



COOL CLAIM

Sacred Games actor Kubbra Sait says her life is an open book and she has nothing to hide

LEISURE P2



MAJOR BLOW

In a significant effort to punish Russia, the EU agrees to ban the overwhelming majority of Russian oil imports after negotiations

INTERNATIONAL P10



SHOOTERS' GOLDEN START

Elavenil Valarivan, Ramita and Shreya Agrawal claim gold medal in the 10m air rifle women's team event at ISSF World Cup

SPORTS P12

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Singer KK dies after Kolkata concert

KOLKATA: Singer Krishnakumar Kunnath, better known as KK, who was in Kolkata for a concert, died Tuesday evening. He was 53. The playback singer collapsed after the concert and was rushed to a private hospital in the city. He was 'brought dead' to Kolkata's CMRI Hospital around 10 pm, hospital authorities said. The singer had earlier in the day posted photos from his concert at Kolkata's Nazrul Mancha. One of the most versatile singers of the Indian film industry, KK has recorded songs in several languages, including Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Bengali, among others.

Govt raises premium for PMJJBY, PMSBY

NEW DELHI: The government Tuesday raised the premium for its flagship insurance schemes -- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) in order to make them economically viable. The premium rate of PMJJBY has been revised upward to Rs 1.25 per day, translating into an increase from Rs 330 to Rs 436 annually. The annual premium for PMSBY has been hiked from Rs 12 to Rs 20, an official statement said. The new premium rates are effective from June 1, 2022.



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2 Odia jawans get Shaurya Chakra

POST NEWS NETWORK
New Delhi, May 31: President Ram Nath Kovind conferred Shaurya Chakra, the third highest peacetime gallantry award, on two Odia security personnel posthumously during a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhawan here Tuesday. Special Operation Group (SOG) commandos—Sudhir Kumar Tudu and Debashis Sethy—had sacrificed their lives during an anti-Maoist operation in Kalahandi district in September 2020. While Sudhir had joined the police force as a constable in September 2013 and was inducted to SOG in June 2018, Debashis had joined in October 2013 and was inducted to SOG in March 2016, it was learnt. Sudhir's mother Jauna Tudu and Debashis' parents Chhaji Sethy and Sanatan Sethy received the award.

AT LORDS' SERVICE



Carpenters busy constructing chariots at Rath Yard in Puri, Tuesday, ahead of the car festival of the sibling deities

4 BJD candidates file nominations for RS elections

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, May 31: Four Biju Janata Dal (BJD) candidates Tuesday filed their nomination for the election to as many Rajya Sabha (RS) seats in Odisha. BJD spokesperson Sulata Deo, media advisor to government Manas Mangaraj and RS member Sasmit Patra have filed their nominations for the full-term RS seats, while recently joined tribal leader Niranjan Bishi submitted his papers for the RS bypoll. The candidates filed their nominations before the returning officer in the Odisha Assembly in presence of several ministers and senior leaders of the BJD.

Felling of trees for MLA quarters decried

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, May 31: The protest against felling of trees for construction of MLA quarters in Unit-IV area of the city continued Tuesday with a group of environmentalists staging a demonstration at the project site. The protesters led by Mahanadi Bachao Andolan convener Sudarshan Das received support from former MP and Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy, MLA Suresh Routray, former bureaucrat Arabinda Behera, former MLA Dillip Srichandan and other activists. The protesters pasted stickers on the trees saying 'Gachha Kahuchi... Mote Katani, Nijara Sarvanash Dakani' (Tree is saying... Do not cut me and do not invite destruction for yourself). P3

AT 4.1%, Q4 GROWTH LOWEST IN FY 2021-22

GDP growth during 2021-22 is estimated at 8.7% as against a contraction of 6.6% in 2020-21 fiscal

AGENCIES
New Delhi, May 31: India's economy grew by 4.1 per cent in January-March quarter of 2021-22—the lowest quarterly growth in the last fiscal—as the growth was 20.1 per cent, 8.4 per cent, and 5.4 per cent, in the first, second and third quarters, official data said, Tuesday. In the previous fiscal 2020-21, the economy had contracted by 6.6 per cent as the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted business activities. China had registered economic growth of 4.8 per cent in the first three months of 2022. The 4.1 per cent expansion during the January-March period of 2021-22 is the lowest quarterly growth in the last fiscal. The growth was 20.1 per cent, 8.4 per cent, and 5.4 per cent, in the first, second and third quarters, respectively, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). The GDP had grown by 2.5 per



GVA growth in manufacturing sector accelerated to 9.9%
GVA growth in both mining and construction was 11.5%
Agriculture sector growth decelerated to 3%

cent in the January-March quarter in the previous year. The NSO, in its second advance estimate released in February, had projected the GDP growth during 2021-22 at 8.9 per cent. The Economic Survey tabled in Parliament in February had estimated the GDP growth for the current fiscal (2022-23) in the range of 8-8.5 per cent. According to the NSO data, India's real GDP grew to ₹147.36 lakh crore from ₹135.58 lakh crore in 2020-21. Gross value added (GVA) growth during the fiscal ending March 2022 was at 8.1 per cent as against a contraction 4.8 per cent in the preceding year. The GVA growth in the manufacturing sector accelerated to 9.9 per cent during the year as against a contraction of 0.6 per cent earlier. GVA growth in both mining and construction was 11.5 per cent. These two large segments of the economy had contracted in the Covid-hit 2020-21. However, agriculture sector growth decelerated to 3 per cent from 3.3 per cent in FY21. Electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services segment grew by 7.5 per cent during 2021-22. The segment had contracted by 3.6 per cent in the previous fiscal. GVA growth in services sector—trade, hotel, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting—was 11.1 per cent during 2021-22 as against a contraction of 20.2 per cent in the previous year. Financial, real estate and professional services grew by 4.2 per cent in the year over 2.2 per cent earlier. Public administration, defence and other services posted 12.6 per cent growth against (-5.5 per cent in 2020-21. "The growth in GDP during 2021-22 is estimated at 8.7 per cent as compared to a contraction of 6.6 per cent in 2020-21," the NSO said.

Brajarajnagar bypoll sees 69% voter turnout

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, May 31: The bypoll to the Brajarajnagar Assembly constituency in Jharsuguda district went off peacefully Tuesday with a voter turnout of 69 per cent till 5 pm, an official said. "The election was conducted peacefully. The voting began at 7 am and continued till 6 pm. The final voters' turnout in the bypoll will be known after polling parties return from the booths," said Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), SK Lohani. So far, no untoward incident has been reported from any booth in the constituency. However, due to some technical glitches, four EVMs have been replaced, he said. In a village in Lakanpur block, the voters have boycotted the election protesting closure of school in the village. Moreover, five pink booths were formed where only women polling agents were appointed, officials said. To ensure free and fair voting, security arrangements were made in different booths for the poll while 1,228 polling officers have been appointed in the booths. As many as 1,000 police officials and three companies of Central Armed Police Force were deployed at different booths to maintain law and order. The voting was carried out following



Covid-19 norms with arrangements of sanitisers and thermal scanning at all polling booths. Moreover, liquor outlets were shut for 48 hours for the election in the district. The bypoll was necessitated following the untimely demise of BJD's Kishore Mohanty in December last year. Although 11 candidates were in the fray, the constituency predominantly witnessed a triangular fight among BJD, BJP and Congress nominees. The BJD fielded Alaka Mohanty as its candidate in Brajarajnagar assembly segment, while the BJP nominated former MLA Radharani Panda. Ex-assembly speaker Kishore Patel is contesting the by-election on a Congress ticket. The Assembly seat was with CPI and Congress till 2009 and went to BJP in 2014. Ruling BJD grabbed the seat in the last election held in 2019. Now, all eyes are on the by-poll as all three parties have a strong hold in the constituency.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Not one candidate is there who got inspired by Puja Singhal!

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	55566.41 ↓ 0.64
NIFTY	16584.50 ↓ 76.90
DOLLAR	78.33 ↑ ₹0.10
EURO	83.48 ↑ ₹0.03
GOLD	₹50,800 ↓ ₹0.23
SILVER	₹61,318 ↓ ₹0.91

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 38.0°C	39.4°C
	MIN 27.7°C	27.5°C
Humidity	82%	79%
Rainfall	NIL	NIL
Forecast	Light rain very likely	

Odisha to receive above normal rainfall: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, May 31: India's rain-fed agriculture region is set to receive above normal rainfall this monsoon season, the weather office said Tuesday raising hopes for a bumper farm output and reining in inflation. "The average rainfall this monsoon season is expected to be 103% of the long period average," India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra told reporters here. In April, the IMD had said the country would receive normal rainfall—99 per cent of the long period average (LPA), which is the mean rainfall received over a 50-year-pe-



riod from 1971-2020. The LPA for the entire country is 87 cm. The monsoon core zone - states ranging from Gujarat to Odisha that are dependent on rainfall for agriculture - is set to experience above normal rainfall at more than 106 per cent of the long period average, Mohapatra said. He said central India and south peninsula are

set to receive above normal rainfall, while north-east and north-west regions are likely to get normal rains. This is the fourth consecutive year that India is likely to experience a normal monsoon. Earlier, India had witnessed normal monsoon from 2005-08 and 2010-13. Mohapatra said in the near future, India could witness normal monsoons as the decadal epoch of below normal rains was nearing its end. "We are now moving towards a normal monsoon epoch," he said. Asked about the criticism faced by IMD for "hasty" declaration of monsoon onset over Kerala, Mohapatra said the weather office followed a scientific process to announce the onset and progress of monsoon.

Sonepur boils at 44.5° C

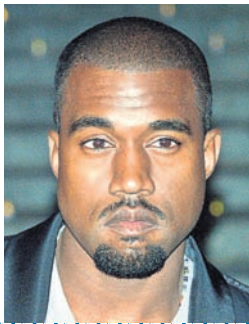
BHUBANESWAR: Odisha sweltered in scorching heat and intense humidity Tuesday as the mercury rose by several notches in the state, the weather office said. At least 18 weather stations recorded a maximum of over 40 degrees Celsius. The temperature rose by around 1-3 degrees at a few places and it was above normal in several areas, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

Sonepur recorded 44.5 degrees Celsius, the highest in the state. The hot weather baked Bolangir as the maximum shot up to 43.5 degrees in the district headquarters and 43.2 in Titilagarh, a bulletin stated. Sambalpur recorded 43 degrees, followed by 42.5 degrees each in Bargarh and Boudh. The mercury in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack was 38 and 39.4 degrees, respectively, according to the department.

Insurance co told to pay ₹5L to Puri mishap victim



POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has directed an insurance company to give ₹5 lakh compensation to next of the kin of a woman who had died in a stampede-like situation during the Rath Yatra celebrations in 2018. While hearing a plea filed by Haguri Mallick, husband of the victim Saraswati Mallick, the commission has directed the insurance company to disburse the amount within 30 days. Sources said Saraswati along with a few others sustained severe injuries in a stampede-like situation during the car festival celebrations in the Holy City in 2018. A critically injured Saraswati was first admitted to Puri district headquarters hospital and later shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack where she succumbed. Despite recommendation from the Srimandir administration, the insurance firm declined to pay the amount on the pretext of 'non-performance of autopsy of body'. Later, Haguri approached the OHRC seeking its intervention in this matter.



KANYE WEST'S FIFTH DIVORCE LAWYER QUILTS

Rapper Kanye West's fifth divorce lawyer has quit, citing an "irreconcilable breakdown in the attorney-client relationship." West had hired Samantha Spector to represent him in his split from Kim Kardashian just two months ago, after his previous attorney, Chris Melcher was fired.

KILMER'S VOICE RECREATED WITH AI TECHNOLOGY

Val Kilmer's voice was recreated by start-up firm Sonantic using AI technology for his role in *Top Gun: Maverick*. The 62-year-old actor lost his voice after undergoing a tracheotomy in 2014 as part of his treatment for throat cancer.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You are creative, and today you will prove to be resourceful and thereby successful! Okay, you are ambitious, says Ganesh, but don't bite off more than you can chew. Be confident of your abilities, work hard and have faith in providence.

TAURUS
You will feel the burden of financial responsibilities on your shoulders today, says Ganesh. Do not let expenses bother you. Money will come to you from unexpected sources later in the day. If you can maintain an impartial judgement, then you will yield wonderful results on the financial front, advises Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you would love to spend as much time alone as possible with your sweetheart, says Ganesh. A casual conversation between the two of you may culminate into a sensuous consummation. In the evening, you will keep people charmed with your wit and wisdom, feels Ganesh.

CANCER
There is a fat chance that you will take pleasure in the company of your close friends and relatives, predicts Ganesh. You may have an awesome time with your mate. There may be a few minor problems here and there, but your family will rally behind you and will help you in solving your problems.

LEO
The travel bug inside you is itching to be let loose, but things are not so simple when it comes to finding new destinations, says Ganesh. With you, holidaying goes hand in hand with delays. So, although you might be excited at the prospect of going to new places, this excitement will be somewhat curtailed thanks to postponements of travel plans.

VIRGO
Today you may understand the utter uselessness of your dogged efforts and feel extremely anxious about success eluding you constantly. However, Ganesh advises you not to lose hope, but to re-energise your mind, give a boost to your curiosity and pay attention to long-term goals.

LIBRA
It sure is tiring to run with the herd. You may feel the desire to get away from the rat race at work today. Maybe it is the monotonous and stressful environment in office that is pushing you to your limits. But you may seek a new direction and lifestyle, one that is less taxing. Sometimes, it becomes imperative to make a few changes.

SCORPIO
You shall be completely immersed in your routine today. It's the same old humbug of a day for you, says Ganesh. But this exhausting day may transform into an exciting evening - so be prepared to get surprised.

SAGITTARIUS
Cupid is hunting and you are the game today. Cupid's arrows will have you adrift on the ocean of love and turbulent emotions. Your rescue is imminent, when a member of the opposite sex answers your SOS calls. But use your discretion as to which boat you hitch a ride back home, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
It's a lucky day for your sweetheart! Wonder why it's written in your horoscope? You will pamper him/her to the hilt, take them out on a shopping spree and buy whatever they lay their eyes on, even if it's way beyond reasonable, says Ganesh. You will go overboard to make your love feel that nothing else matters, and although this lavish outing will serve the purpose, you may later repent not keeping a count of your cash.

AQUARIUS
You find solace in travel today. But if you plan to include others, beware, as you may end up doing all their dirty work too. But, you will find fulfillment even in that, which, says Ganesh, is your strong point. You know how to turn a weakness into strength.

PISCES
Today just might be the day when you invent a better mousetrap. However, your ideas have a propensity to wane and wax at the same speed, says Ganesh. Hence, keep a notebook handy to jot down all your earth-shattering revolutionary ideas.

Kubbra claims her life's an open book

Mumbai: Known for her outspokenness, the vivacious Kubbra Sait is now also an author. Part memoir, part inspirational treatise, her book titled *Open Book* outlines the struggles, achievements, joys and failures and the many reinventions of a shy and anxious Bangalore girl.

Sait said she is finally ready to release the memoir after working on it for two years. With the pandemic in-

duced lockdown serving as the origin of this honest rendition, Kubbra Sait who embarked on an inward self-discovery expedition whilst scripting the memoir says, "It's been a labour of love. I was asked by many who knew I was writing a memoir: 'Aren't you too young to write one?' This was my time and my way to reflect on the journey thus far, and to recognize how much I've learnt over the last three decades. It was cathartic, it made me smile, it brought a lump to my throat... but above it all, I made a cross-over. The past is behind me. The present is a new book to pen. I'm excited to bring you all *Open Book*, because that is literally who I am, as a person. Enjoy this story." She adds, "My life is an open book. I have nothing to hide."

AGENCIES



Lalat Mohan conferred with Dharmapada honour

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Eminent painter Lalat Mohan Patnaik Tuesday received prestigious Dharmapada Award, the highest honour given to an individual for lifetime achievement and contribution to visual art and sculpture by Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi (OLA), here at Sankskruti Bhawan.

The Akademi also felicitated five more noted artists on the occasion. They were Jyotirmayee Mohanty, Baladev Maharatha, Panchanan Sur, Durga Charan Panda and Debendra Mishra. Dharmapada award carries a purse of Rs 5 lakh, a citation and a shawl, the other awardees will each be felicitated with Rs 1 lakh cash and a citation, the Akademi said.



Attending the event Culture minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi said the government is doing multiple things for the artists of the state under the ST initiative to help them lead a comfortable life.

Additional chief Secretary Madhusudan Padhi said the department is collaborating with OLA for the benefits of the artists having state level reputation. OLA is preparing a list of old art works

which will be sold and the proceeds will go to the artists.

Award winner Lalat Mohan Patnaik said that he is thankful to the selection committee for considering him for this honour.

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

Patnaik has held exhibitions at Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi, Bhubaneswar; Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, Birla Academy of Arts and Culture, Kolkata and Indian festivals at London, Indonesia and New Delhi.

Saie's on a roll

Mumbai: Already out with two exceptional dramas, *Pondicherry* and *Pet Puraan*, Marathi and Hindi film star Saie Tamhankar is on her way to dominating the film industry with her back-to-back releases.

A source revealed, "Saie has a packed calendar ahead. She has multiple projects in the pipeline, including *Medium Spicy*, *India Lockdown*, and *B.E. Rojgaar*. She has been shooting non-stop due to her hectic schedule and is committed to each and every role that she portrays. What makes her slate of releases even more exciting is that each comes from a diverse cinematic universe and that the actress has been a disruptor with her unconventional choices over the years."

Saie Tamhankar also has an MX Player Series and Red Chillies project on her upcoming slate.

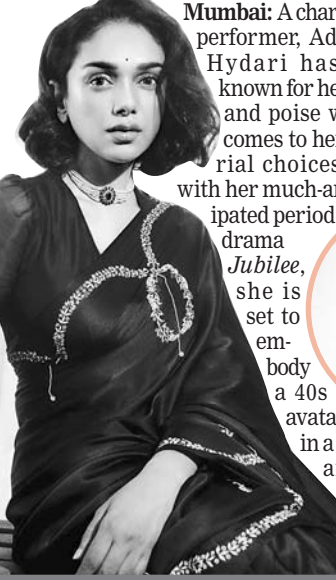
The actor was a big fan of Aamir Khan when she was young. So much so that she wished to marry him someday. Though that did not happen, she could share screen space in the film *Ghajini*.

AGENCIES



Artistes of Balasore-based theatre troupe Srasta presented Odia play *Ashankare Chandrabindu* at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. Written by Hemendra Mohapatra, the play was directed by Manoranjan Das. The event was part of the regular theatre programme Natyadhara, an initiative of Odisha Language, Literature and Culture department and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Aditi reminds everyone of Gayatri Devi



Mumbai: A charismatic performer, Aditi Rao Hydari has been known for her grace and poise when it comes to her sartorial choices. Now, with her much-anticipated period drama *Jubilee*, she is set to embody a 40s avatar in a unique amalgamation of stories

that made Hindi film industry what it is today. During the announcement event, Aditi Rao Hydari donned a retro-style black saree that brought out the best of her elegance. The definition of class, her look for the evening was reminiscent of Gayatri Devi, the third Maharani consort of Jaipur.

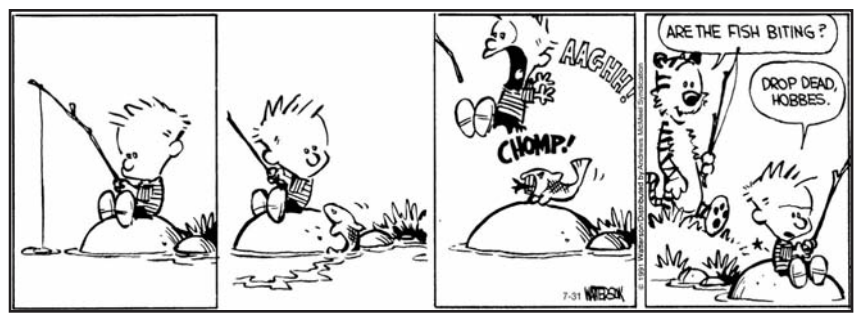
A source revealed, "Aditi's phone has been ringing off the hook about how much everyone loved her look for the event. Everyone's been telling her that she looked so similar to Gayatri Devi." Aditi Rao Hydari will be seen in the Vikramaditya Motwane directorial alongside Prosenjit Chatterjee, Aparshakti Khurana and Wamiqa Gabi. Written by screenwriter Atul Sabharwal, *Jubilee* has been set against the backdrop of a newly independent India. Needless to say, fans can't wait to see what Aditi has in store for them with this intriguing web series.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



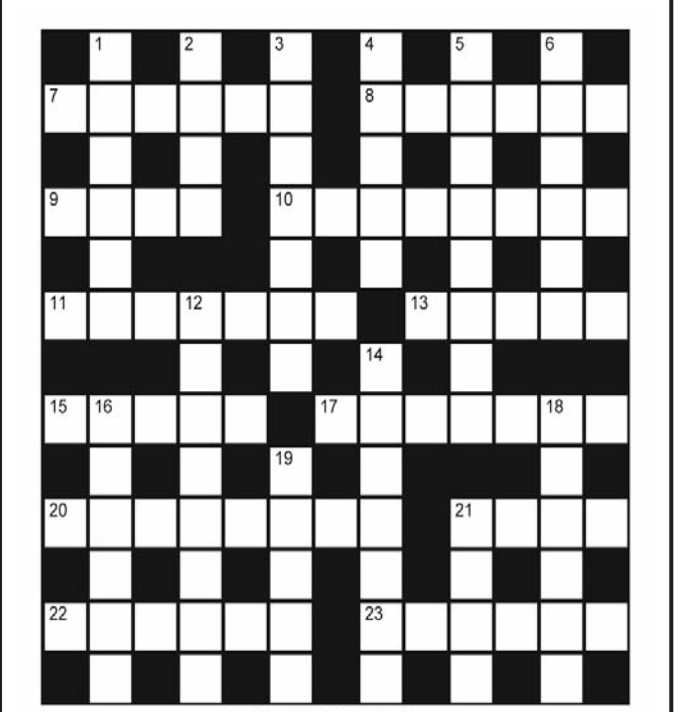
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



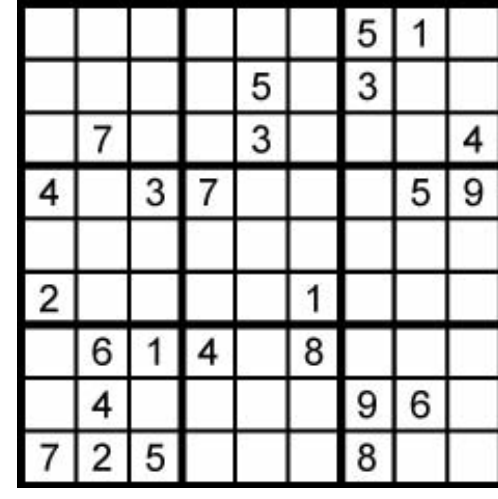
FUN post CROSSWORD



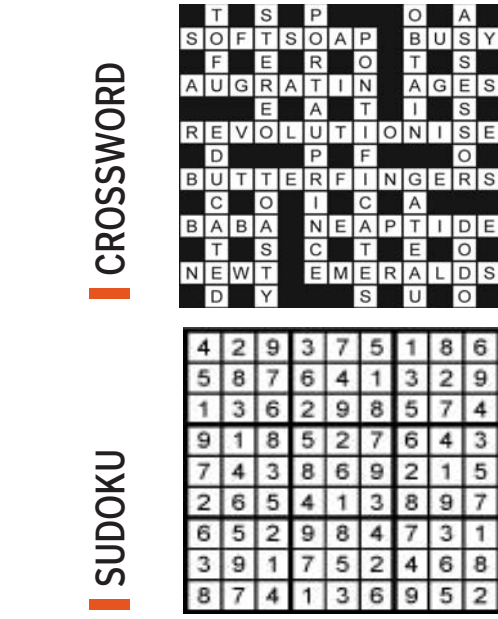
- Copyright ©2022 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
7 Sordid
8 Dump, like stocks
9 Jezebel's idol
10 Out of doors
11 Kidd, for one
13 Petrol unit
15 Slack off
17 Fish hawks
20 Funfair
21 Skedaddle
- Down**
22 Heavy ales and such
23 Harangue
1 Cavalry member
12 Golf club shaft material, at times
14 Sequester
16 Knockout
18 Rates of return
19 Russian beverage
21 Garrison

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



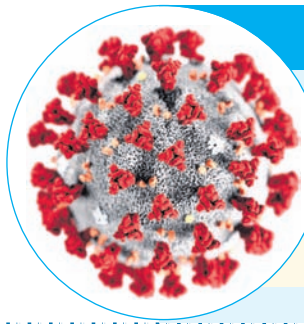
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



PAYING HOMAGE

Artistes perform Odissi on the 105th birth anniversary of Kala Vikash Kendra founder Babulal Doshi in Cuttack, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	53,22,84,945	50,31,97,921	63,12,300
India	4,31,58,087	4,26,15,574	5,24,630
Odisha	12,88,440	12,79,196	9,126

Tobacco kills 37K in state every year

AROUND 600 MILLION TREES ARE CHOPPED DOWN ACROSS THE GLOBE ANNUALLY TO PRODUCE TOBACCO PRODUCTS, SAID DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH NIRANJAN MISHRA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Health and Family Welfare department observed the World No Tobacco Day 2022 at Soochana Bhawan here Tuesday. On the occasion, a painting exhibition was also organised.



Girls visiting a painting exhibition organised on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

"The theme of World No Tobacco Day 2022 is 'Poisoning our planet'. Around 600 million trees are chopped down across the globe annually to produce tobacco products. More than 70 lakh people in the world die due to tobacco use every year. Out of that, 10 lakh people die in India and the figure is 37,000 in Odisha," said Director of Public Health Niranjana Mishra.

As per Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), smoking has decreased significantly among the adult people from 10.3 per cent in 2009-10 (GATS-1) to 7.0 per cent in 2016-17 (GATS-2). During the same period, overall tobacco use prevalence has declined marginally among the adults in Odisha from 46.7 per cent to 45.6 per cent.

Smokeless tobacco use has decreased marginally from 43.1 per cent to 42.1 per cent in the state. Khaini and tobacco for oral application are the two most commonly used tobacco products. At least 16.9 per cent of adults use Khaini and 14.9 per cent use tobacco for oral application in Odisha.

The mean age of initiation of tobacco use among adults has increased from 16.5 years to 17.4 years in comparison to GATS-1. The quit attempts made by the tobacco users also increased by manifolds in last six years. The prevalence of secondhand smoke exposure has also decreased significantly in our state

at home from 55.2 per cent in GATS-1 to 26.4 per cent in GATS-2.

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey 2019 reveals that at least 6.2 per cent (7 per cent boys and 5.5 per cent girls) students in Odisha use any forms of tobacco, whereas the national average of tobacco use is 8.5 per cent. The mean age of initiation of tobacco use among these students is 11.1 years.

As per the National Family Health Survey 2019 (NFHS-5), tobacco use among the male has decreased significantly from 55.9 per cent (NFHS-4) to 51.6 per cent (NFHS 5), whereas tobacco use among female has increased from 17.3 per cent (NFHS-4) to 26.9 per cent (NFHS-5). Odisha has ranked sixth among high consuming tobacco states in the country.

Health and Family Welfare department Special Secretary Ajit Kumar Mohanty said the state gov-

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ernment aims at bringing down tobacco use by 30 per cent by 2030. "To achieve this, we have to enforce the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Product Act (COTPA) Act strictly. We should take steps to discourage smoking among youngsters," he added.

Odisha State Medical Corporation (OSMCL) Managing Director Yamini Sarangi said tobacco use is now a well-documented threat to global health. It is currently world's single biggest cause of preventable death. "Much of what is known about the risks of tobacco use, however, concerns the direct impact (in terms of morbidity and mortality) of firsthand and secondhand smoke on people's health. What we have yet to do as a public health community is drawing attention to the myriad other ways in which tobacco growth, production and consumption impact

Environmentalists decry felling of trees for MLA quarters in City



Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy, former MLA Dillip Srichandan and environmentalist Jaykrushna Panigrahi extending their support to the protests against tree felling at Unit-IV in Bhubaneswar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The protest against felling of trees for construction of MLA quarters in Unit-IV area of the city continued Tuesday with a group of environmentalists staging a demonstration at the project site.

The protesters led by Mahanadi Bachao Andolan convener Sudarshan Das received support from former MP and Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy, MLA Suresh Routray, former bureaucrat Arabinda Behera, former MLA Dillip Srichandan and other activists.

The protesters pasted stickers on the trees saying 'Gachha Kahuchi...Mote Katani, Nijara Sarvanash Dakani' (Tree is saying...Do not cut me and do not invite destruction for yourself). They

The protesters called off their agitation after they got an assurance from the authorities that no more trees would be felled in the locality

also shouted slogans against the state government for its decision to fell hundreds of trees for the construction work.

The protesters asked the state government to stop felling trees immediately. More than 200 trees have reportedly been cut down so far for the project while 600 more would be felled for the purpose, sources said.

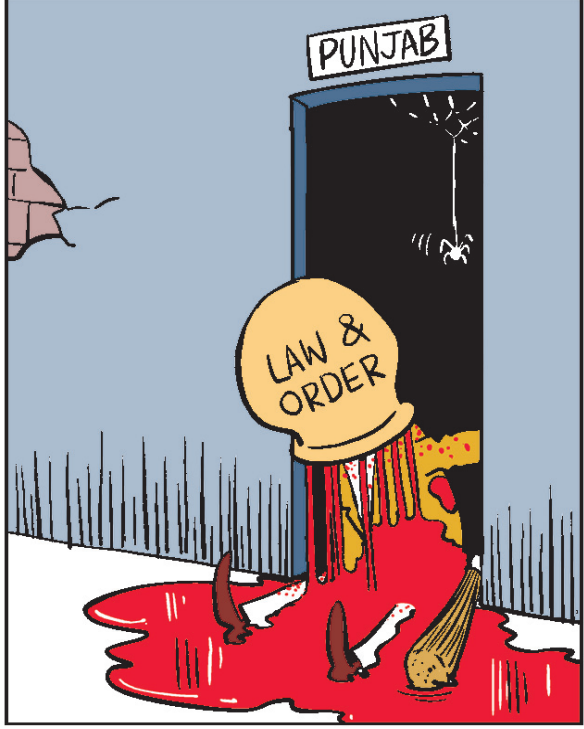
"Expanding the green cover by planting more and more trees is the need of the hour. The expansion

in the green cover will make the city a more livable place," said environmentalist Jaykrushna Panigrahi. "The decision to cut down trees will harm the environment and the people of Bhubaneswar. We strongly condemn the decision. We will not allow tree felling anymore," Das said.

Satpathy said the state government could have planned to establish the MLA quarters at the site identified for compensatory plantation. "By doing this, we could have saved hundreds of grown-up trees," he said. "Saplings need certain time to grow up as trees. Felling grown-up trees for some projects and planting saplings as compensation is not a good idea," he added.

Earlier, Das had lodged an FIR at Kharavela Nagar police station here against the felling of trees for the project.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



SRIMANDIR HERITAGE CORRIDOR

SC bench: Can't hear until CJI allots the matter to us

The bench said that it cannot assume the jurisdiction of the Chief Justice as its "hands are tied"

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, May 31: A day after it passed direction for listing of matter for hearing, the Supreme Court (SC) Tuesday expressed "technical difficulty" in taking up a couple petitions against the construction work going on around Srimandir in Puri.

A two-judge bench of the SC comprising Justices BR Gavai and Hima Kohli said that the bench can only take up the matter for hearing after the Chief Justice allots it the case.



"Until the Chief Justice allots the matter to us, we cannot hear it. We cannot assume the jurisdiction of the Chief Justice. Our hands are tied. We are controlled by registry," the bench said after the case was mentioned before it.

Senior advocate Mahalaxmi Pavani mentioned the case and submitted that despite the apex court's direction, the case was not listed for hearing Tuesday. The senior counsel also contended that the construction work is going on against the judgment of this court.

Significantly, a couple of special leave petitions have been filed in the Supreme Court against the Orissa High Court order of May 9. The High Court had not stayed the construction work going on around the Puri Srimandir in its order passed May 9.

SC notice to govt over Jagadev bail plea

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, May 31: The Supreme Court Tuesday issued notice to the Odisha government in connection with the bail application filed by Chilika MLA Prasanta Jagadev, who was arrested for ramming his car into a crowd outside Banpur block office in Khurda district March 12. At least 22 people were injured in the incident.


A two-judge bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and BV Nagarathana sought response from the state government on Jagadev's bail application July 25.

The Orissa High Court rejected Jagadev's bail application May 20. The HC asked him to surrender before a court in Banpur by May 23.

Jagadev filed a special leave petition in the apex court challenging the decision of the High Court.


The HC had earlier granted him interim bail for seven days in April on health grounds. The interim bail was later extended till disposal of the bail application.

Jagadev has been charged with serious offences like attempt to murder, obstructing police personnel from performing their duty, injuring public and using car as weapon to hurt people.



01.06.1963 - 03.06.2021


"For me, happiness on a child's face makes all the difference."



Our humble tribute to the visionary...

Dr. Bijaya Kumar Sahoo
on his birth anniversary

Let's build a better India through Education



CP busts bike lifters' gang



The individuals used to steal motor cycles and scooters from the different areas of the City and sell those in Khurda and Ganjam

Police recovered eight motor cycles and two scooters on the basis of the information collected during interrogation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Commissionerate police Tuesday busted a bike lifters gang and recovered nine vehicles including two scooters from their possession.

The accused were identified as Deepak Kumar Sahoo, 28, of Ragadi in Banki area of Cuttack district; Hemanta Patra, 22, and Sekh Nour Alam, 27, of Dumduma area under Khandagiri police limits here; and Sukanta Behera, 37, of Taratuli under Chatrapur police limits in Ganjam district. The accused Deepak and Sukanta are currently staying at Dumuduma area.

On May 19, the complainant who resides near Panchasakhanagar area in the City lodged a complaint with Khandagiri police in con-

nection with the theft of his motor cycle from the garage while he was away for some work the previous night. The special team of Khandagiri Police, after examining the CCTV footage, identified the miscreants and arrested Deepak, Hemanta and Sekh Nour.

The individuals used to steal motor cycles and scooters from the different areas of the City and sell those in Khurda and Ganjam. Police also arrested Sukanta from Ganjam on the charges of helping the gang in disposing of the stolen bikes.

Police recovered eight motor cycles and two scooters on the basis of the information collected during interrogation. The accused were Tuesday produced before the court that sent them to judicial custody.

ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATIONS



The College of Basic Science & Humanities celebrated its annual day 'Darpan 2022' at its campus in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Active Covid caseload dips to 70 in state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Odisha recorded three new Covid cases Tuesday, taking the tally 12,88,440, the state Health department said in a bulletin.

The toll remained at 9,126 as no new death was recorded in the last 24 hours.

There are 70 active cases in the state at present. Seven more people recovered from the disease, taking the recoveries to 12,79,191, the Health bulletin said.

The daily test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.03 per cent as the new cases were detected after testing 11,510 samples, it added.

The state currently contributes 2.99 percent of infected cases of the National caseload. Likewise, it houses 0.41 per cent of the total active cases in India. The percentage of national recovered cases in Odisha is at 3.01 and the state contributes 1.75 per cent of the total Covid fatalities across the country.

SOA ranks 20th among private varsities in India



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University here has been chosen as the top university in state and 20th in India in the India Private Universities Rankings 2022-23 conducted by Education World magazine.

SOA's Officer-on-Special Duty Pritam Nayak received the award from GrayQuest Finance Founder Rishab Mehta at a special function held at New Delhi Saturday. More than 100 universities were in the fray.

The program was attended by Pankaja Mittal, Secretary General of the Association of Indian Universities; Dilip Thakur, Founding Editor; Summiya Yasmeen, Managing Editor; Tejas Patani, General Manager; and Aasana Jain, Marketing Manager of Education World respectively.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By the virtue of an affidavit dt. 28.05.2022 before the Notary Public, Bhubaneswar: I, Mandakranta Sahu, At-Vyas-12/103, SBI Colony, Debashram, Kesura, Bhubaneswar-751002, Dist- Khordha, Odisha have changed my name from Mandakranta Sahu to Mandakranta Padhi as per my Husband's surname i.e. Pradeep Kumar Padhi for all future purposes.

I, Ranjita Kumar Nayak, S/o. Daitari Nayak of Vill: Kulajallarpur, P.O.: Jallarpur, P.S.: Niali, Tehsil: Niali, Dist- Cuttack, State: Odisha, PIN - 754004 is hereby declare that amendment of my daughter's name from Nivedita Nayak to Nibedita Nayak, which will be shown in her Educational Certificate, Aadhaar Card and an affidavit issued by the Executive Magistrate, Niali, dated 21.04.2022.

Hubby held on dowry death charges

THE DECEASED WOMAN HAD REPORTEDLY INFORMED HER MOTHER OVER PHONE THAT SHE WAS BEATEN SEVERELY BY HER HUSBAND A FEW HOURS BEFORE HER DEATH ON THE FATEFUL DAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Commissionerate police Tuesday arrested an engineer on the charges of dowry death after his newly-wed wife died under mysterious circumstances at her in-laws' residence at Sarakantara under Khandagiri police limits here May 29.

The accused identified as Prakash Khuntia of Sarakantara works as an engineer in a private firm in Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh.

Sources claimed that Khuntia had married the victim Prabhavati Nayak, 23, of Thihidi area of Bhabrak district April 27. The couple was staying in Gwalior after their mar-



riage and had returned Bhubaneswar few days ago to celebrate Savitri Brata here.

Family members of Khuntia claimed that they found the bedroom of Nayak closed from inside while searching for her Sunday evening. They knocked

several times but she did not open the door.

The woman was found hanging from the ceiling fan when the in-laws broke into the house. They rushed her to AIIMS Bhubaneswar where the doctors declared her brought dead.

Nayak's mother Madhavi Lata later lodged a complaint with the Khandagiri police accusing Khuntia of strangling her to death over dowry. Madhavi also alleged that the accused husband and in-laws of the deceased used to inflict torture on her as the newly-wed bride's family failed to give gold bracelet and vehicle they had demanded.

The deceased had also reportedly informed her mother over phone that she was beaten severely by her husband few hours before her death on the fateful day.

Police later registered a case (288/22) and arrested Khuntia over charges of dowry death, section 304(B) of the IPC.

KiiT Int'l School pupil lands 7th at Toycathon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: A game 'Untold Stories' designed by Shree Roy, a Class X student of KiiT International School, has been selected among the top seven games at Toycathon, an inter-ministerial initiative of Government of India in association with All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Untold Stories is a multiplayer game where one must answer questions about India's heritage to move to the next level. With this game, Shree intends to revive the art and culture of India.

With modernisation and technology, most youngsters are glued to their smart phones and the internet. Shree designed this game with the help of the schools research wing Inspiron hoping to move them away from this exposure while enhancing their knowledge on India's art, history, and culture.

From over 14 lakh online entries, 200 games were chosen for the physical edition of Toycathon. Untold Stories was the only one from Odisha among the top 7 felicitated games.

Under the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Toycathon is conceived to challenge India's innovative minds to conceptualise novel Toys and Games based on Bharatiya civilisation, history, culture, mythology and ethos. Toycathon is an inter-ministerial initiative organised by Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell with support from AICTE, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of MSME, Ministry of Textiles and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

KiiT International School chairperson Mona Lisa Bal said, "This is an extremely proud moment for KiiT International School family. I congratulate Shree for her endeavours. This is an accomplishment for the entire school. We nurture our students to think beyond their textbooks and take interest in activities outside their classroom. I am glad that this morale-boosting has steered us to achieve this great honour. I firmly believe that these leaders of tomorrow can drive us towards a better future with proper education and guidance.



Modi interacts with PM-KISAN beneficiaries

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday interacted with the beneficiaries of several central sponsored schemes including Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

The PM also released the 11th installment of ₹2,000 each to over 10 crore beneficiaries. The principal objective of the interaction was not only to understand how these welfare schemes have brought about ease of living for the citizens, but also to explore the possibility of convergence and satu-

ration. Living upto its name, the scheme primarily addresses the poorest segments of society.

Krishni Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Khurda and ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) organised a farmers' meet to mark the Garib Kalyan Sammelan. Aparajita Sarangi, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) attended the programme as Chief Guest, wherein over 200 farmers took part physically. Besides, a few hundred more farmers viewed it through social media like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The Sammelan was one of the largest ever single-event nationwide interaction covering all dis-

tricts of India, wherein Prime Minister appraised the beneficiaries about the impact of such wide-ranging schemes/programmes covering housing, availability of potable water, food, health and nutrition, livelihood and financial inclusion on their lives.

The district level event was linked with the national event at 11am when Prime Minister Modi came live from Shimla interacting with the beneficiaries of the country. The Sammelan highlighted people-centric approach of the aforementioned schemes leading to ease of living of citizens and the Government's resolve that no one is left behind in the nation's march to progress.

16 Odisha students in Nat'l Yoga Olympiad

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: A total of 16 students from Odisha will participate in the National Yoga Olympiad, which is to be held in Delhi on the occasion of International Yoga Day June 21.

A state-level Yoga Olympiad-2022 was held by the S&ME department at the Capital High School premises in Bhubaneswar from May 28 to 30 this month.

A total of 350 students selected on block and district levels had participated in the event. Out of them, 16 have been selected to participate in the National event.

ASHAs struggle in shadows outside WHO spotlight

ASHAs, the first and sometimes the only point of contact for millions of villagers and the healthcare system, earn money through task-based incentives under the NHM, which is funded in a 60:40 ratio between the Centre and state governments



to take a patient to hospital. "There is no conveyance and we have to manage everything on our own. Also, we work under so much pressure. There have been days when we spend the whole day walking and don't sit for five minutes. But this is not acknowledged."

ASHAs are the first and sometimes the only point of contact for millions of villagers and the healthcare system. They earn money through task-based incentives under the National Health Mission

(NHM), which is funded in a 60:40 ratio between the Centre and state governments. All the ASHAs PTI spoke to said they don't earn more than ₹10,000 per month.

Poonam Muttera, executive director, Population Foundation of India, noted that there are major differences between the pay scales of regular frontline workers and those recruited on a contractual basis under the NHM.

During the pandemic, ASHAs continued to work in fragile settings

despite receiving resistance from communities. A study conducted by the Population Foundation of India during this period showed that the fear of getting infected by Covid among people kept many away from accessing services at health facilities, she said.

She added that the government had introduced a performance-based payment method to support ASHAs. However, ASHA incentives are primarily centred on activities relating to reproductive and child health.

"ASHA incentives get significantly impacted in states with low total fertility rates and higher usage of private health care facilities," she said.

Compensation given to ASHAs differ across states and only a few have introduced fixed monthly remuneration in addition to the incentive package, Muttera added.

Stressing that the disbursement of incentives needs to be timely and regular, she said ASHAs have a wide-ranging experience working with community and health system

and a clear career progression path is imperative for them.

According to Akhila Sivadas, executive director at the Centre for Advocacy and Research, a non-profit organisation, the time has come to recognize the indispensability of ASHAs.

"An all-out effort must be made to ensure that every process related to ASHA starting from recruitment, appointment, training, remuneration and the right to appeal and redress must be streamlined to ensure that they feel both respected and given the due that they are entitled to," Sivadas said.

As the struggle for acknowledgment and better pay structures continues, Priyanka Kumari from Lakhisarai in Bihar said the biggest award for her is the satisfaction she sees in the eyes of her patients when they get treated.

"If I wanted to earn money I would have done something else but this is a noble profession for me and I keep that in mind whenever I feel inconvenienced," the 41-year-old told PTI.

PTI

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SHORT TAKES

Ex-serviceman held for molesting minor

Nilgiri: Police Tuesday arrested an ex-serviceman on charge of molesting a minor girl of his neighbourhood under Brahmapur police limits. The accused was identified as Rajkishore Behera, 61, a former Indian Air Force personnel. The girl had visited his residence to bring bananas when Behera waylaid her and molested her. The girl narrated her ordeal before her mother after returning home. A village committee meeting was called but it failed to resolve the issue. Later, the girl's mother lodged a police complaint. Police conducted a probe and arrested the accused, Brahmapur OIC Hemant Kumar Majhi said. The accused will be produced in court after conducting a medical examination on him, Majhi added.

Man ends life over wife's affair

Dhenkanal: A man committed suicide over his wife's alleged extramarital affairs at Sarakhia village under Sadar police limits in Dhenkanal district. According to sources, the deceased Deba Sandha worked in a company in Dubai. He used to visit home once or twice a year. In the meantime, his wife Sandhyarani allegedly developed an extramarital affair with another youth of the village. After coming to know about it, Deba returned home. However, his wife refused to join him to perform Sabitri Brata rituals and observed the 'Brata' at her parental home. Unable to bear the pain, Deba hanged himself in his residence. Informed, police seized the body from the spot and sent it for a postmortem.

Rail roko over exp train halt

Rayagada: Demanding restoration of scheduled halts of six express trains, members of 'Ambodala Citizen's Committee' Tuesday staged a rail roko at Ambodala Railway Station in Rayagada district. Several stoppages of the trains had been cancelled during Covid-induced lockdowns. But even after two years, as the trains are not halting at Ambodala Railway Station the locals resorted to the protest. Residents of many parts of Rayagada, Kalahandi, and Kandhamal districts depend on the station. The protest will continue until their demands are met, said the members of the Ambodala Citizen's Committee.



Man gets life term for human sacrifice

Jajpur, May 31: A court in Jajpur district Tuesday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for killing an 8-year-old boy as part of some 'tantrik' rituals (occult practice) seven years ago. The additional district and sessions court also imposed a penalty of ₹35,000 on Deepak Barik, convicted of killing Abhisek Nayak of Rajendrapur village February 26, 2015. On that day, a community feast was organised at Rajendrapur in Kuakhia block. The villagers had seen Nayak and Barik helping in serving food to the people. But after some time, both were not found. In the evening, when Nayak did not return home, his family searched for him at all possible places but failed to trace him. Barik was also not present in his house. Nayak's body was found floating in a pond near a temple on the outskirts of the village the next morning. There was a garland around his neck and a vermilion mark on his forehead. Acting on a complaint, police conducted a raid at Barik's house and found some human bones and materials like books and other things related to 'tantrik' rituals. The court gave its verdict based on the evidence and statements of 24 witnesses in the case, additional public prosecutor Rajendra Nayak said.

Sundargarh boy secures 86th rank

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, May 31: Sundargarh erupted in joy after a local lad, Gourav Agarwal, secured 86th all-India rank in Civil Services Examinations 2021, the results of which were declared by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Monday.



Agarwal, 25, has brought laurels for Odisha and his home district. Youngest son of a retired PNB employee Sajjan Agarwal and homemaker Kiran Agarwal, Gourav attributes his success to his parents

and family members. A law graduate, Gourav prefers to work in the Indian Foreign Services (IFS) over the Indian Administrative Service due to his special interest in international relations. "Determination, hard work and complete revision are my mantras of success," said Gourav when asked about his preparation. Without any formal coaching, Gourav said he properly utilised his time during lockdown. "I did not join any coaching centre except for mock test series. I achieved the success through online study materials. I used to study 10-12 hours every day," Gourav said. Gourav is a student from Rourkela-based Paul English Medium School. After passing Class VIII, he went to complete his Boards from Little Flowers School in Bolangir and then went to pursue his intermediates from Science in Geetanjali School in Hyderabad.

UPSC EXAM

BOOST TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Admin plans two retail malls, 22 Ganjam haats

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, May 31: The district administration has planned to open two retail shopping malls and 22 Ganjam haats in the district to make women self-reliant, a report said.

Sources from Ganjam district administration said the two retail shopping malls will come up at Berhampur and Khallikote alongside National Highway-16 while 22 Ganjam haats will be opened in each of the block headquarters in the district.

Plans are also afoot for establishment of a central processing unit at Chamakhandi which will sell food and other products in collaboration with star hotels. Moreover, efforts are on for tie-up with all college hostels, skill development centres and hostels for SC and ST students. The shopping malls and Ganjam haats will be established as part of an initiative under state's Mission Shakti programme and state-owned Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS). The malls and haats will showcase and provide marketing facilities for various food products and household articles prepared by the women self-help groups (SHGs). Reports said Mission Shakti and ORMAS have been preparing various plans to provide livelihood means to women and make them self-reliant. The members



of the women SHGs are being provided with bank loans and various subsidies as part of this initiative. The move to open Ganjam haats is an outcome of this development where the SHG women will have facilities to display and sell off their food products like pickles, baddi, papad and various household articles. Meanwhile, three Ganjam haat outlets have started functioning on DRDA premises of Chhatrapur, Lake View Park near Tampara Lake on Chhatrapur outskirts and in Berhampur. An app for Ganjam haats has also been developed to facilitate sale and purchase of products of SHG women. The development of the app has been helping residents in Berhampur to buy their choicest products from these haats. The app will soon be available in all the 22 blocks, NACs and municipalities in coming days.

LBSNAA joint director inspects SHG projects

Chhatrapur: Joint director of Mussoorie-based Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Radhika Rastogi, visited Ganjam district Tuesday and inspected various projects being run by women SHG members under Mission Shakti. A team of 38 IAS officers and those from Bhutan Civil Services Training has come to Ganjam on a study tour. These IAS officers accompanied by Collector Vijay Amruta Kulunge and PD Shinde Dattatraya Bhausaheb have collected data about various projects of SHGs.

22 blocks, NACs and municipalities in coming days.

HONING SKILLS



Students displayed their shuttling skills on the concluding day of 34th annual summer camp on sports organised by Rourkela Steel Plant at Ispat Stadium, Tuesday

Newborn survives night in bush

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dabugaon, May 31: Thrown by his parents in a bush, a newborn boy miraculously survived a night with no harm from wild animals before he was rescued Tuesday morning. The heart-wrenching incident was reported from Barigaon village under Dabugaon police limits in Nabarangpur district. The baby boy was discovered after the passersby heard his cry. A woman Champa Tanti gave the baby motherly care before he was taken to a local health centre. The condition of the baby is absolutely fine with minor cuts and wounds due to ant bites, medical sources said. On being informed, police reached the spot and launched a probe. A case has been registered

The condition of the baby is absolutely fine with minor cuts and wounds due to ant bites

while the police have initiated an investigation to ascertain the details regarding the abandoned baby. Meanwhile, the baby has been left in the care of Champa who is leaving no stone unturned to give the baby a new lease of life. While locals have praised the love of Champa for the baby, they demanded stringent action against the parents who abandoned the newborn. "It was sheer luck that the boy survived the night as stray animals do roam around in the area. How can someone be so inhumane

to leave a baby to die? We suspect it to be the work of some unwed young couple," a local woman said. Another local said it was a 'miracle' that the baby survived the night. "They are criminals, not parents who abandoned the baby in a bush," he added. Police are searching for the newborn's parents. The Child Line has also been made aware of the child's condition.



2 get 20 years in jail for minor's gangrape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 31: Adjudicating a case of gangrape of a minor girl, the additional district and sessions judge of Keonjhar Subhashree Tripathy, Tuesday, convicted two accused and sentenced them to 20 years of imprisonment each. The judge also imposed a fine of ₹58,000 on the duo. According to the case diary, the 17-year-old girl had gone to watch 'pala' in Ghatagaon area April 19, 2017. Three people including a minor boy abducted the girl and gangraped her before abandoning her with life threats. Next day, the girl returned home with much difficulty and narrated her ordeal before her parents, who lodged a complaint with police. The accused duo was arrested while the minor was detained. The court has ordered the government to pay ₹5 lakh as compensation to the gangrape victim.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, SUNDARGARH. No.5767, Dt.27.05.2022. COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement NOTICE INVITING TENDER. Bid Reference No. SNGM-02/2022-23/Dt.27.05.2022. No.C-410: On behalf of the Sundargarh Municipality, on-line e-tender Percentage Rate Bids are invited by the Executive Officer, Sundargarh Municipality from the intending and eligible class/category of bidders in conformity with the Detailed Tender Call Notice in single cover bid system i.e. Technical Bid & Financial Bid for execution of the works mentioned in the DTCN. Contractors validly registered/empanelled under Sundargarh Municipality are also eligible to participate for the works as per condition of DTCN.



Hitting the bullseye

Trainee IAS personnel trying their hands at archery during a visit to Dharanidhar Sports Complex in Keonjhar, Tuesday, as part of Bharat Darshan programme

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable property). Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of STATE BANK OF INDIA under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon the Borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest, Cost, Legal Charges etc. within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

Man gets life term for human sacrifice

Jajpur, May 31: A court in Jajpur district Tuesday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for killing an 8-year-old boy as part of some 'tantrik' rituals (occult practice) seven years ago. The additional district and sessions court also imposed a penalty of ₹35,000 on Deepak Barik, convicted of killing Abhisek Nayak of Rajendrapur village February 26, 2015. On that day, a community

STATE BANK OF INDIA AUCTION SALE OF VEHICLES

Table with columns: SI. No., Borrower Name, Vehicle Type/Model, Make, Registration No., Chasis No., Engine No., Year of Manufacture, Minimum Bid Price (Rs.), Caution Money (Rs.), Kept at Yard. Includes terms and conditions for the auction sale.

Live within; be not shaken by outward happenings.

SRI AUROBINDO



Booker for Shree

It is not often that a novel winning a coveted international prize becomes a binding force seeking to bridge gaps between communities, nations, religions, genders and even languages.

Set in northern India, the novel tells the story of an 80-year-old woman protagonist who, to her family's consternation, insists on travelling to Pakistan.

The importance of the book in the contemporary world is immense which is why it has struck such a chord with the readers and the judges.

As the scope of literature becomes narrow if it is used for advancing any doctrine or creed, the jury refrained from specifying the appeal of the novel to the present day reality in the world.

The serious things in the book are borders and divisions between religions, genders and nations - notably between India and Pakistan.

Shree was born Geetanjali Pandey but changed her surname to her mother's forename. The anecdote that she shared with the media after receiving the award is illustrative of the influences that shaped her into an advocate of women's identity and feminine voice in a male-dominated society.

The bilingual novel - the Hindi original is translated by American painter and prolific translator Daisy Rockwell - is yet another literary and linguistic triumph, especially in the context of India where the present dispensation has been trying to impose Hindi on the entire country.

Truly, literature has the power to rise above politics, race and languages.

THE CURSE OF FOSSIL-FUEL

FOCUS ENVIRONMENT

Our planet is facing a triple crisis of climate, nature, and pollution, with one common cause: the fossil-fuel economy. Oil, gas, and coal are at the root of runaway climate disruption, widespread biodiversity loss, and pervasive plastic pollution.



and misleading "net-zero" pledges. The goal is to divert political attention from the urgent action needed to end reliance on fossil fuels and scale-up proven approaches, like renewable energy, agroecology, and plastic reduction and reuse.

Such transformative action is precisely what Stockholm+50 must deliver. Participating governments and decision-makers must acknowledge that fossil fuels are the main driver of the triple crisis we face, and they must set a bold agenda for halting fossil-fuel expansion, ensuring a rapid and equitable decline of oil, gas, and coal, and accelerating a just transition to a fossil-free future.

The fossil-fuel economy is enabling Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis it has created. In the seven years after Russia illegally annexed Crimea, eight of the world's biggest fossil-fuel companies enriched Russia's government by an estimated \$95.4 billion.

INSTEAD OF FACING ACCOUNTABILITY, THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY AND ITS ALLIES ARE EXPLOITING THE UKRAINE CRISIS TO PUSH FOR EVEN MORE DRILLING, FRACKING, AND EXPORTS OF LNG ALL AROUND THE WORLD



Nikki Reisch & Lili Fuhr

As UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently noted, fossil fuels are choking our planet. In the last decade, their combustion accounted for 86 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions.

Yet, rather than reining in the polluters, the world's governments are currently planning to allow more than twice as much fossil-fuel production in 2030 than would be consistent with the goal - agreed under the 2015 Paris climate agreement - of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Last year, the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights, Marcos A. Orellana, affirmed what frontline communities have long known: fossil-fuel production generates toxic compounds and pollutes air, water, and soil. Air pollution from burning fossil fuels was responsible for about one in five deaths worldwide in 2018.

Fossil fuels are also behind the proliferation of plastics, which are accumulating in even the most

remote areas of the planet, from the top of Mount Everest to the bottom of the Mariana Trench. Ninety-nine per cent of all plastics are made from chemicals derived from fossil fuels, predominantly oil and gas.

As if that were not enough, fossil fuels foment and fund violent conflict around the world. The fossil-fuel economy is enabling Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis it has created.

Instead of facing accountability, the oil and gas industry and its allies are exploiting the Ukraine crisis to push for even more drilling,

fracking, and exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) all around the world. But new fossil-fuel infrastructure, which will take years to bring online, will do nothing to address the current energy crisis.

As world leaders gather for Stockholm+50, breaking our addiction to fossil fuels should be the top priority. Yet fossil fuels are conspicuously absent from the official concept note and agenda.

This omission is no accident. The fossil-fuel lobby has decades of experience sowing doubt about the damage the industry is causing and obscuring the link between fossil fuels and the toxic chemicals used in industrial agriculture and plastic products.

One possible feature of such an agenda would be a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty - an initiative that has attracted wide support, including from thousands of civil-society organisations, hundreds of scientists and parliamentarians, more than 100 Nobel laureates, and dozens of municipal governments.

In parallel with the Stockholm meeting, an intergovernmental negotiating committee, convened by the UN Environment Programme, is gathering in Dakar to develop a legally binding global plastics treaty.

If we have learned one thing in the 50 years since the first Stockholm conference, it is that a future tied to fossil fuels is no future at all. To tackle the converging crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and petrochemical and plastic pollution, Stockholm+50 has no alternative but to confront oil, gas, and coal head-on.

Nikki Reisch is Director of the Climate and Energy Program at the Center for International Environmental Law. Lili Fuhr is Deputy Director of the Climate and Energy Program at the Center for International Environmental Law. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Republicans eager to solve US' door problem



Melvin Durai

NOT ONLY CAN DOORS BE INVITING TO POTENTIAL BURGLARS, THEY ALSO ATTRACT SALESPeople AND JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

A group of about 20 high-ranking Republicans got together recently in Washington, D.C., to discuss what they called "The Problem of Eildoers in Our Schools."

The urgent meeting had been organised by Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, who had won wide acclaim among his peers for zeroing in on what he considered the most pertinent fact regarding the latest shooting: the 18-year-old gunman had entered the school in Uvalde, Texas, through an unsecured door.

Cruz, smiling broadly at the applause that greeted him, suggested that schools should not have a dozen doors to enter and exit, but

a single high-security door. He was praised not just for conceiving a brilliant solution to a seemingly unsolvable problem, but for standing up bravely against one of the most powerful lobbying groups in America, the National Door Association (NDA).

The NDA represents hundreds of door manufacturers, who want to sell as many doors as possible. Indeed, it's largely because of the NDA that American houses are full of doors: front doors, back doors, side doors, bedroom doors, bathroom doors, shower doors, closet doors, pantry doors, garage doors, refrigerator doors. But the NDA knows that doors can cause problems. Not only can doors be inviting to potential burglars, they also attract salespeople and Jehovah's Witnesses. The NDA is aware that some people have eliminated front doors—and are using back doors exclusively—to keep people from selling or witnessing to them.

That's why the NDA recently launched a media campaign with a catchy slogan: "Doors do not open for people. People open for people."

Cruz acknowledged that doors do not usually open themselves, except in places like grocery stores with sensors that open doors automatically. But instead of worrying about whether a door in a school is locked or unlocked, the best solution is to eliminate it, he said.

"If we have a single door for every school, we can monitor it for 24 hours a day," he said. "We can see who's coming and going, and what they're carrying. It would be like airport security, with metal detectors, x-ray machines, and mandatory pat-downs of anyone with an angry face. Some kids may have to take their shoes off too, but this is a small price to pay for living in the freest country in the world."

While gun control advocates are quick to blame the proliferation of guns in America for mass shoot-

ings, Cruz noted that there is only an average of one gun per person in America, but at least three doors per person. And that does not even include doors to sheds, outhouses and vehicles.

"The shooter used a door to get into the school," Cruz said, "but without the door to his pick-up truck, he would have never reached the school."

Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina wondered aloud if more doors were needed in schools for emergency exits. "If there's a fire in the school, wouldn't we want more than one door for the kids to escape?" he asked. "Wouldn't we have a stampedede otherwise?"

Cruz shook his head. "That's what windows are for."

Jumping out of windows is more efficient than running toward a door, he said. "Besides, fires are not a problem in schools. We have lots of fire extinguishers in schools and every kid carries a water bottle with them."

WISDOM CORNER

- All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. - WALT DISNEY
Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently. - HENRY FORD
My favourite things in life don't cost any money. It's really clear that the most precious resource we all have is time. - STEVE JOBS

WORDSWORTH

Target

Everyone has targets - figurative ones, anyway. When targets were tangible things, all you could do was hit them, or - perhaps more often - miss them. But when the word moved out of the literal field into the intangible arena of management, new verbs became attached to it. Now we can set targets, or reach them, or meet them, or even exceed them. Some of the targets we set are tough ones, or ambitious ones. On occasion they aren't even single points but target ranges, which have nothing to do with shooting ranges, where one may find the corporeal sort of targets.

Colonial baggage

Sir, In the "SG Vombatkere vs Union of India, 2022," the Supreme Court ruled that the Section 124-A (Sedition law) must be held in abeyance from an immediate effect and suspended all the pending criminal proceedings based on the law. This has come as a ray of hope. While analysing closely, one may find that the roots of the sedition law are connected to the Rowlatt Act of 1919 which was then passed by the British Parliament to suppress the voices of Mahatma Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the growing nationalist upsurge in the country.

Gun trotting killers

Sir, The Texas shooting has exposed glaring loopholes in America's gun policy. From the old to school kids, none have been spared by the gun trotting killers. Psychological illness and inadequate security measures are cited as reasons for the Texas type of shooting though the larger issues cannot escape attention. The gun culture affecting the country has, surprisingly, not shaken the political parties. As is known, the Republican Party is a strong proponent of free firearm laws for the American citizens.

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

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national

of the day quote

We have decided to form a core committee of the party in Rajasthan. It will work to strengthen the organisation. We will fight the next assembly election with full strength

ASADUDDIN OWAIISI | AIMIM CHIEF

In the last 10 years, I was involved in 11 elections and only one I lost in Uttar Pradesh in 2017. At that time, I was associated with the Congress party. It has broken my winning record

PRASHANT KISHOR | POLITICAL STRATEGIST-TURNED-POLITICIAN

Even before Jain became a minister in the Delhi Cabinet, he had dealt in hawala transactions for shell companies and bought farm lands in Delhi for over Rs 27 crore. But Kejriwal still made him a minister, to use him as a fund collector

ANIL KUMAR | DELHI CONGRESS PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

64% voting in Champawat

Dehradun: Around 64 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the by-election to Uttarakhand's Champawat Assembly constituency Tuesday which will decide the fate of four candidates, including Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhumi. The voting began at 7 am and went on till 5 pm. By the time polling drew to a close, approximately 64 per cent of the electorate had cast their votes, District Magistrate Narendra Singh Bhandari said.

Textbook politics: Fresh row erupts

Bangalore: The politics over textbook revision in Karnataka refuse to die down as the ruling BJP is now in a fix over a fresh row over the description of social reformer Basavanna, who is revered by the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community. The prominent seers of the community have urged Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai to get the description of Basavanna corrected. They have also warned Bommai of protests if the revision is not carried out. The Veerashaiva-Lingayat community is standing firmly with BJP in the state, and the issue is being considered seriously by the ruling party.

Flood situation improves in Assam

Guwahati: The flood situation in Assam improved significantly Tuesday although nearly 1.77 lakh people are still suffering in the deluge across four districts, an official bulletin said.

Techie kills wife, dumps body in river

Tirupati: A techie brutally murdered his wife, stuffed her body in a suitcase and dumped it in a lake in temple city of Tirupati. The chilling facts came to light Tuesday, nearly five months after he committed the crime. Police recovered the body of Padma from the lake in Venkatapuram on the outskirts of the town. Police said they have arrested Venugopal, a software engineer currently employed in Hyderabad.

Debt drives family of four to death

Hyderabad: Four members of a family allegedly died by suicide as they were apparently reeling under a huge debt, police said. The four - a couple and two daughters - ended their lives by jumping into a lake near here, the police said.



In view of the health problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, people should avoid use of tobacco as it not only harms the individuals using it, but also those around them as well as the nature

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

NEW MISSION

India's communication satellite GSAT-24 will be launched by Arianespace from Kourou in French Guiana June 22, the Indian Space Research Organisation said in a mission status update Tuesday



Kashmiri Pandits threaten mass migration from Valley

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, May 31: A Hindu woman teacher was shot dead Tuesday by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district, following which Kashmiri Pandits, employed under the PM package, threatened to undertake mass migration from the Valley if they were not relocated to safe places within the next 24 hours.

"Those involved in this gruesome terror crime will be soon identified and neutralised," a police spokesperson said. The woman's killing evoked widespread condemnation in the Valley. "Very sad. This is yet another targeted killing in a long list of recent attacks directed at unarmed civilians. Words of condemnation and condolence ring hollow as do the assurances of the government that they will not rest till situation normalises. May the deceased rest in peace," National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah tweeted.

"Rajni was from Samba District of Jammu province. A government teacher working in Kulgam area of South Kashmir, she lost her life in a despicable targeted attack. My heart goes out to her husband Raj Kumar & the rest of her family. Another home irreparably damaged by violence," he added.

"Despite GOIs fake claims about Kashmir being normal its obvious that targeted civilian killings are on the rise & a deep cause of concern (sic). Condemn this act of cowardice which sadly plays into the vicious anti-Muslim narrative spun by BJP," she tweeted. Sajad Lone also condemned the killing, saying cowardice has yet again plummeted to shameful depths.



People from the Kashmiri Pandit community shout slogans during their protest march against the killing of the school teacher Rajni Bala

The killing of Rajni Bala (36), who belonged to Jammu's Samba district but was posted at a government school in Gopalpora, Kulgam, is the second killing of a non-Muslim government employee in May and the seventh targeted killing in Kashmir this month

Officials had said she was a migrant Kashmiri Pandit

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said despite the Centre's claims of normalcy in Kashmir, targeted killings were on the rise

"A teacher, an innocent woman hailing from Samba, has been shot dead in Kulgam. May her soul rest in peace," he said.

BJP spokesman Altaf Thakur said he strongly condemned the attack. "Yet another dastardly act of terrorism in Kulgam. Attacking unarmed civilians, that too women, is no bravery but an act of frustration," he added. This is second

killing of a non-Muslim government employee in the month of May. On May 12, Rahul Bhat, a clerk, was shot dead inside the tehsildar's office in Chadoora tehsil of Budgam district.

Of the seven targeted killings that took place in Kashmir this month, three victims were off-duty policemen and four were civilians. Meanwhile, Kashmiri Pandits, employed under the prime minister's package, have threatened to undertake mass migration from the valley if the government did not relocate them to safe places within the next 24 hours as employees from the community hit the streets at various places to protest against the teacher's killing.

Some Kashmiri Pandit employees assembled at the Ghanta Ghar (Clock tower) at Lal Chowk here to protest against the killing while another group gathered at Batwara in Sonawara area of the city and raised slogans against the Union Territory administration, officials said.

MONKEYPOX

Health Min issues guidelines to states

In the 'Guidelines on Management of Monkeypox Disease' issued to states and union territories, the health ministry stressed on surveillance and rapid identification of new cases as the key public health measures for outbreak containment, mandating the need to reduce the risk of human-to-human transmission.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: Amid increasing cases of monkeypox being reported in non-endemic countries, the government Tuesday issued guidelines directing district surveillance units to consider even one such case as an outbreak and initiating a detailed investigation through the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme.

It stated that India needs to be prepared in view of the increasing reports of cases in non-endemic countries even as no case of monkeypox virus has been reported in the country till date.

The guidelines proposed a surveillance strategy to rapidly identify cases and clusters of infections and the sources of infections as soon as possible in order to isolate cases to prevent further transmission, provide optimal clinical care, identify and manage con-



tacts and protect frontline health workers and effective control and preventive measures based on the identified routes of transmission.

According to the guidelines, a confirmed case is laboratory confirmed for monkeypox virus by detection of unique sequences of viral DNA either by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and/or sequencing. All the clinical specimens should be transported to the apex laboratory of ICMR-NIV (Pune) routed through the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) network of the respective district or state. The guidelines explain the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures, IPC at home, patient isolation and ambulance transfer strategies, additional precautions that needs to be taken care of and duration of isolation procedures.

Raising awareness of risk factors under risk communication and preventive measures, the guidelines further explain in detail about raising awareness and educating people about the measures for monkeypox virus like avoiding contact with any material of the sick person, isolation of infected patient from others, practising good hand hygiene and using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when caring for patients.

Satyender Jain sent to ED's custody till June 9



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: Delhi's health minister Satyender Jain was Tuesday sent to Enforcement Directorate's custody till June 9 in a money laundering case by a court here which noted that his interrogation was required to unearth the alleged larger conspiracy. The ED had Monday arrested the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Special Judge Geetanjali Goel issued the remand order after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the ED, sought Jain's custodial interrogation for 14 days.

He said there was a chequered layer of money and the agency was trying to find out if the accused was laundering somebody else's money and whether there were other potential beneficiaries. "The money hasn't stopped at Rs 4.81 crore. It is beyond. Some facts we don't have, but the accused is aware," the SG said, adding that the likelihood of tampering with evidence could not be ruled out till the agency ascertained the real trail. So far, Jain has been evasive in his replies to the agency, he alleged.

Woman throws six kids into well

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 31: The police Tuesday registered a case of murder against a 30-year-old woman who allegedly killed her six children, aged between 18 months and 10 years, by throwing them into a well at a village in Maharashtra's Raigad district following domestic discord, an official said.

The accused, Runa Chikhuri Sahani, threw her children, including five girls, into a well in Kharavali village in Mahad taluka, around 100km from Mumbai, Monday afternoon, and later attempted suicide but was saved by local residents, he said. The woman was arrested and booked for murder, he said and claimed she has confessed to the crime.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

The children, aged between 18 months and 10 years, drowned before villagers could pull them out, the official said. Investigations have revealed the accused committed the crime in a fit of rage following an argument with her husband. "The couple often fought over the husband's alcohol addiction, he said. After throwing her children into the well, the accused allegedly tried to jump into the water body, but was saved by villagers.

The woman was brought to the police station by locals, the official said. Sahani's family originally hails from Uttar Pradesh and had come to Maharashtra in search of work, he said.

First person held in Moosewala killing

AGENCIES

Chandigarh, May 31: Manpreet Singh, the first arrest in the killing of famed singer-turned-politician Sidhu Moosewala was produced before a Mansa court in Punjab Tuesday and was sent to police custody for five days.

A team of Punjab Police along with sleuths of the Uttarakhand STF had arrested Manpreet Singh from Dehradun Monday. He was suspected to have provided "key logistical support" in the murder of the Punjabi singer.



Singh, a resident of Faridkot in Punjab, was reportedly trying to hide among pilgrims, who were scheduled to go on a yatra to Hemkund in Chamoli district when the police nabbed him.

Famous Punjabi singer and Congress leader Moosewala was shot dead by unidentified assailants Sunday, a day after the state government pruned his security cover

Meanwhile, the cremation of Moosewala was held in his native village Moosa in Mansa district Tuesday. After much delay to get the consent of his father, the post-mortem of Moosewala was conducted by a five-member forensic team of doctors from Patiala and Faridkot medical colleges at the Civil Hospital in Mansa.

Tens of thousands of Moosewala's fans and followers gathered outside his palatial bungalow to pay tributes and attended his funeral.

Officials told IANS the singer-turned-politician's wailing parents gave consent for the post-mortem of their only child after Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced to set up a judicial commission under a sitting judge of Punjab and Haryana High Court to probe his killing.

PROUD MOMENT



President Ram Nath Kovind presents Param Vishisht Seva Medal to Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, during Defence Investiture Ceremony - 2, at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi

Backdoor channels active to revive India-Pakistan ties

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE REMAINED STRAINED FOR YEARS NOW AND TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE IN AUGUST 2019 WHEN INDIA REVOKED SPECIAL STATUS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/ Islamabad, May 31: With Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the ruling and a coalition government set in place, Islamabad and New Delhi have been working towards activating backdoor channels for talks to revive the stalled relationship between the nuclear powered neighbours.

The development is being seen as a major step with an intent to push forward the relationship between India and Pakistan towards normalcy through bilateral engagements, talks and addressing each other concerns to find a mutual ground of understanding.

Relations between the two countries have remained strained for years now and took a turn for the worse in August 2019 when India revoked special status of Jammu and Kashmir.

In response, Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties and suspended bilateral trade and insisted that until India reverses its decision, there can be no talks on any issue between the two countries.

"Even before the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took charge, the two countries were talking to each other, albeit quietly," said an informed source.

"Those contacts have led to the renewal of the ceasefire under-statement in February 2021 and



since then the truce is holding, with no major incident of ceasefire violation."

While the ceasefire agreement gave hopes of a forward movement towards more engagements on bilateral level between the two coun-

tries, it did not yield any positive results of openings during the tenure of former Prime Minister Imran Khan.

However, under the new government set-up in Pakistan, there is renewed efforts by the two sides

to explore ways and means to de-escalate tensions and revive the stalled relations.

"Call it backchannels, Track-II or behind-the-scene talks, I can only confirm that relevant people in both countries are in touch with each other," another official source said

It should be noted that immediate results of these back channel engagements are unlikely as both sides have put forward tough pre-conditions for resumption of dialogue, the source added.

"Pakistan's policy is clear. We want to engage with everyone, including India. However, Narendra Modi's hardline government may not show flexibility

on the issue of Kashmir.

"India is inclined to the re-engagement but reluctant to offer something that would help Pakistan resume the dialogue," the source added.

The source also revealed that Western countries, including the US and UK, who he said are trying to open some formal channels of communications, are also facilitating the backdoor channels of engagement between India and Pakistan.

"India is eager to first resume trade and then other ties with Pakistan. New Delhi is willing to meet wheat shortage of Pakistan by entering into a government-to-government agreement."



HALF-AN-HOUR OF HAVOC

Severe thunderstorm throws Delhi into chaos



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: The National Capital witnessed its first severe thunderstorm in four years as squally winds of 100 kmph pummeled the city Monday evening, uprooting trees, damaging property and bringing traffic to a screeching halt. This is the first storm of "severe" intensity in Delhi since June 9, 2018, when Palam had logged a wind speed of 104 kmph, a Met department official said. A moderate thunderstorm had hit the city last Monday. The thunderstorm led to a drastic fall in the temperature at the Safdarjung Observatory - from 40 degrees Celsius at 4:20 pm to 25 degrees Celsius at 5:40 pm. Safdarjung, Lodhi Road and Ridge logged 17.8 mm, 20 mm and 15 mm of rainfall. East and central parts of Delhi bore the maximum brunt of the storm that peppered the roads with broken tree branches. People at several locations across the city shared reports about the strong winds snapping power and

- 100 KMPH STORM LEAVES THREE DEAD
- OVER 200 TREES UPROOTED IN MCD AREAS
- FLIGHTS, TRAFFIC & POWER SUPPLY DISRUPTED

and 70 delayed at the Delhi airport, while long, serpentine queues of vehicles clogged the arterial roads in the city. Loud thunder, lightning strikes and a short, intense spell of rain accompanied the gusty winds. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) attributed it to a Western Disturbance-induced cyclonic circulation over northwest Rajasthan and adjoining Pakistan. The moisture-carrying easterly winds from the Bay of Bengal are feeding the cyclonic circulation, it said. High temperature and high humidity create thunderclouds, which are capable of producing

short, intense spells of rain and thunderstorms, an official said. The Indira Gandhi International Airport reported winds gusting up to 100 kmph. The Palam weather station logged a maximum wind speed of 70 kmph. A trough extending from north-west Rajasthan to Assam will persist for a few days. Some parts of Delhi are likely to see intermittent thunder activity over the next few days which will keep the mercury in check, said Mahesh Palawat, vice president (climate change and meteorology), Skymet Weather.

'Uprooting of trees due to concretisation, fall in groundwater level'

As a severe thunderstorm uprooted hundreds of trees in Delhi Monday, experts attributed the extensive damage to increasing concretisation and declining groundwater level. Noted environmentalist Pradeep Krishen said extreme weather conditions have damaged trees in the past too. However, the declining groundwater levels and concretisation around the base of the trees have compounded the impact of such events, he added. The roots of a tree tend to spread as much as the canopy spreads and concretisation around its base does not allow water to reach the side roots, which shrivel and weaken the tree as well, Krishen said. Many of the trees are not able to reach the water table that has gone down over the years. This makes them weak and vulnerable, he said. Environmentalist and founder of New Delhi Nature Society Verhaen Khanna said gulmohar trees attract termites that make them hollow. Such trees become the first casualty of severe weather, he said. Many times, people tie cables and ropes to support structures around the tree trunk, which hampers the growth of that particular part. Strong winds snap such trees from these points, he said.

Moosewala murder: Delhi HC to hear Bishnoi's plea citing 'fake encounter' fear



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 31: The Delhi High Court will Wednesday hear the plea filed by jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, named as a suspect in the sensational murder of famed Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, alleging apprehension of a fake encounter by the Punjab police for 'political mileage'. Through his counsel Vishal Chopra, Bishnoi approached the high court after a NIA court of Patiala House Court junked his plea Monday. In the plea, he sought a direction to the Delhi Police and the Tihar Jail authorities to ensure all necessary security arrangements for him. The petitioner sought the court's direction to Central Jail Authorities to give prior intimation to his counsels before his custody is given to any other state police on any production warrant. He should be duly handcuffed, shackled, and video-graphed during the production warrant and on transit remand if any warrant is produced by the Punjab police for the safety of his life, the plea stated.

The Punjab police have alleged that Bishnoi was involved in the murder of Sidhu Moosewala. The accused is entitled to a fair and true investigation and a fair trial and the prosecution is expected to play a balanced role in the trial of a crime. The investigation should be judicious, fair, transparent and expeditious and the investigating authority should ensure the safety of any accused person, his plea said. "Fair trial includes fair investigation as envisaged by Articles 20 and 21 of the Constitution of India. The role of the police is to be for the protection of life, liberty and property of citizens, that investigation of offences being one of its foremost duties. That the aim of investigation is ultimately to search for truth and to bring the offender to book," the plea read. Currently lodged in Tihar jail in a MCOCA (Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act) case, Bishnoi is allegedly involved in more than five dozen criminal cases lodged against him in Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab. He had once threatened to kill Bollywood actor Salman Khan.

internet cables, throwing parts of the capital into chaos. The intense storm damaged old, vulnerable structures and under-construction buildings. The historic Jama Masjid in the walled city area lost the finial of its main dome as it withered the fury of the storm. At least five flights were diverted



JAMA MASJID DOME DAMAGED IN STORM

The historic Jama Masjid in the walled city area lost the finial of its main dome and witnessed some stones getting loose and falling overhead as it weathered a rainstorm Monday evening. Jama Masjid Shahi Imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari said that two people were injured by stones which fell from minarets and other parts of the mosque. The Kalas (finial) of the main dome fell off. It needs urgent repair to prevent further damages. Some stones of the mosque structure also loosened and fell off. I will write to the Prime Minister for immediate repair of the mosque roping in Archaeological Survey of India, Bukhari told PTI. Delhi Waqf Board officials said a team was sent to Jama Masjid for inspection and assessment of the damage. The finial weighs around 300 kgs. It's a difficult task to fix it back and undertake the repairs. We will take a decision after the damage is fully assessed, said a Waqf Board official. In June last year also, some stone pieces from the southern minaret of Jama Masjid had fallen after a storm. In 2020 too, the mosque had suffered damage due to tremors the city. A few pieces of stones had fallen off from minaret near gate number 3 of the mosque premises, its caretakers said.

Improve greenery on European standard roads in west Delhi: CM

New Delhi, May 31: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Tuesday inspected a model stretch being redeveloped on "European standards" in west Delhi's Pitampura and directed the PWD officials to improve work on horticulture segment of the stretch. Kejriwal, accompanied by deputy CM Manish Sisodia and senior officials of Public Works Department (PWD), expressed his unhappiness towards the horticulture work on the stretch and implied that it should be improved. The PWD is developing 16 stretches of arterial roads on pilot basis across the city to create a model for streetscaping and redevelopment of its 500 km roads across the city. During the inspection of Britannia Chowk to Outer Ring Road, West Enclave in Pitampura, Kejriwal pointed out that greenery on stretch was not up to the mark and needed improvement. Shrubs planted on the roadsides

needs to be denser. More plantations should be there on the central verge, Kejriwal said during the inspection. He said that he was not very happy with the horticulture work being done on the stretch. We are beautifying 500 km PWD roads in Delhi on European standards. For this, we are developing 16 stretches on pilot basis across the city. These pilot projects are likely to be completed by September or October. We will then review and finalise a model, which will be best suited for redevelopment of roads, Kejriwal told reporters. PWD officials said that re-designing of roads will eliminate bottlenecks and improve aesthetics of the road stretch. A senior PWD official said that the project entails strengthening of road, enhancing its aesthetics and greenery and introducing user facilities like kiosks, benches, decorative lights, and water ATMs on the roadside. Dedicated cycle paths and wide footpaths will make the stretches more pedestrian and cycle-friendly.



Delhi Police sets up Social Media Cell to counter fake news

New Delhi, May 31: Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana Monday inaugurated the Social Media Cell (SMC) of the force with an in-house state-of-the-art studio 'Face-2-Face' at its headquarters on Jai Singh Marg. Delhi Police has established SMC for holding Podcast, Twitter Live sessions, panel discussions, press briefings and countering fake news, officials said. Speaking on the occasion, Asthana underlined the importance of communication in today's well-networked society. It is equally important to fight fake news as to propagate actual facts in public domain, he said. Social Media is the best medium to spread awareness and for debunking fake news in shortest time. Educational and awareness videos produced by SMC can be shared by EOW, SPUWC (Special Police Unit for Women and Children) and other verticals of Delhi Police, he said. The SMC has been set-up in police headquarters for quick dissemination of information in case of exigencies like violence, fire incident, building collapse, bomb threat or other such emergent situation, said Suman Nalwa, Deputy Commissioner of Police (PRO).



Trucks carrying wheat from India as part of humanitarian aid for Afghanistan pass through the Attari-Wagah border between India and Pakistan, near Amritsar, Punjab, Tuesday

Moosewala makes final journey on favourite tractor

The tractor, which had figured in many of his music videos, was bedecked with flowers for his last ride to a family-owned field for the cremation

Mansa (Punjab), May 31: A sea of mourners bid a tearful farewell to popular Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, who was cremated at his native village in Mansa district Tuesday afternoon. The body of the 28-year-old singer-politician, who was shot dead Sunday, was brought to his home in Moosa village amid tight security Tuesday morning from Mansa civil hospital, where the post-mortem was conducted. Moosewala's family, including his parents, was inconsolable as they sat beside the body at their home. His mother was seen trying to console her husband as people from Punjab, Rajasthan and Chandigarh among other places queued up in large numbers to get a last glimpse of the singer. The singer's favourite tractor, which had figured in many of his music videos, was bedecked with flowers for his last ride to a family-owned field for the cremation. Notwithstanding the scorching



heat, mourners joined the funeral procession as Moosewala's father and mother stood on the tractor with folded hands, accompanying their son on his final journey. Some of his fans wore t-shirts with Moosewala's picture printed on them. The singer's father, Balkour Singh, even took off his turban on seeing the sea of mourners. Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring was present during the funeral procession. A heavy police force was deployed at the slain singer's residence as well as at the cremation site. People heaped praises on Moosewala for his songs and even raised slogans in his favour. "He was a good-natured man. He would never say no to anybody

for a selfie. We are sad that he is not amongst us today," said a villager. Some villagers and fans expressed anger over the Punjab police pruning Moosewala's security cover just a day before he was shot dead and sought the strictest punishment for the killers. "Those who were behind the killing of Moosewala should be given exemplary punishment," said an elderly man who came from Jalandhar. Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, known as Sidhu Moosewala, was shot dead Sunday by unidentified assailants in Punjab's Mansa district. His cousin and a friend, who were travelling in a Mahindra Thar jeep with him, were also injured in the attack. The popular Punjabi singer had

fought the recent assembly election in Punjab on a Congress ticket from Mansa and was defeated by the AAP's Vijay Singla. He was among the 424 people whose security was withdrawn or curtailed by the Punjab Police Saturday on a temporary basis. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Monday announced setting up a judicial commission headed by a sitting high court judge to probe the brutal killing of Sidhu Moosewala. The state police Monday claimed to have rounded up some suspects and got important leads in connection with the killing. It had termed the assassination a case of an inter-gang rivalry and that the Lawrence Bishnoi gang was behind the killing.



At the time of demonetisation, I said it was a 'national tragedy'. Don't be under any misunderstanding -- Modi did not make a mistake, this was done deliberately so that lakhs of crores of loans of 'Modi-friend' capitalists can be waived from the money of common people and their black money can be made white

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

PRE-MONSOON RAINS IN MAHA

Some parts of Maharashtra, including Satara and Beed, received pre-monsoon showers over the past 24 hours, an India Meteorological Department (IMD) official said Tuesday



of the day quote

Agriculture friendly schemes of the Modi government have become the real power of farmers today. In this instalment today @narendramodi transferred #PMKisan ₹21,000 crore to farmers
AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Let me make it very clear that there will be no entry for BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. It has to go. There are no chances of BJP returning to power
MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

The Gandhi family used Amethi for politics for decades and filled their coffers but did nothing for its development
SMRITI IRANI | UNION MINISTER

India may see lower rain in coal-producing areas

New Delhi, May 31: India expects rainfall in the biggest coal-producing areas of its east-central region to be below the long-term average this year, potentially easing utilities' coal shortages as there could be fewer disruptions to mining activity due to flooding.

East-central India includes the states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, which together account for nearly half of the country's annual coal output. Coal accounts for nearly 75% of India's power generation.

India expects overall rainfall during the annual monsoon to be 103% of the long-term average. Higher rainfall in other parts of the country could increase hydro power generation and irrigation-driven electricity demand could be lower, easing pressure on thermal power.

India has reversed a policy to cut coal imports to zero, invoked an emergency law to operate imported coal-based utilities and plans to reopen closed mines to address surging power demand, which is seen growing at the fastest pace in at least 36 years.

Domestic coal output typically dips during the annual monsoon period between June and September every year due to mining disruptions, and state-run Indian Railways also faces delays due to water-clogged tracks and route closures.

State-run Coal India (COAL-NS), which produces 80% of India's coal, reported the first fall in production in two decades in 2019/20, due to the heaviest rainfall in 25 years. The India Meteorological



India expects overall rainfall during the annual monsoon to be 103% of the long-term average. Higher rainfall in other parts of the country could increase hydro power generation and irrigation-driven electricity demand could be lower, easing pressure on thermal power

Coal accounts for nearly 75% of India's power generation

Department (IMD) expects rainfall in the coal-producing regions of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, which together make up a quarter of India's output, to be above average, it said Tuesday.

The intensity of rainfall would be more critical than overall rainfall during a season. Relentless rains over short periods of time could cause mine flooding, even when overall rainfall during the monsoon is deficient. The southwest monsoon has set in over Kerala on May 29, three days ahead of its usual date of June 1.

Erratic rainfall patterns, which India has attributed to climate change, have impeded output in the recent past.

Sudden floods in 2019 in the Dipka mine, India's third largest,

halted operations for days, and it took over a month to resume production at full capacity.

India faced a crippling power crisis in April, when a rapid surge in power demand led to a scramble for coal, forcing the country to roll back plans to cut thermal coal imports to zero.

An increase in peak power consumption during the night when solar power is not available has made phasing out coal-fired generation a big challenge. The addition of alternative sources such as nuclear and hydro power have also been slow.

India is the world's second largest consumer, producer and importer of coal, and the fuel accounts for nearly 75% of annual electricity generation.

BJP censors Dilip Ghosh, bars him from speaking to media

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 31: The BJP central leadership has censored Bengal MP Dilip Ghosh from speaking against a section of party leaders or making statement on any public forum against any of his party colleagues, be it in West Bengal or anywhere else.

BJP's national general secretary and headquarters-in-charge, Arun Singh, in a letter to Ghosh pointed out that certain statements and outbursts by the latter have not only angered the state party leaders, but also embarrassed the central leadership. "This was



pointed out to you on several occasions by the party leadership in the fond hope that you will take note," read Singh's letter; a copy of which was accessed by IANS. Such comments by Ghosh, who is also the party's national vice-president, might create dissatisfaction, unrest and alienation among party ranks, which is unacceptable, Singh said.

"On the instructions of J.P. Nadda Ji, I wish to convey to you the party's deep anguish and concern at issuance of such statements and advise you to always refrain from going to the media or any public forum, about your own colleagues either in the state of West Bengal or anywhere else," the letter quoted Singh as saying.

EASTERN LADAKH ROW

India, China agree to hold next round of military talks soon



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

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 31: India and China Tuesday agreed to hold the next round of the Senior Commanders' meeting at an early date to achieve complete disengagement from all friction points in eastern Ladakh to create conditions for the restoration of normalcy in bilateral relations.

It was the only decision taken at a virtual meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on the India-China Border Affairs as there was no concrete forward movement to resolve the over two-year-old standoff in eastern Ladakh.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the two sides reviewed the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector of India-China border areas and agreed to hold the next round of the Senior Commanders' meeting "at an early date".

The previous meeting under the framework of the WMCC had taken place in November while the 15th round of military dialogue was held March 11.

The meeting on the lingering row Tuesday was the first one after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited India March 24 and 25. "They agreed that as instructed by the two foreign ministers, both sides should continue the discussions through diplomatic and military channels to resolve the remaining issues along the LAC at the earliest so as to create conditions for the restoration of normalcy in bilateral relations," it said.

"In this context, they agreed to hold the next (16th) round of the Senior Commanders meeting at an early date to achieve the objective of complete disengagement from all friction points along the LAC in the Western Sector in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements and protocols," the MEA added. India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC were key for the overall development of the bilateral ties.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.

SHORT TAKES

Bhim Singh passes away

Jammu: Founder of Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party Bhim Singh passed away in Jammu Tuesday after being unwell for about a month. He was 81. The former legislator hailed from Udhampur district's Bhugterian village. He has left behind his wife Jai Mala and son Ankit Love, who lives in London. Singh breathed his last at GMC Hospital here.

ED grills Farooq in JKCA scam case

Srinagar: The Enforcement Directorate Tuesday questioned National Conference president Farooq Abdullah for over three hours in connection with a money laundering case linked to alleged financial irregularities in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association. The Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar reached the ED office at Rajbagh here around 11 am. Before going inside the ED office, the former chief minister linked his questioning by the ED with the forthcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

Hardik Patel to join BJP June 2

Ahmedabad: Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS) convener and former Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel will join the BJP Thursday. Confirming the development, BJP spokesman Bharat Dangar said that Patel, along with his supporters, will join the saffron party in the presence of the party state president CRPatil and former Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel at 12 p.m.

1,000 sanitation labourers missing

Patna: The Municipal Corporation of Patna (MCP) has asked an outsourcing company to provide details of 1,000 sanitation labourers who are said to have disappeared from the ground. Animesh Kumar Parashar, the municipal commissioner of Patna, smelt a possible scam after he received complaints from several areas of Patna. The complainants have said that sanitation work is not taking place in several areas and waste material is piling up there.

119 unregistered vessels found

Chennai: A total of 119 unregistered vessels were found by Tamil Nadu fishing department in its annual inspection in the delta districts of the state. The annual inspection of vessels was done between May 25 and 26, a statement from the department said Tuesday.

UP: Seven killed in ambulance mishap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bareilly (UP), May 31: Seven people died Tuesday when an ambulance coming from Delhi collided with a truck here, police said.

The incident took place in the Fatehganj Paschim area when the driver of the ambulance lost control of the vehicle, which rammaged a divider and came onto the other side of the road before hitting the truck, the Bareilly Police said on Twitter. Seven people died on the spot.

It is suspected that the ambulance driver may have dozed off which led to the crash. A probe is on in the matter, and the victims are yet to be identified, the police said. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has condoled the loss of lives.

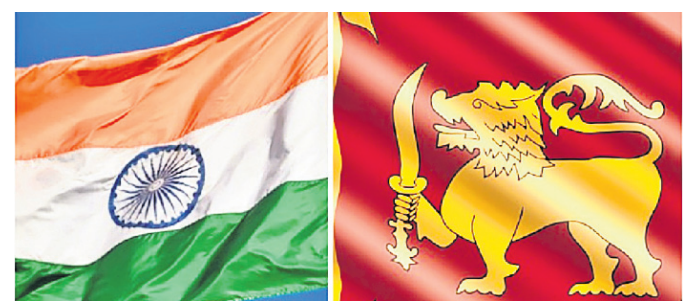
India sends diesel consignment to SL

IN KEEPING WITH INDIA'S 'NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST' POLICY, NEW DELHI HAS EXTENDED THIS YEAR ALONE SUPPORT WORTH OVER \$3.5BN TO LANKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Colombo, May 31: India Tuesday said it has delivered one more consignment of 40,000 metric tonnes of diesel to Sri Lanka to help ease the acute fuel shortage in the debt-ridden island nation which is grappling with its worst economic crisis.

India extended an additional \$500 million credit line to Sri Lanka last month to help the neighbouring country import fuel as it has been struggling to pay for imports after its foreign exchange reserves plummeted sharply in recent times, causing a devaluation of its currency



and spiralling inflation.

India May 23 delivered around 40,000 metric tonnes of petrol to Sri Lanka. "Powering #SriLanka!!! A shipment of 40,000 MT of diesel supplied under #Indian assistance reached #Colombo yesterday

(Monday) evening," the Indian High Commission tweeted.

India and Sri Lanka signed a \$500 million Line of Credit Agreement for the purchase of petroleum products on February 2, 2022.

RS POLLS BJP announces 22 candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: The BJP has announced 22 candidates for the Rajya Sabha polls and the party has decided to support one Independent candidate each from Rajasthan and Haryana.

Though the party's list of Rajya Sabha candidates includes the names of Union ministers Piyush

Goyal, Nirmala Sitharaman, some other prominent names such as that of minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, and senior leaders Vinay Sahasrabudhe and OP Mathur were missing.

Senior BJP leader and former cabinet minister Prakash Javadekar's name was earlier wrongly mentioned among those missing from the list. His current

Rajya Sabha tenure is till 2024. The BJP has fielded eight candidates from Uttar Pradesh, three each from Maharashtra and Karnataka, two each from Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, and one each from Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Haryana.

The saffron party will support two Independent candidates – Subhash Chandra from Rajasthan

and Kartikeya Sharma from Haryana. Former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje met Chandra in the Assembly lobby earlier in the day. His tenure as a Rajya Sabha MP from Haryana will end August 1.

On the other hand, BJP's ally Jannayak Janata Party has also announced its support for Sharma's candidature.

IS IT AUDIBLE?



Activists of Left Front raise slogans during a protest over the hike in price of LPG cylinders and other essential commodities in Kolkata

TIME TO TAKE ACTION

Ban advt of tobacco products: Health experts to govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: Health experts and celebrities have urged the government to put an immediate ban on advertisement of tobacco products.

Noted epidemiologist and public health expert Chandrakant Lahariya pointed out that children and non-tobacco users too visit the point of sale (POS) and are at risk of getting addicted and giving relaxation on POS is like inviting a tobacco pandemic.

He also brought to the notice of the government about the tobacco threat on the people's health in the wake of Covid-19.

He cited various studies showing how tobacco users have become vulnerable to the deadly infection during the pandemic. "Every life is precious and we are losing 1.3 million Indians every year to tobacco-related diseases.

Apart from cancer, tobacco is also a major cause of a wide range of chronic and life-threatening conditions like lung diseases, cardiovascular diseases, and strokes to name a few," he said.

The epidemiologist backed the demand to ban designated smoking areas in the airports, hotels and restaurants, as they were a health risk to non-smokers.

"People are aware of the ill effects of tobacco on health. But that is only one facet. There is a strong need to spread awareness on how tobacco adversely affects the environment. From beginning to end, the tobacco cycle is an overwhelmingly polluting and damaging process."

"Air pollution caused by smoking springs to mind, but damage occurs across the entire supply chain, and is much more complex," said Dr Ankit Gupta, Managing Director, The Park and Signature Group of Hospitals. Renowned wrestler and



On the eve of World No Tobacco Day, they also asked the Centre to ensure that tobacco control law and policies are made stronger and implemented effectively

More than eight million people are killed across the globe every year due to tobacco use

Even cigarette smoking releases 84,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere

TOBACCO SMOKE EMITS THREE DIFFERENT KINDS OF GREENHOUSE GASES, EXPERTS SAID

actor Sangram Singh said there has been alarming evidence of widespread advertising and pro

motional activities that influences children to start smoking and potentially develop the habit for a

lifetime addiction that could kill them. He expressed concern that despite the ban on tobacco advertisements, the industry is spending a hefty amount on promotion of such items by adopting various marketing tactics.

"They eye youth as their probable client as they very well know that in a tobacco-addicted youth, they will have a life-time client. I request the government that such advertisements should be immediately prohibited," he said at an event held here on the eve of World No Tobacco Day, according to a statement. Dr Uma Kumar, HOD of Rheumatology, AIIMS, New Delhi, said tobacco companies that make products like cigarettes and gutka are specifically targeting teenagers and kids. "They prominently display their advertisements near school and colleges so that they are visible to the impressionable minds. These should be completely

banned," he said, stressing that it is very important to save the youth from these addictive products. Dr Kumar also highlighted the harms of passive smoking to non-smokers, especially children and women.

"Doing away with Designated Smoking Areas (DSA) can be a game changer in the direction of health of the vulnerable population and making India's public places 100 per cent smoke-free."

"Tobacco products cause serious ailments like cancer, claiming almost 13 lakh lives in the country. For healthy India, it is critical that tobacco control law and policies are made stronger and implemented effectively," she reiterated.

Communication expert Neelkanth Bakshi also touched upon various anti-tobacco measures taken by the Centre and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been very particular about the health of people particularly youth.

international



Israel & the UAE just signed a historic Free Trade Agreement - the first of this scope to be signed between Israel & an Arab state
NAFTALI BENNETT | ISRAELI PM

BLACK BOX FOUND

A team of experienced international and national mountain guides Tuesday retrieved the black box of the Tara Air plane that crashed in Nepal's mountainous Mustang district Sunday, killing 22 people



of the day quote

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) needs to strengthen its centrality, unity, and solidarity to address key challenges for the sake of regional and global peace, security, and sustainable development

PRAK SOKHONN | CAMBODIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

The Second Amendment, which protects the right to keep and bear arms, to the nation's constitution "was never absolute" in gun control push

JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT

There will be new deliveries of Caesar self-propelled artillery systems soon, and we will continue to work together in this context

CATHERINE COLONNA | FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

3 get death penalty

Dhaka: Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal Tuesday sentenced three persons to death for collaborating with the Pakistan Army and committing crimes against humanity during the country's Liberation War in 1971. "One of the convicts is a fugitive and was tried in absentia but the other two faced the trial in person... They all were activists of Jamaat-e-Islami (party)," senior prosecutor Syed Haider Ali said. Jamaat-e-Islami was opposed to Bangladesh's 1971 independence from Pakistan while its activists were the key elements of Pakistan military's auxiliary units like Razakar and Gestapo-like Al-Badar forces.

Agatha weakens

Puerto Escondido (Mexico): Hurricane Agatha made history as the strongest hurricane ever recorded to come ashore in May during the eastern Pacific hurricane season, making landfall on a sparsely populated stretch of small beach towns and fishing villages in southern Mexico. The storm hit Oaxaca state Monday afternoon as a strong Category 2 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 105 mph (165kph), then quickly lost power as it moved inland over the mountainous interior. Agatha was downgraded to a tropical depression by Tuesday morning, with sustained winds down to 35 mph (55 kph).

Dutton to lead Aus opposition

Canberra: Former Defence Minister Peter Dutton was chosen Monday to lead Australia's conservative opposition following the party's election defeat nine days ago. Defeated Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he would step down as Liberal Party leader after his loss to new Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who leads the left-leaning Labor Party. Dutton was elected unopposed to become the new leader of the Liberal Party, and former environment minister Sussan Ley was elected his deputy.

Pak gov't, TTP to extend ceasefire

Islamabad/Peshawar: The Pakistan government and the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have agreed to extend the ceasefire indefinitely amidst ongoing negotiations between the two sides to end the nearly two decades of militancy in the tribal region, bordering Afghanistan. The ceasefire, which was to come to an end on the night of May 30, has been extended for an indefinite period, sources said.

UPPING THE ANTE

China sends 30 jets near Taiwan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taipei, May 31: US Senator Tammy Duckworth Tuesday reiterated America's support for Taiwan on her second visit in a year to the self-governing island claimed by China.

Duckworth, meeting with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, emphasized the close economic, political and security relations between Taipei and Washington. China sent 30 military aircraft toward the island Monday in an on-going campaign of regular flights. Taiwan's Defence Ministry said it responded by scrambling jets, putting air defence missile systems on alert and issuing radio warnings.

Duckworth said she wanted to "emphasise our support for Taiwan security". The former Army helicopter pilot and lieutenant colonel in the National Guard cited strong bipartisan backing for a bill she has put forward promoting cooperation between Taiwan's armed forces and the National Guard.

"I do want to say that it is more than just about military. It's also about the economy," the Illinois



US Senator Tammy Duckworth's meeting with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, emphasised the close economic, political and security relations between Taipei and Washington

Taiwan's Defence Ministry said it responded by scrambling jets, putting air defence missile systems on alert and issuing radio warnings

US President Joe Biden said on a recent trip to Japan and South Korea that the US would intervene militarily if China were to invade Taiwan

Democrat told Tsai. Tsai thanked the US government and Congress "for the importance they place on peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," as well as Duckworth herself for "keeping a close watch on Taiwan related security issues".

China said it strongly deplors

Duckworth's visit. "Taiwan is a province of China, and there is no so-called president," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said. He urged the US to end all official contacts with Taiwan.

"The US government has recently sent a series of erroneous signals on the Taiwan issue," he said.

PAK SHOCKER

Woman gangraped inside moving train

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Multan, May 31: In a shocking incident, a 25-year-old woman was gang-raped inside a train heading from Multan to Karachi by at least three staff members. The victim was on board the Bahauddin Zakaria Express when some staffers subjected her to sexual assault on May 27.

The police have registered an FIR based on the complaint of the victim.

"The FIR has been registered under Section 377s (punishment for rape) and 34 (common intent) of the Pakistan Penal Code," confirmed police authorities. A medical check-up of the victim confirmed rape.

HIT BY FUEL SHORTAGE

SL port switches to pedal power

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Colombo, May 31: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka's main seaport unveiled a free bicycle service Tuesday, allowing workers to navigate the facility without petrol-powered vehicles, as the island nation struggles with unprecedented fuel shortages.



The island nation is experiencing its worst financial meltdown since independence, leaving authorities struggling to pay for ad-

equate supplies of vital imports. Motorists around the South Asian country are forced to spend hours or even days waiting for rationed fuel at gas stations. The bicycle initiative was aimed at conserving petrol in the Colombo deep-sea container port, Sri Lanka Ports Authority Chairman Prasantha Jayamanna said.

"We have built a cycle track along a disused railway line for those who come to the port to use cycles instead of other vehicles," he said. The port in Colombo sits on 469 hectares of land. Shipping lines operating through the port -- located in the Indian Ocean, along the world's busiest east-west maritime trade route -- donated 100 bikes to kick off the initiative, Jayamanna said.

GROWING CHALLENGE

Pakistan's fuel supply threatened

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 31: Cash-strapped Pakistan may face a supply disruption in its oil sector as the key industry is facing challenges in arranging international finances for import of crude and oil products, according to a media report Tuesday.

The Petroleum Division has informed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Finance Minister Miftah Ismail that arrangements of oil imports are getting tough by the day as foreign banks are not providing financing against letters of credit (LCs) opened by oil marketing companies (OMCs) and refineries with the local banks, the Dawn News reported, citing its sources.

A senior official told the Pakistani daily that except two



large corporations - Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and Pak-Arab Refinery Limited (Parco) - all OMCs and refineries are struggling to arrange imports of petroleum products and crude.

About six-seven cargoes worth USD 50-75 million each (USD 350-500m cumulative) depending on size and product were held up at present because of the increased

risk following some critical statements from the relevant ministries about the tough fiscal and foreign exchange position, the daily reported.

The sources said that Pakistani banks were opening LCs on behalf of the oil industry, but their partner banks were not extending credit cover. "Unfortunately, the country's fuel supply is now also

being severely threatened by limited credit facilities, high inflation and increasing rupee-dollar parity," stated an oil industry's report sent by the Petroleum Division to the Prime Minister Office and the finance minister. The oil industry has told the government that this financial predicament had left the oil industry extremely vulnerable and fragile, adding that this "may result in breakdown of the supply chain".

The Oil Companies Advisory Council reported to the ministries of petroleum and finance that "immediate remedial measures are required to be taken across two targeted areas of concerns -- reluctance of international banks to confirm LCs for oil imports and timely remittance of price differential claims".

WARINESS AND ANXIETY

Relief and disbelief as Shanghai to start lifting lockdown

Life is set to return to something more like normal from Wednesday, when the passes issued by residential buildings for people to go out for a few hours will be scrapped, public transport will resume and residents can go back to work

REUTERS

Shanghai, May 31: Shanghai authorities Tuesday began dismantling fences around housing compounds and ripping police tape off public squares and buildings, to the relief of the city's 25 million residents, before a painful two-month lockdown is lifted at midnight.

On Monday evening, some of the people allowed out of their compounds for brief walks took advantage of suspended traffic to congregate for a beer and icecream on deserted streets, but there was

a sense of wariness and anxiety among residents.

Most will be stuck indoors again until midnight, as they have been for the past two months under a ruthlessly enforced lockdown that has caused income losses, stress and despair to millions struggling to access food or get emergency healthcare.

The prolonged isolation has fuelled public anger and rare protests inside Shanghai and battered the city's manufacturing and export-heavy economy, disrupting supply chains in China



and around the world, and slowing international trade.

Life is set to return to something more like normal from Wednesday, when the passes issued by residential buildings for people to go out for a few hours will be scrapped, public transport will resume and residents can go back to work.

"Now that I'm going back to work

so suddenly, I feel a little nervous," said resident Joseph Mak, who works in education. "It's hard to believe it's actually happening."

The easing of curbs applies only to those in low-risk areas, or about 22.5 million people. Residents will still have to wear masks and are discouraged from gathering. Dining inside restaurants remains banned. Shops can operate at 75% capacity.

Gyms will reopen later. Residents will have to get COVID tests every 72 hours to take public transport and enter public venues. Tough quarantine is still in store for anyone testing positive and their close contacts.

LOCKDOWN-WARY

The end of the lockdown brings relief, but is also met with apprehension. China is alone among major countries enforcing an uncompromising "zero COVID" policy that aims to eradicate all outbreaks as soon as they occur at just about any cost. The highly-transmissible Omicron variant is prone to making comebacks and it remains to be seen if frequent testing can keep it under control.

Todd Pearson, managing director of Camel Hospitality Group, which operates eight restaurants, four bars and three gyms in Shanghai and neighbouring

Suzhou, is wary. His restaurants are only allowed to do deliveries, which amount for about 5% of revenue, not enough to pay salaries and rent. At least from midnight his workers who have been sleeping in the restaurants, stuck there due to the strict lockdown rules, can finally go home.

"I'm hopeful that they will rush things along quickly to restart the economy," Pearson said. "I just hope it's not at the cost of more outbreaks. I'm not sure many businesses or the people could handle much more." Economic activity in China has somewhat recovered in May from a dismal April as COVID curbs in major manufacturing hubs were gradually relaxed, although movement controls still depressed demand and restrained production. Factory activity was at a three-month high in May, but contracted from a year earlier.



Stagflationary risk to India quite low compared to other countries
ANANTHA NAGESWARAN
CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISER

INDIA'S TEXTILES EXPORTS HIGHEST-EVER IN FY22

India recorded its highest-ever textiles and apparel exports in the financial year 2021-22 at USD 44.4 billion, the government said Tuesday. The exports tally, which also includes handicrafts, indicates a substantial increase of 41 per cent and 26 per cent over corresponding figures in FY21 and FY20, respectively. USA was the top export destination for the country's textiles and apparel shipments.



of the day quote

The fear is that due to this (six airbags) the market will become smaller. The car manufacturing sector is important because it is a big creator of employment



RC BHARGAVA | MSI CHAIRMAN

The pandemic has accelerated several trends that will continue to have far-reaching effects on the Indian consumer -- an increased affinity towards holistic health and wellbeing, a massive shift in the adoption of digital technology and importantly, a heightened consciousness amongst consumers on sustainability and social equity



NITIN PARANJPE | HUL CHAIRMAN

We are extremely bullish on Winkin' Cow and want to be a dominant player in the milk-based beverages category. We plan to extend our offerings to various segments of the dairy drinks category, from affordable SKUs to premium and indulgent experiences, and are looking for an all-India outreach with a focus on top metros.



VARUN BERRY | BRITANNIA INDUSTRIES MD

Rupee plunges to all-time low of 77.71 against dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 31: The rupee declined by 17 paise to close at its all-time low of 77.71 against the US currency Tuesday as surging US bond yields dampened the appeal of riskier assets.

Losses in the domestic equities, high crude oil prices and forex outflows also weighed on the rupee. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened lower at 77.65 against the greenback and finally settled at 77.71, down 17 paise over its previous close.

During the session, the rupee touched an intra-day low of 77.71 and a high of 77.62. On Monday, the rupee settled at 77.54 against the US dollar.

This is the fifth straight monthly decline for the rupee amid weak risk sentiments, foreign fund outflows and concerns over high inflation.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.5 per cent higher at 101.92.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures advanced 1.77 per cent to USD 123.82 per barrel.

According to Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities,



the rupee has become the worst-performing currency among Asian currencies and clocked the fifth monthly decline in a row in May on the back of foreign fund outflows and slower economic growth.

"Risk sentiments remained weak on worries over hawkish central banks following higher inflation and slower growth prospects," Parmar said.

US Treasury yields surged Tuesday following a Federal Reserve Governor's comments that the central bank should be prepared to raise interest rates by 50 basis points at every meeting on until inflation is decisively controlled.

"Rupee traded weak as crude

prices rise towards USD 120 in WTI making it more expensive for India to import," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst at LKP Securities, said.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 359.33 points or 0.64 per cent lower at 55,566.41, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 76.85 points or 0.46 per cent to 16,584.55.

In a hectic FII movement in the equities markets, foreign institutional investors sold shares worth ₹46,741.52 crore while purchased stocks worth ₹45,737.96 crore, leading to net outflow of ₹1,003.51 crore Tuesday, according to stock exchange data.

Govt raises premium for flagship insurance schemes PMJJBY, PMSBY

The premium rate of PMJJBY has been increased from ₹330 to ₹436 annually; the annual premium for PMSBY has been hiked from ₹12 to ₹20

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: The government on Tuesday raised the premium for its flagship insurance schemes - Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) in order to make them economically viable.

The premium rate of PMJJBY has been revised upward to ₹1.25 per day, translating into an increase from ₹330 to ₹436 annually.

The annual premium for PMSBY has been hiked from ₹12 to ₹20, an official statement said.

The new premium rates are effective from June 1, 2022.

In percentage terms, the premium increase is 32 per cent in case of PMJJBY and 67 per cent for PMSBY. The decision has been taken in view of the long-standing adverse claims experience of the schemes, it added. The number of active subscribers enrolled under



PMJJBY and PMSBY as on March 31, 2022 were 6.4 crore and 22 crore, respectively.

Since the launch of the PMSBY, an amount of ₹1,134 crore has been collected by the implementing insurers towards premium and claims of ₹14,144 crore have been paid under PMJJBY as on March 31, 2022.

Further, an amount of ₹9,737 crore has been collected by the implementing insurers towards premium and claims of ₹14,144 crore have been paid under PMJJBY as on March 31, 2022.

Claims under both the schemes have been deposited into the bank accounts of the beneficiaries through the direct benefit transfer (DBT) route.

The transmission of benefits through these schemes were closely monitored during COVID-19 and a host of measures were taken to simplify the procedures and expedite claims, including, outreach programmes and messages from the banks to reach out to beneficiaries of the people who died during the

pandemic, simplifying claims form and proofs of death and many more, it said.

"It may be recalled that the original approval at the time of launch of the schemes in 2015 provided for an annual review of the premium amount (Rs. 12/- for Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and ₹330/- for Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana) based on the claims experience. However, no revision of premium rates was made in the last seven years since inception of the schemes in spite of recurring losses to the insurers," it said.

Upon examination of the claims experience of the schemes, it said, IRDAI informed that while the claims ratio (percentage of amount of claims paid to premium earned) pertaining to PMJJBY and PMSBY, for the period up to March 31, 2022, was 145.24 per cent and 221.61 per cent respectively, the combined ratio (sum of claims ratio and expense ratios) pertaining to PMJJBY and PMSBY for the period stood at 163.98 per cent and 254.71 per cent.

Revised rates would also encourage other private insurers to come on board for implementing the schemes, thereby increasing the saturation of the schemes among the eligible target population, especially those who are underserved or unsorted.

SHORT TAKES

LIC shares down 3% after earnings

New Delhi: Shares of LIC Tuesday declined over 3 per cent after the company posted a 17 per cent decline in consolidated net profit for the fourth quarter ended in March 2022. The stock declined 3.05 per cent to settle at ₹811.50 on the BSE. During the day, it tanked 3.23 per cent to ₹810. At the NSE, it fell by 3.21 per cent to end at ₹810.85. In volume terms, 2.22 lakh shares were traded at the BSE and over 43.73 lakh shares at the NSE during the day. Insurance behemoth LIC Monday posted a 17 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to ₹2,409 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2022. The insurer had earned a profit of ₹2,917 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

Sun Pharma stock dips 3%

New Delhi: Shares of Sun Pharmaceutical Industries fell by over 3 per cent Tuesday after poor financial results for the last quarter of 2021-22. The stock declined 3.11 per cent to settle at ₹860.45 on the BSE. During the day, it tumbled 4.12 per cent to ₹851.50. At the NSE, it went lower by 2.60 per cent to end at ₹865.15 apiece. In terms of volume, 4.58 lakh shares were traded at the BSE and over 2.43 crore shares at the NSE during the day. The Mumbai-based drug major Monday posted a loss of ₹2,277 crore for the fourth quarter of 2021-22, mainly on account of a one-time exceptional loss.

House price index rises 1.8 pc in Q4

Mumbai: The All India House Price Index (HPI) rose 1.8 per cent in the fourth quarter of FY22 on an annual basis, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India. However, the rise in the key index was slower compared to the January-March quarter of the preceding fiscal when it had recorded an increase of 2.7 per cent. The RBI releases its quarterly house price index based on transaction-level data received from housing registration authorities in ten major cities. The cities are Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, and Mumbai.

China claims it's still India's top trade partner

THE DISPARITY IN TRADE FIGURES PUBLISHED BY CHINA AND INDIA IS A RESULT OF DIFFERENT STATISTICAL MEASUREMENT SCALES, SAYS CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN ZHAO LIJIAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, May 31: China Tuesday insisted that it is still India's biggest trade partner in 2021-22 as per its figures and attributed the "disparity" to different methods of calculating the trade volume by New Delhi and Beijing while referring to reports that the US has unseated it to take the top slot.

"According to the statistics of Chinese competent authorities, bilateral trade volume between China and India stood at USD 125.66 billion in 2021," Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing when asked about reports of the US overtaking China to become the largest trade partner of India in 2021-22.

"China remains the largest trade partner of India and for the first time the bilateral trade exceeded USD 100 billion in 2021," Zhao said.



"The disparity in trade figures published by China and India is a result of different statistical measurement scales," he said.

China follows the financial year from January to December, while India calculates the same from April to March every year.

At the same time, Zhao said, "China does not object to the de-

velopment of normal trade relations between India and the US, and is not that interested in the changes of the ranking in trade volume," playing down the US, which is fast improving its relations with India with strategic tie-ups like Quad, (US, India, Japan, Australia) alliance unseating it from the top slot.

China has remained a dominant trade partner of India for a long despite the widespread concerns over the ballooning trade deficit every year.

Zhao declined to go into issues of trade barriers and other constraints being mentioned by Indian businesses, saying the details should be obtained from the Chinese Commerce Ministry.

For years India has been insisting that China should open its markets for India's IT and pharmaceuticals, the country's main strengths of exports but Beijing is yet to oblige.

The trade deficit with China rose to USD 72.91 billion in 2021-22 from USD 44 billion in the previous fiscal year as per Indian figures whereas the US is one of the few countries with which India had a trade surplus amounting to USD 32.8 billion last year.

Fiscal deficit improves to 6.7% in FY'22 on higher tax mop up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: Fiscal deficit for 2021-22 improved to 6.71 per cent of the GDP over the revised budget estimate of 6.9 per cent mainly on account of higher tax realisation.

Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for 2020-21, the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) said that the fiscal deficit in the absolute terms was ₹15,86,537 crore (provisional). The finance ministry in February had estimated the deficit at ₹15,91,089 crore or 6.9 per cent of GDP.

According to the data, the tax receipts during the fiscal were at ₹18.2 lakh crore as against the revised es-

timates (RE) of ₹17.65 lakh crore. The total expenditure too was higher at ₹37.94 lakh crore against the RE of ₹37.7 lakh crore presented to Parliament on February 1, 2021. CGA further said the revenue deficit at the end of the fiscal was 4.37 per cent for fiscal 2021-22.

In another set of data, the CGA said the fiscal deficit during the first month of 2022-23 was 4.5 per cent of the Budget Estimate for the current fiscal. The deficit was 5.2 per cent in the year-ago period. The government expects the fiscal deficit for the current financial year at 6.4 per cent of GDP or ₹16.61 lakh crore. In April 2022, there was a revenue surplus of ₹591 crore. Government

meets its fiscal deficit from market borrowings. Commenting on the data, Vivek Jalan, Partner, Tax Connect Advisory said the revenue collections were around ₹27 lakh crore, almost ₹5 lakh crore above the budget estimates of around ₹22 lakh crore.

There was a growth of around 35% over the last year's revenue collection, led by growth of around 50 per cent indirect taxes and supported by around 20 per cent growth in indirect taxes, he said.

"The spurt in tax revenues, especially GST Collection was mainly a result of DGARM, which is the Data Analytics wing of the GST Council," Jalan said.

New CRM of IOB, Bhub

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Gaurav Bhardwaj, Deputy General Manager, has joined as the new CRM of Indian Overseas Bank, Bhubaneswar region. Prior to this, he was leading the Dehradun region of Uttarakhand as Regional Manager.



Bhardwaj started his career as a probationary officer in 2000 and worked in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan. Out of his 22 year tenure, he has served in various branches for about 19 years. During his tenure as CRM in Bhubaneswar region he is likely to give more emphasis on retail, MSME and better customer services.

CRYPTOVERSE: WILL YOU GROW OLD WITH BITCOIN?

REUTERS

London, May 31: If you assumed crypto was just a young person's game, think again.

More people in the United States than ever before are turning to cryptocurrencies to help fund their retirement, it seems, even as the recent market carnage provides a stark reminder that this wild market is not for the faint-hearted.

Some 27% of Americans aged 18-60 - around 50 million people - have owned or traded crypto in the past six months, a poll published last week by crypto exchange KuCoin found.

Yet older folk are more devoted

to the young asset class than the general population, according to the survey carried out at the end of March, with 28% of those aged 50 and above betting on crypto as part of their early retirement plans.

Their most popular for investing in crypto were that they saw it as the future of finance, they didn't want to miss a hot trend, and they saw it as a way to diversify their portfolios.

The market turmoil of recent weeks has hushed talk earlier in 2022 that bitcoin and other crypto would win mainstream acceptance and be ushered into pension plans.

"If they (investors) want crypto, it should be a very small alloca-



tion of their portfolio, and they should be prepared to lose it," said Erik Knutzen, chief investment officer for multi-asset class strategies at Neuberger Berman.

"We would not recommend it to

everybody."

Indeed bitcoin is trading at around \$30,000, down 60% from a peak of \$69,000 in November. And the market meltdown means many newcomers' investments are deeply

in the red. Nonetheless, crypto investors and analysts are watching like hawks for any indication that bitcoin could bounce back.

JP Morgan's Nikolaos Panigirtzoglou and his global strategy team said last week the crypto mayhem had soured investor sentiment so much that certain metrics signalled a "good entry point for long-term investors."

Bitcoin funds, including exchange-traded funds (ETFs) saw the largest outflow since May 2021. JP Morgan said, adding that its position proxy for Chicago Mercantile Exchange bitcoin futures was approaching oversold territory.

Using a model based on the volatility ratio of bitcoin to gold, the team estimate "fair value" for bitcoin at \$38,000.

The KuCoin poll comes a week after a survey of 11,000 adults by the Fed found that 12% of Americans dabbled in cryptocurrencies as an investment last year.

It did not break down participants by age, but found almost half of those holding crypto for an investment had an annual income of \$100,000 or more, while almost a third had an income under \$50,000. If older investors are in the new crypto vanguard, though, has there been a rush from asset managers to meet this demand?

INDIA OUT OF TITLE RACE

India's Elavenil, Ramita, Shreya seal team gold



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: India opened their account at the ongoing ISSF World Cup with the trio of Elavenil Valarivan, Ramita and Shreya Agrawal claiming the gold medal in the 10m air rifle team women competition in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Indian trio outplayed Denmark represented by Anna Nielsen, Emma Koch and Rikke Maeng Ibsen, 17-5 in the gold medal contest. Poland won bronze in the event. Former World No.1 Elavenil, Ramita and Shreya had reached the gold medal clash after two

rounds of qualification Monday. The Indian trio had first topped the qualification stage one with a combined effort of 944.4 across 90 shots. They then came second in stage two behind Denmark, to make the title round. In men's air rifle team competition, Indian trio of Rudranksh Patil, Paarth Makhija and Dhanush Srikanth fell short in their bronze medal match against Croatia, going down 10-16. The 12-member Indian rifle squad now finds itself at the fifth spot in the medals tally with Serbia leading the field with two golds and a total of four medals.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, May 31: The young Indian hockey team dished out some impressive and fast-paced hockey in a Super 4s match against South Korea but an outright victory eluded them as a 4-4 draw pushed them out of the Asia Cup title race, here Tuesday. Malaysia's 5-0 win over Japan

early in the day meant that an outright win became a pre-requisite for India to qualify for the summit clash. Both India, Malaysia and Korea finished on five points each in the Super 4 stage but the Birendra Lakra-side fell behind on goal difference. Nilam Sanjeev Xess (ninth minute), Dipsan Tirkey (21st), Mahesh Sheshe Gowda (22nd) and

Shakthivel Mareeswaran (37th) scored for India, while Korea scored through Jang Jonghyun (13th), Ji Woo Cheon (18th), Kim JungHoo (28th) and Jung Manjae (44th). Korea will now take on Malaysia in the final Wednesday, while India will play Japan in the third-fourth place classification match. It was a midfield slugfest between the two sides as both India

and Korea tried to take upper hand in the first quarter. India secured a penalty corner in the second minute but Nilam Sanjeev Xess' effort was saved by the Korean goalkeeper Jaehyeon Kim. But in the ninth minute Nilam scored with a low flick to the right bottom corner of the Korean net past Kim from India's second penalty corner. Two minutes from the first

quarter, India conceded a penalty corner and Jang Jonghyun was bang on target to draw level for Korea. Korea made it 2-1 five minutes later when Ji Woo Cheon chose his spot after being fed by Jungjun Lee following a defensive lapse from Pawan Rajbhar inside his own circle. But India drew level three minutes later when Dipsan Tirkey converted team's third penalty corner. Mahesh Sheshe Gowda restored the lead a minute later, pushing home Vishnukant Singh's pass from a counter-attack. Korea secured another penalty corner but this time the Indians defended well to deny Jang. Two minutes from halftime, Kim JungHoo equalised for Korea through a fine field goal from an acute angle as both the teams went into the breather locked 3-3. India went all out and restored their lead in the 37th minute through an unmarked Shakthivel Mareeswaran, who tapped in a cross from Sheshe Gowda from the right flank. In the 42 minute Uttam Singh missed a sitter when he failed to connect to Rajkumar's cross standing in front of open goal. A yellow card - five-minute suspension - to Yashdeep Siwach three minutes from the third quarter cost India dearly as Korea equalised again when Manjae Jung deflected in a long ball from midfield. Just 27 second from the final hooter, Karthi Selvam came close to handing India the winner but Korean goalkeeper Kim Jaehyeon made double save to deny the title holders last-gasp winner.

1ST GRAND SLAM SEMIS FOR THE INDIAN IN 7 YEARS

French Open: Bopanna, Middelkoop sail through



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, May 31: India's Rohan Bopanna reached his first Grand Slam semifinal in seven years after he and his Dutch partner Matwe Middelkoop rallied to beat Lloyd Glasspool and Henri Heliovaara in the men's doubles quarterfinals of the French Open, here. The Indo-Dutch pair eked out a 4-6, 6-4, 7-6(10-3) win over the British-Finnish combination in a hard-fought contest on Monday night. Bopanna last reached the semifinals of a tennis Major at the 2015 Wimbledon Championships when he had teamed up with Romania's Florin Mergea and lost in a gruelling five-setter to Jean-Julien Roger and Horia Tecau.

Bopanna, 42, and Middelkoop, 38, will face 12th seeds Marcelo Arevalo and Jean-Julien Roger Thursday in the last four. Bopanna and Middelkoop lost the opening set but dished out a superb fightback to win the next two to emerge victorious. In the decider, the Indo-Dutch pair showed tremendous mental fortitude to fightback from 3-5 down to take the match to a Super Tie-break. They were again 0-3 behind but won 10 straight points to come up trumps. Bopanna and Middelkoop had saved five match points to knock out Mate Pavic and Nikola Pietrangeli, the reigning Wimbledon champions, from the Roland Garros, Saturday.

SWIATEK LOSES SET, BUT ADVANCES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, May 31: The loss of one set by a player is normally not the stuff of headlines at a Grand Slam tournament. That did constitute news at the French Open, because the player was No.1-ranked Iga Swiatek and it had been more than a month since that happened to her. The way it came about was noteworthy, too: She led the first set of her fourth-round match against 74th-ranked Zheng Qinwen of China 3-0, then 5-2, and was a point from claiming it on five occasions but could not seal the deal. Swiatek entered the day having won 20 sets in a row, and 48 of her preceding 49. All that truly mattered, in the end, was that 2020 champion Swiatek would not lose another set on this cloudy evening, getting past the hard-swinging Zheng 6-7(5), 6-0, 6-2 to return to the quarterfinals at Roland Garros and run her winning streak to 32 consecutive matches. Swiatek regrouped by changing tactics — she sped up her forehand instead of absorbing Zheng's power — and in a less conventional way, too, deciding to change her tune. No, really: She switched which song she was singing in her head during the match. She has won her past five tournaments, going unbeaten since February for the WTA's longest such stretch since Serena Williams compiled a 34-match run in 2013.



With 23-time Grand Slam champion Williams absent from the tour for nearly a year, and Swiatek's predecessor atop the rankings, two-time major winner Ash Barty, having recently retired, there is no dominant figure in women's tennis to mount a challenge. Next to try to stop Swiatek will be 11th-seeded Jessica Pegula, who advanced to her third major quarterfinal — and first in Paris — with a 4-6, 6-2, 6-3 victory over Irina-Camelia Begu of Romania, who

was fined USD 10,000 last week when she threw her racket and it bounced into the stands, brushing a child in a front-row seat. Pegula, owner of a 2-3 record at Roland Garros before this year, saw two sides to taking on Swiatek, who beat her on a hard court at the Miami Open in March. The other women's quarterfinal Wednesday will be between two Russians: No.20 Daria Kasatkina and No.29 Veronika Kudermetova. They were team-

mates on the team that won the Billie Jean King Cup last year — Russia was barred from trying to defend that title because of the country's invasion of Ukraine — and have known each other since they were kids, squaring off as juniors as long ago as 2011. Coco Gauff, an 18-year-old seeded 18th, and Sloane Stephens, the 2017 U.S. Open champion and 2018 French Open runner-up, face each other on Tuesday, when the other women's matchup will be No. 17 Leylah Fernandez, a 19-year-old from Canada, against 54th-ranked Martina Trevisan of Italy. Men's matches Wednesday are No.7 Andrey Rublev against 2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic, and Holger Rune, a 19-year-old from Denmark, against No.8 Casper Ruud, a 23-year-old from Norway. Cilic swept past 2021 US Open champion Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 in Monday's last match, adding the departure of the men's No.2 seed to that of No.4 Stefanos Tsitsipas earlier in the day. With Rune, who eliminated 2021 runner-up Tsitsipas 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, and Alcaraz still in the field, it's the first time in 28 years that two teens made the men's quarterfinals at any Grand Slam tournament.

Team India to assemble in Delhi June 5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: The Indian cricket team will assemble here June 5 ahead of the five-match T20 series against South Africa. The first match of the series begins here on June 9 and South Africa will arrive here June 2. There will be no crowd restrictions and there will be no bio-bubble for the series though players will be tested regularly for COVID-19. The other venues are Cuttack (June 12), Visakhapatnam (June 14), Rajkot (June 17) and Bangalore (June 19). **KL Rahul will lead the team in the absence of Rohit Sharma, who is rested alongside Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah** "The Indian team will assemble here June 5 while the South Africans land in Delhi June 2," DCA joint secretary Rajan Manchanda told this agency. The Indian cricketers are in the middle of a much needed break post a two-month long IPL. KL Rahul will lead the Indian team in the absence of regular skipper Rohit Sharma who has been rested for the series alongside other all-format players, including Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah.

Messi backs Benzema for Ballon d'Or

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Buenos Aires, May 31: According to Lionel Messi, there is "no doubt" that Real Madrid striker Karim Benzema deserves to win his first Ballon d'Or award this year. Messi has won a record seven Ballon d'Or awards as the world's best player, but saw his new club Paris Saint-Germain eliminated by Madrid in the round of 16 of the Champions League this year — after Benzema scored a hat trick in the second half of the return leg. Benzema netted another four goals against Chelsea in the quarterfinals and three against Manchester City in the semifinals — including the decisive penalty in extra time of the second leg — before Madrid defeated Liverpool 1-0 in the final on Saturday. Benzema was also the top scorer in the Spanish league as Madrid won the title in dominant fashion. "There's no doubt, it's very clear that Benzema had a spectacular year," Messi said in an interview to Argentine TV channel TyC Sports when asked if Benzema should get the prestigious award. "I think there is no doubt this year." In total, Benzema scored 44 goals



in 46 matches with his club this season, and equaled Madrid great Raúl González as the club's second-highest scorer with 323 goals. Cristiano Ronaldo leads that tally with 451.

While Madrid knocked out a quartet of European giants on their way to the Champions League title, Messi wasn't overly impressed with the team's style of play. Madrid needed big comebacks against both

PSG and Man City and had Benzema to thank both times. "Out of the blue they score against you, and the match changes automatically," Messi said about this Madrid team. "Madrid was not the best team in this Champions League, there were better teams." The 34-year-old Messi is training with Argentina in Bilbao for the "Finalissima" — a friendly between the Copa America winners and European champion Italy Wednesday. Messi could find himself going up against Benzema again at the World Cup in Qatar this year — both Argentina and France are among the main contenders — but insisted that defending champion France should be considered the favorite. "France is an impressive team, (four years) ago we said they could be candidates and they ended as winners. I believe the hit they took at the Euros (being eliminated by Switzerland) made them stronger," Messi said. "(Argentina) can fight anyone and will make it hard for any rival. That doesn't mean we are the favorites to be world champions or any of that. It means we will fight against anyone."

Anand beats Carlsen, finishes 4th

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Stavanger (Norway), May 31: Indian chess ace Viswanathan Anand defeated world champion Magnus Carlsen in round seven of the blitz event of the Norway Chess on way to a fourth-place finish. The former World Champion, however, suffered defeats to Anish Giri (the Netherlands) and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (France) in the fourth and ninth round respectively to finish with 5 points in the 10-player blitz event early Tuesday. The Indian GM started with a win over Aryan Tari (Norway) in the blitz before drawing with So in round two. He posted a victory over veteran Veselin Topalov in the third round before sharing the point with Teimur Radjabov. After a loss to Giri and a draw with Hao Wang (China), Anand scored over Carlsen. However, the draw against Shakhriyar Mamedyarov followed by the loss to Vachier-Lagrave put paid to his chances of a high finish after having started with 2.5 points from the first three rounds. Anand's win over Carlsen comes close on the heels of compatriot and



teen sensation R Praggnandhaa defeating the Norwegian World Champion in an online blitz tournament recently. American Wesley So finished on top of the Blitz standings with 6.5 points, one clear of Carlsen while Giri took the third spot. He

thus earned the right to pick his starting number for the classical event. The 10 players will play a classical event beginning later Tuesday. Anand begins his campaign in the Classical event with a game against Vachier-Lagrave.