



ON A MISSION

Actor Parineeti Chopra has asked people to join her in cleaning the debris from the oceans

LEISURE P2



ISIS CLAIMS KABUL ATTACK

The ISIS claims responsibility for an attack on a Gurdwara in Afghanistan, saying it was retaliation for 'insults' to Prophet

INTERNATIONAL P10



LOVLINA COMES CLEAN

Olympic medallist boxer Lovlina Borgohain clarifies she hasn't filed for divorce as she was never married to Nabanit

SPORTS P12

NAVEEN LEAVES FOR ITALY TODAY



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 19: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will leave from Delhi to Italy Monday to begin his 11-day foreign visit.

According to sources, the CM will leave by an early morning flight to Italy. Sources also said that most of the officials of the CM's delegation have left for Italy Sunday. Leading the high-level delegation, Patnaik will visit World Food Programme (WFP) headquarters in Rome. He will meet the executive director of WFP, David Beasley and the senior leadership of WFP.

The CM will have detailed discussions on Odisha's partnership with WFP and future projects which will further help the state in ensuring food security in a sustainable manner. The CM will also meet Pope Francis in Vatican.

On his way back, Patnaik will meet investors from the Middle East and adjoining regions in Dubai. He will extend an invitation to potential investors to come and invest in Odisha and assure them of all support and facilitation by the state government.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...



A girl carries her brother as she wades through a flooded road on the outskirts of Agartala.

REUTERS PHOTO

4 OF FAMILY KILLED IN LIGHTNING STRIKE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, June 19: Four members of a family, including a minor boy, were killed after lightning struck them at Malikamunda village under Komna block in Nuapada district Sunday.

Two others were admitted to Komna community health centre (CHC) in critical condition.

The deceased were identified as Tirtha Nag, 60, Lakhsman Nag, 28, Chudamani Nag, 23, and Gunasagar Nag, 15. Police registered a case and



sent the bodies for post-mortem.

The incident occurred when 10 members of a family were laying an asbestos roof on their house at Malikamunda. At least six of them suffered critical injuries in the lightning strike and collapsed. Komna fire personnel with the help of locals rushed the injured to Komna CHC, where four of them were declared dead.

Villagers have demanded compensation to the bereaved family from the state government.

NEWS IN BRIEF

4 terrorists gunned down in encounters

SRINAGAR: Four terrorists were killed in two separate encounters with security forces Sunday in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara and Kulgam districts, police said. While two terrorists were killed in Kupwara as many were eliminated in Kulgam, they said, adding some more terrorists are hiding and operation was still underway in both the areas. One of the terrorists killed in the Kupwara encounter was identified as a Pakistani affiliated with the proscribed Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), they said.

Aska: Woman beats father-in-law to death

ASKA: In a shocking incident, a woman beat her father-in-law to death with a blunt object at Kishorchandrapalli under Aska police limits in Ganjam. The deceased was identified as Simanchal Nayak (55). Police detained the accused and started an investigation following an FIR lodged by the sister-in-law of the deceased. The accused and Simanchal were not on good terms. Saturday night, they had a fight. Sunday morning, Simanchal's granddaughter revealed the matter before locals.

No Agnipath rollback: Govt

Applicants will have to give undertaking that they didn't take part in protests, arson

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: Ruling out the rollback of the Agnipath recruitment scheme despite widespread protests, the three services of the military Sunday came out with a broad schedule of enrolment under the new policy and asserted that it was aimed at bringing down the age profile of the armed forces.

Lt Gen Anil Puri, the additional secretary in the Department of Military Affairs, told a press conference that the supportive measures announced in the last few days for the Agniveers were not



Lt Gen Anil Puri, additional secretary, Department of Military Affairs, speaks to reporters at New Delhi, Sunday.

PTI PHOTO

because of the protests and arson, and the government was already working on them.

He said the youths who were involved in arson and violence while protesting the scheme will not be able to join the three services as a police verification process will be carried out before enrolling anyone.

"There is no space for indiscipline in the armed forces. There is no space for arson and violence. All those who want to become a part of the armed forces under the Agnipath scheme will have to give a certificate that they were not

part of any arson," he said.

To a question on whether the government was reviewing or rolling back the scheme because of the protests, Lt Gen Puri said, "No, why should there be a rollback?"

Giving details of the Navy's plan to induct Agniveers under the scheme, Vice Admiral (Personnel) Dinesh Tripathi said the naval headquarters will come out with a broad guideline for the recruitment by June 25.

The first batch of recruits will join the training programme on INS Chilka in Odisha by November

MP BJP leader assures guard jobs to Agniveers

Indore: BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya Sunday sought to defend the Centre's Agnipath scheme for military recruitment, saying if he has to appoint security personnel at his party office, he would give priority to those who have served as Agniveers. His remark soon kicked up a row, with some prominent political leaders, including his party colleague MP Varun Gandhi and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, besides several netizens slamming him for it.

21, he said, adding the Navy is recruiting both men and women as Agniveers under the scheme.

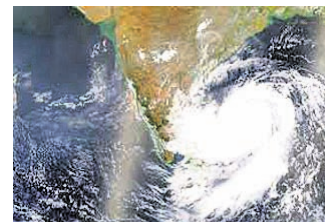
About the Indian Air Force's plan for induction under the Agnipath scheme, Air Marshal SK Jha said the registration process will start June 24 and the process for online examination for phase one of the recruitment process will begin July 24. "We are planning to start the training for the first batch of recruits by December 30," Air Marshal Jha said.

Continued on P4 (More on P7)

SRC's dummy cyclone message creates flutter

■ Tweet from SRC's official handle almost pressed the panic button with people wondering why there was no information from the IMD

PNN & AGENCIES



Bhubaneswar, June 19: A 'dummy message' from the official Twitter account of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Sunday created a flutter among the people with many making queries on the intention behind such a move.

The SRC's dummy message said an 'impending' Cyclone 'Sitrang' is likely to cross north Odisha close to Dhamra as a very severe cyclonic storm with a maximum wind speed of 155 kmph. This has almost pressed the panic button with people wondering why there was no information from the IMD.

The dummy message in the tweet carries a letter to the 18 collectors where it is said that heavy rainfall and storm surge were likely, while elaborating on the expected damage and suggested action for north Odisha and adjoining districts.

With utter confusion, many Twitter users sought clarification over the post from the SRC. "Is

some mock drill going on near Dhamra? the SRC may clarify this dummy message," wrote a user: "Why is this a Dummy Message? Is this posted by mistake?" asked another user.

The dummy alert is usually used for table-top exercises on cyclone and flood. This is also aimed to keep officials engaged in disaster mitigation and prepare equipment required during calamities. In fact, there is no such cyclonic storm over the Bay of Bengal currently. The IMD hasn't issued any forecast or warning regarding such system.

Clarifying a query by a Twitter user, SRC PK Jena wrote, "As part of cyclone preparedness @SRC_Odisha @osdma is organising physical mock drills across the state to rehearse our preparedness actions. Nothing to worry. Happy that the dummy message has created a sense of an impending disaster. Yday TTE table top exercise was completed."

Close shave for 200 as plane catches fire after take-off

SAFETY CONCERNS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE PATNA AIRPORT WHICH IS SURROUNDED BY DENSELY POPULATED LOCALITIES

AGENCIES

Patna, June 19: Nearly 200 people on board a Delhi-bound aircraft had a close shave Sunday as the plane caught fire soon after take-off from the airport here and made an emergency landing minutes later, officials said.

The Spice Jet aircraft took off at around quarter past noon and, according to Patna District Magistrate Chandrashekhar Singh, local administration began receiving calls soon afterwards that it has caught fire.

"Many people, mostly residents of the nearby Phulwari Sharif locality, began making frantic calls

upon watching the plane in flames," he told reporters at the airport.

Director of Jaiprakash Narayan International Airport, Anchal Prakash, said arrangements were made for the affected passengers' travel to their destination by an alternative plane.

The Spice Jet said in a statement, "B737-800 aircraft was operating SG-723 (Patna-Delhi route). On takeoff, during rotation, cockpit crew suspected bird hit on engine 01. As a precautionary measure and as per SOP (standard operating procedure), the captain shut down the affected engine and decided to return to Patna."

"The aircraft landed safely in



Patna and the passengers deboarded safely. Post flight inspection showed bird hit, with three fan blades damaged," said the airways.

It, however, did not share in its statement the number of persons

on board the Patna-Delhi flight. Many passengers shared their experience with media persons, with a mix of horror and relief.

"I had come to the airport groggy and dozed off before the plane took off. Within a few minutes, a judder woke me up. It was only after landing that I realised how lucky I was," recalled a young man.

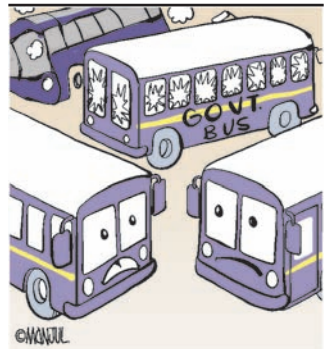
"The entire plane was trembling. We were petrified and crew members were busy pacifying us. We were initially told that the plane would land at an airstrip in Bihta or Arrah. Thankfully, it landed at the airport itself," said an elderly woman who also showered blessings on the pilot, whom she has

not met, for showing presence of mind. There seemed to be some confusion, though, about the duration for which the plane remained airborne.

Safety concerns have always been associated with the airport here, which is surrounded by densely populated localities, including markets selling meat, fish and poultry which often increase the risk of bird hits.

July 17, 2000, the airport had hit the headlines when a Delhi-bound Boeing 737 aircraft, coming from Kolkata, ploughed through a residential colony soon after take-off killing more than 60 people, including six local residents.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Bad roads, rough weather, tough terrain, nothing scares me. I am only afraid of ill-conceived govt schemes

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 37.2°C	36.0°C
	MIN 26.9°C	24.2°C
Humidity	79%	79%
Rainfall	13.2mm	1.8mm
Forecast	Light to Moderate Rain	

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
 accuracy • reliability • trust
 FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

Right now you need to summon all your mental abilities as you will have to take quick, on-the-spot decisions. However, Ganesh cautions you to take proper advice as your decisions may have a long-term impact, more so if they involve monetary matters.

TAURUS

Ganesh sees you acting very possessive about people and things. You are, consequently, likely to feel suspicious, uncertain and insecure about everything, particularly people. It's even possible that you may even suspect the feelings and intentions of those who are close to you. An uneasy anxiety and excitement will prevail at home. This is not going to be a particularly pleasant day for you. Act sensibly, carefully.

GEMINI

You will be more inclined towards religious teachings and rituals today. You will probably visit a place of worship and spend some time there and this will bring you mental peace and calm. However, you still need to do justice to your duties, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Today, you will put your heart and soul into whatever task you take up. But the results may not be too forthcoming. However, that should not be a reason for you to get dejected or anxious. You will get your due sooner or later. Also, spending some time with your loved ones will be quite gratifying emotionally.

LEO

You will leave no stone unturned to satisfy and please your partner today. So your chances of slipping up are very slight. You will be able to impress your partner today. You need to be careful in all your financial dealings today, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Give attention to your deepest feelings. A small excursion may be on the cards. Ganesh says today you will easily get along with other people. You will shower your sincere love and affection on your near and dear ones. Use your magical skills to improve your relationships.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will try to attain prestige in society today. This prestige will come to you via the field of communication or by your own thought processes. In your free time you will be able to learn about various topics of interest to you. Ganesh wishes you all the very best in life.

SCORPIO

You are quite vocal about your ambitious plans, says Ganesh. But, being too harsh on yourself or others for that matter may spoil your relationships with many people. Stay away from lengthy discussions to avoid any conflicts.

SAGITTARIUS

Conversation and interaction with like-minded people is going to make your day, says Ganesh. Shooting ideas, brainstorming and casual discussions may enlighten you today. Those around you will enjoy your company.

CAPRICORN

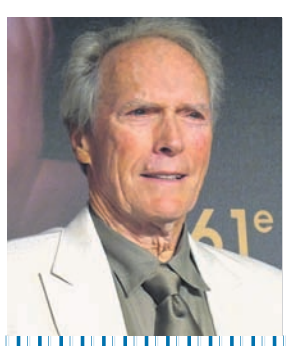
Lack of proper planning is probably the reason for you not being able to get your work done in time. You'll realise this mistake and today, you will spend majority of time drawing a plan on paper, says Ganesh. You may hit a jackpot, but think twice before spending the money on anything unnecessary. You may come across some good career opportunities, grab them before it's too late.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will want to expand your horizon of knowledge. You will give a tough fight to your opponents and come out triumphant, feels Ganesh. Troubles will not be able to trouble you as you will be able to turn them into your advantage. You are clever, talented and have all that it takes to fly high. Just believe in the strength of your wings.

PISCES

Financial bearings will be at the fore front of your attention today, feels Ganesh. Bank accounts, stocks, loans and other such things will dominate your thoughts and words. Earning money will be your primary goal and you will focus on those methods that will be most profitable to you, today. Give work your best shot and punch in your 100% as Ganesh feels that you will reap the benefits of the effort you put in today.



CLINT EASTWOOD'S DAUGHTER ON GROWING UP WITH FAMOUS DAD

Hollywood maestro Clint Eastwood's daughter Alison Eastwood has opened up about growing up with her famous dad. In a new interview, the daughter of the legendary actor described her famous father as a 'down-to-earth' dad who loves nature and having a beer, reports aceshowbiz.com.

LAUREN GRAHAM SPLITS FROM PETER KRAUSE

American actress and author Lauren Graham and her long-term partner Peter Krause have split after more than 10 years together. A representative for the *Gilmore Girls* actress, 55, confirmed to *PEOPLE* she and the 56-year-old actor "quietly ended their relationship last year".



Parineeti takes to ocean cleaning

MUMBAI: Actress Parineeti Chopra, who is also a certified scuba diving instructor, shared a video of herself collecting plastic waste and debris from the ocean.

The actress was seen picking items that were discarded in the ocean in the clip.

The actor shared the video on her Instagram account and wrote: "Had fun diving, but also did an important Dive Against Debris. Join me in creating ocean change."

In the short clip, the Ishaqzaade star was seen picking face mask, cans and plastic among other items from the ocean and showing it to the camera. She even shook her head in disappointment.

A caption on the video read: "About 14 million tons of plastic ends up in the ocean every year. By the year 2020, the amount of plastic in the ocean is expected to quadruple. This could cause the extinction of thousands of species of marine life."

"Some of these species include sea turtles, dolphins, and seals. Luckily, divers can help to save the ocean and these species through Dive Against Debris."

Since the program's launch, 90,000 visitors to the ocean have removed 2 million pieces of garbage from the water. I'm happy to have done my part in helping to save the ocean."

On the acting front, Parineeti will be next seen in 'Uunchai', which also stars Anupam Kher, Amitabh Bachchan and Boman Irani. AGENCIES



Sundargadi play Bhav highlights the essence of human relations



A scene from the play

Kalamandap) from different regions of Odisha are staged in Bhubaneswar to encourage the theatre form in the state.

Written and directed by Pradip Bhol, the play was produced by Kumud Panda.

Most people in today's society are behind material pleasure. They forget that the real wealth of life is love and feelings of one human being towards the other. The relationship that is based on love lasts for eternity and is the essence of life not the one that is developed through greed. This was the theme of the play that director Bhol tried to convey to the viewers.

The actors who performed on stage included Bijay Maharana, Laxmiprabha Pati, Latika Patnaik, Lijarani Sahoo and Ansuman Acharya.

Among the dignitaries, Principal Secretary of PH department Rabin Nath Nayak, theatre director Pradip Panda, Odisha Natya Sangh(ONS) vice-president Jitu Patnaik and the PRO of ONS Prakash Maharana were present on the occasion. PNN

BHUBANESWAR: Navjivan, a theatre troupe of Sundargarh, presented Sundargadi play *Bhav* here at Rabin Mandap, Sunday.

The drama was part of *Natyadhara*, a monthly drama show organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi in collaboration with Odisha Language Literature and Culture department under which four plays (one at Rabin Mandap, three at Bhanja

Acting now a part of my healing process: Neetu

MUMBAI: At the age of 21 when Neetu was at the peak of her career, she got married to the then superstar Rishi Kapoor and majorly discontinued her acting career.

She made her comeback in 2010 with the film *Do Dooni Char* alongside her husband Rishi Kapoor.

"The offers for film kept coming and I kept on refusing. In between, I did a few special appearances, only because my husband told me, 'chal na, ye karte hai, kaam karke maza ayega'. He was my best friend too," recalled Neetu with a smile.

"Now, I am an actress by choice. Now, acting has become a part of my healing process."

"It is heartbreaking to lose a partner of 45 years, with whom I have grown up and lived my life. But also, I want to wake up to hope, to a new day, I am looking forward to something. This film *Jug Jug Jeeyo* was exactly that for me," said the mother of the top actor Ranbir Kapoor.

The film *Jug Jugg Jeeyo*- directed by Raj Mehta, produced by Karan Johar, starring Varun Dhawan, Kiara Advani, Anil Kapoor alongside Neetu Kapoor - releases in theatre June 24.



777 Charlie declared tax-free in Karnataka

HYDERABAD: The Karnataka government has declared Rakshit Shetty-starrer *777 Charlie* tax-free in the state.

The tale of *777 Charlie*, written and directed by Kiranraj K, centres on a desperate young man who has lost interest in his life. Surprisingly, a puppy appears to him, completely altering his outlook. The story has a lot of emotions in it, and viewers from all over the world are enjoying it.

The Karnataka Finance Department has issued an official directive stating that State Goods and Services Tax (GST) will not be

levied on the sale of *777 Charlie* tickets for six months, beginning June 19.

The decree specifies that exhibitors and movie theatres are not permitted to collect SGST on ticket sales and that movie tickets must be sold at the revised rates.

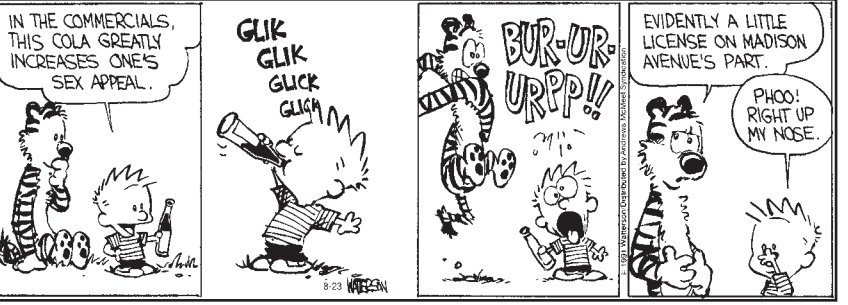
Visuals of Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai in tears after viewing the Rakshit Shetty-starrer had surfaced a few days ago. The Chief Minister praised the film's emotive storyline as well as its writing. IANS



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

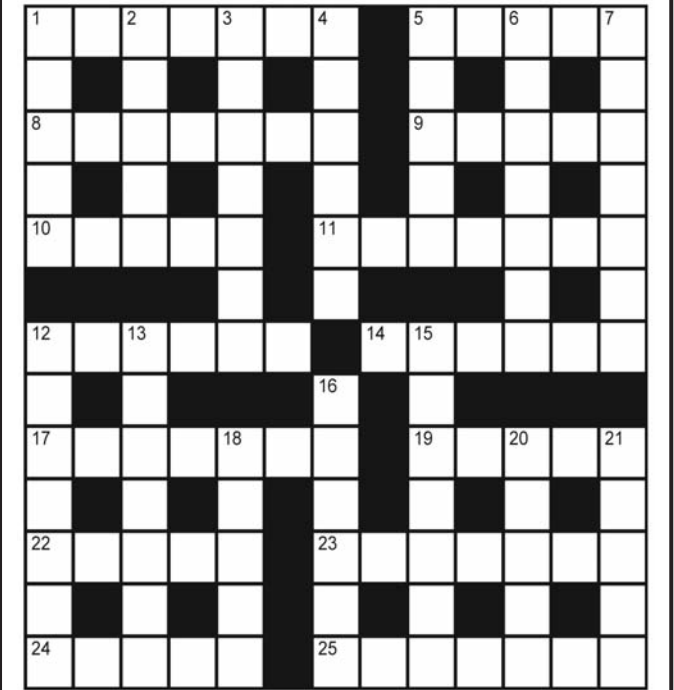


BREVITY



FUN post

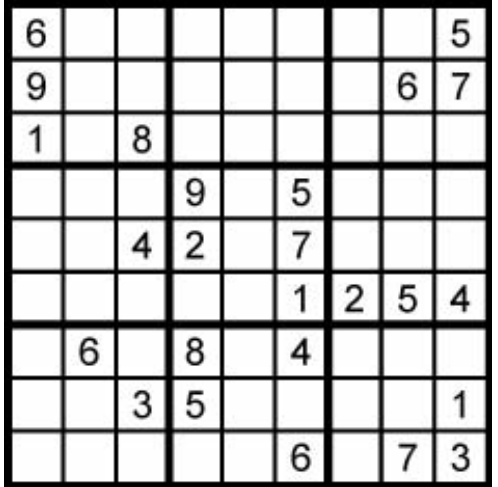
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Adult
 - 5 Camera setting
 - 8 Cargo
 - 9 Brief tussle (3-2)
 - 10 Barrel part
 - 11 Kitty (4,3)
 - 12 Leave
 - 14 Ravine
 - 17 Military man
 - 19 Fable writer
 - 22 Boot out
- Down**
- 23 Inspires
 - 24 To-do list
 - 25 Calms
 - 1 Fishing tackle
 - 2 Alpha's opposite
 - 3 Leave something undone
 - 4 Packing a wallop
 - 5 Diets
 - 6 Tableware
 - 7 Sweet liqueur (4,3)
 - 12 Trigger-happy
 - 13 Valuables storage
 - 15 Chagrined
 - 16 Vinegar holders
 - 18 Pigeon shelters
 - 20 Herring
 - 21 Assignments

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

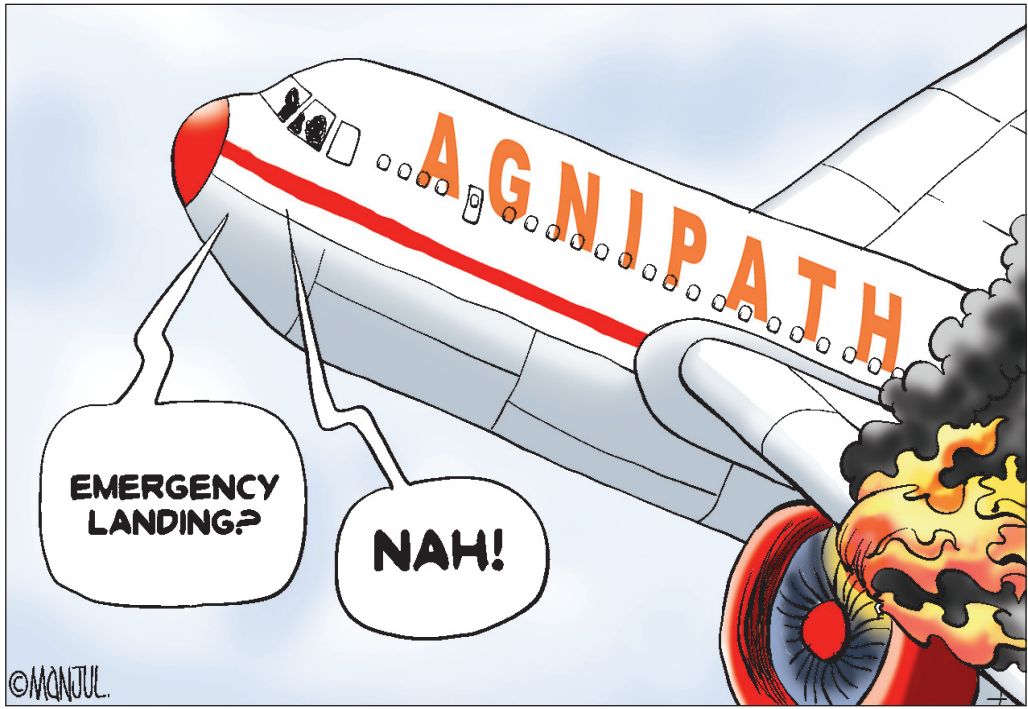


RAIN IN CITY

People travel amid monsoon rain in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	54,41,65,716	51,93,50,180	63,40,521
India	4,32,96,692	4,26,99,363	5,24,855
Odisha	12,88,851	12,79,451	9,126

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



City to have 350 more CCTVs for better surveillance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: In a bid to improve surveillance, the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) has decided to install as many as 350 more closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras at strategic locations of the Capital city, an official said Sunday.

The BSCL has recently issued a request for proposal (RFP), inviting interested parties for supply, installation, testing and commissioning of CCTVs and video management systems, said the official.

The CCTV cameras will be aided



THE CCTV CAMERAS WILL BE AIDED BY THE INTEGRATED CITY OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT CENTRE, THE HIGH-TECH FACILITY THAT WILL BE OPERATIONAL AT THE NEW BUILDING OF BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION HEADQUARTERS AT JANPATH IN AUGUST

THE ₹95 CRORE WORTH ICOMC WILL FUNCTION FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS OF THE 11-STORY BUILDING OF THE BMC. THE BUILDING WILL HAVE A 3,000SQFT VIDEO PANEL TO PLAY LIVE FOOTAGE OF FEED RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS LOCALITIES

by the Integrated City Operations and Management Centre (ICOMC), the high-tech facility that will be operational at the new building of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) headquarters at Janpath in August.

"This is one of our most technology-driven projects under the

Smart City Mission. It will encompass most of the operations of the Capital such as traffic posts, public transport system, solid waste collection and transporting vehicles among others. The ICOMC will ensure round-the-clock surveillance with the help of additional cameras that will be set up

across the City," said BSCL General Manager Kamaljit Das.

The Rs 95 crore worth ICOMC will function from the first and second floors of the 11-storey building of the BMC. The building will have a 3,000sqft video panel to play live footage of feed received from various localities.

Film festival on road safety receives overwhelming response in Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Rourkela, June 19: The screening of shortlisted movies for National Road Safety Short Film Festival-2022, organised by State Transport Authority (STA), received an overwhelming response at Rourkela.

All the shows held at a local multiplex went houseful with the audience giving a rousing response to the festival, a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country.

A total of 42 shortlisted films were screened in the festival in Rourkela Saturday and Sunday. Many local residents, college students, police personnel, transport department officials and independent filmmakers whose films have been shortlisted for the festival were present at the screening of the films.

Speaking on the occasion, Rourkela SP Mukesh Kumar Bhamoo said, "The issues raised in the shortlisted films on road safety



"The festival offered an unbiased and a democratic space to storytellers, who are willing to share their ideas about road safety through the audio-visual medium. Festivals like this will help us spreading awareness about road safety. I appeal to citizens of Rourkela to follow traffic rules and

All the shows held at a local multiplex went houseful with the audience giving a rousing response to the festival, a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country

A total of 42 shortlisted films were screened in the festival in Rourkela Saturday and Sunday.

Many local residents, college students, police personnel, transport department officials and independent filmmakers were present at the screening of the films



are very relatable. I am hopeful that this festival would create awareness about safe driving habits and help us in reducing road accidents and resultant fatalities.

Actors Sidhanta Mohapatra and Kuna Tripathy, two jury members for the film festival, were present at the inaugural ceremony. They appreciated the works of independent filmmakers and appealed to public to follow road safety rules.

regulations. Together we can make a difference," said Rourkela RTO Biswaraj Behera.

Independent filmmakers whose films had been shortlisted for the festival were overwhelmed with the audience response and appreciated the transport department's unique initiative.

Among others, Transport Commissioner Arun Bothra, Rourkela ADM Subhankar

Mohapatra and Sundargarh SP Sagarika Nath were present at the inaugural ceremony.

Filmmakers, amateur film enthusiasts and students have submitted entries in documentary, experimental, narrative, fiction, non-fiction and animation formats. There are entries in languages like Hindi, Telugu, Malayalam, English and Odia on various aspects of road safety. There are film submissions from every nook and corner of Odisha. Some of the shortlisted films are in Santali language, sources said.

The festival will culminate at Puri with the screening of shortlisted movies for two days starting June 24. The awards in different categories like Best film, Best Director and Best cinematographer will be given on the occasion.

Jaga doing well, says Health dept

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 19: The state government Sunday said the health of Jaga, one of the surviving conjoined twins separated in India's first craniopagus surgery at AIIMS-New Delhi in 2017, is good and he is doing well.

The Health and Family Welfare department issued a statement on the health of Jaga after a thorough health check-up at SCB Medical College Hospital (SCBMCH) in Cuttack. AIIMS, Delhi's eminent neurologist Deepak Gupta was among the doctor's team that examined health of Jaga, an official said.

Jaga's twin brother Kalia, who survived for over three years after surgeries, however, died at SCBMCH November 25, 2020.

After he arrived at SCB two days ago, Jaga underwent MRI and CT scan tests under the supervision of Sudhansu Sekhar Mishra of Neurosurgery department Friday.

A team of doctors led by Ashok Kumar Mahapatra and Deepak Kumar Gupta from AIIMS-New Delhi, who had carried out the surgery to separate Jaga and Kalia, visited SCB and examined Jaga



June 18-19.

Jaga, now 7-years-old, was found in a cheerful mood and playing with a mobile phone.

Then 28-month-old conjoined twins hailing from Milipada village in Kandhamal district underwent the first stage surgery, lasting 25 hours, August 28, 2017. The final separation surgery was done

October 25, 2017, which lasted 20 hours.

After spending over two years at AIIMS-New Delhi, Jaga and Kalia were discharged in September 2019. After returning to Odisha, they were admitted to SCBMCH.

The state government had sanctioned Rs 1 crore from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) for

AT A GLANCE

The Health and Family Welfare department issued a statement on the health of Jaga after a thorough health check-up at SCB Medical College Hospital (SCBMCH) in Cuttack

Then 28-month-old, the conjoined twins hailing from Milipada village in Kandhamal district underwent the first stage surgery, lasting 25 hours, August 28, 2017.

The final separation surgery was done October 25, 2017, which lasted 20 hours

The state government had sanctioned Rs 1 crore from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the treatment of the twins

Jaga's twin brother Kalia, who survived for over three years after surgeries, however, died at SCBMCH November 25, 2020

the treatment of the twins. Experts said that chance of such cases occurring is one in three million and barely 12 or 13 such surgeries have been done globally during the last 33 years.

TWO ARRESTED FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF PANGOLIN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: The Special Task Force (STF) of the state Crime Branch Sunday arrested two persons after recovering a pangolin from their possession in Sonapur.

Acting on a tip-off, the STF team with the help of Binika Forest officials waylaid Ashok Bisi and Jaykumar Patel, both residents of Loisingha in Bolangir, near Durguripalli Square under Durgurpalli police limits in Sonapur Saturday evening.



"A pangolin and a few incriminating materials were recovered from their possession. As they could not produce any document in favour of possession of the scaly-skinned mammal, we handed them over to

Binika Forest officials for necessary action," said an official, adding that the pangolin has also been handed over to Sonapur Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) for safe custody.

The ant-eating mammal with armour of keratin scales has been listed under Schedule 1 of Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as an endangered species.

Special drive against the wildlife criminals is on. Since 2020, we have recovered 16 pangolins, said the official.

Vaishnav to take part in Int'l Day of Yoga at Konark

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: Union Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnav will lead the International Day of Yoga celebration at Konark Temple, Tuesday, an official said Sunday.

The International Day of Yoga celebration at Konark that will see participation of around 2,000 people from various walks of life will begin at 6am and conclude at 8:30am June 21.

Konark is one of the 75 heritage sites where the day will be celebrated June 21.

QUALITY CHECK



Forest department officials examine the quality of wood being used in chariot construction at Rath Yard in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

How yoga became an effective weapon in war against Covid

Although yoga has been practiced for thousands of years, its importance has increased manifold after the coronavirus pandemic. Now, yoga is also being explored from a scientific point of view.

Dr Anil Kumar from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Patna, said due to the Covid infection, delicate parts of the lungs are damaged. The lungs become less active, which in turn reduces oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange.

If not treated properly, lung problems can remain for life among the patients who, apart from suffering from obesity, lung disease and diabetes, have been infected by coronavirus and have been on a ventilator for a long time.

He said among patients who have recovered from Covid, there is a blockage in the arteries of the lungs, which obstructs the circulation of blood to the lungs. Apart from this, many types of problems



also come to the fore after Covid.

Padma Bhushan Swami Niranjananand Saraswati said Covid epidemic has had a huge impact on health. Not only physical health but also mental health has been affected. It is being studied extensively all over the world at different levels. Yoga played an effective role during this pandemic. Yoga has an important role to play in dealing with post-Covid situations.

People around the world have embraced yoga to stay healthy and refreshed and to fight against depression during the pandemic. Yoga is also playing an important role in the psycho-social care and rehabilitation of Covid patients. It is especially helpful in allaying

their fears and anxiety.

He said that the essence of yoga is balance. This creates a balance not only within the body or between mind and body, but also in the human relationship with the world. Yoga emphasises the values of mindfulness, moderation, discipline and perseverance. When applied to communities and societies, yoga provides a path to sustainable living.

In 1963, Swami Satyanand Saraswati established the Bihar Yoga School in Munger. Since its inception till date, yoga has been propagating science for the welfare and upliftment of humanity. Niranjanananda Saraswati, the spiritual successor of Satyananda Saraswati, points out that there is a need to adopt yoga as a lifestyle.

He said that yoga will improve health and develop immunity in the body. There will be mental and emotional balance. It maintains clarity, happiness, harmony, contentment, positivity and creativity in life.

IAN5

2 hurt as dispute over bus timetable turns violent

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: A dispute over bus timetable at new Baramunda bus stand in the city here turned violent as a group of miscreants allegedly attacked the staffers of a Ganjam-bound passenger bus with sharp weapons Sunday morning.

Prasanta Sahoo and his younger brother Benudhar Sahoo, both staffers of a private bus named 'Babamani', sustained injuries in the attack, police said. The duo was admitted to Capital Hospital, they added.

According to sources, 'Babamani' usually departs for Ganjam before another private bus named 'Dildar'. An argument ensued between the staffers of the two buses when 'Dildar' left for Ganjam ahead of 'Babamani' Sunday morning.

Soon the argument turned violent as a group of around eight to ten miscreants attacked the staffers of Babamani bus with sharp



Prasanta Sahoo and his younger brother Benudhar Sahoo, both staffers of a private bus named 'Babamani', sustained injuries in the attack

Babamani usually departs for Ganjam before another private bus named 'Dildar'. An argument ensued between the staffers of the two buses when 'Dildar' left for Ganjam ahead of 'Babamani' Sunday morning

weapons. The miscreants were allegedly instructed by Dildar bus owner Surendra Mohanty alias Sandha to carry on the assault on the rival group, sources said.

The incident triggered panic among the passengers. On being informed, Bharatpur police reached the spot and rescued the injured.

The police have registered a case as per a complaint lodged by Babamani bus owner Bimal Shankar Singhdeo and arrested four persons, including Mohanty,

sources said. The other three accused persons were identified as Pradip Kumar Sahoo, 52, Rabi Narayan Pradhan, 27, and Pradip Kumar Behera, 58. The police also seized the two buses.

Later, the accused were produced in a local court which sent them to judicial custody.

"The staffers of the two buses had earlier clashed over the timetable a few days ago. But, the matter was then solved amicably," said a police officer.



Artistes perform Odissi during Rotary Kalinga Samman Utsav at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

SHRIE Awards given to Men Achievers on Father's Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: Parichay Foundation presented the 7th Edition of SHRIE Awards to honour and felicitate Men Achievers from various fields here on the occasion of Father's Day, Sunday.

Rosalin Patasani Mishra, president, Parichay Foundation, addressing the audience said, "Every year, we are getting achievers from all over the country that fills my heart with pride. They are all inspirational in their respective fields." This is the only award in the state which is given to the men achievers who have made significant social impact in their own fields but stayed away from lime-light. The award is given every year on Father's Day.

The Award list included Shovan Kumar Rath in field of Medical Science, Sarat Das and Srinibas



Ghatuary in the field of Art and Culture, Abhaya Mohanta in the field of Social Work and Anil Pradhan in the field of Education & Entrepreneurship.

Similarly, Brahma Mishra was chosen for being the Business Leader, and Dillip Hali was awarded in the field of Media. Award in the

field of Sports was given to Deep Ranjan Bisoyi while Kuma Tripathy was chosen in the field of Entertainment. For Corporate Excellence, R.K. Mohapatra was felicitated. Award in the field of Literature was given to Phani Mohanty. Where Gajendra Kumar Padhi was awarded in field of

Sculpture, Binay Bhusan Jena was awarded in field of Sustainable Fashion.

Pratap Das was given award in the category of Non Residential Odia. Special mention Awards were given to Sitikantha Mishra and Rajib Shekhar Sahoo. The Lifetime Achievement Award went to Pranab Patnaik and Pradosh Patnaik.

On this occasion, Special Citation was given to Santosh Patnaik and Sanjay Mahakud.

The awardees were selected on the suggestions of all executive and committee members of the Foundation. A cultural programme was also organised on this occasion, where renowned classical dancer Saswat Joshi and troupe performed to the delight of audience.

The Foundation has been organizing SHRIE Awards since 2016 to acknowledge the achievements of men in various fields. It has

also been working for the promotion of Indian art and culture and bringing about economic and social upliftment of deprived women and children in urban slums of Odisha and Delhi for the past one decade. The foundation has been giving away AARYA Awards for Women achievers since 2012.

Those present on this occasion were Pradip Kumar Amat, Forest and Environment minister, Munna Khan MP, Rajya Sabha, Amar Patnaik MP Rajya Sabha, Sulata Deo MP Rajya Sabha, Sulochana Das, Mayor Bhubaneswar, Arup Patnaik Chairperson, Odisha Mo Parivaar, Akash Das Nayak, Chairperson Mo School, Prasanna Kumar Patasani, Vice President, BJD and former MP, Priyadarshi Mishra Former Chairperson OSHB and former MLA and Manasi Pradhan, Indian Women's Rights Activist & Author among others.

Aarshi Edtech App aims at revolutionising Indian edu

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: The Covid-19 pandemic induced a major overhaul of the Indian education system in terms of style and structure. The two long years of lockdowns and shutdowns ushered in the formative influences of online teaching, a mode which was in its infancy in India prior to the hiatus in the conventional classroom teaching. Online education, no more a stepney, now tops the preferences of parents, students and educators alike.

However, poor and middle class parents are still undergoing tremendous pressure due to increasing education expenditure on schools and private tuitions coupled with a constant need to check on their children's dedication as online method comes with its share of distractions.

In an effort to aid such parents and provide free education online, a free Educational Technology (Edtech) app 'Aarshi - First Ray of Light' was launched in April this year by an Odia couple. Anupama Mohanty, a doctor by profession, and Ajaya Kumar Mohanty, a strategic consultant on sustainability goals management, started the app as the first step of their Sustainability Consulting firm A4Con Services Pvt Ltd.

Aarshi is also enriched with an E-LMS and ERP solution for any educational institute at an affordable price, which will make institutes self-sustainable.

Speaking to Orissa POST, Ajay expressed his views on online education and said the mode is here to stay. Students from poor families are failing to keep pace with the shift due to lack of technological facilities at their schools and homes. Aarshi brings to them free education ranging from KG to PG and also provides them certificates in several state and national level courses.



The app presents contents in 23 different Indian languages. Along with that it provides NCERT/CBSE/ICSE/state board contents, vocational training, competitive exam materials, coding classes, language learning, psychometric tests, stress management modules and many more.

Anupama said that their app aims to revolutionise the Indian education sector by establishing a sustainable education universe through its 'freemium' model by providing a bridge for students, even from the remotest of villages and weakest of financial backgrounds. Aarshi also provides audio visual contents on basic health, skill development, soft skills, surveys, questionnaires and digitised health awareness programmes which prove beneficial in spreading awareness on a range of areas such as sanitation and mental well being.

Ajay said, "We are in discussions with several state governments to include this app in their education welfare schemes. We are also in talks with major NGOs and financial institutions to help provide refurbished mobile phones to underprivileged students across the nation. The phones will solely host the Aarshi app. We are looking to add another CSR feather by providing scholarships to 10 meritorious 'Aarshians' for higher education every year. We have started the branch at several institutes including Utkal University in Odisha and several others in Telangana.

TENSION IN CITY SLUM DURING RESCUE OF MINOR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: Tension erupted Sunday in City slum during the rescue of a nine-year-old minor girl from her foster parents here by the Mancheswar police and members of Childline, Bhubaneswar. The officials were caught in a dilemma as both the biological and foster mothers staked separate claims for the custody of the minor girl here Sunday.

The IIC of Mancheswar police station, Sudhir Kumar Sahoo pacified the irate slum dwellers who later allowed the cops to take the girl with them. The fate of the girl is to be decided by a full bench of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Bhubaneswar, Monday. Police sources revealed that Santosh Pradhan, the biological father of the minor, hails from Marshghai area of Kendrapara district.

Pradhan, employee of a private company in Mancheswar area, used to stay at the residence of Tuni and Babuli Bisoyi at Akhamandalamani Basti under Mancheswar police station. He reportedly handed over the kid to the Bisoyi couple after his wife, Mandadari, left home following a familial dispute few years ago.

The childless couple had fostered the girl for the last eight years as their own child. Meanwhile, Mandadari returned to her in-laws' house after reconciliation with Pradhan in 2019. She then asked Pradhan to bring back her daughter kept by Bisoyi family. Recently, Mandadari and Pradhan came to city and asked the foster parents to hand over the girl to them. However, the Bisoyi couple refused to return the girl to the biological parents following which they sought the help of police and Childline, Bhubaneswar.



Dignitaries visit a photo exhibition on Gandhiji organised by Nari Seva Sangha and Gandhi Shanti Pratisthan in Buxi Bazar area of Cuttack, Sunday

'Postpartum depression affects dads too'

If you thought only women faced depression during pregnancy and post birth, you may be wrong. New research shows men also face severe mood changes in the period surrounding their child's birth, but their condition is often overlooked. Researchers from Deakin University in Australia mined Reddit posts and discovered that dads' posting behaviours in the period surrounding their child's birth can be a warning sign for depression. One in five dads experience anxiety in the perinatal period - the time before and after their child's birth. One in ten also experience depression. However, support for fathers'

mental health in the perinatal period is limited, revealed the study published in JMIR Pediatrics and Parenting. "It's a huge public health problem that's not really being addressed," said Sam Teague, who was until recently a postdoctoral research fellow at Deakin's Center for Social and Early Emotional Development. Research in this area is also limited - few researchers focus on fathers, and those who do struggle to find fathers with time to participate between their work and new family commitments.

Teague thus analysed thousands of posts on Reddit's fatherhood forums r/Daddit and r/PreDaddit to better understand what problems dads face and what kind of support



they want. Dads commonly post about milestones like pregnancy announcements and activities like paternal bonding, Teague found. But the topic with most users and posts was fatherhood challenges:

struggles, budgeting, and sleep. "One of the things that jumped out was that men tend to prefer sharing informational support with each other. That's where they share specific advice or information to

solve a problem," reported Teague. Teague's machine learning algorithm could predict with close to 70 per cent accuracy which dads would use more language that reflected postpartum depression based on their prepartum posting habits. "Impact on social engagement is a key symptom of depression. That's expressed online through fathers' posting behaviours," she said. Reddit users were quick to respond to posts about common challenges, like problems in the family environment or broader societal issues. But when posters shared individual challenges like mental health problems, the community was less available to help, Teague said.

No Agnipath rollback: Govt

Continued from P1

About the Army's recruitment plan, Lt Gen Bansi Ponappa said the Army will issue a draft notification Monday and subsequent notifications will be issued by various recruitment units of the force from July 1 onwards. Recruitment rallies under the Agnipath scheme will take place across India in August, September and October, he said. Lt Gen Ponappa said the first batch comprising 25,000 personnel will join the training programme in the first and second week of December. The second lot of recruits will join their training around February 23. He said a total of 83 recruitment rallies will be organised across the country to select around 40,000 personnel.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-977682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Koraput: 15 dengue cases pop up in 3 days



POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, June 19: Dengue cases keep on spreading in Laxmipur block of Koraput. In the last 72 hours, 15 dengue cases have been detected in the area.

Outbreak of dengue has caused panic among people in the block. It was alleged that some people were down with fever in this area. A girl and a woman were said to have died of dengue.

On being informed, a mobile medical team took rounds in the area and collected water samples. They said that it was viral fever and advised people to maintain proper sanitation in their surroundings.

However, locals refused to buy such claim of the medical team. Sources from the local hospital said that 15 people were affected with dengue.

Doctor S Pradhan of Laxmipur CHC said that 15 people were detected with dengue till Sunday.

Couple found hanging

POST NEWS NETWORK

Saintala, June 19: In a heart-wrenching incident, a young couple was found hanging from a tree at Dangarmunda village under Saintala police limits in Bolangir district, Sunday.

While no exact reason for their death was known immediately, it was suspected that the couple committed suicide by hanging themselves from the tree.

The deceased have been identified as Chandra Bhoi and Jagyanseni Kuanr. Locals spotted the bodies hanging from a banyan tree in a forest nearby the village. They then informed the youth's father who arrived at the spot and tried to cremate the bodies hastily.

On the other hand, Saintala police rushed to the crematorium ground after learning about the incident and seized the bodies. Seeing the police, the family members of the youth abandoned the bodies and fled the spot.

They might have taken the extreme step after their family members objected to their relationship, a local said.

Injured jumbo stuck in pond battles for life

■ Vets are trying their best to save its life. Its wound has become septic and it is not taking any food
■ Another jumbo injured in same range

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 19: For last four days, an injured elephant stuck inside a pond has been battling for life at Padiabahal village under Padiabahal range in Sambalpur. Veterinary doctors and experts from OUAT, Bhubaneswar, have been trying their best to save its life.

However, it is down with fever and its condition has been deteriorating. It is stuck in muck well inside the pond. Its wound has become septic and it is not taking any food, sources said. A team of veterinary doctors from Bhubaneswar has started its treatment. They have administered saline and medicines to keep it alive.

About the condition of the elephant, Prof Indramani Nath of OUAT, Bhubaneswar said, "The tusker was first provided treatment June 2 after it was tranquilized. For three days, its condition was stable. Later, it did not take food, banana leaves or medicines. Hence, its condition has worsened."

He added what is worrying is one of its legs which has got sprained. It has been twisted and the jumbo is unable to stand up.

DFO B Nilambar said that the elephant is being provided all possible treatment and it will get well soon. "As the animal is well inside the pond, villagers have been advised not to use the pond water. Locals are extending all possible help in the

Tusker tramples woman to death

Chhendipada: A woman was trampled to death by a tusker at Khairabereni village under Chhendipada forest range in Angul district, Sunday. The deceased was identified as Shailabala Dehuri, 55, wife of Hadibandhu Dehuri in the village. The incident sparked tension in the area as locals staged a demonstration demanding compensation for the bereaved kin. On being informed, Forest and police officials reached the spot and tried to placate the agitating villagers. The local tehsildar gave away ₹10,000 from the district Red Cross fund and the forest officials ₹15, 000 to the family for the post death rituals. Police sent the body for post-mortem and launched an investigation. The villagers relented after Forest officials assured to provide compensation to the bereaved family.

treatment of the pachyderm.

Another elephant was found injured and unable to walk near Turang forest under Padiabahal range under Sambalpur Forest Division. Informed, a team of forest officials and veterinary doctors searched for the injured animal, but failed to trace it, said ranger Pabitra Mohan Majhi.



Construction of chariots has picked up pace in Paralakhemundi with Rath Yatra drawing closer

OP PHOTO

Minor girl drowns, two others critical



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliapal, June 19: A 13-year-old girl drowned in a pond while two others were rendered critical at Remu village under this police limits in Balasore, Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Manorama Patra, 13, of Kathasagada village. Two of them rescued in critical condition were identified as Ananya Patra, 12, of Langaleswar and Jaylakshmi Parida, 13, of Kalanda. The two were shifted to the district headquarters hospital.

The girls with their family members had come to Remu village to attend the marriage reception of their relative Gadadhar Jena.

The incident occurred when they had gone to bathe in a nearby pond. Relatives rescued them in critical condition and rushed them to Baliapal community health centre (CHC) for treatment. Later Manorama was shifted to the district headquarters hospital where she succumbed during treatment.

Baliapal police registered a case and handed over the body to her family members after post-mortem.

Day after complaint, Tirtol MLA 'ready to marry Somalika'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tirtol, June 19: A day after his wife-to-be girlfriend accused him of cheating, running a sex racket and registered a complaint against him for not showing up at the marriage registrar, Tirtol MLA Bijaya Shankar Das Sunday said he is ready to marry Somalika.

"I am ready to marry Somalika. I have never declined to marry her. I sought more time owing to my mother's health condition," said Das. He also denied the allegations that he was operating a sex racket.

The MLA has landed in a major controversy after Somalika accused him of running a sex racket. She has alleged that the legislator engaged innocent girls in the illegal activity. The money collected through the sex racket was used for election-related expenses by the MLA, she stated.

Somalika lodged a complaint against Das at Jagatsinghpur police station here Saturday. In her complaint, Somalika also accused the MLA of cheating and harassment.

Besides, she claimed that Bijaya Shankar's relatives are issuing threats to her and her family members. She has further alleged that the MLA also threatened her lawyers.



FILE PHOTO

On the basis of her complaint, police have registered a case under relevant sections of the IPC and started an investigation.

According to reports, the Tirtol MLA and his girlfriend had applied for marriage registration at sub-registrar office May 17. However, Das did not turn up at the sub-registrar office while his girlfriend waited there for three hours.

"We had applied for marriage registration at the office of the sub-registrar May 17. He had promised me to come today for the marriage. However, he didn't keep his promise," said Somalika.

"His family members have been

threatening me while his elder brother has misbehaved with me. On the other hand, Bijaya Shankar is not responding to my phone calls," she said.

He is either cheating me or having an affair with someone, she added.

The MLA, however, refuted the allegations. "As per norms, the marriage registration needs to be completed within 90 days of applying for it. We still have 60 days left for marriage registration. I haven't received any information from anyone regarding registration of marriage today," he had said.

Passenger train to Nuagaon starts today

Nayagarh: Passenger train services from Bhubaneswar to Nuagaon in Nayagarh will be launched June 20. East Coast Railway in a notification stated that Bhubaneswar-Mahipur special passenger train (08430) will be extended to Nuagaon railway station. Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaihnav will flag off the train Monday. The train will leave Nuagaon Road at 15.15 hrs and run through Mahipur, Nayagarh Town, Bolagarh Road, Bolagarh Town PH, Rajsunakhala, Begunia, Khurda Road, Khurda Road Junction, Retang, Lingaraj Temple Road and reach Bhubaneswar at 19.16 hrs.

Timber mafia active in Kuldiha sanctuary

Nilagiri: Timber mafia are reportedly active in Kuldiha sanctuary area of Balasore. The matter came to the fore after it was found that several valuable trees including sal have been chopped off near Takabandh in KC Pur panchayat. The area falls under Jadachua forester. Many wonder how the timber smugglers could cut away the trees despite vigil by the forest officials. Kuldiha ranger Anant Kumar Jena said that the Forest staff have been on leave and the matter has been taken seriously and will be investigated. On the other hand, the forest department has been generating forests through plantation drives by spending crores of rupees. However, the timber smugglers have set their sight on the valuable tree species. Locals have demanded patrolling in the area to keep tabs on the timber smugglers.



Bamboo felling in community-guarded forest irks tribals

A SAMBALPUR-BASED COMPANY HAS ALREADY CARTED AWAY SEVEN TRUCKLOADS OF BAMBOO FROM THE FOREST

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh/Dasapalla, June 19: Bamboo cutting from the community-guarded Beberi forest under Dasapalla range in Nayagarh district has met with stiff resistance from tribals, who are enraged over the issue.

A Sambalpur-based company has already carted away seven truckloads of bamboo from the forest. Local tribals who have been guarding the forest over years opposed it. They have resolved not to allow further bamboo cutting from the forest.

They said, "The government has permitted us to guard the forest and certificates to protect community forest resources have

been issued to us. The forest department has allowed cutting of bamboos without taking permission of the committee. This is illegal and how could the DFO allow such illegality?"

Reports said, Pokharigochha reserve forest is spread over 1,606.09 acre, including 77.79 acre of gramya jungle. Tribals of Beberi have been guarding and nurturing the forest for the last 20 years.

In 2004-05, the forest department had formed a Vana Surakhya Samiti (VSS) and allowed it to guard the forest. But no financial incentives were provided to the tribals, it was alleged. This led to deep resentment among tribals who eventually left the VSS.



Later the tribals applied for certificate for protection for community forests. The administration took their case into consideration and granted forest resources certificate to the tribals in 2022. They were also given map of the forest.

As per the certificate given by the administration, the tribals are now guarding the forest.

However, in the last few days, a Sambalpur-based company has been cutting bamboo and transporting it elsewhere.

"Though we have been opposing the bamboo cutting, the company is paying little heed to us. Even the company staff has termed the certificate of guarding forest as wrong one," they said.

The tribals were left fuming over the development and held an emergency meeting to discuss the issue. They resolved that the bamboo cutting will be opposed tooth and nail. President of the community forest resources committee, Paramananda Mallick said that cutting bamboo without taking our permission is illegal. "We guard the forest. How can a company cut it away?" he fumed.

Contacted, Dasapalla ranger Nikhilesh Mallick said that if the tribals intimate their problems to the forest department, the issues will be sorted out. DFO Khyama Sarangi said if the tribals have not been taken into confidence in the matter of bamboo cutting, the matter will be looked into.

If the tribals are still part of the VSS, about 50 percent of the money paid by the company towards bamboo will be shared with the tribals, he added.



SPLENDID SHOW

Artists staged comic play 'Mancha Pagala' as part of the golden jubilee celebrations of Rotary Club in Bhadrak, Sunday

OP PHOTO

358 teacher posts vacant in Keonjhar high schools

62 high schools do not have headmasters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 19: The state government has been carrying out school transformation programmes to equip high schools with modern infrastructure facilities to ensure quality education, but vacancies in teachers' posts have affected studies in the district.

Reports said 358 teacher posts are lying vacant in various schools, even though the government has appointed 340 general and sports teachers December 16, 2021.

The new academic session has begun June 17, but lack of teachers has left students and their guardians worried over the studies.

On the other hand, given the situation in the government-run schools, scores of meritorious students have left for private schools. There are 208 government schools



in the district, but studies of these schools have allegedly been affected by 358 vacancies. In such a situation, exacting quality education is a distant dream locals said. Besides, 62 high schools do not have headmasters.

It is often alleged that Sanskrit teachers are teaching science while sports teachers teach History, Geography, Mathematics and Hindi.

District education officer (DEO) Purnachandra Sethi said that teachers will be appointed soon. "There are 1,748 sanctioned posts of teachers in the district while 1,390 teachers are at work," he added.

Woman ends life over tiff with hubby

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 19: A woman committed suicide by consuming poison over a domestic dispute, Medical Outpost police here said, Sunday. The deceased was identified as Lakshmi Nayak, 20, wife of Kanhu Nayak of Kujamendi village under Banigochha police limits in Nayagarh district.

She died while undergoing treatment at MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur, Saturday night. Police registered a case and handed over the body to her brother after conducting post-mortem. Police said that the deceased was married to Kanhu two years back. However, they were not on good terms due to frequent quarrels.

The incident occurred when Kanhu beat up his wife following an argument, June 13. Later, Lakshmi consumed poison. Family members rushed her to the Nayagarh headquarters hospital first and later shifted her to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur.

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

COOLING THE HOTTEST CITIES



As global temperatures increase, the world's dense, heavily paved urban jungles are increasingly being exposed to extreme heat, with their poorer inhabitants facing the greatest risks

tions of last resort to protect the most vulnerable. In India, people joke that the reason Bollywood movies are so long is that filmmakers want to give people a chance to spend four hours in an air-conditioned theater. But, as this spring's devastating heatwave showed, the value of cool spaces is no longer a joke.

Cities in areas prone to extreme heat will need to invest in a range of communal spaces that are accessible to the most vulnerable when heat and humidity exceed the survivability threshold. These could be movie theaters, shopping malls, schools, places of worship, swimming pools, parks, transit hubs, or dedicated cooling centers.

Extreme heat is arguably the biggest climate-justice issue we face. Of the 1.7 billion urban residents now exposed to extreme heat, most live in fast-growing cities in poor countries, and most lack access to the air-conditioned buildings and cars that people in advanced economies take for granted. Resolving these inequities should be a top global priority. The Cool Coalition is getting started in India, where the government has already developed the world's first national cooling action plan, and where state and city leaders are deeply committed to confronting the threat of extreme heat.

But more needs to be done. The launch of the \$10 billion Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet has shown that the international community is still capable of mobilising behind major efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Deploying renewables and improving access to clean energy remain vital goals. But building heat resilience and implementing sustainable cooling solutions have also become urgent priorities. We must take steps now to help our hottest cities cool down.

Rushad Nanavatty is MD of Urban Transformation at RMI. Sheila Aggarwal-Khan is Director of Economy Division at UNEP.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

from Freetown and Athens to Melbourne and Milan are already reaping the benefits of using urban nature as a cooling mechanism – one which also improves stormwater management, sequesters carbon, increases biodiversity, and provides recreation.

Another common-sense measure is to resurface our cities so that they shed heat rather than absorb it. The typical asphalt road absorbs up to 95% of the sunlight that lands on it, and concrete roads and sidewalks absorb up to 75%. These scorching surfaces disproportionately harm the outdoor labour force, those without a personal vehicle, and the poor who live in neighbourhoods dominated by such materials. By using lighter-coloured construction materials that increase the reflectivity of these surfaces by just 10%, we can reduce their temperatures by up to 5°C – a potentially lifesaving difference.

Better buildings are also key. Cooling a poorly designed building with air conditioning is like running a faucet into a leaky bucket. By contrast, good building design can minimise the need for air conditioning altogether. For example, light-coloured, reflective "cool roofs" are inexpensive and can reject 90% of the heat energy that lands on them, making a huge difference even where other measures aren't viable, such as in informal housing.

Passive building-efficiency measures like orientation, insulation, reflection, shading, and ventilation are not new. But we must enact more ambitious building codes and performance standards, and invest in the institutional capacity to enforce them.

Moreover, air conditioning, where it is used, can be made more climate friendly. As matters stand, it is both a vital enabler of productivity and a major source of urban heat and emissions. By 2050, AC units could consume as much energy as the combined US, German, and Japanese economies do today. The most common refrigerator they use is nearly 2,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a global warming agent. Accordingly, regulators need to set standards that exclude the worst-performing units from the market; and the public and private sector need to work together on marketing campaigns, financing solutions, and incentives to move buyers toward climate-friendly products.

Urban planners and developers should also consider district cooling systems, which serve many buildings with a single chiller plant. Because these systems can deliver efficiencies of scale without heating city air as much as individual AC units do.

Finally, policymakers in some cities should consider various op-

Extreme heat is having its moment in the sun. This year's headlines have been as relentless as the temperatures: "Spain endures record heatwave," "Devastating heatwave in South Asia," "Texas shatters heat record," "Can you even call deadly heat 'extreme' anymore?"

This worldwide coverage has called attention to a massive challenge that will only grow in scope and seriousness. Nowhere are cooling measures more urgent than in our cities, where streets, buildings, industries, and vehicles could increase temperatures by a catastrophic 4° Celsius by the end of the century, putting the world's poorest people at highest risk.

The search for solutions is already underway, but it needs to gather momentum. At last year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), the Cool Coalition, a 120-organisation partnership led by the UN Environment Programme and including RMI, released a comprehensive guide to sustainable urban cooling. And in Davos last month, the Cool Coalition and the Adrienne Arsht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center launched an online Heat Action Platform that makes it easy for policymakers and planners to identify the solutions most relevant to them. To stay ahead of the problem, municipal leaders will need to embrace many measures, including smarter urban design. To draw cool air through a city, planners and developers can orient streets and building heights with the prevailing winds and develop more strategically placed green and blue spaces. They can also create more shaded commuter corridors for pedestrians and cyclists, and plan more diverse, mixed-use developments that lend themselves to efficient district cooling systems (and less heat-emitting car traffic).

Planting more trees in concrete jungles also could make a significant difference. Urban forests and parks can be 7°C cooler than treeless neighbourhoods, and a street lined with trees can be 3°C cooler than one without. Cities



Rushad Nanavatty & Sheila Aggarwal-Khan

EXTREME HEAT IS ARGUABLY THE BIGGEST CLIMATE-JUSTICE ISSUE WE FACE

Assange's Extradition

The UK government has done a disservice to the cause of free speech and democracy by approving the extradition of the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to the United States. UK home secretary Priti Patel dealt a blow to the decade-long efforts Assange has been making in protracted legal battles to remain in the UK. He incurred the wrath of the US government for revealing to the world the latter's misadventures in Afghanistan and Iraq. In fact, he has spent the last decade either in hiding in Ecuador's London embassy or in a UK prison. He is wanted by the US authorities on 18 counts, including a spying charge, relating to WikiLeaks' release of vast troves of confidential US military records and diplomatic cables which they claimed had jeopardized their lives.

His supporters, on the other hand, plead that he has been victimised for his anti-establishment role exposing US wrongdoings in conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. His persecution is being construed globally by many as a politically-motivated assault on journalism and free speech.

The likelihood of Assange's prosecution in US courts poses a grave challenge to the US First Amendment rights and the ability of news outlets to publish material deemed a threat to national security. Quite rightly has the WikiLeaks issued a statement saying it is "a dark day for Press freedom and for British democracy." Sharing its reaction to the UK's decision on Twitter it asserted Assange did nothing wrong. He has committed no crime and is nothing but a journalist and a publisher. The US First Amendment guarantees freedom concerning religion, expression, assembly, and the right to petition. It forbids Congress from promoting one religion over others and restricts impinging on the Press or the rights of individuals to speak freely.

The charges against Assange include 17 under the Espionage Act and one under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. The ruling overturns a December 2021 decision that declared Assange could not be extradited because subjecting him to US incarceration could increase the risk of suicide. The judge this time has accepted US assurances that Assange will not face solitary confinement and will have access to psychological treatment.

Defending the decision on extradition, the British Home Office stated the UK courts have not found that it would be oppressive, unjust, or an abuse of process to extradite Assange. Also, according to the courts, the extradition would not be incompatible with his human rights, including his right to a fair trial and to freedom of expression.

Assange's legal team has two weeks' time to appeal. Among the options he has is the argument that the extradition poses threat to Press freedom and he is being made to pay the price for exposing wrongdoing by the US executive branch. Experts on human rights say even if these arguments fail to sway the UK judicial system, Assange can also appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France on the plea that extradition would violate the UK's commitment to human rights treaties.

Assange was initially indicted by the US Department of Justice for "conspiring" to steal Department of Defence secrets. The carefully crafted case sought to project him as a cybercriminal rather than a journalist propelled by the intent to bring to light the government's wrongdoings in public interest. However, as the US administration seemingly realised the argument would not hold, the Justice Department last month accused him of violating the Espionage Act, a 100-year-old law against publishing classified information. The new charge had already been levelled against some leakers, but using it against a journalist like Assange would put at risk the US' reputation for being the world leader in upholding right to free speech. For, it opens the door for journalists anywhere in the world to be extradited to the US for divulging information the US administration deems classified. The hundreds of thousands of leaked documents about America's Afghanistan and Iraq wars and diplomatic cables were made public by WikiLeaks, working with a chain of newspapers across the world. The use of the Espionage Act to prosecute Assange has a serious implication for journalists' right to access classified information to enlighten the public on the government's ill intentioned functioning. This is how democracies seem to function these days.

The British government could have rejected the US request for extraditing Assange as the intention of the latter appears to stifle free speech and expression. Former UK Prime Minister Theresa May had stalled the extradition proceedings of Gary McKinnon, who hacked the US Department of Defence. But, the UK Home Secretary Priti Patel has, by conceding the US request for extradition, acted against the interest of Press freedom and the public who have a right to know what their governments are doing in their name.

In fact, it is preposterous to bring the spying charges against Assange since he published classified documents and did not leak them. The legal officers of Barack Obama rightly understood that this would threaten public interest journalism. It was Donald Trump's team, which behaved in a manner treating the Press as an "enemy of the people", that took the step.

It will be in the fitness of things that the incumbent US President, Joe Biden, should take the initiative to let Assange continue to inform the public of the government functioning with facts, no matter how he gets them. For it is Biden who recently said the work of free and independent media "matters now more than ever." However, the 'system' in the US is far stronger than any politician. It is very unlikely President Biden can change any attitude in the Justice Department.

WISDOM CORNER

- "A thing of beauty is a joy forever: its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness." **JOHN KEATS**
- "The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love." **WILLIAM WORDSWORTH**
- "There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about." **OSCAR WILDE**

WORDSWORTH

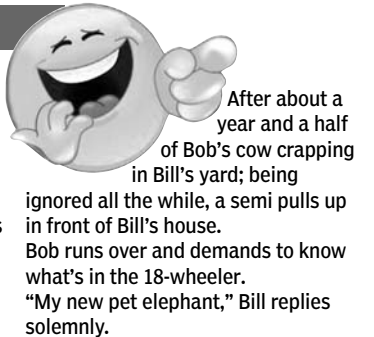
Tiffin

More than any other word, tiffin, meaning lunch or any light meal, evokes British India. It entered the language at the very beginning of the nineteenth century, perhaps because the English fashion for eating dinner mid-afternoon was giving way under the influence of the Indian climate to a main meal taken later in the day, requiring a lighter midday meal and a name for it. Why the much older luncheon wasn't used isn't clear. Instead, the English in India borrowed tiffin, an old English dialect or slang word for taking a little drink or sip. The word is still widely used in India for any hot light meal or snack taken at any time during the day. In Mumbai (formerly Bombay), the term tiffin-wallah is sometimes heard, though the more common term is dabbawallah. Lunches are cooked at home by workers' wives and then transported, often by train, perhaps 20 or 30 miles to their husbands' workplaces, each three-tiered tiffin-carrier or dabba probably passing through several hands in a sophisticated and efficient cooperative process.

LOL

Angry neighbours

Two neighbours had been fighting each other for nigh on four decades. Bob buys a Great Dane and teaches it to use the bathroom in Bill's yard. For one whole year Bill ignores the dog. So Bob then buys a cow and teaches it to use the bathroom in Bill's yard.



SPECTRUM ECOLOGY

Himalayan tragedies & economic woes

Gigantic Himalayan tragedies rock and destabilise the Indian economy as development becomes a fad. The 15.9 per cent wholesale inflation, the Sensex crash by 2931 points in a week, rupee below 78, prolonged heatwave, low wheat yield, millions of tree felling and blasts for roads are a connected saga. The latest least discussed washout of Assam's New Haflong railway station is a testimony to the magnitude and a tell-tale of India's future.



Shivaji Sarkar

ABOUT 10,000 HIMALAYAN GLACIERS ARE RECEDING AT A RATE OF 30 TO 60 METRES PER DECADE AS TEMPERATURES RISE WITH ROAD AND DAM CONSTRUCTIONS

Impact on the fragile Himalayas is stated to be the reason for most calamities and economic woes. An Indo-US Monsoon study linked the Himalayas to formation of cyclones up to South Africa. About 10,000 Himalayan glaciers are receding at a rate of 30 to 60 metres per decade as temperatures rise with road and dam constructions. Around 10.76 million trees were felled between 2015 and 2018 for development, as per a Rajya Sabha answer.

The nation has learnt little from the June 2013 Kedarnath tragedy that wiped out a large chunk of the Himalayas considered the soul of god - Devtama, killing 6000. The cost of the damage is difficult to assess but a sample can be taken from the compensation given to flood-hit people in Bihar. For ₹5-lakh houses ₹6000 is doled out.

Uttarakhand allocates one-third of its annual budget to disaster relief and in 2021 spent additional ₹7000 crore.

Arunachal Pradesh's largest Dibang dam will chop 2.7 lakh more trees. The Haflong washout would not have happened but for the false desire for creating a single-gauge all over. It is fashionable to discuss about Uttarakhand, but the Northeast is becoming worse losing about 1.45 million hectares (Mha) of tree cover between 2001 and 2020, amounting to roughly 76 per cent of the country's total tree cover loss, according to a global study by the University of Maryland's Global Land Analysis & Discovery laboratory released by Global Forest Watch. It says India as a whole lost 1.93 Mha of tree cover in 2001-20, including Uttarakhand's 50,000 hectares. Assam has the highest share of the national tree cover loss - 14 per cent. From 2001 to 2020, the state lost 269 kilohectare (kha) of tree cover - 9.8 per cent decrease. Among other Northeastern states, Mizoram lost 247 kha, Nagaland 225 kha, Arunachal Pradesh 222 kha, Manipur 196 kha, Meghalaya 195 kha and Tripura lost 102 kha tree cover in 20 years, the report said. The seven sister states are among the 10 worst performers in terms of tree cover loss.

and Forest in December, 2014 filed an affidavit driven by "pain, anguish and outrage" demanding stoppage of work at seven Uttarakhand hydropower projects, including Tapovan Vishnugad. Seven years later in 2021 it filed another saying consensus has been reached with the Power Ministry, Jal Shakti Ministry and the Uttarakhand government to continue work on these projects. And in February, 2021 Tapovan saw flash flood killing 200 in Chamoli.

Floods and landslides are becoming frequent in the Himalayas due to reckless road, rail and dam constructions, tree felling, blasting and tunneling in the fragile hills. A Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) study has found that 51 per cent of Uttarakhand is 'high' and 'very high' landslide-prone.

The recent spate of activities on the higher Himalayas for creating road - railways to Karnaprayag, and comfort zones for tourism are adding to the problems. Today, most dams have only one-third the capacity of power generation these were ostensibly built for but during rains the overflows dip the people in woes. Policy paradigm has to shift and construction activities need to be checked for protecting the Himalayas. This is the key to boosting the sagging Indian economy.

The Ministry of Environment

"No-more-dam" movement is popular in Arunachal but the resistance is weak. So now comes the world's largest concrete gravity Diband dam with 2880 MW capacity in a fragile region. It would lead to clearing 1,165 hectares of rare traditionally protected biodiversity forest home to the Idu Mishmi tribe. Hundreds of families in 39 villages of Dibang Valley will be displaced. The pattern is almost a repeat at Kedarnath restoration at the insistence of former Uttarakhand CM Harish Rawat. Dr DP Dobhal, a senior glaciologist of National Institute of Mountaineering, says that the suggestions in their report, in accordance with higher Himalayan geology, were ignored in the new construction.

and Forest in December, 2014 filed an affidavit driven by "pain, anguish and outrage" demanding stoppage of work at seven Uttarakhand hydropower projects, including Tapovan Vishnugad. Seven years later in 2021 it filed another saying consensus has been reached with the Power Ministry, Jal Shakti Ministry and the Uttarakhand government to continue work on these projects. And in February, 2021 Tapovan saw flash flood killing 200 in Chamoli.

Floods and landslides are becoming frequent in the Himalayas due to reckless road, rail and dam constructions, tree felling, blasting and tunneling in the fragile hills. A Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) study has found that 51 per cent of Uttarakhand is 'high' and 'very high' landslide-prone.

The recent spate of activities on the higher Himalayas for creating road - railways to Karnaprayag, and comfort zones for tourism are adding to the problems. Today, most dams have only one-third the capacity of power generation these were ostensibly built for but during rains the overflows dip the people in woes. Policy paradigm has to shift and construction activities need to be checked for protecting the Himalayas. This is the key to boosting the sagging Indian economy.

The Ministry of Environment

and Forest in December, 2014 filed an affidavit driven by "pain, anguish and outrage" demanding stoppage of work at seven Uttarakhand hydropower projects, including Tapovan Vishnugad. Seven years later in 2021 it filed another saying consensus has been reached with the Power Ministry, Jal Shakti Ministry and the Uttarakhand government to continue work on these projects. And in February, 2021 Tapovan saw flash flood killing 200 in Chamoli.

Floods and landslides are becoming frequent in the Himalayas due to reckless road, rail and dam constructions, tree felling, blasting and tunneling in the fragile hills. A Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) study has found that 51 per cent of Uttarakhand is 'high' and 'very high' landslide-prone.

The recent spate of activities on the higher Himalayas for creating road - railways to Karnaprayag, and comfort zones for tourism are adding to the problems. Today, most dams have only one-third the capacity of power generation these were ostensibly built for but during rains the overflows dip the people in woes. Policy paradigm has to shift and construction activities need to be checked for protecting the Himalayas. This is the key to boosting the sagging Indian economy.

The Ministry of Environment

and Forest in December, 2014 filed an affidavit driven by "pain, anguish and outrage" demanding stoppage of work at seven Uttarakhand hydropower projects, including Tapovan Vishnugad. Seven years later in 2021 it filed another saying consensus has been reached with the Power Ministry, Jal Shakti Ministry and the Uttarakhand government to continue work on these projects. And in February, 2021 Tapovan saw flash flood killing 200 in Chamoli.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Whither Opposition unity

Sir, The hollowness in Opposition unity has been exposed again. The search for a common Opposition candidate for President has not had a smooth course. No party appears keen and comfortable in picking a suitable person to contest the ruling NDA alliance candidate. Though the writing is on the wall - the NDA candidate is sure to romp home and occupy the Rasina Hills - it's all about sending out signals. The ambitious Mamata Banerjee got it all wrong by not taking the Congress into confidence while convening a meeting of like-minded Opposition leaders. The Congress hit back; according to the party it's still in the limelight. In parallel, Sonia Gandhi is busy asking top party leaders to talk to parties to bring them around. CPM leader Sitararam Yechury shot off a letter to Mamata expressing his displeasure on the way the meeting to discuss President was convened. Some non-BJP chief ministers are flexing their muscles to display their relevance in the scheme of things. Telangana Rashtira Samiti (TRS) president K Chandrasekhar Rao wants to be the pivot of Opposition unity. He perceives a national role for himself. But the other day, Rahul Gandhi lambasted KCR at a public rally in Hyderabad. Moreover, the chief minister is reportedly not happy with Mamata calling a 'unilateral' meeting to discuss the Presidential candidate. When he is high on national ambition, he does not desire to be seen with the Congress fearing a dent in his own vote bank. Similarly, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) chief Naveen Patnaik was ambiguous in response to a request to attend the Opposition-called meeting on Presidential election. The absence of big guns in the meeting is in itself a statement on 'Opposition unity'. In the last presidential election, the NDA had garnered the support of TRS; things changed later due to an uneasy relation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and KCR. **Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA**

Agnipath fury

Sir, The Centre toying with the idea of turning a soldier's job into a contractual appointment has backfired disastrously. The massive protests demanding the rollback of the Agnipath scheme escalated last Friday, with protesters torching trains and vandalising public property. A protester and a train passenger perished in the violence as the Railways bore the brunt of the Agnipath fury. The unrest continued in UP, Bihar and Haryana for a third successive day and has spread to Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand and Punjab. The Centre must revisit the plan in consultation with experts if it is to bring the explosive situation under control. **NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE**

national

of the day quote

If all of us work together, then the 21st century will belong to India. The country will become an economic superpower



NITIN GADHKARI | UNION MINISTER

The time is ripe for a digital kranti (revolution) in the state. Digital revolution should happen in the field of education through the National Education Policy and other initiatives



PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

AAP is trying to mislead Punjabis with a propaganda to cover up its abysmal performance. It has not only failed on development and creating new jobs but also presided over the complete collapse of the law and order situation in the state



SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL | SHIROMANI AKALI DAL CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

2 die, 5 injured

Thiruvananthapuram: Two persons were killed on the spot and five seriously injured after a pickup van lost control and ramed into people standing on the roadside on Sunday morning. The incident occurred at Kannapuram in Kannur district of Kerala. Police said the pickup van driver dozed off and lost control of the vehicle which ploughed into people who were standing near a bridge at Kannapuram on Sunday morning. The deceased has been identified as Abdul Salam (28) and Noushad (32) of Kannapuram. The injured were rushed to the Kannur medical college hospital at Pariyaram.

3 killed in K'taka

Bengaluru: At least three people were killed as incessant rain lashed Karnataka in the last 48 hours, with the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) predicting downpours across the state till June 22. A yellow alert has been issued from Sunday till June 22 in Bengaluru, Chamarajanagar, Chikkaballapur, Hassan Kodagu, Tumakuru, Mandya, Shivamogga, Davanagere Chitradurga. Meanwhile, the IMD issued an orange alert for Shivamogga, Chikkamagalur, Kodagu and precautionary measures were taken in the coastal districts of Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada.

Accident kills 4

Unnao: Four persons were killed and one seriously injured when a container ramed into a car in the Hasanganj police circle area Sunday morning on the Lucknow-Agra Expressway. The container hit the car across the divider, killing four persons on the spot. One passenger, who was critically injured, has been admitted to a hospital in Lucknow. According to police reports, the family was travelling from Jaipur to Siwan in Bihar to attend a family function.

Heroin seized

Lucknow: A Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) team has seized 348 grams of heroin worth ₹1.5 crore in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki district and arrested two persons in connection, officials said Sunday. The NCB also recovered ₹3.73 lakhs from the accused, identified as Sagir and Alam. "During interrogation, the accused revealed that the seized heroin was supplied by one Mohammed Atif of Barabanki and thereafter, all out efforts were made to trace the supplier. He was apprehended by the NCB team and being questioned," said an NCB official.

ARE STATES READY FOR BAN ON SINGLE-USE PLASTICS?

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 19: When Sandhya Sharma, a homemaker from central Delhi, bought vegetables and fruits the vendor quickly pulled out a polythene bag. Handing over her cloth bag, Sharma asked him if he was aware that from July 1 polythene bags are banned. The vendor answered in the negative. As against this, in Tamil Nadu the 'Meendum Manjappai' (Once again, yellow bag) campaign has been working wonders for almost a year now. It refers to the age-old practice by Tamilians to carry a cotton bag, coloured yellow with turmeric, while stepping out of their homes. A Manjappai vending machine - people insert a Rs 10 coin or a note to get it - installed at the largest Koyambedu wholesale market in Chennai has already sold about

1,000 cloth bags over this week indicating the response from the citizens to the ban on SUP.

But it is not just polythene bags. Scores of businesspersons, vendors and even users are still not aware that from July 1 there is going to be a total ban on single use plastic (SUP) across India.

The proposed ban includes items such as plastic straws, polythene bags, plastic sticks for candy or ice creams, polystyrene (thermocol) for decoration, plastic cups, glasses and cutlery items, plastic sticks for ear buds, for balloons, wrapping films for sweet boxes or cigarettes and even PVC banners of less than 100 microns.

What exactly is the ban?

As per the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules, 2016, there is a complete ban on sachets



using plastic material used for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala. As per PWM (Amended) Rules, 2021, the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic less than 75 microns (i.e. 0.075 mm in thickness) has been banned

with effect from September 30, 2021 as opposed to the 50 microns recommended earlier under PWM Rules, 2016.

Has the Centre done enough?

Across India, since the Environment Ministry's notifications last year, on the one hand it is

the Ministry and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) that is working in tandem with their counterparts in the states while on the other hand, it is the states that are working with the local bodies to set the house in order.

Chaired by the Secretary, Environment Ministry, there is a national task force of all Chief Secretaries of states/UTs. Then, there is another task force headed by the CPCB comprising all the state pollution control boards/pollution control committees. For over a year now, there are regular meetings happening, there is stocktaking happening.

"The state PCBs have made an inventory of industries dealing with SUP and issued letters to each of them. Basically, that has ensured that each one of them is aware and on board,"

said an official from the Ministry.

What are states doing? With a push from the Centre/CPCB, almost all states and UTs are working towards implementing the ban by various means, including an emphasis on awareness and providing alternatives to the banned items.

Stating that it is fabulous that these 14-15 items are going to be banned and that they are not going to be missed as alternatives are possible and they don't really take away from the livelihoods of waste recyclers, Chaturvedi pointed out: "The state and the Central governments ought to give soft loans, give subsidies and any and every kind of help to the alternative products that are manufactured by single, small entrepreneurs for local consumption."



Vijayvargiya's remark on Agniveers draws flak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, June 19: BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya Sunday sought to defend the Centre's Agniveer scheme for military recruitment, which is facing stiff opposition from various quarters, saying if he has to appoint security personnel as his party office, he would give priority to those who have served as Agniveers. His remark soon kicked up a row, with some prominent political leaders, including his party colleague MP Varun Gandhi and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, besides several netizens slamming him for it. The Madhya Pradesh Congress demanded an apology from the BJP for "insulting" the defence forces.

Under fire for the statement, Vijayvargiya later said what he meant was that the excellence of Agniveers will be utilised in whichever field they choose after completing service in the defence forces. He also accused the "toolkit



gang" of twisting his remark to insult the "Karmveer".

Addressing a press conference at the BJP office here, Vijayvargiya, while describing the benefits of the scheme, said the youth would develop qualities like discipline and obedience, which is part of army's training.

"In army training, first is discipline and second is following orders.

Do not disrespect the youth and army personnel of the country so much. The youth of our country work hard day and night to pass the physical exam and clear test because they want to serve the country and not because they want to be a guard outside the BJP office

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

video of his statement went viral on social media platforms.

Tagging the video in his tweet, Varun Gandhi questioned Vijayvargiya and said army is a medium to serve 'Maa Bharti' (mother India). "Our great army's heroic tales cannot be expressed with mere words and its valour echoes in the entire world," Varun Gandhi said, accusing the BJP national general secretary of offering the job of a "chowkidar" (watchman) to soldiers after retirement.

Delhi CM Kejriwal termed it an insult of the youths and army personnel of the country. "Do not disrespect the youth and army personnel of the country so much. The youth of our country work hard day and night to pass the physical exam and clear test because they want to serve the country and not because they want to be a guard outside the BJP office," Kejriwal said in a tweet. K K Mishra, chairman of the media department of Madhya Pradesh Congress, also criticised Vijayvargiya for the statement.

In Gujarat, jobless numbers rising



According to the state's Employment Exchange Department records there are four lakh unemployed people registered as on March 2021

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gandhinagar, June 19: In the beginning of this month, some 17 lakh job aspirants applied for 3400 vacant posts of Talati (village panchayat executive head), indicating the unemployment crisis in Gujarat.

Yet, it is neither a political or election issue because the society is highly polarised and safety and security have put the core issues of governance on the backburner, observed political analysts and commentators.

According to the state's Employment Exchange Department records there are four lakh unemployed people registered as on March 2021. Of them 3,85,506 are literate and just five per cent are semi-skilled. If one goes by the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee job cards data, 30 lakh job cards have been issued, of which 15 lakh are active job card holders, said Hemant Shah, economist and political analyst.

Though unemployment is a core socio-economic issue, it is not a serious issue for society because society is highly influenced by issues

like safety and security, according to Shah. Now this urban and middle class concern over safety and security has also percolated to the rural areas, added Shah.

Ideally unemployment, good governance, accountability should be political and election issues, but when the entire society is polarised on Hindu-Muslim lines, security takes the front seat and issues like unemployment take the back seat, analyzed Amit Dholakia, Head of the Political Science Department of the Maharaja Sayajirao University.

Both political analysts have observed that even youths who are complaining about unemployment, vote along religious lines in all elections.

This has encouraged political parties to put good governance issues in cold storage and whip up religious sentiments before elections.

If unemployment was an issue in the state, the Gujarat youths too would have reacted similarly like the youths in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh to the announcement of the new military recruitment 'Agniveer' scheme, said Professor Baldev Agja, Dean of the Political Science Department of Vallabh Vidyanagar University.

Over and above these issues the other major problem is poor civic awareness, the new generation is least concerned about their rights and the duties of the government, where protests and agitations are considered to be anti-development.

50K women write to PM on water shortage

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Palanpur (Gujarat), June 19: North Gujarat's Karmavad lake and Mukteshwar dam issue took an interesting turn Sunday after 50,000 women wrote postcards to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to include the water bodies under the Narmada Command area.

The people in the Vadgam constituency have been agitating for the past few months after the water levels in the Karmavad lake and Mukteshwar dam dipped and now both are running dry. People have been demanding to fill both these water bodies with water from Narmada.



The water shortage in the area has become a major political issue with leaders bickering among themselves. Both reservoirs fall under the Vadgam Assembly constituency where Jignesh Mevani is the sitting MLA. He recently launched a slogan, "No water, No Vote" targeting the ruling party, as he alleged that the ruling party was depriving the area from Narmada water.

BJP state unit president C.R. Patil stated that Mevani was raising the water issue because he has realised that he is going to lose the elections in December. Patil raised questions, whether Mevani was sleeping for four and half years and why he did not raise the issue earlier? "This issue is not of the last two to three months, people of this area have been crying foul for the last 30 years. Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi is well aware about the water shortage in the Vadgam area, as the issue was raised before him when he was the chief minister," said Ramesh Patel, leader of Karmavad & Mukteshwar Jal Andolan Samiti.



A man carries his child and his belongings, on Father's Day in Surat

PTI PHOTO

Fearing 'fish famine', Goa acts to raise production

To deal with the fish famine situation, the government apart from taking action against illegal fishing has focused on resolving issues pertaining to this business

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, June 19: Fearing that a fish famine could pose a serious threat to the availability of the staple food of the coastal state, the Goa government apart from notifying the "Goa State Mariculture Policy 2020" to carry out open sea cage fish culture, has also urged the NIO to suggest adoption of modern methods for production of fish.

Some 2475 boats and 897 trawlers are registered with the fisheries department for fishing activities. According to the fisheries department statistics, while 23,147 tonnes of sardine were caught in 2018, this dropped to 6771 tonnes in 2020.



In 2019, it was 10,618 tonnes. The same is the case with mackerel, another staple fish. While in 2018, 35,699 tonnes of mackerel were caught, in 2020 the figure dropped to 25,325 tonnes. Apart from using mackerel for curry and frying, mackerel pickle is also prepared in many houses in Goa.

To cater to the fish needs of the populace, it is also imported from other states, which is also purchased by the fish processing units. To deal with the fish famine situation, the government apart from taking action against illegal fishing has focused on resolving issues pertaining to this business. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant

has urged the scientists and students of the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) to suggest ways to increase fish productivity by adopting modern methods. The NIO has played a vital role in increasing the production of green mussels in Goa, training for which was given to stakeholders.

According to marine experts, pollution near Goa's river mouths and in the waters off the state's coastline as well as over-fishing using banned practices like bull trawling and LED fishing, could lead to a fish famine in the state. The Opposition benches, during the last term of the BJP government in the state, were vociferous in the

Assembly in demanding action against illegal fishing.

The fishermen from Goa are also demanding action against illegal practices used to catch fish in the sea. Goa Fisheries Minister Nilkanth Halarnkar, had earlier said the Central government has sanctioned ₹400 crore for setting up cage fishing infrastructure to boost the coastal state's catch of fish.

The state is known for its seafood, which is sought after by the eight million plus tourists who visit Goa every year. The overkill of fish for export and to cater to the hospitality industry in the tourism-oriented state as well as rising sea temperatures has resulted in a fish famine of sorts in the waters off Goa, driving the prices of locally consumed staple fishes through the roof.

Ibrahim Maulana, president of the Margao wholesale fish market in South Goa and the only wholesale fish market in the state, said that illegal fishing should be stopped. "On Saturday we got around 50 tonne of fish from Andhra Pradesh," Maulana said.

According to sources, fish in Goa is brought from Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and also from Maharashtra.

Mysuru gears up for Yoga Day

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mysuru, June 19: Mysuru city, the erstwhile capital of the Mysuru kingdom and presently known as the cultural capital of Karnataka, is all geared up for the celebration of the International Yoga Day on June 21.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the mega event organised in the premises of the historical and magnificent Mysuru Palace. Modi will arrive in Karnataka for a two-day visit on June 20. He will attend various programmes in Bengaluru and will reach Mysuru on the evening of June 20.

As many as 19 'asanas' (exercises) of Yoga will be exhibited in 45 minutes during the celebration of International Yoga Day in which Modi is expected to participate between 7 a.m. and 7.45 a.m. Authorities said that 1,200 children, selected among 20,000, will take part in the event.

The celebration will start with a 1-minute prayer. Next 4 minutes will be given for stretching and movements following which 19 'asanas' will be performed.



Situation grim in Assam, more areas inundated

The state has been reeling under heavy floods, with eight people killed in flood and landslides and 37 lakh in 30 districts currently affected by the deluge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, June 19: The flood situation in Assam remained extremely critical Sunday with many new localities coming under the impact of the deluge in several districts of the state and overnight incessant rain inundating more areas in Guwahati, officials said.

According to the latest updates by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), the state was witnessing floods and landslides for the last six days, leaving behind a huge trail of destruction everywhere.

In the last 24 hours, 32 districts, comprising 118 revenue circles and 4,291 villages, have reported flooding, it said.

Around 31 lakh people have been impacted and 1.56 lakh of them have taken shelter in 514 relief camps across the state.

Relief materials were also distributed among people who are affected by the floods and have not taken shelter in relief camps, the ASDMA said. At least 302 relief distribution centres or points opened temporarily, it said.

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has been helping the district administrations evacuate people from the flood-hit areas. The state disaster response force, fire and emergency services personnel, policemen and ASDMA volunteers have also been deployed for rescue operations.

“So far, 20,983 people have been evacuated by the various agen-



Flood-affected villagers use boats to shift to safer areas after heavy rainfall in Morigaon district, Sunday PTI PHOTO



A damaged utility pole after flood due to heavy rains at Rangia in Kamrup district of Assam, Sunday PTI PHOTO

cies,” the bulletin said. Incessant rain since Saturday night wreaked havoc in Guwahati, leading to knee-deep water logging in many areas across the city, while water has touched the chest level at some places.

Guwahati Municipal Corporation Commissioner Devashish Sharma told reporters that sluice gates on the Bharalu river have been shut. “Due to heavy rain in Upper Assam and flowing of excess water through the Brahmaputra, the water level of the river in Guwahati has risen considerably. Its level is now above that of its tributary Bharalu,” he said.

To stop backflow of Brahmaputra water into the city, the administration has closed all the sluice gates on the Bharalu, the lifeline of Guwahati city.

“This led to flooding of new areas in the city. During the last few days, we were able to pump

out floodwaters to Bharalu, but today we are not able to do so,” Sharma said.

Flooding was reported from Zoo road, RG Baruah road, Nabin Nagar, Anil Nagar, Hatigaon, Lachit Nagar, Tarun Nagar, Jyotikuchi, Ghoramara, VIP road, Chandhari and many other areas.

According to the daily flood report of the ASDMA, eight people lost their lives in various places due to the floodwaters. The death toll in this year’s flood and landslides across the state has gone up to 62, it said.

Meanwhile, fresh landslides were reported from Cachar, Dima Hasao, Goalpara, Hailakandi, Kamrup Metropolitan, Karimganj and South Salmara districts. During the last 24 hours, the state recorded an average rainfall of 37.2 mm.

As per the Central Water Commission bulletin, the mighty Brahmaputra is flowing above the

danger marks at Neamatighat in

Jorhat, Tezpur in Sonitpur, Goalpara and Dhubri towns.

Its tributaries Kopili at Kamrup and Dharamtul in Nagaon district, Subansiri at Badatighat in Lakhimpur, Puthimari at NH Road Crossing in Kamrup, Pagladia at NT Road Crossing in Nalbari, Manas at NH Road Crossing in Barpeta and Beki at Road Bridge in Barpeta are flowing above danger levels.

The Barak river at BP Ghat in Karimganj, AP Ghat in Cachar and Matizuri in Hailakandi, and its tributary Kushiya at Karimganj town are flowing above the danger levels.

Five animals dead in Kaziranga National Park

Guwahati: At least five animals, including a leopard, have been killed in floods in Assam’s Kaziranga National Park (KNP), so far this year, an official statement said on Sunday.

More than 15 per cent of the park area has been inundated with the Brahmaputra river, which passes through it, flowing above the danger level at several places, it said.

According to a flood report from KNP, four animals were killed after being hit by vehicles while crossing the national highway, which cuts through the park. These include one leopard and three hog deer.

Animals from KNP routinely cross over to the higher reaches of the bordering Karbi Anglong

district during flooding. Speed restriction of 40 km per hour is in force on the stretch of NH 37 that passes through it to ensure the safety of the animals. Vehicles are fined if found to be driving above the prescribed limit.

Another hog deer rescued during the flood died later, taking the number of animals killed in floods this year to five. Three other hog deer injured due to the floods have been rescued by the Park authorities. A python was also rescued without any injuries, the report said.

Fifteen per cent of the total park area has been inundated so far. The total park area currently is 858.98 sq km. Out of the total 223 camps inside the KNP, 44 have been flooded.

Raj passes resolution demanding repeal of Agnipath scheme



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, June 19: The Council of Ministers in Rajasthan unanimously passed a resolution Saturday which said the Agnipath scheme of the Centre for short-term recruitment into the armed forces must be withdrawn keeping in mind the larger public interest and the sentiments of the youth.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot at the Chief Minister’s residence here Saturday.

At the meeting, the Council of Ministers expressed concern over the nationwide protests against the Agnipath scheme.

It was stated during the meeting that to maintain the dignity and prestige of the Indian Army, it is necessary to have skill, experience and stability in the force. To increase efficiency in the army it is crucial to have permanent soldiers instead of short-term recruits, so that the country can reap the benefits of their experience.

The army must be equipped with all the resources and must be continuously strengthened.

The resolution said that there have been massive protests across the country against the provisions of the scheme, which has created many doubts among the youth with regard to their future. Due to this, the youth are protesting on the

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot at the Chief Minister’s residence in Jaipur Saturday

roads and railway tracks in many parts of the country.

Incidents of vandalism and damage to public property have been reported from many places in the country. Demonstrations are being held in various states, including Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Assam. In states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana, the youth even set railway coaches on fire, it noted.

It was discussed at the meeting that many military experts are of the opinion that Agnipath scheme will neither secure the future of the youth, nor will the country’s army be able to face the challenges with full confidence.

Experts feel that there should be regular recruitment in the army, and the soldiers must get all the benefits so that their and their family’s future can be secured, the resolution noted.

Land for new Silchar airport was sought by AAI in 2019



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, June 19: The land for the proposed new airport in Assam’s Silchar which has sparked off a political slugfest was sought way back in 2019 by Airports Authority of India (AAI), documents reveal.

The Centre’s statement made earlier this month that no proposal has yet been received for a greenfield airport in Assam’s Cachar district, despite large-scale land acquisition by the state government for a second airport in the Barak valley, has sparked off a political controversy.

However, the fact remains that the Airports Authority of India (AAI) way back in 2019 had sought land for the construction of the proposed facility, and even conducted a pre-feasibility study in 2020 for the same, documents reveal.

In a reply to queries by TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sushmita Dev whether sanction had been granted, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia mentioned in a letter dated June 8, “No proposal as per GFA Policy, 2008 to construct a Greenfield airport in Cachar District of Assam has been received.”

“However, if any such proposal from any Airport Developer or the State Government is received, the same would be considered as per the Greenfield airports Policy, 2008,” it read.

During a meeting between the then Transport Department Principal Secretary Biswa Ranjan Samal and AAI Regional Executive Director (RED) D K Kamra April 6, 2019, the PSU sought 116.5 acres of additional land to expand the existing airport at Kumbhirgram in Silchar.

The current airport is a defence airport and hence there are limitations to its expansion. After scouting for land for several months and receiving a report from the Cachar district administration, the Assam government January 2, 2020, wrote to the AAI Regional Executive Director (North Eastern Region) about three identified land parcels in three tea gardens - Khoreel, Doloo, and Silcoorie.

Following this communication, a multi-disciplinary team from

AAI headquarters, with support from the Assam government and district administration, conducted a “pre-feasibility study” at the three identified sites from January 20 to 22 in 2020.

Though details of site contour maps, geo-coordinates, the wind rose diagram, highest flood level, and extent of the land area were not supplied by the state government, the AAI team prepared a “pre-feasibility report” based on a “visual survey and preliminary data” provided during the site visit.

The present AAI RED (NE Region) Ravi Kant confirmed that a study was carried out to check the suitability of the proposed sites, and a report was also prepared accordingly.

The 21-page report ‘Development of New Greenfield Airport at Silchar, Assam’, prepared by a five-member technical team, preferred Doloo tea estate after the site analysis of the three locations on parameters like connectivity, physical features, and planning aspects.

“For the development of Airport for Code 4C Category type of Aircraft operations, the quantum of land requirement works out to be 870 Acre as per Draft Master Plan,” the report added. So the Assam government is now acquiring 2,500 bighas (826.45 acres) of the land of Doloo tea estate.

The ‘pre-feasibility report’ also pointed out that the developer has to carry out an Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) survey and obtain ‘Site Clearance’ and ‘In-Principle’ approvals as well as permissions from the Defence and Forest and Environment ministries.

Development of the greenfield airport at Doloo tea garden was even discussed during a virtual meeting between Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Scindia October 19 last year; and it was decided that the Assam government will transfer the land by December 20, 2021.

The state government, thereafter, had initiated the land acquisition process in Doloo, but it could not proceed properly till April this year.

7th dist in Assam under prohibitory orders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kokrajhar, June 19: Prohibitory orders were imposed on Kokrajhar Sunday apprehending breach of law and order, making it the seventh district in Assam to be placed under such restrictions within a week, amid protests and agitations over various issues by political parties and other outfits.

The additional district magistrate has clamped the prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC on Kokrajhar “in view of the urgency in maintaining peace and tranquillity in the district”, a government order said.

“It has been noticed that there is a possibility of occurrence of law and order situation due to activities of anti-social elements and agitational programmes of



political parties, students’ unions and other organisations,” the order maintained.

Assembly of five or more persons in any public places, processions, shouting of slogans, taking out rallies and organising melas without permission have been barred in the district for now, along with pillion riding and carrying and brandishing of weapons.

Earlier, prohibitory orders were brought into force in

Charaideo, Sonitpur, Cachar, Karimganj, Hailakandi and Kamrup districts to check any law and order situation.

Restrictions were imposed on Cachar and Karimganj June 12 following violent protests in different parts of the country over controversial remarks against Prophet Mohammad by two former BJP leaders.

The other three districts were also brought under the prohibitory orders during the past week.

LOST AND FOUND AFTER CENTURIES

Saraswati brings growth prospects to Thar

Lost and found after centuries, the Saraswati river has emerged as a boon for the dry, parched and arid zone of western Rajasthan which is now attracting the attention of people from across the world.

The silent river flowing underground is boosting the confidence of people who are now planning to bring farming here.

Saraswati, for centuries, was believed to be a mythical river. However, the Vaidik Saraswati River Research Centre situated in Jodhpur worked hard to trace the Saraswati river which yielded surprising results.

In Jaisalmer, sweet and potable water was traced when its team dug around 20 wells, each 40-60 metre deep.

The emergence of water in dry regions full of sand dunes boosted their belief that the Saraswati was not lost but flowing somewhere underground. This was way back in 2002. Today, this water is being used by defence personnel serving at the border posts and the locals nearby.

Earlier, the soldiers and locals had to travel for miles to fetch water. However, the situation has changed now, said Madanmohan Vyas, general secretary, Vaidik Saraswati Nadi Shodh Sansthan.

He added that Dabla village near Jaisalmer has another interesting story where a jungle was being fed by a Saraswati tubewell which was dug by the Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), India’s largest oil and gas producer. This was found as an un-

“Once this river was called mythical. However, now the world believes that the river is a reality. Their perception has totally changed which can be by analysing the research papers presented in different parts of the world which are of excellent quality”

JR SHARMA | SENIOR OFFICER, INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

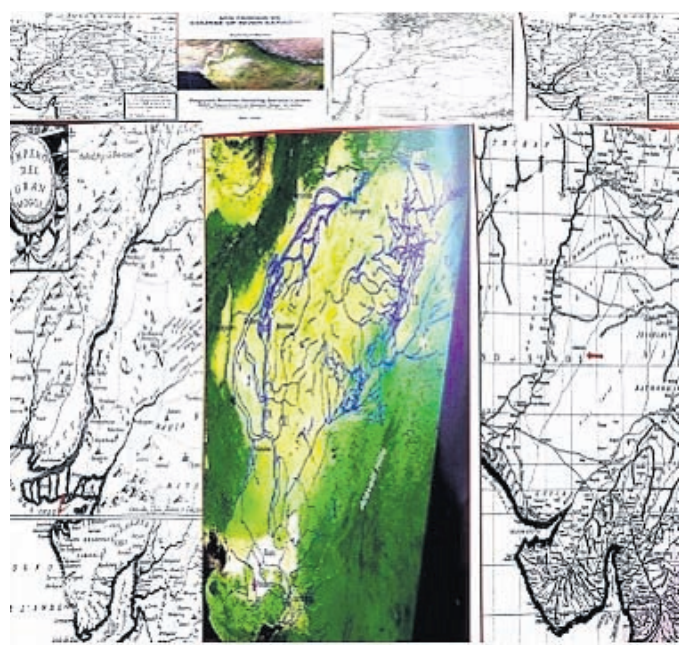
The Saraswati water is flowing underneath in its purest form and hence the vegetation which will come up here will be the best of its kind. The innovative cooperative farming is being promoted in areas surrounding canals and water bodies of the

RAJENDRA PACHAR | MANAGING DIRECTOR, PACHAR GROUP

derground fresh water reservoir after drilling a well.

Buoyed by these developments, a group proposed to establish an agro-township in Jaisalmer, Phalodi and Bikaner where grains and spices will be grown.

“The Saraswati water is flowing underneath in its purest form and hence the vegetation which will come up here will be the best of its kind. The innovative cooperative farming is being promoted in areas surrounding canals and water bodies,” Rajendra Pachar, Managing Director of the Pachar



Group, told IANS.

When asked if the prospects will dwindle as it is a desert region, he was confident that the “Saraswati water will boost all prospects. We have found water at just 50 feet depth which is not the case anywhere else in Jaipur and adjoining areas,” he added.

Saraswati Research Centre officials told IANS that “Rivers neither die nor dry out but either change course or else the water level goes down.”

Similarly, the Saraswati was never lost but its water level went down to 100-150 feet. Even the state ground water department after five years of research concluded that there is a surplus water reserve in Jaisalmer where 30-35 water wells can be dug per

square kilometre area.

As per the Central Ground Water Authority report which did a recent survey in the region, there is a capacity to build one million tubewells in eight paleo channels traced in the Rajasthan Saraswati Flow Zone.

JR Sharma, a senior officer in the Indian Space Research Organisation who made an immense contribution to the research on the Saraswati, told IANS, “Once this river was called mythical. However, now the world believes that the river is a reality. Their perception has totally changed which can be by analysing the research papers presented in different parts of the world which are of excellent quality.”

Madanmohan Vyas told IANS, “Our Shodh Yatra started in the 80s when Saraswati Nadi Shodh Parakalp was formed in 1983.”

“This samiti conducted a historical survey from Adibadri, foothills of the Shivalik hills in 1985 covering Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat. A mini survey was conducted in 1992 covering Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Jalore and Sirohi with veterans from the ISRO, PHED and some universities,” he said.

“In 1995, our research centre was formed which made coordinated efforts with NASA satellite, ISRO, BARC and Ground Water Department of Rajasthan to trace the route of the Saraswati,” he added.

In fact, the world has also recognised Saraswati as the oldest map in 1760 A.D. by Bryce Collier Library Atlas depicts the Soorsuti joining the Ghaggar.

The Vedas, our oldest literature, also mention the Saraswati, he said, adding that “Rajasthan canal, now called Indira Gandhi canal, seems to be on the same course which was once the Saraswati flow area, it has the same alignment and there is no pumping station in between. It flows from Haryana to Rajasthan till Mohangarh.”

“When former PM Indira Gandhi inaugurated it in 1980, one inscription on its bank referred to it as the Saraswati Rupa Rajasthan Canal,” he added.

After decoding history, literature and science, we tracked the Saraswati course via mapping. Now Thar awaits the Saraswati water in its arid region to bring back prosperity and growth in the region, said Pachar. IANS

of the day quote

Jammu and Kashmir's Kishitwar will become a major power hub after the completion of the ongoing power projects

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

The Tamil Nadu delegation will voice the people's agitated mood at Karnataka government's decision to build the Mekedatu Dam on river Cauvery

MK STALIN | TN CM

Sangrur was dubbed to be a backward district but now it will be transformed as a model district of Punjab. We will develop smart schools, multi-specialty hospitals and boost industrialisation to generate employment

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

SHORT TAKES

Three terrorist associates held

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir police along with security forces arrested three terrorist associates of proscribed terror outfit Al-Badr from north Kashmir's Handwara area and recovered incriminating materials, arms and ammunition from their possession, officials said Sunday. Police acted on specific information regarding movement of terrorists in Wangam area of Handwara. A special checkpoint was established by the police, army and CRPF near Wangam Crossing.

BJP leader injured

Mainpuri: A Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader has been shot at by unidentified assailants in Mainpuri, police officials said Sunday. According to the police, two unidentified persons shot BJP Scheduled Caste Yuva Morcha district president, Gautam Kathariya, late on the intervening night of Saturday/Sunday. He received bullet injuries near his shoulder and was admitted to a hospital, from where doctors referred him to Agra for advanced medical treatment. His condition is said to be stable.

Three arrested

Gandhinagar: The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Gujarat Sunday morning carried out search at a roadside dhaba in Gandhinagar district and arrested three persons for selling cookies made of cannabis oil. They were also selling cannabis oil. Gandhinagar Special Operation Group (SOG) Police Sub Inspector L.H. Masani said that the ATS has handed over all three accused to SOG and a case has been registered at Adalaj police station, under various sections of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Act (NDPS).

Cop found dead

Dibrugarh (Assam): A policeman allegedly died by suicide in Assam's Jorhat district Sunday, an official said. The sub-inspector, who was posted at the Selenghat police station, was found dead by his colleagues at his official quarters, he said.

Driver killed

Jammu: A truck driver was killed and a few shops damaged in a cloudburst that hit J&K's Poonch district Sunday, officials said. Officials of Disaster Management Office said that a cloudburst hit Mandi area of Poonch.

Cong on revival path but challenges remain

Press Trust of India
New Delhi, June 19: One month since the Congress drafted a plan for revamp at the Udaipur Chintan Shivir, the party has begun to walk the talk, though the task of electoral revival remains tedious and challenging.

The latest appointment of veteran Jairam Ramesh as general secretary in-charge of communications with publicity, social and digital media under him and firebrand Pawan Khera as media chief has set the ball rolling for a new outreach wing that will show the way to reconnect with the masses, according to party leaders.

Strengthening the party's communication strategy to improve public engagement is foremost on the Congress agenda after Rahul Gandhi had stressed that they "have to go back to the people" at the Udaipur meeting. Senior Congress leader Ajay Maken says the message of the three-day brainstorming and the decisions taken there have reached the grassroots and state units have already been instructed to enforce the new pledges.

"These decisions include ensuring 50 per cent representation to workers who are under 50 at state, district and block levels in the Congress and setting up of new mandal committees to have more feet on the ground," Maken said.

Senior Congress leaders add that the party has already embarked on the new path of revival and changes will be visible over the coming months once the recently constituted Task Force for 2024 Lok



Senior Congress leaders add that the party has already embarked on the new path of revival and changes will be visible over the coming months

The latest appointment of veteran Jairam Ramesh as general secretary in-charge of communications with publicity, social and digital media under him and firebrand Pawan Khera as media chief has set the ball rolling for a new outreach wing that will show the way to reconnect with the masses, according to party leaders

Sabha polls reworks its strategy. Party functionaries holding positions for over five years will gradually be replaced and 'one person, one post' formula, as agreed on in Udaipur, will be enforced, says AICC general secretary Maken, who had read out the Chintan Shivir pledges.

The replacement of Randeep Surjewala as in-charge of communications by Ramesh is the first major signal of relieving leaders from multiple posts. Surjewala held the post for seven years and continued as media chief even after being appointed AICC general secretary Karnataka in 2020.

"We have started embarking on the path laid down by the Udaipur declaration. The outcome of the brainstorming ses-

sion and tangible differences will be seen in the party and its functioning soon," said Maken. On the expansion of the Communications department, insiders said all state units have been brought under its wings now to ensure better coordination and uniform messaging.

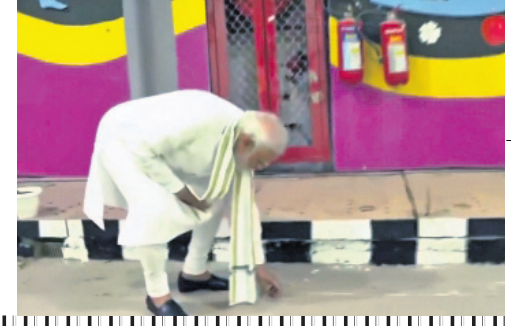
The communications wing is also set to have dedicated units on research and data analytics, sources say, adding that the promised election management and public insight departments were in the works too. The unexpected Enforcement Directorate summons to Gandhi and nationwide protests against the Agnipath scheme have only aided Congress mobilisation in recent days, with its leaders noting that the angst of the youth was a major chal-

Opinion, advice, consultation, consent, counselling, discussion, joint decision and group meeting. These democratic words are not in the dictionary of the BJP

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

PM PICKS UP LITTER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday picked up litter during an inspection of the newly inaugurated tunnel built under Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor in Delhi



PRESIDENTIAL POLL

Mamata may skip Pawar's meeting

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 19: The differences between West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee and other opposition parties over selection of a unanimous opposition candidate for the Presidential polls, seem to be widening, as she, in all probability, will skip the meeting called by NCP chief Sharad Pawar June 21.

Instead, she is likely to depute her nephew and Trinamool national General Secretary, Abhishek Banerjee to attend. Officially, the Trinamool leadership is stating that her most likely absence in the meeting convened by Pawar will be because of her pre-scheduled appointment on that day. However, party insiders said that the actual reasons might be the growing grievances in the mind of the Chief Minister over certain developments since she convened a similar meeting on this count at New Delhi's Constitution Club on June 15.

The first reason is that in the invitation to opposition parties to attend the meeting convened by Pawar, there is absolutely no reference to the previous meeting on June 15. "In the meeting at Constitution Club on June 15, 2022, it was unanimously decided that Pawar would convene the next meeting of the opposition parties on the issue of Presidential polls.



However, surprisingly the invitation for the meeting on June 21 does not have any reference of the decision taken on this count in the meeting on June 15. This is somewhat belittling the efforts of the Chief Minister who took the first initiative to call an opposition meeting on this count," a senior West Bengal cabinet minister said.

Secondly, Banerjee is reportedly unhappy with the manner in which the National Conference chief Farooq Abdulla withdrew name as a probable opposition candidate in the Presidential polls by making a public statement later and without saying anything about his reluctance on this count at the June 15 meeting.

However, another section in the Trinamool does not look at the issue in that way. They feel that the Chief Minister wants Abhishek Banerjee to play a major role on behalf of the party in national politics and hence, his presence at the June 21 meeting was the right opportunity to project him on this count.

India gives e-visas to Sikhs, Hindus in Afghan

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, June 19: India has given e-visas to over 100 Sikhs and Hindus living in Afghanistan following a deadly terror attack on a gurdwara in Kabul, government sources said Sunday.

The electronic visas have been given "on priority" to these people by the Ministry of Home Affairs, they said. The Islamic State terrorist group has claimed responsibility for the attack on the gurdwara in Afghanistan's capital that killed two persons, including one Sikh community member, calling it "an act of support" for the Prophet. Several blasts tore through Gurdwara Karte Parwan in Kabul's Bagh-e Bala neighbourhood on Saturday while Afghan security personnel thwarted a bigger tragedy by stopping an explosive-laden vehicle from reaching the place of worship of the minority community.

"More than 100 Afghan Sikhs and Hindus have been granted e-visas by India, on priority, post the attack on gurdwara in Kabul," a source said. The dreaded terror group said one of its fighters "penetrated a temple for Hindu and Sikh polytheists" in Kabul, after killing the guard, and opened fire on the worshippers inside with his machine gun and hand grenades.

It was the latest targeted assault on a place of worship of the Sikh community in Afghanistan. The three attackers were killed by the Taliban forces. Since the Taliban took power in August last year, Afghanistan has seen continuing attacks by rival Sunni Muslim militant group Islamic State.

STAYING FIT



Students perform yoga asanas, ahead of the International Day of Yoga at Darbhanga Ghat in Varanasi

PTI PHOTO

43-year-old man clears exam, son fails

Press Trust of India

Mumbai, June 19: A 43-year-old man from Pune and his son both appeared for the Class 10 Maharashtra board examination this year, but the results brought a mixed bag of feelings for the family as the father cleared the exam, while the son failed.

The results of the annual Class 10 exams conducted by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education were declared Friday. Bhaskar Waghmare, who had to give up studies after Class 7 and



take up a job to sustain his family, was keen to resume studies.

After a gap of 30 years, he appeared for the exams this year

along with his son.

"I always wanted to study more, but could not do so earlier because of family responsibilities and to earn to sustain our livelihood," Waghmare, a resident of Babasaheb

"Since sometime, I was keen on resuming studies and doing some courses which would help me in earning more. Hence, I had decided to appear for the Class 10 exams. My son was also appearing for the exams this year, and this helped me," he said.



Countdown for Presidential poll begins

The countdown for the election of President of India has begun with the announcement of poll dates and results of

Rajya Sabha biennial polls. The byelections for a few Lok Sabha and Assembly seats will be over by next week. The BJP has adequate numbers in the kitty to win the Presidential poll on its own. Yet, PM Modi wants to garner support from non-NDA parties like BJD, TRS and YSR Congress. The BJP has not floated any names as yet and would like to seek suggestions from the Opposition parties first. It is clear that BJP is tying all the loose ends before announcing the Presidential candidate.

A Muslim Vice President?

Will the Nupur Sharma spark spring up a surprise candidate for the post of Vice President from the BJP's closet? The ruling party is finding it hard to face an embarrassing question that it doesn't have

a Muslim representation even in Rajya Sabha where members are nominated. Therefore, one view is that a couple of Muslim scholars be nominated to the Rajya Sabha as and when the President decides to fill seven vacancies in the Upper House. Another theory doing the rounds is that the BJP may even field a Muslim for the post of Vice President of India. Modi is known for surprising leaders and political analysts.

BJP's Muslim dilemma

Before one ventures to discuss BJP's Muslim dilemma, look at a few facts. The BJP will have no Muslim representation in Parliament after July 7 when Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi retires from Rajya Sabha. M.J. Akbar is set to retire June 29 and Syed Zafar Islam's merely 2-year term

will end July 4. The BJP's lone face in Lok Sabha, Shah Nawaz Hussain, has already been packed back to Bihar as a minister after he lost the 2014 Lok Sabha poll. The BJP could have nominated a Muslim in the biennial polls for the Rajya Sabha's for 57 seats in 15 states including 8 in UP. But it decided not to do so. The BJP may have its electoral compulsions ever since it followed the principle of "winnability" in selecting a candidate. But the government continues to follow the path of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas' with Modi claiming that welfare schemes running into Rs 12 lakh crores benefit all communities per annum.

Desperate search

The Opposition parties are desperately looking for a credible and senior Presidential candidate. The names such

as Farooq Abdullah and Ghulam Nabi Azad were mentioned for consideration by the Opposition parties. Ghulam Nabi Azad is a non-controversial and affable person whose name brings about a consensus. There were some reports that the Congress may have reservations about him. But sources close to Sharad Pawar say that the Congress is not averse to him. However, the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is reported to have suggested the name of former finance minister Yashwant Sinha. The 84-year leader had joined the TMC sometime ago. His acceptability across the parties is undeniable. BSP leader Mayawati and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar have already declined to contest for the President's post. The health of Mulayam Singh Yadav and Sharad Yadav does not permit them to play any significant role at this stage.

international



There is a real opportunity for India to be a real thought leader on all the three fronts – the challenge on how we grow our economies, the challenge how we show that democracy is relevant and still works today and the challenge how we tackle climate

DAVID CAMERON | FORMER PM, UK

US OKAYS COV VAX TO KIDS

The US opened Covid-19 vaccines to infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The shots will become available next week, expanding the nation's vaccination campaign to children as young as 6 months



of the day quote

If this bill is enacted, I think we're in a very serious situation. What now needs to happen is really substantive negotiations between the British government and the European Union

MICHEAL MARTIN | PM, IRELAND



The situation has become very complex for negotiations. The international context has a role, and Mali is part of the Russian game on the international stage

RAMA YADE | SENIOR DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICA CENTER, ATLANTIC COUNCIL



Sri Lanka has reached out to several companies suggested by Russia's embassy in Colombo to buy crude oil

KANCHANA WIJESEKERA | ENERGY MINISTER, SRI LANKA



SHORT TAKES

French voters elect Parliamentarians

Paris: French voters are going to the polls in the final round of key parliamentary elections that will demonstrate how much legroom President Emmanuel Macron's party will be given to implement his ambitious domestic agenda. In last week's first vote, the left, under firebrand Jean-Luc Melenchon, made a surprisingly strong showing, sending jitters through Macron's allies. They fear that a strong showing from Melenchon's coalition Sunday could turn Macron into a shackled second term leader, one who spends his time bargaining with politicians and with major limits placed on his ability to rule.

Bangladesh floods death toll rises

Dhaka: At least 25 people were killed by lightning or landslides over the weekend in Bangladesh while millions were left marooned or homeless in low-lying northeastern parts hit by the worst monsoon floods in the country's recent history, officials said. Many of Bangladesh's rivers have risen to dangerous levels and the runoff from heavy rain from across Indian mountains exacerbated the situation, said Arifuzzaman Bhuiyan, the head of the state-run Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre.

Duterte's daughter takes oath as VP

Manila: Sara Duterte, the daughter of the outgoing populist president of the Philippines Rodrigo Duterte, took her oath Sunday as vice president following a landslide electoral victory she clinched despite her father's human rights record that saw thousands of drug suspects gunned down. Rodrigo's presidency has been marked by a brutal anti-drugs campaign that has left thousands of mostly petty drug runners shot dead by police or vigilantes. He is being investigated for crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court.

20 Indian fishermen jailed in Pak freed

Karachi: Pakistan in a goodwill gesture Sunday released 20 Indian fishermen who have been languishing in a jail here for the last five years for allegedly fishing illegally in the country's waters. The twenty fishermen were lodged at Malir district jail in the Landhi area of Karachi. They were sent to Lahore on their way to the Wagah border where they will be handed over to the Indian authorities.

NATO warns war could last 'years'

Ukraine received a significant boost on Friday when the European Commission recommended it for candidate status, a decision EU nations are expected to endorse at a summit this week

Kyiv, June 19: The war in Ukraine could last for years, the head of NATO said on Sunday, calling for steadfast support from Ukraine's allies as Russian forces battle for territory in the country's east.

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said supplying state-of-the-art weaponry to Ukrainian troops would boost the chance of freeing its eastern region of Donbas from Russian control, Germany's Bild am Sonntag newspaper reported.

After failing to take the capital Kyiv early on in the war, Russian forces have focused efforts in recent weeks on trying to take complete control of the Donbas, parts of which were already under the control of Russian-backed separatists before the Feb 24 invasion.

"We must prepare for the fact that it could take years. We must not let up in supporting Ukraine," Stoltenberg was quoted as saying. "Even if the costs are high, not only for military support, also because of rising energy and food prices," he added.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he had visited troops in several places, including the southern Mykolaiv region, about 550 km (340 miles) south of Kyiv. "I talked to our defenders - the military, the police, the National Guard," he said in a video on the

Russia's state news agency TASS said many Ukrainian fighters had surrendered in Metolkin



Russian forces trying to approach Kharkiv, northwest of Luhansk, aimed to turn it into a "frontline city", a Ukrainian interior ministry official said

Their mood is assured: they all do not doubt our victory. We will not give the south to anyone, and all that is ours we will take back

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

Telegram message app on Sunday that appeared to have been recorded on a moving train.

BATTLE FOR SIEVIERODONETSK
 The eastern industrial city of Sievierodonetsk, a prime target in Moscow's offensive to seize full control of Luhansk - one of the two provinces making up the Donbas - faced heavy artillery and rocket fire again, the Ukrainian military said.

Analysts at the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, wrote in a note that "Russian forces will likely be able to seize Sievierodonetsk in the coming weeks, but at the cost of concentrating most of their available forces in this small area".

Serhiy Gaidai, the governor of Luhansk, told Ukrainian television: "All Russian claims that they control the town are a lie. They control the main part of the town, but not the whole town."

In the twin city of Lysychansk across the river, residential buildings and private houses had been destroyed, Gaidai said on the Telegram messaging app, adding, "People are dying on the streets and in bomb shelters."

Russia has said it launched what it calls a "special military operation" to disarm its neighbour and protect Russian speakers there from dangerous nationalists. Kyiv and its allies dismissed that as a baseless pretext for a war of aggression.

'3-DIGIT NUMBER OF LEADS' Germany probes possible war crimes

Berlin: German police said Saturday they were investigating several hundred potential Russian war crimes in Ukraine including political and military officials suspected of being linked to the alleged offences. "Up until now we have received a three-digit number of leads," Holger Muench, head of the BKA federal police, told the Welt am Sonntag newspaper. The inquiry does not only cover suspected perpetrators of war crimes but also political and military officials, he said. "It's the most difficult part of our inquiry, intricate puzzle work," he added. "Our clear goal is to identify those responsible for atrocities, to prove their actions through our investigations and bring them to justice," including in Germany. The country applies universal jurisdiction which allows a foreign country to prosecute crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide, regardless of where they were committed. However "that may take time" because investigations linked to the Ukraine conflict are only at their "very beginning", Muench said. The UN's Ukraine commission confirmed receiving multiple allegations of rights abuses by Russian forces, but said it was too early to say whether they constituted war crimes.

PROPHET'S 'INSULT'

ISIS claims Kabul gurdwara attack

In a message posted on its Amaq propaganda site, ISIS said Saturday's attack targeted Hindus, Sikhs, and the "apostates" who protected them in "an act of support for the Messenger of Allah"



Afghan police thwarted a bigger tragedy by stopping an explosive-laden vehicle from reaching the place of worship of the minority community

Kabul, June 19: The ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack on a Gurdwara in Afghanistan, saying it was retaliation for "insults" to Prophet Muhammed.

Protests in several countries were sparked by suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma's remarks earlier this month about the Prophet. In a message posted on its Amaq propaganda site, ISIS said Saturday's attack targeted Hindus and Sikhs and the "apostates" who protected them in "an act of support for the Messenger of Allah".

The group said one of its fighters "penetrated a temple for Hindu and Sikh polytheists in Kabul, after killing its guard, and opened fire on the pagans inside with his machine gun and hand grenades". Two people were killed and at least seven others injured in the at-

ack. Interior Ministry spokesman Abdul Nafi Takor said the attackers lobbed at least one grenade when they entered the Gurdwara, setting off a blaze.

The attack follows a visit by an Indian delegation to Kabul to discuss the distribution of humanitarian aid from India to Afghanistan. The reports said the delegation discussed with Taliban officials the possibility of reopening the Indian embassy. The number of bombings across Afghanistan has dropped since the Taliban returned to power, but several attacks - many targeting minority communities - have rocked the country in recent months.

WILDFIRE WOES



Flames rage in a field during a fire in Arraiza, northern Spain. Firefighters in Spain are struggling to contain wildfires in several parts of the country suffering an unusual heat wave for this time of the year

South China hit by deluge

THE RAINFALL IN SOME AREAS HAS BEEN THE HEAVIEST IN 60 YEARS

Beijing, June 19: Vast tracts of southern China were pounded by severe storms, triggering flooding in cities and mudslides in rural areas, as the first bout of summer rains reached the peak of their power. Streets turned to swollen rivers as cars and single-storey houses were swept away in at least two counties in Guizhou province in southwestern China Saturday, according to videos circulating on Chinese social media. In neighbouring autonomous region Guangxi, five villagers were killed when a house built of wood gave way after being lashed by torrential rains, state media said. Mudslides and road collapses were also reported.

ditionally marked by unsettled and rainy weather as warm and humid air in the south collides with cooler air masses from the north.

The early summer storms have been greater in intensity and more prolonged than usual this year, with precipitation in Guangxi, Guangdong and Fujian at its highest since 1961, according to local weather bureaus.

Cold and warm air has converged over southern China, and the two sides have entered into a deadlock and a tug of war, said Wang Weiyue, an analyst at weather.com.cn, an arm of the China Meteorological Administration.

China is historically prone to summer flooding, but in recent times, it has become more vulnerable due to deforestation, reclamation of wetlands and storage of water for power generation and irrigation. Climate change has also been blamed.

In July 2021, hundreds of people died when extreme flooding struck Zhengzhou, a city of 12 million in central China, some of whom drowned in a submerged subway line.



Lanka troops open fire to contain riots

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Colombo, June 19: Sri Lanka's military opened fire to contain rioting at a fuel station, officials said today as unprecedented queues for petrol and diesel were seen across the bankrupt country.

Troops fired in Visuvamadu, 365 kilometres (228 miles) north of Colombo, Saturday night as their guard point was pelted with stones, army spokesman Nilantha Premaratne said.

"A group of 20 to 30 people pelted stones and damaged an army truck," Premaratne told AFP. Police said four civilians and

FUEL CRISIS



three soldiers were injured when the army opened fire for the first

time to contain unrest linked to the worsening economic crisis.

As the pump ran out of petrol, motorists began to protest and the situation escalated into a clash with troops, police said.

Sri Lanka is suffering its worst economic crisis since independence, with the country unable to find dollars to import essentials, including food, fuel and medicines.

The nation's 22 million population has been enduring acute shortages and long queues for scarce supplies while President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has for months resisted calls to step down over mismanagement.

FASTEST GROWING IN 9 BILLION YEARS

Monster black hole devours equivalent of 1 Earth every second

THE BLACK HOLE IS SO BIG AND BRIGHT THAT IT IS EASILY VISIBLE TO ANYONE WITH A GOOD TELESCOPE IN A VERY DARK BACKYARD

AGENCIES

Canberra, June 19: Astronomers have identified a gigantic black hole which is swallowing an Earth-size chunk of matter every second. This is the brightest and fastest-

growing black hole to have existed in the last 9 billion years. The discovery has been recently made by an international team led by astronomers from the Australian National University (ANU).

The black hole shines 7,000 times brighter than all the light from our own galaxy making it visible to well-equipped backyard astronomers, said lead researchers Dr Christopher Onken and co-author Christian Wolf, who led the team. Both the astronomers described the black hole as a "very large, unexpected needle in the haystack".

The new supermassive black hole, known as J1144, is around 500 times as Sagittarius A, the su-



permissive black hole at the heart of the Milky Way, which was recently photographed for the first time. "It is 500 times bigger than the

Perhaps two big galaxies crashed into each other, funneling a whole lot of material onto the black hole to feed it

CHRISTOPHER ONKEN | ASTRONOMER, AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

tronomers have been hunting for objects like this for more than 50 years and surprisingly this "astonishingly bright black hole" remained unnoticed. What has made the researchers curious is that the black hole has the mass of three billion suns, while others of comparable size stopped growing so quickly billions of years ago.

The team is now trying to determine why the massive black hole remains so unusually hungry for matter. The scientists suspect that a catastrophic cosmic event must be responsible for the birth of this gargantuan void.

According to co-author Christian Wolf, Assistant Professor at ANU, the black hole is such an outlier that he does not believe another one like this will be found. The black hole is easily visible to anyone with a good telescope in a very dark backyard as it has a visual magnitude of 14.5. Visual magnitude is the measurement to find out how bright an object in space appears to an observer on Earth.

business

of the day quote

In the WTO ministerial conference, we fully protected the interests of farmers, MSMEs, and fishermen. There will be no burden on them. We protected their interests

PYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

By combining Commercial Lighting and Seating Solution businesses, we aim to offer wider solutions to our customers in the B2B (business-to-business) space and deliver more value

ANU DHIR | VP, AND BUSINESS HEAD (COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS), WIPRO

We have big aspirations and want to ensure we are achieving high double-digit or triple-digit growth this year as well

MANISH KALRA | CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICER, ZE5

SHORT TAKES

FM to meet heads of PSBs today

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to meet the heads of public sector banks (PSBs) Monday to review the performance of the lenders and the progress made by them on various schemes launched by the government for the revival of the economy. Banks would be urged to sanction loans for productive sectors to accelerate the revival of the economy facing headwinds including from the Russia-Ukraine war, sources said. The Finance Minister would take stock of credit growth, asset quality, and business growth plan of banks, sources said, adding non-performing assets (NPAs) of Rs 100 crore and the recovery status would also be discussed.

SGBs witnessed max traction in Covid yrs

New Delhi: Investment in Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs) went up sharply during COVID-impacted years as investors looked for safer options amid volatility in equity markets with 2020-21 and 2021-22 accounting for nearly 75 per cent of total sales of the bonds since the inception of the scheme in November 2015. The next tranche of SGBs is scheduled to open for subscription for five days beginning Monday. The issue price has been fixed at Rs 5,091 per gram of gold. It will be the first issuance of the current fiscal. The government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India has offered a discount of Rs 50 per gram less than the nominal value to those investors applying online and the payment against the application is made through digital mode.

Coal stock at more than 52-mn tonne

New Delhi: The government Sunday said that coal stock at various coal mines is more than 52 million tonne (MT), which is sufficient for about 24 days of fuel required for power plants in the country. The statement came weeks after shortage of fuel crippled power generation at various power plants in the country. "As on 16th June 22, coal stock at different domestic coal mines is more than 52 MT, which is sufficient for about 24 days requirement of power plants," the coal ministry said in a statement. In addition to it, about 4.5 MT coal stock is available at various goods shed sidings, private washeries and ports and is awaiting to be transported to the power plants.

GLOBAL CRUDE PRICES SKYROCKET

Private oil retailers hit with huge losses

While retail rates have been on a freeze since April 6, the price of diesel sold to bulk users like state transport undertakings increased in line with the rise in international oil prices



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 19: Selling diesel at Rs 20-25 a litre below cost and petrol at Rs 14-18 per litre below cost, as a result of a price freeze despite soaring crude rates is unsustainable, an industry body representing private fuel retailers like Jio-bp and Nayara Energy has told the Oil Ministry and has sought its intervention to create a viable investment environment.

June 10, the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI), which besides private fuel retailers also counts state-owned firms such as IOC, BPCL and HPCL as its members, wrote to the Petroleum Ministry saying losses on petrol and diesel will limit further investments in retailing business.

International crude oil and product prices have risen sharply to a decade high but state-owned fuel retailers, who control 90 per cent of the market, have frozen petrol and diesel prices at rates equivalent to two-third of the cost.

This has left private fuel retailers like Jio-bp, Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy and Shell to ei-

ther raise prices and lose customers, or to curtail sales to cut losses.

"With effect from March 22, 2022, the retail selling prices were revised on 14 occasions at an average of 80 paise per litre per day, leading to an overall increase of Rs 10 per litre on both petrol and diesel. However, the under-recoveries (losses) continue to be very high in a range of Rs 20-25 per litre for diesel and Rs 14-18 per litre for petrol," FIPI director general Gurmeet Singh wrote.

"This resulted in rapid diversion of bulk diesel (direct consumers) sales to retail outlets amounting to widening of losses incurred by private fuel retailing companies," FIPI wrote.

"We urgently seek your support in matters related to retail selling pricing of petrol and diesel, as all private oil marketing companies, who are making investments in the retailing sector are experiencing a difficult investment environment," it said.

Losses, it said, will limit their ability to "make further investments as well as to operate and ex-

You can own rakes and you save on transport cost and that pays for itself in about 9-10 years and the rake itself runs for about 25-30 years. I have asked all state GENCOS to own rakes to reduce load on railways

RK SINGH | POWER MINISTER

SEQUOIA ASKS COURT TO DISMISS SUIT

Sequoia Capital India has asked a local court to dismiss a defamation lawsuit filed by one of its former general counsels, saying it was an attempt to curb its free speech rights and harm its interests, the venture capital firm's court filing shows



428 infra projects show cost overruns of ₹4.98 lakh crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 19: As many as 428 infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of Rs 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns of more than Rs 4.98 lakh crore, as per a report.

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, which monitors infrastructure projects of Rs 150 crore and above, out of 1,559 projects, 428 projects reported cost overruns and as many as 647 projects were delayed.

"Total original cost of implementation of the 1559 projects was Rs 21,73,907.11 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 26,72,201.26 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of Rs 4,98,294.15 crore (22.92% of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for April 2022 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till April 2022 was Rs 13,50,610.98 crore, which was 50.54 per cent of their anticipated cost.

However, the number of delayed projects decreases to 525 if the delay is calculated on the basis of latest schedule of completion.

Further, for 619 projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative gestation period has been reported.

Out of the 647 delayed projects, 103 have overall delays in the range of 1-12 months, 111 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 314 projects for 25-60 months and 119 projects have been delayed for 61 months and above. The average time overrun in these 647 delayed projects was 42.83 months.

Reasons for time overruns as reported by various project implementing agencies include delay in land acquisition, delay in obtaining forest and environment clearances, and lack of infrastructure support and linkages.

Delay in tie-up for project financing, delay in finalisation of detailed engineering, change in scope, delay in tendering, ordering and equipment supply, and law and order problems are among the other reasons.

Flight of FPIs continues; equities worth ₹31,430cr sold in June so far



With this, net outflow by FPIs from equities reached ₹1.98 lakh crore so far in 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 19: Aggressive rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, coupled with elevated inflation and high valuation of equities continued to keep foreign investors at bay from the Indian stock market as they pulled out Rs 31,430 crore in this month so far.

Going forward, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) flow to remain volatile in the emerging markets on account of rising geopolitical risk, rising inflation, tightening of monetary policy by central banks, among others, Shrikant Chouhan, Head - Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities, said.

According to the data, foreign investors withdrew a net amount of Rs 31,430 crore from equities in the month of June (till 17th).

The massive selling by FPIs continued in June too as they have been incessantly withdrawing money from Indian equities since October 2021.

Shrikant attributed latest selling to rising inflation, tight monetary policy by global central banks and elevated crude oil prices.

Global investors are reacting to increased risks of a global recession as the US Federal Reserve was

forced to raise interest rates by 75 basis points due to persistently elevated inflation. Moreover, it also indicated to continue its aggressive stance to contain stubbornly high inflation.

"Strengthening of the dollar and rising bond yields in US are the major triggers for FPI selling. Since the Fed and other central banks like Bank of England and Swiss central bank have raised rates, there is synchronised rate hikes globally, with rising yields. Money is moving from equity to bonds," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Given this scenario of uncertainty where bonds offer the safety of capital and better yields it is obvious that there will be a flight of capital to safety. The US markets saw the worst weekly drop since March 2020, the peak of pandemic, Vijay Singhania, Chairman, TradeSmart, said.

On the domestic side as well, inflation has been a cause for concern, and to tame that, RBI has also been increasing rates.

In addition to equities, FPIs withdrew a net amount of about Rs 2,303 crore from the debt market during the period under review. They have been continuously withdrawing money from the debt side since February.

Apart from India, FPIs have been selling heavily in other emerging markets like Taiwan, South Korea, Philippines and Thailand.

'Normal monsoon, interest rate cut to tame inflation'

For the common man, the price hike is drilling a hole in pocket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 19: A combination of normal rainfalls aiding bumper agriculture output and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) further hiking interest rates to cut easy money in the system hold key to bringing down multi-year high inflation triggered by surging food and fuel prices, economists said.

Although the government has room to further reduce excise duty on petroleum products to contain inflation from the fiscal side, emphasis will be on monetary policy to control price pressures, they added.

While retail inflation rose 7.04 per cent in May year-on-year, slightly down from 95-month high of 7.79 per cent in April, wholesale or WPI inflation rose to a record high of 15.88 per cent in May. Three-fourth of the price rise is coming from food items and a normal monsoon will



help cool it down as it will boost production and replenish stockpiles.

The RBI has already raised interest rates by 90 basis points after inflation remained above its 2-6 per cent target band for a fifth straight month and is expected to hike interest rates by another 80 bps, they said.

Edible oil prices, which had been a major factor contributing to the inflation, have started to ease a bit with leading players announcing some reduction.

Economic affairs secretary Ajay Seth on June 16 said inflation in India is mainly because of high energy and food prices and hoped that it would moderate in the coming months.

Top 10 firms lose ₹3.91L cr in m-cap; TCS, RIL top laggards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 19: The market valuation of the top-10 most valued firms plunged by a whopping Rs 3.91 lakh crore last week, in tandem with a steep sell-off in equities, with TCS and Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit.

Markets have been extremely bearish of late amid rate hikes by global central banks, unrelenting foreign fund outflows and jump in crude oil prices.

The market valuation of the 10 most valued domestic firms eroded by Rs 3,91,620.01 crore last week.

From the top-10 firms, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) was the top loser, as its market valuation tumbled Rs 1,01,026.4 crore to stand at Rs 11,30,372.45 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) tanked Rs 84,352.76 crore to reach Rs 17,51,686.52 crore.

The valuation of Infosys eroded by Rs 37,656.62 crore to Rs 5,83,846.01



Past week, the BSE Sensex plunged 2,943.02 points or 5.42%, while the NSE Nifty declined 908.30 points or 5.61%

crore and that of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) plunged by Rs 34,787.49 crore to Rs 4,14,097.60 crore.

HDFC Bank's market valuation fell by Rs 33,507.66 crore to Rs 7,16,373.13 crore and that of HDFC divd Rs 22,977.51 crore to Rs 3,72,442.63 crore.

ICICI Bank's mcap declined by Rs 22,203.69 crore to Rs 4,78,540.58 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever (HUL) went lower by Rs

20,535.43 crore to Rs 4,96,351.15 crore.

The mcap of State Bank of India (SBI) dipped by Rs 18,563.19 crore to Rs 3,93,575.37 crore and that of Bharti Airtel fell by Rs 16,009.26 crore to Rs 3,53,604.18 crore.

In the ranking of top-10 firms, Reliance Industries continued to remain the most valued company, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Infosys, HUL, ICICI Bank, LIC, SBI, HDFC and Bharti Airtel.

Apple's first store in the US with a staff union

UNIONS, ON THE DECLINE FOR DECADES, HAVE WON SEVERAL SYMBOLIC VICTORIES IN THE UNITED STATES IN RECENT MONTHS, WITH PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN VOICING HIS SUPPORT

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

San Francisco, June 19: A majority of employees at a US Apple store have voted to form a union, a first for the tech giant, which

has so far tried to discourage unionising attempts.

Of the 110 employees at the Towson, Maryland shop, 65 voted in favor and 33 against, according to a live count broadcast Saturday by the federal agency overseeing the vote.

The vote comes after a group of employees called AppleCORE (Coalition of Organized Retail Employees) campaigned for unionisation.

"We did it Towson! We won our union vote! Thanks to all who worked so hard and all who supported! Now we celebrate... Tomorrow we keep organizing," AppleCORE tweeted.

Saturday's result means that the shop's employees, who have been voting since Wednesday, should form their own branch of the



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) union, once the agency has certified the results.

IAM International President Robert Martinez Jr said he applauded the workers' "courage." "They made a huge sacrifice for

thousands of Apple employees across the nation who had all eyes on this election. I ask Apple CEO Tim Cook to respect the election results and fast-track a first contract for the dedicated IAM CORE Apple employees in Towson," he said in a statement.

"This victory shows the growing demand for unions at Apple stores and different industries across our nation."

Apple's director of distribution and human resources, Deirdre O'Brien, visited the shop in May to address employees.

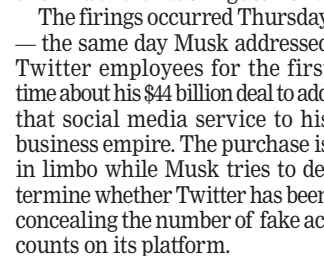
"I want to start out by saying it's your right to join a union, but it's equally your right not to join a union," O'Brien said, according to audio published by Vice.

"If you're faced with that decision, I want to encourage you to consult a wide range of people and sources to understand what it could be like to work at Apple under a collective bargaining agreement."

She said that the presence of an intermediary would complicate relations between Apple and its employees.

It's unclear how many SpaceX workers lost their jobs, but Shotwell left no doubt that the company believed they had crossed an unacceptable line. "The letter, solicitations and general process made employees feel uncomfortable, intimidated and bullied, and/or angry because the letter pressured them to sign onto something that did not reflect their views," Shotwell wrote in her email, according to the Times. "We have too much critical work to accomplish and no need for this kind of overreaching activism."

The firings occurred Thursday — the same day Musk addressed Twitter employees for the first time about his \$44 billion deal to add that social media service to his business empire. The purchase is in limbo while Musk tries to determine whether Twitter has been concealing the number of fake accounts on its platform.



Neeraj allays injury fears



MUSCLE POWER: Neeraj Chopra is all pumped up after his gold medal winning throw at Kuortane in Poland

Fraser-Pryce equals year's best timing

Paris: Three-time Olympic gold medalist Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce equalled her world-leading time of the year in winning the 100 metres in 10.67 seconds at the Diamond League meet here. She was unchallenged Saturday at Stade Charley as she matched her time at the Kip Keino Classic in Kenya last month. She also beat Jamaican countrywoman and two-time reigning Olympic champion Elaine Thompson-Herah's meet record of 10.72s, set last year. The 35-year-old Fraser-Pryce will go for a 10th World Championship gold medal in Eugene, Oregon, next month.

Kuortane: All well with @Neeraj chopra after that bad slip on his third attempt. Nothing to worry. Well done #Neeraj Chopra, congrats for one more top class performance," the AFI tweeted.

Chopra had made a spectacular return to competition after his historic gold in the Tokyo Olympics with a stunning throw of 89.30m to shatter his own national record, which placed him second at the Paavo Nurmi Games. He nearly touched the coveted 90m mark, considered the gold standard in the world of javelin throw.

His earlier national record was 88.07m which he had set in Patiala in March last year. He had won the Tokyo Olympics gold with a throw of 87.58m August 7, 2021.

Peters, who has been beaten by Chopra twice in four days, is leading the charts this season with his monster throw of 93.07m while winning gold in the Doha Diamond League last month. Chopra's 89.30m effort in Turku stands at fifth for the season so far.

THE BOXER HAS RUBBISHED NEWS ABOUT HER FILING A PETITION FOR SEPARATION

Lovlina denies allegations over 'marriage', 'divorce'

AGENCIES

Guwahati, June 19: Barely a couple of days after it was reported by a section of the media that Olympics medallist Lovlina Borgohain had filed a divorce petition at a family court here, the pugilist issued a clarification Sunday. Lovlina has now claimed that she was never 'married' and so a formal divorce ruling is not necessary for her to separate from her lover Nabanit Goswami. So news about she filing a divorce petition is wrong.

It should be stated here that Lovlina had hidden to the world that she was allegedly 'married' despite being in the media spotlight. Allegedly she and Nabanit had been in a relationship for a long time and had been staying together also for quite some time now.

In a video clarification, Lovlina appealed all to put a rest to

speculation over her alleged divorce petition. She also said that although she was in a relationship with Nabanit, the couple broke-up four months before the Tokyo Olympics. It has been said that as she wants to concentrate on her boxing career, Lovlina decided to end the relationship. She had also told some of her friends that the relationship was turning out to be 'stressful' for her.

The 24-year-old boxer also denied that the two had lived like husband and wife. Lovlina won bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Games in the women's welterweight event, becoming only the third Indian boxer to win a medal at

the Olympics. She is the first female athlete and the second boxer from Assam to represent the state in the Olympics.

In 2020, Lovlina became the sixth person from Assam to receive the Arjuna Award. She currently works as the Deputy Superintendent of Police by Assam government.

However, in spite of Lovlina's clarifications and denial, sources said that the 24-year-old had tied the knot with Nabanit of Jorhat way back in 2018.

They informed that even though the marriage was a hush-hush affair, a few close friends had indeed attended the ceremony



FUN TIMES: Lovlina Borgohain enjoys a light moment at an event in Guwahati, held recently. PFI PHOTO

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: Allaying fears of any injury during the Kuortane Games in Finland where he claimed his first win of the year, Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra said he is looking forward to starting June 30 his Diamond League season in Stockholm.

The 24-year-old Chopra slipped and Saturday after his third attempt in Kuortane. The conditions were treacherous for a javelin throw competition with a wet and slippery run-up due to rains. He lost his balance after releasing the spear in his third attempt and had

a nasty fall with his left shoulder hitting the turf.

Chopra won the competition with his opening throw - his lone legal attempt - of 86.69m. He took only three attempts, just like second and third-place finishers - Trinidad and Tobago's 2012 Olympics champion Keshorn Walcott (86.64m) and reigning World Champion Anderson Peters (84.75m) of Grenada.

"Tough conditions with the weather, but happy to get my first win of the season here at Kuortane," Chopra wrote in an Instagram post. "I am feeling good and looking forward to starting my Diamond League season at @bauhausgala

(Stockholm Diamond League) on the 30th," Chopra added.

Chopra's throw was not as big as the 89.30m effort while finishing second in the Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland, in a star-studded field Tuesday. However, the win will surely boost his confidence ahead of the Stockholm Diamond League.

"This win will certainly be a huge confidence-booster as this is my second tournament of the year. I am sure I will be able to improve as the season progresses," added the javelin expert.

Athletics Federation of India (AFI) also said that 'all is well' with Chopra. "News from

NEWS IN BRIEF

Delgado returns to Odisha FC after 2 yrs

Bhubaneswar: ISL team Odisha FC announced Sunday the return of Spanish centre-back Carlos Delgado after two years. Delgado amassed 1,389 minutes of serious game time over 16 matches in his debut season with Odisha FC in 2019-20. Delgado is a product of the Malaga CF youth academy and made his professional debut for the club's B side more than a decade ago. He has also represented top tier Spanish club Valencia in the Champions League also. He last played for Castellon in the Spanish third division before joining Odisha FC.

Title for Berrettini

London: Matteo Berrettini looks in prime shape for another deep run at Wimbledon. The second-seeded Italian retained his grass court Queen's Club title here Sunday by beating Filip Krajinovic 7-5, 6-4 in the final. It backed up his title triumph in Stuttgart last week, which also was on grass. Wimbledon starts June 27 and Berrettini is heading to the All England Club having won 20 of his last 21 matches on grass - his only loss coming against Novak Djokovic in four sets in last year's Wimbledon final.

Indian eves arrive

Colombo: The Harmanpreet Kaur-led Indian women's cricket team arrived here Sunday for their limited-over tour of Sri Lanka, beginning June 23. The team are without Mithali Raj who has recently retired and veteran pacer Jhulan Goswami, who is injured. The Indian eves will play three ODIs and as many T20Is at Pallekele and Dambulla respectively. "We are working hard on our team, we have great combinations. And it is great opportunity for juniors to show their mettle," Harmanpreet had said Saturday.

Lalbiakkima loses

Dubai: Indian boxer NT Lalbiakkima lost to Filipino Jayson Vayson in a 10-round WBC Asian Boxing Council's continental light flyweight title fight here Saturday evening. It was Lalbiakkima's first loss in five professional bouts so far in his career. All the three judges awarded the fight unanimously to Jayson with the scoreline reading 97-94, 97-93 and 96-94. The two boxers were out to get each other from the first bell and did not let up on the high-octane action throughout the 10 rounds.

Saha eyeing new role with Tripura

Wicket-keeper keen to don mentor-cum-player's role



AGENCIES

Kolkata, June 19: Discarded Team India wicket-keeper Wriddhiman Saha, who also had a fallout with Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB), is in talks with Tripura for a potential player-cum-mentor role, an official said here Sunday.

"He (Saha) wants a role of being the player-cum-mentor for the Tripura team. He has been in talks with some Apex Council members in Tripura but nothing has been finalised yet," an official informed. However, to do so, he has to first get a clearance (no-objection certificate) from the CAB and then the BCCI and then it will be taken forward," he added.

Saha however, was not available for comments. The 37-year-old played a stellar role in Gujarat Titans' IPL triumph in their debut season this year. He had pulled out of the Bengal set-up after being rejected in the Indian Test team for

Sri Lanka.

After that, CAB joint-secretary Debabrata Das made some unsavoury remarks about Saha's decision in the media, questioning his commitment for Bengal, something that annoyed the seasoned wicketkeeper-batter.

Having made a mark in the IPL, Saha was named in Bengal's Ranji Trophy quarterfinal match squad against Jharkhand, but without his consent. The veteran wicket-keeper took strong exception to it and reportedly sought an apology from Das. Later, he made it clear he's not going to play for Bengal again.

Saha was even approached by Bengal head coach Arun Lal to forget all differences and turn out the side. But the wicketkeeper-batter remained firm and said that the association must issue an apology for questioning his 'commitment'.

Having made his debut for Bengal in 2007, Saha has played 122 first-class matches

WE HAVE A POOL OF LEADERS NOW: DRAVID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 19: Six captains leading Indian teams across formats in a span of eight months isn't something that head coach Rahul Dravid had planned. However, he isn't complaining as it provides an opportunity to create more leaders within the group.

Since Dravid took over in November after the T20 World Cup, India have had Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant and Hardik Pandya (set to lead in Ireland) as national captains due to the Covid-19 related bubble breaks, simultaneous series held in countries, and injury-induced breaks.

"It's been challenging as well, we have got six captains in the last eight months, which actually wasn't the plan when I started, but it's the nature of the number of games we are playing," Dravid told 'Star Sports' before the start of the fifth match.

The 'Wall' accepted that that the times are such that one has to accept the situation. "It's the nature of COVID-19, so I have had to work with quite a few people. It has been great fun. A lot of other guys have got an opportunity to lead, we



have got opportunities to create more leaders in the group," Dravid said looking at the positive side of the things.

The endeavour has been to get better in every aspect although losing the Test and ODI series in South Africa was disappointing.

"We have constantly strived to get better, we have tried a lot of different people. In the last eight months, touring South Africa was a bit of a disappointment in terms of Test cricket," Dravid stated.

Dravid is happy with the bowling talent that has emerged thanks

Bad day for Indian hockey teams

Both men's and women's squads lose their FIH Pro League matches

AGENCIES

Rotterdam, June 19: It was a bad day for both the Indian men's and women's hockey teams as they lost their respective matches in the FIH Pro League here Sunday. The Indian men's hockey team's FIH Pro League title hopes went up in smoke after suffering a hard-fought 1-2 defeat against the Netherlands in the second match of the two-leg tie. The women on the other hand, lost 2-3 to Argentina. India needed an outright win over the Netherlands to have an outside chance of clinching the title, but it was not to be.

The Netherlands won the FIH Pro League in the men's section with 35 points from 14 games, with two games still in hand. Similarly Argentina eves became champions by earning 42 points from 16 games. Indian men are in third spot with 30 points from 16 matches in the men's section.

The men started on a strong note, taking the lead inside 30 seconds with a brilliant field goal by Abhishek. However, the Netherlands came back strongly in the seventh minute as Jip Janssen converted a penalty corner.

The Dutch earned four more



Indian women celebrate after scoring a goal against Argentina, Sunday in the FIH Pro League game. PFI PHOTO

penalty corners after restoring parity, but the Indian defence held firm. Two minutes from half time, India managed back-to-back penalty corners but the Dutchman defended stoutly.

The third quarter too produced enthralling hockey and Jorrit Croon sounded the board from a set piece to hand the hosts a 2-1 lead. That scoreline remained till the end despite the best efforts by India.

Earlier in the day the women's hockey team squandered a one-goal lead to lose 2-3 to Olympic silver medallist Argentina. Salima Tete and Deep Grace

Ekka scored for India. India broke the stalemate in the 23rd minute when Salima beat opposition goalkeeper Belen Succu with a solid drive.

Argentina equalised in the 38th minute when Delfine Thome beat Savita under the Indian bar. Argentina then scored twice from successive penalty corners in a span of three minutes with Eugenia Trinchinetti (41st) and Agustina Gorzelany (43rd) hitting the target. Even though Deep got a goal back, Argentina managed to hold on to their slender lead and win the game and title.

SERIES SHARED

BANGALORE: India and South Africa shared honours in the five-match T20I series after the last game here Sunday was called off due to rain with only 3.3 overs of play possible. During that time India had scored 28 runs for the loss of two wickets. They were put in after skipper Rishabh Pant lost the toss for the fifth successive team in the series. Hence India and South Africa were on level terms at 2-2 after four matches. Despite best efforts of the ground staff, a continuous drizzle prevented the match from being played at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here.

to the IPL. "Our white ball cricket has been good though, shows the character of the team. It was incredible to see the fast bowling talent we have (during the IPL), especially with few of the bowlers clocking such speed," Dravid pointed out.

"A lot of youngsters got an opportunity to showcase their skills, and a lot of them came good, those are really good signs for Indian cricket, exciting times ahead," Dravid exuded confidence.

England may rest Anderson ahead of crucial India match

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, June 19: England pace bowling stalwart Jimmy Anderson will likely miss the third and final Test against New Zealand at Leeds starting June 23. Sources said that the fast bowler was reportedly suffering from a leg discomfort on the final morning of the Trent Bridge Test which England won.

A report in 'Daily Mail' has said that the 39-year-old Anderson could miss the third Test more on account of taking rest rather than injury, given the busy summer schedule ahead, including the crucial Test against India. Anderson was reportedly battling a leg niggle which restricted him to just 8.4 overs of the second innings at Trent Bridge and delayed his introduction into the attack until the second hour of the final morning, the report said.

With England having taken an unassailable 2-0 lead in the Test series and the gap between the third Test against New Zealand and the re-arranged Test against India in Birmingham just three days later, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) might want to keep the ageing warhorse fresh for the contest against the Rohit Sharma-led side.