



LOOKING INWARD

Actor Kiara Advani, after completing eight years in the film industry, shares the biggest learning during her career

LEISURE P2

NEW GROUP ON THE BLOCK

Aiming to re-energise American alliances globally, the US, UAE, India and Israel have formed a grouping called I2U2

INTERNATIONAL P10



PRANNOY ADVANCES

HS Prannoy ends Lakshya Sen's journey at the Indonesia Open badminton tournament with a comprehensive win

SPORTS P12

PWC SETS FOOT IN STATE; OPENS OFFICE IN CITY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 15: PricewaterhouseCoopers India Wednesday said it would create 10,000 additional employment opportunities in India over the next five years, as it set foot in Odisha for the first time with an office in capital Bhubaneswar.

It plans to hire around 500 people in the state within the next year. The new office in Bhubaneswar will be a flexible, multi-use one serving clients in the region, a top company official said.

"This expansion is in line with the firm's commitment to create 10,000 additional jobs in the country over the next five years," he said. "Our talent pool is no longer centered in metro cities and we are looking to leverage the wealth of skilled professionals in other cities, too." PwC Chairperson Sanjeev Krishan said. Between 2006 and 2017, tier-2 and tier-3 cities received five times more investment for retail infrastructure than tier-1 and metro cities, Krishan said.

Apart from Bhubaneswar, the firm had recently expanded operations in Jaipur. It will also set up branch offices in Noida and Thane, he said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Must be an Agniaveer

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	52541.39 ↓ 152.18
NIFTY	15692.20 ↓ 39.90
DOLLAR	78.67 ↑ ₹0.14
EURO	81.26 ↑ ₹0.03
GOLD	₹50,538 ↑ ₹343
SILVER	₹60,700 ↑ ₹1,199

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	36.3°C	36.4°C
MIN	26.0°C	26.0°C
Humidity	83%	80%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light to Moderate Rain	

FIFA U-17 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

KALINGA STADIUM TO HOST INDIA MATCHES

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 15: In a good news for football lovers, Kalinga Stadium in City is all set to host India's matches of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022 October 11, 14 and 17 this year.

The DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai will host the summit clash of the U-17 Women's World Cup on October 30 while the semi-finals will be played in Goa, FIFA and Local Organising Committee (LOC) announced Wednesday.

The official draw will take place June 24th. The 24 group stage games will conclude October 18 and the matches will be shared among all

ED GRILLS RAHUL FOR THIRD DAY IN A ROW



FACE TO FACE: Police stop Congress workers during a protest outside the AICC office against summoning of party leader Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the National Herald case, in New Delhi, Wednesday

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 15: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was questioned by the Enforcement Directorate for about eight hours Wednesday, the third day of his appearance in the National Herald money laundering case.

Gandhi (51) left the Enforcement Directorate (ED) headquarters on APJ Abdul Kalam Road in central Delhi around 9:30 pm. His statement was recorded in multiple sessions under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and after Wednesday's round of questioning, he has clocked close to 30 hours with the ED investigators.

He has been called by the agency for the 4th day June 17 as he sought an exemption for Thursday. The grand old party has called the agency's action vendetta politics of the Centre against opposition leaders as the party's supporters continued protests on roads leading to the ED office.

The probe pertains to alleged financial irregularities involving Young Indian Private Limited, promoted by the Congress, which owns National Herald. The newspaper is published by Associated Journals Limited (AJL) and owned by Young Indian.

Gandhi (51) arrived at the ED headquarters around 11.35 am with his Z+ category CRPF security escort. He was accompanied by his sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as his convoy whizzed past police barricades thronged by media persons and party supporters. The questioning began at 12 noon. He was grilled for about three hours after which he left for an hour long break, possibly for lunch.

NATIONAL HERALD CASE

MORE P9

NEWS IN BRIEF

MONSOON TO ENTER STATE IN 48 HOURS

Bhubaneswar: The southwest monsoon is likely to make an onset over Odisha during the next 48 hours, the IMD said. Chitrakonda in Malkangiri district and some other places in the southern part of Odisha have already started experiencing pre-monsoon rainfall, the Bhubaneswar Centre of IMD's Meteorological Department said Wednesday. One or two places in 16 districts of the coastal state are likely to experience thunderstorm accompanied by lightning for 24 hours beginning from 8.30am June 15, the weather office said. **P3**

MEGA 5G AUCTION GETS CABINET NOD

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet has approved the auction of airwaves capable of offering fifth-generation or 5G telecom services including ultra high-speed internet, and gave its nod for setting up of captive 5G networks by the big tech firms. The auction of over 72 GHz of the spectrum will be held by July-end, said an official statement detailing the decision taken by the Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at its meeting held June 14. The spectrum auction will commence July 26, 2022. **MORE P11**

State turns graveyard of 'poached' elephants

■ With another skeleton found at Badamba range, at least six elephants have been killed in Athagarh forest division since Feb

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 15: Skeletal remains of one more elephant were exhumed from Athagarh forest division in Cuttack district, forest officials said Wednesday.

The skeletal parts, suspected to be of a male elephant, were detected from Chandragiri reserve forest under Badamba range of Athagarh forest division.

"Forest staff of Athagarh Division has recovered the body parts of one more elephant from the Chandragiri reserve forest of Janipadar beat of Badamba Range near Kharod village June 14," informed Athagarh DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav.

Yadav said the remains which appear to be part of a male elephant were discovered while the



forest officials were investigating the cases of recovery of body parts of two elephants in Badamba range. No tusks were recovered from the site, Yadav said.

Earlier this month, a team of special task force of Odisha Crime Branch had exhumed skeletons of two jumbos from a place on the foothills of Chandragiri hills in Gopinathpur section of the same forest range. Similarly, a sub-adult tusker succumbed to pellet wounds in the same forest division Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan sought immediate intervention of the Odisha government to check poaching of

wild elephants. The death of a wounded pachyderm who was shot by poachers in Athagarh forest is distressing for all wildlife enthusiasts, he said in a tweet.

Citing media reports, he said, around 947 elephants have died due to poaching, poisoning, electrocution and accidents in the last 12 years in Odisha. "The dense forests and wildlife are a unique identity of our state. Elephants are pillars of our ecosystem and have a special role in environment & forest conservation. Growing number of elephant deaths in Odisha over the years is a matter of grave concern for everyone," Pradhan said. **MORE P3**

Formal notification issued for Prez poll

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 15: The Election Commission of India (ECI) Wednesday issued formal notification for election to the next President of India. Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Odisha SK Lohani has republished three notifications of the ECI for the poll scheduled for July 18.

As per the notifications, the nominations can be filed till June 29 while scrutiny of papers will be done the next day (June 30). July 2 (Saturday) has been set as the last date for the withdrawal of candidatures.

The election will be held July 18 (Monday) at Room No 54 (1st Floor), Odisha Legislative Assembly here. The MPs of both Houses would cast their votes at Room No 63, 1st Floor, Parliament House, New Delhi.

Normally, MPs are expected to cast their votes at New Delhi and members of all respective state Assemblies at the concerned place of poll. However, on account of any exigency for special circumstances, the Members of Parliament can vote in any of the places of polling in any State/ Delhi/ Puducherry, the notice said.

BJD snubs Oppn meet, Rajnath calls Naveen

New Delhi: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Wednesday skipped the meeting called by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to hold discussion on the presidential elections. The Opposition's meeting, attended by leaders from 17 parties, was presided over by NCP president Sharad Pawar. Following the meeting, Pawar said that steps will be taken to bring parties like BJD, TRS, Aam Aadmi Party, which skipped the meeting, on the floor. Meanwhile, The BJP Wednesday began the consultation exercise on evolving a consensus name for the presidential election with senior party leader Rajnath Singh speaking to a number of key Opposition leaders including Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. **P7**

Similarly, any MLA desirous of voting at Parliament, New Delhi or at any other Legislative Assemblies instead of his/her concerned place of poll, can also do so.

Counting for the poll will take place in the National Capital July 21, after all ballots from states are brought to Delhi. **Contd...4**

So long, Internet Explorer! Browser 'dies' after 27 yrs

Marking Explorer's passing on Twitter, some users referred to it as a 'bug-ridden, insecure POS' or the 'top browser for installing other browsers', while for others it was a moment for 90's nostalgia memes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Francisco, June 15: Internet Explorer is finally headed out to pasture. As of Wednesday, Microsoft will no longer support the once-dominant browser that legions of web surfers loved to hate — and a few still claim to adore. The 27-year-old application now joins BlackBerry phones, dial-up modems and Palm Pilots in the dustbin of tech history.

IE's demise was not a surprise. A year ago, Microsoft said that it was putting an end to Internet Explorer June 15, 2022, pushing users to its Edge browser, which was launched in 2015.

The company made clear then it was time to move on. "Not only

is Microsoft Edge a faster, more secure and more modern browsing experience than Internet Explorer, but it is also able to address a key concern compatibility for older, legacy websites and applications," Sean Lyndersay, general manager of Microsoft Edge Enterprise, wrote in a May 2021 blog post.

Users marked Explorer's passing on Twitter, with some referring to it as a "bug-ridden, insecure POS" or the "top browser for installing other browsers." For others it was a moment for 90's nostalgia memes, while The Wall Street Journal quoted a 22-year-old who was sad to see IE go.

Microsoft released the first



version of Internet Explorer in 1995, the antediluvian era of web surfing dominated by the first widely popular browser, Netscape Navigator. Its launch signaled the beginning of the end of Navigator. Microsoft went on to tie IE and its ubiquitous Windows operating system together so tightly that many people simply used it by default instead of Navigator.

The Justice Department sued Microsoft in 1997, saying it violated an earlier consent decree by requiring computer makers to use its browser as a condition of using Windows. It eventually agreed to settle the antitrust battle in 2002 over its use of its Windows monopoly to squash competitors. It also tan-

ned with European regulators who said that tying Internet Explorer to Windows gave it an unfair advantage over rivals such as Mozilla's Firefox, Opera and Google's Chrome.

Users, meanwhile, complained that IE was slow, prone to crashing and vulnerable to hacks. IE's market share, which in the early 2000s was over 90%, began to fade as users found more appealing alternatives.

Today, the Chrome browser dominates with roughly a 65% share of the worldwide browser market, followed by Apple's Safari with 19%, according to internet analytics company Statcounter. IE's heir, Edge, lags with about 4%, just ahead of Firefox.

'SQUID GAME' UNIVERSE TO BE EXPANDED TO NEW REALITY SERIES

After greenlighting the second season of their mega hit South Korean drama 'Squid Game,' Netflix is now expanding the story's universe by adapting it into a reality competition series called 'Squid Game The Challenge.'

SPEARS DIDN'T INVITE BROTHER TO WEDDING

Britney Spears insisted her brother Bryan wasn't invited to her wedding after he claimed she 'can't even make a dinner reservation.' The 'Toxic' superstar tied the knot with Sam Asghari at her California home June 9 after five years together but her family were noticeably absent from her big day.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES You are feeling very excited and are all geared up to do what you want. Put all that energy to productive use.

TAURUS This day promises to be like any other. You will, as usual, begin by attending to home chores and then get caught up in your hectic office schedule.

GEMINI There are chances that your love life will go through some ups and downs today, warns Ganesh.

CANCER You will be extremely eager and enthusiastic today, portends Ganesh.

LEO On most days, people go about seeking luck; but seems like today, you are not going to be one of them.

VIRGO Your love life will hit choppy waters today, warns Ganesh.

LIBRA The Darwinian legacy of the 'supremacy game' takes on a new turn for you today.

SCORPIO Passionate love affairs will be even more intense and seductive than before, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS You may be surprised at the state of your support and subsidy, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN If you had scheduled the launch of a new product today, tarry a while, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS Your ambition makes you overbearing, and foot-in-mouth will be a common phenomenon today.

PISCES While no major troubles ought to crop up to disturb your peace of mind, you will still find yourself dealing with a few minor irritants.

8 YEARS IN SHOWBIZ

Kiara reveals her biggest learning

MUMBAI: Kiara Advani has been on a roll of late. The actress was recently seen in Kartik Aaryan and Tabu starrer 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2' and has been basking in the success of the horror-comedy these days.

'JugJugg Jeeyo' with Varun Dhawan, Anil Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor. Interestingly, Kiara has another reason to grin from ear to ear as she has completed eight years in the industry.



ODISSI NRUTYA NATIKA UTSAV 'AZADI' BEGINS

Gandhi comes alive on stage in 'Mahatma'



A presentation by the members of Orissa Dance Academy

POST NEWS NETWORK BHUBANESWAR: 'Azadi,' a three day Odissi dance drama festival (Odissi Nrutya Natika Utsav), began here at Rabindra Mandap, Wednesday.

The event, a part of 75-week-long celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, is being organised jointly by The Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi (OSNA) and Odia Language, Literature and Culture (OLL&C) department, Government of Odisha.

dance drama 'Mahatma,' presented by Orissa Dance Academy (ODA), showcasing the complex life of the Father of the Nation.

ODA secretary as well as the president of OSNA Aruna Mohanty, who choreographed Mahatma said, "The path of non-violence along with his experiment with truth was Bapu's weapon to counter the mightiest."

like poetry in motion in our presentation. It was more about how Gandhi is relevant to our times and lives than a biographical description.

Verses from the poems of famous poets like Narsi Mehto, Sumitra Nandan Pant, Harivanshrai Bachchan, and acclaimed Odia poet Radhamohan Garnaik were used in the production, she added.

The second performance of the evening, 'Bira Bhumi Utkal,' choreographed by Guru Durga Charan Ranbir of Nrutyayan, highlighted various episodes from Odisha's freedom struggle.

'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of Independence and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements.

The official journey of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' commenced March 12, 2021 and will end August 15, 2023 on the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence.

Apart from OSNA president Mohanty, OLL&C Secretary Madhusudan Padhi, Odissi danseuse Priyambada Mohanty, OSNA vice-president Manmath Kumar Satpathy, Manmath Prabodh Rath attended the event as guests.



Guests released a souvenir ahead of the event

OP PHOTOS

BTS' TIME-OUT LEAVES FANS TEARFUL

Pleading exhaustion, the K-pop pioneers announced a break from group musical activities to pursue solo projects

Reuters from a cafe in Seoul where she had gathered with other fans. "Their voice gave me huge strength when I had tough times, and I'm no longer afraid of such headwinds... Now I want

to give my voice of courage to them." Kim Young-sun, who runs the cafe, said she felt sorry that she



SEoul: K-pop pioneers BTS faced tears and sympathy from fans but anger from shareholders in their management company Wednesday, a day after the band, pleading exhaustion, announced a break from group musical activities to pursue solo projects.

Many in South Korea reacted with shock and dismay at Tuesday's news that, with some of its seven members approaching military service age, also triggered speculation about the future of a band whose upbeat hits and messages of youth empowerment have turned them into global stars.

"I could relate to them as they shed tears and honestly told us how they felt," fan Nini Lee told

as a fan had only wanted more from BTS at a time when they were struggling, wishing them a well-deserved break to recharge their batteries.

BTS Leader and rapper RM, in a tearful video released Tuesday on the ninth anniversary of a group that last year became the first Asian band to win artist of the year at the American Music Awards, said he had 'felt guilty and afraid' to ask for the rest that he desperately needed.

Singer Jimin said they were struggling to find their identity in what he called an 'exhausting process,' while RM also lamented that the K-pop industry could not provide young artists with 'time to mature'.

On social media, some other fans blamed BTS' management group HYBE for relentlessly pushing for new albums and other moneymaking opportunities, read more

The company did not immediately respond to a request for comment. REUTERS

'Lagaan' to be adapted as Broadway show



MUMBAI: 'Lagaan: Once Upon A Time' has completed 21 years of its release in Hindi cinema Wednesday and now the Aamir Khan-starrer is set to be adapted as a Broadway show in the UK, reports say.

According to a source: "Several leading producers from the UK have requested for the rights from Aamir Khan Productions and a final decision will be made soon regarding the West End Theatre."

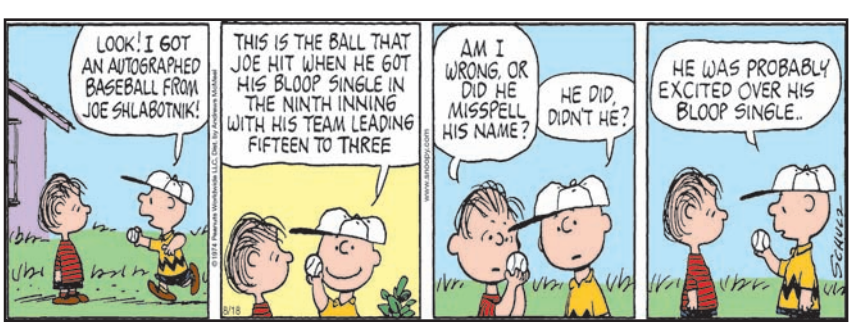
The West End Theatre is the equivalent to the Broadway show which is one of the biggest and most popular theatres worldwide.

The source added: "Aamir Khan's team is yet to make a final decision about it. The makers have different plans which include doing a worldwide tour of the show that will feature a completely original cast."

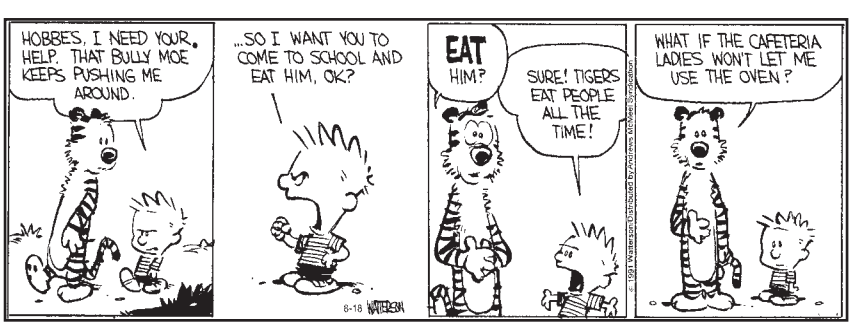
'Lagaan' is a tale set in 1893 during the late Victorian period of India's colonial British Raj. The film is directed by Ashutosh Gowariker and is produced by Aamir Khan Productions.

On the work front, Aamir is gearing up for the release of Laal Singh Chaddha August 11. IANS

PEANUTS



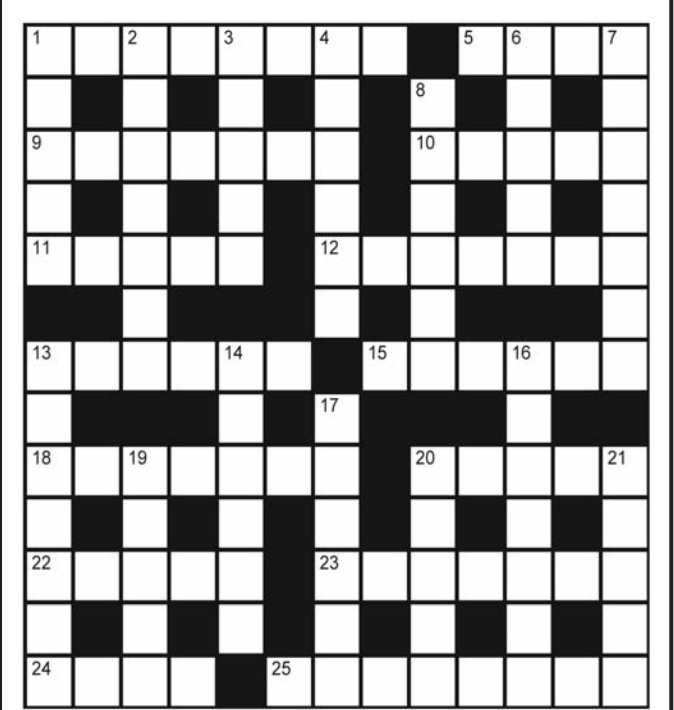
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across 1 Relief provider (3,5), 5 Cemetery sights, 9 Rice dish, 10 Forbidden, 11 Vanquishes, 12 Seaport in northern France, 13 Split in two, 15 Genuine, 18 Bread type, 20 Blind followers, 22 Befuddle, 23 Bureau, 24 Dollar rival, 25 Beach item, Down 1 Less common, 2 Talk over, 3 Marriage and others, 4 Cheap, 6 Jewish spiritual leader, 7 Underwater device, 8 Cultural, 13 Army unit, 14 Carpentry tool, 16 Part of a place setting, 17 Wreath for the head, 19 Tree with catkins, 20 Primitive weapon, 21 Winter wear

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.

6x6 grid with numbers 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CLAMMY, AMISS, RESO, HOUSE, TOWN, PENINSULA, etc. SUDOKU SOLUTIONS: 615329784, 978461253, etc.

7 including 4 siblings critical

CRACKER BLAST IN GANJAM



Kodala, June 15: Seven persons including four siblings sustained critical injuries while three houses collapsed in a major cracker explosion at Beruanbadi village under Kodala police limits in Ganjam district, Wednesday.

The injured were identified as Bishnu Behera, 28, Tripura Behera, 22, Srihari Behera, 26, Balaram Behera, 31, all sons of Dandapani Behera, their relative Mithun Behera, 22, neighbours Kailash Behera, 53 and his son Kanha Behera. It is suspected that the ex-

losion occurred when the siblings were preparing crackers for marriage ceremonies of Bishnu and Sridhar scheduled for June 26.

All the injured were admitted to Kodala community health centre (CHC) first and later shifted to MCKG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur after their condition deteriorated.

Five among the injured were stated to have received over 50 per cent burn injuries. However, a 28-day old newborn had a close shave as it escaped without any injuries during the blast.

On being informed, Kodala po-

lice and fire services personnel rushed to the spot and started an investigation. Purusottampur SDPO Suryamani Pradhan also visited the spot and took stock of the situation.

The intensity of the blast was so huge that villagers, for a moment, could not exactly figure out what happened and started running helter-skelter.

Later, some villagers noticed smoke billowing out of the house of Behera and the burnt pieces of household articles and asbestos roof lying scattered in the area.

Some of them mustered courage and rescued all the seven injured persons from inside their houses. Kailash and his son sustained critical injuries after a wall of their house collapsed under the impact of the blast.

Acting on a complaint, Purusottampur Sub-divisional Police Officer (SDPO), additional superintendent of police and Kodala police reached the spot and started investigation.

Police are looking into the safety angles of cracker manufacturing by the family members.

LEISURELY HOURS



Tourists having a timeout on Bateshwar sea beach near Kantiagarh village in Ganjam district, on the occasion of Raja festival, Wednesday OP PHOTO

TRACKING JUMBOS

Watch tower installed at Sarisua hill

Khaira, June 15: Residents living on the foothills of Sarisua hill under this tehsil of Balasore district heaved a sigh of relief as a watch tower was installed on the hilltop by the Forest department to track the movement of the elephants, a report said.

The forest officials deployed on the watch tower installed at Badbil village will track the movement of elephants over 16.5 sq km area around the hill and alert the residents in advance in case of any possible elephant attack.

This has brought relief to residents residing in five panchayats around the hill.

Reports said elephants from nearby jungles frequently stray into the villages around the hill and destroy life and properties. The elephant menace has become more acute during last 10 years as people were found living in constant fear of elephant attack and destruction of their properties.

AC vehicles to boost footfall in Debrigarh

Sambalpur, June 15: In a bid to attract more tourists to Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Sambalpur district, the Hirakud wildlife division authorities, Wednesday, launched five air-conditioned safari vehicles.

Attabira MLA Snehangini Chhuria and DFO of Hirakud Wildlife Division Ashipragyan Das flagged off the safari vehicles.

These vehicles are in addition to a fleet of nine common safari vehicles that are already operational at the tourism site.



are over now, more tourists are expected to visit the sanctuary this year," the DFO said.

Of the five safari vehicles, three are four-seater Mahindra Thor while two of them are mini buses with a sitting capacity of 12 each.

In yet another development, safari vehicles are now allowed to ferry tourists to Samalei temple, Sambalpur town (to buy Sambalpur handloom items), deer park, Nrusinghanath temple in Bargarh and Kedarnath temple in Barpahad range, it was stated.

THE 5 VEHICLES ARE IN ADDITION TO A FLEET OF NINE COMMON SAFARI VEHICLES THAT ARE ALREADY OPERATIONAL AT THE TOURISM SITE

OF THESE SAFARI VEHICLES, THREE ARE FOUR-SEATER MAHINDRA THOR WHILE TWO OF THEM ARE MINI BUSES WITH A SITTING CAPACITY OF 12 EACH

THE VEHICLES ARE NOW ALLOWED TO FERRY TOURISTS TO SAMALEI TEMPLE, SAMBALPUR TOWN, DEER PARK, NRUSINGHANATH TEMPLE IN BARGARH AND KEDARNATH TEMPLE IN BARPHAD RANGE

Social boycott endemic in Ganjam villages



Chhatrapur, June 15: The drastic rise in ostracism cases has become a matter of grave concern in rural villages of Ganjam district. In the recent past, there have been several instances of 'social boycott', mostly in villages.

This age-old tradition of socially boycotting a family for various reasons still exists in most villages in the district. Just a few days back, there were reports of an Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel being boycotted by his family for an inter-caste marriage.

Meanwhile, as many as 18 families of fishermen community at Kainchapur village under Ganjam block have been socially boycotted from their village for the last six years.

Despite claims of awareness progs by administration and police, incidents of social boycott are on the rise in the district

The matter came to the fore after these families met Ganjam SP Brijesh Kumar Rai Monday and sought his intervention in the issue. Despite repeated complaints, police officials have turned deaf ears to their plights, the families alleged.

They also have brought serious allegations against present Zilla Parishad member Sanatan Behera, who is the person behind their social boycott.

According to the families, the fishermen community spends a lot of money every year on the village deity. However, Behera, who is also the president of the Mahasangh, does not show the expenditure list and is alleged to have bungled the funds.

When asked for the expenditure list, he spread rumours against the 18 families and ostracised them, the families alleged.

Behera claims that the expenditure list was destroyed by rodents and refuted the allegations of ostracising the fishermen families. "It is a drama to defame me," Behera said.

Notably, families of two defence personnel in Polasara have appealed to the district administration for justice following alleged boycott by villagers after one of the two youths recently married a girl of another caste.

The families were living peacefully until things took an ugly turn following Aurobindo's inter-caste marriage in January this year.

Despite claims of awareness by administration and police, incidents of social boycott are on the rise in Ganjam. Last month, a woman samiti member and a former sarpanch in Ganjam block were reportedly ostracised for defying the village committee decisions.

TAKING STOCK



A delegation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USA, visited Dhenkanal and took stock of the faecal sludge treatment plant being implemented by self-help groups and other projects of Dhenkanal Municipality, Wednesday OP PHOTO

Woman attacked by croc, survives

Pattamundai, June 15: A woman bathing in a river miraculously escaped from the jaws of a crocodile in Pattamundai area of Kendrapara district, Wednesday. Reports said, Manjulata Samal, a native of Raulia village under Pattamundai block, was bathing in Kanthia river Wednesday when a crocodile dragged her into the river.

However, she managed to escape from the jaws of the reptile. She was critically injured in the attack. She was first rushed to Kendrapara district headquarters hospital and later shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack.

Boat library for visitors in Bhitarkanika Nat'l Park

Dangamal, June 15: Deep inside Bhitarkanika National Park, the foresters have set up a boat library for children.

The library housed in a stationary boat at Dangamal, the gateway to the forest, threw open its doors June 5, the World Environment Day, this year.

The boat is stationed at the eco-tourism complex so that students of nearby schools as well as children of visitors to Bhitarkanika, can use the library.

Spread over 672 sq km, Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary is the second largest Mangrove ecosystem in India. Once the hunting ground of the princely Raj Kanika family, it is now famous for its large population of salt water crocodiles.

Bhitarkanika DFO JD Pati, who along with others planned the boat library, said a boat discarded by the department has been taken over and refurbished into a library.

It was retrofitted for the purpose and a room was created in its hull to house books. Stairs were constructed to reach the room from the ground.

"The aim of the library is to connect children and youth to na-

ture and sensitise them about conservation," Pati said. Inspiration was drawn from commitment and continuous support for mangrove conservation by locals.

"To commemorate their efforts and build capacity of the next generation, we felt the requirement of a dedicated platform where data, books, documents can be shared with youngsters to motivate them to conserve the mangrove and wetlands," Pati said.

He credits the forest division officers including his wife for conceptualising and designing the project.

The library houses about 1,500 books which have been funded by the government-run Bhitarkanika

Eco-Tourism and Eco-Development Society (BEEEDS).

As it is off-season for tourists now, the boat library is open to local children of the area, which is located in the coastal Kendrapara district.

The national park is closed from May 1 to July 31 every year for mating and nesting by saltwater crocodiles. For now, children of two to three local schools will be allowed to visit the library, Pati said.

Much thought has been given to attract children to the library. The boat has been painted in bright colours with motifs to attract them. A single room with 32 compartments has been created in the hull of the boat to house the books, which have been placed on shelves in a way that children find easy to use.

The lowest shelves are for children between three and five years of age and have picture books in Odia, Hindi and English, besides card games.

The shelves above it are for children between five and 10 years and are stocked with folk tales, short stories and biographies. Books for those between 10 and 15 years are placed in the higher racks and have encyclopedias, books on nature, conservation, atlas, science projects and biographies.

On the topmost racks are books for those who are above 15 years. There are books on wildlife conservation, mangrove forests and ecology, besides government brochures and publications on wetland conservation.



EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No. e-T-M-Limn-GII-PUI-001-22
NAME OF WORK: MECHANIZED WASHING OF BED ROLL LINES OF TRAIN NO. 20819, 20820, 20861, 20862, 22827, 22828, 22866, 22865, 22890, 22889, 12843, 12844, 12881, 12882, 18419, 18420, 22883, 22884, 22836, 22835 (WEEKLY SERVICES) OF (PURI GROUP II) OF PURI COACHING DEPOT FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

Advertised Value : ₹4,01,96,220.78, EMD : ₹3,51,000/-, Tender Document Cost : ₹11,800/-, Period of Completion : 24 Months.

Bidding Start Date : 22.06.2022 At 1530 Hrs. of 06.07.2022

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1530 Hrs. of 06.07.2022

Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Complete information including e-Tender documents and corrigendum is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Sr. Coaching Depot Officer / PURI-199/N/22-23

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA E-mail: rw_rourkela@yahoo.co.in
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, ROURKELA
TENDER CALL NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. ONLINE-SERKL-07 of 2022-23

No. O-468

- Name of the Work : Road Works
- Total No. of Works : 8 (Eight) Nos.
- Estimated Cost : Rs. 14.02 lakhs to 47.89 lakhs
- Class of Contractor : "D", "C", "B" & "A" Class
- Period of Completion : 03 (Three) to 04 (Four) Calendar Months
- Type of Tender : Single Cover
- Other details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding	
		From	To
1	2	3	4
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Rourkela	Online-SERKL-07 of 2022-23	22.06.2022 from 10.00 A.M.	02.07.2022 upto 5.00 P.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
OIPR-25067/11/0012/2223 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, RW Division, Rourkela



The Indian Army will recruit 25,000 Agniveers in the next 180 days and the process for recruitment of the remaining 15,000 will begin a month after that

455 BOOKED FOR DRUNKEN DRIVING

Over 450 people were booked in a day for drunken driving across Noida and Greater Noida in Gautam Buddha Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh, police said.



of the day quote

BJP's efforts to suppress the truth through untruth, injustice and immorality will never succeed. Truth is on Rahul Gandhi and the Congress' side that will neither bow down nor be afraid of any atrocities

UP Govt will give priority to Agniveers in the (recruitment of) state police and related services after they serve Maa Bharti (country)

Even as concerns are growing over the steadily rising Covid numbers in Chennai, the good news is that most of the patients are being treated at home as the symptoms are very mild

800 Cong leaders, workers detained in 3 days

New Delhi, June 15: Around 800 senior Congress leaders and workers have been detained since Monday for protesting the questioning of Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate in violation of prohibitory orders and despite being denied permission, officials said.

Congress leaders and workers were also detained Wednesday after they staged protests outside the ED office and the party headquarters here.

After being grilled by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for three consecutive days in connection with the National Herald case, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will not be questioned by the agency Thursday. An ED source said the agency will question Rahul Gandhi again Friday.

RAHUL'S ED GRILLING



Congress workers burn tyres and shout slogans as they stage a protest senior leaders on and 217 Tuesday. A police statement had said CrPC Section 144 is already in force with effect from May 24 this year in the area, thereby prohibiting holding of any public meeting, processions and demonstration.

Delhi cops reject allegations

New Delhi: The Delhi Police Wednesday rejected as "totally false" the allegations that its personnel forcibly entered the Congress headquarters and beat up party workers and leaders on a day the party staged protests against the questioning of Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate.

The Congress leader left the ED headquarters at around 11:45 p.m. On Monday, his questioning had ended at about 9 p.m. However, since he reportedly wanted to correct a few parts of his statements, he had to wait for a few more hours at the ED headquarters here.

Sonia Gandhi, who is presently admitted to the hospital for Covid related health issues, has also been summoned June 23 in the same case.

India, Spain agree to add new depth and content to ties



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar welcomes Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares in New Delhi

In their wide-ranging talks, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his visiting Spanish counterpart Jose Manuel Albares Bueno reiterated their commitment to closely work in countering common challenges of terrorism, violent extremism and cyber crime

as part of which Airbus Spain will supply 56 C295 aircraft, 40 of which would be made in India, and agreed to further deepen defence and security cooperation.

It said India welcomed Spain's interest in participating in its national defence manufacturing programme through 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives.

In September last year, India sealed a nearly Rs 21,000 crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space to procure 56 C-295 transport aircraft to replace the ageing Avro-748 planes of the IAF under a project that entails manufacturing of military aircraft in India for the first time by a private company.

In a tweet in Spanish, he said the meeting with Jaishankar was excellent and that both sides will continue to work to deepen the bilateral relations and signed a declaration for cultural and academic cooperation.

SHORT TAKES

Uma throws cow dung at liquor shop

Bhopal: Continuing her agitation against the liquor shops in Madhya Pradesh, former Chief Minister and senior BJP leader Uma Bharti threw cow dung at a liquor shop in Orchha town in Niwari district.

4 held for link with 1984 riots

Kanpur (UP): A Special Investigation Team (SIT), formed to investigate the 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, has arrested four accused from Ghatampur area Kanpur Nagar district.

CET 2022 exam in K'taka from June 16

Bangalore: The Common Entrance Test (CET 2022) -- gateway to becoming eligible for seeking entry into professional courses in Karnataka -- will be held from June 16-18 as scheduled.

3 boys drown at Juhu Beach

Mumbai: The maximum city recorded its first monsoon tragedy when three young boys drowned at the famed Juhu Beach and one was rescued by the Mumbai Fire Brigade.

Jammu: Explosives recovered from bus

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Police recovered explosives in the form of gelatin sticks from a bus carrying an unidentified number of passengers on the outskirts of the city Wednesday.

AI-enabled portal for pensioners soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 15: The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare will launch an artificial intelligence-enabled common portal soon for the benefit of pensioners, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said Wednesday.

Interacting with beneficiaries of 'Bhavishya', a portal for pension payment and tracking, here, he said that in keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's motto of ensuring 'ease of living' for all, the AI-supported portal will send automatic alerts to pensioners.

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, said the proposed portal will not only enable constant contact with pensioners and their associations across the country but will also regularly receive their inputs, suggestions as well as grievances for prompt response.

Most of the superannuated senior citizens, including retired paramilitary personnel, and those about to get superannuated lauded the prompt pension processing through the 'Bhavishya' platform and thanked the minister for such seamless service, a statement issued by the Personnel Ministry said.

Some of the hiccups from the banking side were brought to the notice of the minister, which he said would be taken care of automatically in the AI-enabled portal with fixed responsibility. Singh said 'Bhavishya' has ensured end-to-end digitisation of the pension processing and payment in tune with the Modi government's objective of transparency, digitisation and service delivery.

BRAVING THE ODDS



Students carry their luggage to safer places after their hostels and accommodations were flooded due to rains, in Guwahati, Assam. Fresh landslides were reported from various parts of Guwahati for the second consecutive day Wednesday amid incessant rainfall, which also led to heavy waterlogging in most parts of the city, officials said

'Covaxin booster effective against Omicron, Delta'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 15: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has found in a study that a Covaxin booster dose enhances the vaccine effectiveness against the Delta variant infection and gives protection against the Omicron variants BA.1.1 and BA.2.

The protective efficacy of Covaxin following the second and third dose immunisations were compared against the Delta variant and also studied the efficacy of Covaxin against Omicron variants in a Syrian hamster model in the study. The ICMR scientists also studied the antibody response, clinical observations, viral load re-

duction and lung disease severity after virus challenge.

"Protective response in terms of the reduction in lung viral load and lung lesions were observed in both the 2 doses as well as 3 doses Covaxin immunised group when compared to placebo group following the Delta variant challenge," the ICMR study said.

The study said that in spite of the comparable neutralising antibody response against the homologous vaccine strain in both second dose and third dose immunised groups, considerable reduction in the lung disease severity was observed in the third dose immunised group post Delta variant challenge indicating the involvement of cell mediated im-



mune response also in protection. "In the vaccine efficacy study against the Omicron variants i.e., BA.1 and BA.2, lesser virus shedding, lung viral load and lung disease severity were observed in the immunised groups in comparison to the placebo groups," the study underlined.

It said that the present study shows that administering of Covaxin booster dose will enhance

Uptick in Cov cases

India reported 8,822 fresh Covid cases in last 24 hours, a steep rise against 6,594 infections on previous day, the Union Health Ministry said Wednesday.

the vaccine effectiveness against the Delta variant infection and give protection against the Omicron variants BA.1.1 and BA.2. However, the findings of the study are a preprint and have not been certified by peer review.

MATTER OF CONCERN

Killer borewells: Recent cases of kids falling into deadly holes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 15: The dangers posed by abandoned borewells have come to the fore again after the rescue of 11-year-old Rahul Sahu, who was pulled out from a borewell in Chhattisgarh's Janjgir Champa district after a 104-hour-long operation.

Here are some other prominent borewell mishaps over the last few years: In 2006, a massive operation to rescue five-year-old Prince Kumar Kashyap, who had fallen into a 55-foot deep borewell in a village in Haryana's Kurukshetra, garnered national spotlight.



Rahul Sahu after he was successfully rescued, Tuesday night.

Prince garnered celebrity status and often made appearances at yagnas and events around villages in Kurukshetra district.

On June 9 this year, a two-year-old boy fell into a borewell at a farm in Gujarat's Surendranagar district, following which a team

of the Army, fire brigade, police and health officials rushed to the spot and rescued him. On May 22 this year, a six-year-old boy, who fell into a 100-foot-deep borewell in a village in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district died after a 9-hour-long rescue operation.

In 2009, the top court had issued guidelines for preventing fatal accidents of children falling into abandoned borewells

Ritesh Jawasingh Solanki, a six-year-old boy fell into a 200-foot deep borewell in Maharashtra's Nashik district on November 15 last year. It took 16 hours for the police team to rescue him.

and despite rescue operations spanning 109 hours, he could not be saved. Officials managed to supply oxygen but no food or water could be provided to him.

In May 2019, Seema, a four-year-old girl slipped into a 440-foot deep borewell in Jodhpur's Melana village. Seema was stuck at a depth of 260-feet inside the borewell and her body was pulled out after a 14-hour operation.

The tubewell at the farm had broken down and the girl's father had taken the pump out for repairing, leaving the borewell open.

The NDRF and the Army were pressed into service and the tod-

der was finally rescued after a 48-hour long operation. Almost 40 JCB machines were pressed into service for digging a parallel pit and about 100 men from the Army and the NDRF participated in the operation apart from 150 policemen.

The girl could not be saved, despite a massive effort by Army and district administration for five days. A huge rock was a major hurdle that the rescuers had been struggling to break for three days.

international

of the day quote

My message on Swedish and Finnish membership is that I strongly welcome that. It is an historic decision. It will strengthen them, it will strengthen us



JENS STOLTENBERG | SECRETARY-GENERAL, NATO

The fact that the president's going to fly directly from here to Saudi Arabia is probably signifying that there is a linkage between the visit and the ability to improve relations



YAIR LAPID | FOREIGN MINISTER, ISRAEL

We are in a moment where we need to send clear political signals - us, Europeans, us, the European Union - toward Ukraine and the Ukrainian people



EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

SHORT TAKES

Japan, Oz vow to boost defence ties

Tokyo: Japan and Australia's defence ministers Wednesday vowed to step up their ties to support democratic values in the Indo-Pacific region and agreed to work more closely with Southeast Asia and the Pacific island nations where China is seeking to expand its influence. Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles and his Japanese counterpart, Nobuo Kishi, said that region-wide cooperation is necessary to maintain and strengthen the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific, where there is growing fear that Russia's invasion of Ukraine may embolden China to increase its assertiveness.

US okays \$120mn new loan to Lanka

Colombo: The US Wednesday announced \$120 million in new loans to Sri Lanka to grow and support small and medium-sized businesses in the debt-ridden island nation. According to the US Embassy here, the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) Board of Directors has approved the loan in new investments that will reach small and medium-sized businesses and help to provide equity, jobs, and futures.

WHO to share Monkeypox vax

London: The World Health Organisation said it's creating a new vaccine-sharing mechanism to stop the outbreak of monkeypox in more than 30 countries beyond Africa. The move could result in the UN health agency distributing scarce vaccine doses to rich countries that can otherwise afford them. To some health experts, the initiative potentially misses the opportunity to control monkeypox virus in the African countries where it's infected people for decades, serving as another example of the inequality in vaccine distribution that was seen during the coronavirus pandemic.

7 quakes strike off Iranian coast

Dubai: Seven earthquakes struck off Iran's southern Kish Island Wednesday, rattling Dubai and other areas across the Persian Gulf. The US Geological Survey said six magnitude 4 tremors struck, as well as one magnitude 5.3 off the island near the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Iranian state television reported that authorities deployed rescue teams to the town of Jenah in Hormozgan province, though no damage and casualties were initially reported.

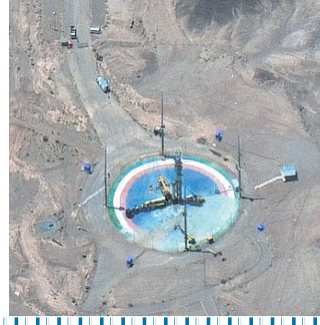


The Taiwan Strait is an international waterway, meaning that the high seas freedoms, including freedom of navigation and overflight, are guaranteed under international law

NED PRICE | STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, US

FRESH ESCALATION BY IRAN

Iran acknowledged Wednesday it plans two tests for its new solid-fuelled rocket after satellite photos showed preparations at a desert launch pad previously used in the programme, even as tensions remain high over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear programme



India, Israel, UAE & US form new I2U2 alliance

In October 2021, a meeting of the foreign ministers of the four countries took place when External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar was visiting Israel. At that time, it was called the 'International Forum for Economic Cooperation'. This time, the meeting will take place at the level of heads of government/state - an upgrade



India is a massive consumer market. It is a massive producer of high-tech and highly sought-after goods as well. So, there are a number of areas where these countries can work together, whether its technology, trade, climate, Covid-19, and potentially even security as well

NED PRICE | US STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 15: The new I2U2 grouping of India, Israel, the UAE and the US will hold its first virtual summit next month as part of the Biden administration's efforts to re-energise and revitalise American alliances across the world, according to the White House.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan would attend the first-of-its-kind virtual summit of the I2U2 grouping next month for discussions of the food security crisis and other areas of cooperation, it said Tuesday.

The virtual summit of the four countries would take place during Biden's trip to the Middle East region from July 13 to 16, a senior administration official told reporters during a conference call.

President Biden looks forward to this unique engagement with Prime Minister Bennett, Prime Minister Modi and President Mohammed bin Zayed, the official said.

State Department spokesperson

Ned Price, during his daily news conference Tuesday, told reporters that each of these countries are technological hubs.

"Part of our approach from the start is not only to revitalise and re-energise our system of alliances and partnerships around the world, but also to stitch together partnerships that did not exist previously or were not utilised to their full extent," Price said.

"Biotechnology is also prominent. Deepening trade and economic ties between these countries is in our interest when it comes to the relationship between Israel and the UAE. That is something we have sought to deepen. These two countries have deepened their relationship in recent years, including in the economic realm," he said.

Biden will visit the Middle East region from July 13 to July 16 with stops in Israel, the West Bank and Saudi Arabia, and engagements with nearly a dozen counterparts from across the region and beyond.

"The first stop is Israel. This will be President Biden's first visit to the country as President, and it comes nearly 50 years after his

first visit to Israel as a young senator," said the official.

During the trip, Biden will engage with nearly a dozen of his counterparts in three stops - Israel, the West Bank, and Saudi Arabia.

It is part of this clear sequence of global engagements at an important moment, the official said.

"It demonstrates, we believe, the return of American leadership to bring countries together to address common threats and challenges, something the US can uniquely do."

"And with new frameworks that aim to harness unique American capabilities to enable partners to work more closely together, which is essential to a more secure, prosperous and stable Middle East region over the long term," the official said.

Biden's visit will also focus on Israel's increasing integration into the region, both through the Abraham Accords with the UAE, Morocco and Bahrain; through deepening ties between Israel, Jordan and Egypt; and also entirely new groupings of partners, including Israel, India, the UAE, and the United States - what they call I2U2, said the official.

IN A BID TO DITCH RUSSIA EU signs gas deal with Egypt, Israel

Last year, the EU imported roughly 40% of its gas from Russia, and due to that has had difficulty imposing sanctions on Russia over its ongoing invasion of Ukraine

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cairo, June 15: Egypt, Israel, and the European Union Wednesday signed a deal to increase liquefied natural gas sales to EU countries, who aim to reduce dependence on supply from Russia as the war in Ukraine drags on.

The deal, will see Israel sending more gas via Egypt, which has facilities to liquify it for export via sea, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said.

"What a special moment," von der Leyen said in a joint news conference alongside Egyptian and Israel energy ministers. "I very warmly welcome the signing of this historic agreement."

The Israeli gas will be brought via a pipeline to Egypt's LNG terminal on the Mediterranean before being transported on tankers to the European shores.

Israel has two operational gas fields off its Mediterranean coast containing an estimated 690 billion cubic meters of natural gas combined, and a third offshore rig is in the works. It has already signed gas export agreements with neighboring Egypt and Jordan.

Egypt's extensive natural gas facilities on the Mediterranean have stood largely inactive since the country's 2011 uprising that toppled

GERMANY SLAMS RUSSIA'S MOVE TO CUT SUPPLY

Berlin: Russian energy giant Gazprom's decision to cut supplies of natural gas to Europe via the Nord Stream pipeline was "political", Germany's economy minister said Wednesday. Gazprom announced Tuesday it would be cutting deliveries via the pipeline by around 40 percent due to the "repair" of compressor units by German company Siemens. Gazprom's move was "a political decision and not a technically justifiable decision", Economy Minister Robert Habeck said at a press conference. Habeck said Germany was aware of the need to service the pipeline but added that "the first set of maintenance works where this would have become relevant will not take place until autumn."

longtime autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

In recent years, the government of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi rehabilitated and modernized the facilities. In 2018, Egypt signed a \$15 billion deal with Israeli company Delek Drilling and its US Partner, Noble Energy to transport natural gas there. Egypt aims to create a regional energy hub.



Ukraine fights for Severodonetsk despite ultimatum

REUTERS

Kyiv, Ukraine, June 15: Ukraine ignored a Russian ultimatum to surrender the eastern city of Sievierodonetsk Wednesday as NATO defence ministers gathered in Brussels to discuss sending more heavy weapons to replenish Kyiv's dwindling stocks.

Russia had told Ukrainian forces holed up in a chemical plant in the shattered city to stop "senseless resistance and lay down arms" from Wednesday morning, pressing its advantage in the battle for control of eastern Ukraine.

Plans announced by Moscow to open a humanitarian corridor for civilians stuck in the plant were disrupted by Ukrainian shelling, Russian-backed separatists were quoted by RIA news agency as saying. The separatists had planned to take the civilians to territory under their own control.

Ukraine says more than 500 civilians, including 40 children, are trapped alongside soldiers inside the Azot chemical factory, where its forces have resisted

Ukraine President said the country does not have enough anti-missile systems and there was no justification for delays from Western countries

weeks of Russian bombardment that has reduced much of Sievierodonetsk to ruins.

The mayor of Sievierodonetsk, Oleksandr Stryuk, said after the early morning deadline passed that Russian forces were trying to storm the city from several directions but Ukrainian forces continued to defend it and were not completely cut off.

"We are trying to push the enemy towards the city centre," he said on television, without referring to the ultimatum. "This is an ongoing situation with partial successes and tactical retreats."

"The escape routes are dangerous, but there are some," he said.



Sieverodonetsk city focus of fight for eastern Ukraine

Hundreds trapped in Sievierodonetsk's Azot chemical plant

NATO defence ministers due to discuss Ukraine military aid

STRAWBERRY SUPERMOON



Sculptures of angels fixed at the St Isaac's Cathedral are silhouetted on the full moon in St Petersburg, Russia. AP PHOTO

CUTTING CHAI

Pak min urges citizens to drink less tea

RECENTLY, FINANCE MINISTER MIFTAH ISMAIL WARNED THAT PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY COULD BE IN A SIMILAR POSITION AS THAT OF SRI LANKA IF TOUGH DECISIONS WERE NOT TAKEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, June 15: Cash-strapped Pakistan has urged its countrymen to cut down the consumption of tea to help reduce the import bill eating into the country's depleting foreign exchange reserves.

The appeal from Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal came after it emerged that Pakistan consumed tea worth Rs 83.88 billion (\$400 million) in the fiscal year 2021-22, The News International newspaper reported.

He said that Pakistan, one of the biggest importers of tea in the world, has to borrow money to import it. "I appeal to the nation to cut down the consumption of tea by 1-2 cups because we import tea



Last month, Pakistan govt restricted the import of dozens of non-essential luxury items as part of its bid to save foreign exchange

on loan, Iqbal said while speaking to reporters here Tuesday.

The federal budget document for the outgoing fiscal year showed that Pakistan imported Rs 13 billion (\$60 million) worth of more

tea than the last fiscal year. In the fiscal year 2020-21, Rs 70.82 billion (\$340 million) was spent on the import of tea, the News Network International news agency reported.

EU sues UK after plan to override post-Brexit deal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 15: The European Union (EU) Wednesday set the UK a two-month deadline to respond to legal action as it challenged British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's plan to override parts of the Brexit agreement relating to Northern Ireland.

The UK government had tabled a new Northern Ireland Protocol Bill in Parliament earlier this week, which Britain insists is aimed at fixing parts of the Northern Ireland Protocol and denies any potential breach of international law.

If the UK doesn't reply within two months, we may take them to the court of justice," said Maros Sefcovic, Vice-President of the European Commission.

"Let there be no doubt: there is no legal nor political justification whatsoever for unilaterally changing an international agreement. This is illegal. The UK bill is extremely damaging to mutual trust and respect between the EU and the UK. It has created deep uncertainty and casts a shadow over our international cooperation," he said.

The Commission confirmed that Brussels will also resume legal proceedings against the UK, which it suspended in September last year, for breaching the EU withdrawal treaty agreed in 2020.

A spokesperson for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said London was disappointed by the EU's legal moves.

"The EU's proposed approach, which doesn't differ from what they've said previously, would increase burdens on businesses and citizens and take us backwards from where we are currently," he said, referring to EU proposals to ease post-Brexit trade problems with Northern Ireland.

Japan to attend NATO meet for first time

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Brussels, June 15: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Wednesday he will attend this month's NATO summit in Madrid, becoming the country's first leader to join a top meeting of the transatlantic alliance.

The June 28-30 gathering is seen as a crunch moment for the 30 North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies, four months into Russia's war in Ukraine.

Sweden and Finland, which have applied to join NATO, are sending delegations to the summit, and South Korea's new President Yoon Suk-yeol will also be the first leader from his country to attend.

Japan, a key US ally and not a NATO member, has delivered defensive supplies to Ukraine and imposed tough sanctions on Russia in tandem with the other Group of Seven countries.

"As the only Asian country in the G7, Japan's diplomatic capabilities are being tested," Kishida told reporters. His attendance at the NATO summit will be "the first time for a Japanese prime minister", he said, adding that he intends to highlight the link between security concerns in Europe and Asia.

MISERY AT MOLINEUX



England slump to historic 0-4 loss to Hungary in Nations League, less than a year after reaching Euro 2020 final on home soil

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wolverhampton, June 15: England suffered their worst home defeat since 1928 with a 0-4 loss to Hungary in the Nations League.

Less than a year after reaching the European Championship final on home soil to raucous celebrations, England were booed by their own fans after a heavy loss to an unheralded Hungary team that completed a double after upsetting England last week. European champion Italy had it little better as it was beaten 5-2 by Germany.

England's last game of the long 2021-22 season will ensure plenty of reflection before the World Cup in Qatar in five months' time. Manager Gareth Southgate, a national hero during Euro 2020, had to endure chants of "you don't know what you're doing."

There was tension before the game kicked off as England fans drowned out the Hungarian anthem with a chant referencing Hungary's history of racist abuse of players by fans. Hungary was punished by UEFA and FIFA for racist incidents in games last year, including one in which England players were abused.

Hungary had been clinging on to a 1-0 lead from Roland Sallai's early goal for much of the match, before England fell apart in the latter stages. Sallai made it 2-0 in the 70th minute before Zoltan Nagy fired in a shot from the edge of the box for 3-0. England defender John Stones was sent off for a second booking after what seemed like slight contact with an opponent and Daniel Gazdag added a fourth for Hungary.

Plenty of England's players showed signs of being physically and perhaps mentally tired after a long season, with little creativity in the face of a densely packed Hungarian formation and midfielder Kalvin Phillips in particular giving away possession cheaply ahead of the second goal.

It was England's biggest home loss since being beaten 1-5 by Scotland 94 years ago. Other losses to Hungary loom large in English soccer history. A 3-6 home loss in 1953 and 1-7 defeat away the following year played crucial roles in shaking England's view of itself as a pre-eminent soccer nation of the era.

After no wins and just one goal in four Nations League games,

Southgate defended his choice to rotate the lineup and give fringe players game time.

In League A, Belgium's 1-0 win over Poland in Group 4 was more restrained than its 6-1 thrashing of the same opposition last week. The Netherlands stayed atop the group by beating Wales 3-2 thanks to Memphis Depay's stoppage-time winner after Gareth Bale had leveled the score for Wales from the penalty spot.

Tuesday's Nations League games marked the end of a long, draining season of European club and international games. For some players, the next season is already looming. Two of Andorra's starting lineup for a 1-2 loss to Moldova are set to kick off the 2022-23 Champions League in seven days' time when national champion Inter Club d'Escaldes plays in the preliminary round of qualifying.

In the second-tier League B, Scotland came back from 1-0 down to beat nine-man Armenia 4-1, Montenegro won 3-0 against Romania, Bosnia-Herzegovina edged past Finland 3-2, and Ukraine and Ireland drew 1-1, with Ukraine playing its home game in Poland because of the Russian invasion.

Stimac hits out at AIFF's messy state of affairs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 15: Indian football team head coach Igor Stimac has lashed out at the messy state of affairs grappling the national federation (AIFF), a day after his side qualified for AFC Asian Cup for the second consecutive time.

The AIFF is currently run by the Supreme Court-appointed Committee of Administrators (CoA) after the Praful Patel-led federation was found to have violated the National Sports Code.

Stimac questioned the timing of the issue, which has cast a shadow on India's qualification for a prestigious tournament like the AFC Asian Cup. "For such an important tournament, was this the time to do this? Was anybody thinking how that could affect the dressing room and the players?" Stimac asked, referring to AIFF's current state of affairs.

"I am not getting into who is right and who is wrong. It is not my job. I am just talking about timing. At such an important time, such a thing is happening, is anyone normal? Nothing would have happened if they were waiting for three more weeks after having waited so many years," he said.

The 54-year-old, whose contract has been extended till September, also minced no words when asked about his future. "We had no time to talk about contracts. We don't even have a board. Nobody thought about how that drama could affect the players," the Croatian said.

India's qualification was sealed ahead of their final league match against Hong Kong Tuesday when Palestine beat Philippines 4-0. Stimac's side celebrated its qualification with an emphatic 4-0 win over Hong Kong as it finished with three wins to top group D — their best ever campaign.

Prannoy ends Lakshya run at Indonesia Open

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, June 15: World No. 8 Lakshya Sen crashed out of the Indonesia Open badminton tournament after losing to compatriot HS Prannoy in an all-India second round clash here Wednesday.

Sen was comprehensively beaten 10-21, 9-21 by Prannoy in a men's singles match that lasted a little more than half an hour. Interestingly, this was Prannoy's first-ever win against Sen out of their three head-to-head meetings so far.

In the doubles action, the duo of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila opened their account with a win, getting the better of higher ranked Japanese pair of Kelichiro Matsui and Yoshinori Takeuchi 27-25, 18-25, 21-19.

However, it was curtains for the women's duo of Ashwini Bhat and



Shikha Gautam as it lost 9-21, 10-21 to China's Zhang Shu Xian and Zheng Yu in just 28 minutes.

The campaign also ended for another women's pairing of Haritha M Harinarayan and Ashna Noy as the duo also suffered straight-game defeat against South Korea's Jeong Na Eun and Kim Hye Jeong.