



## COUCH OF MANIFESTATION

Filmmaker-host Karan Johar spills the beans in his show that Kartik Aaryan and Sara Ali Khan were, in fact, 'dating'

LEISURE P2



## CHINA SLAMS US

The US is the biggest threat to world peace, stability and development, says China

INTERNATIONAL P10



## NADAL IN SEMIFINALS

Rafael Nadal battles through injury to march into the semifinals at Wimbledon, beating Taylor Fritz

SPORTS P12

## Droupadi Murmu to visit Odisha today

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The state government has decided to treat Droupadi Murmu as a 'state guest' when the NDA presidential candidate arrives here for electioneering July 8, a senior official said.

The Home department official also said that adequate measures will be taken for the safety, with an escort pilot and a personal security officer will be provided to Murmu.

These apart, special arrangements for her reception, accommodation, boarding, and transport will be made for her visit, the official said. Besides interacting with MLAs and MPs, Murmu, who had been touring states to seek support for her candidature, is likely to have one-on-one meeting with CM Naveen Patnaik. P3

## 3 die of asphyxiation in Gajapati factory

POST NEWS NETWORK

**R Udaygiri, July 7:** Three workers of a noodle manufacturing unit at Mohana in Gajapati district died allegedly of asphyxiation late Wednesday night, a police official said Thursday.

The deceased were identified as Arun Sahu of Nimakhandi in Ganjam district, and Sunil Dalai and Prabhakar Dalai of Kampaguda in Gajapati district.

The incident came to the fore Thursday morning when the trio did not open the unit's door. Soon, other workers informed the Mohana police who reached the spot and broke open the unit's door to find the trio lying unconscious. They were rushed to the Mohana Community Health Centre (CHC) where doctors declared them 'dead on arrival', said an official.

According to an official of Mohana police, the unit has four to five rooms and the incident may have taken place after 1am. "The regulator of one of the LPG cylinders was found to be open and the room was filled with gas. Initial investigation suggests the three workers died from asphyxiation," said the official.

The bodies were sent to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur for post-mortem. A case of unnatural death has been registered and further investigation is on, the official added.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



See, how caring this govt is. It wants us to eat only non-cooked greens and stay healthy!

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	54178.46 ↑ 427.49
NIFTY	16132.90 ↑ 143.10
DOLLAR	75.41 ↑ ₹0.08
EURO	81.04 ↑ ₹0.09
GOLD	₹50,631 ↑ ₹131
SILVER	₹57,033 ↑ ₹307

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	33.0°C	32.5°C
MIN	25.2°C	25.5°C
Humidity	97%	92%
Rainfall	8.8mm	6.4mm

Forecast: Light rain likely

# BACK WITH A BANG



People run through the streets with fighting bulls during the first day of San Fermin Festival in Pamplona, northern Spain, Thursday. The festival was suspended for the past two years owing to the Covid-19 pandemic

PTI PHOTO

## Boris quits as UK PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, July 7:** British Prime Minister Boris Johnson Thursday said he was sad to announce his resignation as Conservative Party leader, triggering a leadership election for a new Tory leader who will go on to become the new PM.

Johnson, 58, said he will remain in charge at 10 Downing Street until the process of electing a new leader is completed - expected by the time of the Conservative Party conference scheduled for October.

"I want you to know how sad I am to be giving up the best job in the world," Johnson said. He blamed the 'herd instinct' of his party as he delivered his resignation speech on the doorstep of 10 Downing Street.

"It is clearly now the will of the parliamentary Conservative Party that there should be a new leader of that party and therefore a new Prime Minister," he said.

"I have agreed with Sir Graham Brady, the chairman of our backbench MPs that the process of choosing that new leader should begin now and the timetable will be announced next week and I have today appointed a Cabinet to serve as I will until a new leader is in place," he said.



The outgoing leader reiterated he had been given an "incredible mandate" at the 2019 general election, which was "the reason I have fought so hard in the last few days to continue to deliver that mandate in person". "I felt it was my job, my duty, my obligation to you to continue to do what we promised in 2019," he said.

Referring to the high drama of the last few days, Johnson said he had tried to persuade his colleagues that it would be "eccentric" to change government with such a "vast mandate" and when the Tories are only a "handful of points" behind in the polls and when the economic scene is so difficult domestically and internationally.

He added, "I regret not to have been successful in those arguments and of course it is painful not to be able to see through so many ideas and projects myself." MORE P10

# Now, BJB boy 'ragged'

■ A Plus II second year Commerce student of BJB Junior College lodges police complaint alleging ragging by his senior hostel inmates

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** A few days after a Plus III student of BJB Autonomous College here committed suicide alleging ragging, a Plus II student of BJB Junior College here Thursday levelled similar allegations against his senior hostel inmates.

In a written complaint at Badagada police station, the alleged victim, a Plus II second year Commerce student of BJB Junior College, claimed that his senior hostel inmates ragged him in front of faculty members. However, the faculty members did not protest the action of the accused seniors, he alleged.

On July 2, Ruchika Mohanty, a Plus III first year girl student of the BJB Autonomous College, died by suicide after she was allegedly harassed by her seniors at Karubaki women's hostel. In the purported suicide note, she also mentioned about ragging by three students. The matter is under investigation.



Meanwhile, members of different student unions staged road blockade near the BJB College demanding justice for the Plus III girl student. Based on the autopsy report, police have confirmed that the death of the girl was due to asphyxia which was caused by hanging from a rope. The issue was raised in the Assembly and members cutting across party lines expressed concern over the suicide by the BJB Autonomous College student. Minister of State for Home TK Behera told the Assembly that the government has asked the police to undertake proper investigation into the matter.

When asked about the frequent allegations of ragging, BJB Autonomous College Principal Niranjan Mishra said students should feel free to approach the college authorities whenever they feel like being harassed.

"We have constituted an internal committee which is probing the

unfortunate death of Ruchika. We'll send the enquiry report to the state government soon. We've also decided to hold intensive counselling programmes in the college and hostel and urge the students to share with us their issues without any fear," Mishra said.

Ragging Free Campus Abhiyan (RFCA) convener Tejeswar Parida said at least 15 to 20 incidents of ragging are being reported from various educational institutes across the state every year. "We usually receive many complaints from students and parents about ragging in colleges. However, they are reluctant to file a formal complaint with the police," Parida said.

RFCA has proposed to the state government to enact a strict anti-ragging law as enacted in several states to rein in the heinous crime. Installation of CCTV cameras at strategic locations in educational institutions will also go a long way to curb the ragging menace, he said.

## DRDO ESPIONAGE CASE

# Charges against 5 accused dropped

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, July 7:** The Court of Additional District Judge (ADJ)-III Thursday dropped three charges slapped against the accused persons in DRDO espionage case under Official Secrets Act in Chandipur of Balasure district due to non-submission of supporting documents by the state Crime Branch (CB).

A team of the CB had arrested five persons - four contractual workers and a permanent driver - on the charge of leaking classified information on September 14, 2021 and produced them in the court. The CB registered a case (76/21) at Chandipur police station under Sections-120(B), 121-A and 34 and under Sections 3, 4 and 5 of Official Secrets Act-1923.

The accused were identified as Basant Behera, 52, a contractual worker, Hemant Kumar Mistry, 52, a DG operator in ITR, Tapas Ranjan Nayak, 41, posted at the main gate of ITR, Sk Musafir, 32, an AC operator in ITR and driver-cum-permanent employee Sachin Chhatha of Uttar Pradesh.

Reports said the Intelligence Bureau (IB) in New Delhi found leaking of sensitive defence related information to the neighbouring countries through phone calls from the Chandipur based defence establishment.

The IB sleuths found that international calls were regularly being made to some persons working in the DRDO and calls were made by them to outside. The CB later took up the case and suspected a mysterious woman having Pakistani links to be the 'handler' of the spy ring engaged in leaking sensitive information from the high-security defence establishment of DRDO.

During the investigation, Pakistan link had surfaced as four Facebook accounts of the mysterious 'operative' were operated from Pakistan through proxy IPs to keep the location secret.

Among the four accounts, three were operated from Islamabad whereas one was from Rawalpindi. The female operative had been in contact with all the five arrested staffers of the DRDO owned ITR.



# Inflation pushed 71mn into poverty since Ukraine war

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dubai, July 7:** A staggering 71 million more people around the world are experiencing poverty as a result of soaring food and energy prices that climbed in the weeks following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said in a report Thursday.

The UNDP estimates that 51.6 million more people fell into poverty in the first three months after the war, living off \$1.90 a day or less.

This pushed the total number globally at this threshold to 9 per cent of the world's population. An additional 20 million people slipped to the poverty line of \$3.20 a day.

In low-income countries, families spend 42% of their household

- The UNDP recommends that rather than spending billions on blanket energy subsidies, governments instead target expenditure to reach the most impacted people through targeted cash transfers that can prevent a further 52.6 million people from falling into poverty at \$5.50 a day
- For cash-strapped and debt-laden developing countries to achieve this, the UNDP called for an extension of debt payments that had been in place during the pandemic among the world's richest nations



incomes on food but as Western nations moved to sanction Russia, the price of fuel and staple food items like wheat, sugar and cooking oil soared.

Ukraine's blocked ports and its

inability to export grains to low-income countries further drove up prices, pushing tens of millions quickly into poverty.

"The cost of living impact is almost without precedent in a generation... And that is why it is so serious," UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner said at the launch of the report. The speed at which this many people experienced poverty outpaced the economic pain felt at the

peak of the pandemic.

The UNDP noted that 125 million people experienced poverty over about 18 months during the pandemic's lockdowns and closures, compared with more than 71 million in just three months after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in late February.

"The speed of this is very quick," said George Molina, UNDP chief economist and author of the report. Some of the countries hardest hit by inflation include Haiti, Argentina, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, the Philippines, Rwanda, Sudan, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan.

The total number of people living in poverty, or are vulnerable to poverty, stands at over 5 billion, or just under 70% of the world's population.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### GOVT PUTS CURBS ON WHEAT FLOUR EXPORTS

**New Delhi:** After banning wheat exports in May, the government has imposed restrictions on outbound shipments of wheat flour or atta, maida and semolina, a move aimed at containing price rise. Exporters of these commodities would now need approval of the inter-ministerial committee on export of wheat for the shipments from July 12. The new approval framework will be applicable for wheat flour (atta), maida, semolina (rava/ sirgi), wholemeal atta and resultant atta.

### INDIA ELECTED TO UNESCO PANEL

**New Delhi:** India has been elected to the Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for the 2022-2026 cycle, the government said Thursday. India has served as a member of the ICH Committee twice - from 2006 to 2010 and from 2014 to 2018. According to UNESCO, the core functions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage are to promote the objectives of the convention, provide guidance on best practices and make recommendations on measures for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage.

### MAYURBHANJ ROAD MISHAP CLAIMS 4

**Baripada:** Four persons were killed and one injured when their vehicle collided with a truck in Mayurbhanj district Thursday night. According to police, a family was returning to Baripada after attending a marriage ceremony when their vehicle collided with a truck at Dwarsumi Ghat on NH-49 under Bangiriposi police limits. Elio Hansda, 45, his wife Aladi Hansda, 40, and driver Stephen Hansda, 45, were killed on the spot. David Tudu, 10, and Elizabeth Tudu, 13, were rescued and admitted to PRM Medical College & Hospital, where Elizabeth succumbed to her injuries, Bangiriposi IIC Sanjay Panda said.

# leisure

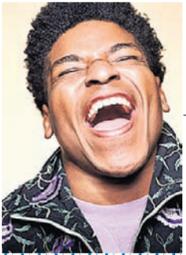


## BTS' 'PROOF' STAYS HIGH ON BILLBOARD ALBUMS' CHART

K-pop supergroup BTS has ranked high on the US Billboard's main albums chart for the third consecutive week with its anthology album 'Proof'. The album came in 13th, down nine notches from the previous week's fourth, on this week's Billboard 200 chart

## JERRY HARRIS GETS 12 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SEX CRIMES INVOLVING MINORS

Jerry Harris has been sentenced to 12 years in federal prison for soliciting sex from minors. Harris' sentencing comes five months after the former reality star pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting a 15-year-old in a bathroom and paying a 17-year-old to send him sexually explicit videos and photos



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You will be the focus of everyone's attention today - for your visual appeal or for your abilities. Ganesh suggests that you should make the best of the opportunity and recharge yourself. You can accomplish quite a lot with the energy you gain.

**TAURUS**  
You may feel that you woke up on the wrong side of the bed today, says Ganesh. The day is filled with a fair share of jittery moments and lingering worry. Stand firm and remember that every night has a dawn. The law of averages will make your evening more enjoyable.

**GEMINI**  
You will feel the need to pursue your passions today. You will give more time to your family and will spend as much time as possible with your children and will bestow your love and affection on them. You will be in an imaginative and romantic mood today.

**CANCER**  
Sometimes acting a little eccentric and adopting an approach that you usually don't helps you redefine your style, says Ganesh. Go ahead and do that today! Although you will be open to adapt and bring in some revolutionary changes, you will make sure to follow a proper pattern.

**LEO**  
Financial gains will make you happy today. You will have the opportunity to participate in social functions. All your work will get completed as per schedule. You will be able to channel your energy effectively, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
A mixture of the desirable and undesirable is on the cards today. Sentimental people will tend to think of you as a little immature. However, your sense of humour will be as robust as ever and you will never fall short of jokes. Ganesh advises you to pursue spiritually enriching activities in order to properly channelise your abilities.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says that today is going to be an unforgettable day for all those people who are in love or a romantic relationship. If you plan to propose to your beloved today is a good opportunity for it as success will come easily to you. You will be able to spend a day filled with joy, happiness and enjoyment. Ganesh shows his blessing on you

**SCORPIO**  
You go on a shopping spree and that too with your beloved. This may be quite therapeutic for your relationship. You may be just happy to use your bargaining skills to the optimum. Spending lavishly, first on shopping and then on sumptuous dinner to treat your taste buds. What more one wants in life!

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Someone from the opposite sex is likely to get attracted towards you. Enjoy being in the limelight. Today, your main activity becomes hanging around with friends and cherishing their company.

**CAPRICORN**  
Pain and fun, both are the two sides of a coin and today, you will experience both of them in equal amount. You may have to slog yourself to earn money, but be careful and don't drain yourself out, advises Ganesh. You will get what you have wished for, however, you need not try your luck too much.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will receive some good news today. Whatever has been in the pipe line may come out in the open and you'll see the desired output, feels Ganesh. Courageous and patient, you can deal with the toughest of challenges with an ease and Ganesh gives a pat on your back for that.

**PISCES**  
Your day today will be like a tug-of-war competition. Try to come out on top in this competition. Ganesh advises you not to underestimate your enemies. It is advisable to find a solution or avoid conflict so that you don't need to waste your energy in this.

## Kartik Aaryan still dating Sara Ali Khan?

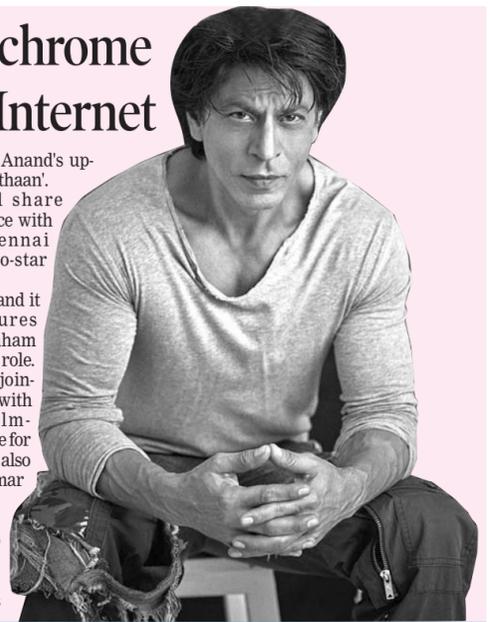
**Mumbai:** Ever since they gave a glimpse of their undeniable chemistry in Imtiaz Ali's Love Aaj Kal, rumours about Kartik Aaryan and Sara Ali Khan's off-screen relationship have been doing rounds and fans have been waiting for an official confirmation from the stars.  
Well, looks like the wait is over! Amidst the excitement, Karan Johar has now spilled some beans. During a conversation with India Today, the filmmaker-host said, "I call this couch the couch of manifestation. I was like telling Kriti (Sanon) the other day, I said just say a name! Because Katrina on this couch said that she thought she would look good with Vicky, then Vicky collapsed, and then the next thing we know is that they are married. Sara Ali Khan also had admitted of having a crush on Kartik on this same couch and they started dating. Alia has mentioned Ranbir season after season and she is married to him today and is going to have his beautiful baby. So it's fantastic that this couch has actually manifested so many relationships!"  
Well, 'Koffee With Karan' is surely a hub for lovebirds and fans are eager to see what the brand new season of the chat show will ensue for other B-Town couples.  
Meanwhile, on the professional front, Sara Ali Khan was last seen in Atrangi Re. Kartik Aaryan, on the other hand, will be next seen in Freddy and Shehzada.



## SRK's monochrome pic takes over Internet

**Mumbai:** Superstar Shah Rukh Khan's latest black and white picture shared by his manager Pooja Dadlani has caused a tizzy on social media. The picture was shared by Dadlani on Instagram and seems to be King Khan's recent images. In the photograph, the superstar is seen looking at the camera and smiling. Sharing the picture, Dadlani wrote: "In a world full of Trends - A Timeless Classic!"  
On the work front, SRK, who has completed three decades in the Hindi film industry, will be next seen in director

Siddharth Anand's upcoming 'Pathaan'. He will share screen space with his 'Chennai Express' co-star Deepika Padukone and it also features John Abraham in a pivotal role. He is also joining hands with Tamil filmmaker Atlee for 'Jawan' and also has Rajkumar Hirani's 'Dunki', which also stars Taapsee Pannu. IANS



## Trisha dazzles as Princess Kundavai in 'Ponniyin Selvan'



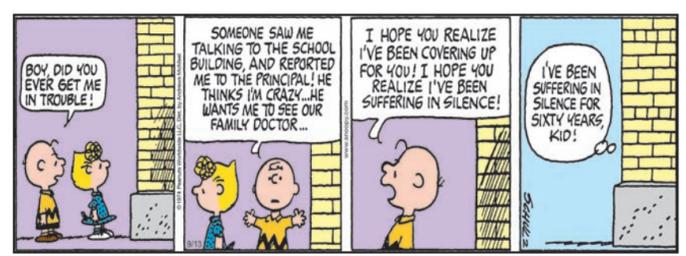
**Chennai:** The makers of director Mani Ratnam's much-awaited magnum opus, 'Ponniyin Selvan' released the first look of actress Trisha as princess Kundavai in the film.  
Lyca Productions and Madras Talkies, which are jointly producing the film, tweeted the first look poster and said, "In a world of men, a woman of courage. Presenting Princess Kundavai!"  
The makers have already released the first look poster of Vikram as Aditya Karikalan, Karthi as Vanthiyathevan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan as queen Nandini in the film.  
The film, the first part of which will release on September 30 this year, will release in five languages -- Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Hindi.  
The film is based on the classic Tamil novel 'Ponniyin Selvan' by eminent writer Kalki.  
The film, called by Mani Ratnam as his dream project, will be among the most expensive projects ever undertaken in the country. IANS



## Guddu Bhaiya all set for 'Mirzapur 3'

**Mumbai:** As the entire cast and crew begins preparing to start shooting for the third season of 'Mirzapur', actor Ali Fazal is busy with his own prep to bring back his character Guddu on screen.  
The actor has taken to the method of learning the basics of wrestling to apply the methods of combat and hand to hand combat to apply the skills for his character. According to a source, "Ali Fazal is currently prepping for the action sequences that are part of the script of this upcoming season."  
"The training is currently underway and he's been doing this for a few weeks now ahead of the start of the shoot which is set to commence soon. Ali Fazal is giving all his efforts to this role and has already started taking basic wrestling lessons for the same."  
On the other work front, Ali was recently seen in the international murder mystery 'Death On The Nile' and will soon be seen in Vishal Bhardwaj's 'Khudiyaa' with Tabu and 'Kandahar' with Gerard Butler. IANS

### PEANUTS



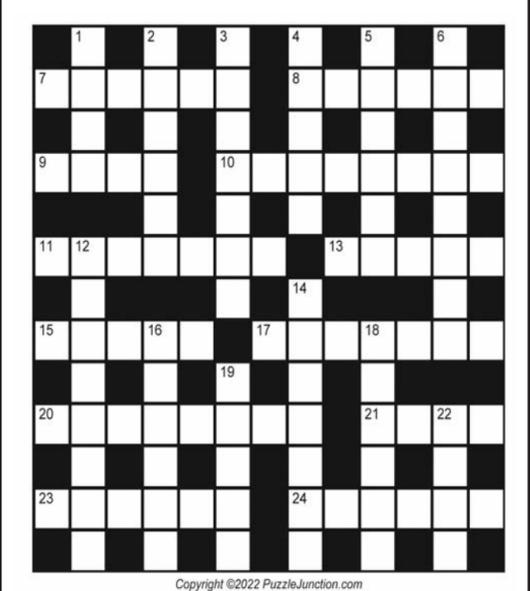
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



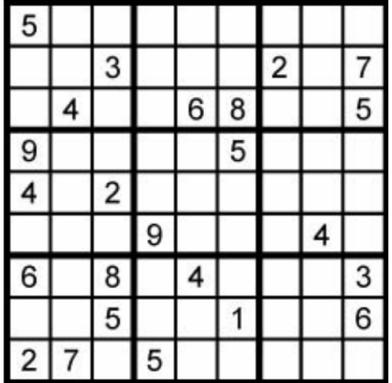
### FUN post CROSSWORD



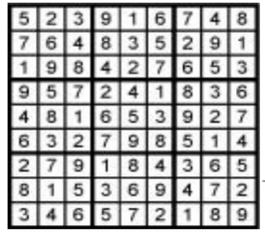
- Across**
- 7 Cause for glasses
  - 8 Health facility
  - 9 Elusive creature
  - 10 Outsider
  - 11 After suicide or combat
  - 13 Fore-and-aft-rigged vessel
  - 15 Modern letters (1-4)
  - 17 Hazelnut
  - 20 Eternal
  - 21 Musical composition
  - 23 Snare
  - 24 Carmaker's woe
  - 4 Cake topper
  - 5 Aeneid poet
  - 6 Swine (4,4)
  - 12 Close at hand
  - 14 It falls between Canada and the USA
  - 16 Brush aside
  - 18 Wild horse
  - 19 Afr.
  - heavyweight
  - 22 Hideous
- Down**
- 1 Orpheus's instrument
  - 2 Booty
  - 3 Nationalist

### 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



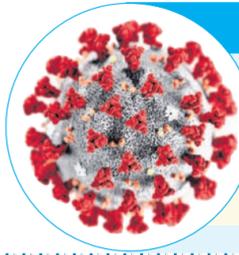
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## FESTIVAL AHEAD

A retailer buying Rakhi from a wholesaler at Choudhury Bazar in Cuttack, Thursday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	55,78,51,297	53,16,98,767	63,67,475
India	4,35,66,739	4,29,21,977	5,25,305
Odisha	12,91,946	12,80,750	9,126

# MLU students boycott exam after staffers tested positive

THEY URGED THE UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES TO HOLD THE EXAMINATION ONLINE TO AVOID THE VIRUS SPREAD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, July 7:** As many as 60 final year students of Madhusudan Law University (MLU) here Thursday boycotted their examination after a few faculty members and staffers of the institute tested positive for Covid-19.

The students urged the university authorities to hold the examination in online mode to avoid the virus spread. They claimed that three examination invigilators had tested positive for Covid-19 three days ago while three more staffers of the varsity were found positive for the virus infection Wednesday.

"A few infected staffers have been assigned examination duties by the authorities. We are afraid that the infection may spread to some of us. That is why we have boycotted the examination. The authorities should take the issue seriously and hold the examination



The students claimed that three examination invigilators had tested positive for Covid-19 three days ago while three more staffers of the varsity were found positive for the virus infection Wednesday

in online mode," said a student. Registrar Nirupama Swain said some students are deliberately trying to stall the examination. "We have arranged around 200 test kits and urged the students to give their samples. But, no one did opt for the tests. We have sanitised the ex-

amination halls and taken precautionary measures to check the virus spread," Swain said. She further said that the final year examination is being conducted by Utkal University and they did not have any authority to take any decision in this regard.

# Droupadi Murmu to visit state today

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** NDA Presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu is scheduled to arrive here Friday to campaign for her election July 18.

A rousing welcome will be given to Murmu after her arrival at the airport. Murmu would separately meet the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLAs and MPs seeking their votes. She will also have a one-on-one meeting with Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas.

She will meet the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MLAs and MPs at a conference hall inside the Assembly during the day. Murmu will also meet the BJP legislators at the state Guest House.

"Murmu will attend a meeting of all BJD MLAs and MPs here at the Assembly at 10.30 am. The Chief Minister has already appealed to all the legislators of Odisha to support her as she belongs to the state. We hope she will get a good response," said BJP MLA Amar Satpathy.

BJP legislator Jayant Sarangi appealed to all elected members, irrespective of their party, to support Murmu. However, Congress



Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra, once again, made it clear that his party members are not going to support Murmu in the election as the presidential election is being fought on policy and ideology. "Yashwant Sinha is a son of Bihar. Will the BJP members from Bihar support him?" Mishra questioned while commenting on BJP's appeal. Meanwhile, Gopalpur MLA Pradeep Panigrahi, who was expelled from the BJD, said he will support Murmu as Odisha is proud of her nomination. Once elected, she will bring glory for the state at international level. He also praised Modi for selecting Murmu for the Presidential post.

Notably, the BJD president called on all MLAs in the state across party lines to vote for the "daughter of Odisha" for the country's top job.

## ₹14 lakh in fake currency seized

**Bhubaneswar:** The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police Thursday seized Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) with a face value of over ₹14 lakh and arrested two persons in this connection in Bargarh district. The STF personnel with the help of Barpali police in Bargarh district detected an incident of illegal business of FICN. Two persons Pattu Yadav of Gorakhpur district in Uttar Pradesh and Balam Meher of Bargarh district in Odisha, were apprehended, police said. During search, the STF personnel seized fake currency notes with a face value of ₹14,29,500 in ₹500 denomination from their possession.

**OrissaPOST**  
English daily

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# 55 illegal structures demolished in City



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** In a demolition drive conducted by the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL), around 55 unauthorised shops, cabins, and trolleys in the Sahid Nagar area were razed Thursday. These structures were encroaching on drains causing waterlogging in the city.

As per sources, illegal shops and stores had sprouted on government-owned land, and were encroaching open drains. While some unlicensed stores were built on temporary buildings, others were set up on the main roads. All these structures were demolished by BMC and BSCL.

Around 40 unauthorised shops

and 15 road encroachment constructions, according to the report, were destroyed. In a concerted operation, the BMC, BSCL enforcement squads, central enforcement squad, and Revenue officer of BMC together with other officials, dismantled these unauthorised stores, cabins, and carts on the internal road of Saheed Nagar, MLCP road to Saheed Nagar internal road, and MLCP peripheral road.

"We had to take strict decisions and shut down these structures since the shops weren't following instructions and disregarding protocol. Encroachment over drains will not be allowed," said Kamaljit Das, General Manager of BSCL.

## STATE-LEVEL 73RD VANA MAHOTSAV

# Forest dept plans to plant 488.16L saplings

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The state-level 73rd Vana Mahotsav was observed with much enthusiasm on the premises of Municipal Corporation Government High School at Baramunda here Thursday.

Chief Minister Naveen Pattanik graced the occasion as chief guest through videoconference. Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradeep Kumar Amat was the guest of honour.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Forces (PCCF & HoFF) Debidutta Biswal welcomed the chief guest and other dignitaries. He also highlighted the importance and objectives of Vana Mahotsav.

The forest cover of Odisha is rising through mass protection of existing forests and massive plantation drive throughout the state under various schemes of the state government, sources said.

This year also, various afforestation programmes are being organised throughout the state in the rainy season through Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR), Artificial Regeneration (AR), Urban

Tree Plantation (UTP) and Avenue Plantation, said a source in the Forest department.

The department has planned to plant 488.16 lakh saplings throughout the state. Similarly, 490.30 lakh saplings have been raised for distribution among the people with minimal price.

"The medicinal value of plants was realised during the Covid-19 pandemic. So, thrust will be given in the plantation of medicinal plants," said an official of the Forest department.

A brochure titled '73rd Vana Mahotsav' highlighting the activities under different programmes and schemes of the Forest department was released on this occasion.

To create awareness among the school students regarding conservation of forests, competitions like debate, essay writing and drawing were conducted and the winners were given prizes.

Jhurimal Vana Surakshya Samiti of Sundergarh District received Rs 2 lakh as reward for its remarkable work in conservation of forests. Notably, the state celebrates Vana Mahotsav in the first week of July every year.



## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# 'Odisha leading state in FRA implementation'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** A two-day national consultation and potential of Forest Rights Act (FRA) in the context of 'Tribal Development: Implementation Gaps and Way Forward' was inaugurated Thursday. The event was organised by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRIT) and state ST & SC Development Department, with support from Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The consultation aims to understand the challenges and bottlenecks impeding the development of tribal communities and to find ways to strengthen the existing policy and programme to em-

power the tribal people.

SCSTRIT Advisor cum Director and Special Secretary A B Ota welcomed the delegates and participants from across the country and shared that the consultation aims to initiate a dialogue on different dimensions of the FRA.

The inaugural session of the National Consultation was graced by NITI Ayog Deputy Advisor Muni Raju. He highlighted the importance of tenurial security and recognition of forest rights in addressing livelihood security of the poor and vulnerable communities. The keynote address was delivered by N Saxena, former member, Planning Commission.

He delivered a speech on the significance of FRA in the context of the tribal development. Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs FRA



Division Director Manoj Bapna spoke on key initiatives taken by the ministry on FRA implementation. State ST&SC Development Principal Secretary Ranjana Chopra highlighted that Odisha is one of the leading States in FRA implementation. UNDP India Deputy Resident Representative Denny Curry highlighted the importance of Community Forest Rights Act in mitigation and climate change adaptation of vulnerable communities.

The legislative intent of the Act is to 'recognise and vest forest-

dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forest for generations, but whose rights could not be recorded.'

More than 4.57 lakh claims have been approved in Odisha. Around 3.51 lakh title holders have been covered under various government programmes and schemes, which shows the commitment of Odisha in overall tribal development and recognition of forest rights and tenurial security of tribal and forest dependent communities in particular.

## I-T raids in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** The income tax (I-T) department Thursday carried out search and seizure operations on a group engaged in the business of mining, processing and trading of black stones.

The operation covered more than 15 premises located in Bhubaneswar, Jajpur, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Gurugram, Noida etc, the Finance ministry said in a statement.

During the course of the operations, various incriminating documentary and digital evidence including hand-written books and loose sheets have been found and seized, it said.

The seized documents contain systematic details of cash sales and bogus sundry creditors exceeding Rs 80 crore, it said. The group is found to have made huge unaccounted investments in acquisition of properties. The search action has led to seizure of unaccounted cash, jewellery and bullion worth more than Rs 1 crore, it added.

# 'Arctic heating up four times faster than global warming'

The study does not pinpoint a cause for these relatively sudden increases, but the researchers speculate that contributing causes are probably sea ice and water vapour feedbacks combined with changes in how atmospheric and oceanic heat move into the Arctic

The study does not pinpoint a cause for these relatively sudden increases, but the researchers speculate that contributing causes are probably sea ice and water vapour feedbacks combined with changes in how atmospheric and oceanic heat move into the Arctic.

"Thirty years is considered the minimum to represent climate change," said Petr Chylek, a physicist and climate researcher at Los Alamos National Laboratory, US, and lead author of the study published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters.

"We decreased the time interval to 21 years. At that smaller time scale, and contrary to previous investigations that found the Arctic amplification index increases in a smooth way, we observed two distinct steps, one in 1986 and a second one in 1999," Chylek said.

Because the decade-by-decade episodic trend identified by Chylek



and his collaborators affects global weather and sea levels, accurately projecting future climate change in smaller timeframes is essential for planning any mitigation of its

impacts and developing adaptation strategies.

The researchers noted that the Arctic influences the world's climate and weather, and the melting of

the Greenland ice sheet causes sea-level rise that threatens many coastal communities.

The amplification index in the study is the ratio of an Arctic 21-year temperature trend versus an overall global 21-year temperature trend, they said.

The study calculated the Arctic amplification index to be greater than 4 within the early decades of the 21st century, four times faster than the global mean and considerably more rapid than previous published research had determined using 30- to 40-year time intervals.

These earlier studies pegged the index between 2 and 3, the researchers said. From 39 climate-change models in the widely used CMIP6 collection of the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP), the research team found four that reproduced the first step reasonably well around 1986, but none that re-

produced the second step in 1999.

CMIP is an international collaborative of climate models using a shared set of parameters. CMIP6 has been used to create recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Report.

"We attributed the first step to increasing concentrations of carbon dioxide and other pollutants in the atmosphere, because several models do it correctly, but the second step we think is due to climate variability because none of the models can reproduce the second step," Chylek said.

Short-term climate variability is typically undetected by climate models with their 30-year-plus-long timescales, the researchers said. Future increases in the Arctic amplification index are likely to be smaller as the temperature difference between the Arctic and the tropics decreases, they said.

## OSA's 53rd convention

**Bhubaneswar/California:** The Oda Society of The Americas (OSA) recently organised its 53rd Convention at Sacramento, California, USA. The topic of the convention was 'Taking the Higher Education in Odisha to a new dimension'. On the approval of CM Naveen Patnaik, 'Mo College Abhijan' Chairperson Akash Dasnayak attended the event. The flagship initiative of the state government under CM's vision, has been a thriving platform for the overall development of universities and colleges in the state. Akash said in his address, "Mo College Abhijan is a platform that connects the alumni to the alma mater and all of you can be part of it. Intellectual contribution always helps students and institutions evolve. OSA can tie up with various universities as well as student-exchange programmes which will enhance education in the institutions. Mo College Abhijan has opened up the development process of colleges across the state."

# Carbon-credit in City on cards



**CARBON-CREDITS ARE LICENCES THAT ALLOW FIRMS TO PRODUCE A SPECIFIC NUMBER OF GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS**

THESE CREDITS ARE PRODUCED BY INITIATIVES THAT DIRECTLY REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS OR EMPLOY MORE ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY SUBSTITUTES SUCH AS SOLAR POWER

WHEN A PROJECT AVOIDS OR REDUCES ONE METRIC TONNE OF GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS, ONE CARBON CREDIT IS RECEIVED

Climate change is already having an impact on human health. In addition to planned, systematic and creative measures to reduce waste output and lower greenhouse gas emissions, the initiative aims to establish sustainable systems for garbage collection, segregation, and treatment. Additionally, the BSCL will make efforts to find similar greenhouse initiatives throughout the state

SANJAY KUMAR SINGH | MANAGING DIRECTOR, BSCL

tainable initiatives and generating revenue from them.

“Climate change is already having an impact on human health. In addition to planned, systematic and creative measures to reduce waste output and lower greenhouse gas emissions, the initiative aims to establish sustainable systems for garbage collection, segregation, and treatment. Additionally, BSCL will make efforts to find similar greenhouse initiatives throughout the state,” said BSCL Managing Director Sanjay Kumar Singh.

It can be mentioned that the move comes against the backdrop of the pledge ‘Net Zero Emissions by 2050’ made by different countries in COP 26 Climate Summit held in October last year. The state Capital will be the first city in the state to roll out such an initiative.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** Aiming to achieve a climate-complementary status for the state Capital, the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) has decided to roll out several carbon-credit initiatives which will reduce greenhouse emission and also help achieve monetary gains from it.

Carbon-credits are licences that allow firms to produce a specific number of greenhouse emissions. These credits are produced by initiatives that directly reduce greenhouse gas emissions or employ more environment-friendly substitutes such as solar power. When a project avoids or reduces one metric tonne of greenhouse emissions, one carbon credit is received.

“The City is all set to conduct the solid-waste treatment project in order to process the residential garbage further in a scientific manner for sustainable development. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has been implementing several programmes and has a number of qualified projects that can assist in lowering carbon emissions. A third-party organisation that can confirm the emission reduction has to be recruited in order to ensure that the data on emission reduction is accurate,” said BSCL General Manager Kamaljit Das.

Through its initiative, the BSCL also aims to monetise pollution reductions and generate additional revenue that will be utilised to support and finance its numerous welfare and development activities. This action is anticipated to assist the city’s local bodies in both earning credits for their sustainable initiatives and generating revenue from them.

## Youth’s body found under mysterious circumstances

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The body of a youth was found under mysterious circumstances in a field near Bodhakhandi village on the outskirts of the City Thursday. The deceased was later identified as Ashis Ojha, 20, of Sisilo village under Balipatna police limits. He is suspected to have been murdered.

Sources revealed that locals of Bodhakhandi village Thursday morning spotted the body of Ojha in a field near Dhanua Bridge. Police reached the spot and sent the body to the Capital hospital for post-mortem.

“My son left home Wednesday night after receiving several phone calls from unknown persons. They killed my son and threw his body near the bridge. When he did not reach home after several hours, I searched for him in the nearby villages till 3am Thursday, but in vain,” Pramod Ojha, father of the deceased told media.

“I suspect one person, identified as Raja Das of Harijan Sahi, who used to harass my daughter. Raja might be upset with my son as we have recently fixed the marriage of my daughter. My daughter’s marriage is scheduled to be held tomorrow. I have recently informed his family members about his misdeeds. He is absconding since yesterday night,” he added.

Ojha had gone to attend a marriage function Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, police found several wounds on Ojha’s body which clearly indicate foul play in his death. Police have been investigating the matter after registering a case under section 302 (murder charges) of the IPC. The suspects Raja and one of his friends were detained at Balipatna police station till the last report came in.

Sources claimed that Raja, along with two other accused, hatched a plan to kill Ashis over Raja’s unrequited love. Later, one of the accused who is still absconding called Ashis near the river Dhanua Wednesday evening. They offered him alcohol and later murdered him by hitting his head and other parts with wooden planks.

The accused have reportedly confessed that they have murdered Ashis to take revenge for rejecting Raja’s marriage proposal.



Members of CPI and BKMU protest against rising LPG price near Raj Mahal square in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

OP PHOTO

## HOLD YOUR BREATH



Waterlogging in front of ISKCON temple in Bhubaneswar

OP PHOTO

## State logs 428 new Cov cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** Odisha recorded 428 fresh Covid-19 cases on Thursday, 27 more than the previous day, taking the tally to 12,91,946, the state Health department said in a bulletin.

This is the highest daily rise since February 22, when the single-day spike figure was the same.

The coronavirus death toll remained unchanged at 9,126 as no new fatality was recorded.

Odisha now has 2,235 active cases, while a total of 12,80,532 people have recovered from the disease so far, the Health department said.

Khurda, where state Capital Bhubaneswar is situated, reported the highest number of cases at 183, followed by 88 in Cuttack.

## LHB coaches in 3 trains originating from Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has decided to provide Rajdhani Coach like facilities in three trains originating from its jurisdiction.

Union Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw, during his recent visit to Odisha, had flagged off the Bhubaneswar-KSR Bengaluru Prashanti Special with Rajdhani Express like coach facilities and also announced to provide this facility in two more trains i.e. Bhubaneswar-New Delhi -Bhubaneswar Duroto Express and Bhubaneswar - Anand Vihar (Delhi) - Bhubaneswar Super Fast Express via Angul-Jharsuguda-Rourkela within a few days.

The ECoR has provided this facility in the above trains by augmenting modern Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches. These coaches are fire retardant and low maintenance with higher passenger carrying capacity providing safer and comfortable experience.

The regular service of the 18463/18464 Bhubaneswar - KSR Bengaluru City - Bhubaneswar Prashanti Express with LHB coaches commenced w.e.f. July 5 from Bhubaneswar and w.e.f. July 6 from KSR Bengaluru City.

The 12281/12282 Bhubaneswar - New Delhi - Bhubaneswar Duroto Express will run with LHB coach facilities w.e.f. July 13 from Bhubaneswar and w.e.f. July 14 from New Delhi.



Similarly, the 22805/22806 Bhubaneswar - Anand Vihar (Delhi) - Bhubaneswar Super Fast Express via Angul-Jharsuguda-Rourkela will run with LHB coach facilities w.e.f. July 16 from Bhubaneswar and w.e.f. July 18 from Anand Vihar.

LHB coach facility in more ECoR trains like the 22869/22870 Visakhapatnam-Chennai-Visakhapatnam Express will commence w.e.f. July 11 from Visakhapatnam and July 12 from Chennai. This facility will also be available in the 18503/18504 Visakhapatnam-Sai Nagar Shirdi-Visakhapatnam Express w.e.f. July 7 from Visakhapatnam and w.e.f. July 8 from Sai Nagar Shirdi.

Till now, 49 trains originating from ECoR jurisdiction have Rajdhani Train like coach facilities with the augmentation of modern LHB Coaches.

Apart from this, trains passing through ECoR jurisdiction like the 12839/12840 Howrah-Chennai-Howrah Mail and the 12841/12842 Shalimar-Chennai-Shalimar Coromandel Express have also been provided with LHB facilities w.e.f. July 5 from Howrah/Shalimar.

# This year’s summer 2nd hottest after 2010: CSE

While extreme heatwaves in the states of the north-west draw maximum public attention, the increase in overall anomalous temperature in other regions of the country have been largely neglected, indicated a new country-wide analysis by Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) Thursday.

The seasonal average air temperature for 2022 summer was 1.24 degrees Celsius warmer than the baseline trends. Moreover, the heatwaves lashing India this summer are symptomatic of the anomalous temperature trends that are expected to worsen with growing climate change impacts, it said.

Year 2022 summer was the second hottest after the summer of 2010. Mega cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Hyderabad are much hotter than the larger region around them due to heat island effects caused by surface absorption of heat and local waste heat generated by traffic, industries and air conditioning (among other urban activities), the latest CSE analysis said.

Talking about the increase in overall anomalous temperature in other regions of the country that have been largely neglected, “This is a very disturbing trend as policy preparedness to mitigate rising heat due to climate change is nearly absent in India,” said Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director, research and advocacy, CSE.

“Urban greens and waterbodies will worsen public health risks without heat action plans, rising air temperature, radiating heat from land surfaces, concretisation, heat-trapping built structures, waste heat from industrial processes and air conditioners, and erosion of heat dousing forests. This requires urgent time-bound mitigation

Urban greens and waterbodies will worsen public health risks without heat action plans, rising air temperature, radiating heat from land surfaces, concretisation, heat-trapping built structures, waste heat from industrial processes and air conditioners, and erosion of heat dousing forests. This requires urgent time-bound mitigation

ANUMITA ROYCHOWDHURY | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY, CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

trapping built structures, waste heat from industrial processes and air conditioners, and erosion of heat dousing forests. This requires urgent time-bound mitigation,” she said.

Senior programme manager at the Urban Lab of CSE Avikal Somvanshi said, “Currently, the attention is largely on the maximum daily heat levels and extreme conditions of heatwaves. But it is equally important to pay attention to the overall rising temperature and humidity trends in different regions to understand the gravity of the problem.”

The Urban Lab of CSE has



analysed the temperature trends in India from January 2015 till May 2022. The effort has been to understand the warming trends by covering all three dimensions of heat stress - surface air temperature, land surface temperature, and relative humidity (heat index) - at the national, regional and local levels.

The seasonal average air temperature for 2022 - pre-monsoon or summer (March, April and May as per IMD classification) - is 1.24 degrees Celsius warmer than the

baseline trends that relate to 1971-2000 climatology.

Baselines are defined based on historical timelines and may vary for different metrics; the anomaly is generally computed from the 1951-80, 1971-2000, or 1981-2010 climatology baseline.

This is warmer than the 1.20 degrees Celsius anomaly noted in 2016 pre-monsoon season, but lower than the 1.45 degrees Celsius anomaly recorded in the 2010 pre-monsoon season.

Similarly, land surface temperature anomaly has been extreme this pre-monsoon season, with a 1.46 degrees Celsius departure from the baseline (1971-2000). It must be noted that pre-monsoon seasonal trends in both land and air temperature are identical to the annual trends, but with more pronounced highs and lows.

Monsoon is hotter than pre-monsoon period on an average, while winter and post-monsoon seasons are warming up faster.

IANS

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BRAHMANI-GOBARI WATER ROUTE

# River linking project marred by indoor stadium plan



It is apprehended that the indoor stadium constructed on the water route will affect the agriculture in the area and prove suicidal for the farmers

After reports surfaced, people in the area have opposed the move and started preparing for an agitation

PD, DRDA, Rajendra Kumar Panda said he has not received any complaint regarding construction of an indoor stadium on the river route and would discuss the matter with the WR department

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara/Pattamundai, July 7:** Hope for Brahmani-Gobari river linking project in Kendrapara district appears to be bleak with the construction of an indoor stadium on the proposed water route, a tributary of Brahmani, in Pattamundai, a report said.

It is apprehended that the indoor stadium constructed on the water route will affect the agriculture in the area and prove suicidal for the farmers. After reports surfaced, people in the area have opposed the move and started preparing for an agitation.

Social activist Prafulla Kumar Dash said, "The water route is a distributary of Brahmani. It flows by Narasinghpur village and merges with Gobari river at Gandakia under Kendrapara block."

The distributary was renovated during 1866 Odisha famine (Na'anka durvikhya) and boat service was introduced in the river as part of livelihood initiative for locals. People also used the river water for agricultural purposes as well as for daily chores, he said.

The water body got buried with the passage of time, owing to the apathy of the state Water Resources (WR) department, he added.

Advocate Pramod Kumar Sahu said farmers in Pattamundai, Kendrapara and Mahakalpara blocks used to draw water from this river to irrigate their farmlands.

Later, the water body got buried and some influential persons encroached upon it. Local farmers staged several agitations demanding revival of the river.

Taking note of this, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation stone for renovation of the river at an outlay of ₹3 crore.

However, the consultancy agency abandoned the project for some reasons resulting in a cost overrun. The project cost has now reached ₹7 crore. While uncertainty plagues the revival of the river, the construction of an indoor stadium on it has come as a shocker to scores of farmers and people dependent on it for their survival.

Khirod Kumar Mallick, a local, said several agitations have been held demanding linking of Brahmani river with Gobari. The

state government is working on its revival but the construction of indoor stadium has thrown spanner in the plan.

Protesting the move, Mallick, Ashok Kumar Bal and Debashis Panda have filed a complaint with the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). They alleged that construction of the indoor stadium will hamper the linking of these two rivers.

Taking cognisance of the matter, NALSA has written to the district legal services authority (DLSA) seeking a report. The DLSA in turn has written to the WR department seeking a reply on the matter.

When contacted, district rural development agency project director Rajendra Kumar Panda said he has not received any complaint regarding construction of an indoor stadium on the river route. He, however, assured to discuss the matter with the WR department on receipt of a complaint in this regard.



Students planting saplings at 73rd district level Vana Mahotsav celebration at Subalaya in Sundargarh district, Thursday. The saplings were mostly phasi, jamun, dhaura and neem that are required for making of chariots for Rath Yatra

## Admin toughens stand against mining mafia

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chhatrapur, July 7:** Amid allegations of plunder of minor minerals like sand, murrum and laterite stone in Ganjam district, the administration has decided to take stern action the mafia.

Ganjam Collector Dibyajyoti Parida, after holding a review meeting here recently, has underscored the need for augmenting revenue collection. He has asked the revenue officials to intensify crackdown on the people involved in illegal extraction of minor minerals by seizing their vehicles and imposing penalty on them.

It was learnt that in the current year revenue officials have so far seized 584 vehicles during raids and collected revenue worth over ₹1.93 crore in Chhatrapur sub-division.

In Bhanjanagar sub-division, 520 vehicles have been seized during raids and penalty worth ₹85 lakh has been collected.

In Berhampur sub-division, 922 vehicles illegally carrying minor minerals have been seized and over ₹1.47 crore has been collected as penalty from the violators.

Kandhamal district.

Non-payment of penalty will invite an additional jail term of one year and three months, the court ruled.

According to the case diary, Babula broke into the house of the 12-year-old girl on June 28, 2017 night, kidnapped her and raped her. The girl insisted on marrying her following which the duo left the house next morning. They hid themselves inside a culvert near Basajargi village.

However, a local resident spotted them following which the duo fearing exposure of their hiding went inside a forest and stayed on a rocky floor surrounded by bushes. As the girl again insisted on marrying her, the accused was infuriated and strangled her to death and dumped the body there before absconding.

The victim's family members filed a police complaint in this regard. Police investigated the matter and the accused admitted to the crime during interrogation.

## Officials to cough up pension funds



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Loisingha, July 7:** The district administration has ordered recovery of embezzled pension funds to the tune of ₹4.17 lakh including interest from a panchayat supply assistant and a programme assistant of the block social security office in Loisingha of Bolangir district.

The administration had investigated the alleged irregularities in the social security scheme in Jharmunda panchayat under this block. Lakhs of rupees towards pension have been embezzled in the name of dead persons.

Sarpanch Banita Meher had taken up the issue with local MLA and the district administration. The district administration, during its investigations, found that two people - panchayat supply assistant Hemant Sahu and programme assistant of the block social security office Srikant Gadyta - were involved in the scam.

Sub-collector Lambodar Dharua has directed the district social security officer and the BDO to recover

## PLIGHT OF SWABHIMAN ANCHAL

# 2 YRS ON, BUS TO JODAMBA PANCHAYAT A PIPEDREAM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chittrakonda, July 7:** It has been over two years since a road was laid to Jodamba panchayat under Swabhiman Anchal of this block in Malkangiri district but the Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) is yet to launch bus service on the route, much to the chagrin of the residents.

Reports said the state government had decided to lay a road to Jodamba panchayat with an aim to connect the remote panchayat with the district headquarters of Malkangiri. The district administration went ahead with the plan and the road construction works from Kalimela to Jodamba started in the presence of Chittrakonda MLA Purna Chandra Baka and then district Collector Manish Agarwal July 10, 2020.

Meanwhile, two years have passed since the road was built but the villagers claimed that OSRTC is yet to run a bus to their village. The OSRTC is running a bus



THE OSRTC IS RUNNING A BUS BUT IT ONLY RUNS TILL JANTAPAI AND RETURNS BACK

THE DISTANCE BETWEEN JANTAPAI AND JODAMBA IS AROUND 20 KM

but it only runs till Jantapai and returns back. The distance between Jantapai and Jodamba is around 20 km.

People of Jodamba, Panashput, Gajulumamudi, Jantri and Andrapali panchayats are having a harrowing time in covering the distance either by foot or on their

own arrangements due to lack of bus service.

Residents said while the state government is taking several steps for the growth and development of Swabhiman Anchal, the OSRTC has thrown a spanner in its works by not running a bus till the remote panchayat.

The villagers have demanded extension of the bus service from Jantapai to Jodamba and launching of bus service from Jodamba to Jeypore. Moreover, they also demanded direct bus service from Swabhiman Anchal to the state capital Bhubaneswar.

## 1.2L SAPLINGS TO BE PLANTED IN DARINGBADI

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Daringbadi, July 7:** Amid reports of deforestation in some areas of Kandhamal district due to lack of public awareness, the Forest department has been stepping up its efforts to regenerate forests where trees have been felled.

The department is going to plant 30,000 saplings in Simanbadi section. This was announced during 73rd Vana Mahotsav celebrations here Thursday when forest regeneration scheme was launched. Schoolchildren planted saplings in the presence of forest officials, teachers, local BDO, tehsildar and police officials.

It was learnt that altogether 1.20 lakh saplings will be planted in various forest sections under Daringbadi range.

"Nearly 30,000 saplings, mostly of jackfruit, mango, neem and other fruits alone will be planted in Simanbadi section along while locals and Vana Samrakhyana Samitis will be tasked to look after saplings," said ranger Satish Kumar Dharua.

## Jumbo poached in Ghumusar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhajnagar, July 7:** It seems that there is no let-up in elephant deaths in the state as another elephant was found dead at Kanabintha under North Ghumusar range of Ganjam district, Thursday.

The tusker was shot dead with arrows by poachers while its tusks were missing, a report said. Meanwhile, forest officials have started an investigation into the matter after being informed by villagers about the carcass of the animal.

DFO Sudarshan Behera said the tusker was dead in Kanabintha forest but it is not clear what led to its death. A part of the carcass is lying buried in mud.

**In June, four carcasses of elephants were found in Athagarh forest division Another carcass was recovered in February**

He added that the elephant might have died Wednesday while its tusks have been cut away. Post-mortem of the carcass will be done Friday to ascertain the exact cause of its death.

It may be noted here that in the last month, four carcasses of elephants had been recovered in Athagarh forest division in Cuttack. The carcass of another elephant was found in February.

In Satakosia, an elephant was found dead earlier.

# Man gets life for rape, murder of minor girl

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Phulbani, July 7:** Adjudicating a case of rape and murder of a minor girl, additional district and sessions judge of Phulbani fast-track POCOS court Bhaskar Chandra Sahu convicted the accused and sentenced him to life imprisonment, Thursday. The court also imposed a fine of ₹2 lakh on the convict, Babula Mallick, 22, of Salaguda under Tikabali police limits of



## Youth arrested for raping 5-year-old girl

**Rupsa:** Singla police in Balasore district arrested a youth on charge of raping 5-year-old girl, Wednesday night. The accused was identified as Muna Hansdah of Basudevpur under Baliaipal police limits. A case under POCOS Act was registered and a medical examination was conducted on him before he was produced in the court that rejected his bail plea and remanded him to judicial custody. The incident occurred when the girl accompanied her mother to attend her aunt's marriage July 5. There, the accused lured the minor and raped her.

# NRL land allotment sparks row

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paradip, July 7:** Conflicting claims by the state and Union governments on land allotment to Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in this port town of Jagatsinghpur district has sparked a controversy, a report said.

The Paradip Port, a Central government undertaking, in a letter (No. 408, dated February 11) claimed to have allotted 234.14 acre land to NRL on lease for 30 years. However, the state government owned Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Ltd (IPICOL) has said that only 202 acre land has been allotted to NRL.

Reports said NRL is establishing a refinery in Paradip Port region as part of Smart Industrial Port City (SIPC) project. Three other projects are also coming up along with NRL. These



projects are: Triveni Earthmovers Pvt Ltd, Essar Minmet India Ltd and Container Corporation of India (Concor). Sources from IPICOL said that funds to the tune of ₹11,579.51 crore will be spent on establishment of these projects.

However, the disparity in data regarding land allotment to NRL has raised many eyebrows. The data mismatch is also reported in cases of industrial firms like Triveni, Essar and Concor.

As per the letter, NRL has been allotted 234.14 acre land on a 30-year lease for which the NRL has paid ₹70.59 crore to Paradip Port. The land is on Plot no-37 and 45, khata no-27 in Sandhakuda mouza near the port town.

On the other hand, the state-owned IPICOL issued a letter (No-637, dated March 31) where it claimed to have issued 202 acre land to NRL. The project received the approval of high-level clearance authority (HLCA) January 6, 2021.

The refinery when established will have the capacity to store 6 lakh kilolitre of crude oil. This crude oil will be transported through underground pipelines to NRL refinery plant at Guwahati in Assam. The project worth ₹1,420 crore will generate over 200 jobs.

The HLCA has issued 33 types of clearances for the project. This includes clearance from SPCB, Factories and Boilers department, Idco, Odisha

Power Transmission Corporation Ltd, power, drinking water and other clearances.

Earlier, it was the practice by the government to make an environment impact assessment of any project which is going to be established. Separate meetings were held for palli sabha, gram sabha and public hearings.

However, the state government has now introduced easy single window clearance system to facilitate establishment of industries without any hassles. However, observers are apprehensive about the outcome of the move. They claim that only time will tell how far the move will benefit the project affected people.

When contacted, NRL's Paradip branch head Bikash Das said, "We have received 234.14 acre of land from the government." However, he did not have the details of other clearances.

<p><b>यूनियन बैंक ऑफ इंडिया</b> Union Bank of India</p>	<p><b>UNION BANK OF INDIA</b> REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar-751003</p>	<p><b>POSSESSION NOTICE</b> (For Immovable Property)</p>
<p><b>[RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES-2002]</b></p>		
<p>Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, CDA Bidanasi Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No.54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrowers / Guarantor in loan Account mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest &amp; expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/ Guarantor and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrowers/ Guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Union Bank of India, CDA Bidanasi Branch for an amount mentioned below with interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the Borrower to redeem the Secured Assets.</p>		
<p><b>CDA BIDANASI BRANCH/ Name &amp; Address of Borrowers &amp; Guarantor</b></p>	<p><b>Liabilities due as per notice (in Rs.)</b></p>	<p><b>Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession</b></p>
<p><b>Borrowers: (1) Mr Prasant Kumar Das, S/o: Late Bholanath Das, (2) Mr Tushar Ranjan Das, S/o: Mr Prasant Kumar Das, Guarantor: Mrs Mira Das, W/o: Mr Prasant Kumar Das, all are resident of At: Sabalpur, Bentkar, Cuttack, Odisha- 754112.</b></p>	<p><b>Rs.20,21,414/- as on 31.03.2022 with further interest, cost &amp; expenses</b></p>	<p><b>18.04.2022 / 04.07.2022</b></p>
<p>another plot no. 618, Area: Ac 0.180 dec, Total Area: Ac 0.26 dec, Mouza: Sabalpur, Thana: Cuttack, Thana No.- 117, Tahasil: Cuttack, Dist: Cuttack, Odisha - 754112. Property is bounded by: North: Road, South: Plot No 619, East: Road, West: Plot No 616 &amp; 621.</p>		
<p><b>Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 07.07.2022</b></p>		<p><b>Sd/- Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India</b></p>

FOCUS INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

# PRINCIPLES VS PRAXIS



Our positions on Tibet, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iraq and now Ukraine do not enhance our image as an aspiring world power

Russian alliance. If this stance is maintainable is another question that needs to be investigated.

On India's attitude towards China, PM Modi attended the 14th virtual BRICS summit hosted by China in June 23 and 24. Narendra Modi and Xi Jinping may meet in person at the SCO summit in Uzbekistan in September; first time both coming face to face after the April 2020 stand-off at the LAC. But do such meetings yield any tangible result, solutions to ongoing border disputes.

Curiously, with China you can talk and talk, but Beijing will do what it wants to, being indifferent to persons (country heads) and principles of international law. The 14th virtual BRICS summit in June was hosted and hijacked by China. Beijing went by a blue print it had prepared for the new world order. BRICS, as has been conceived and constructed, has inherent contradictions. Participation in BRICS does not help the partners constituting it.

Let us also not forget that neither Soviet Union nor Russia has supported India against China since 1962, in view of the 'brother and the friend' syndrome. Russia is set to have facilitated some discussion between India and China after February 2022. To be sure, Russia is legally (treaty-bound) obliged to take the Chinese side in any future showdown between India and China.

If India could manage to persuade Russia to negotiate with Ukraine and if Russia could get China to disengage from areas occupied since 2020, it would make some sense for India's foreign policy. Until Russia stops the war and China withdraws from Indian territory in Ladakh, all that was said in the joint communiqué released by BRICS sounds hollow. This brings us back to the question raised in the beginning that, "dharma (principles), and vyabaharika (praxis)" have to be combined to stamp India's footprint in international community. Some thoughts for South Block to chew into.

The writer is Professor of International Politics, JIMMC, INFA

The epic 'Mahabharata', famously filmed by BR Chopra, teaches us plenty of principles of statecraft in several episodes. In one such telling moment, in the last battle between Duryodhana and Bhismasena fought with maces, Lord Krishna gives a powerful message to his own brother Balarama. It so happened that Bhismasena hit Duryodhana below the belt on the latter's thigh, which is not permissible in a mace-fight. He did it on the hints given by Lord Krishna which themselves were allegorical. As Duryodhana lay on the ground deeply wounded, breathing his last, Balarama, who was witnessing the fight, took out his mace to hit Bhismasena to death. Balarama was the greatest mace fighter of the time and was teacher to both. Lord Krishna jumped in between Balarama and Bhismasena and lovingly admonished the former, his elder brother.

Notably, what Lord Krishna said, is of immense importance to our foreign policy which maintains a delicate balance between principles and praxis, often times, tilting in favour of praxis as many countries do. My argument has been, in view of many a determinant of our foreign policy being not in place, the principle and praxis in our foreign policy have to be merged. Let us understand how Lord Krishna said to Balarama, "In a battle between dharma (principle/good) and adharma (evil) the only place to go is to the battlefield (ranabhumi); you had gone away on pilgrimage (tirtha yatra) having refused to take sides, you cannot come at the last stage and seek to influence the outcome of the battle, because you are not aware of what has happened in the epic battle. Duryodhana has been the epitome of adharma (Lord Krishna cited several of those acts of adharma). So why extend the courtesy of dharma to the evil incarnate, Duryodhana."

If we scan the history of making and practice of India's foreign policy, it is based on dharma (principles) like non-intervention in others' territories, no-war but peace-seeking, non-alignment, promotion of virtues of democracy,

tolerance, accommodation, equity between nations and so on. Our adherence to dharma has earned us goodwill of the international community. Indian democracy and pluralism are cited as examples of best practices by other countries. But whenever we have failed or been reluctant to support other countries on the basis of dharma, we have become weaker in our own and others' perception. For instance, our positions on Tibet, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Iraq and now Ukraine do not enhance our image as an aspiring world power.

The former US President Barack Obama, a 'good friend of India', addressing the Indian Parliament on 8 November 2010 spoke glowingly about India - our history, culture, politics, civilisation and so on. But on standing up for democracy and human rights which we dearly uphold, Obama was critical, mildly though. He said, "when peaceful democratic movements are suppressed - as they have been in Burma, for example - then the democracies of the world cannot remain silent..... Faced with such cross-violations of human rights, it is the responsibility of the international community - especially leaders like the United States and India - to condemn it. And if I can be frank, in international fora, India has often shied away from some of these issues."

Some of us have maintained that, it is in the national interest of India to stand up for democracy and against violation of human rights anywhere in the world, particularly in our neighbourhood. Our position on Tibet

has been fraught with risks for India's security. Tibet was a buffer created ironically by the British colonial regime between India and China. Nehru's giving away Tibet without reciprocal obligations from Beijing and India accepting it as a part of China has brought the PLA on to our borders. It is another humanitarian matter that we have sheltered the Dalai Lama to the chagrin of Beijing.

When Afghanistan, an independent and sovereign country, was invaded by the Soviet Union on 24 December 1979, PM Indira Gandhi was ambivalent, not even supporting a UN resolution which called for withdrawal of 'foreign forces' from the soil of Afghanistan. That is why, for our noncommittal approach, we got sidelined in the fight against Taliban or in takeover by Taliban recently. Similar has been the story on Iraq which was invaded by Anglo-US combine without a UN mandate. Currently, as the war is raging in Ukraine, India seems non-involved. Is that a right stand?

Apparently, New Delhi has sympathy for Moscow's position in the current war in Ukraine because of our long history of friendship and dependence on Russia. We have also managed to buy some oil from Russia whereas Europe, dependent largely on Russian oil and gas, has cut off supply. In that sense, New Delhi perhaps made a smart move! In keeping with the practice of non-alignment, the efficacy of which we have questioned repeatedly, New Delhi is friendly with both the United States-led NATO bloc as well as the Sino-



DK Giri

IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF INDIA TO STAND UP FOR DEMOCRACY AND AGAINST VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD



Dani Rodrik

Productivism might just develop into a new policy model that captures imaginations of even the most polarised of political opponents

Higher always higher! Let us never be satisfied with what is accomplished.

THE MOTHER



## A New Paradigm?

A new economic paradigm becomes truly established when even its purported opponents start to see the world through its lens. At its height, the Keynesian welfare state received as much support from conservative politicians as it did from those on the Left. In the United States, Republican presidents Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon bought fully into the paradigm's essential tenets - regulated markets, redistribution, social insurance, and counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies - and worked to expand social-welfare programmes and strengthen workplace and environmental regulation.

It was similar with neoliberalism. The impetus for it came from economists and politicians - such as Milton Friedman, Ronald Reagan, and Margaret Thatcher - who were market enthusiasts. But the paradigm's eventual dominance was due in no small part to Center-left leaders like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, who had internalised much of its pro-market agenda. These leaders pushed for deregulation, financialisation, and hyper-globalisation, while paying lip service to ameliorating the consequent rise in inequality and economic insecurity.

Today we are in the midst of a transition away from neoliberalism, but what will replace it is highly uncertain. The absence of a solidified new paradigm is not necessarily bad. We do not need yet another orthodoxy offering cookie-cutter solutions and ready-made blueprints for countries and regions with different circumstances and needs.

But economic policy must be guided by an animating vision. History suggests that the vacuum left as neoliberalism wanes will soon be filled by a new paradigm that eventually will need support across the political spectrum. Such an outcome may seem impossible given current political polarisation. In fact, there already are signs of convergence.

In particular, a new bipartisan consensus may be emerging around "productivism," which emphasises the dissemination of productive economic opportunities throughout all regions and all segments of the labour force. Unlike neoliberalism, productivism gives governments and civil society a significant role in achieving that goal. It puts less faith in markets, is suspicious of large corporations, and emphasises production and investment over finance, and revitalising local communities over globalisation.

Productivism also departs from the Keynesian welfare state by focusing less on redistribution, social transfers, and macroeconomic management and more on supply-side measures to create good jobs for everyone. And productivism diverges from both of its antecedents by reflecting greater skepticism toward technocrats and expressing less knee-jerk hostility to economic populism.

The rhetoric of US President Joe Biden's administration - and some of its policies - feature many of these elements. Examples include the embrace of industrial policies to facilitate the green transition, rebuild domestic supply chains, and stimulate good jobs; blaming large corporate profits as a culprit behind inflation, and refusing (so far) to revoke former President Donald Trump's tariffs against China. When the administration's most senior economist, Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen, extols the virtues of "friend-shoring" - sourcing supplies from US allies - over the World Trade Organisation, we know the times are changing.

But many strands of this thinking exist on the political Right as well. Alarmed by China's rise, Republicans have made common cause with Democrats in pushing for investment and innovation policies to bolster US manufacturing. US Senator Marco Rubio, a past and likely future Republican presidential candidate, has made impassioned pleas for industrial policy - promoting financial, marketing, and technological assistance to small businesses and to manufacturing and high-tech sectors. "In those instances in which the market's most efficient outcome is one that's bad for our people," said Rubio, "what we need is targeted industrial policy to further the common good."

Many on the Left agree. The architect of Trump's China trade policy, Robert Lighthizer, has won many progressive fans for his hardball tactics vis-à-vis the WTO. Robert Kuttner, a leading voice on the Left, has argued that Lighthizer's views on trade, industrial policy, and economic nationalism "were more those of a progressive Democrat."

The Niskanen Center, named after the libertarian economist William Niskanen (a principal adviser to Reagan), has made "state capacity" one of its main planks, emphasising that governments' ability to provide public goods is important for a healthy economy. Oren Cass, an adviser to the Republican Mitt Romney during his 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns and a former senior fellow at the pro-market Manhattan Institute, is a critic of financialised capitalism and supports reshoring supply chains and investing in local communities.

Likewise, Patrick Deneen, one of the leading intellectuals of the US "populist Right," advocates "pro-worker policies" and "the encouragement, through government policy, of domestic production." During a recent interview in which Deneen discussed these and other economic policies, the New York Times writer Ezra Klein remarked: "What's funny about that to me is that they seem to me to resemble what the current Democratic Party is."

As James and Deborah Fallows found when they travelled across America in their single-engine plane to study local economic development, pragmatism can override political partisanship when it comes to fostering businesses, job creation, and public-private partnerships. Local politicians confronted by the challenges of economic decline and joblessness engaged with community groups, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders in extensive policy experimentation. And in many cases their political affiliation made little difference to what they did.

Whether this kind of cross-party collaboration and fertilisation of ideas will amount to a new paradigm remains to be seen. There are deep divides between Republicans and Democrats on social and cultural issues such as abortion rights, race, and gender. Many Republicans, including prominent figures such as Rubio, have yet to renounce their allegiance to Trump, who remains a threat to US democracy. And there is always the danger that the "new" industrial policies favoured by both conservatives and progressives will fizzle out or turn into the old measures of the past.

Nonetheless, there are signs of a major reorientation toward an economic-policy framework that is rooted in production, work, and localism instead of finance, consumerism, and globalism. Productivism might just develop into a new policy model that captures imaginations of even the most polarised of political opponents.

The writer, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is President of the International Economic Association.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

### WISDOM CORNER

Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen.

MARK TWAIN

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

THOMAS A. EDISON

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

### SPECTRUM MULTILATERALISM

## Rethinking the global order

Just as the world was beginning to recover from one of the biggest crises in recent decades, another one has erupted in Europe. Just as the COVID-19 pandemic underscored our common humanity, Russia's war on Ukraine has reminded us of how fragile, interconnected, and interdependent our world is. As the Chinese say, "All is one under heaven."

Intensifying great-power confrontations and deglobalisation are jeopardising world peace and security. New crises seem to be lurking around every corner, but appropriate solutions are nowhere to be seen - not in the Far East, South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, or Latin America. The popular mood has darkened, reinvigorating populism, nationalism, Islamophobia, and other atavistic trends that threaten the progressive achievements humanity has made since World War II.

The Ukraine crisis itself is a symptom of deeper structural problems in the international order. That order, led by the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), has failed to

live up to the principles of good governance enshrined in the UN Charter. New global orders tend to emerge from major wars. In the case of WWII, the victors created structures designed to preserve international peace and security. But while our increasingly integrated world has changed dramatically since the UN's founding, our organising principles still reflect the mentality of the post-war and Cold War era. Within the current framework, a failure to respond to global challenges is a failure of the entire international community.

Can the system be reformed? Calls since the early 1990s to restructure the UN system - the avatar for the broader international order - have consistently fallen on deaf ears. Worse, Russia and China are now using their seats at the helm of the international order to push for a more multipolar system. Rather than working to reform the current framework, they are challenging its validity.

Humanity's collective achievements over the past seven decades are a testament to why we must work together to make the UN system more fair, inclusive, and attentive to people's needs and aspirations. Indeed, that was the mission

of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change in 2003.

Consisting of 16 eminent figures from different parts of the world, and chaired by former Thai Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun, the panel analysed contemporary threats to international peace and security; evaluated how well existing policies and institutions had done in addressing those threats; and offered recommendations aimed at strengthening the UN and enabling it to provide collective security for the twenty-first century.

The panel's final report made clear that all of the UN's principal organs needed reform, including the Security Council, which the panel argued should be expanded. Unfortunately the Security Council's veto-wielding permanent members simply ignored the panel's recommendations, setting the stage for today's paralysis and dysfunction. The Middle East is especially in need of a well-functioning, genuinely representative UN system. No region has suffered more from the unfair bipolar and unipolar dynamics of the past. We have been the altar on which the principles of the international order are rou-

tinely sacrificed. The same principles that led to the creation of the State of Israel also led to the Palestinians being deprived of their homeland and denied their basic rights to self-determination and statehood.

As the Middle East has gone from one war to another, from one catastrophe to another, and from one UN resolution to another, justice has continuously eluded it. Every time an Arab, Muslim, or Middle Eastern issue comes up, the hypocrisy of the great powers that lead the international order becomes crystal clear. The leaders of those powers need to come to their senses. Reforming the existing order requires new thinking by all UN member states, including the Security Council's five permanent members. The international order can preserve peace and security only to the extent that it is equitable and capable of meeting the challenges that humanity faces. Short of that, geopolitical upheavals will continue to threaten world peace and security.

The writer has served as Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the UK and the US.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Turki bin Faisal al-Saud

INTERNATIONAL ORDER CAN PRESERVE PEACE AND SECURITY ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT IT IS EQUITABLE AND CAPABLE OF MEETING THE CHALLENGES THAT HUMANITY FACES

### On a green mission

Sir, When reckless felling of trees often takes place in Indian forests that could potentially lead to negative impacts on ecosystems and the environment as a whole, it is heartening to note that a Odisha woman, Sarojini Mohanta, has a forest named after her, known as 'Sarojini Vana', which exemplifies her striving and the unflinching desire for the conservation of forests in the Bonai forest division in Odisha. Sarojini Mohanta, the home-grown change-maker, who led to the survival of 95 per cent of the saplings planted on the four acres, lives by example and has shown that if a single woman could turn the barren land completely into a lush green forest in just two years through sheer dedication, love and care, a positive human approach towards timberland has a significant potential to resuscitate the nature.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### Protect the oceans

Sir, Despite the fact that the oceans provide 50 per cent of the world's oxygen, it is disheartening to see the untold harm that has been done to the oceans. According to Sustainable Development Goal 14, a healthy ocean is essential for human health, rapid economic growth, and a stable climate. Approximately 25% of all carbon dioxide emissions are absorbed by the ocean, making it an essential climate change buffer. More than 3.5 billion people rely on the ocean for their food security, and 120 million people directly participate in fisheries and aquaculture-related industries. Human activities are placing the health of the ocean in peril. Nearly 80% of wastewater is dumped untreated into the ocean. Additionally, eight million tonnes of plastic trash are dumped into the oceans annually. By 2050, this plastic might weigh more than all the fish in the oceans if immediate action is not taken. Sludge, sewage, hazardous waste, industrial effluents, and other rubbish have greatly polluted the oceans. The oceans' acidification due to the climate catastrophe is also upsetting the marine food web. Coral reefs are dying and bleaching in greater numbers. Mangroves, seagrasses, and wetland ecosystems along the coast are deteriorating. The State of the Global Climate in 2021 report from the World Meteorological Organization says that 2021 witnessed record highs for greenhouse gas concentrations, ocean heat, ocean acidification, and sea level rise. Additionally, marine pollution is rising alarmingly, and by 2100, more than half of all marine species may have nearly vanished from the planet.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

## of the day quote

TN Congress is in the Intensive Care Unit in the state and its oxygen is its Dravidian partner DMK, without which it cannot survive

**K ANNAMALAI** | TAMIL NADU BJP PRESIDENT

If I am elected the President of the country, first and foremost I will be answerable to the Constitution, only to the Constitution. This does not mean that we have to be on collision course with whoever is the Prime Minister. A way-out can be found by sitting and talking with the Prime Minister, as has happened many times in the past

**YASHWANT SINHA** | OPPN'S JOINT CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL POLL

The 75th birthday bash planned for former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at Davangere next month will be held under the aegis of the national party

**D K SHIVAKUMAR** | K TAKA CONG PRESIDENT

## SHORT TAKES

### NHSRCL MD Satish Agnihotri sacked

**New Delhi:** The Railways has terminated the services of NHSRCL Managing Director Satish Agnihotri who was in charge of the government's prestigious bullet train project, senior officials said Thursday. Rajendra Prasad, Director, Projects, National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL) has been handed over the charge for three months, the officials said. Senior Railway officials said there were several allegations against Agnihotri, including misuse of official position and diverting funds in an unauthorised manner to a private company.

### 4 Pak fishermen nabbed in Kutch

**New Delhi/Bhuj:** A BSF patrol caught four Pakistani fishermen and seized 15 boats from the 'Harami Nalla' creek area of Kutch along the India-Pakistan maritime boundary in Gujarat Thursday, a spokesperson of the force said. Nothing suspicious has been recovered from the fishing boats, he said.

### Terrorist held

**Srinagar:** A hybrid terrorist linked with proscribed terrorist outfit Al-Badr was arrested in J&K's Awantipora Thursday and arms and ammunition recovered from his possession, police said. "On a specific information regarding movement of terrorists in Beigund, Awantipora, police along with army's 42RR and CRPF's 130Bn established a joint checkpoint in the said area and arrested hybrid terrorist, identified as Aamir Ahmed Parray, son of Abdul Rashid Parray resident of Kashwa Chitragam, Shopian," police said.

# Mushroom is the new cash crop in J&K

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Srinagar, July 7:** It is no secret that the youngest mountains in the world, the Himalayas, are home to some of the world's unique flora and fauna. God had bestowed the Kashmir Valley in particular with a favourable agro-climate that delivers the precise conditions for the growth of medicinal plants. Recently mushroom cultivation in Jammu and Kashmir has taken the center stage for its high commercial value and therapeutic benefits.

Mushrooms are an excellent source of nutraceuticals, antioxidants, anticancer prebiotic, immunomodulating, anti-inflammatory, cardiovascular, antimicrobial, antiviral, antiparasitic, antifungal, and antidiabetic elements;



Under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (National Agriculture Development Programme) mushroom cultivation is a focus area

MUSHROOM GROWERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH QUALITY SEEDS AND TRAINED IN SCIENTIFIC CULTIVATION TECHNIQUES

Mushroom production is at its all-time high in the Union Territory thanks to the J&K Agriculture Department's efforts in bringing the best methods and technical know-how to people genuinely interested in farming

they also guard against tumor development. Rich in protein, vitamins, minerals, antioxidant agents (selenium, vitamin C, and choline), folic acid, and iron, mushrooms are the new superfoods.

The Valley boasts of many success stories in the mushroom cultivation business. 27-year-old Nisar Ahmad from the Bramri area of Kupwara quit his job two

years back to be a full-time mushroom farmer. He participated in a mushroom farming awareness session organised by the agriculture department and took a leap of faith in himself to start this venture. Now he encourages people to pursue farming because it's more satisfying than slogging in salaried jobs, it pays well, and the government

schemes, subsidies, and interest-free loans help in easy business set-up. In the fairy tale Nadigam hamlet (off the Shopian-Kadir road) Jahangir Ahmad Malik and his friend Umar Yaseen set up a button mushroom unit last year seeing the popularity of this fungus. With the help of the Department of Agriculture and administra-

tion's 50 per cent subsidy and technical knowledge, they were able to grow 110 kg of mushrooms in six months earning a profit of Rs 2 lakh.

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) like mushrooms are a source of livelihood for people living in the forest area. J&K has 20,230 sq km covered in forests, which is about 20 per cent of its total geographical area. In the Shivalik range of the Jammu region mushrooms (especially gucchi or Morchella esculenta L.) provide income security to peasants. Gucchi mushrooms fetch a great commercial value so it's often a competition for forest dwellers to find a huge bunch of them. On a good day, a person can collect up to 10 kg of fresh mushrooms.



**Modi Model of Governance: When inflation does not come down, Modi-fy the statistics that show inflation**  
**JAIRAM RAMESH** | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

## AMITABH KANT TO BE NEW SHERPA OF G-20

Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant will be the new Sherpa of G-20, replacing Union Minister Piyush Goyal as full-time sherpa required for India's presidency, sources said



## POST 'KAALI' POSTER CONTROVERSY

# Manimekalai shares pic of Lord Shiva-Parvati smoking

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, July 7:** Controversial Tamil documentary film maker Leena Manimekalai, who is in the eye of storm for showing Goddess Kali smoking a cigarette, has now put out on her Twitter handle an image of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati smoking, hours after her documentary was pulled down from the site.

The documentary film director shared a photo of two individuals dressed as Hindu God Shiva and Goddess Parvati walking on the streets smoking cigarettes. She has, however, clarified that this was not from her movie but from everyday rural India as to how folk artists chill out after a show.

Leena Manimekalai is in Canada and was to screen her documentary "Kaali" at the Aga Khan Museum as part of the "Rhythms of Canada" programme of the museum. However, after the Indian embassy took up the issue that the director hurt the religious sentiments of Hindu community by portraying Goddess Kaali in bad light, the film was not allowed to be screened at the museum.

Microblogging platform Twitter also pulled down the documentary from its site after outrage from all corners against her depicting Goddess Kaali in poor light. The director has however clarified that her Kaali is an epitome of love and sharing and that the Goddess had accepted a cigarette from a black street dweller at a park around Kensington market in Toronto.

Uttar Pradesh and Haryana police have already registered criminal cases against Leena Manimekalai for hurting sentiments of millions of Hindus across the globe who believe in Goddess Kaali.

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## Akasa Air gets air operator certificate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 7:** Akasa Air said Thursday said it has received the Air Operator Certificate (AOC) from aviation regulator DGCA and will start commercial operations later this month.

The grant of the AOC marks the satisfactory completion of all regulatory and compliance requirements for the airline's operational readiness, Akasa Air said in a statement.

The process concluded with the airline having successfully conducted a number of proving flights under the supervision of the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation), it added.

The airline, backed by ace stock market investor Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, had taken delivery of its first Boeing 737 max aircraft in India on June 21. "We are thankful to the Civil



Aviation Ministry and the DGCA for their constructive guidance, active support and the highest levels of efficiency throughout the AOC process. We now look forward to opening our flights for sale, leading to the start of commercial operations by late July," Vinay Dube, Founder-Chief Executive Officer of Akasa Air, said.

Following the government's initiative to usher in a new era of digitalisation, Akasa Air is the first airline whose end-to-end AOC process was conducted using the government's progressive eGCA digital platform, the airline said.

According to the airline, it will commence commercial

## Rana couple denies links with key accused

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, July 7:** The Rana couple - Independent MP Navneet Kaur-Rana and her husband and Independent MLA Ravi Rana - Thursday rubbished charges that the alleged mastermind of the June 21 murder of Amravati pharmacist was linked to their party.

### AMRAVATI MURDER

"The allegations are absolutely baseless. We have never met him or even know him, he was never our worker. Whichever party they may belong to, strict action should be taken against them," said Ravi Rana, who is a 3-time MLA from Badnera. His wife is a first-time MP. His dismissal came after some TV channels aired news alleging one of their party workers was the mastermind behind the murder of veterinary pharmacist Umesh Kolhe. The Ranas have a political outfit called Yuva Swabhiman Party (YSP).

# 67 leaders join Shinde group

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, July 7:** The 'leaks' in the Shiv Sena continued unabated as ex-Thane Mayor Naresh Muske along with 67 former municipal corporators joined Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's group, here on Thursday.

The move has come as a jolt to the former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, ahead of the upcoming civic elections in Thane where the party has ruled for many years.

Muske and others met Shinde - who was also the Guardian Minister of Thane in the erstwhile Maha Vikas Aghadi regime - at his residence and pledged to work together under his leadership for the progress of the city adjoining Mumbai.

Earlier, several leaders from Thane had issued veiled threats that if they are denied tickets for civic polls they would "follow



Eknath Shinde's path". The latest development came a week after Shinde was sworn-in as the Chief Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party's Devendra Fadnis took oath as Deputy CM after the MVA government collapsed on June 29.

Besides, there are indications that many Sena elected law-makers, party leaders and office-bearers at various levels are likely to shift allegiance to the Shinde Group in

the coming weeks.

The Shinde camp has claimed that several Sena MPs are also in touch with them and may join them soon even as the Shiv Sena Chief Whip in Lok Sabha Bhavana Gawali - MP from Yavatmal-Washim constituency was removed on Wednesday and replaced by Thane MP Rajan Vichare.

The Sena is keeping hopes pinned on the Supreme Court verdict of

## Anand Rao Adul quits party post

**MUMBAI:** In a setback to the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena, former MP Anand Rao Adul has resigned from his party post as a 'leader'. Talking to PTI, his son Abhijit Adul said his father has resigned from the post of Shiv Sena leader but will remain a party worker. Adul held the post of Shiv Sena neta (Shiv Sena leader). The party organisation has 'Shiv Sena Paksh Pramukh' at the top, followed by 14 'netas' or leaders and 25 'up-netas' or deputy leaders. When asked if he will be joining the faction led by new Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Abhijit said, "My father will continue to be a Shiv Sainik (Shiv Sena worker)."

July 11, after which the party would chart its future course of action even as Thackeray has launched interaction and communication with the grassroots workers.

## GEARING UP



Youngsters attend a training session as they prepare for the Agnipath examination, at Morhabadi ground in Ranchi

PTI PHOTO

# Muslim mother can't be a guardian of minor children: Kerala HC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kochi, July 7:** A division bench of the Kerala High Court has observed that it cannot hold a Muslim woman can be guardian of her minor child's property since it is bound by the precedents of the Supreme Court.

The division bench of Justices PB. Suresh Kumar and CS Sudha observed that even though the personal law which prevents Muslim women from being guardians can be argued to be violative of Articles 14 and 15 and hence void, they cannot go into the same since it is bound by the precedents set by the apex court.

The court observed this while hearing a petition filed by C. Abdul Aziz from Kozhikode and a dozen others over a partition deed in which a Muslim mother acted as a legal guardian of her son's property. Relying on the 'Shayara Bano's case, in which it was held that the practices of the Muslim personal law-Shariat cannot be required to satisfy the provisions contained in Part-III - Fundamental Rights of the Constitution applicable to State

actions, in terms of Article 13 of the Constitution. "That being the position, as the Shariat Act has been held to be not a State legislation, it cannot be tested on the anvil of Articles 14 or Article 15 of the Constitution as argued on behalf of the appellants," the Court held in its judgment.

The court further pointed out that since there are numerous decisions from the apex court, which holds that a Muslim mother cannot be a guardian of her minor children, the High Court is bound to follow the law declared by the apex court as provided under Article 141 of the Constitution.



## Moga court jails 3 Dera followers for three years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chandigarh, July 7:** In the first conviction in the 2015 sacrilege cases in Punjab, a court in Moga district Thursday sentenced three Dera Sacha Sauda followers to a three-year jail term for desecrating the Guru Granth Sahib.

The court of Judicial Magistrate First Class Rahul Garg also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 each on Prithi Singh a resident of Baghapurana and Amardeep Singh and Mithu Singh, both residents

of Malke village, said Special Public Prosecutor Sukhdev Singh. He said this was the first conviction in the 2015 sacrilege cases in the state. Two other persons, Davinder Singh and Satnam Singh have been acquitted for want of evidence, the special public prosecutor said. Shortly after the Moga court's verdict, Punjab Finance Minister and senior AAP leader Harpal Singh Cheema accused the previous governments in the state of never wanting to ensure that justice is delivered in the sacrilege cases.

### 2015 SACRILEGE CASES

## 'KAALI' POSTER CONTROVERSY

## TMC not to take onus of FIRs against Mahua

Political analysts feel that her unfollowing of the party's official Twitter handle is a sort of her clandestine protest against her own party on this issue



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, July 7:** Distancing itself further from the party Lok Sabha member Mahua Moitra over her recent comments on Goddess Kali that has sparked huge controversy, the Trinamool Congress leadership Thursday made it clear that it will take no responsibility on the FIRs against her in different parts of the country on this count.

On behalf of the party, veteran Trinamool Congress leader and three-time party Lok Sabha member, Saugata Roy issued a statement saying that the onus is on Moitra and not on the party to take care of the FIRs.

"As far as TMC is concerned, the party doesn't approve the poster for the film 'Kaali', it's unacceptable to us. We also don't approve of Mahua Moitra's statements on the matter: It's our party's official position. Our party is secular; it respects all religions. As far as the FIRs are concerned, it's on Mahua Moitra to take care of that. Until BJP takes action on Nupur

Sharma for her comments against the Prophet, they have no right to speak about anything else," the statement read.

At the same time, Trinamool Congress' secretary general and West Bengal Commerce & Industries Minister, Partha Chatterjee has told media persons that since the opinions expressed by Moitra are her personal views, the party will not take any responsibility in the matter.

The development is naturally provoking the question whether it is the beginning of the end of Moitra's association with the Trinamool Congress, as the maverick party MP, who had taken stand against the party leadership on many issues in the past, has unfollowed Trinamool Congress' official Twitter handle soon after she was censured by the party leadership over her comments about Goddess Kali.

Moitra though is tight-lipped on this question, political ana-

lysts feel that her unfollowing of the party's official Twitter handle is a sort of her clandestine protest against her own party on this issue.

The BJP has already made a big issue over Moitra's comments. Besides filing FIRs in different parts of the country including West Bengal, BJP activists arranged protest demonstrations in different parts of the state. The leader of the opposition in West Bengal has even threatened to approach the Calcutta High Court demanding Moitra's arrest.

However, Moitra has refused to shift from her stand and instead challenged BJP to prove her wrong. "I do not want to live in an India where BJP's monolithic patriarchal Brahmanical view of Hinduism & rest of us will tip-toe around religion. I will defend this till I die. File your FIRs, I will see you in every court in the land," she had said in her latest Twitter message.

## Tamil Nadu gets new elephant reserve

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, July 7:** The Environment Ministry Wednesday announced the formation of a new elephant reserve in Tamil Nadu, which will take the total number of such reserves to 32 across India.

"In an important step towards conserving our national heritage animal, I am thrilled to share with you that Tamil Nadu will bring 1,197.48 sq km area under Agasthiyarmalai Elephant Reserve," Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav tweeted.

The Tamil Nadu Cabinet has passed a proposal to this effect and sent it for concurrence to the Environment Ministry, which in turn would send its approval in a day or two.

Officials of the Tamil Nadu forest department have commenced preparing detailed project reports (DPR) to identify elephant corridors in the newly-declared Agasthiyarmalai Reserve.

The Union Ministry of Environment has cleared the department's proposal to declare 1197.48 sq.km of forest land in



Kanniyakumari and Tirunelveli districts as the new elephant reserve.

Once a forest area is notified as an elephant reserve, it receives funding under the Centre's Project Elephant.

A senior forest department of-

icial told IANS: "Even as the Union Ministry of Environment has declared the area as an elephant reserve only Wednesday, it is already protected as a forest reserve or a wildlife sanctuary."

He said that the elephant reserve status will focus on conser-

OFFICIALS SAID THAT THE PERIYAR-AGASTHIYARMALAI AREA IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE 1,800 ELEPHANTS BASED ON THE 2010 CENSUS

TAMIL NADU'S EXISTING ELEPHANT RESERVES INCLUDE NILGIRI, COIMBATORE, NILAMBUR, SRIVILLIPUTHUR AND ANAMALAI

vation and protection of tuskers as indicator species and representing a healthy ecosystem.

The department officials said that the Periyar-Agasthiyarmalai area is estimated to have 1,800 elephants based on the 2010 census.

The elephant population in this belt is spread across Agasthiyarmalai and Mahendragiri ranges.

With funding under Project Elephant, the forest department expects that there won't be a shortage of resources for the proposed elephant corridor and maintaining the tusker population.

Prevention of man-animal conflict will be one of the major focus areas as far as the new reserve is concerned.

## GI sought for TN's Chettikulam onion

**Chennai:** The Tamil Nadu Agricultural Marketing Board and a farmers' & producers' association in the state's Perambalur district have filed an application for Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the Chettikulam small onion. NABARD's Madurai Agri-Business Incubation Farm is the facilitator for this application, which says that this particular onion is cultivated in Chettikulam village in Allathur block in Perambalur. The small onion in this area has around 15-18 layers of dried outer scales and has a shelf life of 8 to 9 months. As many as 70,000 tonnes are produced in 12,500 hectares in the area. The high sulphur content in this region gives this particular onion the highest pungency taste. Interestingly farmers of the region give a small quantity of onion after crop as an offering at the Lord Murugan temple.



## TORCH RELAY

The torch relay of the 44th Chess Olympiad after its arrival at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, in Kolkata, Thursday. The torch is being taken to 75 cities in a span of 40 days before reaching its destination Mahabalipuram

PTI PHOTO

## Psychology, criminology hot subjects in TN colleges

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, July 7:** In wake of the Covid pandemic, colleges in Tamil Nadu have seen a heavy rush for getting admission to undergraduate psychology courses.

While commerce and computer science are preferred courses graduation, psychology has become a hot subject of late, various college managements told IANS.

Criminology is another subject that has gained momentum as far as admission is concerned in the state's colleges.

With the increase in demand for psychology and criminology on the rise, the cut-off marks for these courses are also likely to show an upward trend.

Sources in Women Christian College told IANS that the department has already received 890 applications for 50 seats in the Psychology stream for Shift I. The college has 50 more seats in Shift II



and this would mean a total of around 900 applicants for 100 seats available in the college.

With the increase in number of ailments related to anxiety, stress, and mental illness on the rise, almost all the companies are hiring trained psychologists and most of them prefer graduates in psychology for

these posts. This is considered the major reason for the surge in demand for psychology courses.

Educational consultants also said that there is an increase in the number of trained psychologists globally and this is also a reason for the demand for admission to psychology courses.

S Kothai, Principal of Chennai's prestigious Ethiraj College for Women, told IANS that the number of applications for undergraduate courses in psychology has risen to 800 this year. The college has a post-graduate course in applied psychology and the number of students who passed out of the college was placed in prestigious companies as psychologists.

The DG Vaishnav College has received 300 applications for its 50 undergraduate seats for psychology course. The college also has undergraduate courses in criminology and police administration which are also seeing a high demand.

K Kasinathan, a senior HR professional in Chennai, told IANS that applied psychology is in high demand across the globe and the demand for undergraduate courses in psychology in the Chennai colleges is for further pursuing post-graduation in this subject and to land up a good job.

## Tension in Bengal's Canning over killing of 3 TMC workers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, July 7:** Tension is brewing in Canning, a part of the coastal belt in South 24 Parganas district in West Bengal following the murder of three influential local Trinamool Congress workers in broad daylight Thursday morning.

While local Trinamool Congress leaders have blamed BJP for the murder, circumstantial evidence behind the murder is pointing towards infighting within the ruling party.

The three killed, namely a local panchayat member, Swapan Majhi (38) and local Trinamool Congress booth presidents, Bhutnath Pramanik (33) and Jhantu Halder (33) on Thursday morning while they were going to attend a preparatory



meeting on the forthcoming Trinamool Congress's annual Martyr's Day programme July 21. While they were going to the meeting venue riding on two motorcycles, they were stopped by the assassins who first hacked the three and then fired multiple bullets.

However, local police source said that it is evident that the killers had definite information about the time when the three victims will pass through the place of crime and hence, they were waiting right there for them.

From this point the infighting motive becomes stronger.

At the same time, the statements given by a local Trinamool Congress MLA from Canning (West) assembly constituency, Paresh Ram Das to the police as well as to the media have picked holes on the infighting theory. "The three victims had the fear of being killed for quite some time. They came to meet me at my party office Tuesday evening and expressed their apprehension. I assured them of making arrangements for their security. However, I could never imagine that their apprehensions would come true so early," he said. Now, questions are being raised on why security arrangements were not made for them despite the fact that the local MLA was aware of life threats.

## TN POLICE TO BE HONOURED WITH PRESIDENT'S COLOUR



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, July 7:** Tamil Nadu Police will be honoured with the prestigious President's colour, which is the highest honour that is bestowed upon the military, paramilitary and police forces of the State/Union Territory.

This is for honouring the forces that have done exceptional service to the nation. Vice-President M Venkiah Naidu will bestow the honour on Tamil Nadu police.

The state police will thus be the first police force in South India to be bestowed with the prestigious honour and the tenth in the coun-

try. The Tamil Nadu police was conferred with the President's Colour in 2009 when the force celebrated its 150th year of existence but was not ceremonially accorded.

Tamil Nadu DGP C Sylendra Babu told media persons that a replica of the special flag would be worn by all members of the force as a special honour. He said that the state would design the flag and take approval from the central government. Notably, the Indian Navy was the first Indian armed force to be honoured with the President's Colour. President Rajendra Prasad awarded the honour to the Indian Navy in 1951.

## Bengal govt goes green on Hooghly ferries

ONCE THE PROTOTYPE OF THE GREEN FERRY COMPLETES TRIALS SUCCESSFULLY, MORE VESSELS CAN BE ORDERED TO REPLACE THE ENTIRE FLEET OF DIESEL-GUZZLERS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, July 7:** The government of West Bengal plans to replace the ferries operating between several ghats of the river Hooghly along Kolkata, Howrah and the suburbs with green vessels.

The state transport department has signed a contract with Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd to design and build a green vessel that will carry 150 passengers in air-conditioned comfort.

The zero-emission electric ferry will be powered by a 210 kWh liquid-cooled energy storage solution and have solar panels mounted on the roof.

It will be 24-metre long with an aluminium Catamaran hull and twin propellers. Its piercing hull design will allow an operating speed of 8 knots and a maximum of 10 knots.

The contract was signed by Anindya Sengupta, special secretary, Transport Department, Government of West Bengal and



Cdr Shantanu Bose (retd), director (shipbuilding), GRSE in the presence of other officials.

According to a source, GRSE's in-house design team will complete work on such a vessel after which it will be constructed fol-

lowing latest rules of the classification society for such class of passenger vessels.

On the occasion, Cmde PR Hari, (retd) chairman & managing director, GRSE said: "The project is expected to revolutionise the water

transport system in this region and support the country's efforts to reduce its emission and Carbon footprints, changing the lives of the people in the city. The initiative also demonstrates the GRSE's capabilities in manufacturing electric

The zero-emission electric ferry will be powered by a 210 kWh liquid-cooled energy storage solution and have solar panels mounted on the roof

mobility solutions under Make-in-India initiative. We are keen to emulate our success in this green venture in other states with potential for waterways."

Ferry services along the Hooghly are a lifeline for thousands of commuters and there is tremendous scope for improvement. The vessels that operate now have diesel engines and cause severe pollution, environmentalists have noted. Once the prototype of the green ferry completes trials successfully, more vessels can be ordered to replace the entire fleet of diesel-guzzlers.

## of the day quote

Karnataka is in the forefront among the states attracting about 38 per cent of the total FDI flowing into the country

**BASAVARAJ BOMMAI**  
KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

For a long time, the nation had a hope that Jammu and Kashmir will be irreversibly integrated with the nation by removal of Article 370 and Article 35A, and that hope was fulfilled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On 5 August 2019, a new era was established in Kashmir

**AMIT SHAH** | UNION HOME MINISTER

The BJP government repeatedly plays with the sentiments of the people. It had promised to make Gujarat malnutrition free in 2012; now there are more than three lakh malnourished children in Gujarat in 2022

**ISUDAN GADHVI**  
AAP NATIONAL JOINT GENERAL SECRETARY

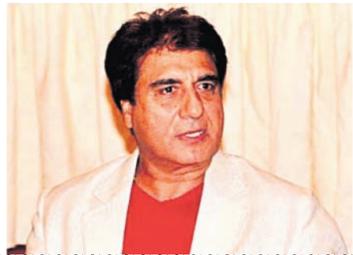


**We should create a system in our campuses that when these students arrive there in the next few years they get what they want**

**NARENDRA MODI** | PRIME MINISTER

## RAJ BABBAR GETS 2-YEAR JAIL

An MP/MLA court in Lucknow has awarded a two-year jail sentence to former MP Raj Babbar in a case related to 1996. The court has also imposed a fine of Rs 8,500 on the actor turned politician. The former MP was present in court when the sentence was announced



## Scindia assumes additional charge of steel ministry

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 7: Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia Thursday assumed the additional charge of steel ministry.

Scindia was given additional charge of steel ministry after R.C.P Singh resigned on Wednesday, a day before his Rajya Sabha term was to end.

After assuming the charge of steel ministry, Scindia tweeted: "As per the direction of Prime Minister (Narendra Modi), I assumed the charge as minister of steel. I will try my best to discharge this new responsibility with the blessings of all the well wishers."

In another tweet, Scindia said: "Today, took the additional charge of steel ministry from RCP Singh. I will do my best to fulfill the aspirations of the country by discharging this responsibility given by the top leadership to full potential." It was learnt that Scindia also held back to back meeting with ministry officials.



## MANN STARTS SECOND INNINGS

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Gurpreet Kaur during their wedding ceremony in Chandigarh. Mann, 48, divorced his first wife Inderpreet Kaur in 2015. He has two children from that marriage -- daughter Seerat Kaur Mann (21) and son Dilshan Singh Mann (17), who attended Mann's swearing-in ceremony March 16

PTI PHOTO

## SHORT TAKES

### Actor Sreejith Ravi held in POCSO case

**Thrissur (Ker):** Six years after being held for allegedly exposing himself to some minor girls, popular Malayalam actor Sreejith Ravi landed in police custody again Thursday for an alleged similar act targeting two children here, police said. The actor was arrested based on a complaint filed by the parents of the children that an unidentified person, who came in a black car, had behaved indecently with the two minors in a nearby park July 4, they said. Later in the day, Ravi was produced before a magistrate court here which sent him to 14-day judicial remand, police added.

### Dalai Lama set to visit Jammu, Ladakh

**New Delhi:** The Dalai Lama is likely to visit Jammu and Ladakh next week as part of a two-day tour even as India Thursday rejected China's criticism over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday greetings to the Tibetan spiritual leader, asserting that it is a consistent policy to treat him as an honoured guest of the country. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said that the birthday greetings by the prime minister to the Dalai Lama Wednesday should be seen in the overall context.

# EAM presses for early resolution of LAC issues

## JAISHANKAR HOLDS TALKS WITH WANG YI

- The two Ministers met on the sidelines of the two-day G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) currently underway in Bali
- Jaishankar discussed with Wang the vexed issue of the return of Indian students to China and the resumption of direct flights between the two countries
- Jaishankar also reiterated that the India-China relationship is best served by observing the three mutuals - mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** India Thursday pressed China for an early resolution of all the outstanding issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar conveying to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi the need for completing the disengagement process from the remaining friction points in the region.

At a one-hour meeting in Bali on the sidelines of a conclave of foreign ministers of the G20 nations, Jaishankar told Wang that the relationship between the two countries should be based on "three mu-



tuals" -- mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests.

Jaishankar also reaffirmed the importance of "fully abiding" by the bilateral agreements and protocols, and the understandings reached between him and Wang during their previous conversations, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The talks took place nearly three-and-a-half months after Wang visited India. "Began my day in Bali by meeting FM Wang Yi of China. Discussion lasted one hour: Focused on specific outstanding issues in our bilateral relationship pertaining to the border situation. Also spoke about other matters including students and flights," Jaishankar tweeted.

India has been pressing for quick disengagement of troops from all the remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh, insisting that

peace and tranquillity along the border are prerequisite for progress in overall ties.

Jaishankar also discussed with Wang the vexed issue of the return of Indian students to China and the resumption of direct flights between the two countries. On the discussions on the border row, the MEA said Jaishankar and Wang looked forward to the next round of senior commanders' meeting at an early date.

Wang said that since March, China and India have maintained communication and exchanges, effectively managed and controlled differences, promoting bilateral relations, it added. The MEA said Jaishankar also recalled his meeting with Wang Yi in Delhi in March and reviewed the progress of some key issues discussed then, including the return of students. "The EAM stressed the need for expediting the process and facilitating the return of students on an early date," the MEA said. Thousands of Indian students were unable to return to China for over two years due to Beijing's Covid-19 restrictions. India has been taking up the issue with China several times.

The border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

# HACKERS TARGETING GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, July 7:** Cyber-security researchers Thursday said they have discovered an "unprecedented, sophisticated" phishing technique that has been targeting government websites across the world, including Indian government's portal <https://india.gov.in>, extorting the affected users.

The threat actors have been targeting the Indian government's portal by utilising a bogus URL to trick users into submitting sensitive information such as credit card numbers, expiration months and CVV codes, according to AI-driven cyber-security firm CloudSEK.

BitB attacks imitate legitimate sites in order to steal user credentials as well as other sensitive data, such as personally identifiable information (PII). The new URL that pops-up as a result of the BitB attack appears legitimate.

"The bad actors have also replicated the original page's user interface. Once their victims click



into the phishing page, a pop-up appears on the phoney window claiming that their systems have been blocked, posing as a notification from the Home Affairs Enforcement and Police," the researchers claimed.

The users are then notified of their excessive use of pornographic websites, which is illegal under the Indian law, and are requested to pay a fine of Rs 30,000 to unlock their systems.

"They are given a form to fill out in order to pay the fine, which

asks them to divulge personal information, including their credit card information. The victims become panicked because the warning has a sense of urgency and appears to be time-bound," the researchers said.

## FRESH HURDLE

The information that the victims enter into the form is transferred to the attacker's server. Once the attackers get the card information, it might be sold to other buyers in a larger network of cyber criminals, or the victim could be extorted for extra money.

## Zubair moves SC for bail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** The Supreme Court has agreed to hear Friday the plea of *Alt News* co-founder Mohammed Zubair for quashing the FIR and bail in connection with a case registered against him in the Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh for allegedly outraging religious feelings.

A vacation bench of Justices Indira Banerjee and JK Maheshwari said Thursday that the matter be listed Friday subject to clearance from the Chief Justice of India.

"Let the matter be listed July 8, 2022, before the appropriate Bench subject to assignment," the bench said in its order. During the hearing, senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, appearing for Zubair, said his anticipatory bail was rejected by the Allahabad High Court and subsequently he was arrested. He said that Zubair is the co-founder of *Alt News* and his job is to fact-check news and he was doing the role of identifying hate speeches. "A look at the FIR shows that there is no crime but there is a threat to his life as people out there are threatening him," he said while urging the court to list the matter urgently.

An FIR was lodged against Zubair in Uttar Pradesh under IPC section 295A (deliberate and malicious act intended to outrage religious feelings) and section 67 of the IT Act here on a complaint by Hindu Sher Sena Sitapur district president Bhagwan Sharan June 1. Zubair was arrested by the Delhi Police June 27 for allegedly hurt-



ing religious sentiments through one of his tweets. The Delhi Police has invoked new provisions - sections 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 201 (destruction of evidence) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and section 35 of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act - against Zubair.

The appeal of Zubair against the Allahabad High Court order of June 10 was filed through advocate Satya Mitra.

The petition said it is a "new police strategy for registering FIRs in hate crime cases against the criminals as well as those monitoring and protesting hate crimes." Zubair said that the allegations in the impugned FIR (lodged in Sitapur) even if taken on its face value and if accepted in entirety do not prima facie disclose any offence, and that is a fit ground for quashing of FIR, as has been held in a catena of judgements of the apex court. The appeal sought a stay of the investigation in the Sitapur FIR and direct the UP government not to proceed, prosecute or arrest the petitioner.

## GRAFT CASE

# CBI arrests ED of Power Grid Corporation, five others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** The CBI has arrested a Power Grid Corporation of India's executive director and five officials of Tata Projects, including an executive vice president and an assistant VP, in connection with alleged bribery to favour the private company in contracts and other works, officials said Thursday.

They said the probe agency arrested the accused - PGCIL's B S Jha, and Tata Projects' Executive VP Desh Raj Pathak, Assistant VP R N Singh and its three other officials - after conducting searches at 11 locations Wednesday which continued till Thursday. The CBI recovered Rs 93 lakh from the premises of Jha in Gurugram, they said.

The CBI had received source information about the alleged bribery in electricity projects following which Jha, who was posted in Itanagar, was put under surveillance. During the surveillance, it surfaced that Jha was allegedly receiving bribes from the executives of Tata Projects for granting favours, the officials said. The CBI action followed an FIR against Jha, Pathak and Singh.

The company Tata Projects and its three other officials - Nafeeq Hussain Khan, Randheer Kumar Singh and Sandeep Kumar Dubey - are also named as accused in the FIR.

# Obesity among adults on rise in India, decline in undernourished people: UN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**United Nations, July 7:** The number of undernourished people in India has declined in the last 15 years to 224.3 million in 2019-21, according to a UN report, which also said that there are more obese adults and anaemic women in the world's second most populous country.

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022 report, issued Wednesday by UN agencies Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UNICEF, World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), said that the number of people affected by hunger globally rose to as many as 828 million in 2021, an increase of about 46 million since 2020 and 150 million since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report said that in India, the number of undernourished people declined to 224.3 million in 2019-21 from 247.8 million in 2004-06.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

It said that the number of children under 5 years of age who are stunted declined to 36.1 million in 2020 from 52.3 million in 2012, the number of children under five years of age who are overweight declined to 2.2 million in 2020 from three million in 2012.

The report added that the number of children up to 5 months of age exclusively breastfed touched

14 million in 2020 from 11.2 million in 2012.

In percentage terms, the prevalence of undernourishment in the total population in India stood at 21.6 per cent in 2004-06 and declined to 16.3 per cent in 2019-21, the prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years of age declined to 30.9 per cent in 2020 from 41.7 per cent in 2012 and the prevalence of overweight

**THE REPORT SAID THAT IN INDIA, THE NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE DECLINED TO 224.3 MILLION IN 2019-21 FROM 247.8 MILLION IN 2004-06**

children under five years of age was 1.9 per cent in 2020 from 2.4 per cent in 2012. The prevalence of obesity in India's adult population increased to 3.9 per cent in 2016 from 3.1 per cent in 2012 and anaemic women aged 15 to 49 years declined marginally from 53.2 per cent in 2012 to 53 per cent in 2019.

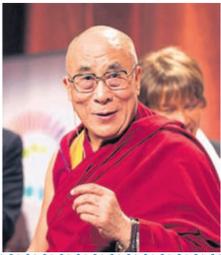
India and Indonesia, for example, provide substantial subsidies to final consumers under the Targeted Public Distribution System for grains in India, and the food assistance programme (BPNT) based on electronic vouchers for rice, in Indonesia, it said.

# international



**The moral of the story is: do not seek to destroy Russia. Russia cannot be destroyed. You can break your teeth on it - and then choke on them**  
**MARIA ZAKHAROVA** | THE TOP SPOKESWOMAN IN RUSSIA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

**BIRTHDAY WISH DRAWS IRE**  
China Thursday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for greeting the Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama on his 87th birthday, saying India should stop using Tibet-related issues to interfere in China's internal affairs



# FROM BREXIT TO EXIT

Outgoing Prime Minister Boris Johnson was the Mayor who basked in the glory of hosting the 2012 London Olympics, and the man who led the Conservatives to a thumping election victory on the back of his promise to "get Brexit done" but a list of scandals became the reason behind his fall from grace

Boris Johnson lasted just three years as British Prime Minister. Weakened by scandals, he refused for months to resign but Thursday, he succumbed to the political reality, forced by his own colleagues.

After Theresa May's resignation, Brexit figurehead Johnson was elected head of the Conservative party in July 2019 after a landslide victory over foreign minister Jeremy Hunt. He was appointed Prime Minister by Queen Elizabeth II, promising a swift exit from the European Union.

Johnson won an 80-seat majority in a December 2019 general election, allowing him to ram his Brexit divorce deal through Parliament. January 31, 2020, three-and-a-half years after the referendum, the UK formally left the European Union.

As coronavirus spread across the globe, Johnson announced a UK-wide lockdown March 23. Four days later, he confirmed that he has tested positive himself and was suffering mild symptoms of Covid.

Johnson was repeatedly criticised for his government's response to the pandemic, including being slow to react, and accusations mounted that he has lied to Parliament at various stages.

Johnson's Conservatives gained ground against the main opposition Labour party in by-elections, including taking the historic Labour stronghold of Hartlepool in north-east England.

In early December, revelations emerged about several illegal parties held in Downing Street during successive coronavirus lockdowns. An angry public, many



It is clearly now the will of the parliamentary Conservative Party that there should be a new leader of that party and therefore a new Prime Minister  
**BORIS JOHNSON**

deprived of seeing sick and dying loved ones due to social distancing restrictions, accused him of double standards.

Johnson survived a vote of no confidence from his own MPs June 6,

called by rebels fed up with "Partygate" revelations and controversies such as the Paterson case. Finance minister Rishi Sunak and health secretary Sajid Javid decided they have had enough of de-

fending the scandals and gave their resignation July 5. Dozens of junior ministers, ministerial aides and other Cabinet ministers followed suit, telling Johnson his position is untenable.

## Frontrunners for premiership

Boris Johnson announcement to resign as Britain's Prime Minister Thursday, brought an end to a turbulent two and half years in Downing Street and triggering a search for a new leader. Below is a summary of some of those who could be in the frame to replace him. However, there is no clear favourite and they are not listed in order of likely prospects



**Rishi Sunak**  
Sunak, who resigned as finance minister Tuesday saying the British public "rightly expect government to be conducted properly, competently and seriously", was until last year the favourite to succeed Johnson. But he later faced criticism for not giving enough cost-of-living support to households. Revelations about his wealthy wife's non-domiciled tax status and a fine he received, along with Johnson, for breaking Covid lockdown rules have damaged his standing.



**Liz Truss**  
The foreign secretary is the darling of the ruling Conservative Party's grassroots and has a carefully cultivated public image. The 46-year-old spent the first two years of Johnson's premiership as international trade secretary, championing Brexit, and last year was appointed as Britain's lead negotiator with the European Union.



**Jeremy Hunt**  
The former foreign secretary, 55, finished second to Johnson in the 2019 leadership contest. He would offer a more serious and less controversial style of leadership after the turmoil of Johnson's premiership. Over the last two years, Hunt has used his experience as a former health secretary to chair parliament's health select committee and has not been tarnished by having served in the current government.



**Ben Wallace**  
Defence minister Ben Wallace, 52, has risen in recent months to be the most popular member of the government with Conservative Party members, according to Conservative Home, thanks to his handling of the Ukraine crisis. He began his political career as a member of Scotland's devolved assembly in May 1999.



**Sajid Javid**  
Javid was the first cabinet minister to resign in protest over accusations that Johnson misled the public over what he knew about sexual harassment allegations against a Conservative lawmaker. The son of Pakistani Muslim immigrant parents, he finished fourth in the 2019 leadership contest to replace former Prime Minister Theresa May.



**Nadhim Zahawi**  
The newly appointed finance minister impressed as vaccines minister when Britain had one of the world's fastest rollouts of Covid jabs. Zahawi's personal story as a former refugee from Iraq who came to Britain as a child set him apart from other contenders. Zahawi said last week that it would be a "privilege" to be Prime Minister at some stage.

### WHAT THEY SAID

**It is good news for the country that Boris Johnson has resigned as Prime Minister. But it should have happened long ago. He was always unfit for office. He has been responsible for lies, scandal and fraud on an industrial scale**  
**KEIR STARMER** | LEADER OF OPPOSITION, LABOUR PARTY

**From our point of view, the political developments do not change our position on the (Northern Ireland) protocol or the way in which we work with our British counterparts on Northern Ireland**  
**EUROPEAN COMMISSION SPOKESPERSON**

**He doesn't like us, we don't like him either**  
**DMITRY PESKOV** | SPOKESMAN, KREMLIN

### SCANDALOUS TENURE

Below are some of the scandals that have hurt Boris Johnson politically.

#### The Pincher affair

Mass resignations from the government this week followed accusations by a senior former civil servant that Johnson's office gave false information about past sexual harassment allegations against lawmaker Christopher Pincher. In February, Johnson appointed Pincher deputy chief whip, giving him responsibility for the wellbeing of other Conservative lawmakers. Last week, Pincher was suspended from the party after acknowledging he had made other people uncomfortable during a drunken night out. It subsequently emerged that Pincher had been the subject of past sexual harassment allegations. Johnson's office initially said the prime minister had been unaware of specific past allegations against Pincher. However, Monday, senior former civil servant Simon McDonald wrote a letter saying he had investigated the allegations in

#### Partygate

The term 'Partygate' was coined to refer to a scandal over parties held in government, including in Johnson's own Downing Street office, which were found to have violated strict Covid-19 lockdown rules. Johnson himself was fined by police for attending a birthday party, and was forced to apologise to Queen Elizabeth after it emerged staff had partied in Downing Street on the eve of her husband Prince Philip's funeral in April 2021. A report by a senior civil servant gave a damning account on a series of illegal lockdown parties, detailing instances of staff's excessive alcohol consumption and vomiting.

#### Other sex scandals

Johnson's Conservatives have been hit by other scandals of lawmakers accused of sexual improprieties, including two that led to lawmakers resigning. In both cases, the Conservatives lost special elections held last month to replace them. Conservative lawmaker Imran Ahmad

2019 and had upheld the complaints. Khan resigned after being found guilty of having sexually abused a 15-year-old boy. Neil Parish, another lawmaker, resigned after admitting he watched pornography on his phone in the House of Commons twice, in "a moment of madness".

#### Owen Paterson affair

Last year, parliament's standards committee recommended suspending Conservative lawmaker and former minister Owen Paterson for 30 days after finding he had committed an "egregious case of paid advocacy" by lobbying on behalf of companies that paid him. After damaging headlines, Paterson resigned and the government abandoned the proposed changes. The Conservatives lost the election to fill Paterson's seat.

#### Refurbishment probe

After a refurbishment of Johnson's Downing Street flat - led by a celebrity designer and including gold wallpaper - Britain's electoral commission fined the Conservatives 17,800 pounds for failing to accurately report a donation to pay for it.

## Ukraine raises flag on recaptured island

**Kyiv, July 7:** Ukrainian forces raised their national flag on a recaptured Black Sea island Thursday in a symbol of defiance against Moscow, but Russian forces consolidated gains in eastern Ukraine and probed the defences of potential new targets. Moscow responded to the flag-raising ceremony fast. It said one of its warplanes had struck Snake Island shortly afterwards and destroyed part of the Ukrainian detachment there. The tiny island, located about 140 km (90 miles) south of the Ukrainian port of Odesa, is strategically important as it guards sea lanes. Russia abandoned it at the end of June in what it said was a gesture of goodwill - a victory for Ukraine that Kyiv hoped could loosen Moscow's blockade of Ukrainian ports. Images released by Ukraine's interior ministry on Thursday showed three Ukrainian soldiers raising the blue and yellow national flag on a patch of ground on Snake Island next to the remains of a flattened building. "Glory to Ukrainian soldiers," the ministry said on Twitter. Andriy Yermak, the Ukrainian president's chief of staff, suggested the moment was one that would be repeated across Ukraine in the coming months. "The flag of Ukraine is on Snake Island. Ahead of us are many more such videos from Ukrainian cities that are currently under temporary occupation," he wrote on Telegram. Russia's missile strike on the island's new residents had caused significant damage to its dock, Odesa regional administration spokesman Serhiy Bratchuk said.

## CHINA LASHES OUT AT US

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian's comments came a day after the head of the FBI and the leader of Britain's domestic intelligence agency raised fresh alarms about the Chinese government, warning business leaders that Beijing is determined to steal their technology for competitive gain



threats to the international order. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian's comments came a day after the head of the FBI and the leader of Britain's domestic intelligence agency raised fresh alarms about the Chinese government, warning business leaders that Beijing is determined to steal their technology for competitive gain. The heightened tone comes ahead of a meeting Saturday between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Chinese Foreign Minister

Wang Yi at the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations' ministers' summit in Bali, Indonesia. The relevant US politician has been playing up the so-called China threat to smear and attack China, Zhao told reporters at a daily briefing when asked about FBI Director Christopher Wray's comments reaffirming longstanding concerns in denouncing economic espionage and hacking operations by China as well as the Chinese government's efforts to stifle dissent abroad.



A bolt strikes near Moscow State University building during a thunderstorm in Moscow

## Inspired by Ukraine, Taiwan citizens study urban warfare

**New Taipei City, July 7:** Dressed in military camouflage with an assault rifle at the ready, "Prof" Yeh peers from behind a vehicle in a parking lot outside Taipei, scanning his surroundings and waiting for a signal to advance. Yeh actually works in marketing, and his weapon is a replica - but he is spending the weekend attending an urban warfare workshop to prepare for what he sees as the very real threat of a Chinese invasion. "The Russia-Ukraine war is a big reason why I came to this workshop," 47-year-old Yeh, whose call sign during training is "Prof",

tells AFP during a break between sessions. When Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops to invade Ukraine at the end of February, he gave shape to the darkest fears of many Taiwanese. The self-governed democracy lives under constant threat from authoritarian China, which views the island as part of its territory and has pledged to take it one day. But the war in Ukraine has also inspired Yeh. The resilience of Ukrainian forces has given him hope that with the right tactics, Taiwan too might have a chance defending itself against its much mightier neighbour. He is not alone - the organisers of the urban com-



bat course say their students have nearly quadrupled since February. Firearms and first aid courses have also seen increased enrolment. "Sense of crisis" Disquiet over China was brew-

ing in Taiwan long before the Russian invasion. Max Chiang, CEO of the company that organises the workshops, says there has been "a heightened sense of crisis" among Taiwanese people since 2020, when Chinese warplanes began making regular incursions into the island's air identification zone. Roughly 380 sorties were recorded that year - a number that more than doubled in 2021, and is on track to do so again this year, according to an AFP database. China comprehensively outnumbered Taiwan militarily, with over one million ground force personnel to Taiwan's 88,000, 6,300 tanks compared with 800, and 1,600

fighter jets to 400, according to the US Department of Defence. But Ukraine has provided a practical blueprint for how to make that disparity matter less. It has vividly demonstrated how fighting for control of cities can be difficult and costly for attacking forces - and most of Taiwan's 23 million people live in urban areas. As Yeh and his 15 teammates run in staggered column formation across the parking lot, stooping behind dilapidated buildings and vehicles to simulate attacks on enemy positions, they are trying to put some of the lessons learned in Ukraine's devastated cities into practice.



**We started with a very high threshold and soon we are going to have all taxpayers with an annual turnover of more than ₹5 crore having to generate e-invoices for their B2B part of business**

**VIVEK JOHRI** | CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES AND CUSTOMS

## GOPINATH BREAKS ANOTHER TREND

Gita Gopinath created history after becoming the first woman to serve as the chief of International Monetary Fund. She has broken another glass ceiling, she shared a post on social media where Gopinath can be seen posing alongside her framed picture on the wall of former Chief Economists of the IMF



## of the day quote

I would like the NITI Aayog to map all this (industrial corridors, freight corridors, defence corridors, manufacturing zones, textile parks, logistics parks, medical and pharma hubs). Map it all and tell us where you see a possibility for bringing them under the PM Gati Shakti

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN** | FINANCE MINISTER

From practically nowhere, we have reached \$76 billion industry in electronics manufacturing today, and this is having a double-digit growth

**ASHWINI VAISHNAW** | IT MINISTER

The company has planned a capex of over ₹75,000 crore in next 5 years in renewable

**NATARAJAN CHANDRASEKARAN** | CHAIRMAN, TATA POWER

# Can't rule out possible global recession: IMF chief

*IMF head flagged a more universal spread of inflation, more substantial interest rate hikes and a slowdown in China's economic growth because of escalating sanctions related to Russia's war in Ukraine*

REUTERS

**Washington, July 7:** The head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Wednesday said the outlook for the global economy had "darkened significantly" since April and she could not rule out a possible global recession next year given the elevated risks.

**IMF Managing Director**

Kristalina Georgieva told Reuters the fund would downgrade in coming weeks its 2022 forecast for 3.6% global economic growth for the third time this year, adding that IMF economists were still finalizing the new numbers.

The IMF is expected to release its updated forecast for 2022 and 2023 in late July, after slashing its fore-



**The outlook since our last update in April has darkened significantly. We are in very choppy waters. It's going to be a tough '22, but maybe even a tougher 2023. Recession risks will increase in 2023**

**KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA** | MANAGING DIRECTOR, IMF

cast by nearly a full percentage point in April. The global economy expanded by 6.1% in 2021.

Asked if she could rule out a global recession, she said, "The

risks has gone up so we cannot rule it out." Recent economic data showed some large economies, including those of China and Russia, had contracted in the second quar-

ters, she said, noting the risks were even higher in 2023.

Georgieva said a longer-lasting tightening of financial conditions would complicate the global economic outlook, but added it was crucial to get surging prices under control.

"The global outlook was more heterogeneous now than just two years ago, with energy exporters, including the United States, on a better footing, while importers were struggling," she said.

Slower economic growth may be a "necessary price to pay" given the urgent and pressing need to restore price stability, she said.

## FinMin pegs \$ value at ₹79.90 for import duty calculation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** The Finance Ministry Thursday pegged the exchange rate for dollar at ₹79.90 for calculation of import duty with effect from July 8, as against ₹78.95 a fortnight ago.

The sharp revision is due to depreciation of rupee against dollar following outflow of capital caused by various external factors, including the hardening of interest rate globally.

Similarly, in case of pound sterling, the value has been fixed at ₹96.10 as compared to ₹96.70 earlier, according to a finance ministry statement.

As regards euro, the conversion rate for calculating taxes on imported goods has been fixed at ₹82.15 as compared to ₹83.10 June 16, it said.

The sharp revision in exchange rates comes in the backdrop of the rupee depreciating by 4.1 per cent against the US dollar during the current financial year so far (up to July 5). However, it is modest relative to other EMEs and even major advanced economies.

Since the war in Ukraine broke out in late February, RBI has expanded its foreign exchange reserves in order to shield the rupee from steep depreciation. Since February 25, the headline foreign exchange reserves have declined by \$40.94 billion.

## TAX EVASION

# Vivo remitted 50% of its turnover to China

*The action is being seen as part of the Union government's steps to tighten checks on Chinese entities and the continued crackdown on such firms and their linked Indian operatives that are allegedly indulging in serious financial crimes like money laundering and tax evasion while operating here*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** A whopping ₹62.476 crore has been "illegally" transferred by smartphone maker Vivo to China in order to avoid payment of taxes in India, the Enforcement Directorate said Thursday, as it claimed to have busted a major money laundering racket involving Chinese nationals and multiple Indian companies.



ED seized funds worth ₹465 crore kept in 119 bank accounts by various entities involved in the case, ₹73 lakh cash and 2 kg gold bars

This money is almost half of Vivo's turnover of ₹1,25,185 crore, it said without stating the time period of the transaction.

The crackdown on the leading Chinese company came after the federal probe agency found that three Chinese nationals, all of whom "left" India during 2018-21, and one other person from that country incorporated as many as 23 companies in India in which they were also helped by a Chartered Accountant, Nitin Garg.

Among the foreigners, one identified as Bin Lou was an ex-director of Vivo and, according to the ED, he left India in April, 2018. Two others -- Zhengshen Ou and Zhang Jie -- left the country in 2021, it said.

"These (23) companies are found to have transferred huge amounts of funds to Vivo India. Further, out of the total sale proceeds of ₹1,25,185 crore, Vivo India remitted ₹62,476 crore or almost 50 per cent of the turnover out of India, mainly to China," the ED said in a statement.

These remittances, it added, were made in order to "disclose huge losses in Indian incorporated companies to avoid payment of taxes in India."

Vivo had said Tuesday that "as a responsible corporate, we are committed to be fully compliant with laws."

The agency said while it followed "all due procedures as per law" during the raids conducted under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), it alleged "employees of Vivo India, including some Chinese nationals, did not cooperate with the search proceedings and tried to abscond, remove and hide digital devices which were retrieved by the search teams."

## India's probes on firms hurt business confidence: China

**Mumbai:** Multiple investigations by Indian enforcement agencies into Chinese companies are damaging the confidence of foreign entities investing and operating in the country, China's embassy in the South Asian nation has said. Many Chinese firms have struggled to do business in India after political tension surged following a border clash in 2020. India has cited security concerns in banning more than 300 Chinese apps since, and toughened rules on Chinese investment. Wednesday's comments by the embassy follow raids this week by a financial crime fighting agency, the Enforcement Directorate, targeting smartphone maker Vivo, owned by China's BBK Electronics, in a money laundering investigation. Such frequent investigation "impedes the improvement of business environment in India and chills the confidence and willingness of market entities from other countries, including Chinese enterprises to invest and operate in India," the embassy said in a statement.

## FM urges PSBs to ensure credit flow to KCC holders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Thursday urged public sector banks (PSBs) to ensure smooth flow of credit to Kisan Credit Card (KCC) holders to boost rural incomes.

During the half-day long meeting with the CEOs of public sector banks, she also asked them to help Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in technology improvement.

After the meeting, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and

Dairying Parshottam Rupala said the finance minister reviewed the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme and discussed how institutional credit can be made available to the segment.

"The meeting was presided over by the finance minister and the issuance of Kisan Credit Card to all those engaged in fishing and dairying sector was discussed. In another session on Regional Rural Banks, it was decided that the sponsor bank should help them in digitalisation and technology im-

**Banks were asked to expedite non-performing assets resolution and focus on recovery of bad loans**

provement," Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat K Karad said.

RRBs, which play an important role in agriculture credit, are sponsored by public sector banks (PSBs). Currently, the Centre holds 50 per cent in RRBs, while 35 per cent

and 15 per cent are with the concerned sponsor banks and state governments, respectively.

Of the 43 RRBs, about one-third, especially from north-eastern and eastern regions, are in losses and they need funds to meet regulatory capital requirements of 9 per cent, sources said.

These banks were formed under the RRB Act, 1976 with an objective to provide credit and other facilities to small farmers, agricultural labourers and artisans in rural areas.



All India Punjab National Bank Officers' Association (AIPNBOA) releases third booklet on occasion of farewell to its outgoing employees

# China's share in India's total imports falls in 2021-22

**SOURCES SAID THE MAJOR ITEMS IMPORTED FROM CHINA INTO INDIA ARE USED FOR MEETING THE DEMAND OF SECTORS LIKE TELECOM AND POWER**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** The share of Chinese imports in the country's total inbound shipments has declined to 15.4 per cent in 2021-22 from 16.5 per cent in 2020-21, sources said Thursday.

Citing some examples, they said imports like Active Pharmaceutical

Ingredients (APIs) and drug formulations provide Indian pharma industry raw material for producing finished goods which are also exported.

Increase in imports of information and communication technology products and medical and scientific instruments can be attributed to the surge in demand of



these products during Covid-19 times. "Moreover, the rising prices

of commodities globally have also played a significant role in adding

Exports to China increased marginally to \$21.25bn last fiscal from \$21.18bn, while imports rose to \$94.16bn from about \$65.21bn in 2020-21

India's exports to China at \$21.2bn in 2021-22 were its third highest, after the US and UAE. Exports to the neighbouring country stood at \$11.9 billion in 2014-15

Further, sources stated that imports of mobile phones from China dropped by 55 per cent to \$626 million in 2021-22, from \$1.4 billion in 2020-21.

"Technical regulations have been framed for several products for maintenance of standards/quality of imported products. This will check import of sub-standard products from any country, including China," a source said.

from about \$65.21 billion in 2020-21.

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# Hampered RAFA reaches semifinals



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Wimbledon, July 6:** Wincing from abdominal pain, unable to ply his customary relentless style of tennis, Rafael Nadal thought he might need to stop playing in the Wimbledon quarterfinals against Fritz.

Up in the Centre Court stands, Nadal's father was waving his arms, motioning to the 22-time Grand Slam champion to quit. Not surprisingly, perhaps, he didn't listen. Nadal stayed out there, adjusted his service motion and his strategy — and figured out a way to win.

With much of the crowd roaring and standing after Nadal's best strokes, he twice erased one-set deficits against the 11th-seeded Fritz and emerged with 3-6, 7-5, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6(10-4) victory Wednesday to reach his eighth semifinal at the All England Club.

"For a lot of moments," Nadal said, "I was thinking, maybe I will not be able to finish the match." He did complete it, but said he couldn't be sure whether he will be able to play Friday against Nick Kyrgios, a 27-year-old Australian who earned his Grand Slam semifinal debut with a 6-4, 6-3, 7-6(10-5) victory over Cristian Garin of Chile.

## Nadal 'has a 7mm tear' to his stomach

**Wimbledon:** Rafael Nadal practiced at Wimbledon after arriving more than an hour later than his scheduled slot amid fears he may have to withdraw from his semifinal against Nick Kyrgios through injury — although the Spanish star has reportedly vowed to play the match. 'Marca' — a Spanish newspaper — has reported Nadal has a 7mm tear in one of his abdominal muscles but is still hoping to face Kyrgios in their mouth-watering clash Friday. He mainly hit groundstrokes and not served at full power, which Spanish media have reported has been the case in practice for most of the week.



The other men's semifinal is Novak Djokovic against Cam Norrie. The women's semifinals Thursday are 2019 champion Simona Halep against Elena Rybakina, and Ons Jabeur against Tatjana Maria. Halep eliminated Amanda Anisimova 6-2, 6-4, and Rybakina defeated Ajla Tomljanovic 4-6, 6-2, 6-3.

Nadal got to his 38th career major semifinal by denying what would have been a first such appearance for Fritz, who beat Nadal in the hard-court final at Indian Wells, California, in March. That ended a 20-match winning streak for Nadal, who was bothered that day by a painful rib injury.

This time, the problem was a muscle in his stomach area, which had some athletic tape. Nadal left the court with a trainer for a medical timeout while up 4-3 in the second set; Fritz paced around the baseline, waiting. A doctor gave Nadal some pills; the trainer tried to relax the muscle.

When action resumed, Nadal clearly was compromised. It was hard not to think: Might he give up? Nadal acknowledged that went through his mind. Fritz did, too.

Fritz pretty much handed over the second set of what would become a 4-hour, 21-minute contest under a sky of slate clouds. After Fritz took the third set, his big serve got broken three times in the next.

Nadal occasionally would watch a ball off Fritz's orange racket fly by. Nadal couldn't move the way he usually does. His trademark grunts of "Uhhhh" were rare.

He didn't generate the usual zip on his serves, which dipped from a high of 120 mph to barely above 100 mph. He sought to end exchanges with a quick-strike forehand or a drop shot — sometimes with success, often not.

Still, he summoned his best for last, grabbing a 5-0 lead in the closing tie-breaker — the first-to-10, win-by-two format starting at 6-all in a fifth set is new to Wimbledon this year — and then five of the last six points.

Nadal extended his unbeaten mark in 2022 Grand Slam matches to 19-0 as he seeks to add a trophy at Wimbledon to his triumphs at the Australian Open in January and French Open in June. For everything he's accomplished, the 36-year-old Spaniard never has won the first three Slam titles of a season.

Nadal, who won Wimbledon in 2008 and 2010, leads Kyrgios 6-3 head-to-head; they are 1-all at Wimbledon. In 2014, Kyrgios, then just 19 and ranked 144th, announced himself to the world by winning; in 2019, Nadal took the rematch after Kyrgios was at a local pub into the wee hours the night before.

# Sania bids adieu to Wimbledon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Wimbledon, July 7:** Trailblazing Indian tennis star Sania Mirza's swansong appearance at Wimbledon ended in a semi-final defeat to defending champions Neal Skupski and Desirae Krawczyk in the mixed doubles event here.

Mirza and her Croatian partner Mate Pavic, seeded sixth, went down 6-4, 5-7, 4-6 to Skupski and Krawczyk in two hours 16 minutes Wednesday night.

The 35-year-old Mirza is India's most accomplished woman tennis player, having won six Grand Slam titles, including three mixed doubles trophies. She was aiming to complete a Career Slam in mixed doubles.

She had won the mixed doubles titles at the 2009 Australian Open and the 2012 French Open with Mahesh Bhupathi and the 2014 US Open with Brazilian Bruno Soares.

"The tears, fight and the struggle. The work we put in is all worth it in the end. It wasn't meant to be this time at Wimbledon but you have been nothing but spectacular it's been an honor to play here and win here over the last 20 years. I will miss you Until we meet again,"



Mirza tweeted Thursday.

Mirza and Pavic, both multiple-time Grand Slam winners, dominated the first set on the back of a strong serve. Mirza, who is in her last year on tour, and Pavic looked on course to sealing the match as they led 4-2 in the second set but the duo lost five of the next six games as Skupski and Krawczyk, seeded second, forced the decider.

In the decider, Mirza and Pavic drew first blood as they broke their opponent's serve but were immediately broken back. In the 12th

game, Pavic double faulted twice with Skupski and Krawczyk converting the match point. This is Mirza's best mixed doubles performance at the All England Club. She had previously reached the quarterfinals in 2011, 2013 and 2015.

Mirza, a six-time Grand Slam winner, had earlier announced that she would hang up her racket at the conclusion of the 2022 season.

The 35-year-old Indian star has now bid farewell to Wimbledon having won a women's doubles title in 2015, pairing Martina Hingis.

# KAUR, VASTRAKAR LIFT INDIA

India women complete ODI series clean-sweep with a dominating 39-run victory over Sri Lanka eves in the third match

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Pallekele, July 7:** Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (75, 88b, 7x4, 2x6; 1/21) and Pooja Vastrakar (56 n o, 65b, 3x6; 2/33) produced solid all-round performances as Indian women cantered to a 39-run victory over a clueless Sri Lanka in the final ODI Thursday to complete a 3-0 rout.

Harmanpreet and Vastrakar first bailed the team out with a 97-run seventh wicket stand that ensured a decent total of 255/9 for the visitors. The bowlers then executed the plans perfectly to shot out the hosts for 216 in 47.3 overs with both Harmanpreet and Vastrakar chipping in with crucial breakthroughs.

With this series win, the Indian women clinched their fourth consecutive bilateral series victory against the island nation. The women's side had earlier won ODI series in 2013, 2015, and 2018.

Having already sealed a series win, Harmanpreet's unit came into the final game as a confident bunch, something which the Lankans distinctly lacked from the very onset.

With nothing to lose, Sri Lankan skipper Chamari Athapaththu won the toss and sent the Indians to bat on a surface that is mostly known to favour teams batting first.

Buoyed by the outstanding performances in the second ODI, openers Shafali Verma (49, 50b, 5x4) and Smriti Mandhana (6), however, failed to make a big impact.

With Shafali departing at a crucial juncture, India suddenly had a middle-order collapse as they were left tottering at 124/6 before Harmanpreet turned the tables around in style.

The Indian skipper batted with a lot of responsibility throughout her innings and made the best of the short balls deployed by the Lankan bowlers.

Harmanpreet completed her fifty with a brilliant six over deep mid-wicket region, as she got low and clobbered a floated delivery from off-spinner Oshadi Ranasinghe to clear the boundary for a maximum.

While Harmanpreet played the captain's knock, Vastrakar played the role of a perfect second fiddle, courtesy three free-flowing sixes to hit her second fifty in women's ODI.

When Sri Lanka started the chase, skipper Athapaththu (44, 41b, 8x4) and Hasini Perera (39, 57b, 3x4) did show positive intent adding 56 for the second wicket but things went downhill after the home team skipper was dismissed. Nilakshi de Silva (48 n o, 59b, 2x4, 1x6) tried her best but couldn't find an ally.

They found Rajeshwari Gayakwad (3/36) difficult to get away while most of the bowlers kept the home team under tight leash.

### BRIEF SCORES

**India Women 255/9** (Harmanpreet Kaur 75, Pooja Vastrakar 56, Shafali Verma 49, Yastika Bhatia 30; Inoka Ranaweera 2/22) beat Sri Lanka Women 216 (Nilakshi de Silva 48 n o, Chamari Athapaththu 44, Hasini Perera 39; Rajeshwari Gayakwad 3/36, Meghna Singh 2/32, Pooja Vastrakar 2/33) by 39 runs.



Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur raises her bat after scoring half century, while Pooja Vastrakar looks on, Thursday

# Sindhu, Prannoy sail into last eight stage



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kuala Lumpur, July 7:** India's two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and compatriot HS Prannoy cruised to the quarterfinals of the Malaysia Masters with straight-game wins here Thursday.

Sindhu, who is seeded seventh, made short work of the World No.32 China's Zhang Yi Man 21-12, 21-10 in just 28 minutes in the women's singles second round clash.

However, a tough contest awaits the former World Champion, currently ranked seventh in the world, as she will cross swords with her nemesis Tai Tzu Yung of Chinese Taipei in the last eight.

Sindhu has a dismal 5-16 head-to-head record against the World No.2, who had also beaten the Indian in the quarterfinals of the Malaysia Open last week.

In the men's singles contest, Prannoy eked out a 21-19, 21-16 Wang Tzu Wei of Chinese Taipei to book a quarterfinal against Japan's Kanta Tsuneyama.

However, B Sai Praneeeth and former Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap bowed out of the competition. While Paneeth lost to Li She Feng of China 14-21, 17-21 in 42 minutes, Kashyap was dispatched 10-21, 15-21 by sixth seed Indonesian Anthony Sinisuka Ginting.

# Kohli 'asks' for rest against WI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Star batter Virat Kohli himself asked for rest from the entire series against the West Indies, including the five T20Is, according to sources in the BCCI.

It is also understood that the T20 squad for the tour of West Indies will be announced July 11, one day after the shortest format series against England concludes.

"It was team management's decision to rest Kohli, Rishabh Pant, Hardik Pandya, Jasprit Bumrah for the ODI series along with skipper himself," a senior BCCI source in the know of things told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The five-match T20 series starts July 29 in Tarouba, Trinidad followed by couple of matches in St Kitts (Aug 1 and 2) and it concludes in Florida August 6 and 7 respectively.

"However for the T20I series, all others are playing but Kohli has himself asked for a break. He has informed that he will be available for all series after the West Indies tour," the source informed.

It is understood that senior off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will be recalled for the T20 series in the Caribbean and the USA leg.

While Kohli will get his break as he has sought but his place in the



national T20 squad for the next big international assignment (Asia Cup in Sri Lanka) will depend on his T20 form in the two games that he will play against England.

In between, India are expected to play a short T20 series in Zimbabwe and just like in Ireland, a second string team is supposed

to travel to the African nation.

KL Rahul is expected to be fit before the Asia Cup but if he recovers in time for the Zimbabwe tour, he will be part of that short series. Deepak Chahar, who is recovering from a hamstring and back injury, is expected to be fit for Asia Cup starting August 27.

# 215-member contingent announced for 2022 CWG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 15:** India Thursday announced a 215-member athlete contingent across 16 disciplines for the Commonwealth Games (CWG) beginning July 28 in Birmingham.

On the sidelines of the send off-ceremony for the CWG bound athletes, IOA acting president Anil Khanna called it a 'gender-neutral contingent' with 108 men and 107 women being part of the touring party.

The overall contingent count stands at 322 including 72 team officials, 26 extra officials, nine contingent staff, including three general managers. Discipline-wise, the biggest contingent is of athletics and hockey (36 entries each).

India will also take part in women's cricket, which is making its CWG debut, aquatics, badminton, table tennis, boxing, cycling, gymnastics, triathlon, wrestling, weightlifting, lawn bowls, squash, judo and para sports.

India has only won 28 medals in athletics in CWG history but world championship medal winning long jumper Anju Bobby George is expecting a rich haul of at least seven medals this time

with Neeraj Chopra expected to win gold in javelin. Chopra is also likely to be India's flag-bearer at the opening ceremony.

Onkar Singh was Indian Olympic Association's first choice for the chef de mission role but he requested the acting president Anil Khanna to consider someone else as he is not ready to take up the responsibility due to health issues.

The IOA has now chosen Bhandari, who was earlier named one of the three general managers of the contingent, for the role.

Maninder Singh, Onkar Singh's son, has been added to the contingent as the third general manager in place of Bhandari. The other two general managers are Prashant Kushwaha and Anil Dhupar. Bibhu Kalyan Nayak has been appointed doctor.

### CASH REWARDS

Mehta also announced that IOA will be rewarding CWG gold medalist with Rs 20 lakh, Rs 10 lakh for silver and Rs 7.5 lakh for bronze winner. The send off ceremony was attended by Sports Minister Anurag Thakur, who also reviewed India's preparations for CWG in a Mission Olympic Cell meeting held before the function.