



BHUMI'S ADMIRATION

Actor Bhumi Pednekar says she fangirls all strong women and derives strength from them

LEISURE P2



EOW NABS EX-BANKER

The EOW arrests former manager of a PNB branch in city from New Delhi over loan fraud

DOWNTOWN P4



JUNTA EXECUTES ACTIVISTS

Myanmar's ruling military executes four democracy activists accused of helping to carry out "terror acts"

INTERNATIONAL P10



RAISINA RENDEZVOUS

Droupadi Murmu, the new Commander-in-chief of the armed forces inspects her first tri-services guard of honour in the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, Monday

Proof that poor too can dream: Murmu

I have got the opportunity to rise from serving as a ward councillor to becoming the President of India. This is the greatness of India, the mother of democracy

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT OF INDIA

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 25: Her election is proof the poor can dream and fulfil those dreams too, India's 15th President and its first tribal Head of State Droupadi Murmu said after taking oath of office Monday, a landmark day that melded tradition with the aspirations of a modern nation.

President Murmu, who is the second woman in the top constitutional post, succeeds Ram Nath Kovind and was sworn in by Chief Justice of India NV Ramana at Parliament's Central Hall.

The tribal leader, India's youngest President at 64 and the first to be born after Independence, took oath of office in the name of god to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law.

"It is the power of India's democracy that a girl born in a poor tribal home could reach the topmost con-



SWORN-IN: CJI NV Ramana (L) administered the oath of office to Droupadi Murmu in the Central Hall of Parliament in New Delhi, Monday

stitutional post," she said in her address, marking her journey from Rairangpur in Mayurbhanj district, one of the most underdeveloped in India, to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Murmu, who began her speech in Hindi with "Johar", a traditional tribal greeting, said, "That I attained the post of President is not my personal achievement. It is the achievement of every poor person in India. My election is proof of the fact that the poor in India can have dreams and fulfil them too."

In her address that lasted a lit-

tle over 18 minutes, she spoke on a gamut of issues, including the poor, tribal communities, sustainable development as well as the government's digital India and 'vocal for local initiatives' and its handling of the Covid pandemic.

As celebrations broke out in several parts of the country, she said she belonged to tribal society and had got the opportunity to rise from serving as a ward councillor to becoming the President of India. **Contd...P4**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



There is some mistake. According to the records you will be running a bar in Goa for the next 13 months

FARMER KILLS SELF OVER LOAN BURDEN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, July 25: A farmer committed suicide by consuming pesticide over outstanding loan burden and lack of money to start farm works, Monday. The deceased was identified as Laiban Bhatra of Putra village under Jeypore Sadar police limits in Koraput.

Sources said, Bhatra was earning his livelihood by tilling his few patch of ancestral land as well as by working as a share-cropper. After finding Bhatra writhing in pain, family members rushed him to Ravanaguda primary health cen-

tre. They later shifted him to the district headquarters hospital in Jeypore after his condition deteriorated. However, he succumbed during treatment despite all the efforts by the doctors.

Police registered a case of unnatural death and sent the body for post-mortem. The deceased's son said that his father had borrowed from the local money lenders to perform the post-death rituals of his grandfather, who died last month. He was left without any money and unable to start farm works. This pushed him to distress and might have forced him to take the extreme step.

4 Cong MPs suspended from LS

As House proceedings were again stalled Monday after the near washout last week, a visibly peeved Speaker had warned them to hold placards outside the House if they wanted to protest against price rise

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 25: Four Congress Lok Sabha members were suspended for the rest of the session Monday after Speaker Om Birla took a stern view of the continuous disruptions by Opposition MPs since the beginning of the Monsoon Session.

Terminating the action against its MPs a blot on democracy, an angry Congress alleged that the government was trying to intimidate it for raising people's issues and said it would not be cowed down.

As the protesting Opposition members again stalled Lok Sabha proceedings Monday after the near washout last week, the Chair named

Congress MPs Manickam Tagore, TN Prathapan, Jothimani and Ramya Haridas.

When members are named, they have to immediately withdraw from the chamber of the House.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi then moved a resolution to suspend the four for the rest of the session. Joshi said that these MPs had shown utter disregard for the authority of the Chair and a serious note of their misconduct had been taken by the House.

Speaking to reporters outside the four suspended MPs along with the House, Congress' deputy leader

in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi said, "The government is trying to intimidate us by suspending our MPs. What was their fault? They were trying to raise the issues which matter to people."

The Congress party will not be cowed down like this, he asserted.

The MPs were holding placards raising the issues of rising prices of gas cylinder, imposition of GST on items such as flour and buttermilk. "We moved an adjournment motion demanding a discussion on these issues, but no discussion was held," he said.



MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	55766.22 ↓ 306.01
NIFTY	16631.00 ↓ 88.50
DOLLAR	80.53 ↓ ₹0.12
EURO	81.53 ↑ ₹0.02
GOLD	₹50,465 ↓ ₹179
SILVER	₹54,324 ↓ ₹807



SHORT TAKES

TOP COURT GRANTS CONDITIONAL BAIL TO JAGADEV

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday granted conditional bail to MLA Prasanta Jagadev, who is accused of ramming a SUV into large crowd at Banpur in March this year which injured 20 people including police personnel. A two-judge bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Vikram Nath granted bail to the MLA with certain conditions. The apex court restricted the MLA from visiting his constituency Chilika for one year. The bench said the MLA will have to take permission from the district Collector to visit Chilika. Jagadev was also barred from addressing any public gathering. The bench said that he can only address a political meeting of maximum five people. The bench also added that the trial court can impose other restrictions if it finds necessary. During the hearing, senior advocate Pinaki Misra appeared in the court for Prasanta Jagadev and contended that it is not appropriate to compare the Chilika incident with the one happened in Lakhimpur Kheri.

12 MORE STEEL PLANTS ON THE ANVIL IN STATE

Bhubaneswar: At least 12 more steel plants will be set up in state with a production capacity of 60 million tonne per annum, Steel and Mines Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallik said Monday. Odisha currently has 51 steel plants with a production capacity of 33.12 mtpa, the minister said. Three new steel facilities will be set up in Sundargarh, two in Jajpur, and one each in Angul, Kendrapada, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, and Jagatsinghpur districts. Two steel firms are yet to decide on the districts from where they would operate, the minister said while replying to a written question of BJD MLA Dhruva Charan Sahoo in the state Assembly. Mallik, however, did not mention the time frame for setting up the units.



CBI busts racket falsely promising governorship, RS seats for ₹100cr

FOUR PERSONS WERE ARRESTED IN THIS CONNECTION WHILE ANOTHER ACCUSED GAVE CBI SLEUTHS THE SLIP

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 25: The CBI has claimed to have busted a multi-state job racket where plum posts like governor of a state and member of Rajya Sabha were allegedly offered by a group of people at a price of ₹100 crore.

The agency had conducted searches at seven locations in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka recently in connection with the case, officials said, adding that four members - Kamalakar Premkumar Bandgar of Maharashtra's Latur, Ravindra Vithal Naik of Karnataka's Belgaum and Delhi-NCR based Mahendra Pal Arora and Abhishek Boora - were arrested.

Another accused, Mohammed Aijaz Khan, escaped during the

search operation after allegedly assaulting CBI officers, they said, adding that a separate FIR was filed against him at the local police station in connection with this.

The agency in its FIR, has named all five accused in connection with the case, the officials said.

A special CBI court, however, has granted bail to all the four people arrested by the agency.

It is alleged that Bandgar, who impersonated a senior CBI officer and flaunted his "connections" with highly placed officials, had asked Boora, Arora, Khan and Naik to bring any sort of work that he could fix in lieu of payment of huge illegal gratification.

They conspired with "the sole ulterior motive of cheating private persons by falsely assuring them of arrangement of seats in Rajya



Sabha, appointment as governor, appointment as chairman in different government-run organisations under central government ministries and departments against huge pecuniary consideration," the FIR alleged.

The agency came to know through its sources that Boora discussed with Bandgar how the latter's purported connections with

high-ranking officials playing "pivotal roles" in appointments could be exploited to get the work done.

It surfaced that the accused were attempting to cheat people by falsely assuring them of candidature for Rajya Sabha against a huge consideration to the tune of ₹100 crore, the FIR stated.

The CBI received information that they would drop names of senior bureaucrats and political functionaries to impress clients approaching them for some work either directly or through middleman like Abhishek Boora, it stated.

It also emerged that Bandgar posed as a senior CBI officer and threatened police officials of various police stations to grant favours to people known to him or to influence investigations of ongoing cases, the FIR alleged.

Musk tells followers to call out WSJ over report on his 'affair'



AGENCIES

San Francisco, July 25: Tesla CEO Elon Musk Monday hit out at the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) for linking him with Google Co-founder Sergey Brin's wife Nicole Shanahan, asking his more than 102 million social media followers to slam the publication for going ahead with a false story.

A Wall Street Journal report claimed Sunday that Musk engaged in a brief affair last fall with the wife of Sergey Brin, prompting the Google Co-founder to file for divorce earlier this year and ending the tech billionaires' long friendship.

Musk told his followers to call them out on it. WSJ is supposed to have a high standard for journalism and, right now, they are way sub-tabloid. WSJ should be running stories that actually matter to their readers and have a solid factual basis, not third-party random hearsay, Musk tweeted.

The Tesla and SpaceX CEO said that character assassination attacks have reached a new level this year, but the articles are all nothing-burgers.

"I work crazy hours, so there just isn't much time for shenanigans. None of the key people involved in these alleged wrongdoings were even interviewed, he posted on another report about Amber Heard's threesome with Musk and Cara Delevingne at actor Johnny Depp's house in 2016, which he has denied.

According to the WSF report, the Musk-Shanahan affair allegedly occurred at the 'Art Basel' event in Miami.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	29.7°C	30.2°C
MIN	23.9°C	24.2°C
Humidity	98%	98%
Rainfall	19mm	20.2mm

Forecast: Light rain likely

leisure



WHEN JLO APPEARS IN HER B'DAY SUIT

On her 53rd birthday, actress-singer Jennifer Lopez treated her fans with an unusual surprise. The *On the Floor* hitmaker shared a nude picture of herself as she launched her 'JLo Beauty'. The said picture was featured in a video campaign shared on Instagram.

IGGY AZALEA SNAPS AT FAN COMMENTING ON HER TWERKING

Rapstress Iggy Azalea has reacted angrily to online comments about her twerking. The *Fancy* hitmaker, who is known for her love to twerk, caught wind of a tweet about her dancing skills which she seemingly found offensive, reports aceshowbiz.com.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

A favourable day as any can be, says Ganesh. You are happy and content with what you have, and you've planned and are working towards what you want. A romantic date may prove interesting or throw up a controversy – decide where you want to take it.

TAURUS

This is one of those days when not goes well, warns Ganesh. No matter how hard you try you may not be able to keep problems and difficulties at bay. You may not be pleased or comfortable doing what has been assigned, or required, and could simply sit sullenly, doing nothing.

GEMINI

Your highly competitive nature will push you to perform better and better. You don't even know what being second best means. Getting in touch with like-minded people will only make your resolve stronger. Your desire to be the best will make you take interest in everything that can help you improve.

CANCER

Your business acquaintances will come forward in the manner that may seem nothing short of some divine intervention. This means that they will virtually save your neck from the guillotine, predicts Ganesh. You will grow wiser in your spending ways, as you will know what to buy and what not to buy.

LEO

Motivating people through your own actions is one way; the other is to let your words do the talking. Both are equally effective, says Ganesh. With a bit of help from the stars, today, it is your words that shall hold more weight than your actions.

VIRGO

In all likelihood, you will be eager to grab the monetary challenges that come your way, as they only enhance your desire for success. You will bring up new ideas and better methods of tackling the challenges on hand. Ganesh gives you an assurance that your present business views will do you a world of good.

LIBRA

Some days you get the carrot, while on others, it is the stick! Today is going to be one of those 'stick' days when it comes to dealing with your seniors, foresees Ganesh. It would be wise to delay auction bids or sealed tenders. Sometimes, waiting patiently is the best policy, especially if you are a job aspirant. Do not expect immediate success.

SCORPIO

You shall follow all things to the dot today. Your approach will be methodical and robotic. It is likely that you shall symbolise the saying, 'Actions speak louder than words'. Your powers of persuasion will help you amass the confidences of many, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

A day of full of caution, warns Ganesh. There are chances that your heart will find its partner, forcing you to fall in love. You may be cupid's next prey. However, watch your steps, as the initial stages of a relationship may be fragile and need to be handled with care.

CAPRICORN

It will be one of those mundane days with nothing remarkable happening on any front. But don't be disheartened, advises Ganesh; planetary movements indicate there may be a change coming soon, most likely a good one. So, perk up and look forward to tomorrow.

AQUARIUS

You do have a way with words and today, you may succeed with your gift of the gab! But Ganesh says that your confused feelings may come in the way of your triumphant achievement. Also, sentiments may lead to a disastrous outcome. Sounds familiar?

PISCES

The fount of your creativity spurts today like there is no tomorrow. For lesser mortals, it takes inspiration, perspiration and a lot of desperation to come up with something creative. You, on the other hand, keenly remember the lessons from your past efforts, and use them today to scale new heights, says Ganesh.



Urvashi asks for help on social media

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela Monday dropped a behind-the-lens video from the sets of her upcoming Pan-India film *The Legend*. Taking to social media, the *Sanam Re* actor captioned the video, 'Pl save meAs an Actress my first PAN Indian film #Thelegend will release on the 28th of July, 2022 worldwide. Need all your love & wishes.' In the video, Urvashi could be seen shooting for an action sequence in an all-black look, as she holds a gun in



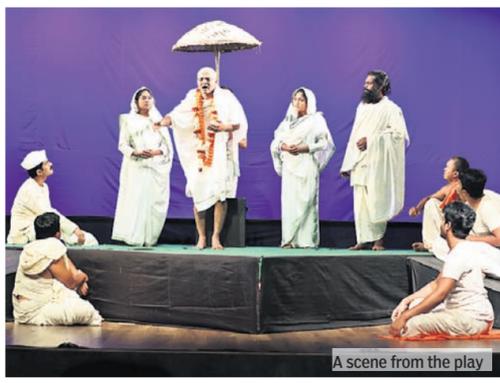
Bhumi fangirls all strong women

Mumbai: After making an unconventional debut with 2015's critically acclaimed film, *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, there has been no looking back for Bhumi Pednekar. She is strong, opinionated and has always broken stereotypes with her on-screen characters. The *Badhai Do* actress, in a recent interview with a portal, spilled beans on the actresses she idolises and her idea of an ideal man. On the actresses she admires, Bhumi said, "There are lots of people whom I admire for sure. I admire Priyanka Chopra. We share our birthdays and I really look up to her. Alia is also an

admire. But the one I truly fangirl is Smita Patil. She might not be with us but when I see her work today, my perspective is so different. I have high regard for Meryl Streep and I also love Zendaya. I fangirl all strong women. I really get strength from them." Asked about her idea on an ideal man, she added "I had an idea of an ideal man when I was younger. But now, all that really doesn't matter to me. I think that will put too much pressure on the man that I am with. The idea is that we both evolve with time and age."

Bharangam-22 concludes with Odia play Gandhinka Odisha

Bhubaneswar: Curtain fell on the 22nd edition of Bharat Rang Mahotsav (Azadi segment), also known as Bharangam, organised by National School of Drama here at KIIT auditorium with the Odia play *Gandhinka Odisha*, Monday. Written by Shankar Tripathy and directed by Nalini Nihar Nayak, the play was presented by New Quest Repertory of Rourkela. It revolved around Mahatma Gandhi's Odisha visit and his fight against superstitions in the society. The play also depicted the story of several freedom fighters from Odisha such as Gopabandhu Das, Madhusudan Das, Harekrushna Mahatab, Nilakantha Das, Rama Devi and their sacrifice. The mega cast of the play included Chimmay Kumar Panda, Umakanta Bisoi, Nihar Ranjan Mishra, Anil Kumar Mallick,



and Subhankar Sahu, who performed on stage. Eminent film maker Himanshu Khatusa, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi secretary Prabodh Rath and Kadambini editor Iti Samanta and Soumyendu Shankar Ray, director of KIIT School of Architecture and Planning were among the guests while NSDIan Samaresh Routray offered vote of thanks. The five-day event was part of the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* campaign launched by the Government of India. PNN

Rahul reacts to Janhvi's secret stalking comment

Mumbai: Janhvi Kapoor recently confessed on Koffee With Karan that she is secretly stalking Rahul Khanna on Instagram. The actor has now reacted to her comments. Rahul feels that it is sweet of her to say that. The *Elaan* actor revealed that he has never met her but knows her father Boney Kapoor very well. He also met her mother Sridevi when she was shooting with his father Vinod Khanna on a film set many years ago. The actor remembered her being a classic introvert and feels that is what connected him with her as he too is an introvert. He feels that wherever the iconic actress is, she'd

be very proud of Janhvi who has turned out to be a sweet and confident girl. Rahul is often in the news for his Instagram photos. He had recently shared a semi-nude photo of himself and the picture had gone viral on the internet. Many celebrities like Malaika Arora, Neha Dhupia and Dia Mirza commented on the photo too. While Malaika wrote, "Nice sofa", Neha Dhupia added, "Nice...socks!" Dia Mirza commented, "Sofaaa so good!" In fact, fashion designer Prabal Gurung tagged Janhvi Kapoor and asked her, "And what do you have to say @JanhviKapoor?". AGENCIES



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

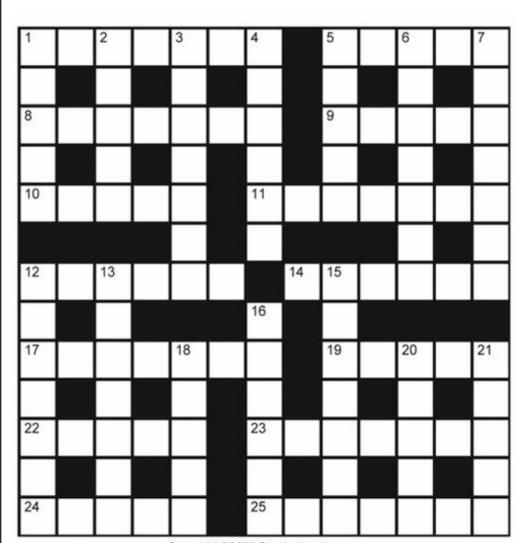


BREVITY



FUN post

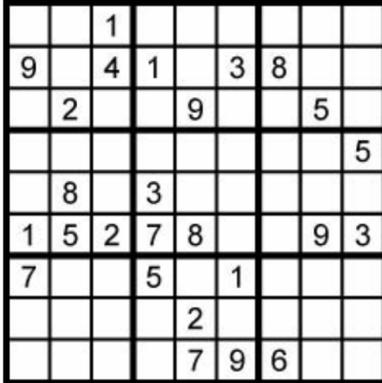
CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2022 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Paving material
 - 5 Stockpile
 - 8 Bolt with the loot
 - 9 Public persona
 - 10 Recipe direction
 - 11 Blown away
 - 12 Fireside
 - 14 Kind of sauce
 - 17 Type of can or man
 - 19 Grocery section
 - 22 Squirrel's stash
 - 23 Pingpong items
 - 24 Short simple song
 - 25 Connoption fit
 - 6 Versus
 - 7 Slight
 - 12 *Allan Quatermain* creator
 - 13 Traveller's destination
 - 15 *Arabian Nights* character
 - 16 Tyrant
 - 18 Needle
 - 20 Kind of panel
 - 21 England's ___ Downs

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



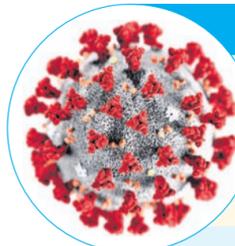
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



RAIN PAIN

Commuters negotiate a waterlogged road in Rasulgarh area of Bhubaneswar after rain lashed the City, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	57,54,30,244	54,52,16,650	64,03,511
India	4,39,05,621	4,32,28,670	5,26,074
Odisha	13,07,249	12,91,669	9,133

State yet to get ₹3,251cr GST compensation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The state government is yet to receive over ₹3,251 crore as part of GST compensation from the Union government, state Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari told the state Assembly, Monday.

In a written reply to a question asked by BJD member Debesh Acharya, Pujari said the Centre is yet to release GST compensation of ₹1,167.50 crore due for the financial year 2021-22 and ₹2,084.03 crore for the first three months of the current fiscal.

GST has been introduced in the state with effect from July 1, 2017 subsuming state taxes like VAT, entry tax, entertainment tax, forest development tax and central taxes such as central excise duty, service tax, CST and other taxes.

As per the provisions made in the Constitution, the states are to be compensated for any loss on account of the introduction of GST for a period of 5 years which ended June 30, 2022, Pujari added.

Uproar in House over seizure of govt property by pvt firm

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The state Assembly Monday witnessed a pandemonium as opposition BJP and Congress stalled the House proceedings over seizure of government property at Nirman Soudha here by L&T over non-payment of dues and Speaker not allowing a debate on the issue.

The issue was raised in the Assembly by the opposition BJP members who strongly objected to Speaker BK Arukha's decision of rejecting the notice for a debate on the issue.

While the Opposition BJP and Congress members demanded a debate, Speaker in a ruling said, "A review petition was earlier filed with the Supreme Court in connection on the matter. Hence, as per Rule 60 (VII), a matter which is already sub-judice cannot be debated on the floor of the House."

This irked the opposition members who trooped into the well of the House and raised slogans against the state government. Unable to run the House,



the Speaker adjourned the proceedings first till 11:30am and then till 4:00pm.

The Opposition members said that a due of ₹20 crore was not paid to L&T on time and now that amount has escalated up to ₹120 crore including interest. They demanded a clarification from the Works Minister.

Opposition BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi said that the matter was not sub-judice as the SC was yet to hear the review petition of the state government. Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati said that the state government did not give importance to the issue between 2004 and 2022 for which the construction

company with court order seized government properties including some computers from the Nirman Soudha. As the computers have several important files, the government should blacklist such a company, he said.

The issue originates from a road construction work assigned to L&T. The company was awarded the work to build 166km road from Sambalpur to Rourkela. The Works department did not refund ₹20 crore to the company even after completion of work.

The company then moved the High Court and obtained judgment in its favour. The state government challenged the HC judgement in the SC which upheld the order. The state government has filed a review petition in the SC, an official said on the status of the case.

Meanwhile, the company moved the court of Civil Judge (Commercial) as the government did not make the payment even after the court order. The court ordered the seizure of the property of the government when it did not take any action even after repeated notice.

Odisha erupts in joy as Murmu assumes office

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rairangpur/Bhubaneswar, July 25: Special prayers were organised, sweets and country-made rice beer distributed and people danced to the tune of tribal music as 'daughter of Odisha' Droupadi Murmu took oath as the 15th President of India, Monday.

The streets of Murmu's hometown Rairangpur in Mayurbhanj district were deserted for some time as people were glued to television sets and big screens set up in the town to witness her oath-taking ceremony.

In her native Uparbeda village, local Santals from children to elderly danced to the streets to the beating of drums 'ghusa' and 'mardal' before offering special prayers to Lord Marangburi and Goddess Aera at 'Jaher' (place of worship).

Sweets were distributed and children planted trees to mark the occasion, said Manoranjan Murmu, headmaster of Government Upper Primary School in the village where the President studied till Class VII.



Women from tribal community take selfie in Bhubaneswar. OP PHOTO

In Bhubaneswar, a mega celebration was organised at BJP state headquarters, where women dressed in 'Jhal' saree of Santals danced to the tune of tribal music, while firecrackers were burst at a nearby temple.

Residents of the President's in-laws' Pahadpur village celebrated by dancing at a field amidst beating of drums, while a religious congregation was held at Murmu's maternal uncle's Jamada village.

"We celebrated the occasion by offering locally brewed rice beer 'handia' to our God and forefathers as per our custom, and also to the elderly on whose laps the President played while growing up," her maternal uncle

Dasmath Marandi said.

In Rairangpur town, celebrations were galore as merry-making events were organised in the municipality area. Huge LED screens were installed to witness the swearing-in ceremony as children of Shri Aurobindo Integral School danced to celebrate the elevation of their former teacher to the position of President of the country.

Several events were also organised in district headquarters Baripada to

House passes resolution congratulating new Prez

BHUBANESWAR: The state Assembly Monday passed a resolution congratulating 'Odisha's daughter' and India's first tribal President Droupadi Murmu after she assumed the country's top Constitutional post. The resolution, moved by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Niranjan Pujari, was passed unanimously through voice vote. The resolution was passed hours after Murmu took oath as the President of India.

mark the occasion.

In state capital Bhubaneswar, a mega celebration was organised at BJP state headquarters where women dressed in 'Jhal' saree of Santals danced to the tune of tribal music, while firecrackers were burst at a nearby temple.

A laddu weighing one quintal was prepared at a Laxminarayan temple in Aigina area by city-based Kuberpuri Byabasai Sangh, which was distributed among the poor.

'Partha doesn't need hospitalisation for now'

BHUBANESWAR: West Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee, arrested in connection with a school job scam, was Monday flown to AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, where doctors said that he suffers from chronic diseases but does not need immediate hospitalization. The Calcutta High Court had July 24 directed the Enforcement Directorate, which held the 69-year-old TMC leader last week, to take him to the health facility in Bhubaneswar by an air ambulance as he complained of health issues. "We've conducted a thorough screening (of Chatterjee), including blood, kidney, thyroid and cardiological investigations. He has some chronic diseases, but does not need immediate hospitalisation," AIIMS executive director Ashutosh Biswas told reporters. A report has been sent to the Calcutta High Court with details of Chatterjee's health status, Biswas said.

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SCIENCE TOPPERS

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Proof that poor too can dream: Murmu

Continued from P1

"This is the greatness of India, the mother of democracy," she said to thunderous applause from the gathering that included Prime Minister Narendra Modi, ministers, former President Pratibha Patil, MPs as well as leaders such as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik who backed her election.

The new President, who was born in a Santhal family, said she grew up in a small tribal village where even getting primary education was a dream and went on to become the first person in the village to enroll for college education.

It is a matter of great satisfaction for me that those who have been deprived for centuries and those who have been denied the benefits of development, those poor, downtrodden, backwards and tribals are seeing their reflection in me, she said.

Murmu said her election as president has the blessings of the poor of the country and reflected the dreams and potential of crores of women and daughters of the country.

She paid tribute to India's freedom fighters, and said the country will have to move quickly on the twin tracks of 'sabka prayas' (everyone's effort) and 'sabka kartavya' (everyone's duty) to fulfil their expectations.

Noting that she was the first President to be born after Independence, Murmu said it was her good fortune that she has assumed the position at a time when the country is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to mark the 75th anniversary of its freedom.

"From Santhal revolution, Paika revolution to Kol revolution and Bhil revolution, all these revolutions strengthened the tribal contribution in the freedom struggle," Murmu said.

"In our country full of diversities, we are engaged in the making of 'Ek Bharat - Shreshtha Bharat' by adopting many languages, religions, sects, food habits, lifestyles and customs," she said.

She highlighted the role of India's ancient traditions in dovetailing growth and environment preservation. "I was born in that tribal tradition which has lived in harmony with nature for thousands of years. I have realized the importance of forests and water bodies in my life," Murmu said.

"We take necessary resources from nature and serve nature with equal reverence. This sensitivity has become a global imperative today," she added.

Murmu, who started public life as a councillor and was former Jharkhand governor, said she wanted to reassure all Indians, particularly the youth and women, that their interests will be supreme for her as president.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described Murmu taking over as President as a "watershed moment". The day, which started with outgoing president Kovind and Murmu arriving in a procession from the Rashtrapati Bhavan to the Parliament Building, was edged with ceremony and celebration.

India's new president was given a 21-gun salute after which she signed the oath register to applause and the thumping of desks.

After the short ceremony, Murmu and Kovind were escorted out of the Central Hall amid the ruff of drums and blowing of trumpets.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I Anand Jain, R/o- Belpahar, Dist. Jharsuguda declare that my son Arihant Jain was the Student of Belpahar English Medium School, Belpahar. The Principal issued a Transfer Certificate Serial No.954/21 and a Certificate of Migration, MC - 2143073 in favour of my son. On Dt.20.07.2022 the aforesaid Original Certificate has been lost at Belpahar Fatak. In spite of my best effort I could not trace out the same.

EOW nabs ex-banker from Delhi over loan fraud in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch has arrested a chartered accountant, who served as a manager in one of the branches of Punjab National Bank (PNB) in the City, from New Delhi for his alleged involvement in a loan fraud here, a police official said Monday.

According to EOW officials, PNB's Bhubaneswar circle head Paresh Kumar Das had approached the EOW alleging that Kali Prasad Mishra, proprietor of M/s KP Solutions, had availed cash credit (CC) as working capital of Rs 2.50 crore October 24, 2017 from PNB's Bapuji Nagar Branch by using forged documents.

During investigation, the EOW claimed to have found that the accused Neeraj Kumar, who worked as a manager (credit) at PNB's Saheed Nagar branch here between

2013 and 2016, along with a few other senior bankers were behind the fraud.

"Even though Neeraj resigned from PNB in 2016, he used to sit in the Bapuji Nagar branch posing as a bank official and was actively engaged in facilitating and arranging loans to the tune of crores. Neeraj, along with another accused Prakash Kumar Behera who has already been arrested and a few other bank officials, facilitated the sanction of loan on the basis of forged documents. Kali Prasad's company had transferred lakhs of rupees to the accounts of Neeraj and other accused," said a senior EOW officer.

Earlier, Kali Prasad, Srikant Prasad Prusty, the then senior manager (credit), Birendra Kumar Pattnaik, ex-chief manager, Narendra Nayak, the then manager, and a businessman Prakash Kumar Behera were arrested in connection with the case, added the official.

State's missive to Centre for settlement of PMFBY claims

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Odisha cooperation minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak Monday wrote a letter to Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar for an early settlement of claims under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal BimaYojana (PMFBY) for kharif 2021.

In his letter, Nayak said the Odisha government was continuing to implement PMFBY since kharif 2016 even though many of the neighbouring states were opting out of the scheme.

In order to augment the scheme implementation process, the state government has taken several initiatives. Odisha is the first state to introduce Smart Sampling Technique (SST) for the selection of plots for conduct of crop cutting experiments (CCEs) and second state to integrate state land records portal with national crop insurance portal, he said.

The state government has also conducted a special drive for capturing of CCE data using mobile app leading to maximum capturing of such data. Besides, the state has also formed district and block level monitoring committees to oversee programme implementation, pointed out Nayak.



THE MINISTER SAID THE KHARIF SEASON OF 2021 WAS FRAUGHT WITH MANY NATURAL CALAMITIES AFFECTING MANY CROPS, ESPECIALLY PADDY, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR NEARLY 98 PER CENT OF THE AREA INSURED.

THE ESTIMATED CLAIM FOR THE SEASON IS ABOUT RS 1,364 CRORE, OUT OF WHICH CLAIMS TO THE TUNE OF RS 748 CRORE HAVE BEEN SETTLED, SO FAR.

The minister further said the Kharif season of 2021 was fraught with many natural calamities affecting many crops, especially paddy, which is the major crop of the state and accounts for nearly 98 per cent of the area insured.

The estimated claim for the season is about Rs 1,364 crore out of which claims to the tune of Rs 748 crore have been settled, so far. It has come to the notice of the state government that in many cases the notified insurance companies have raised objections regarding the conduct of CCE and held up the claims,

Nayak said. Though the objections raised by the insurance companies have been duly complied, the claims have not been settled which has led to farmers unrest in many places and likely to affect the ongoing enrolment process for kharif '22, he said. Therefore, Nayak sought personal attention of Tomar into the matter and requested to issue the necessary directive to the insurance companies for the settlement of claims at the earliest for safeguarding the interest of the farmers.

Forest fires should be actively managed, say scientists

The giant sequoias of California are some of the largest, oldest trees on Earth. Stretching 100 metres to the sky, some have a girth that could only be spanned by 20 friends holding hands. But in the last two years, fierce wildfires in California have killed an unprecedented number of these endangered trees. The fires in 2021 alone killed as many as 3,600 giant sequoias, which is approximately 5 percent of large trees in the population.

The solution would seem to be to prevent fires, but sequoia groves thrive when small-scale fires pass through. Exclusion of fire can be just as harmful as too much fire.

Globally, more than 4,400 species face threats from patterns of fire that have been modified by human activity. Increasingly, researchers are exploring how climate change and land use are changing patterns of fire and what can be done to get more of the 'right' kind of fire.

Actively managing fire to suit particular species or ecosystems means ensuring the right amount, pattern, and timing of fire in landscapes that need it, and less fire in those landscapes that don't. Applying the right kind of fire can be helpful for both humans and ecosystems, encouraging desired species and resources. The continuation and reinstatement of

Indigenous fire stewardship in the tropical savannas of Brazil demonstrates this. There, the Xavante people use fire to boost vegetation growth and certain animal foods.

Areas managed by the Xavante are less likely to experience deforestation and weed invasion. Revitalising Indigenous knowledge in Australia, North America and beyond is likely to also promote patterns of fire that benefit biodiversity and people.

Collecting data through scientific experiments and systematic monitoring encourages innovative fire management. For example, knowing when plants flower and produce seed can be used to identify when fire is needed, and parts of the landscape where fire should be suppressed. Linking such information with projections of future wildfires provides a powerful way to design more effective planned burning strategies. In semi-arid Australia, computer modelling has been used to investigate whether planned burns can reduce the risk of harm to birds, reptiles and small marsupials.

Preliminary studies indicate that strategic burns, including burning in a striped pattern, can moderate the size of wildfires and benefit some threatened species. A new strategy in many temperate forests is letting wildfires burn



when conditions are not extreme, to promote patchily burned areas that are helpful for a range of species. In Yosemite National Park, California, a policy of not extinguishing fires started by lightning has created more diverse habitats that support a variety of plants and their pollinators, such as bees. A different suite of approaches focuses not just on fire, but on the whole ecosystem. Fire and biodiversity cannot be tackled in isolation from other environmental changes such as habitat loss or introduced pest species. From the Arctic tundra to the Amazon rainforest, large-scale environmental restoration projects involving local communities and national agencies have been proposed

to increase the total area of habitats and their connectivity to each other. In general, bigger and better-connected animal and plant populations are more resilient to fires. The boreal region of Canada is home to a wide range of creatures, from microscopic microbes to massive moose and caribou. But draining the spongy peatlands has increased the risk of very large fires and tough-to-manage smoldering fires that persist even in cold conditions.

Strategic rewetting of drained peatlands and the promotion of fire-resistant mosses can create a natural fire break, reduce wildfire severity and promote biodiversity. In Africa, reintroducing native grazing animals such as white rhinoceros helps to create patchy fires. The grazing of these huge creatures creates habitats for a range of insects and plants. Of course, context matters; grazing by non-native animals, such as cattle in Australia's alpine regions, doesn't always reduce fire risk and can harm ecosystems.

Some ecosystems may even benefit from artificial habitats. In the Simpson Desert of Australia, scientists have tested the use of refuges made from wire mesh in providing shelter for small animals in open, recently burnt landscapes. Ongoing research indicates that these 'safe houses' could protect populations of reptiles and small mammals that would normally be easy prey for introduced cats and foxes.

Restoring and promoting landscapes that people can use creates opportunities to balance land for wildlife with other values in many regions of the world. On every vegetated continent, scientists are partnering with local communities to explore 'green firebreaks' comprising low-flammability species planted at strategic locations across the landscape. Research in New Zealand has identified low-flammability vegetable crops, pastures and traditional Maori food and medicine species, such as the kawakawa tree, that could moderate fire while en-

hancing biodiversity. Agriculture and forestry around the Mediterranean that promotes patchworks of low-flammability crops, orchards and oak trees can also reduce the risk of large, intense fires and provide homes for communities of threatened birds. Science has provided a large body of knowledge on fire and biodiversity. At its best, science is inclusive of the diverse people living and working in fire-prone ecosystems.

Learning from previous and current management by local and Indigenous people and fostering shared fire management are invaluable steps in promoting fires that benefit people and biodiversity. But more large-scale experiments are needed to test new ideas. And on top of all the other changes humans are creating, climate change is increasing wildfire activity and causing more extreme fire weather in many parts of the world.

The challenges the world faces in a new era of fire are so large that ecologists need to keep experimenting, testing new ideas and being bolder with conservation initiatives. Ecosystems are shaped by complex and interconnected reactions to humans and fire. As the world changes, it's an interplay scientists need to keep learning about.

HANDICRAFTS EXPO



Textiles, Handlooms & Handicrafts Minister Rita Sahu and Brajarajnaraj MLA Alaka Mohanty along with others visited a stall at the ongoing state-level handicrafts exhibition at Ekamra Haat in Bhubaneswar, Monday

ORISSA HIGH COURT

A glorious journey of seven & half decades

SUMAN MOHANTY, OP

Cuttack, July 25: The High Court of Orissa was established July 26, 1948, by an order notified April 30/June 8, 1948 promulgated by the then Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten of Burma in exercise of the powers vested in him under Government of India Act, 1935, as adopted by the India Provisional Constitution (Amendment) Order, 1948.

Justice Bira Kishore Ray, who was the first Advocate General of the new province of Orissa since 1st April 1936 and became the first Odia to be elevated as a Judge of Patna High Court in the year 1945 became the first Chief Justice of the new High Court of Orissa, July 26, 1948.

Bachu Jagannadh Das from Ganjam having practice in erstwhile Madras, Lingaraj Panigrahi, the then Advocate General of Orissa and RL Narsimham, an ICS- DJ, then posted as Law Secretary of Orissa were appointed and took oath as Judges of the new High Court, July 26, 1948.

The then Governor of Orissa, His Excellency Asaf Ali, Bar-at-Law, had administered oath to the new judges in the presence of Justice H J Kania, the then Chief Justice of India, Kailash Nath Katju, Governor of West Bengal, Justice CM Agarwalla, Chief Justice of



Patna High Court, Harekrushna Mahtab, Chief Minister, SM Bose, the then AG of West Bengal and Sir Sultan Ahmad, Advocate General of Patna. Swamy Bichitranda Das became the new Advocate General of Orissa. Taking charge, Chief Justice BK Ray hoped that all the judges would prove worthy of the expectations of the people of Orissa and be faithful custodian of the noble heritage of the high traditions of the highest court of justice.

Meanwhile, 74 years have passed and the High Court of Orissa is going to celebrate its 75th Diamond Jubilee Years, July 26, 2023.

The High Court Bar Association is going to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee for 2-years spreading over 2022 to 2024 from July 26, 2022. Many eminent jurists have brought glory to the Orissa High Court by becoming the Chief Justice of Orissa High Court. Among them, Justice RN Mishra, Justice G B Patnaik & Justice Deepak Mishra of the High Court of Orissa, went up to the Supreme Court of India and became the Chief Justice of India.

ALLEN launches global studies division in Bhubaneswar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: ALLEN Career Institute, which is known for the preparation it offers for engineering and medical entrance examinations, is all set to place its students in the world's top-ranked universities. Through ALLEN Global Studies Division (AGSD), students can avail services from standardized test preparation to university selection under the guidance of India's best Overseas Education Experts.

After producing world-class results at AGSD's different centers, ALLEN Global Studies Division has started providing its services at ALLEN Bhubaneswar. AGSD head Apoorv Bhatt and Sachin Srivastava informed that at ALLEN students are given guidance on the study subjects as well as on profile building, writing statement of purpose, interview skills, and recommendations. Till now more than 100 students have got admission to top universities of the world, with many being selected into the best universities including eight at MIT, USA, eleven at the University of Oxford, UK, 13 at the University of Toronto, Canada.



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MOCK DRILL



ODRAF personnel participated in a mock drill in River Mahanadi near Banki in Cuttack district on the occasion of World Drowning Prevention Day, Monday. The programme was held on the joint auspices of Utkal University and Rover Ranger Group of Banki Autonomous College

Suicide bid by differently-abled over land demarcation delay

POST NEWS NETWORK

Digapahandi, July 25: In a shocking incident, a differently-abled man tried to commit suicide by consuming poison in the presence of Ganjam Collector, Berhampur SP and other district officials during a joint grievance hearing on the block office premises here in Ganjam district, Monday.

The victim was identified as J Balakrushna Dora, 41, a resident of Patand under Kushapada panchayat of Digapahandi block. Government officials rushed him to Digapahandi community health centre from where he was shifted to MKCG Medical College & Hospital in Berhampur in a critical condition.

According to reports, Ganjam Collector Dibya Jyoti Parida, Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M, DRDA project director V Keerti Vasani, district social security officer Kalyani Das, Digapahandi BDO Haladhar Sabar, additional tehsildar Ramesh Chandra Behera and



Digapahandi IIC Deepti Ranjan Behera and various department officials were present at the grievance redressal camp.

The hearing was underway when Dora came on a tricycle and consumed poison to end life in front of the Collector alleging inaction by revenue inspector (RI) despite repeated requests for land demarcation. Sources said Dora had repeatedly visited the revenue circle office at Digapahandi and requested the RI to demarcate his homestead land which had been encroached upon by his neighbour.

He alleged that the RI, Akshaya Mallick, demanded bribe to do the needful and harassed him by forcing him to make repeated rounds of his office. The demarcation

could not be carried out as he failed to bribe the RI, he alleged. Frustrated, Dora reached the grievance hearing camp and tried to end life by consuming the poison, said sources.

When contacted, the RI rejected the charges stating that as per the application of Dora he visited his house for land demarcation a week back. He failed to demarcate the land as Dora had stored firewood and other materials on his backyard while his neighbour was not present.

He clicked the photograph of geotagging of the land in Dora's presence and advised him to clear the firewood and other materials for demarcation of the land. He said even the amin and other staffers of Digapahandi revenue circle office visited Dora's house last Saturday for demarcation of the land.

However, they failed to do so as the backyard was not cleaned. They told him that they will demarcate the land after a few days to which Dora consented and gave an undertaking to.

Plantation to draw jumbos towards NH underpasses



Banana plantation on National Highway-49 underpass near Belda village

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 25: Forest officials have come out with a novel idea to help elephants take the underpasses of National Highway-20 and 49 to cross the highways in Keonjhar district, a report said.

In order to attract the pachyderms towards the underpasses, they are scattering elephant faeces along the path. They have also planted banana plants and paddy saplings along some of the underpasses to attract the mammals to take the route.

This step has been taken after elephants were found facing trouble crossing the National Highways 20 and 49, which are frequently congested due to heavy traffic. It is hoped that these steps will help animals cross the highways safely and also prevent casualties.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has constructed underpasses at various places of both the highways. However, it was frequently seen that the animals did not use the crossing points to reach the other side of the highways. In light of the challenges faced by the pachyderms, the Forest department

took the decision to use the new techniques.

Forest officials are hopeful that the animals will take the underpasses after getting smell of their faeces. They are also of the opinion that the banana plants and paddy saplings on the underpasses will help the animals get their preferred food for which they will take the underpass instead of waiting in herds to cross the highways during traffic snarls.

A few years ago, three elephants were killed after they were hit by a cargo truck and a passenger bus in Ghatagaon area while they were crossing NH-20. Moreover, the animals often find it difficult to cross the highway due to large number of vehicles and cargo trucks parked on the roadsides. As a result, the jumbos remain confined to the nearby jungles and often destroy lives and properties by entering the nearby human habitats at night.

When contacted, Keonjhar DFO HD Dhanaraj said the elephants are reluctant to accept the underpasses. Hence, an initiative was taken to attract the animals by planting their fodder so that once they use the path they will do so every time.

Historic Jagusagar to get a facelift



POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhamnagar, July 25: Jagusagar, a sprawling historic water body at Dhamnagar Bazaar in Bhadrak district, will get a facelift as the government has sanctioned ₹1 crore for the purpose.

Bhadrak MP Manjulata Mandal has sent a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, intimating him about the need for renovation of one of the oldest water bodies in the state.

The sprawling pond is under the fisheries department. Over years, the pond has been given a short shrift due to departmental apathy. As a result, parts of the pond have been encroached upon, it was alleged.

Buildings are being raised around the pond. There is no let-up in land grabbing around

the pond, which is choked with weeds, hyacinth and bushes. Its water is also getting polluted. "It is going to lose its existence soon," the locals lamented.

It was in 2018 when former MLA Mukhtikanta Mandal had sent a proposal to the then Fisheries minister, seeking renovation of the water body.

The MP had recently visited Dhamnagar where local people and members of citizens' forum had urged her for its renovation.

The MP said that the state government has sanctioned ₹1 crore while there is a proposal to sanction ₹2 crore for the renovation of the pond.

It was also learnt that the pond area will be demarcated and official records will be prepared before the renovation starts.

23 years of Indomitable Spirit of our Bravehearts
23 years of Constant Inspiration to Every Indian

KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS

26 JULY, 2022

Indian Army fought legendary battles at altitudes above 12000 feet in Dras, Kaksar, Batalik and Turtuk Sectors of Kargil District to evict Pakistani intruders threatening our territorial integrity. Operation Vijay was one of the toughest and longest campaigns of modern times.



BATTLE OF TOLING
Indian Army launched its attack on Tololing in the last week of May 1999. Point 4590 was captured on 06 June 1999. Tololing was captured by gallant troops by 12 June 1999.



BATTLE OF TIGER HILL
Tiger Hill was one of the highest peaks in the Dras - Kargil Sector. Eviction of Pakistani troops from this feature was one of the most important objectives for the Indian Army during the Kargil operation and the peak was captured on 04 July 1999.



BATTLE OF KHALUBAR
Khalubar Ridge due to its location, dominates all approaches towards the Line of Control. Our Artillery destroyed enemy sangars, disrupted communication & supply lines. Some of the most heroic deeds of valour were witnessed in this sector.



BATTLE OF POINT 4875
Point 4875 located in Mushkoh Valley dominated National Highway from Dras to Matayan. The troops of Indian Army fought valiantly to recapture this strategically important peak.



OPERATIONS IN BATALIK
The first success of Operation Vijay was achieved in this Sector in the area of Rockfall on 09 June 1999. The subsequent attacks were launched on Point 4875, Garhi, Point 5000 and Jubar Complex. The Batalik Sector was cleared of the enemy by 07 July 1999.



OPERATIONS IN KAKSAR
This was the area where the first Indian patrol while moving to re-occupy the winter vacated posts, got ambushed. This Sector saw bitter fighting and Indian Army launched multiple attacks to dislodge the Pakistanis.



On Kargil Vijay Diwas, I bow to every valiant soldier who fought for India till the very last breath. Their heroic sacrifices inspire us.



Param Vir Chakra (PVC) - 4
Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) - 10
Vir Chakra (VrC) - 49
Sena Medal (Gallantry) (SM) - 135



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FOCUS PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS

THE GOOD & THE BAD



The view that privatising banks is the panacea for all ills of banking in India is obviously wrong. All bank failures have been of high-profile private banks

bank failures have been of high-profile private banks. The mother-of-all bank failures occurred in 2008 in America and among the Western nations, starting with the fall of the gold-plated Lehman Bank and the domino effect resulted in a global financial crisis. Surely public sector ownership of banks was not to be blamed for this crisis.

Around the same time in late 2008, a cash-rich company like Infosys had to publicly announce that it was moving its cash deposits from private and foreign banks to State Bank of India, and that its shareholders or customers should not panic! The instinctive flight of public deposits to PSBs indicates the trust and confidence of depositors. There is however a flip side to this confidence. It is because of an implicit guarantee by the owner of the PSBs i.e., the government of India that no bank will fail. This un-priced guarantee can result in poor profitability. Is it fair that the public depositor should have an unlimited guarantee that her or his money in the PSB is safe? Should there not be an upper limit (say ₹5 lakh) above which funds are at risk of bank failure? The answers to these and many such questions lie in banking reforms, which include more autonomy in their running, more commercial orientation, a lower burden of pursuing social objectives, more focus on manpower productivity and a better pricing of depositors' risk.

The wrong answer is outright and wholesale privatisation of all PSBs as was proposed recently in a paper authored by a former NITI Aayog Chairman and a present member of the PM's Economic Advisory Council. Surely a middle path can be found, wherein government ownership is reduced, functioning autonomy of the PSB is increased, the public's trust is maintained, deposit insurance is properly priced and the commercial performance of banks is enhanced. This is not rocket science, unlike that moon-landing in 1969.

The writer is a noted economist.
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The third week of July marks two anniversaries of events in 1969, one national and the other international. The latter was the first human landing on the moon which happened around 8 am on a Sunday morning in India. Just 12 hours before that, the Prime Minister announced to the nation, that the government was taking over 14 private banks, and nationalising 85% of the nation's deposits. One event was a technological breakthrough while the other demonstrated political audacity. Each event had a long-term influence, one on the evolution of the space exploration programme, and the other on the evolution of banking and finance. We will leave the story of Apollo 11, whose crew came back safely to Earth, and the subsequent developments, to a later day. For now, let's focus on the long shadow of bank nationalisation. The economy has grown 50 times larger since 1969. The bank deposits with those 14 public sector banks were not even ₹100 crore then, while today Public Sector Banks (PSBs) hold over ₹100 lakh crore in deposits. The deepening of the financial sector, its formalisation and its spread into every corner of the country has been phenomenal.

After 53 years, the share of deposits with PSBs is still at 70%, which is a fall of merely 15% since that day of nationalisation. Incidentally the PM had rushed through nationalisation, even getting Presidential assent on a Saturday. But this hasty legislation was defeated by the Supreme Court just six months later, and hence a modified ordinance had to be passed to overcome the court hurdle. The PM gained immense popularity and political mileage from this decision since there had been hundreds of private bank failures in the previous twenty years. The public perceived, rightly or wrongly, that their money was safe in PSBs. That feeling persists to this day. Even this government has shown disproportionate dependence on PSBs rather than private banks. For instance, more than 90% of the PM's Jan Dhan

Yojana of 45 crore accounts were opened by PSBs. This is the world's foremost financial inclusion campaign and has helped channel government subsidies through direct benefit transfers to the JDY accounts. Even during COVID these accounts have proved invaluable. They also have an insurance cover as well as an overdraft facility attached to the accounts. The Mudra loans to small enterprises are also mostly an exclusive domain of PSBs. On the credit side too, the bulk of the loans for government projects, whether in ports, roads or railways or other infrastructure endeavours are through PSBs. A recent example is the Bundelkhand Expressway in Uttar Pradesh, whose estimated cost is ₹15,000 crore. Loans for the Expressway have been raised from a consortium of PSBs.

As for bank failures, there too the PSBs come to the rescue. Yes Bank recently was de facto taken over by State Bank of India (although not technically). The ill-famed Global Trust Bank was bailed out by the Oriental Bank of Commerce back in 2004.

If one looks at only the commercial performance of PSBs the picture is mixed to put it mildly. The quantum of bad loans or what are called non-performing assets (NPAs)

is much worse for PSBs in comparison with private banks. A recent report by the credit information company TransUnion CIBIL shows that willful defaulters have increased by 10-fold in the past 10 years. As of March 2021, these defaulters owed ₹2.4 lakh crore, of which 95% was owed to PSBs. This amounts to loot of public funds. Of these there are 36 people who have defaulted on more than ₹1000 crore each. The chances of recovery are remote, and in any case the legal process is longwinded. The question is whether this implies negligence of the lenders, lack of vigilance on loans, or lending under some political pressure? The negligence argument is not convincing, since for example, 30% of those loans were given by State Bank of India or its associates, who are all known for high standards of diligence and lending practices. Why is it that private sector banks have low NPA ratios? Are they better at loan monitoring? Are they better custodians of public deposits? Do they inherently take less risks? Is it because they don't lend to socially desirable but commercially non-lucrative borrowers? Or is it because they don't face political pressure to lend?

The view that privatising banks is the panacea for all ills of banking in India is obviously wrong. All



Ajit Ranade

THE INSTINCTIVE FLIGHT OF PUBLIC DEPOSITS TO PSBs INDICATES THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE OF DEPOSITORS

Fascist Footsteps

Always do what you know to be the best even if it is the most difficult thing to do.

THE MOTHER



Clouds of Fascism and Right-wing autocratic rule are once again hovering over most of Europe as is evident following the collapse of the Mario Draghi government in Italy. Only recently France narrowly escaped such a prospect when the Right wing party leader Marine Le Pen failed to become the country's President though succeeding in securing an unprecedented number of votes. But, Italy's fate to be ruled by a Right-wing coalition, the major constituent being the successor of the architect of Italian Fascism, Benito Mussolini, looks almost certain.

Italy will hold a snap national election September 25 after Prime Minister Mario Draghi resigned following the collapse of his national unity government. It has already sent tremors through financial markets. A fierce election campaign is on the cards. The country is facing scorching summer heat and dire human and economic crises resulting from the pandemic and the energy and security concerns created by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It is noteworthy that the Draghi government had assiduously, and somewhat successfully, tried to stave off these impediments. A bloc of conservative parties, led by the Far-right Brothers of Italy, is ahead of all other parties in opinion polls that predict a clear majority for it.

Draghi was an unelected former central banker who led a broad coalition for almost 18 months on the assurance of the partners in February 2021 that he would be given a free hand in managing the affairs of the country. He got support from both the Left and the Right. In view of the crises created by COVID-19 and the urgent need for help from the EU, most other major parties, including the Centre-left Democratic Party, the anti-establishment populist Five Star Movement, firebrand Matteo Salvini's hard-core nationalist Lega, and former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia lent support to him.

Draghi was fed up with the internal bickering and pulls and pressures exerted by the coalition partners over the past few months. The need to get relief funds from Brussels and the fear that new elections would trigger chaos had held things together. However, in June, the coalition was on the rocks. An increasingly bitter intra-party fight within the Five Star Movement and then between Five Star and Lega, precipitated matters. First, the Five Star threatened to leave the government. Even then there was hope Draghi would survive with a narrower coalition. But, when Lega and Forza Italia insisted on more Right-wing government policies, Draghi had no option but to resign.

The turn of events does not augur well for Italy which needs to pass a budget to implement the reforms sought by the European Commission in exchange for a promised €200bn in grants and loans from the EU's pandemic relief fund. That process will now be delayed because Italy's President has dissolved parliament ahead of the September elections. Obviously, and something that most Indians would be able to comprehend, the focus of all those political parties would be on how to defeat their rivals at the hustings rather than fighting inflation, finding ways to get through a difficult winter without Russian energy supplies and helping consumers by fighting inflation.

Pre election polls suggest an alliance of Italy's Right-wing parties will form the next government. Apart from Salvini's Lega and Berlusconi's Forza Italia, the big winner will likely be the Brothers of Italy that had refused, from the beginning, to support Draghi's government. Its 45-year-old leader Giorgia Meloni, like Marine Le Pen of France, has moorings in Right-wing ideas. As a teenager, she joined the Italian Social Movement, a party inspired by Mussolini. In 2014, she became a founding member of the intensely anti-immigrant Brothers of Italy. She could temper her Right-wing rhetoric for pragmatic politics and the dire need for EU money for tiding over Italy's financial crisis but that would not be her true self.

Meloni may not have a cakewalk given infighting among Right-wing parties. But, it looks like the next Italian PM may not have Draghi's crisis-management skill and experience or the will to transcend party politics. This, some observers feel, is no good news for Italy, a country with a history of continual political turmoil.

SPECTRUM MIDDLE EAST

Resuscitating the two-state solution

For decades, the defining conflict of the Middle East has revolved around a single piece of diplomatic jargon: the "two-state solution." Originally, this term referred to a concrete idea – the formation of a sovereign independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. But for most politicians, it has long since become an empty cliché, uttered out of habit, and without much interest in seeing it through.

Consider US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's recent call with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. According to the State Department readout, Blinken "stressed the US commitment to improving the quality of life of the Palestinian people in tangible ways and the [Biden] Administration's support for a negotiated two-state solution."

Such talk is nothing new. While the US has formally recognised the state of Israel since 1948, it has yet to recognise the state of Palestine in accordance with the UN partition plan. Moreover, both territories that the original UN resolution set aside for an Arab state are now occupied by Israel. While the US and most of the rest of the world have called on Israel to end its military rule over millions of Palestinians, they have done little to change the

status quo. Even though Palestine has been recognised as a non-member state by the UN and formally recognised by 139 UN member states, the US, the European Union, Japan, and Australia still have not taken this critical step.

Given this, US officials' endless repetition of the phrase "two-state solution" means nothing. But while few expect the US to sanction Israel or arm Palestinians (as it has done for Ukrainians), there are still practical steps that both America and the international community could take to make the two-state solution more than an empty slogan.

For example, the US could remove the Palestine Liberation Organisation – which signed the 1993 Oslo Accords along with Israel – from its list of designated terrorist organisations. It could block imports of products made in illegal Jewish settlements that bear the label "Made in Israel." And it could demand that Israel cease the daily violence committed against Palestinians and pursue justice for Shireen Abu Akleh, the slain Palestinian-American journalist whom US officials themselves believe was likely killed by an Israeli bullet.

America can also do more to help Palestinians build the state

institutions they will need to end Israeli control of Palestinian land, water, and air. As matters stand, Israel restricts Palestinians' water usage and sets housing regulations in occupied territories, where Palestinian homes are regularly demolished. Palestinians are not even free to upgrade their cell-phone towers, owing to Israeli towers that have been built illegally on occupied Palestinian lands.

Under these conditions, an independent Palestinian economy is an impossibility. But a strong push to help Palestinians engage economically with neighbouring Arab countries – especially Egypt and Jordan – could start the process of ending Palestinians' forced dependence on Israel.

Recent political developments suggest that renewed progress on these issues is possible. The Centrist Israeli politician Yair Lapid has stepped in as a caretaker Prime Minister. Unlike the outgoing Right-wing PM, Naftali Bennett, Lapid supports the two-state solution and advocates renewed negotiations with the Palestinian leadership.

However, Lapid's tenure will probably be short-lived, given that Israel will go to the polls in November to elect a new government. Once again, Palestinians are left waiting and hoping for a posi-

tive outcome in an Israeli election, an exercise that most now consider a waste of time.

The land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River either must be split into two sovereign states, or it must be shared between the Palestinian and Israeli people, with all citizens having equal rights. Israeli and American leaders who profess to believe in the two-state solution must prove that they mean what they say. At a minimum, the US must demand – wielding the threat of sanctions – that Israel not pursue any further action that impedes the realisation of a contiguous Palestinian state.

Continued Israeli settlement activity makes a complete mockery of the two-state solution and any political leader who still claims to support it. Are world leaders – starting with Biden – serious when they talk about a democratic Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel? In the absence of meaningful policy changes, the "two-state solution" will continue to ring hollow.

The writer is the founder of the Institute of Modern Media at Al-Quds University, Ramallah.
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WISDOM CORNER

Nature is the source of all true knowledge. She has her own logic, her own laws, she has no effect without cause nor invention without necessity.
LEONARDO DA VINCI

Man as an individual is a genius. But men in the mass form the headless monster, a great, brutish idiot that goes where prodded.
CHARLIE CHAPLIN

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.
DALAI LAMA

WORDSWORTH

Usufructuary

We are short of words that contain four us. Among the few that are even relatively common (leaving aside Hawaiian muu-muu) are tumultuously and unscrupulous, although the very much rarer pustulocrustaceous and pseudotuberculous are also recorded. This term comes from Roman law. Usufruct is the right of temporary possession and enjoyment of something that belongs to somebody else, so far as that can be done without causing damage or changing its substance. For example, a slave in classical Rome could not own anything. Things he acquired as the result of his labour he merely held usus (et) fructus, under "use (and) enjoyment" – it was his master who actually owned them. The term remains in use in modern US legal practice and elsewhere to mean somebody who "enjoys the fruits" of something, usually land. These days a usufructuary can be a trustee who enjoys the produce or income from property he holds in trust for somebody else. Many Native American groups hold land on a usufruct basis, with rights to enjoy the renewable natural resources of the land for hunting and fishing.

Vaccary

You won't find this in any modern dictionary except the largest, as it has quite gone out of use except when speaking of historical matters. The word meant a cow pasture, not some peasant's patch where one cow was kept for her milk, but larger-scale pasturage where cattle were kept and bred and as a source of working oxen. The word is usually linked to grazing land in the moors and valleys of the Pennines in Yorkshire and Lancashire. In the thirteenth century numbers of vaccaries were carved out of the old private hunting chases of the nobility, who created them in an attempt to get some revenue back from their holdings. Vaccaries were small-scale commercial cattle farms – in places, as around Pendle (more famous for its witches), you can still see the big stone-slab walls that kept the cattle enclosed. The word comes from the mediaeval Latin vaccaria, derived from vacca, a cow. Vaccinate is closely linked, since that derives from the Latin vaccinus, of or from a cow, as cow-pox serum was used to protect people against smallpox.

LOL

Free haircut

A man and a little boy entered a barbershop together. After the man received the full treatment - shave, shampoo, manicure, haircut, - he placed the boy in the chair. "I'm going to buy a green tie to wear for the parade," he said. "I'll be back in a few minutes."



When the boy's haircut was completed and the man still hadn't returned, the barber said, "Looks like your daddy's forgotten all about you." "That wasn't my daddy," said the boy. "He just walked up, took me by the hand and said, 'Come on, son, we're gonna get a free haircut!'"



Daoud Kuttab

WHILE THE US AND MOST OF THE REST OF THE WORLD HAVE CALLED ON ISRAEL TO END ITS MILITARY RULE OVER MILLIONS OF PALESTINIANS, THEY HAVE DONE LITTLE TO CHANGE THE STATUS QUO

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Neighbour's evil designs

Sir, The expansionistic and imperialistic move by the Andhra Pradesh government in the border areas of Odisha is a matter of concern. In a democracy, such undue interference by a neighbouring state in our soil smacks of corruption and impropriety. Our freedom fighters and the founding Fathers of Utkala Sammilani sacrificed their lives for unification of various scattered lands lying outside our state for building a greater Odisha. Let their martyrdom not go in vain. But, a neighbouring state is entering illegally into our territory by providing local citizens with freebies and alluring promises. It is against the rule of law and propriety. An all-party meeting should be convened. Our leaders in the Parliament should apprise the matter to the higher authorities. A peaceful mass agitation is the need of the hour. All the stakeholders should think deeply about the situation. It is a matter of urgent importance.
Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Incentivise aforestation

Sir, Growing urbanisation poses a serious threat to the environment since it is causing green spaces to disappear across the country. In almost all states, there is a decrease in the amount of trees. According to data analysis from the Forest Survey of India, every state's tree cover has decreased by minimum of 40 sq km in the past 10 years. Another threat is more and more trees would be cut down nationwide as a result of the Central government's forest conservation rules. Small tree patches and solitary trees outside of reported forest areas that are smaller than one hectare in size are referred to as 'tree cover.' These trees are typically found as dispersed trees in urban areas, village areas, and along roads. To improve tree cover each and every state has to come up with attractive offers to people. Every state in the nation should offer 5 to 6 units of free electricity in exchange for planting and maintaining a tree on a specific campus, similar to what the state of Jharkhand is doing now. The offer should be applicable only for suitable trees that will aid in future nature preservation. The offer of free electricity should merely focus on increasing urban vegetation by including every citizen in the mission to plant trees. Otherwise every state government has to set a target to plant crores of saplings in every moon-son to increase the forest cover.
Vijaykumar HK, RAICHUR

of the day quote

Parliament as an institution and legislative assemblies collectively have unfortunately become irrelevant to the national discourse of the country now going back a couple of decades. This is primarily because parliamentarians and legislators across parties, across decades and across the country have systematically devalued the institution

MANISH TEWARI | CONGRESS MP

I want to tell you with confidence that if any foreign powers cast an evil eye on us and if there is a war, we will become victorious

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Ancient forts located in Bundelkhand region of the state should be repaired, and developed as new centres of tourism

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

SHORT TAKES

Six killed

Srinagar: Six people were killed and three others injured after an SUV they were travelling in fell into a gorge on Jammu-Srinagar highway in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, police said Monday. Police said the incident took place when the driver of the SUV, carrying a marriage party, lost control over the vehicle in Ramsu stretch of Jammu-Srinagar highway on Sunday.

Woman arrested

Shimla: A woman who was caught on camera while performing stunts on the wheel of a car on the Parwanoo-Solan highway near Jabli in Himachal Pradesh has been arrested along with others for reckless driving. After losing control, the speeding vehicle crashed into a barrier and landed on the opposite side of the road.

CBI arrests seven

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday claimed to have arrested seven people in connection with the murder of Shridhar Das during the post-poll violence in West Bengal. The accused were identified as Pranab Barkait, Pritam Roy Sarkar, Ratan Roy Sarkar, Liton Shil, Liton Bhaumik, Nakul Roy Sarkar and Biswajit Barman, alias Biswa.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT SCAM

Mamata breaks silence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 25: If anyone is found guilty of wrongdoing, he must be punished, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said Monday days after her cabinet colleague Partha Chatterjee was arrested in the SSC scam by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Addressing an award function of the state government here, Banerjee slammed the opposition for a "malicious campaign" launched against her, asserting that she does not support corruption. "I will not get into the details of the case as it is sub judice. We have full faith in the judiciary. We want a time-bound probe into the matter. If someone is found guilty, the person should be punished accordingly, be it life imprisonment. I won't mind. But, I condemn the malicious campaign against me," she said.

"We want a fast-track court to hear the matter, otherwise it will be like the Saradha case, which is pending for over ten years and there is no verdict or justice. The crime was done by the CPI(M), but the TMC was targeted," she alleged.

Banerjee said she believes in politics of sacrifice and serving the country. "I am not in politics to improve my life. Throughout my life, I have been against corruption but I do not support injustice. However, I am unhappy with the recent developments that have taken



Please remember, an injured lion can be dangerous. Please do not play with fire. If anyone has done wrong, prosecute him. But, do not touch me because I know how to fight back, for I have done nothing wrong. Take three months' time, but get to the bottom of the SSC scam

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

place in the state. I do not spare anyone, even if that person is a minister," she said.

Referring to the video shared by the BJP, in which she was seen interacting with Arpita Mukherjee from whose house ₹22 crore in cash was found, the chief minister said the Trinamool Congress has no links with her.

"The party has no relation with that lady, neither do I know her. I will not be a part of the media trial that is going on. If I visit several Durga Puja pandals and interact with people there, does it mean I know them personally? No. And if that is the case, what about Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi, who were clicked with

BJP leaders?" she asked.

"Please remember, an injured lion can be dangerous. Please do not play with fire. If anyone has done wrong, prosecute him. But, do not touch me because I know how to fight back, for I have done nothing wrong. Take three months' time, but get to the bottom of the SSC scam," she said.

Banerjee claimed that over one lakh people were hired by the state government during her tenure but there were complaints of only 200 discrepancies in the recruitment drives done through the School Service Commission (SSC). "Will all of them be rendered jobless? If there are any mistakes, they can be rectified," she said.

Another student ends life in TN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 25: Days after a Class 12 student committed suicide in a private school in Kallakurichi district of Tamil Nadu, a similar incident was reported from a Tiruvallur school hostel Monday morning.

A heavy police contingent is camping at Kezhachery in Tiruvallur district following the incident.

The student had gone to the school in the morning and then went back to her hostel room.

When she failed to return even after a couple of hours, school authorities alerted the hostel and on inquiry, she was found hanging in her room.

It may be recalled that on July 13, a plus two girl student jumped off from the hostel room in Kallakurichi which escalated into a major issue. The private school where the girl was studying was vandalised and the people took to the streets thus torching four school buses and one police bus.

Furniture and other materials were also destroyed.

With the police drawing flak from all corners over the manner in which it was handled, a heavy police contingent is deployed near the school. Police from other adjacent districts have also been called up to replenish stocks.

After the Kallakurichi incident, the state police are on the back foot and not to escalate any violence, many contingents of police have reached the spot.

Recruitment affected due to Covid: Rajnath



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The three services could recruit a total of 37,301 personnel in the last two years as against an average annual vacancy of 60,000 with the induction process hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, according to details provided by the government Monday.

The number of total recruits in 2019 was 95,843 with the Army topping the list with 81,812 personnel followed by the IAF with 7,548 and the Navy accounting for 6,483 personnel.

According to the data furnished by him, the Army currently has a shortfall of 1,16,484 personnel while the number in the Navy is 13,597 and the IAF 5,789. "The recruitment

The number of total recruits in 2019 was 95,843 with the Army topping the list with 81,812 personnel followed by the IAF with 7,548 and the Navy accounting for 6,483 personnel

process for the years 2020 and 2021, was severely affected and disrupted because of COVID pandemic, and the recruitment rallies had to be curtailed for the Army," he said.

"Nevertheless, 1280 officers and 12091 soldiers were inducted in the Army for the year 2020, and 1065 officers for the year 2021," he added. The defence minister said in case of the Navy and the Air Force, which follow an online recruitment process, the impact of the pandemic was lesser.

"In the case of the Navy, 377 officers and 2772 sailors were inducted in the year 2020 and 409 officers and 5547 sailors in the year 2021. Similarly, in the case of the Indian Air Force, 261 officers and 8,423 airmen were inducted during the year 2020 and 467 officers and 4609 airmen in the year 2021," he said.

The three services have already started the recruitment process for the year 2022 under the newly launched 'Agnipath' scheme.

Hijab row: SC to hear pleas against HC order

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 25: The Supreme Court will decide on a batch of petitions challenging the Karnataka High Court order that wearing hijab is not an essential practice in the Islam.

The affected girl students knocked the door of the apex court questioning whether the state can interfere with the students' choice to wear hijab to college without causing any harm to others.

Significantly, the Supreme Court had observed in 1994 that religious freedom is the hallmark of pluralism and inclusiveness.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan

had mentioned the hijab row case before the bench of the apex court for urgent hearing.

Bhushan sought early listing of the case and submitted that the case was pending for months.

The apex court had indicated that it may hear the case this week.

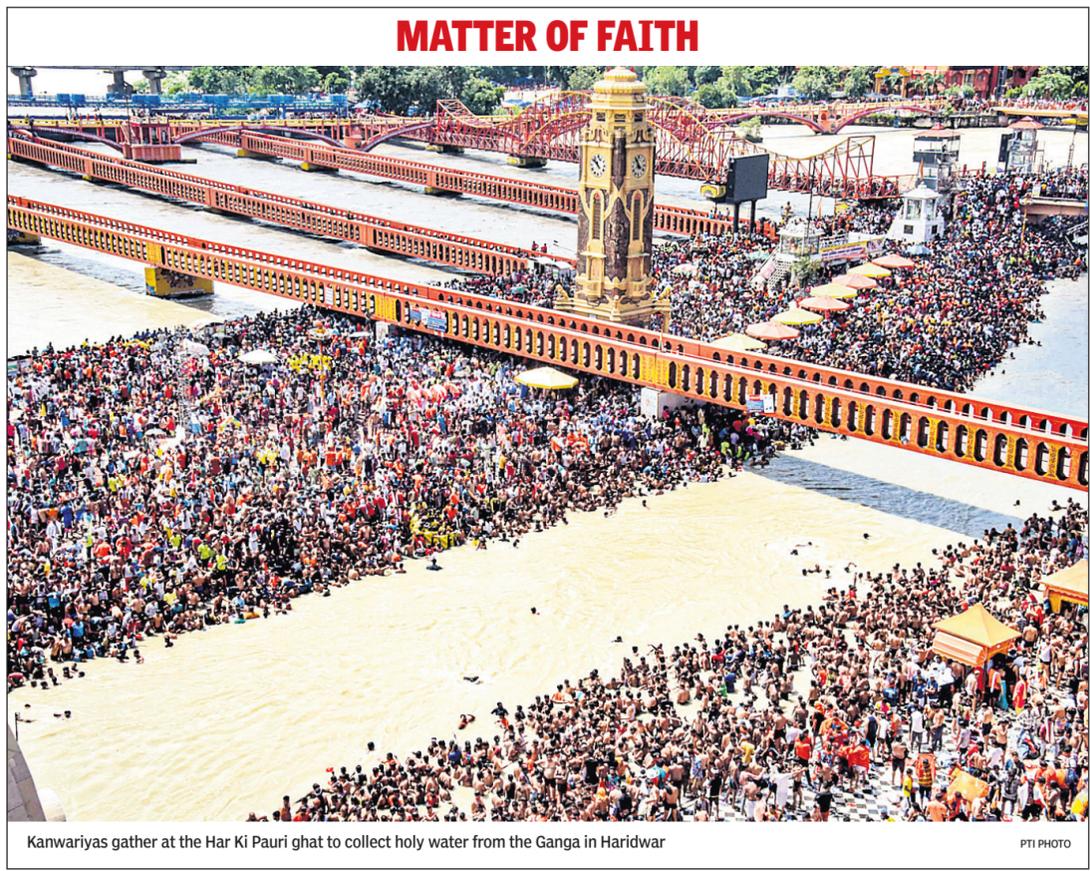
Niha Naaz, one of the petitioners, had argued that denying Muslim girls like her access to education and punishing them for wearing hijab to college, was a violation of their right to privacy.

"Freedom of conscience forms a part of the right to privacy," her petition said.

Naaz submitted that no law prohibited hijab and the Karnataka High Court order had created dichotomy of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience.

Naaz also argued in her petition that students like her had expected the HC to quash the Karnataka government order of February 5 directing college development committees to prescribe uniforms for them.

"State government's order is a ridiculing attack on Muslim students wearing hijab under the guise of attaining secularism and equality on the basis of uniform," Naaz contended.



Kanwariyas gather at the Har Ki Pauri ghat to collect holy water from the Ganga in Haridwar

PTI PHOTO

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Kovind to get Lutyens' bungalow, ₹2.5L pension

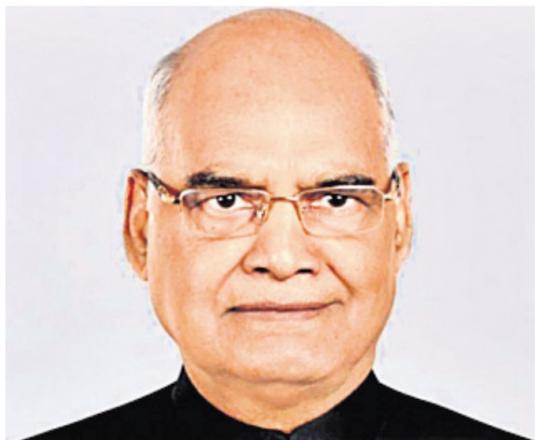
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Ram Nath Kovind, who demitted office Monday after serving as 14th President of India, will live in a fully-furnished lavish bungalow in Lutyens' Delhi for the rest of his life with a pension of ₹2.5 lakh.

The retired President is also entitled to a secretarial staff consisting of a private secretary, an additional private secretary, one personal assistant, two peons, and office expenses up to ₹1 lakh per annum.

According to The President's Emoluments And Pension Act, 1951, uploaded on <https://legislative.gov.in/>, the retired President is entitled to free medical attendance and treatment, and is entitled to highest class travel anywhere in India, accompanied by one person, by air, rail, or steamer. The President of India gets ₹5 lakh in income every month.

A former President, who demits office either after expiration of his term, or by resignation, gets a pension at the rate of 50 per cent of the



emoluments of the President per month for the rest of his or her life, according to the Act.

However, if any person before assuming the office of President, has held the office of the Vice President, he or she will not be entitled to any pension and other benefits

under the provisions of the Vice President's Pension Act, 1997.

According to the 1951 Act, a retired president will, for the rest of his or her life, be entitled to the use of a furnished residence (including its maintenance) without payment of rent, two telephones

(one for internet and broadband connectivity), one mobile phone with national roaming facility, and a car, or allowance to avail a car.

The law says that the spouse of the President is entitled to get a family pension at the rate of 50 per cent of what a retiring president gets, for the rest of her/his life, in case the president dies in office, or resigns, or demits office after the end of the term. The spouse is also entitled to medical attendance and treatment, free of charge, for the rest of his or her life.

Such spouse will be entitled to the use of a furnished residence (including its maintenance) without the payment of licence fee. He or she is also entitled to a secretarial staff consisting of a private secretary and a peon, and office expenses up to ₹20,000 per annum.

The spouse, quite like the retired president, is entitled to a free telephone and a car, or such car allowance for the rest of his or her life, and is allowed 12 top class single journeys anywhere in the country, by air, rail, or steamer, accompanied by a companion or a relative.

Six die after drinking illicit liquor in Gujarat

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, July 25: At least six persons have died in Ahmedabad and Botad districts of Gujarat after drinking illicit liquor, officials said Monday.

In both districts at least 14 to 20 persons fell ill after drinking the liquor. Ahmedabad Range Inspector General V. Chandrashekhar told the media. "Four dead bodies were brought from Dhandhuka Taluka at the government hospital, four other persons are under treatment, their condition is stable."

The officer further said, "Two bodies were disposed of in the morning and two were sent for the post-mortem and only after the report comes, the police will be able to know whether they died because of any chemical or any other reasons." But, the family members told the police that the deceased and those under treatment had drunk country liquor on Sunday night.

In Botad district, two patients were admitted to the hospital. Arti Parma's husband Vashram was rushed to the hospital on Monday morning after he complained of vision loss and vomiting.

According to her, Vashram and 10 others from the Rojida village had drunk country liquor and most of them had fallen ill. Bhavnagar Range Inspector General Ashok Kumar Yadav rushed to Botad.

MUTUAL FUND INVESTOR AWARENESS PROGRAM
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Date and Venue:
Wednesday, 27th July, 2022; 6:30 p.m. onwards.
at Hotel Radhika Regency, Bisra Road, Rourkela - 769 001, Odisha.
For registration, please contact: Ranjit Mallik, Mobile: 99370 88035.
Registration is compulsory.
The registration time will be from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm.
It is mandatory to follow the COVID safety guidelines during the event.
No walk-ins will be allowed.

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OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, GUDARI
Letter No. 1295 Date: 25.07.2022
CORRIGENDUM
Ref: e-Procurement Notice No-1249/ NAC Dtd 15.07.2022
No.C-853: This is certify that the Paper Cost mentioned in the DTCN/NIT No-GUD/NAC/01-2022- 23 received through the ONLINE, may be read as OFF LINE. The same must have to provide in shape of Demand Draft or Bankers Cheque in favour of Executive Officer, NAC, Gudari Payable at Gudari only by Registered POST/Speed POST on or before at 4PM dtd 03.08.2022 and the Technical Bid and Financial Bid received on-line shall be opened at 11 AM of Dated 04.08.2022.
Sd./- Executive Officer, NAC, Gudari
Date: 25.07.2022
OIPR-13184/11/0006/2223

'Tiger state' records most big cat deaths in country

FELINE GRAVEYARD

- There are six tiger reserves in the state, namely Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura, Panna and Sanjay Dubri
- Of the 27 tiger deaths this year, nine were males and eight females
- According to officials, territorial fights, old age, ailments, poaching and electrocution are some of the prominent reasons for their deaths



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, July 25: Madhya Pradesh, which is known as the 'tiger state' of India, has also earned the dubious distinction of accounting for the highest number of deaths of these majestic striped felines. Till July 15 this year, of the total number of 74 tiger deaths registered in the country, MP alone accounted for 27 of them - highest for any state during this period, the data published by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) on its website has revealed. The centrally located state is followed on this front by Maharashtra, which registered 15 deaths during the period. Karnataka comes next with 11 fatalities, Assam five, Kerala and Rajasthan four each, Uttar Pradesh three, Andhra Pradesh

two, Bihar, Odisha and Chhattisgarh one each, among other states, as per the NTCA figures. According to officials, territorial fights, old age, ailments, poaching and electrocution are some of the prominent reasons for their deaths. Madhya Pradesh had regained the coveted tag of being the 'tiger state' of the country in the 2018 census. If established, this force will

As per the All-India Tiger Estimation Report 2018, the state was home to 526 tigers, the highest for any state in the country. There are six tiger reserves in the state, namely Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura, Panna and Sanjay Dubri. Of the 27 tiger deaths this year, nine were males and eight females. In other cases, the gender of the animals was not mentioned in the data. The deceased included adults, sub-adults and cubs. Tigers live, breed and hunt in forests and they are at the top of the food chain. As apex predators, their presence indicates a healthy and broader ecosystem. Expressing concern over the rising number of tiger deaths, wildlife enthusiast and Right to Information (RTI) activist Ajay Dube told PTI, "In Panna, no tigers were found about 10 years back. After that, the NTCA advised the states to set up their own Special Tiger Protection Forces (STPFs) for safeguarding the big cats, especially from poachers." The Centre has made budgetary provisions for supporting the STPFs, but the MP government has so far not constituted any such force due to its own vested interests, he alleged. The forest department can only try to prevent poaching and it always strives to do so, he said. On the issue of formation of the STPF, he said Madhya Pradesh was the first state to give a nod for it, but it has not been formed yet somehow. On the positive side, Chauhan pegged the number of tiger births in the state this year at around 120, although the exact count could not be confirmed.

'Opposition obstructs development works'



The PM attending former RS MP Harmohan Singh Yadav's death anniversary programme is being seen in political circles as part of the BJP's outreach to the numerically strong Yadavs, the core vote bank of the Samajwadi Party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur, July 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday accused the Opposition of obstructing development works merely on the ground that they could not accomplish these during their tenure while alleging that they keep their political interests above that of society and the country. "Many times, the opposition parties put some obstacles in the government's work as they could not implement the decisions taken by them when they were in power," Modi said addressing virtually a programme on the 10th death anniversary of former Samajwadi Party Rajya Sabha member Harmohan Singh Yadav. "Now, if they (decisions) are implemented, they oppose it. People of the country don't like it," he added. Recalling words of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Modi underscored the primacy of the nation over party politics. "Parties exist because of democracy and democracy exists because of the country. Most parties in our country, especially all non-Congress parties, have followed this idea," he said. "I remember the 1971 India-Pakistan war when all major parties stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the government. When the first nuclear test was conducted by the country, all parties stood firmly with the government," Modi added. The prime minister said when the country's democracy was crushed during the Emergency, all major parties came together to save the Constitution. "Chaudhary Harmohan Singh Yadav was also a 'jujharu sainik' (combative soldier) of that struggle. In other words, the interests of our country and that of society are bigger than our ideologies," he stressed. "However, in recent times, there has been a trend to put ideology and political interests above the interests of the country and that of society," he added. Speaking on social justice, Modi said every section of society should get equal opportunities. "No one should be deprived of the basic needs. The country will move forward when the Dalits, backwards, tribals, women and divyang move ahead. Harmohanji considered education as the most important for this transformation," he said. Hailing Yadav, Modi said he not only took a political stand against the massacre of the Sikhs in 1984 but also came forward to save them. He risked his life and saved the lives of many Sikh families, Modi said, adding that the country recognised his leadership and awarded him the Shaurya Chakra for it. Modi said Yadav took forward the ideals of socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia in his long political life. "The work which he has done for society and his contribution to the politics of UP and the country will guide coming generations," he said. The prime minister said Lohia worked on the cultural strength of the country by organising Ramayana fairs and caring for the Ganga. "Lohiaji was of the view that socialism is a principle of equality. He used to alert (people) that the decline of socialism may convert it into inequality. In India, we have seen both these situations," he said. Modi said India is realising Lohia's dreams by initiatives like the Namami Gange, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Eklavya Schools for tribal areas and the promotion of education in mother tongue. Born October 18, 1921, Harmohan Singh Yadav was a towering leader of his community. He remained active in politics for a long time and served in various capacities as an MLC, MLA, member of the Rajya Sabha and the chairman of the Akhil Bhartiya Yadav Mahasabha. He was also instrumental in establishing many educational institutions in and around Kanpur with the help of his son Sukhran Singh. The PM attending his death anniversary programme is being seen in political circles as part of the BJP's outreach to numerically strong Yadavs, the core vote bank of the Samajwadi Party led by Akhilesh Yadav.

Akhilesh slams BJP over potholes in new expressway

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanauj (UP), July 25: Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav Monday took a jibe at the ruling BJP over a portion of the Bundelkhand Expressway developing deep potholes following rainfall in Jalaun. Yadav was in Kanauj to meet a party leader who recently lost his son. "At the time of inauguration of the Bundelkhand Expressway, prominent leaders had made tall claims. But after just five days of the inauguration, it developed big potholes. The expressway could not even handle a little rainfall," he told reporters. It seems there has been a 'dacoity' in its construction, not just loot, Yadav added. The 296-km-long expressway was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi July 16. A portion of the expressway developed deep potholes following heavy rainfall in Jalaun within a week of its inauguration. The potholes appeared at Chiriyia Salempur in Jalaun district. Uttar Pradesh Expressway Industrial Authority spokesperson Durgesh Upadhyay had said earlier, asserting that they were repaired instantly and the road opened to traffic.

TAJ & TEENS



Miss Teen International participants pose for photographs at the Taj Mahal complex, in Agra, Monday. PFI PHOTO

Incessant rainfall triggers flood-like situation in MP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, July 25: Continued rain for three days in several parts of Madhya Pradesh has prompted the authorities to make the people alert with a flood-like situation. Almost all big and small size rivers in the state including - Narmada, Betva, Tava, Shipra, Gopad-Banas and many more are reportedly flowing above danger marks. Highways and many roads connecting one from another part of the state are submerged with rainwater. Reports received from various locations suggested that there is a flood-like situation in many areas, schools, community health centres, government offices and residential colonies. A bridge built on National Highway connecting capital city Bhopal to Raisen collapsed Sunday night, slowing vehicular movement and causing traffic snarls on other roads. Similarly a 40-metre patch of newly constructed bridge on National Highway connecting Bhopal-Jabalpur and Nagpur (Maharashtra) caved



Accused of helping BJP, AIMIM lodges FIR against Cong leader

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, July 25: An FIR was lodged against Madhya Pradesh Congress vice-president Abbas Hafeez as he called All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) a 'B' party of the BJP and accused its chief Asaduddin Owaisi of helping the saffron party in recently concluded urban polls in Madhya Pradesh. Owaisi's AIMIM contested urban body elections for the first time in Madhya Pradesh and made remarkable entry. FIR against Hafeez was lodged in Bhopal for his statement against Owaisi. Hafeez made this claim in a video message uploaded on his official Twitter handle a couple of days back. Hafeez made this allegation referring to the result of Burhanpur mayoral post, where the Congress candidate lost election against the BJP with a margin of 542 votes. Congress claimed that the BJP won Burhanpur mayoral post with the help of AIMIM. In a statement, Hafeez argued that Congress lost by a slim margin because AIMIM cut into party's vote bank. He also alleged that AIMIM chief Owaisi has been 'caught red-handed helping BJP'. Subsequently, MP cadre of AIMIM Friday registered an FIR against Hafeez under section 504 (Intentional insult to provoke breach of peace) at Ashoka Garden police station in Bhopal. Although, FIR was registered by AIMIM leaders in Bhopal, the Congress accused the state ruling BJP's hand behind this issue. The development prompted senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh to jump in support of Hafeez. "What has Abbas Hafeez said so wrong? It is yet another evidence that BJP's police promptly registered the FIR. The BJP's police force doesn't show such promptness in other cases," Digvijaya wrote on Twitter. MP BJP unit was yet to respond on the issue. Earlier, Madhya Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) head



Govt trying to save big fish: Mayawati on transfer row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, July 25: Amid the controversy surrounding the transfers in Uttar Pradesh's health and public works departments, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati has alleged the government is trying to save some 'big fish' involved. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, who also holds the portfolio of health, had July 4 written to the additional chief secretary, medical and health, demanding an explanation over the 'lapse' in not "fully implementing the transfer policy in postings in the current session." At a meeting of the BSP office-bearers from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala Sunday, Mayawati alleged the people of Uttar Pradesh are harassed due to corruption at every level. "They are now witnessing how the game of corruption is being played in transfer-posting, which has become an industry. The state government has been compelled to unmask it but efforts are on to save some 'big fish' of this game," she alleged. After Pathak's letter surfaced on social media, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath formed a committee led by the chief secretary to probe the transfers in the health department. A few days ago, Adityanath had



CM Yogi Adityanath formed a committee led by the chief secretary to probe the transfers in the health department

ordered the suspension of five Public Works Department (PWD) officials, soon after the removal of its minister Jitin Prasada's officer on special duty, following allegations of irregularities and non-compliance to the transfer policy. Those suspended include Manoj Kumar Gupta, Engineer-in-Chief (Development) and the head of the department. The other officials are Engineer-in-chief (Project and Planning) Rakesh Kumar Saxena, Senior Staff Officer Shailendra Kumar Yadav, Administrative Officer Pankaj Dixit and Principal Assistant Sanjay Kumar Chauhasia. A disciplinary inquiry has been instituted against them.

of the day quote

Unlike previous rebellions in the party, the revolt this time was aimed at "finishing off" the Sena

UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA CHIEF

The outgoing President leaves behind a legacy where the Indian Constitution was trampled upon umpteenth times. Be it scrapping of Article 370, CAA or the unabashed targeting of minorities & Dalits, he fulfilled BJP's political agenda at the cost of the Indian Constitution

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

There is nothing to be concerned or worried about monkeypox as testing and surveillance have been intensified across the state and those among the primary contacts of the three infected persons in the state have tested negative

VEENA GEORGE | KERALA HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

One dies, 20 ill

Ballary (Karnataka): A 10-year-old girl died and 20 people fell ill after consuming contaminated water in the Gonal village of Karnataka's Ballary district, officials said Monday. The deceased girl has been identified as Sukanya. According to authorities, the tragedy occurred after gutter water got mixed with drinking water. Most villagers, who are ill, are being treated at the premises of the government school. The villagers after consuming the contaminated water started falling sick. They developed severe loose motion and vomiting symptoms on Saturday evening.

Pilot injured

Pune: A light training aircraft crashed in an open field in Pune's Indapur taluka, injuring a 22-year-old woman trainee pilot, officials said here Monday. The victim, identified as trainee-pilot Bhavika Rathod, sustained minor injuries in the incident. She was administered first-aid and then taken to a private hospital in Shegaon for treatment. According to aviation circles, the aircraft is a Cessna 152 VT-ALI in which pilot Rathod was on a solo flight sortie. The plane - owned by Carter Aviation, a flying school in Baramati - crashed owing to a suspected engine failure, according to the sources.

Three arrested

Chennai: Tamil Nadu forest officials have arrested three people including a minor boy for poaching and selling elephant tusks in Erode. The forest officials acted on a tip-off after the officials in the Kadambur forest range found that tusks were missing from the carcass of a wild elephant that was found dead on June 21 in the forest area. The accused who were arrested on Sunday evening are K. Sadaiyappan (45), P. Sengottayan (41), and a 17-year-old boy, all from Athiyur Puthur in the Sathyamangalam Forest range.

3 dead in Delhi

New Delhi: As many as three people were killed and two others sustained injuries when a car in which they were travelling rammied into a stationary DTC bus in the national capital on Monday, an official said. Deputy Commissioner of police Brijendra Kumar Yadav said that a PCR call was received at 7.04 a.m. regarding an accident on highway near Nangli Poona area.



PM 'Farmer Harassment' Scheme: No compensation to farmers martyred. No statistics of farmer suicides. Debts of 'friends' waived, not of farmers. False promise of 'right MSP'. Insurance companies getting benefit of Rs 40,000 crore in the name of crop insurance

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

190 PIGS CULLED

As many as 190 pigs have been culled so far in two pig farms after African swine flu was reported in Kerala's Wayanad district. The district administration Monday pointed out that culling will continue, but there is no need to be worried as things are under control



Leaders across parties congratulate Murmu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Political leaders cutting across party lines on Monday congratulated Droupadi Murmu on being sworn in as the country's 15th President with Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing it as a "watershed moment" for India, especially for the poor, marginalised and downtrodden.

Murmu, who succeeds Ram Nath Kovind, was administered the oath of office by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana at Parliament's Central Hall. The country's first tribal to occupy the highest Constitutional position and the second woman in the post, Murmu is India's youngest president at 64 and the first to be born after Independence.

Congratulating Murmu, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu said her election to the highest office is a testimony to the vibrancy and strength of Indian democracy. "My best wishes to her for a successful and fulfilling tenure as the First Citizen of India," he said.

Wishing her the best for a fruitful tenure, Modi said the entire nation watched with pride as she took the oath. Modi said, "The entire nation watched with pride as Smt. Droupadi Murmu Ji took oath as the President of India. Her assuming the Presidency is a watershed moment for India, especially for the poor, marginalised and downtrodden. I wish her the very best for a fruitful Presidential tenure."

"In her address after taking the



President Droupadi Murmu takes salute as she leaves after her oath ceremony in the Central Hall of Parliament in New Delhi

oath, President Droupadi Murmu Ji gave a message of hope and compassion. She emphasised India's accomplishments and presented a futuristic vision of the path ahead at a time when India is marking Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav," he said.

BJP chief J P Nadda, senior Union ministers and opposition leaders were among those who congratulated Murmu. Her first address to the nation as "people's president" encapsulated not just the significance of this truly historic moment but the spirit of New India, Nadda said.

Congratulating Murmu, Shah hoped that her tenure will take India's pride to new heights. "Many congratulations to Smt Droupadi Murmu on taking oath as the 15th

President of India. I am sure that your tenure will take the pride of the country to new heights. Today's historic day is a wonderful example of empowerment and 'Antyodaya' of every section following democratic values," Shah tweeted in Hindi.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said it is a remarkable day in the history of the Indian Republic and expressed confidence that her rich legislative and administrative experience will benefit the nation. Several Opposition leaders also took to Twitter to congratulate Murmu.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin greeted Murmu, saying the nation would benefit from her services. "I am sure that the nation

would stand to benefit from your services as the President of this great country and I wish you all the very best," Stalin said in his message.

Senior Congress leader and former Union minister P Chidambaram said it is "a proud moment" in India's history to see a lady born to a tribal family in a remote village of Odisha ascend to the office of President of India.

"Congratulations and Best Wishes to Honourable Madam Droupadi Murmu," Chidambaram said on Twitter. Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Sharad Pawar congratulated Murmu and expressed confidence that she would remain committed to the protection of India's democracy, constitution and law, and will make the country more proud during her tenure.

In her speech after taking the oath, Murmu touched on various issues, including the government's digital India and 'vocal for local' initiatives and its handling of the Covid pandemic. She also paid tribute to India's freedom fighters and said the country will have to move quickly on the twin tracks of 'sabka prayas' (everyone's effort) and 'sabka kartavya' (everyone's responsibility) to fulfil their expectations.

Murmu, who started public life as a councillor and later became Jharkhand governor, said she wanted to reassure all Indians, particularly the youth and women, that their interests will be supreme for her as president.

LINKING AADHAAR TO VOTER CARD

Move high court, SC to Surjewala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The Supreme Court Monday asked Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala, who has challenged the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021 that enables linking of electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem, to approach the competent high court.

A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and A S Bopanna, which asked Surjewala's counsel as to why he has not moved the high court first, granted the politician liberty to approach the high court. "Why do not you move the Delhi High Court? You will have the same remedy. You are challenging sections 4 and 5 of the Election Laws (Amendment) Act of 2021. Why have you come here? You can go to the Delhi High Court," the bench observed.

The counsel representing the Congress leader said three states will go to elections in the next six months, while underlining the significance of the petition.

The bench noted if there are different petitions, the Union of India can file a transfer petition and the apex court might club the matters before one high court.

"An efficacious alternative rem-



■ The top court was hearing Surjewala's plea challenging the constitutional validity of section 4 and 5 of the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021

■ A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and A S Bopanna, which asked Surjewala's counsel as to why he has not moved the high court first, granted the politician liberty to approach the high court

edy is available before the high court in the exercise of its jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution," it said.

"In view of the remedy which is available in the law, we grant liberty to the petitioner to move a petition under Article 226 (of the Constitution) before the competent high court," the bench said.

Rs 15,477cr spent on roads along China border in last 5 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The government constructed 2,088 kms of roads in areas bordering China in the last five years with an expenditure of Rs 15,477 crore, the government said Monday.

In total, the government spent Rs 20,767 crore in constructing 3,595 kms of border roads during the period that included those in areas along the frontiers with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar, according to the details provided in Lok Sabha.

Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt said the government constructed 2,088.57 kms of road along the border with China by incurring an expenditure of Rs 15,477.06 crore.

According to the details provided by him, Rs 4,242.38 crore was spent to construct 1,336.09 kms of road along the border with Pakistan, while an expenditure of Rs 882.52 crore was incurred to build 151.15 kms road along the frontier with Myanmar in the last five years. Bhatt said 19.25 kms of road was constructed along the border with Bangladesh at a cost of Rs 165.45 crore. There has been a renewed focus on developing infrastructure along the LAC with China following the eastern Ladakh standoff. The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry. As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area.

I-DAY PREPAREDNESS



Workers prepare Indian national flags ahead of Independence Day in Vasai, Maharashtra

8 killed in Purvanchal e-way accident

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Barabanki (UP), July 25: Eight people were killed and 16 injured when a Delhi-bound bus rammied into a parked bus on Purvanchal Expressway here Monday, police said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the incident and said the state government is providing all possible help to the victims. Superintendent of Police Anurag Vats said around 4.45 am, a private double-decker bus from Bihar's Muzaffarpur on its way to Delhi collided with an-

other bus parked on Purvanchal Expressway under the Lonikatra police station area.

Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Manoj Pandey said

the accident took place near an eatery close to Narendrapur Madraha village. The parked bus was on its way to Delhi from Sitamarhi, also in Bihar.

There were 36 passengers altogether in the two double-decker buses and police suspect the driver was sleepy at the time of the accident.

"The accident on Purvanchal Expressway in Barabanki is extremely saddening. I express my condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. Along with this, I wish speedy recovery to all injured. Under the supervision of

the state government, the local administration is engaged in providing all possible help," Modi was quoted as saying in a tweet by his office.

Police took the injured to a community health centre in Haidergarh, from where those seriously hurt were referred to a trauma centre in Lucknow.

At present, nine injured are being treated at the Lucknow trauma centre and three at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in the state capital. Other passengers were sent to their destinations after administering first aid.

Every sweet has its sour

Every sweet has its sour: Even the ubiquitous Indian sweet 'revdi' acquired a new found meaning when the Prime Minister chose it to target his political opponents accusing them of promising freebies in exchange for votes. He termed it a dangerous 'revdi culture'. However the BJP-ruled Gujarat government's frenzied sop-announcements in the run-up to the 2017 Gujarat Assembly elections makes it a veritable case of the pot calling the kettle black!

The rebuttal from Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, though, was swift. "Providing free and top quality services to the public-education, healthcare and the like

is not 'revdi' but providing undue benefits to some corporates surely is", he said, answering a swipe with a jibe. AAP cadres were quick to take to the streets statewide to protest the remark. "Government schools in Delhi have reported 99 per cent results in the recent board examinations, what about Gujarat", questioned AAP spokesperson.

According to official sources, the state government has closed down around 90 government primary schools and merged nearly 500 of them since 2020. A survey by the education department in 2019 had found that of the 32,772 government schools in Gujarat, 12,000 were run with just one or two teach-

ers and 15,171 with less than 100 students. Interestingly, except for a 17-month break, the BJP has been in power in Gujarat for 27 years and was earlier part of the Janata Dal government in the state too. Passing the buck is a handy political tool.

Five days after the PM's 'revdi' jibe, the AAP national convener, Kejriwal landed in the Prime Minister's home ground of Gujarat and almost in an air of obstinate defiance promised up to 300 units of free electricity per month per billing cycle,

if voted to power in the state. Power remains the bugbear of the average Gujarati and with the state government raising fuel surcharges by 20 paise to Rs 2.50, applicable on every unit of electricity consumed, for the fourth time in five months, it has unknow-

ingly created a fertile ground for AAP promise to yield tangible results. The recovery of the rise, already cleared by the Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission (GERC) headed by former chief secretary and Modi confidante,

Anil Mukim, will begin with the May-June, 2022 electricity bill. In summary, the power bill for consumers in Gujarat is set to get costlier by an additional Rs 270 crores per month and Rs 3,240 crores per annum from June 2022 onwards. The rise, coming close to the election is likely to help AAP to rub in the issue.

While Prime Minister Modi may have charged opposition governments with doling out freebies, its own government in Gujarat was doling out sops in the run up to the last elections with not a care in the world. In almost one fortnight before the elections were declared and the code of conduct came into force,

the Gujarat government announced projects and sops worth Rs 11,000 crores. Of these, four big schemes and some other benefits were introduced in the last 24 hours before the model code came into effect.

With elections due in Gujarat later this year, the same vicious cycle of sops and inaugurations has begun. The actual situation on the ground, however, presents a different picture. Only one university from Gujarat made it to the list of top 100 in 'overall' category of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings. Gujarat University was ranked 73rd.



international



Your (Droupadi Murmu) appointment to this chief responsibility in one of the largest democracies is testimony to the trust and confidence the government and the people have placed in your caliber and political acumen
RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | PRESIDENT, SRI LANKA

MONKEYPOX VAX GETS EU NOD
The European Commission has approved a smallpox vaccine for use against monkeypox after the World Health Organization declared monkeypox a global health emergency, the Danish drugmaker that developed the jab said Monday



of the day quote

We will not turn on the IAEA cameras until the other side returns to the nuclear deal
MOHAMMAD ESLAMI | NUCLEAR CHIEF, CHINA

The South China Sea is not a safari park for countries outside the region or a fighting arena for major powers to compete in
WANG YI | FOREIGN MINISTER, CHINA

One or two judges, who have always been anti-PML-N and anti-government, are repeatedly included in the bench. Bench-fixing is a crime just like match-fixing
MARYAM NAWAZ | VP, PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE

Junta kills 4 freedom activists

The killings mark Myanmar's first execution in nearly 50 years, hanging a former lawmaker, a democracy activist and two other political prisoners who had been accused of a targeted killing after the country's military takeover last year



VICTIMS' DETAILS

KYAW MIN YU, 53: Better known as Ko Jimmy, he was prominent in a failed 1988 pro-democracy movement and jailed for 18 years during a previous era of military rule

PHYZO ZEYA THAW, 41: A rapper and co-founder of the pioneering hip-hop group Acid, he spent several years in jail after being arrested in 2008. After democratic reforms in 2011, he ran as a member of parliament and was a lawmaker until 2020

HLA MYO AUNG AND AUNG THURA ZAW: The pair were convicted April 12 and sentenced to death for the March killing of a woman accused of being an informant for the military, the website of the army chief said

Executed include democracy figure, former lawmaker
Prison officials not letting families retrieve the bodies
New example of atrocious human rights record, Amnesty
17 people sentenced to death since coup - activists

atrocious human rights record," said Erwin Van Der Borcht, regional director of rights group Amnesty International. "The four men were convicted by a military court in highly secretive and deeply unfair trials."

Thazin Nyunt Aung, the wife of Phyzo Zeya Thaw, said by telephone prison officials had not let the families retrieve the bodies. The men had been held in the colonial-era Insein prison and a person with knowledge of the events said their families visited it last Friday.

One relative was allowed to speak to the detainees via an online platform, the source added. "I asked (prison officials) why didn't you tell me or my son that it was our last meeting... I feel sad about it," Khin Win Tint, the mother of Phyzo Zeya Thaw, told BBC Burmese.

An activist group, the Assistance Association of Political Prisoners (AAPP), said Myanmar's last judicial executions were in the late 1980s and that since the coup 117 people had been sentenced to death. The AAPP says more than 2,100 people have been killed by security forces since the coup. The junta says that figure is exaggerated.

Last Friday, the World Court rejected Myanmar's objections to a genocide case over its treatment of the Muslim Rohingya minority, paving the way for a full hearing.

INTERNATIONAL OUTCRY

This goes against our repeated calls for all detainees to be freed. It also will sharpen the feelings of the (Myanmar) people and worsen the conflict, as well as deepening Myanmar's isolation from the international community
YOSHIMA HAYASHI | FOREIGN MINISTER, JAPAN

I am outraged and devastated at the news of the junta's execution of Myanmar patriots and champions of human rights and democracy. These depraved acts must be a turning point for the international community
TOM ANDREWS | SPECIAL RAPporteur ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN MYANMAR, UN

We condemn the military regime's execution of pro-democracy leaders and elected officials for exercising their fundamental freedoms.
US EMBASSY IN MYANMAR

The junta's barbarity and callous disregard for human life aims to chill the anti-coup protest movement. European Union member states, the United States, and other governments should show the junta that there will be a reckoning for its crimes
ELAINE PEARSON | ACTING ASIA DIRECTOR AT HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

These horrendous executions were murders. They're a part of the junta's ongoing crimes against humanity and attack on the civilian population
MATTHEW SMITH | HEAD OF SOUTHEAST ASIA'S FORTIFY RIGHTS

China warns US of strong measures if Pelosi visits Taiwan

China claims democratically ruled Taiwan as its territory and has never ruled out taking the island by force. Taiwan rejects China's sovereignty claim and vows to defend itself



Beijing, July 25: China delivered sterner warnings to US officials about House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's possible visit to Taiwan, a foreign ministry spokesman said Monday, confirming a report by the Financial Times (FT).

The FT report, published Saturday, cited six people familiar with the Chinese warnings as saying they were significantly stronger than the threats that Beijing has made in the past when it was unhappy with US actions or policy on Taiwan, which is claimed by China. The private rhetoric suggested a possible military response, the FT cited several people familiar with the situation as saying. "We are seriously prepared," spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters at a regular briefing Monday when asked for comment about

Largest threat: Sunak

London: China represents the "largest threat" to Britain and the world's security and prosperity this century and there is evidence to suggest it has targeted countries from the US to India, UK Prime Ministerial candidate Rishi Sunak said Monday. The 42-year-old former Chancellor set out a series of plans he would undertake if elected the prime minister, including building a new NATO-style military alliance of "free nations" to defend against Chinese "technological aggression". "I would close all 30 of China's Confucius Institutes in the UK - the highest number in the world," said Sunak as part of his Conservative Party leadership campaign pitch to win over members' votes.

China has been stepping up military activity around Taiwan seeking to pressure the democratically elected government there to accept Chinese sovereignty Taiwan's government says only the island's 23 million people can decide their future, and while it wants peace will defend itself if attacked.

SHORT TAKES

Record Covid-19 cases in Australia

Sydney: The number of Australians admitted to hospitals with Covid-19 hit a record of about 5,450 Monday, official data showed, as the spread of highly contagious new Omicron sub-variants strains the healthcare system nationwide. The figure has grown since late June, as the BA.4 and BA.5 strains became dominant since they can evade immune protection, whether from vaccination or prior infection, while some experts say the latter can be as infectious as measles.

Russia shifts aim; to oust Zelenskyy

Kyiv: Russia appears to have reversed itself after the country's top diplomat said Moscow's overarching goal is to topple the government of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as Russian artillery barrages and air strikes continue to pummel cities across Ukraine. The remark from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov comes amid Ukraine's efforts to resume grain exports from its Black Sea ports, something that would help ease global food shortages, under a new deal tested by a Russian strike on Odesa over the weekend.

2 killed, 5 hurt in LA park shooting

Los Angeles: Two people were killed and at least five others were injured after gunfire erupted Sunday at a Los Angeles park where a car show was being held. The LA Police Department said the shooting occurred around 3:50 pm at Peck Park in LA's San Pedro neighbourhood. The LAPD tweeted it wasn't an active shooter situation but provided no more information. Police have not identified the victims. Seven people overall, four men and three women, were injured and taken to hospitals, according to the fire department.

Schools reopen in Sri Lanka

Colombo: Sri Lanka Monday reopened public and private schools, which were closed for nearly a month due to fuel shortages in the wake of the ongoing economic crisis. However, schools will be open only three days a week Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and students will be taught online on the other two days of the week, reports Xinhua news agency. The Ministry of Education also extended the first school term until September 7. Schools will also not conduct examinations at the end of the first term, and principals have been instructed to conduct alternative forms of evaluation.

Two Indian-origin men shot dead in Canada



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Two Indian-origin men have been shot dead in Canada, 10 days after an eerily similar killing of Ripudaman Singh Malik, who had been acquitted of charges of bombing an Air India plane, according to media reports.

Meninder Dhaliwal and Satinder Gill were killed Sunday at the British Columbia resort village of Whistler. The two latest victims were shot in broad daylight while sitting in a car in a public place like Ripudaman Malik and as in that incident, a car was also found burning nearby, according to media reports. The two incidents, however, have not been linked by officials.

Two persons who have not been publicly identified have been arrested in connection with the latest killings, CTV reported quoting officials. But there have been no arrests as yet in the killing of Malik. Dhaliwal, along with his brother Barinder, was on a list of six men, four of them of Indian descent, released last year by the Vancouver Police Department which called them "gangsters" who "pose a significant risk to the safety of the public".

Dhaliwal was a member of a gang known as "Brother Keeper" (BK), while Gill was not known to be involved with gangs, the Vancouver Sun reported. It added that the BK has been involved in violent conflicts over the years with the gang known as "United Nations" and with some members of "Red Scorpions".



Japan's Sakurajima volcano erupted again Monday morning, hours after a first devastating eruption which prompted authorities to raise the volcanic alert level to the highest possible and ensuring the evacuation of dozens of people
PTI PHOTO

Pope apologises for 'devastating' school abuses in Canada

Discoveries of hundreds of potential burial sites at former schools in the past year drew international attention to the legacy of the schools in Canada and their counterparts in the US. The discoveries prompted Pope to comply with the truth commission's call for him to apologise on Canadian soil for the Catholic Church's role



for the Catholic Church's cooperation with Canada's "catastrophic" policy of Indigenous residential schools, saying the forced assimilation of Native peoples into Christian society destroyed their cultures, severed families and marginalized generations in ways still being felt today.

I humbly beg forgiveness for the evil committed by so many Christians against the Indigenous peoples
POPE FRANCIS | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

in the country, Francis traveled to the lands of four Cree nations to pray at a cemetery. Four chiefs then escorted the pontiff in his wheelchair to powwow ceremonial grounds where he delivered the long-sought apology and was given a feathered headdress. His words went beyond his earlier apology for the "deplorable" acts of missionaries and instead took responsibility for the church's institutional cooperation with the "catastrophic" assimilation policy, which Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission said amounted to a "cultural genocide."

More than 150,000 native children in Canada were forced to attend state-funded Christian schools from the 19th century until the 1970s in an effort to isolate them from the influence of their homes and culture. The aim was to Christianize and assimilate them into mainstream society, which previous Canadian governments considered superior. The Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual abuse was rampant at the schools, with students beaten for speaking their native languages. That legacy of that abuse and isolation from family has been cited by Indigenous leaders as a root cause of the epidemic rates of alcohol and drug addiction now on Canadian reservations. Many in the crowd Monday wore traditional dress, including colorful ribbon skirts and vests with Native motifs. Others donned orange shirts, which have become a symbol of residential school survivors, recalling the story of one woman whose favorite orange shirt, a gift from her grandmother, was confiscated when she arrived at a school and replaced with a uniform.

Indian passengers to be strictly monitored for Covid-19: Pakistan

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, July 25: Pakistan has announced telescopic monitoring of Indian passengers arriving in the country through air or land routes amid a surge in Covid-19 cases caused by the Omicron sub-variant BA-275.

The Directorate of Health Sciences issued a circular in this regard on the instructions of Health Minister Qadir Patel, The Express Tribune reported.

Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport (AIIP) has made foolproof arrangements for monitoring of Indian passengers, the report said.

As per instructions, monitoring of Indian passengers will be conducted at all entry points including airports, Wagah-Attari border, and Peace Corridor Kartarpur Gurdwara.

Meanwhile, the coronavirus positivity rate has decreased from 2.96 per cent to 2.74 percent across Pakistan, according to the statistics issued by the National Institute of Health (NIH) Sunday.

During the past 24 hours, three more people died of Covid-19-related complications, the NIH said. During this period, 19,402 Covid-19 tests were conducted, out of which 532 came out positive.

The positivity rate was thus found to be 2.74 per cent, as compared to the previous day's 2.96 per cent. According to the NIH, 179 people were in critical condition.

Pakistan reels from another upsurge in the coronavirus pandemic, this paper reported that citizens in Karachi have largely forgone the standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued to curb the highly-contagious disease.

These SOPs include wearing face masks, maintaining distance from others, and washing hands or using hand sanitizers to maintain protective hygiene.



of the day quote

This collaboration is a first-of-its-kind initiative in the direction of utilising cutting-edge technology to deliver food. Curefoods has taken an innovative approach towards improving logistics and further serving the demand of consumers

ANKIT KUMAR | CEO, SKYE AIR MOBILITY

In times when the number of parcels is continuously increasing, owing to industry growth, we have clearly seen the advantage of having gig workers to help strengthen our delivery capabilities

ASHISH SIKKA | CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER, ECOM EXPRESS

With increased focus on efficiency and prudent capital management, we expect to sustain this positive momentum

ANKIT AGARWAL | MD, STL

SHORT TAKES

Canara Bank Q1 profit jumps 72%

New Delhi: Canara Bank Monday reported nearly 72 per cent jump in standalone net profit at ₹2,022.03 crore for June quarter 2022-23 on healthy core income growth and fall in bad loans. The bank had posted a net profit of ₹1,177.47 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to ₹23,351.96 crore in April-June 2022-23, as against ₹20,940.28 crore in the same period a year ago, Canara Bank said in a regulatory filing. The core income from interest generation increased 8.3 per cent to ₹18,176.64 crore during the quarter.

Diamond industry to plunge in FY23

Mumbai: India's diamond industry is likely to witness 15-20 per cent decline in revenue in this financial year due to falling demand and rising prices of rough gemstone globally, according to a report. Revenue of the Indian diamond industry is set to be cut 15-20 per cent to \$19-20 billion this fiscal, compared with a decadal high in the last financial year, following a double blow from falling demand and rising prices of roughs across the globe, Crisil Ratings said in a report.

Tech Mahindra net falls 16.4%

Mumbai: Tech Mahindra Monday reported a 16.4 per cent slide in its consolidated net profit at ₹1,132 crore for the June 2022 quarter. The Mahindra group company, which is the fifth biggest IT exporter in the country, had posted a net profit of ₹1,353 crore in the year-ago period. For the reporting quarter, its revenue grew 24.6 per cent to ₹12,708 crore as against ₹10,198 crore in the year-ago period.

Godrej investing ₹300cr in Dahej

Mumbai: Godrej & Boyce Monday said it is investing an additional ₹300 crore at its facility in Gujarat's Dahej to double revenues from the process equipment arm by FY25. Godrej Process Equipment (GPE) is investing to strengthen presence in the hydrogen and power sectors for delivery of specialised and large equipment for which ₹300 crore investment is being made, according to an official statement. The expansion will increase the manufacturing area by approximately 25,000 square metres, it said.



India is poised to be the fastest-growing major economy in the world and an engine of global growth

KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA | CHAIRMAN, ADITYA BIRLA GROUP

Sensex & Nifty break 6-day winning streak

Fears of global economic slowdown along with reaction to a slew of major quarterly earnings dictated the trend in the domestic market

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 25: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty snapped their six-day winning run to close lower by over a half per cent after profit booking in oil & gas, automobile and telecom stocks Monday. The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 306.01 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 55,766.22 dragged down by index heavyweight Reliance Industries. During the day, the barometer declined 535.15 points or 0.95 per cent to 55,537.08.

The broader NSE Nifty dipped 88.45 points or 0.53 per cent to 16,631 as 31 of its constituents closed in the red. Among the Sensex constituents, Mahindra & Mahindra fell the most by 3.80 per cent. Reliance Industries declined 3.31 per cent after the company's June quarter earnings failed to cheer investors.

The other laggards from the pack were Maruti Suzuki India, Kotak Mahindra Bank, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra and Nestle. Tata Steel, IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, HCL Technologies, Wipro and NTPC were among the gainers. "Fears of global economic slowdown along with reaction to a slew of major quarterly earnings dictated the trend in the domestic market. Recession fears are casting



Bulls finally lost steam after surging ahead for the last six consecutive sessions as investors booked profit in automobile, oil & gas, and telecom stocks, even though gains in metals and select capital goods stocks capped losses. Investors traded with caution ahead of the Federal Reserve meet on Wednesday

SHRIKANT CHOUHAN | HEAD OF EQUITY RESEARCH, KOTAK SECURITIES LTD

a shadow over the global markets as US and Euro business activity contracted unexpectedly owing to the downturn in manufacturing and service sectors," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge dipped 0.13 per cent and midcap index ended marginally higher by 0.03 per cent.

Among the BSE sectoral indices, auto declined by 1.69 per cent, energy by 1.32 per cent, telecom by 0.96 per cent, oil & gas by 0.86 per cent, healthcare by 0.71 per cent and realty by 0.42 per cent.

Basic materials, industrials and metal were among the gainers.

₹ strengthens to over 1-week high on broad \$ losses

The rupee rose by 12 paise to close at 79.78 against the US dollar Monday due to a weak dollar in overseas markets and an improved appetite for riskier assets. Stronger regional currencies also supported the rupee sentiment ahead of the US Fed policy decision Wednesday. Weak domestic equities and FII outflows, however, capped sharp gains. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 79.86 against the greenback and moved in a range of 79.70 to 79.87 in the day trade. In the previous session, the rupee had closed at 79.90 against the American currency. According to Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, the Indian rupee started the week on the front foot following stronger regional currencies and weaker crude oil prices.

In Asia, markets in Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower, while Seoul settled in the green. Markets in Europe were trading in the green during mid-session deals. The US markets had ended on a lower note Friday.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.24 per cent to \$104.52 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors of flooded shares worth ₹675.45 crore Friday, as per exchange data.

Debt raised by state PSUs to be considered borrowing by state: FM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday said the borrowing by state public sector undertakings or their special purpose vehicles (SPVs) will be considered as borrowing by the state government needing consent.

Instances of borrowing by certain state public sector companies, SPVs and other equivalent instruments, where principal and/or interest are to be serviced out of the state budgets, had come to the notice of the Ministry of Finance, she said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

"Considering the effect of bypassing the Net Borrowing Ceiling (NBC) of the States by such borrowings, it was decided and communicated to the States in March 2022 that borrowings by State Public Sector companies/corporations, Special purpose vehicles (SPVs) and other equivalent instruments, where principal and/or interest are to be serviced out of the State Budgets and/or by assignment of taxes/cess or any other State's revenue, shall be considered as borrowings made by the State," she said.

This kind of borrowing would need the consent of the Union Government under Article 293(3) of the Constitution of India, she said. All States have enacted their Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act Compliance to the State FRBM Act is monitored by the respective State Legislatures.

Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance generally follows the fiscal limits mandated by the accepted recommendations of the Finance Commission while exercising the powers to approve borrowings by States under Article 293 (3) of the Constitution of India.

Direct tax collection surges by 41% in Q1

Tax mop-up for April-June quarter in FY23 stands at ₹3,54,569.74 crore which was ₹2,50,881.08 crore last year



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Net direct tax collection in the April-June quarter of the current fiscal rose by 41 per cent to ₹3,54,569.74 crore, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary informed the Lok Sabha.

During the April-June period of 2021-22, the government had collected a net direct tax of ₹2,50,881.08 crore. At the same time, net indirect tax collection including Goods and Services Tax (GST) and custom duty increased by 9.4 per cent to ₹3,44,056 crore as against ₹3,14,476 crore in the first quarter of the previous fiscal, he said in a written reply.

"Various factors like rapid economic recovery post-Covid, better compliances due to various measures taken by the government have contributed to this increase," he said. He also informed that no tax exemption has been granted to food items during the current financial year.

Chaudhary said several steps have been taken by GST Council to improve compliance including auto population of distance based on the PIN Code in the e-waybill and

CRYPTOCURRENCIES ARE UNREGULATED IN INDIA AS OF NOW, SAID MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE PANKAJ CHAUDHARY

automatic calculation of interest in the GSTR 3B for the delay in payment of GST liability.

In another question, he said, Cryptocurrencies are unregulated in India as of now.

Cryptocurrencies and Non-fungible Tokens (NFTs) are by definition borderless and require international collaboration to prevent regulatory arbitrage, he said.

"Therefore any legislation for regulation or for banning can be effective only after significant international collaboration on evaluation of the risks and benefits and evolution of common taxonomy and standards," he said.

Replying to another question, he said that Goods and Services Tax (GST) on health insurance services is levied at the standard rate, i.e., 18 per cent at present.

Probe on WhatsApp must go on: CCI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) Monday told the Delhi High Court that WhatsApp's updated privacy policy of 2021 has not been withdrawn and its probe concerning the policy should be allowed to proceed.

The CCI also said the scope of its inquiry has no overlap with the issue of an alleged infringement of user privacy pending before the Supreme Court. The submissions were made by CCI before a bench headed by Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma on appeals by WhatsApp LLC and Facebook Inc against a single-judge order dismissing their challenge to the probe ordered by the CCI into the instant messaging platform's updated privacy policy.



In January last year, CCI on its own had decided to look into WhatsApp's updated privacy policy based on news reports regarding the same. WhatsApp and Facebook had subsequently challenged before the single judge CCI's March 2021 order directing a probe against them, saying that the issue concerning its new policy was already pending consideration before the high court and the Supreme Court.

5G spectrum race starts today; Jio, Airtel lead

The 5G era will open 10 times faster than 4G and 30 times faster than 3G, allowing millions to have an experience never seen before

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 25: With the mega 5G spectrum auction (worth ₹1.9 lakh crore) beginning from Tuesday amid the tussle over captive private 5G networks, Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel are set to boost their market share as India

prepares for a 5G era.

The four big players in the race -- Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Adani group -- having submitted a combined ₹21,400 crore in earnest money deposit (EMD), are ready with their war chests and strategies for the mega bid, that is likely to be around ₹1.5 lakh crore if the last two auctions are kept in mind.

Reliance Jio Infocomm has submitted an EMD of ₹14,000 while Bharti Airtel has put in ₹5,500 crore. In the 2021 auctions for 4G spectrum, Reliance Jio used 77.9 per cent of their earnest money de-



posit while Airtel used 87.7 per cent.

The 5G auction -- entailing 72 GHz of the spectrum - will conclude by July-end and the rollout is expected by September this year.

The Department of Telecom has released a notice inviting applications (NIA) for the auction of spectrum

in 600, 700, 800, 900, 1800, 2100, 2300, 2500, 3300 MHz and 26GHz bands.

The NIA provides explicit clarity on the subject of Captive Non-Public Networks (CNPN).

The telcos are allowed to surrender spectrum that will be auctioned after a minimum period of 10 years from the date of acquisition.

Last month, in a big relief to telecom companies, the DoT scrapped the 3 per cent floor rate on spectrum usage charge (SUC).

With the 5G auctions, India is one step closer to realising a 5G-led future, with a strong base of 5G-capable devices already in place.

SHARE LOCK-IN PERIOD ENDS Zomato falls to record low

REUTERS

Bangalore, July 25: Shares of Indian food delivery company Zomato fell more than 14% to a record low Monday as a one-year share lock-in period for promoters, employees and other investors expired following the 2021 listing.

Zomato made a stellar debut July 23, 2021 in the Mumbai market, but its shares have lost more than 60% of their value since then on concerns about valuations and as global growth stocks cratered.

Investors are also not comfortable with the acquisition of Blinkit, he said, adding that the fundamen-



tals of the company were still good. Including Monday's losses, Zomato shares have lost nearly 30% since the company announced its deal to buy local grocery delivery startup Blinkit in June.

On Monday, the stock posted its biggest intraday percentage drop since January 24 in heavy-volume trade of 2.7 times the 30-day average.

The firm now has a market value of ₹366 bn compared with ₹1.29 trn at its all-time high in Nov

Analysts say Zomato needs to pump more money into Blinkit as the quick-commerce sector grows at a rapid clip, with rivals Swiggy, Reliance-backed Dunzo, Tata-backed BigBasket and Zepto making big investments.

On Friday, Reuters reported that Domino's India franchise will consider taking some of its business away from Zomato and Swiggy if their commissions rise further.

PM to launch first int'l bullion exchange July 29

The launch will facilitate efficient price discovery with the assurance of responsible sourcing and quality, apart from giving impetus to the financialisation of gold in India, according to a statement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the country's first international bullion exchange at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) Friday.



He will also lay the foundation stone of the unified regulator International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).

The prime minister, during his visit, will launch the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX), which will facilitate efficient price discovery with the assurance of responsible sourcing

and quality, apart from giving impetus to the financialisation of gold in India, according to a statement by IFSC Authority. "This shall empower India to gain its rightful place in the global bullion market and serve the global value chain with integrity and quality. This also re-enforces the commitment of the Government of India towards enabling India to be able to influence global bullion prices as a principal consumer," the statement said.

Also, the prime minister will launch NSE IFSC-SGX Connect. Under this system, all orders on Nifty derivatives placed by members of Singapore Exchange Limited (SGX) will be routed to and matched on the NSE-IFSC order matching and trading platform.

The connect platform will deepen liquidity in derivative markets at GIFT-IFSC.

Brokers and dealers from India and across international jurisdictions are expected to participate in large numbers for trading derivatives through the connect.

Several key announcements will also be made during the visit of the prime minister, the statement said.

Chief Minister of Gujarat Bhupendra Patel, Union Minister of Home Affairs and Co-operation Amit Shah, Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Ministers of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary and Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad will be attending the events.

"In the six month period ended June 30, 2022, we recorded \$170 million of impairment losses resulting from changes to the carrying value of our bitcoin and gains of \$64 million on certain conversions of bitcoin into fiat currency by us," the electric car-maker revealed.

"As with any investment and consistent with how we manage fiat-based cash and cash-equivalent accounts, we may increase or decrease our holdings of digital assets at any time based on the needs of the business and our view of market and environmental conditions," it added.

In the Q2 earnings call with analysts, Musk said that the reason the company sold a bunch of its Bitcoin holdings "was that we were uncertain as to when the Covid lockdowns in China would alleviate".

Axar helps India seal series

Not converting fifties into tons upsets Iyer



MAN OF THE MOMENT: Axar Patel goes for a maximum during his match-winning innings against West Indies in the 2nd ODI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Port of Spain, July 25: Axar Patel smashed a whirlwind unbeaten 35-ball 64 (3x4, 5x6), his maiden ODI fifty, to steer India to a series-clinching two-wicket win over the West Indies in a tense second match here.

Set a stiff target of 312, the visitors were tottering at 205/5 in 38.4 overs but Patel rescued India with his six-hitting prowess, taking the visitors home with two balls to spare Sunday.

Needing six runs off last three balls, Patel clobbered Kyle Mayers (2/48) straight over his head for a

six as India took an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

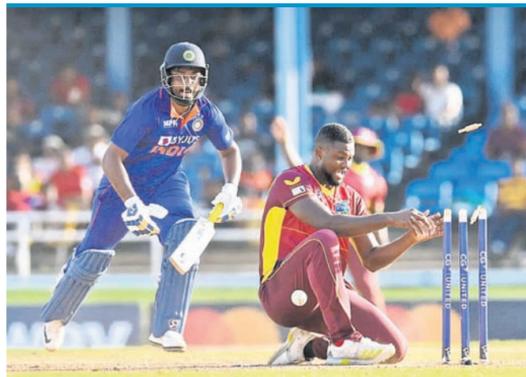
Patel added 51 off 33 balls with Deepak Hooda (33). This was after Shreyas Iyer (63, 71b, 4x4, 1x6) and Sanju Samson (54, 51b, 3x4, 3x6) took the chase deep with well-paced fifties.

"It's very special, to get it in a crucial, series-winning cause is amazing. When I went out, I aimed for 10-11 an over. We thought it could be done as we have IPL experience," Patel, who was adjudged man of the match, said. "We wanted to be calm and keep cover of the rate. This was special as this is my first ODI since 2017, even my first

fifty came here."

India skipper Shikhar Dhawan was lavish in his praise for the all-rounder. "The way Axar played was amazing. Our domestic and IPL cricket keeps us ready as we play in front of big crowds. As Axar said, he's done it multiple times in IPL. That brings a big stage."

West Indies skipper Nicholas



DISAPPOINTING END: Romario Shepherd completes Sanju Samson's run out after the latter's maiden ODI fifty

Pooran said his side lost the game "in the last six overs". "Axar played well and we didn't hold our nerves. We could not keep things down in the last five overs. We felt that it got easier to hit spinners. One wicket would have opened up things but Axar played brilliantly," he said.

Opting to bat, Shai Hope produced a masterclass 135-ball 115 (8x4, 3x6), while skipper Nicholas Pooran showed his big-hitting prowess during his 74 (77b, 1x4, 6x6) as West Indies posted an impressive 311/6.

In reply, Shubman Gill (43, 49b, 5x4) looked in good touch as he gave India a decent start but captain Dhawan (13) found the going tough at the other end. Dhawan was the first to depart with Mayers producing a stunning catch at third man off the bowling of Romario Shepherd (1/69).

Mayers then pegged India back with two quick wickets, first getting rid of a well-set Gill and then removing Suryakumar Yadav (9), who once again dragged one to his stump.

Iyer and Samson tried to take the chase deep with a 99-run partnership off 94 balls but once both departed, India still needed 105 runs from 11 overs. It was the Patel show after that as he kept fighting despite losing Hooda and Shardul Thakur.

Earlier, Hope played the role of an anchor to perfection as he added 65 runs with opener Mayers (39), before forging another 62-run stand with Shamarh Brooks (35). Hope then found his perfect ally in skipper Pooran as the two shared a 117-run stand.

For India, spin duo of Patel (1/40) and Hooda (1/42) were economical but Yuzvendra Chahal (1/69) was expensive as he was smashed for six sixes and two fours. Mohammed Siraj (0/47) bowled well but Avesh Khan (0/54 in 6 overs) had a forgettable ODI debut, while Thakur (3/54) made amends in the back end.

Hope looked in full flow as he played some exquisite shots on the off side before reaching the three figure mark in his 100th ODI game with a six in the 45th over. West Indies amassed 93 runs in last 10 overs.

"Hope's innings was impressive, it was exceptional as a batting group. We wanna win, we wanna win pretty bad in the next game. That's all we are aiming for," said Pooran.

BRIEF SCORES

West Indies 311/6 (Shai Hope 115, Nicholas Pooran 74, Kyle Mayers 39, Shamarh Brooks 35, Shardul Thakur 3/54, Axar Patel 1/40) **lost to India 312/8** (Axar Patel 64 n o, Shreyas Iyer 63, Sanju Samson 54, Shubman Gill 43, Deepak Hooda 33; Alzarri Joseph 2/46, Kyle Mayers 2/48) by 2 wickets.

Nepal, Bangladesh begin campaigns with victories



Players of Nepal and Maldives tussle for ball during their match, Monday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Nepal and Bangladesh open their SAFF U-20 Championship football tournament campaigns with contrasting wins against their respective opponents at the Kalinga Stadium here, Monday.

Nepal had a comfortable outing as they thrash Maldives 4-0 in the tournament opener. Bangladesh, on the other hand, had to toil hard to come out 1-0 winners against Sri Lanka.

Nepal dominated the game against Maldives from the word go, but they had to wait till 42nd minute to find the opener when Dipesh Gurung's strike found the back of the net.

The second half was merrier for Nepal as they scored two quick goals in five minutes. Sugam Suwal doubled Nepal's advantage in the 57th minute before Kritish Ratna Chhunju making it 3-0 on 62 minutes. Managya Nakarmi completed the scoresheet in the added-on time.

Pucovski, 7 others to head to India for camp

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

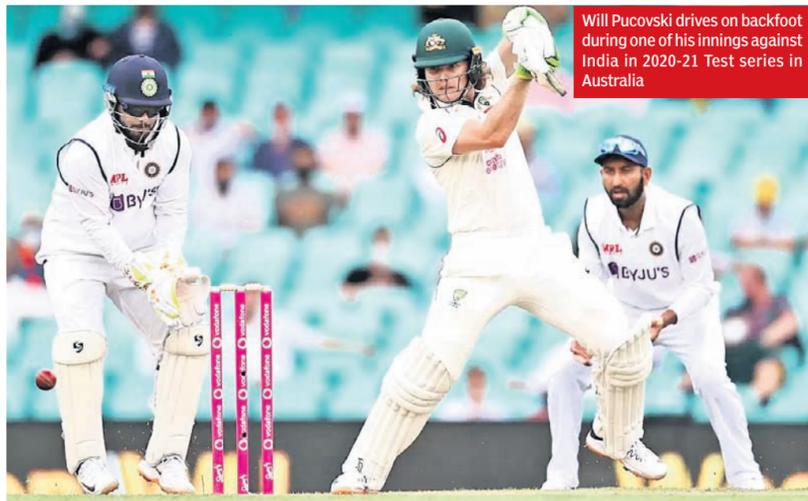
Sydney, July 25: Australian batter Will Pucovski and seven other players will travel to Chennai for a 10-day training camp next month as part of an exchange programme with MRF Pace Foundation.

The 24-year-old Pucovski had made his Test debut against India in January last year but had dislocated his shoulder during the match and had to undergo surgery. He then suffered a concussion last October, which kept him out of action.

He returned at the back end of the summer, making 59 in the Marsh Sheffield Shield final. He was not named in the Australia 'A' squad for Sri Lanka tour but the move to include Pucovski in the camp suggests the Victorian could be in the frame for the Test tour of India.

Josh Philippe, Teague Wyllie and Cooper Connolly, Henry Hunt and spinners Matt Kuhnemann, Todd Murphy and Tanveer Sangha are the other players who will head to India for the training camp, August 7-17.

The 10-day camp is part of a longstanding reciprocal deal between Cricket Australia and the MRF Pace Foundation in Chennai, cricket.com.au reported. The eight



Will Pucovski drives on backfoot during one of his innings against India in 2020-21 Test series in Australia

players will integrate with local players in training and in a two-day and one-day match.

Former Sri Lanka all-rounder Thilan Samaraweera is part of the coaching group. Australia pace legend Glenn McGrath will also be present as a coach as a part his role as a consultant at the MRF

Academy.

"It is exciting to renew the partnership with the MRF Academy and provide this group of young players a truly unique experience," said Australian men's selector Tony Dodemaide.

"Some have toured the subcontinent in the past so this trip will

further refine their skills while others will gain valuable new experience in these testing conditions."

Indian pacers Chetan Sakariya and Mukesh Choudhary will be playing in the KFC T20 Max series in Queensland next month as part of an exchange programme.

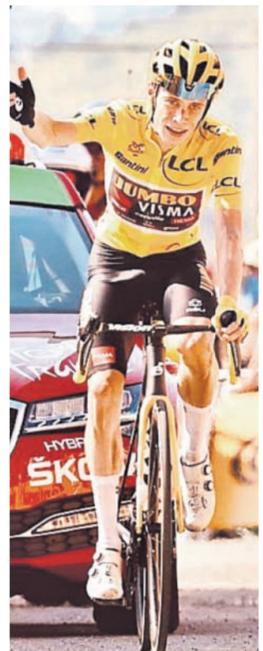
Jonas Vingegaard claims his maiden Tour de France title

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, July 25: Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark claimed his first Tour de France title in the 109th edition of the most prestigious road cycling race here.

Vingegaard, who finished second behind Tadej Pogacar last year, has become the first Danish rider to have won the competition since Bjarne Riis in 1996.

The 25-year-old Dane finished the three-week race two minutes and 43 seconds ahead of Pogacar, thanks to his excellent performance in the mountain stages. He also won the polka-dot jersey for the mountains classification.



White jersey holder Pogacar finished runner-up overall, and the 2018 winner Geraint Thomas rounded out the podium, Xinhua reports.

Vingegaard's teammate Wout van Aert became the winner of the green sprint jersey, and team Jumbo-Visma combined for six stage wins out of 21.

Jasper Philipsen won Sunday's ceremonial final stage to the Champs-Elysees, outclassing Dylan Groenewegen and Alexander Kristoff in the sprint.

PUGILIST ALLEGES THAT HER 'COACHES ARE BEING HARASSED REGULARLY'

Politics is affecting training: Lovlina

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, July 25: Olympic bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain Monday alleged that her preparations for the Commonwealth Games are being hampered because of the "continuous harassment" her coaches are facing from the authorities.

The Indian boxing squad reached the Games Village here Sunday night after a training stint in Ireland but Lovlina's personal coach Sandhya Gurung could not enter the Village since she does not have accreditation.

Lovlina, perhaps, wanted her personal coach Amey Kolekar with her during the CWG but he did not feature in the long list. The decorated pugilist expressed her anger in a long twitter post. "Today with a lot of grief, I

want to tell everyone about the continuous harassment going on with me. The coaches who helped me win an Olympic medal are always being sidelined which has severely impacted my training schedule," Lovlina wrote in her twitter post.

"One of the coaches is Sandhya Gurungji, who is a Dronacharya awardee. I had to plead with folded hands to get my coaches included in the contingent. I am feeling mentally harassed because of this ordeal," she posted.

"Right now, my coach Sandhya Gurung is standing outside the CWG village and not being allowed to enter. Just eight days before the start of my event, my training schedule has been hampered. My other coach has been sent back to India," she said. Lovlina alleged that she en-

dured similar treatment before the World Championship in Istanbul and she fears that something similar will happen at the upcoming Birmingham Games.

"I don't understand how will I focus on the Games (CWG) amidst all this? My World Championships also suffered because of this. I don't want my CWG to be affected due to politics. Hoping I will overcome this politics and win a medal for my country. Jai Hind," she wrote.

The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) said the accreditation process is being managed by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and hoped that issue will be sorted soon.

"The IOA and BFI are working to get Sandhya's accreditation continuously. It is in IOA's hand but it will come by today or tomorrow.

We had given all names beforehand but there is a quota system. Based on the number of athletes who have qualified there is 25 per cent quota. So we had four officials, which includes coach, doctor etc," BFI secretary Hemanta Kalita told this agency.

"We had requested the IOA and they have increased the quota to eight. Four will stay inside the village and four have to stay outside, they can enter the village, and spend the day but at night they have to go back out," Kalita added.

The other coach Lovlina is talking about is her strength and conditioning coach Amey Kolekar, who is also her personal coach. His name was not on the long list. Kolekar was with her in Ireland. The Indian team already has a strength and conditioning coach, who will help out the pugilists

during the Games.

Meanwhile the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said it will try that a proper resolution is reached. "The SAI has taken up the matter with BFI. The Sports Ministry is in talks with IOA to solve the matter and ensure best possible preparation for Lovlina who is a strong medal contender," SAI official said.

Earlier, Boxing's assistant coach Sandhya Gurung and sports psychologist Gayatri Vartak were included in the Indian contingent days before the start of the Commonwealth Games.

Dronacharya awardee Gurung is an assistant coach in the national camp. Vartak is a mental conditioning coach who worked with the Indian table tennis team at the national camp in May.

