more. The gorgeous diva also has a couple of other films in her kitty.



Musk's wish for Johnny-Amber

Los Angeles: A day after the jury began deliberations in the defamation case between actor Johnny Depp and his ex-wife Amber Heard, billionaire Elon Musk Saturday called the Hollywood stars "incredible", hoping they would move on.

Mr Musk, who reportedly dated the actress while she was still married to Mr Depp, tweeted, "I hope they both move on. At their best, they are each incredible."

This comes after Mr Depp was confronted in the court with a text he sent to his former talent agent Christian Carinno in which he talked about the alleged affair between Ms Heard and the Tesla and SpaceX CEO.



Rakhi's beau wants her to be 'more covered'

Mumbai: Rakhi Sawant is making headlines again because of her relationship with Adil Khan Durrani. She posted about him giving her a BMW and also told the media that Adil has purchased a house in her name in Dubai.

But Rakhi's boyfriend has issues with the way she dresses up and wants her to wear less glamorous dresses. He told the media, "It is just that I feel she should wear dresses which are less glamorous and more covered."

Rakhi also spoke about how they both are serious about their relationship and that he also introduced her to his family.



ROCKY BHAI EFFECT

15-year-old tries smoking, lands in hospital

Hyderabad: Doctors at Century Hospital in Hyderabad successfully treated a teenager who inspired by "Rocky Bhai", a character of KGF movie series, smoked a packet of cigarettes for the first time and fell severely sick. The 15-yr-old boy, whose name has been withheld to protect child's identity, was rushed to the hospital when his parents learnt that he smoked after watching KGF2 movie three times in just two days.

The boy watched the movie in the second week of its release in theaters and was inspired by "style" of the lead character 'Rocky Bhai' and wanted to ape him by smoking for the first time, only to fall severely sick in the process, the hospital officials stated.

Meanwhile, KGF Chapter 2 has been minting money even after more than a month of its release.

FUN post

PEANUTS



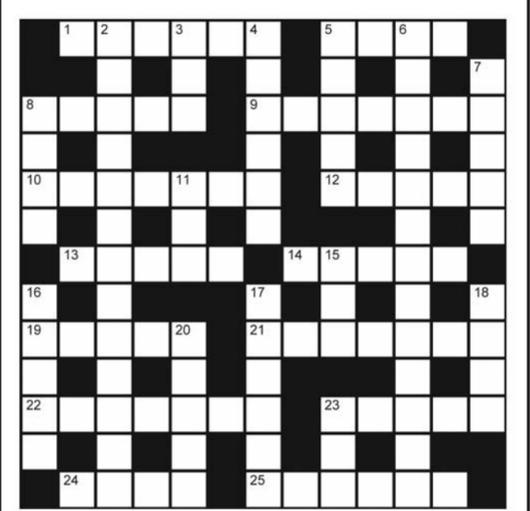
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



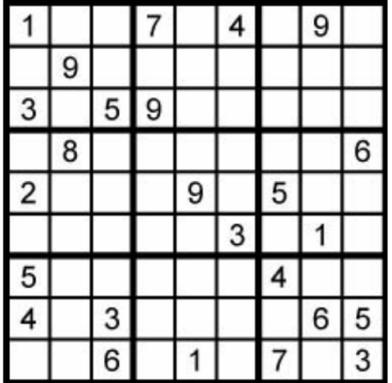
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Damage
 - 5 Wedding day promises
 - 8 Soft creamy candy
 - 9 Outermost tip of a spar
 - 10 Largest living bird
 - 12 Earthy colour
 - 13 Angler's basket
 - 14 Healthy diet necessity
 - 19 Beauty pageant wear
 - 21 They can be flying ones, maybe
 - 22 South China Sea nation
 - 23 Photo finish
 - 24 Quartz variety
 - 25 "Romeo and Juliet" setting
 - 5 Sixth sign of the zodiac
 - 6 Like most seaside cottages (7-6)
 - 7 Kathleen Winsor's novel, "Forever ____"
 - 8 Hoodwink
 - 11 Swelling reducer
 - 15 Marker
 - 16 Barrel part
 - 17 Noted sci-fi author
 - 18 Man, for one
 - 20 Extension
 - 23 Mal de ____
- Down**
- 2 Egadi Islands locale
 - 3 Word of support
 - 4 Beat

SUDOKU

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

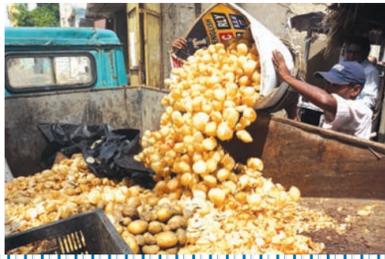


SOLUTIONS



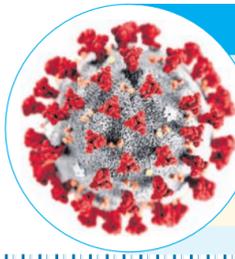
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



HEALTH HAZARD

Huge quantities of Gupchup, a popular street food, were seized by the health officials at Shankarpur in Cuttack over violation of hygiene norms, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	53,11,12,790	50,17,33,017	63,10,094
India	4,31,50,215	4,26,09,335	5,24,572
Odisha	12,88,422	12,79,163	9,126

Adulterated sauce seized in Cuttack, four detained



The godown in Cuttack raided by police, Saturday

ON A TIP-OFF, THE POLICE RAIDED A GODOWN IN MALGODOWN AREA AND SEIZED AROUND 20 CARTONS OF ADULTERATED SAUCE

DURING INVESTIGATION, THE POLICE CAME TO KNOW THAT THE ADULTERATED SAUCE HAD BEEN MANUFACTURED AT A FACTORY IN BARANG AREA

LATER, THE POLICE, RAIDED THE MANUFACTURING UNIT AND SEIZED 60 CARTONS OF ADULTERATED SAUCE AND HUGE QUANTITIES OF RAW MATERIALS

The police had seized huge quantities of fake spices, tea powder, ghee and sauces from several places of the Silver City and on its outskirts in last couple of years. They have also busted several factories producing fake and adulterated products



came to know that the adulterated sauce had been manufactured at a factory in Barang area.

Later, the Malgoddow police, in association with Barang police, raided the manufacturing unit and seized 60 cartons of adulterated sauce and huge quantities of raw materials.

"Two persons were detained from the factory. The unit was processing various chemicals and other hazardous substances to manufacture the sauce. We have sent samples of the adulterated sauce for laboratory tests," said Malgoddow police in-charge Trupti Ranjan Nayak.

Sources, meanwhile, claimed that some traders were selling the adulterated sauce to various retailers in Cuttack and its nearby

areas for last several days. "We are looking into all aspects related to the seizure of adulterated sauce. We are trying to find out the persons involved in the manufacturing and marketing of the fake sauce," Nayak said.

It is worth mentioning here that Jagatpur police and health wing of Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) Friday busted an illegal soft drink unit at Tarol area of the city.

The unit - Binari Industries - was operating from a hotel without requisite permissions, said CMC health officer Satyabrata Mohapatra.

Empty bottles, raw materials and machinery used for making soft drinks have been recovered from the spot, Mohapatra said, adding that the soft drink manufactured at the unit was being sold in Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and Cuttack.

Jagatpur IIC Rabindranath Meher said they have registered a case (219/22) and arrested Jitendra Sahu in connection with the incident.

Notably, the police had seized huge quantities of fake spices, tea powder, ghee and sauces from several places of the Silver City and on its outskirts in last couple of years. They have also busted several factories producing fake and adulterated products.

The police have destroyed these duplicate products after receiving an approval in this regard from the court.



Fruit stalls at Buxi Bazar in Cuttack witnessed huge footfalls ahead of the Sabitri Brata, Saturday

FESTIVAL AHEAD

DISPROPORTIONATE ASSETS CASE

Ex-official of W&CD dept sentenced to 2 years in jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 28: A special court here Saturday sentenced a former top official of the Women and Child Development (W&CD) Department to two years of rigorous imprisonment after he was found guilty of accumulating properties disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The convict was identified as Dr. Surendranath Pati, a native of Kendrapara. Pati resides in Nayapalli area of the capital city, sources said. The court also slapped a penalty of ₹20,000 on Pati. Non-payment of the penalty amount would invite imprisonment for additional three months.

Pati had worked as the assistant director in the health and nutrition section of the W&CD Department.



Dr. Surendranath Pati had worked as the assistant director in the health and nutrition section of the W&CD Department

During a series of raids at different places related to Pati in December 1995, the Vigilance sleuths had found him in possession of disproportionate assets to the tune of ₹9,28,500

The court also slapped a penalty of ₹20,000 on Pati. Non-payment of the penalty amount would invite imprisonment for additional three months

During a series of raids at different places related to Pati in December 1995, the Vigilance sleuths had found him in possession of disproportionate assets to the tune of ₹9,28,500.

Later, the vigilance sleuths arrested Pati after registering a case (69/95) under sections 13(2), 13(1)(e) of the Prevention of Corruption

Act, 1988.

In November 2011, the state Home department had given its nod for the trial of Pati by the Special Court established under sub-section (1) of Section 3 of Special Courts Act, 2006 as he was found amassing properties disproportionate to his known sources of income by resorting to corrupt means.

OPSC halts recruitment process in universities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 28: The Odisha Public Service Commission has said it will keep in abeyance the recruitment process of teachers, after the UGC alleged violation of a Supreme Court order on implementation of the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act 2020.

The UGC, in separate letters to the OPSC and the Higher Education department, said the hiring process of faculty or non-teaching staff in universities should not be conducted for three months in the wake of the apex court order

The move comes a day after the UGC, in separate letters to the OPSC and the Higher Education department, said the hiring process of faculty or non-teaching staff in universities should not be conducted for three months in the wake of the apex court order.

The OPSC interview for appointment to the post of assistant professors for certain subjects were scheduled from June 4.

The Act was passed in the Assembly, but the opposition alleged that the law will curtail the financial and administrative autonomy of universities, and the varsities will come under direct control of the state government.

The University Grants Commission had filed special leave petitions before the Supreme Court challenging the Act, and the court put an interim halt on its implementation.

A delegation of retired vice-chancellors and professors also met Governor Ganeshi Lal over the issue Friday.

Heritage corridor listed as unauthorised project by ASI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 28: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has added Srimandir heritage corridor project to its list of unauthorised projects under Bhubaneswar circle.

The ASI has prepared a list of heritage sites where construction works are being carried out within 100 metre radius without its permission. The Srimandir heritage corridor project has been added to the list. However, the ASI has not issued any statement in this regard.

In its affidavit submitted to the Orissa high court recently, the ASI had stated that it has not provided any no-objection certificate to the project.

The ASI also informed the court that the digging of pits as part of the project work might have damaged archaeological remains near the 12th century shrine.

Meanwhile, Puri Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati once again criticised the state government over the heritage corridor project.

"The Holy City is a place for meditation and spirituality. The state government must not introduce any measures to harm the spiritual essence of Puri," said the seer.

Saraswati further said no political party in the state is capable of challenging the state government

The ASI has prepared a list of heritage sites where construction works are being carried out within 100 metre radius without its permission

The Srimandir heritage corridor project has been added to the list. However, the ASI has not issued any statement in this regard

over the project. "While the BJP is with the BJD, the Congress party has lost most of its base in state," he said.

The seer earlier urged both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to ensure a halt to the 'destruction' of heritage "under the grab of development".

"The Prime Minister and Chief Minister should give attention to the fact that the Puri is being ruined in the name of development. Mutts are being demolished for widening roads... (this) is not right. The administration should stop implementing its plan immediately," Saraswati had said.

Puri MP Pinaki Mishra, meanwhile, said that construction work of the project is going on as per the wish of Lord Jagannath and no agency can stop it.

The High Court and the Supreme Court will take a call on the legality of the project and every one will have to obey the court order, Mishra said.



CHARIOT WORK



Carpenters sawing a log as part of chariot construction for this year's Rath Yatra in Puri, Saturday

OP PHOTO

IIT Kanpur develops smartwatch for visually impaired

Around 49 million blind and 285 million visually impaired persons in the world face difficulty in easily interacting with devices due to the absence of tactile interface and India is home to about 20 per cent of the total blind people in the world

A team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur Saturday announced that it has developed a novel touch-sensitive smart watch for visually impaired persons that are equipped with modern techniques.

The watch comprises sensors like PPG (Photoplethysmography) to read health parameters such as the heart rate and SpO2.

An accelerometer is used to measure the step count to keep track of daily activity. All these parameters can be individually read using the haptic menu.

"One of our objectives at IIT Kanpur has been to make innova-



One of our objectives at IIT Kanpur has been to make innovations inclusive for all. This haptic smart watch is a significant invention in this regard, which I believe will be of great help for the blind and the visually impaired

ABHAY KARANDIKAR | DIRECTOR, IIT KANPUR

tions inclusive for all. This haptic smart watch is a significant invention in this regard, which I believe will be of great help for the blind and the visually impaired," Abhay Karandikar, Director, IIT Kanpur, said in a statement.

"The touch-sensitive and vibration-based features would prove to be revolutionary in giving the sense of time to the blind and the

The invention is said to be a cost-effective smart wearable device with a touch-sensitive tactile interface that displays information using vibrations.

The dial face consisting of tactile touch-sensitive hour markers and vibration-based output is used to read time, create an interface to select different apps, haptically recognize different apps, and to sense the numbers.

The report said that around 49 million blind and 285 million visually impaired persons in the world face difficulty in easily interacting with devices due to the absence of tactile interface and India is home to about 20 per cent of the total blind people in the world.

SDJM court grants 5-day remand for Rajesh, Robin

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 28: The Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate (SDJM) Court Saturday allowed the City police to take two members of the notorious 'Katuri' gang on five-day remand for further investigation.

The Commissionerate Police had earlier sought the court's permission to take Rajesh Mohapatra on a remand for ten days.

Saturday, the Khandagiri police requested the court to grant ten-day remand for Robin Satpathy alias Jagan, another member of the gang. However, the court permitted the police to take both the accused on a remand for five days in the case.

Notably, Rajesh along with other members of the Katuri



gang had robbed a jewelry shop owner of ₹6 lakh at Saubhagya Nagar a few days ago.

Robin, along with six others including Rajesh's mother Jyotshna Rani Mohapatra, was arrested by the special squad of Commissionerate Police May 24. Rajesh had later surrendered before the SDJM court here Thursday. Both Rajesh and Robin are resi-

dents of Pichukoli Basti under Capital police limits.

Police had also recovered several sharp weapons and a toy gun during a raid at the residence of Rajesh April 14. However, Rajesh and his family members had managed to escape before the raid.

Similarly, the special squad also managed to arrest detained criminal Chakara Barik, also a ring leader of the group, after a shootout 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.

SUNNY DAY SPLASH



Locals enjoyed bathing in Bindu Sagar lake in Bhubaneswar on a hot Saturday

OP PHOTO

2 yrs on, Dhenkanal smart park a non-starter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, May 28: Although sanctioned two years ago for the construction of a smart park in town, funds of ₹1 crore lay unspent with the Dhenkanal Municipality authorities, a recent report said.

The civic authorities are yet to acquire a land for the purpose. As a result, the smart park in town is yet to be built.

The state government had planned to construct the park spanning two acres with various facilities, keeping pace with the rapid urbanisation and growing aspirations of the residents.

Two years ago, it sanctioned ₹1 crore for the purpose in 2020. Initially, the district administra-



tionally, the district administration had handed over proposed two acre land near driving training school at Mahishapat to the municipal authorities, which turned out to be a forest land

Now, the district administration has decided to provide two acre of land near the proposed bus-stand at Mahishapat

However, the land is under the custody of the encroachers and the implementation of the project is getting delayed as the encroachers are yet to be evicted

tion had handed over the proposed two acre land to the municipal authorities near the driving training school at Mahishapat. However, plans fizzled when the land turned out to be a forest land.

Now, the district administration has decided to provide two acre of land near the proposed bus-stand

at Mahishapat. However, the land is under the custody of the encroachers. The implementation of the project is getting delayed as the encroachers are yet to be evicted.

As per the plans, the smart park would have ultramodern walking tracks for morning and evening walks. The park would be powered

through solar panels and solar lighting systems and would also have rest rooms, flower gardens and gymnasium facilities. It would be a hub of entertainment and recreation for the locals.

Meanwhile, Dhenkanal has been declared a model town due to which the state government is keen on de-

veloping its infrastructure. The state government is also providing sufficient funds to carry out the developmental works, sources say.

However, due to negligence and apathetic attitude of the local administration, several proposals have failed to see the light of day, the smart park being one among those.

When contacted, Dhenkanal Municipality executive officer Atanu Kumar Samant confirmed that the civic body does have ₹1 crore for construction of a smart park for quite a long time.

The district administration has decided to give two acres near the bus-stand area for which talks will be held with sub-Collector. Tenders will be floated and works will begin after the land is finalised, he added.

WORLD MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY

Sambalpur girl seeks paid leave provision

PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur, May 28: Ranjita Priyadarshini, a resident of N Guha Line in Sambalpur town, has urged Union Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav seeking paid leave for women at workplaces.

She has also submitted a petition to state Labour and Employment Minister Sushant Singh in this regard. This apart, she has launched an online campaign for the same, which has garnered "over-

whelming" response from many quarters so far. The demand holds significance as it coincides with the World Menstrual Hygiene Day, which was observed globally, Saturday. The day is observed at government levels, by all voluntary and social outfits as well as women's organisations to create awareness among women about their monthly cycle which is still considered a taboo in various parts of the country.

With a Master of Law (LLM) degree to her resume, Ranjita has also launched a signature campaign hoping to turn her move into a movement. She is resolute to bring a permanent solution to the problems and discomfort of working women, who constitute nearly a third of the total workforce in the country.

"Women fail to narrate about their discomfort before others. They face an embarrassing situa-



Discomfort from having to work during periods remains unnoticed. I demand equal respect for men and women, because a third of the workforce continues to work under physical and mental pressure during menstruation

RANJITA PRIYADARSHINI | PETITIONER

tion in their workplaces due to lack of access to proper toilets and rest-rooms," she added.

"We have been demanding just one day of paid leave in a month for periods as 99 per cent of women encounter maximum pain for 24 hours," Ranjita said.

"According to Article 15 (3) and Article 42 of the Constitution, the state should create special provisions for women to provide just and humane conditions for work," she said.

"At present, 12 companies in India are already offering paid leave during periods. Why cannot the same be replicated at all government and private establishments," she asked.

Ranjita said there is no shame in demanding such leave and urged women to sign the petition. She is also overwhelmed by the response she has received from women so far. "I have received phone calls from various cities and organisations. We will unanimously make the demand to ensure that women get their rights," she added.

12 new Cov cases in state

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha recorded 12 more Covid cases Saturday, while there was no new fatality, a Health bulletin said. There are currently 80 active cases and eight more patients have recovered from the disease. The daily TPR stood at 0.08 per cent and 14,773 samples were tested in the past 24 hours.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit in the Court of Notary Public BBSR, on dtd. 27.05.2022 that I Baswaraj Mahadevppa Dalgade, S/o. Late Mahadevppa S. Dalgade Res. of Shivangani Enclave, Basant Vihar, Road No. 1/B, Po.- Harmu, Ranchi, Jharkhand- 834002 do hereby state that my correct name is Baswaraj Mahadevppa Dalgade which is mentioned in my Aadhaar Card but in my DL & Pan Card has been wrongly mentioned as Baswaraj M. Dalgade and in Passport as Baswaraj Dalgade. That Baswaraj Mahadevppa Dalgade & Baswaraj M. Dalgade is one & same person.

I, Gupteswar Konhar (Existing name as per HAL, Koraput Division personal records) resident of Qtr.No. E/41, HAL, Sunabeda-2, Ps-Sunabeda, Dist.- Koraput, Pin- 763002 have changed my name from Gupteswar Konhar (Existing name as per HAL, Koraput Division Personal records) to Gupteswar Kanhar vide affidavit/self declaration dated 04.02.2022 (Date of Affidavit/ Self Declaration).

ECoR organises 67th National Railways Awards



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 28: The 67th National Railways Awards-2022 was organised at the Railway Auditorium here, Saturday.

Railway employees, zonal railways and production units were recognised and awarded for their

efficiency in service and dedication towards Indian Railways.

Union Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnav graced the occasion as the chief guest and felicitated the awardees.

Altogether, 156 employees from

various Zonal Railways from all over the country received certificates and awards from the Railway Minister. Apart from this, 21 shields were awarded to various Railways, Production Units & Railway PSUs. Ten trackmen in operations, security and safety category were also awarded.

Meanwhile, 28 employees were awarded for meritorious act with regard to personal safety leading to protection of life and property in railways and 42 were awarded for exemplary work done to improve operations, security and safety, better maintenance and utilisation of assets.

Railway Board Chairman and CEO VK Tripathi in his welcome address spoke about the development of Indian Railways in recent days.

"Indian Railways has achieved milestones in various categories including freight loading, electrification, new line/doubling/gauge conversion, loco production and also the integration of technology for ensuring safety of passengers. We have prepared a National Rail Plan (NRP) for India 2030. The plan is to create a 'future ready' railway system by 2030 and is aimed to formulate strategies based on both operational capacities and commercial policy initiatives to increase share of the railways," he said.

MOBILE GAMING SET TO SURPASS \$136BN IN '22

Mobile gaming now represents 61 per cent of the overall gaming market and is set to surpass \$136 billion in 2022, growing 1.7x faster than the gaming market overall, a new report has shown.

The overall gaming market is set to hit \$222 billion in 2022, according to data.ai (formerly App Annie) and the International Data Corporation (IDC).

Globally, users downloaded 45 per cent more mobile games per week in Q1 2021 from pre-pandemic levels, clocking in at over 1.1 billion games per week.

"We are seeing greater diversity across gaming genres allowing publishers to serve new gamers across generations and genders," said Lexi Sydow, Head of Market Insights, data.ai.

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In Q1 2022, consumers spent over \$1.6 billion per week on mobile games on iOS and Google Play, up 30 per cent from pre-pandemic levels

China led the growth in Q1 2022 while North America and Western Europe made up half of mobile game spend

In Q1 2022, consumers spent over \$1.6 billion per week on mobile games on iOS and Google Play, up 30 per cent from pre-pandemic levels, the report mentioned.

"Asia Pacific saw the biggest



growth in market share for global consumer spend," the findings showed.

China led the growth in Q1 2022 while North America and Western Europe made up half of mobile game spend.

"Studios and publishers should emphasise rewarded videos and playables, and that contextual data about gamers will grow more important over time as Apple, Google, other vendors, and regulatory bodies in several key coun-

tries prioritise customer data privacy and security," explained Lewis Ward, Director of Gaming and VR/AR, International Data Corporation

Studios and publishers should emphasise rewarded videos and playables, and that contextual data about gamers will grow more important over time as Apple, Google, other vendors, and regulatory bodies in several key countries prioritise customer data privacy and security

LEWIS WARD | DIRECTOR, GAMING AND VR/AR, INTERNATIONAL DATA CORPORATION

tries prioritise customer data privacy and security," explained Lewis Ward, Director of Gaming and VR/AR, IDC.

Mobile genre preferences are more varied, with 8 distinct sub-genres being represented among the top 10 games. "Core Games with real-time online features such as PVP (player-versus-player) or cross-platform play among the most popular genres across the

gaming spectrum like PUBG Mobile," said the report.

Nearly 50 per cent of top mobile games by consumer spend in the United States skew female while Gen X and Baby Boomers saw steady growth in mobile game spending. "Mobile is democratising the space and is now the primary driver of growth for digital games consumption," Sydow noted.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Tiffin bomb planted by Maoists defused

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, May 28: At a time when Maoist posters are appearing regularly in various parts of Kandhamal district, CRPF jawans of 127 Battalion have averted a possible mishap by neutralising a tiffin bomb near Gahalai village under Belghar police limits, Saturday. Someone had informed CRPF jawans about suspicious person carrying something in a bag. A special team of CRPF started an operation. After a search operation in Lankagada Gahali area and found a tiffin bomb weighing 5 to 6 kg.



A bomb squad defused the bomb. For last few days, some fringe areas have been witnessing Maoist activities. Maoists have been opposing destruction of ganja farming in hilly areas.

Student's death : 2 teachers suspended

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, May 28: The district administration has suspended two teachers of Nandiniguda Ashram School under Khairipur block in Malkangiri district Saturday in connection with the death of a student on the school premises May 15. Locals had been enraged over the death of the student and sought action against some errant teachers.

The suspended teachers are headmaster Narayan Nayak and teacher Sangita Biswas. Further investigation into the incident is in progress.

Motorcyclist killed in road accident

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patnagarh, May 28: A biker was killed after an unidentified vehicle rammed him from behind at Ulba Square on Patnagarh-Bolangir main road in Bolangir district, Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Sushil Kand. He was rescued in critical condition and rushed to Patnagarh sub-divisional hospital where doctors pronounced him dead. The accident occurred when he was returning after attending a marriage ceremony. Police registered a case and conducted a post-mortem, Saturday.

HOMeward JOURNEY



Forest officials releasing 76 Olive Ridley hatchlings into the sea at Choumukh sea beach under Baliapal block in Balasore district, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Erosion plays havoc along Ganjam coast

TIDAL WAVES ARE FAST ERODING THE COASTLINE AND IT MAY SOON GOBBLE UP THE REMAINING SIX HOUSES IN PODAMPETA VILLAGE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, May 28: Fishermen in Podampeta village at Palibandha panchayat near Rushikulya mouth of Ganjam district have been living in the dread of losing their land and livelihood as high tidal waves are fast creeping in towards the village eating the coast away.

Meanwhile, with the sea surface always remaining rough near the river mouth and high tidal waves constantly lashing the coast, six families of fishermen that still live in the village are counting their days in apprehension that they will be rendered homeless.

The tidal waves are fast eroding the coastline and it is apprehended that it may soon gobble up the remaining six houses in the village.

They fear that the tidal waves may wash away their houses and belongings anytime. Such has been the erosion that the houses are crumbling like a pack of cards while the distance between the sea and Podampeta village has reduced from two kilometres to just a few metres now.

Reports said that the district administration rehabilitated around



99 per cent of the residents at safer places elsewhere after the village witnessed faster erosion due to ingress of the turbulent sea.

However, six families of fishermen were left out of the housing scheme and still continue to live in the village. The roaring sound of the sea haunts them and deprives them of a peaceful sleep at night.

"We are living in the village in an atmosphere of trepidation and nightmare resigned to our fate," said family members of fishermen J Sukanti, L Bhimadara, L Ashis, CH Trinath, L Sriram and B Babaji. They claimed to have seen houses crumbling one after another on full moon days and new moon

nights and this fear continues to haunt them. They alleged that recent cyclonic storm Asani destroyed several pucca houses and mangrove forest and resulted in a change of the landscape.

Sources said that the district administration initially rehabilitated around 102 families at Siddharth Nagar on the foothills of Dumunagiri 2013.

Later, it rehabilitated 370 families at ODRP Colony. Demands are being made in various quarters to relocate the remaining six families at safer locations by providing them houses either under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana or Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana.

Quarry, crusher unit turn villagers' bane

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, May 28: A stone quarry and crusher unit of a road construction firm at Niladunguri under Jujumura tehsil in this district has become a bane for the residents in nearby villages.

The firm is reportedly engaged in construction of Sambalpur-Tileibani stretch of the National Highway-53.

Residents alleged that their houses have developed cracks due to frequent blasting in the quarry. Moreover, the pollutants and dust

particles discharged from the cement mixing plant of the firm are adversely affecting locals' cultivation by enveloping the farmlands in the vicinity.

Locals alleged that the construction firm has been harassing them for years and all their complaints before the company authorities have fallen into deaf ears.

They alleged that the common people are being tricked in the name of development. According to locals, the construction firm has its cement mixing plant at Pradhanpali mouza.



The firm is forcibly discharging the effluents and waste water from its plant to this farmland.

Locals have drawn the attention of the district administration, block officials and the state pollution control board (SPCB) demanding action but to no avail.

Recently, villagers submitted a memorandum to the Jujumura tehsildar demanding his intervention, May 9. Later, tehsildar Abhishek Sahu accompanied by the revenue inspector visited the spot. Tehsildar Sahu said that a report has been prepared and further action will be taken on the order of higher authorities.

Suryawanshi Mayur Bikash, sub-collector, Sadar said no illegalities will be encouraged in the name of development and action will be taken on the basis of the report.

427 kg cannabis seized, 10 held

Bhawanipatna: Ten inter-state smugglers were arrested after 427 kg of cannabis worth around ₹17 lakh was seized from them in Kalahandi district, police said Saturday. Acting on a tip-off, police intercepted a pickup truck at Jaipatna Friday. The narcotics were being transported from Andhra Pradesh to Koksara. DharamgarhSDPO Dhiraj Chopdar said. Ten people were arrested and ₹11,560 in cash was also recovered, the SDPO said, adding that a case was lodged under the NDPSAct.

Rourkela girl Sriya joins K-pop band Blackswan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: Sriya Lenka, an 18-year-old girl from Rourkela, has been selected as the fifth member of popular South Korean pop band Blackswan.

Lenka, who goes by stage name Sriya, will be joining the original members of the girl group -- Youngheun, Fatou, Judy and Leia -- along with Gabriela Dalcin (Gabi) from Brazil as the sixth member.

Record label DR Music welcomed Lenka and Dalcin on board in an Instagram post.

"With their debut, we will be back with the new Blackswan," the post, accompanied with photographs of the new members, read.

Lenka and Dalcin were selected for the band after participating in the six-month-long global auditions that were announced by DR Music last year after Hyeme left the girl group.

DR Music Entertainment Korea director Philip YJ Yoon said Lenka and Dalcin worked well together during the audition process.

"They showed us very positive energy when sticking together and

achieving each of the assignments they needed to overcome. It was one of the reasons we decided not to separate them," Yoon told PTI in an email interaction.

As part of the training, which started in December, both the artists had to work on their Korean language, dancing and vocal skills.

"The duo will now start preparing for their new album and stage performances," Yoon added.

Lenka, a trained dancer, was introduced to K-pop by a friend a few years ago. She found the choreography in the music videos very attractive and got hooked onto its "unique style" of singing and dancing.

Boy band Exo was the teenager's introduction to the world of K-pop and subsequently she fell in love with songs by the BTS, Stray Kids and The Boyz. In 2020, she saw K-pop record labels open online auditions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and decided to give it a shot.

When Lenka's family learnt that she was applying for K-pop auditions, her grandmother introduced her to a classical music teacher. Her short stint in learning Odissi helped her improve subtle nuances.



Kansarjharan dam project shelved for 30 years amid irrigation woes

Locals say no effort has been made to realise former CM Biju Patnaik's assurance of building a dam across the hilly stream

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, May 28: About 30 years have passed after a proposal was made for building a dam at Kansarjharan under Jujumura area in Sambalpur district. But the much-anticipated has been left in the cold store. Farmers in the area have been struggling to irrigate their farmlands and meet their water needs solely from the stream.

Reports said, former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik had inaugurated Kayakud panchayat office building and Jujumura market complex during his visit to Jujumura in 1992. At that time, farmers and local people had demanded construction of a dam, highlighting before Patnaik the need of a water reservoir at Kansarjharan. The former Chief Minister had assured the locals to look into their demand in the larger interest of farmers. Former Rairakhole MLA and minister Basant Mahananda was present at that time.

Later, following a directive from Patnaik, a team of officials had also conducted a survey in the area and held discussions with people. But the project has remained a



non-starter till date. Many locals have repeatedly approached the district administration and various departments in Bhubaneswar in this regard, but in vain.

The people of Kansar panchayat still lamented over the fact that the assurance of the former Chief Minister has remained unrealised. They are still waiting for the project.

They pointed out that most of the panchayats under Jujumura block are forested and hilly areas. There are several streams in the area. These natural water sources can be harnessed for irrigation purpose if conserved in a reservoir. Debjharan waterfall originates from Jarang forest area and flows through many areas. Water of streams like Kansarjharan, Debjharan and Kutherjharan flows through Naktideula and finally mingles with a stream at Kanchanpur. All these streams flow perennially all through the year. Locals said that only Debjharan has been developed as an eco-tourism spot with various

facilities. Also, scores of farmers are getting benefits of irrigation. They demanded that Kansarjharan should be developed as an irrigation facility to boost farming. Many people are eager to spare their land for water reservoir.

The government should seriously consider the long awaited proposal of the reservoir across Kansarjharan, which will provide irrigation to farmers of Gadgadbahal, Musakani, Kansar and Janumunda. The district administration and the forest department should take up a survey on the proposed project. However, executive engineer Santosh Patnaik of the Water Resources department said that a survey was conducted years ago, but the work could not be carried forward due to presence of forest land around the proposed site.

Government deputy chief whip and Rairakhole MLA Rohit Pujari assured, "I would talk to the forest and the minor irrigation departments to resume the process."

FREE HEALTH CAMP



A woman undergoing health check-up at a free medical camp organised by the mobile medical unit of Rourkela Steel Plant for the slum residents in the industrial area, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Historic coast canal hurtles towards death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bahanaga, May 28: Historic Odisha coast canal, built during the British era, is fast losing its existence in Balasore due to illegal constructions at several places, it was alleged.

Now, roads have been laid on the canal bed in Bahanaga block by blocking the water. Such sights are dime a dozen at Abhana, Baripada, Aruhabada and Kharasahasapur areas. Local farmers have expressed their anguish over such development, alleging that such illegal way of building roads across the historic canal will finally strike its death knell and in a few years. They said that there is no law that allows damaging a canal and building roads on it.

On the other hand, renovation of the canal, at some places, has been taken up under MGNREGS. However, lakhs of rupees have been bungled through shoddy renovation work.

In 2011, a portion of the canal at Talapada under Remuna block was



filled up and a small bridge was built there. Following allegations, the irrigation department had looked into the matter and blamed it on the gram panchayat. Later, the bridge and the road were pulled down.

In 2017, a similar development took place near Balarampur in Baripada panchayat under PMGSY. The road work was halted while a bridge was built at the place.

A few years ago, a road was laid across the canal after filling up its bed in Abhana panchayat. Locals alleged that the Water Resources department and the drainage divi-

sion have turned a blind eye to such illegal activities.

They pointed out that the canal used to resolve issues like irrigation, drainage, flood control and ingress of saline water from the sea. The canal would be of immense help for farmers in irrigating the farmlands, if the state government pays attention to its renovation.

When contacted, BDO Gourang Ghose said canal renovation is being carried out under MGNREGS after getting permission from the project director of the DRDA.

"At places, the canal is being

■ Roads have been laid on the canal bed in Bahanaga block by blocking the water

■ Such sights are dime a dozen at Abhana, Baripada, Aruhabada and Kharasahasapur areas

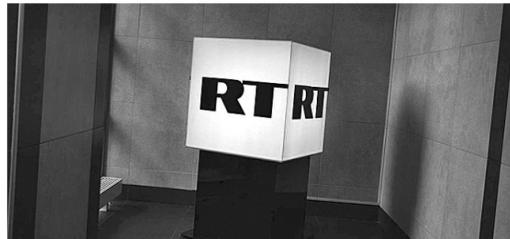
■ Local farmers have expressed their anguish over such development

filled up temporarily for facilitating communication. Later, the road will be dismantled. But I am not aware of the road construction across the canal in Abhana panchayat," he added. As for the issue, executive engineer of the irrigation department said that the block administration is carrying out renovation of the canal under MGNREGS after getting permission from the department.

"But we have no reports about canal being filled up to make space for road projects. Nobody was granted permission in this regard. If it was done, legal action will be taken against the persons concerned. We will look into it only after receiving complaints," he added.

FOCUS INFORMATION WARFARE

FIGHTING BIG LIES



After years of Kremlin-sanctioned Russian interference in Western elections, the threat posed by information warfare has become too big to ignore, and too serious to leave to the discretion of private online platforms. Lawmakers should recognise disinformation campaigns for what they are: deliberate attacks on free societies

to intentionally deceive the public, or more precisely: "coercive and deceptive efforts to disrupt the free formation and expression of individuals' political will by a foreign state actor or its agents."

In practice, the text of the DSA leaves disinformation to be dealt with through online platforms' own codes of conduct. The past few years have shown that approach to be far from satisfactory. Lawmakers must be more creative and direct. Though we do not want to create anything like a thought police, we should be treating big lies for what they are: deliberate attacks on our societies.

Signaling a step in the right direction, the EU General Court recently rejected an appeal by RT following the suspension of its broadcasting license in France. The court found that the balance of interests between the Kremlin-controlled broadcaster and the EU clearly fell in the EU's favour. The EU's interests, it ruled, "aim to protect Member States against campaigns of disinformation and destabilization that would be carried out by the media under the control of the Russian leadership and that would threaten public order and security of the Union, in a context marked by military aggression against Ukraine."

This reasoning should not be limited to the context of a military invasion. Sanctions against anyone peddling fake news should be designed on the same basis. Now that the EU-US Trade and Technology Council has agreed to pursue coordinated measures against disinformation, it has an opportunity to craft a more effective response to the threat of authoritarian information warfare.

To paraphrase Clausewitz, the world's democracies must recognise that disinformation is nothing but the continuation of war by other means. Defending against such threats will require not just stronger logistical means, but also stronger legal tools.

The writer is France's former minister for Europe. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

From the Protocols of the Elders of Zion to Russian President Vladimir Putin's absurd claims that Ukraine is run by Nazis who are pursuing genocide against the country's Russian-speakers, the Kremlin has long been an expert in the dark art of disinformation.

A forgery published in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Protocols supposedly exposed a Jewish conspiracy to achieve world domination. It was as big a lie as has ever been told, and it became a pillar of the virulent anti-Semitism that led eventually to the extermination of most European Jewry by Hitler's Third Reich.

As for Putin's own big lie, it has deceived almost no one outside of Russia, but it may well have incited some of the atrocities that Russia's poorly trained, ill-informed soldiers have committed in Bucha and elsewhere. Disinformation and lies can kill. They can also tip a country over to the wrong side of history.

Western democracies had a wake-up call in 2016, when Russia interfered in the US presidential election on Donald Trump's behalf, and in the United Kingdom's Brexit referendum in support of Leave. These two shocks alerted the world's democracies to the fact that authoritarian states are unleashing a new kind of information warfare against them. The objective is to destabilise, divide, and weaken democratic societies, politics, and institutions — starting with the European Union.

Until recently, we in France had hardly considered the threat of foreign interference in our politics. But that changed with the 2017 presidential election, when emails stolen from Emmanuel Macron's campaign were dumped online just days before voters cast their ballots. Mixed in with real emails were fake ones designed to suggest, falsely, that Macron had off-shore bank accounts. In 2019, similar hack-and-leak attacks were launched against German Chancellor Angela Merkel and hundreds of other German politicians.

By the time the 2019 European Parliament elections were held, Russian attempts at meddling had become a foregone conclusion, and the European Commission responded by setting out an Action Plan against Disinformation and additional measures to protect the electoral process. Nonetheless, democracies remain doubly disadvantaged in the face of electoral interference, manipulation, and information warfare.

For starters, democracies cannot respond with their own counter-propaganda, lest they lose credibility in the eyes of an already distrustful public. As such, they are confined to fact-checking, which has only limited effects. Moreover, democracies cannot renounce essential principles like freedom of expression, which the 1789 French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen describes as "one of the most precious rights."

Of course, this freedom is not absolute. One does not have the right to infringe on others' rights. And, unlike in the United States, many European countries have laws against hate speech. In France and elsewhere, for example, Holocaust denial is a criminal offense, and white supremacist demonstrations

would be inconceivable. Perhaps owing to these differences, the EU has done much more than the US to regulate digital platforms, which are increasingly expected to serve as guarantors of informational integrity. Under the EU's Digital Services Act, which will enter into force in 2023, online platforms will have to meet new transparency requirements, such as by explaining how their algorithms work, and by publishing annual reports on the illicit content (such as hate speech) that they have removed.

Platforms will also be obligated to inform law enforcement about information that may constitute criminal offenses or indicate a serious threat to people's lives or security. And companies that fail to comply with the DSA will face penalties of up to 6 per cent of their annual global revenue.

But the text of the law does not really regulate "disinformation," which is a term coined by the Soviets in the 1920s to describe their preferred instrument of propaganda and destabilisation. Rather, the EU is concerned with "verifiably false or misleading information created, presented, and disseminated for economic gain or



Noëlle Lenoir

THE WORLD'S DEMOCRACIES MUST RECOGNISE THAT DISINFORMATION IS NOTHING BUT THE CONTINUATION OF WAR BY OTHER MEANS



Aakar Patel

We do not appear to have the internal resistance a democracy must have. When one of its branches begins to malfunction (or 'go rogue') the rest of it must step in

Our best friend is he who loves us in the best of ourselves and yet does not ask of us to be other than we are.

THE MOTHER



Absence of Ethics

Last month, a set of over 100 retired government servants wrote a letter to the prime minister. The signatories included a former head of the Research and Analysis Wing or RAW, and a former National Security Advisor. They wrote that communal violence in India "is no longer just the politics of an assertive Hindutva identity, nor the attempt to keep the communal cauldron on the boil — all that has been going for decades and in the last few years had become a part of the new normal. What is alarming now is the subordination of the fundamental principles of our Constitution and of the rule of law to the forces of majoritarianism, in which the state appears to be fully complicit."

It is difficult to disagree with what the letter said and that is not the point I am making today. In response, another set of over 100 retired government servants wrote in support of Hindutva politics and accused the signatories, which again it should be noted included a former RAW head and former NSA, of being 'anti-national'.

This is to me more interesting and it is a reflection on the state of our civil services. It has almost nobody from within questioning what is going on in India today. I can think of two IAS officers who quit the service in protest against what the government was doing. One is the young officer Kannan Gopinathan who resigned in protest against the restrictions on Kashmiris in 2019. The other one was Harsh Mander who resigned in 2002 over the Gujarat pogrom.

Two officers over 20 years is all I can think of. Perhaps there are others, but there cannot be many. It appears that for the rest either they approve of what is going on in the government they work for; or they disapprove but carry on anyway for other reasons; or they are immune and do not care what the government does.

This is not a minor issue and is a reflection on Indian morality. It means that the entire bureaucracy is fine with violence against minorities catalysed by the State. And that they are fine with eccentric economic policies that devastate the lives of the vulnerable and the poor, such as taking away their currency notes (which surely was also a matter over which there ought to have been resignations).

Other things arise from here. Bureaucrats carry out orders. Meaning that those running bulldozers over the homes and shops of the poor without any backing of the law, and those who continue to destroy homes despite a stay from the Supreme Court (as happened in Jahangirpuri) are willing participants.

The brutalisation of Aryan Khan by one officer was acceptable to that officer's colleagues and superiors, because they gauged the wind and found that the government wanted this persecution.

A report in the Indian Express headlined "Cruise drug raid case: One officer went rogue, agency looked other way" says the following about the case. The SIT's internal report says: "It is strange to note that in spite of clear cut denial by Arbaaz (Merchant) — Khan's friend from whom small amount of charas was seized — regarding involvement of Aryan in procurement or possession of drugs, Investigating Officer started looking at WhatsApp chats of Aryan without even formally seizing his mobile phone. It appears the IO was motivated to somehow implicate Aryan Khan in the drug case." Why did the department and his colleagues not stop this 'rogue' officer from implicating an innocent man while the entire nation was watching for weeks? And while the media and the BJP government thoroughly demonised him. The answer is again that they either approved, or disapproved and refused to intervene or they didn't care. Such total absence of ethics in an agency with sweeping powers to destroy lives is troubling and frightening. But it must be examined.

So many of our ugly features have been exposed in recent years that this one has escaped notice or has not been commented on as much as it should have been. We do not appear to have the internal resistance a democracy must have. When one of its branches begins to malfunction (or 'go rogue') the rest of it must step in. The Americans call it checks and balances and it is the ability of the judiciary, legislature and executive to ensure one of the three doesn't overstep. This system necessarily presumes that it is the individuals inside the system, the judges, the civil servants, the administrators and the elected, who will step up when they see something problematic. It appears to have worked for them. It is not working for us. We must ask ourselves why there is such an absence of ethics and personal responsibility in the 'world's largest democracy'.

WISDOM CORNER

- It is better to be high-spirited even though one makes more mistakes, than to be narrow-minded and all too prudent. VINCENT VAN GOGH
- The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
- In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on. ROBERT FROST

WORDSWORTH

Talaria

If we wanted to invent a classical replacement for the idiom from head to toe, we might choose from petasus to talaria. The latter is one of those words — like aglet for the little tube at the end of a shoelace or philtrum for the groove in the upper lip below the nostrils — that identify something we know well but usually can't name. The two words petasus and talaria — and a third, caduceus — are associated with Hermes, the Greek herald and messenger of the gods whom the Romans knew as Mercury. He's usually portrayed as having wings on his sandals. The Romans called these talaria, a plural noun from the adjective talaris, relating to the ankle, from talus, ankle. Hermes was given his talaria by his father Zeus, who also gave him a low-crowned, broad-rimmed traveller's cap of a type well-known in classical times and which Greeks called a petasus. In later times, the hat changed to a brimless one with wings on, but it kept the name. The third traditional item of equipment of Hermes and Mercury, the caduceus, was the wand of office of a Greek or Roman herald, which usually had two snakes wound around a wooden staff. Long ago, this became confused with another rod, the staff of Asclepius, the god of healing, which only had the one snake; the twin-snake version of Hermes and Mercury replaced it and remains common as a symbol of medicine.

Taqwacore

Taqwacore is a recent musical genre. The name combines the Arabic taqwá, which may be translated as piety or the quality of being God-fearing, with the music term hardcore. Its inspiration is a fictional work of 2003 by a white American Islamic convert, Michael Muhammad Knight, which featured a fictitious Muslim punk scene in the US. This led to real-life imitations, with bands rebelling against what they see as the stultifying convention and religious dogma of Islam while maintaining their faith.

SPECTRUM GYANVAPI ROW

Fixing history or driving wedge?

Poonam I Kaushish

BASICALLY, IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO A DESIRE FOR POLITICAL POWER, A STRUGGLE FOR RESOURCES, AND ECONOMIC COMPETITION

Politicians are an unholy lot who take a "holier than thou attitude" on anything and everything — be it religion or riots, scums or scams. All fanatics when it comes to protecting their power bases. Nothing stands testimony to this better than the "jihad" unleashed over the Gyanvapi Masjid-Kashi Vishwanath Temple.

Certainly, the masjid-temple symbolism is an intoxicating potent which is being used by netas to vet voters' appetite depending on which side of the template one is on — Hindu or Muslim. Both have just one faith — power.

Pertinently, the Kashi-Masjid dispute was one of the three religious places invoked by the RSS, BJP and VHP during their Ram Mandir campaign, "Ayodhya to bas jhaanki hai, Kashi-Mathura baaki hai."

Questionably is the genesis of the dispute to rectify history or drive a wedge between Hindus and Muslims? Ensure BJP's political future? Or is it about Shringar Gauri? What does that have to do with the mosque?

History tells us the Gyanvapi Masjid was built by Aurangzeb in 1669 after demolishing the ancient Vishweshwar Mandir. The temple's plinth was left untouched and continued to serve as the mosque's

courtyard. But since 1991 it has been wrangled in legal troubles when a descendant of Vishwanath temple priest and two others filed a suit in Varanasi's civil judge court demanding land be returned to them, bypassing the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 (PoW).

In 1998, the court ruled the suit was barred by PoW Act citing Section 3 which prohibits converting a place of worship of a different religious denomination or a different class of the same religious denomination. Section 4(2) states all litigations, appeals or other proceedings relating to changing the nature of the place of worship (which were pending till August 15, 1947) shall cease after the enactment of this Act and no fresh action can be taken on such cases.

18 August 2021 five women filed a petition demanding right to worship in Shringar Gauri temple daily without any restrictions along with other "visible and invisible deities within the old temple complex". Presently, devotees are allowed to worship only on the fourth day of Chaitra Navratra. Today, post videography all eyes are on what the court adjudicates.

To buttress its claim, a senior BJP leader underscored Kashi

Vishwanath Temple as Lord Shiva's most significant shrine and prominent among 12 'Jyotirlingas' mentioned in Puranas. It is part of our national heritage and symbol of nationalism which is at the core of Indian consciousness. We have given Kashi a political thrust for installing Hindu nationalism as India's dominant political credo.

Muslim clerics aver the Hindutva Sangh has found its golden goose: Reclaiming temples by breaking mosques to get the Hindu majority to keep bringing them back to power on an emotive issue built on the foundation of aasha and badla from Muslim invaders, who are history. The method is simple: instill a feeling of victimisation within Hindus that they had been dealt unfairly by the Muslim minority, first by Mughals and now by Congress which believed in Muslim appeasement.

Today, this victim complex has now culminated into a superiority complex within a cross-section of the majority community which wants to assert its identity by demolition of mosques and "reclaiming" temples. Ayodhya and Babri were the political investments made three decades ago.

Already, seven BJP states have passed laws that criminalise mar-

riage between Muslims and Hindus and targeted laws and policies on namaaz, hijab, beef and taqat. The message is also larger — demonisation of the Muslims. One can call them terrorists, anti-nationals or rabid fundamentalists to completely destroy India's pluralism.

Basically, it all boils down to a desire for political power, a struggle for resources, ethnic rivalries and economic competition. The repeated finger pointing between Hindus-Muslims reveals that for power both will adopt diabolical machinations to create a secular-communal divide. There is no desire to uphold equal respect for various faiths. Instead unashamedly use religion to increase their so-called popularity with voters.

In this milieu wrought with friction our leaders need to understand that by playing Hindus and Muslims against each other they are only serving their vested interests. Communalism thrives on one community's hate for the other along with playing up the psychosis of retaliation. At the end of the day, when our polity does a cost-benefit analysis, they need to answer a simple question: Is there vote-bank politics really worth the price the country is paying? Who will bear the cost and answer to Gods? INFRA

US gun culture

Sir, Sadly and unsurprisingly mass shootings in the US have become a common affair. But when victims happen to be primary school students, the entire world sits and takes notice of the extremity of the tragedy. The slaughter at the primary school in Texas raises again the most obvious question that has been discussed and debated many times in the past: "Why can't America stop the scourge of gun violence?" Distressingly enough, it cannot for the reason that gun violence in the US is symbolic of a broken political system that fails to protect its own citizens. Frequent mass shootings are a stain on the country's international reputation. In a broader sense, the failure to implement bold measures against gun violence is seen as a dysfunctional system of a government incapable of protecting its own citizens, including children. In fact, Pew Research Center's survey reveals the fact that an average 83 percent of Americans have said that the US is no longer a good model of democracy to follow. This makes for depressing reading and seemingly makes it incumbent on the Biden administration to take immediate action on gun control and the need for gun reform. But without the support of the Congress, little will happen federally in the US.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Crime & punishment

Sir, Yasin Malik, chief of out-lawed JKLF, gets life imprisonment for funding terror. He has been awarded varying jail terms under UAPA and IPC by the Delhi Court besides imposing a fine of ₹10 lakh. He has admitted in court to all the charges levelled against him. Yet, it is strange that people like Mehbooba Mufti are angry at the people frowning at Malik for his heinous crime. This makes people unable to understand where she stands. There is no wonder if Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sahariff thinks in a different way because it is an instrument of policy of Pakistan to treat terrorists perpetrating terrorism in India in general and J&K in particular as "freedom fighters." Malik is a Pakistan-trained militant who turned into one of the prominent separatist faces. The court has recognised that terror-funding is one of the gravest offences that deserve to be punished severely. Since Malik has admitted to the crime, the door for challenging in the High Court has been closed. But he has the option to go in for appeal on the quantum of sentence.

KV Seetharamaiah, BANGALORE

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

of the day quote

The population of West Bengal is half of Uttar Pradesh. There was no pre-poll or any post-poll violence in Uttar Pradesh. This is an example of law and order

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

While innocent people like Amreen Bhat, Kashmiri Pandit employee Rahul Bhat and civilian Shoab Ganaie are getting killed day in and day out, the Centre is going hammer and tongs with its claims that normalcy has returned to Jammu and Kashmir

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

The BJP government will come back to power in Himachal Pradesh and the party workers at the ground level have contributed towards strengthening the party organization

SMRITI IRANI | UNION WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

2 shot at during robbery bid

Patna: Two brothers were shot at by unidentified robbers in Bihar's Katihar district late on Friday night. The victims run a Customer Service Point centre in Navrang Madanpur village. The police said that the victims were returning home with the cash which was collected during the day.

2 terrorists killed

Srinagar: Two Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists were killed in an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district Saturday, police said. "Killed terrorists identified as Ishfaq Ah Ganie R/O Chakwangund, Anantnag and Yawar Ayub Dar R/O Dogripora, Awantipora, affiliated with proscribed terror outfit HM. The duo were involved in several terror crimes." Jammu and Kashmir Police tweeted, quoting Inspector General Police, Kashmir zone, Vijay Kumar.

Four men rescued

Thane: Four youngsters in the 16-21 age group who lost their way during a trek to the Mama-Bacha Hills here Saturday morning were rescued by a civic team, an official said. The four had called up Wagle Fire Station for help after which a team comprising firemen and civic personnel mounted a search-and-rescue effort, said Thane Municipal Corporation regional disaster management cell chief Avinash Sawant.

Man kills son

Baruipur (WB): A man allegedly killed his six-year-old son by drowning him in a pond in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district, police said Saturday. The incident happened Friday in Gosaba's Pathankhali island, they said. The son went missing in the morning, following which his family members started looking for him. Later, they found his body near a pond, police said. The father was arrested Saturday from Bhangore, police said, claiming that he has confessed to killing his son.

SHO suspended

Patna: A day after a massive bank robbery in Bihar's Araria, action was taken Saturday against local police officials. Superintendent of Police Ashok Kumar Singh Saturday suspended SHO, Town, Kumar Abhinav. A gang of four to five armed robbers looted a branch of Bank of India located at Bank Road at around 10 a.m. on Friday and fled with Rs 37.5 lakh cash and jewellery worth Rs 87.5 lakh from the lockers.



Civil servants need to focus on innovative ideas which can be used as best governance practices
JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL

SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

The Jal Jeevan Mission has achieved a significant milestone of 50 per cent rural households having access to tap water connections, an official of the Ministry of Jal Shakti said



Father of boy who raised slogans at PFI march held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, May 28: The father of the minor boy, who had courted controversy by allegedly raising provocative slogans during a recent march organised by the Popular Front of India (PFI) in Kerala's Alappuzha, was taken into custody from his house in Palluruthy here on Saturday, police said.

The family, including the boy, was reportedly away from the house ever since a purported video, in which the child could be seen sitting on the shoulder of a person and raising offensive slogans during the "Save the Republic" rally held by the PFI on May 21, went viral on social media platforms prompting police to register a case.

A police officer said that the father was taken into custody and would travel to nearby Alappuzha



The family, including the boy, was reportedly away from the house ever since a purported video, in which the child could be seen sitting on the shoulder of a person and raising offensive slogans during the "Save the Republic" rally held by the PFI on May 21, went viral on social media platforms prompting police to register a case

soon for detailed interrogation. Further procedures would be decided later. However, justifying his son's action, the man said the con-

troversial slogan was not taught by anyone but the boy had learnt it while attending similar programmes before.

He said it was not for the first time that his son was raising such a slogan in a programme and many such instances of him raising similar slogans could be seen on YouTube. "We used to take part in the PFI's programmes. He had learnt the slogan when he attended a protest programme against the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). I don't understand why it has become a controversy now. What offence did he commit to harass a little boy like this?" he told media before taken into custody.

So far, 20 persons have been arrested and remanded in the case and more people were being taken into custody for questioning from various places, he said. According to police sources, the boy would be sent for counselling at a government centre soon.

Meanwhile, PFI activists staged

a protest in Palluruthy against the police custody of the boy's father. Erattupetta resident Anas, who carried the minor boy on his shoulders, was the first person to be arrested in the case.

In the FIR filed based on a complaint by Vijayakumar P K, police invoked various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Kerala Police Act and arraigned PFI Alappuzha district secretary Mujeeb and Navas as accused along with other identifiable people. Sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class), 505(1)(b) (act against the public tranquility), 505(1)(c), 505(2) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC and Section 120(o) of KP Act are included in the FIR.

Ranipet creates world record in waste collection

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, May 28: Tamil Nadu's Ranipet district has created a world record with 20,000 volunteers collecting 186.914 metric tonnes of plastic waste in just three hours.



With his, the district has surpassed Switzerland which collected 128 metric tonnes in the same time span. In a statement on Saturday, the Ranipet district administration said that 20,000 volunteers drawn from all sections of society collected 186.914 metric tonnes of waste within three hours on Friday. The drive commenced at 7 a.m.

The intensive cleaning drive was held across 288 village panchayats, six municipalities, and eight town panchayats in the district. Single-use plastics were recovered from residential buildings, empty plots, roads, highways, companies, and commercial establishments.

Nine adjudicators from four organisations - The Elite World Records, Asian Records Academy, Indian Records Academy, and Tamilian book of Records - certified the record.

The Ranipet district collector M. Bhaskarapandian was the driving force behind the drive. The district collector said: "The event was held to spread the message on environment protection and that our existence is threatened due to environmental degradation. We must protect it and pass it on to the next generation."

Jacqueline gets nod to travel abroad

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 28: Actress Jacqueline Fernandez, who is under the radar of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with her alleged links with con-man Suresh Chandrasekhar, has got the court's permission to travel abroad from May 31 to June 6.



Jacqueline, who wants to attend the International Indian Film Academy Awards in Abu Dhabi, had approached the Patiala House court, seeking its nod for her visit to the UAE, France, and Nepal.

The ED has interrogated Jacqueline multiple times and recorded her statement after her alleged friendship with Chandrasekhar came to light. In the Rs 200 crore money laundering case involving Chandrasekhar, the ED had last month attached gifts and properties worth Rs 7 crore given to the Sri Lankan actress, terming them proceeds of crime.

Aryan started smoking ganja as student in US

Aryan claimed that at that time, he was suffering from sleep disorders and he had read articles on the internet informing ganja (also known as bhaang, pot, grass, etc) could help

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 28: Aryan Khan, 23, the son of Bollywood mega-star Shah Rukh Khan and producer Gauri Khan, admitted to the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) that he started smoking ganja (cannabis) in 2018 while studying for graduation in the US.

The 'voluntary statement' of Aryan, made under NDPS Act, 1985, Sec 67, before Ashish Ranjan, IO, is part of the final complaint lodged before the Special NDPS Court by the NCB on Friday (May 27), and came to light hours after the superstar-son was exonerated from the case.

He claimed that at that time, he was suffering from certain sleep disorders and he had read articles on the internet informing ganja (also known as bhaang, pot, grass, etc) could help. Unaware of what lay in store for him ahead, Aryan revealed that he was friends with another co-accused Arbaaz Merchant since the past seven-

eight years and even the latter smoked ganja and hashish.

At Arbaaz's coaxing, Aryan admitted he occasionally tried smoking Hashish (Charas) but did not relish it much. Aryan, along with his friends Pratik, Manav and Arbaaz had gone to the Mumbai International Cruise Terminal (ICT) in his Mercedes car around 15.30 (on Oct 2, 2021) to board the Cordelia Cruise, and Arbaaz had promised to bring Hashish for that party.

While crossing the check-in point at the ICT, Aryan said he was intercepted by NCB's IO Ashish Ranjan Prasad and even introduced to the then Mumbai Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede as a Gazetted Officer, subjected to a personal search after explaining his rights.

During that physical search, no drugs were recovered from Aryan and he gave up his mobile phone when demanded by the NCB. After checking some messages, the officer asked Aryan whether he knew Arbaaz Merchant, to which he said yes - and with whom he was to share a cabin in the Cordelia Cruise ship.

When the IO asked Aryan whether he deals with narcotic drugs, he replied that he was into consumption of only natural drugs like Ganja or Hashish. Aryan also revealed that Arbaaz had taken out and handed over a small quantity of Charas to the NCB IO Ashish Ranjan Prasad, and said whatever was recovered (from Arbaaz) was for consumption only and probably procured by him from Bandra, after which the NCB team tested the Charas with some kit and sealed it in a pouch.



A visitor takes a selfie with the Pamban Bridge in background, in Pamban

PFI PHOTO

POVERTY TOLL Mother poisons children; 2 daughters die

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 28: Abject poverty has prompted a mother to poison her two daughters and a son, and then attempt suicide. The two daughters have already died while the mother and the son are currently admitted to a hospital in critical condition.

The incident took place on late Friday night at Kalinagar village in West Bengal's Birbhum. The neighbours said that Serina Bibi used to stay at Kalinagar village with her two daughters and a son. Her husband and the father of the three children stay outside the country for professional reasons.

According to the local residents, Serina Bibi often used to complain that her husband stopped sending money for the last seven months, due to which she was unable to bear the expenses for the mini-



The incident took place Friday night at Kalinagar village in West Bengal's Birbhum

mum necessities of her children.

The locals also informed the police that she had frequent quarrels with her husband on this issue over phone. She even had heated arguments with her husband on Friday night. It is learnt that on late Friday night Serina Bibi first poisoned her children with pesticides and then she consumed that. On

Saturday morning, hearing a groaning sound, the neighbours broke open the door.

The two daughters, Hasi Khatun (13) and Khushi Khatun (10) had already died by then. Serina Bibi and her son, Irfan Sheikh (7) were immediately admitted to Burdwan Medical College & Hospital. Their condition continues to remain critical.

Super cyclones will be even more devastating in future: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/London, May 28: Super cyclones, the most intense form of tropical storms, are likely to have a much more devastating impact on people in India in the future due to climate change, according to a modelling study.

Researchers from the University of Bristol in the UK examined the 2020 Super Cyclone Amphan - the most costly cyclone to make landfall in South Asia - and predicted its implications under several scenarios of sea-level rise caused by global warming.

The study, published in the journal Climate Resilience and Sustainability, showed that if greenhouse gas emissions continue at the current rate, more than two and a half times (250 per cent) of India's population would experience flooding of greater than one metre, compared to the event in 2020.

"South Asia is one of the most climate-sensitive regions in the world, with super cyclones causing tens to hundreds of thousands of deaths in historical cases," said study lead author Dann Mitchell, Professor of Climate Science at the University of Bristol. "Comparatively, very little climate impact research has been done in South Asia, despite the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change highlighting it as such a critical region," Mitchell said in a statement.

The study presents a critical piece of evidence in support of ramping down greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the Paris Agreement climate goals, where other lines of evidence all too often focus on high-income countries where impacts are lower, and adaptation is more easily achievable, the researchers said.

They used sophisticated climate



model projections to anticipate the scale of those affected by cyclones in the rest of this century. Although the increasing number of people at risk is anticipated to be more modest in Bangladesh, estimated to rise by 60 per cent to 70 per cent, this factors in declining coastal populations in the fu-

ture, the researchers said.

They noted that if the Paris Agreement climate goals of 2 degrees Celsius warming above pre-industrial levels are adhered to, population exposure to flooding dropped close to zero in Bangladesh. However, even in this climate warming scenario, the exposures

South Asia is one of the most climate-sensitive regions in the world, with super cyclones causing tens to hundreds of thousands of deaths in historical cases

DANN MITCHELL | PROFESSOR OF CLIMATE SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

in India still showed an alarming increase of between 50 per cent and 80 per cent is expected to experience flooding in the future, the researchers said.

The main objective of the Paris Agreement, a global framework to tackle climate change, is to hold the global average temperature increase to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and endeavour to limit the tem-

perature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

"The latest IPCC report has mentioned with high confidence that tropical cyclones with higher intense categories will be more frequent in the future," said Saiful Islam, Professor of Hydrology at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), and contributing author of the study.

"This study shows that population exposure in Bangladesh and India will be increased up to 200 per cent in the future for extreme storm surge flooding (greater than 3 metres) from intense cyclones under high emission scenarios," Islam said. The researchers noted that a strong, rapid and sustained greenhouse gas reduction is essential to achieve goals of the Paris Agreement and to reduce losses and damages of highly vulnerable countries.



Naga national flag issue not negotiable: NSCN-IM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kohima, May 28: The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) categorically said "the Naga national flag symbolises Naga political identity. It is not negotiable," in the editorial of its latest news bulletin "Nagalim Voice." It is unthinkable for NSCN-IM to accept the Naga national flag as a cultural flag as hinted by the Government of India.

Since 1997, the Central government has held more than 85 rounds of negotiations with the NSCN-IM and other Naga groups. However, the NSCN-IM's insistence on a separate Naga flag and Constitution has become a big hurdle in the way of resolving the Naga issue. The former interlocutor and then Governor of Nagaland RN Ravi had rejected these demands repeatedly.

The editorial of the May issue of Nagalim Voice, referring to the Framework Agreement signed August 3, 2015, expressed: "Today,



NSCN is watching how Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to handle Framework Agreement with NSCN and Naga people that he himself took so much pride in and credit for: When the high profile Framework Agreement was signed, Modi went histrionic as he called up all political leaders who matter to announce that he has solved the longest running insurgency move-

ment in Southeast Asia. The world at large was, however, not impressed and waited to see how he would match his words with action acceptable to the Naga people."

The editorial further read: "What is of concern to NSCN in particular, and to the Nagas in general is the habitual betraying of the Government of India after signing agreement after agreement."

BIG HURDLE

Since 1997, the Central government has held more than 85 rounds of negotiations with the NSCN-IM and other Naga groups

However, the NSCN-IM's insistence on a separate Naga flag and Constitution has become a big hurdle in the way of resolving the Naga issue

"Such was the depravity on the part of Government of India that every good thing gained during the 25 years of Indo-Naga political talks is facing the risk of going down the drain. The unfortunate development is tantamount to political blackmail," the editorial said.

The Nagalim Voice said that NSCN cannot allow defilement to take place for the fourth time and this is the crux of the issue. "Everything is clear before the world," the Naga outfit said.

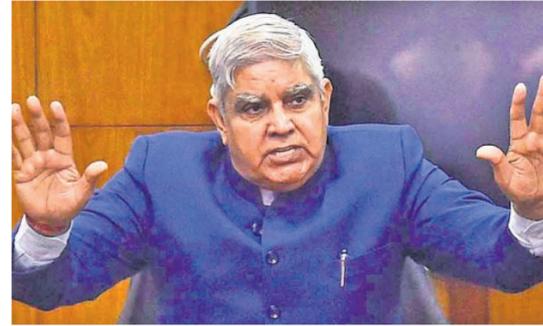
"How could Naga people tread such hollow ground after more than six decades of blood, sweat, and tears. In spite of threat and pressure, NSCN will never lend itself to committing an act of abomination before God and treason before the Naga people," the Nagalim Voice stated.

Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton, who is also a BJP leader, recently in a public meeting in Wokha district, categorically said that the Centre should resolve the Naga issue by August 15 this year.

"If the Naga political issue is not settled now, the long pending issue would take another 100 years to settle," said Patton, who is a member of all the important committees, including the Core Committee on Naga political issues.

During an Assembly session last month, all legislators across party lines strongly urged the Centre to settle the issue at the earliest as Assembly elections are due early next year.

Bengal to replace Guv as 'visitor' of pvt varsities



The development comes amid the state cabinet's decision to make Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee the chancellor of state-run varsities, replacing the Governor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 28: The West Bengal government is planning to amend the law to remove Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar as 'visitor' of private universities in the state and appoint the education minister in his place, a senior official said Saturday.

A discussion in this regard was held during Thursday's state cabinet meeting and the process has already been started, he said.

The development comes amid the state cabinet's decision to make Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee the chancellor of state-run varsities, replacing the Governor.

"There is a proposal for altering the law so that the Governor can be replaced by the education minister as the 'visitor' of private varsities. In Thursday's Cabinet meeting, there was a discussion on this and the proposal was supported by the members," the official told

PTI. "Hopefully, the next meeting will give its approval," he said, adding that the government will explore the legal options in this regard soon.

As per the West Bengal government's policy and guidelines for setting up private universities, the Governor has to be appointed the 'visitor' and he can preside over the convocations.

The 'visitor' also has the power to call for any paper or information relating to the affairs of the universities.

The official said that the government was open to take an ordinance route if the Governor does not clear the proposed bill for making the Chief Minister the chancellor of state-run varsities.

The Governor, by virtue of his position, is the chancellor of all state-run universities.

The decisions of the TMC government come amid a bitter turf war with the Governor over several issues, including some relating to the running of universities.

Dhankhar earlier alleged that vice-chancellors of 24 universities have been "appointed illegally without the chancellor's approval."

After the vice-chancellors of the private universities skipped a meeting called by him in Raj Bhavan in December last year, he had hit out at the ruling dispensation in the state.

Mizoram records lowest IMR in country again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, May 28: Mizoram has the lowest infant mortality rate (IMR) in the country with three deaths per thousand live births, as per data published by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India.

The northeastern state made the achievement for the second consecutive year, officials in Aizawl said. Nagaland with an IMR of four secured second place, followed by Sikkim and Goa having an IMR of five each, as per the Sample Registration System (SRS) bulletin 2020. While the national average was 28, Madhya Pradesh has the highest IMR in the country at 43, it said. Among the northeastern states, Assam has the highest infant mor-

tality rate of 36, followed by Meghalaya at 29 and Arunachal Pradesh at 21, as per the data.

The IMR of Mizoram in 2016 was 27. It reduced to 15 in 2017 and further reduced to five in 2018 and three in 2019, they said.

The Mizoram Health Department attributed the achievement to the hard work and dedication of health-care workers, and staff of departments such as education, public health engineering, social welfare and rural development.

The infant mortality rate, which is widely accepted as a crude indicator of the overall health scenario, is defined as the infant deaths (less than one year) per thousand live births in a given time period in a particular region.

RHINO LAND



One-horned rhinos graze inside the Buraphar Range of Kaziranga National Park in Nagaon district, Saturday. PTI PHOTO

Agartala-Kolkata bus service via Dhaka to resume after 2 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, May 28: The Agartala-Kolkata bus service via Dhaka will resume from June 10 after a hiatus of over two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an official of the Tripura government said Saturday.

The bus service was initially planned to restart from April 28 but postponed owing to "some technical reasons", he said.

International bus service will benefit people amid soaring air fares and suspension of trains due to landslides in neighbouring Assam

State transport department principal secretary LH Darlong has written letters to Bangladesh's Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian High Commission to the neighbouring country, apprising them of the proposed resumption of the international bus service.

"Tickets for the bus service will be available at the Tripura Road Transport Corporation counter at Krishnanagar from June 1. Passengers need to have a valid passport and visa to board a vehicle," a transport department official said. In a separate letter to the joint secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, state additional secretary S Chowdhury informed all concerned about the resumption of the cross border bus service.

The fare from Agartala to Kolkata via Dhaka will be ₹2,300 per passenger, including travelling tax, while it will be ₹1,000 from Tripura capital to Dhaka.

The international bus service will benefit people amid soaring air fares and suspension of long-distance trains due to landslides in neighbouring Assam.

The bus will cover a distance of around 500 km from Agartala to Kolkata via Dhaka in around 19 hours. A train journey between the two destinations via Guwahati takes around 35 hours, another official said.

The bus facility on this route was suspended in March 2020 after the pandemic struck.

New macaque species discovered in Arunachal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 28: Scientists of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have discovered a new macaque species in Arunachal Pradesh.

The new species, named 'Sela Macaque' (Macaca selai), was found in western and central parts of the state, ZSI director Dhriti Banerjee said.

"Scientists collected a few samples and undertook a detailed phylogenetic analysis and we found this monkey is genetically different from the other species in the region," she said.

The new species is separated from the Arunachal macaque of Tawang district by Sela Pass, Banerjee said. ZSI scientist Mukesh Thakur said the Sela Pass acted as a barrier and prevented migration between the two macaque species



for around two million years.

The Sela macaque is genetically closer to the Arunachal macaque and both species have many similar physical characteristics such as heavy built and long dorsal body hair, he said. However, there are also some distinct morphological characteristics, he said.

The Arunachal macaque has a dark face and dark brown colour coat, while the Sela macaque has a pale face and brown colour coat, Thakur said.

Senior nurses to double as docs in rural WB

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 28: The West Bengal Health Department has devised a unique initiative to cope with the problem of shortage of qualified doctors in the rural areas of the state, especially in the community health centres.

It will shortly start a three-week "doctors' training programme" for senior nurses employed under the department and after successful completion of the training, these nurses will be upgraded as community health officers and be posted in different community health centres.

A state Health Department official said that these community health officers will do the initial treatment in case of minor ailments and substitute in case of non-availability of doctors in the community health centers.

However, these community health officers will not have the



right to issue prescriptions or death certificates.

"The entire project is the brainchild of Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, to open the career growth

avenues for the nurses employed with the state government," the official said.

He also said that in the initial phase, 704 nurses will undergo this

West Bengal health department to start a three-week 'doctors' training programme' for senior nurses employed under the department

"doctors' training programme". During the training period, they will receive a special allowance of ₹10,000. An announcement on these lines was made by Chief Minister Banerjee in August 2021, when she said that the state government is planning to open the promotion avenues for experienced nurses, contending these were capable of providing medical services just like qualified doctors.

Noting that often services of the quacks are taken in rural areas, she asked: "If they can, why not the experienced nurses?"

TROUBLE BREWS IN NORTH BENGAL HILLS

GJM ATTEMPTS TO REGAIN POLITICAL GROUND

IF BIMAL GURUNG CONTINUES HIS AGITATION AND SUCCEEDS IN GETTING SUPPORT FROM THE HILLS POPULATION WHO CLAIM THAT THEIR ASPIRATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN MET BY THE CENTRE OR THE STATE, THINGS COULD TAKE A TURN FOR THE WORSE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 28: Will Bimal Gurung's bid to regain political ground lead to another upheaval in the north Bengal Hills? Gurung, president of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM), is presently on an indefinite hunger strike and has called for a boycott of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) polls slated for June 26.

GTA elections were held last in 2012. In 2017, when elections were due, the GJM and other parties in the Hills launched a massive agitation, resulting in violence and a 104-day strike.

"The next few weeks are going

to be very crucial for the Hills. Tourists are flocking there by their thousands after a two-year lull. The season will gradually come to an end after June 15. In 2017, the strike had also begun from June 15. Gurung had then given a call for a separate state of Gorkhaland. This time, he has gone in for a hunger strike demanding the addition of 396 Gorkha-dominated mouzas and more departments to the GTA. It has to be seen what kind of support he receives," a political observer from the Hills said.

Several cases were filed against Gurung after the 2017 strife and he went into hiding. By the time he emerged in Kolkata in 2020,



the GJM had split with his former aide Binay Tamang leading a faction and lending support to the Trinamool Congress. Gurung followed suit, broke ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and got into an alliance with the Trinamool. The West Bengal government not only stopped pur-

suing charges against Gurung, the Trinamool also allowed the GJM to contest the 2021 Assembly Elections in the state from the Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong constituencies.

Gurung realized that his support base had eroded in the Hills after failing to win any of these seats.

While the BJP won in Darjeeling and Kurseong, Kalimpong went to an independent fielded by the Tamang faction of the GJM (the Calcutta High Court had forbidden both factions from using the GJM symbol to contest elections). Tamang finally quit the party in December 2021 and joined the Trinamool. Now, it was time for Gurung to consolidate. It didn't take him long to realise that his political base had eroded.

"New entities like the Hamro Party (HP) and the Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha (BGPM) have come up. The Darjeeling Municipality election, held earlier this year, was an eye-opener. While the HP bagged 18 of the 32 seats, the BGPM won nine. The GJM cut a sorry figure with 3 seats. The remaining two went to the Trinamool. Mind you, the GJM had contested 22 seats, leaving 10 to the Trinamool. Gurung now realizes that the GJM is in no position to contest the June 26 GTA polls. Neither is the BJP-GNLF alliance. No wonder, both have demanded that the GTA elec-

tions be deferred. If the 396 mouzas are included in the GTA, the GJM will stand a better chance, Gurung believes. Addition of departments will turn the GTA more powerful, both administratively and financially. Moreover, both are issues close to the hearts of the Gorkhas," a lawyer and activist from Darjeeling said.

The state administration has made it clear that the GTA elections won't be deferred. There is also little possibility of transfer of departments. If Gurung continues his agitation and succeeds in getting support from the Hills population who claim that their aspirations have not been met by the Centre or the state, things could take a turn for the worse. The BJP-GNLF combine is likely to lend support. The common man in the Hills is apprehensive. People gave their all during the agitation of 2017 but got nothing in return. The administration will take a leaf out of the book from five years ago and not hesitate to crack down on any effort to disrupt normal life in the Hills.

of the day quote

A new water treatment plant being constructed at Chandrawal in northeast Delhi will help resolve water supply issues related to high ammonia content in Yamuna water

The chief minister did not speak on my amendment but has a lot of concern for my uncle. Till now, he was my uncle, but now the Leader of the House (Adityanath) is also calling him 'chacha' (uncle)

Immediate remedial steps is required to save water and check environmental pollution. This cannot be done by the government alone. People's participation is a must

SHORT TAKES

26 injured in road accident

Jammu: As many as 26 passengers were injured when the bus they were travelling in turned turtle in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district Saturday.

Yogi to campaign for Pushkar Dhami

New Delhi/Dehradun: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will campaign for his Uttarakhand counterpart in the crucial bypoll for Champawat assembly.

Man killed in roof collapse

Chennai: A man in Coimbatore died Saturday when a portion of the roof of his house collapsed, police said.

Anbumani new PMK president

Chennai: Former Union Minister for Health and Member of Parliament Dr Anbumani Ramadoss will be the new president of the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK).

Cop hangs self

Mumbai: A 25-year-old police constable allegedly committed suicide in Kanjurmarg suburb due to distress over loan repayment, an official said Saturday.



There is no shortage of wheat in India, but the Centre has imposed a ban on its export to check rampant overseas sales of the grain

BATTLING COVID

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Saturday said that over 88 per cent of India's adult population have been fully vaccinated against Covid



Communal tension resurfaces in K'taka



The coastal region of the state is considered to be communally sensitive and bastion of BJP. The region is prone to communal tensions and clashes

raised its ugly head again in the region with the Hindu students launching a protest against wearing of hijab in classrooms as classes in schools and colleges resumed after summer holidays.

The ruling BJP government has stressed that only uniforms are allowed in the campus. Following the protest in University College of Mangaluru, BJP MLA Vedavyasa Kamat is holding a meeting with College Development and Management Committee members and students.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, May 28: Communal tension in coastal Karnataka region comprising Dakshina Kannada, Uttara Kannada and Udipi is on a rise with the resurfacing of hijab controversy and the Malali temple-mosque row.

The coastal region of the state is considered to be communally sensitive and bastion of BJP. The region is prone to communal tensions and clashes. The hijab crisis which snowballed into an international issue started from here.

Meanwhile, the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) has stated that they will not let Hindu activists carry one handful of soil from Malali Masjid stirring a controversy.

"Don't dream about taking over masjid," stated Abdul Mazed Mysuru, the state president of

SDPI Saturday.

Addressing a rally at Mangaluru, Mazed challenged Hindu activists and Sangh Parivar members to take traditional way of "Tambula Prashne" to ascertain on destroying of 200 years old Suggalamma temple in Ballary by mining baron and BJP leader Janardhana Reddy.

RSS games make JD (S) and Congress parties fearful. "Sangh activists who give boycott calls of businessmen, aren't you ashamed when Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai had inked MoU with Yousuf Ali for Rs 2,000 crore?" questioned Abdul Mazed.

M.A. Yusuf Ali is a UAE-based Indian businessman and billionaire. He is the chairman and managing director of LuLu Group International that owns the LuLu Hypermarket chain worldwide.

"The ruling BJP in the country is not 'pro-people'. The BJP is destroying the country academically, socially and economically instead of empowering it," he charged.

However, the authorities are maintaining the status quo on the Malali Masjid premises.

The temple structure surfaced at the time of renovation recently. Following the development, the court had issued the status quo order: Hindu activists are claiming that they will take the legal way to reclaim this temple.

With the state already entering the election year, the issues are threatening to snowball into a major crisis situation in the entire region, say sources.

Punjab withdraws security of 424 VIPs



The additional Director General of Police (security), however, said in an order Friday that the security personnel were "being withdrawn on a purely temporary basis in connection with an emergent law and order duty"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh: The Punjab Police has ordered the withdrawal of security of 424 people, including former MLAs, Jathedars of two Takhts, heads of Deras, and police officers.

The additional Director General of Police (security), however, said in an order Friday that the security personnel were "being withdrawn on a purely temporary basis in connection with an emergent law and order duty".

Prominent among the Sikh temporal authorities to have lost the security cover is Giani Harpreet Singh, Jathedar of Takht Damdama Sahib in Bathinda. He also holds the charge of Jathedar of Akal Takht, the highest temporal seat of Sikhs.

The security of Giani Raghbir Singh, Jathedar of Takht Kesgarh Sahib in Anandpur Sahib district; Sant Niranjana Dass, chief of Dera Sachkhand Ballan in Jalandhar; Satguru Udhay Singh Namdhari, Bhaini Sahib, Ludhiana; Giani Jagtar Singh, head granthi at Golden Temple in Amritsar; Baba Lakha Singh, Gurdwara Nanaksar Kalender Singh, Jagraon; and Sant Tarminder Singh, Dera chief of Kahna Dhesian, Goraya in Jalandhar has also been withdrawn, as per the order.

Ten personnel deployed to pro-

tect Dera Radha Soami Satsang Beas, nine of Dera Divya Jyoti Jagriti Sansthan, Noormahal and six to guard Shahi Imam Punjab, Mohammad Usman Ludhianvi have also been withdrawn.

Among MLAs whose security has been rolled back are Shiromani Akali Dal legislator from Majitha seat Ganieve Kaur Majithia, Congress MLA from Jalandhar Cantonment Pargat Singh and AAP MLA from Ludhiana North Madan Lal Bagga.

The security cover of former Congress MLAs Kuljit Singh Nagra, Balwinder Singh Laddi, Harminder Gill, Madan Lal Jalalpur, Surjit Dhiman, Hardial Kamboj and Sukhpal Bhullar, former BJP and SAD legislators Dinesh Babbu, Sharanjit Singh Dhillon, Kanwarjit Singh and Gurpartap Singh Wadala has also been dropped.

Former AAP MLAs Kanwar Sandhu and Jagtar Singh Jagga have also lost their security cover. The personnel deployed to protect former MLA and BJP leader Fatehjang Bajwa, former minister Tikshan Sood and BJP chief spokesperson Anil Sareen have also been called back.

The security of Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speakers Rana K P Singh and Nirmal Singh Kahlon, former deputy speaker Ajaib Singh Bhatti and former MP Shamsheer Singh Dullo has also been withdrawn.

Iqbal Singh Lalpura, chairperson, National Commission for Minorities; Sanjay Srivastava, chairman of Bhakra Beas Management Board; former Rajya Sabha MP Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa; Raj Bahadur, vice chancellor of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences; and singer Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, who is known as Sidhu Moosewala; and former MP Rajiv Shukla are the other prominent leaders whose protection has been rolled back.

CHINESE VISA SCAM CBI grills Karti for eight hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: The CBI questioned Lok Sabha MP Karti Chidambaram for eight hours for the third consecutive day on Saturday in connection with its probe into the alleged Rs 50-lakh bribery for issuance of visas to 263 Chinese workers involved in the construction of a Punjab-based power project in 2011, officials said.

Karti Chidambaram arrived at the CBI headquarters here at around 9.30 am and was questioned till 6 pm, they said. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been questioning the Congress leader since Thursday in the 11-year old case which he has termed as "most bogus" and a result of "political vendetta".

The case pertains to 2011 when his father P Chidambaram was the Union home minister. The CBI had registered an FIR on May 14 against Karti and others on allegations of bribe of Rs 50 lakh being paid to him and his close associate

Bihar set to explore 'largest' gold reserve

As per a Geological Survey of India survey, around 222.88 million tonnes of gold reserve, including 37.6 tonnes of mineral-rich ore, are present in Jamui district



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, May 28: The Bihar government has decided to accord permission for exploration of the "country's largest" gold reserve in Jamui district, a senior official said on Saturday.

As per a Geological Survey of India (GSI) survey, around 222.88 million tonnes of gold reserve, including 37.6 tonnes of mineral-rich ore, are present in Jamui district.

"The state Mines and Geology Department is in consultation with agencies engaged in exploration, including GSI and the National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC), for exploration of gold reserves in Jamui.

"The consultation process started after analysing the GSI findings which indicated the presence of gold in areas such as Karmatia, Jhajha and Sono in Jamui district," Additional Chief Secretary cum

Mines Commissioner Harjot Kaur Bamhrah said. She said the state government is likely to sign an MoU with a central agency or agencies for G3 (preliminary) stage exploration within a month's time.

In certain areas, G2 (general) exploration can also be carried out, Bamhrah said. Union Minister of Mines Pralhad Joshi had last year informed the Lok Sabha that Bihar holds the highest share of India's gold reserves.

In a written reply, he had said that Bihar has 222.885 million tonnes of gold metal, which amounts to 44 per cent of the total gold reserves in the country. "As per the National Mineral Inventory, the total resources of primary gold ore in the country as on 1.4.2015 are estimated at 501.83 million tonnes with 654.74 tonnes of gold metal and out of this, Bihar is endowed with 222.885 million tonnes (44 per cent) of ore containing 37.6 tonnes of metal," Joshi had said.

COOLING OFF



A youngster cools himself under a tubewell on a hot day on the outskirts of Amritsar

PTI PHOTO

Over 21,000 pvt vehicles fined for bus lane violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: Over 21,000 private vehicles have been chaled for violating designated bus lanes within two months of the launch of an enforcement drive by Delhi government's Transport department, according to officials.

Nearly 391 DTC buses and 328 cluster buses were penalised under the drive that started from April 1. Between April 1 and May 26, 21,820 challans were issued while there were 819 violations recorded on the part of bus drivers.

The violations by bus drivers also included 100 instances of violations by other kinds of buses. As many as 21,001 private vehicles were penalised for lane violation while 359 vehicles were either lifted or towed away by authorities.

From May 9, the Transport Department started issuing challans to private bus operators and drivers for not adhering to designated bus lanes.

The third phase of the drive has been delayed and will be implemented when the PWD will complete road marking,



an official said. The Transport department

strictly started enforcing lane discipline for buses and goods

FROM MAY 9, THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT STARTED ISSUING CHALLANS TO PRIVATE BUS OPERATORS AND DRIVERS FOR NOT ADHERING TO DESIGNATED BUS LANES

NEARLY 391 DTC BUSES AND 328 CLUSTER BUSES WERE PENALISED UNDER THE DRIVE THAT STARTED FROM APRIL 1

of imprisonment for errant drivers.

Along with the traffic police, the Transport department has earmarked dedicated lanes to be used only by buses and goods carriers from 8 AM to 10 PM.

Under the drive, in compliance with the Supreme Court directions, the first violation of lane discipline attracts a fine of 10,000. The second offence will invite prosecution under the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act, third offence suspension of driving licence and fourth one leading to the termination of vehicle permit.

international



Any agreement with Russia isn't worth a broken penny. Is it possible to negotiate with a country that always lies cynically and propagandistically?
MYKHAILO PODOLYAK | PEACE TALKS NEGOTIATOR, UKRAINE

RARE BIRTH

A photo of a pup, from the critically endangered species red wolf, is going viral on the internet. It shows the pup sleeping beside the mother wolf and has been shared on Twitter by the Roger Williams Park Zoo in the US. "Red wolves, Brave & Diego are first time parents!! Only 15-20 red wolves remain in the wild. This is the first red wolf born at RWPZoo since 2005," reads the caption



of the day quote

The United States fully supports Finland and Sweden joining the alliance and I continue to be confident that both will soon be NATO members. We look forward to being able to call Finland and Sweden our allies
ANTONY BLINKEN | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

California and New Zealand have a natural connection and I'm so pleased we've put pen to paper today to confirm that and continue our cooperation on one of the great challenges from our generation
JACINDA ARDERN | PM, NEW ZEALAND

In the Asia-Pacific region, we must combine our forces to share good practices, knowledge and technologies to help address our common challenges
SHEIKH HASINA | PM, BANGLADESH

SHORT TAKES

Cardinal Angelo Sodano no more

Vatican City: Cardinal Angelo Sodano, a controversial Vatican power broker for more than a quarter of a century who was accused of covering up one of the Catholic Church's most notorious sex abusers, has died at the age of 94. Sodano, who had been ill for some time and died Friday night, was secretary of state under two popes -- John Paul II and Benedict XVI -- holding the number two post in the Vatican hierarchy for 16 years between 1990 and 2006.

Ireland confirms 1st monkeypox case

Dublin: Ireland has confirmed its first case of monkeypox, the country's health agency said Saturday. A separate suspected case is also being investigated and test results are awaited, the Health Service Executive (HSE) said in a statement. Around 20 countries where monkeypox is not endemic have reported outbreaks of the viral disease, with more than 200 confirmed or suspected infections mostly in Europe. Argentina reported two cases of the monkeypox virus Friday in men who had recently arrived from Spain, marking the first time the presence of the virus has been confirmed in Latin America during this latest outbreak.

Nigeria church fair stampede kills 31

Abuja: A stampede Saturday at a church charity event in southern Nigeria left 31 people dead and seven injured, police said, a shocking development at a programme that organisers said aimed to "offer hope" to the needy. The stampede at the program organised by the Kings Assembly pentecostal church in Rivers state involved many people who were seeking assistance, according to Grace Iringe-Koko, a police spokeswoman in the state. Many of the victims came to an annual "Shop for Free" charity programme organised by the church.

15 dead, 3 missing as rains lash China

Beijing: At least 15 people have died in torrential rains across southern China, state media reported Saturday. The storm damaged roads, bridges and telecommunications and power facilities in Yunnan's Qiubei county, which is about 130 kilometers north of the border with Vietnam. Video posted online showed streets flooded with muddy water and some roads partially washed away. More than 1,600 people were evacuated.

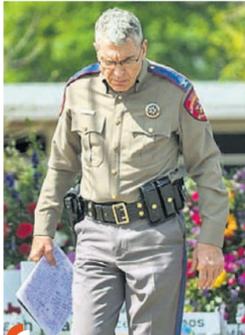
TEXAS SCHOOL SHOOTING

Cops waited to storm gunman

The disclosure of local law enforcement's delay in pursuing the teenaged gunman armed with a semi-automatic rifle came as the nation's leading gun-rights advocacy group, the National Rifle Association, opened its annual convention 275 miles away in Houston



Photos of the victims of the shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, are shown on a video display, during a moment of silence before a baseball game in Seattle



From the benefit of hindsight... it was the wrong decision, period. From what we know, we believe there should have been an entry as soon as you can. If I thought it would help, I'd apologize
STEVEN MCCRAW | DIRECTOR, TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

REUTERS

Uvalde, May 28: Frantic children called 911 at least half a dozen times from the Texas classrooms where a massacre was unfolding, pleading for police to intervene, as some 20 officers waited in the hallway nearly an hour before entering and killing the gunman, authorities said Friday.

At least two children placed several emergency calls from a pair of adjoining fourth-grade classrooms after 18-year-old Salvador Ramos entered on Tuesday with an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, according to Colonel Steven McCraw, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety. Ramos, who had driven to Robb Elementary School from his home after shooting and wounding his grandmother there, went on to kill 19 children and two teachers in the deadliest US school shooting in nearly a decade.

"He's in room 112," a girl whispered on the phone at 12:03 pm, more than 45 minutes before a US Border Patrol-led tactical team finally stormed in and ended the siege.

The on-site commander, the chief of the school district's police department in Uvalde, Texas, believed at the time that Ramos was barricaded inside and that children were no longer at immediate risk, giving police time to prepare, McCraw said.

"From the benefit of hindsight



Twenty-one empty chairs are seen outside of a daycare center as a memorial for the victims killed

where I'm sitting now, of course, it was not the right decision," McCraw said. "It was the wrong decision, period."

Governor Gregg Abbott, a Republican and staunch gun rights proponent who addressed the meeting in a pre-recorded video, seized on apparent police lapses in Uvalde, telling a news conference later he was misled and "livid about what happened."

Houston: Former US president Donald Trump Friday slammed the Joe Biden government over the Texas school shooting as he suggested that the country was prioritising the Ukraine war over the security in schools. Addressing the National Rifle Association (NRA) annual meeting in Houston amid growing calls for stronger gun control measures, Trump said that the US government should focus on funding for school security. "If the United States has \$40 billion to send to Ukraine, we should be able to do whatever it takes to keep our children safe at home. We spent trillions in Iraq and Afghanistan and got nothing for it. Before we nation-build the rest of the world, we should be building safe schools for our own children in our own nation," the former president added. "What's more repulsive is the rush to shift blame away from the villains who commit acts of mass violence and to place that blame onto the shoulders of millions of peaceful, law-abiding citizens who belong to organisations such as our wonderful NRA," he said while referring to gun reform advocates. Trump also launched an attack against the Democrats.

KIDS BEGGED FOR HELP

Some of the mostly 9- and 10-year-old students trapped with the gunman survived the massacre, including at least two who called 911

There were at least eight calls from the classrooms to 911 between 12:03 pm, half an hour after Ramos first entered the building, and 12:50 pm

A girl called at 12:16 pm and told police that there were still "eight to nine" students alive. Three shots were heard during a call made at 12:21 pm

The girl who made the first call implored the operator to "please send the police now" at 12:43 pm and again four minutes later

PROTEST ENTERS 50TH DAY

Sri Lanka on the boil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, May 28: Sri Lankan police Saturday fired tear gas and water cannons to disperse anti-government protesters here as the ongoing agitation demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the worst economic crisis intensified as it entered its 50th day.

"The continuous protest demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has reached its 50th day today. The day is to be marked with protest marches with wider participation," the organisers said.

News website newswire.lk reported that tear gas and water cannons were fired by police to disperse protesters near the World Trade Centre in Fort, Colombo.

According to the Colombo Gazette newspaper, a protest was staged near the residence and office of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe,



disrupting traffic along Flower Road. The protest was staged by "No Deal Gama", it said.

Sharing a video of the protest in which the agitators were seen carrying black flags and shouting anti-government slogans, the Daily Mirror newspaper tweeted, "50 days of the Galle Face Struggle - People's Representatives and many civil activists march from Kollupitiya Junction to Galle Face."

"Our struggle would only end when the Rajapaksa family leaves the political arena and be hauled before the people's court for all the wrongs they have done," Chameera Jeewantha, a protester who has been at the site all 50 days said.

Pak PM blames Imran regime for massive jump in fuel rates

To mitigate the impact of the hike in the fuel prices, the PM announced a ₹28 billion per month relief package to provide ₹2,000 per month to about 14 million families

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 28: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday said his government's move to increase fuel prices was necessary to avoid the country from facing bankruptcy.

Pakistan Thursday increased the prices of petroleum products by ₹30 per litre. Following the hike, price of petrol is now at ₹179.85, diesel at ₹174.15, kerosene at ₹155.95 and light diesel at ₹148.41.

In his first address to the nation after assuming power last month, Shehbaz talked mostly about the domestic problem faced by the government.

His main focus was the relief package for the vulnerable groups after the government increased the petroleum prices to get an assistance package from the



If the United States has \$40 billion to send to Ukraine, we should be able to do whatever it takes to keep our children safe at home
DONALD TRUMP | FORMER PRESIDENT, US

SHIFT IN WAR MOMENTUM

Russian gains in eastern Ukraine

Russian forces have been making slow but steady advances in the Donbas - large parts of which were already controlled by Moscow-backed separatists before the war

REUTERS

Kyiv, May 28: Russian forces were assaulting the Ukrainian city of Sievierodonetsk Saturday after saying they had captured the nearby rail hub of Lyman as Moscow pressed its offensive in the eastern Donbas.

Russian gains in recent days indicate a shift in momentum in the war, now in its fourth month. The invading forces appear close to seizing all of the Luhansk region of Donbas, a main Kremlin war goal, despite Ukrainian resistance.

Russia's defence ministry said Saturday its troops and allied separatist forces were now in full control of Lyman, site of a railway junction and lying west of the Siversky Donets River in the Donetsk region that neighbours Luhansk.

However Hanna Malyar, Ukraine's deputy defence minister, said the battle for Lyman continued, the ZN.ua website reported.

The Russian forces were likely to try to cross the river in coming days in the next phase of the Kremlin's Donbas offensive, the British defence ministry said in its daily intelligence report Saturday. Sievierodonetsk, some 60 km (40 miles) from Lyman on the eastern side of the river and the largest Donbas city still held by Ukraine,

Russia shows off Zircon hypersonic cruise missile

Russia successfully test-fired a hypersonic Zircon cruise missile over a distance of about 1,000 km (625 miles), the defence ministry said Saturday. The missile was fired from the Barents Sea and hit a target in the White Sea, it said. Video released by the ministry showed the missile being fired from a ship and blazing into the sky on a steep trajectory. President Vladimir Putin has described the Zircon as part of a new generation of unrivalled arms systems. Hypersonic weapons can travel at nine times the speed of sound, and Russia has conducted previous test-launches of the Zircon from warships and submarines in the past year.

is now under heavy assault from the Russians. "Sievierodonetsk is under constant enemy fire," Ukraine's police force said in a social media post Saturday.

Russian artillery was also shelling the Lysychansk-Bakhmut road, which Russia needs to take to close a pincer movement and encircle Ukrainian forces.

The General Staff of Ukraine's armed forces said Saturday Ukrainian forces had repelled eight assaults in Donetsk and Luhansk in the previous 24 hours.



Capture of Lyman would set stage for next phase of offensive
Sievierodonetsk under assault

Sen's 'All That Breathes' grabs Cannes Golden Eye

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cannes, May 28: Shaunak Sen's 'All That Breathes', an audience favourite here from the outset, won the 2022 L'Œil d'Or (Golden Eye) for the best documentary at the 75th Cannes Film Festival Saturday, making it two in succession for India.

All That Breathes is about two Delhi brothers Nadeem and Saud who, amid the city's worsening air and deteriorating social fabric, devote their lives to saving migratory black kites that are at the mercy of mankind's unthinking ways. The film was screened as part of the festival's Special Screenings line-up.

The award was announced by a jury chaired by veteran Polish filmmaker Agnieszka Holland.

The citation read "The 2022 L'Œil d'Or goes to a film that, in a world of destruction, reminds us that every life matters, and every small action matters. You can grab your camera, you can save a bird, you can hunt for some moments of stealing beauty, it matters."

The citation described All That Breathes as "an inspirational journey in observation of three Don Quijotes who may not save the whole world but do save their world."

Sen's win is India's second in Cannes in two years. In 2021, Payal Kapadia's 'A Night of Knowing Nothing', which played in the parallel Semaine de la Critique (Cannes Critics' Week) took home the L'Œil d'Or.

All That Breathes was competing with ace Chilean documentarian Patricio Guzman's 'Mylmaginary Country', Ethan Coen's 'Jerry Lee Lewis Trouble in Mind' and Sergei Loznitsa's 'The Natural History of Destruction', among other films.

The L'Œil d'Or jury bestowed a Special Award posthumously on Mantas Kvedaravicius for his film 'Mariupolis 2'. The Lithuanian director was among thousands of civilians killed in Ukraine since the Russian invasion. The jury described Mariupolis 2 as a "film impossible to compare with any other from the competition".

British monarch's future lies in Prince William's hands

WITH THE HEALTH OF THE POPULAR 96-YEAR-OLD QUEEN AN INCREASING SOURCE OF CONCERN, FORCING HER TO PULL OUT OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS, HER PLATINUM JUBILEE WILL MARK NOT JUST A TIME TO REFLECT ON HER PAST, BUT TO LOOK AHEAD

REUTERS

London, May 28: While nearly all attention will be focused next week on Queen Elizabeth as she celebrates her 70th anniversary on the throne this year, for those with eyes on the future of the British monarchy, attention is switching to her grandson Prince William.

The British royals have suffered a bruising couple of years with the US sex abuse lawsuit against Elizabeth's son Andrew, Prince Harry, William's younger brother, quitting duties to move to the United States in 2020, and police investigating alleged wrongdoing at the main charity of son and heir Prince Charles.

Most polls show a majority of the British public support the monarchy, and, while his 73-year-old father commands less popu-

larity, William - the second in line to the throne - and his wife Kate are the most liked royals after the queen.

But, surveys also suggest those aged under 50 are far more ambivalent about the institution.

"The future does rest on Prince William," Matthew Dennison, a biographer of the queen, said. "And we all know that public opinion can be unkind."

A decade ago, amid celebrations for Elizabeth's then Diamond Jubilee, there was a notable moment when she greeted crowds from the balcony of Buckingham Palace accompanied by

Charles, his wife Camilla, William and his wife Kate, and Harry. "LAST OF THE MOHICANS"

"William is the key person because William is going to be king one day," said Charles Rae, a former royal correspondent at the Sun newspaper. "He's the last of the Mohicans, basically. I think an awful lot rests on William's shoulders for the future of the monarchy."

William and Kate, 40, have enjoyed highly positive media coverage over the last five years as one of the world's most

glamorous couples with Hollywood star appeal. The prince has shaken off the "work-shy Wills" nickname British tabloids gave him in the last decade when they suggested the couple were lazy.

William has also received much praise for his work on mental health, homelessness and the environment, but the couple's recent tour of the Caribbean was a wake-up call after they faced protests over Britain's imperial past and criticism that some of the tour had echoes of a colonial throwback.

According to the Sunday Mirror newspaper the visit has prompted William and Kate to rethink how the monarchy should look, with the couple saying they wanted to be known by their names and not their titles - the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.



of the day quote

People in other communities are worried about the money in their pocket before they start a business. They look out for jobs if they don't have money. But the jains have the acumen to start a business even without a rupee in their pocket

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | CM, KARNATAKA

The hybrid power plant will help us to meet our additional electricity demand and will also allow us to produce green hydrogen, supporting Government of India's initiative of Green Energy and Green Hydrogen

MAULIK PATEL | CHAIRMAN & MD, MFL

We continue to maintain our order book position of over ₹10,000 crore along with our steady revenue growth. As has been our commitment, once again we deliver a profitable growth in this year as well

RAJIV MITTAL | CHAIRMAN, VA TECH WABAG LTD

SHORT TAKES

M&M Q4 profit zooms five-fold

Mumbai: Mahindra & Mahindra Saturday reported nearly five-fold jump in standalone profit at ₹1,192 crore for quarter ended March 31, 2022. The company had posted a profit of ₹245 crore for the year-ago period, it said in a statement. Revenue grew 28 per cent to ₹17,124 crore in the period under review as compared with ₹13,356 crore in March quarter 2020-21, it said. In full fiscal year 2021-22, the company logged a standalone profit of ₹4,935 crore, a multi-fold growth from ₹984 crore in fiscal year ended March 31, 2021. M&M said it achieved the highest ever standalone revenue for auto and farm segments at ₹55,300 crore for FY22, which is 29 per cent higher than previous year's.

ITC acquires 10% stake in Blupin

New Delhi: Diversified entity ITC Saturday said it has acquired a 10.07 per cent stake in Blupin Technologies Pvt Ltd, the company behind direct-to-consumer (D2C) brand, Mylo. The FMCG major in April had announced the acquisition of a 10.07 per cent stake in Blupin Technologies Pvt Ltd, for up to ₹39.34 crore. "The company has acquired today, i.e. on 28th May, 2022, 400 equity shares of 10/- each and 2,980 Compulsorily Convertible Cumulative Participating Preference Shares of 100/- each of Blupin Technologies Private Limited, representing 10.07% of its share capital on a fully diluted basis," ITC said in a regulatory filing.

ONGC posts 31% jump in Q4 profit

New Delhi: State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Saturday reported a 31.5 per cent jump in its March quarter net profit as it got the best ever price for crude oil it produces and sells. Standalone net profit of ₹8,859.54 crore, or ₹7.04 per share, in January-March compared with ₹6,733.97 crore, or ₹5.35 a share, in the same period a year back, according to the company's regulatory filing. Revenue from operations rose to ₹34,497.24 crore in the fourth quarter of 2021-22 fiscal from ₹21,188.91 crore in January-March 2021. For the full fiscal (April 2021 to March 2022), ONGC posted a record net profit of ₹40,305.74 crore, up from ₹11,246.44 crore in the previous financial year.



Very few are willing to admit that there had been an overswing on the side of green solutions and technologies that were still in their nascent stage. This fragility has been totally exposed by the crisis in Ukraine

GAUTAM ADANI | FOUNDER, ADANI GROUP

BINANCE REGISTERS WITH ITALY'S REGULATOR

Binance said Friday its legal entity in Italy had registered with the regulator in the country, as the major cryptocurrency exchange seeks to gain traction in Europe. The registration of Binance Italy, which was established in recent months, could potentially make the company more accountable and reduce the prospects for money laundering



Amul makes foray into organic food industry

THE FIRST PRODUCT LAUNCHED IN THIS PORTFOLIO IS 'AMUL ORGANIC WHOLE WHEAT ATTA'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: Dairy major GCMF, which markets its products under Amul brand, Saturday announced entry into organic food market with the launch of organic wheat flour.

The first product launched in this portfolio is 'Amul Organic Whole Wheat Atta', Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMF) said in a statement.

Further, Amul will be launching products like moong daal, tur daal, chana daal and basmati rice in its organic portfolio.

The production of Amul organic atta is being done at state-of-the-art processing facility, Tribhuvan Das Patel Mugar Food Complex.

The product goes through a thorough procedure of lab testing multiple times to make sure that it is as per organic standard laid down by Government of India, it said.

RS Sodhi, MD, GCMF, said the cooperative is in the process of developing a pool of organic farmers and replicate their existing milk model in the organic sourcing.

This will increase the income

of organic farmers and will lead to overall democratisation of the organic food industry.

Currently, the major challenge for the farmers is unavailability of market linkage for organic products and high cost of organic testing facilities, the statement said.

Therefore, along with creation of market linkage for organic farmers, Amul is in process of setting up organic testing laboratories at 5 locations across India.

The first lab is being established at the Amul Fed Dairy in Ahmedabad.

GCMF said the prime objec-

tive of launching organic wheat flour is to help its customers embark on a mission to a more sustainable and healthy lifestyle.

Amul organic atta will be launched at Amul Parlours and leading retail stores across Gujarat initially from the first week of June.

The product will also be available online for home delivery across Gujarat, Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and Pune from June onwards.

It will be available in two pack sizes of 1 kilogram at MRP of ₹60 and 5 kilogram at MRP of ₹290.



The Taste of India

POWER SHORTAGE LOOMS

Coal India to import for first time in years

The country is struggling with fuel shortage as annual power demand is seen growing at the fastest rate in at least 38 years and global coal prices are trading at near-record levels due to a supply crunch resulting from the Russia-Ukraine crisis

REUTERS

New Delhi, May 28: State-run Coal India, the world's largest coal miner, will import the fuel for use by utilities, a power ministry letter seen by Reuters showed Saturday, as shortages raise concerns about renewed power outages.

It would be the first time since 2015 that Coal India has imported the fuel, highlighting efforts by state and federal officials to stock up to avoid a repeat of April, when India faced its worst power cuts in more than six years.

"Coal India would import coal for blending on government-to-government (G2G) basis and supply ... to thermal power plants of state generators and independent power producers (IPPs)," the federal Power Ministry said in the letter dated May 28.

The letter was sent to all utilities, top federal and state energy officials including the federal coal secretary and the chairman of Coal India.

India is expected to face a wider coal shortage during the third quarter of 2022 due to expectations of higher electricity demand,



POWER MINISTRY ASKED STATES TO SUSPEND TENDERS THAT ARE "UNDER PROCESS"

COAL INVENTORIES AT POWER PLANTS HAVE DECLINED BY ABOUT 13% SINCE APRIL TO THE LOWEST PRE-SUMMER LEVELS IN YEARS

stoking fears of widespread power outages. The power ministry said in the letter the decision was taken after nearly all states suggested that multiple coal import tenders by states would lead to a confusion and sought centralised procurement through Coal India.

India stepped up pressure on utilities to increase imports to blend with local coal in recent days, warning of cuts to the supply of domestically mined coal

if power plants did not build up coal inventories through imports.

But the power ministry Saturday asked states to suspend tenders that are "under process".

"The tenders under process by state generators and IPPs for importing coal for blending may be kept in abeyance to await the price discovery by Coal India through G2G route, so as to procure coal at least possible rates," the ministry said.

Fake reviews on e-commerce sites under govt's radar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: The government Saturday said it will develop a framework to keep a check on fake reviews posted on e-commerce websites to protect consumer interest.

The consumer affairs ministry along with the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) held a virtual meeting on Friday with stakeholders, including e-commerce entities, to discuss the magnitude of fake reviews on their platforms.

According to an official statement, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) will develop these frameworks after studying the present mechanism being followed by the e-commerce entities in India and best practices available globally.

Consumer forums, law universities, lawyers, FICCI, CII and consumer rights activists, among others, participated in the meeting to discuss the magnitude of the problem and roadmap ahead for fake reviews on websites.

Since e-commerce involves a virtual shopping experience without any opportunity to physically view or examine the product, consumers heavily rely on reviews posted on platforms to see the opinion and experience of users who have already purchased the good or service.

"Traceability by ensuring the authenticity of the reviewer and the



Fake reviews mislead consumers into buying online products and services

associated liability of the platform are the two key issues here. Also e-commerce players must disclose as to how they choose the 'most relevant reviews' for display in a fair and transparent manner," Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh said.

All stakeholders agreed that the issue deserves to be monitored closely and appropriate framework governing the fake reviews should be developed for protection of consumer interest, the statement said.

Stakeholders from e-commerce companies claimed they have frameworks in place by which they monitor fake reviews and would be pleased to take part in developing a legal framework on the issue, it added.

USL to sell 32 brands to Inbrew for ₹820cr



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: Diageo-controlled liquor maker United Spirits Ltd (USL) has announced the sale and franchising of over 30 popular brands to Singapore-based Inbrew Beverages for an estimated consideration of ₹820 crore.

The company has signed a sale and franchise agreement for select popular brands with Inbrew, a joint statement said.

"USL and Inbrew have executed definitive agreements for the sale of the entire business undertaking associated with 32 brands, including iconic brands Haywards, Old Tavern, White-Mischief, Honey Bee, Green Label and Romanov, for a total cash consideration of approximately ₹820 crore, subject to customary adjustments," it said.

The transaction does not include the McDowell's or Director's Special brands, which will be retained by USL. "The sale portfolio covers the entire business undertaking associated with the 32 brands set out below, including the related contracts, permits, intellectual property rights, associated employees, and a manufacturing facility," it said.

In addition, USL and Inbrew have entered into a 5-year franchise arrangement for 11 other brands, including Bagpiper. "USL has also granted Inbrew a right, subject to certain conditions, to convert the fixed term franchise arrangement into one with perpetual rights to use and/or a call option to acquire the brands at a pre-agreed consideration," it said.

The Company expects to complete the transaction by the end of the quarter ending 30 September 2022. USL's popular portfolio comprises around 30 entry-level lower-priced liquor brands, with an average price of less than ₹400 for a 750 ml bottle, and straddle whisky, rum, brandy, vodka and gin.

Russia mulls crypto for int'l payments

AGENCIES

Moscow, May 28: Russia is considering allowing cryptocurrency to be used for international payments, Interfax news agency quoted a government official as saying Friday.

"The idea of using digital currencies in transactions for international settlements is being actively discussed," Ivan Chebeskov, head of the finance ministry's financial policy department, was quoted as saying.

Russian officials are wrestling with how to regulate the country's crypto market and use of digital currencies, with the finance ministry opposed to the central bank's calls for a blanket ban.

Discussions have been ongoing for months and though the government expects cryptocurrencies to be legalised as a means of payment sooner or later, no consensus has yet been reached.

The finance ministry is discussing adding the latest proposal on international payments to an updated version of a draft law, the Vedomosti newspaper reported on Friday, citing government officials.

Allowing crypto as a means of settlement for international trade would help counter the impact of Western sanctions, which has seen Russia's access to traditional cross-border payment mechanisms "limited," Mr Chebeskov said.

BoB opens City's 59th branch at Baramunda



Bhubaneswar: The Bank of Baroda, Bhubaneswar Region, opened its 59th Branch at Baramunda here Saturday. The branch was inaugurated by Pragyanismita Sahoo (IES), Director, Institutional Finance, in presence of Tarakanta Bhakta, Deputy Secretary to Odisha government and other dignitaries. Sahoo congratulated the bank and informed that the Bank of Baroda has achieved 89% of ACP targets for the last financial year. She also appreciated bank's thrust on evolving business and improving digital footprints across the state. However she expressed concern over areas like farm credit and fisheries where the state offers ample opportunity to the finance sector. It can be mentioned that Baramunda Branch is now the 59th branch of Bhubaneswar Region as well as 175th branch in the state for Bank of Baroda. The new branch is the 26th branch of Khordha district. "Bank of Baroda has been known to take the lead for socio-economic growth of Odisha state. The branch will cater to the banking needs and requirements of the people of the locality and its adjoining areas," said Rajeev Krishna, Regional Manager, Bhubaneswar Region.

Malabar opens store at Chandrasekharpur

Bhubaneswar: Malabar Gold and Diamonds, one of the largest jewellery dealers, launched its brand new store at Chandrasekharpur here, Saturday. The store was inaugurated by Oriya actor Sabyasachi Mishra in the presence of senior management officials and other dignitaries. The new store spanning 6,500 sq ft, located near Chandrasekharpur Police Station, provides largest design variety as well as fair prices for jewellery with reasonable making charges starting at just 4.9%. The brand has also introduced rewarding gold purchase plans, 'Golden Bloom' and 'Golden Glow', which offers customers an opportunity to purchase their favourite designs without paying any making charges and stay protected against gold price hikes. The new store offers a large selection of gold, diamond and precious gemstone jewellery, along with exquisite Kundan, and royal antique designs. The brand has also introduced its latest jewellery collections Virraaz Royal Polki Jewellery, Elara diamond collection, Zoul Lifestyle Jewellery, providing a wide variety of options to its customers. "We are delighted to launch our newest store in Odisha at Chandrasekharpur. With every new store launch, we aim to be more accessible to our customers and cater to their every need. This store will provide customers with a world-class shopping experience, superior craftsmanship and a wide variety of designs suitable for every occasion. As part of the group's CSR initiative, Malabar Gold & Diamonds will allocate 5% of the profit earned by the Chandrasekharpur showroom for various charitable and philanthropic activities in the region," said MP Ahammed, Chairman, Malabar Group.



Delegates visit JSP's Coal Gasification Plant at Angul

Bhubaneswar: More than 60 delegates of the National Mineral Congress visited the Coal Gasification Plant (CGP) set up by Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) at Angul, Saturday. Organised by the Indian National Committee World Mining Congress and supported by the Ministry of Coal, the visiting team comprised of senior mining professionals from various metal, mining and mining technology organisations across India. The delegation had an overview of all the units of the CGP to have first-hand knowledge about its functioning and advantages. JSP's Managing Director VR Sharma and other senior officials explained to the visiting delegates various features of the CGP and the process for the production of the synthesis gas. JSP is the first steelmaker in the world to produce steel through the CGP-DRI route. Addressing the first session of the National Mineral Congress, JSP's Chairman, Naveen Jindal highlighted the benefits of coal gas technology for producing clean energy.

Won't make vehicles in India until allowed to sell locally: Musk



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 28: American electric carmaker Tesla, which has been seeking reduction in import duties to sell its vehicles in India, will not manufacture its products locally unless it is allowed to first sell and service its cars in the country, company founder and chief executive Elon Musk has said.

In a tweet responding to a user asking about Tesla setting up a

manufacturing plant in India, he said, "Tesla will not put a manufacturing plant in any location where we are not allowed first to sell & service cars."

Last month, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had said if Tesla was ready to manufacture its electric vehicles in India then there was 'no problem' but the company must not import cars from China.

In August last year, Musk had said Tesla may set up a manufac-

turing unit in India if it first succeeds with imported vehicles in the country.

He had said Tesla wanted to launch its vehicles in India "but import duties are the highest in the world by far of any large country!"

Currently, India imposes 100 per cent import duty on fully imported cars with CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight) value more than \$40,000 and 60 per cent on those costing less than the amount.

Ola Electric's CEO responds

"Thanks, but no thanks," is the terse message via Twitter from Ola Electric founder and CEO Bhavish Aggarwal for Tesla boss Elon Musk hours after the latter said the EV giant will not manufacture its products locally unless it is allowed to first sell and service its cars in the country.

India exact sweet revenge

ASIA CUP HOCKEY: LAKRA & Co BEAT JAPAN 2-1 IN SUPER 4 LEAGUE MATCH, AVENGE POOL STAGE LOSS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, May 28: The Indian men's hockey team scored two fantastic field goals to beat Japan 2-1 in its first Super 4 league match and avenge its loss in the pool stage of the Asia Cup here Saturday.

The defending champions, who lost 2-5 against Japan in the pool stage, scored two eye-catching field goals through Manjeet (8th minute) and Pawan Rajbhar (35th) to register a narrow win. Japan's lone goal came from a penalty corner through Takuma Niwa in the 18th minute. Japan threatened India initially and secured a penalty corner as early as in the opening minute but the Indians thwarted the danger. The Indians grew in confidence and got their footing as the match progressed.

It was a moment of brilliance from Manjeet that handed India the lead. He made a brilliant solo run down the left flank after re-



ceiving a pass from Pawan and used 3D skills to perfection to beat Takashi Yoshikawa under the Japanese bar. As was the case in the first quarter, the Japanese started the second 15 minutes on a promising note and secured a penalty corner in the 18th minute from which Niwas scored from a rebound after Ken Nagayoshi's initial flick was saved by Indian goalkeeper Karkera.

Pepped up by the goal, Japan continued to put pressure on the Indian defence and earned two more penalty corners, which the Indian defence kept at bay. Minutes later, Karthi Selvam missed a golden chance as he failed to get past Japanese goalie Yoshikawa from one-one-one situation.

Rajbhar restored India's lead five minutes into the second half, slotting home from close range

after being set up by Uttam Singh's brilliant stick work.

Trailing by a goal, the Japanese mounted relentless pressure on the Indian citadel but the Birendra Lakra-led backline stood firm to keep their lead intact.

India will play Malaysia in their next Super 4 stage match Sunday. Meanwhile, in the other Super 4 match of the day, South Korea and Malaysia played out a 2-2 draw.

SUPERNOVAS REIGN SUPREME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, May 28: West Indian all-rounder Deandra Dottin (62, 44b, 1x4, 4x6; 2/28) starred with both bat and ball as she powered Supernovas to an unprecedented third Women's T20 Challenge title triumph with a four-run win over Velocity in a thrilling final here Saturday.

Dottin helped Supernovas post 165/7 after being put in to bat. Then she played a major role in restricting Velocity to 161/8.

South African batter Laura Wolvaardt (65 n o, 40b, 5x4, 3x6) almost single-handedly took Velocity within striking distance of a sensational win after they were reduced to 64/5 in 11 overs and 117/8 in 16.5 overs.

Wolvaardt, who became the only batter in the tournament to score two half centuries, launched a ferocious onslaught in the death overs with a flurry of boundaries to raise hopes of a stunning victory for Velocity. The No.10 batter Simran Bahadur (20 n o) also chipped with three successive fours in the penultimate over.

If Englishwoman Ecclestone made life difficult for Velocity batters in the first half of the run chase, Australian leg-spinner Alana King



(3/32) did the same in the back end. Supernovas had won the first two editions of the tournament in 2018 and 2019 before losing to Trailblazers in the final in 2020. The tournament was not held last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier, Dottin made full use of an early reprieve to score a blistering half century and propel Supernovas. The 30-year-old Dottin was dropped on 13 by Sneha Rana off Deepti Sharma (2/20) in the fourth over, and she made Velocity pay for that costly mistake.

The experienced campaigner stitched 73 runs for the opening wicket with Priya Punia (28) and

added 58 for the second wicket with in-form captain Harmanpreet Kaur (43, 29b, 1x4, 3x6).

For Velocity, captain Deepti, Kate Cross (2/29) and Bahadur (2/30) took two wickets apiece, while Ayabonga Khaka (1/27) got one. The Supernovas could only score 34 runs in the last five overs while losing five wickets.

BRIEF SCORES: Supernovas 165/7 (Deandra Dottin 62, Harmanpreet Kaur 43; Deepti Sharma 2/20, Kate Cross 2/29, Simran Bahadur 2/30) beat Velocity 161/8 (Laura Wolvaardt 65 n o, Alana King 3/32, Sophie Ecclestone 2/28, Deandra Dottin 2/28) by 4 runs.

Pramod, Tarun, Manasi in Fazza Dubai Int'l final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, May 28: Top Indian para shuttlers including Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat and reigning world champion Manasi Joshi battled past their opponents to enter the finals at the Fazza Dubai Para Badminton International here Saturday. In total, nine Indian para shuttlers have made it to seven finals scheduled to be played Sunday.

In men's singles SL3, Bhagat had to come back from a game down each to defeat Daisuke Fujihara of Japan 14-21, 21-14, 21-18. The Odisha lad will play compatriot Nitesh Kumar in the final. Kumar beat fellow Indian Manoj Sarkar 21-17, 21-16.

In the men's singles SL4, Tarun

Dhillon and Indonesian Fredy Setiawan are set to play the final. Dhillon defeated Rickard Nilsson 21-15, 21-17.

Among women, it will be an all-Indian tussle for the gold medal in the women's singles SL3. Joshi overcame a second game scare to defeat Australia's Celine Aurelie Vinot 21-13, 22-24, 21-19 and book the final against Mandeep Kaur who defeated Parul Dalsukhbhai Parmar 21-15, 21-9.

Among others, promising Manisha Ramadass and Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan have advanced to the final as well. While Ramadass had to dip deep to beat Denmark's Cathrine Rosengren 24-22, 22-20, Nithya defeated Thailand's Chae Saeyang 21-18, 21-10. Ramadass meets Japan's Akiko Sugino.

Titans brace up for Royals test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 28: Two leaders, who are minefields of talent in their own right, one team that has made a mockery of all betting odds and the other trying to complete a cycle that started 15 summers back, IPL final between Gujarat Titans and Rajasthan Royals is about this and much more.

When IPL started over two months back, nobody would have believed that two captains walking out for toss in the title clash will be Hardik Pandya and Sanju Samson.

'Remember the Titans', a 2000 Hollywood film headlined by Denzel Washington is considered one of the best sports films on the proverbial underdog story, which always has a capital.

For Titans skipper Hardik and head coach Ashish Nehra, this

journey of two months has been nothing short of spectacular. They have made a lot of people eat a humble pie because many, including experts, termed them a team of no-hopers post auction.

A team that looked like a rag-tag outfit with only a few good players like David Miller, considered past their sell by date, or one-match wonders like Rahul Tewatia, it didn't really look good on paper. But then you wouldn't call cricket a 'game of glorious uncertainties' if everything would be decided on paper.

Come Sunday, expect a partisan and vociferous crowd to chant 'Aava De' and that's the impact that Titans have had on their fans. For Titans, if this is about carving a niche in front of home crowd, Rajasthan would like to do it for someone, who would be watching up from the stars. Shane Warne - Rajasthan's for-

ever first Royal had used the IPL stage in its inception year to show Australian cricket establishment what Ian Chappell had always maintained: "Shane Warne was the best captain Australia never had".

Warne had guided tournament's then cheapest team to victory. Thirteen summers have gone but there is no Warne in flesh and blood to watch his beloved team complete a cycle of life and sport.

It is not easy to lead a pack that has bonafide stars like R Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jos Buttler, Trent Boult along with young guns Yashasvi Jaiswal or Prasidh Krishna but Sanju has handled it well.

What will be Hardik's tactic against a wily Chahal and an experimental Ashwin during the middle overs? Or will Buttler take risks against a Rashid Khan? We will get all those answers in the next 24 hours.

BOPANNA-MIDDELKOOP KNOCKS OUT WIMBLEDON CHAMPIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, May 28: The never-say-die spirit was at work as Rohan Bopanna and Matwe Middelkoop saved five match points to knock out Mate Pavic and Nikol Mektic, the reigning Wimbledon champions, from the Roland Garros, here Saturday.

Bopanna's serve was as venomous as it has been throughout his career and his volleys too were as sharp as ever while his Dutch partner showed exemplary calm under pressure in the men's doubles third round.

A break of serve early in the third set put them at a disadvantageous position but there was no dearth of spirit or class from Bopanna and Middelkoop, who eventually prevailed 6-7(5-7), 7-6(7-3), 7-6(12-10) in two

hours and 32 minutes.

Bopanna, thus, matched his best performance at the clay court major by reaching the quarterfinals, having done it four times in the past.

In an interesting fourth round match, Rafael Nadal will face Felix Auger-Aliassime, who is coached by the 13-time Roland Garros champion's uncle - Toni Nadal.

So, Rafa was asked, might there be some awkwardness there? "For me, it's very simple. He's my uncle. I don't think he will be able to want me to lose, without a doubt, but he's a professional and he's with another player," said Rafa.

"It's not a story at all for me. I know what the feelings are that we have between each other. I know he wants the best for me. Now he's helping another player," he said. "But honestly, for me, it's zero problem."

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