



## SCHOOLING TROLLS

Former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen shuts trolls calling her a 'gold digger' for dating Lalit Modi

LEISURE P2



## BATTLING WILDFIRES

Authorities across southern Europe have intensified efforts to control huge wildfires in many countries

INTERNATIONAL P10



## SINDHU TRIUMPHS

PV Sindhu wins her 3rd title of the season by emerging victorious at the Singapore Open

SPORTS P12

### IN BRIEF

#### Prez election today

**New Delhi:** Nearly 4,800 elected MPs and MLAs will vote Monday to elect the 15th President of India, with NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu having a clear edge over Opposition's Yashwant Sinha as over 60 per cent votes are expected to be cast in her favour. The polling will take place in Parliament House and state legislative assemblies between 10 am and 5 pm for which ballot boxes have already reached their destinations. The counting of votes will take place at Parliament House July 21 and the next President will take oath July 25. **MORE P9**

#### Alva Oppn's VP pick

**New Delhi:** Opposition parties Sunday decided to field former Rajasthan Governor Margaret Alva as their joint candidate for the Vice Presidential election. Alva, 80, would file her nomination papers July 19 which is the last date for filing nominations for the August 6 election. The NDA has fielded West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar as its joint



candidate for the post of Vice President. The decision to field Alva was taken at a meeting of Opposition leaders of 17 parties at the residence of NCP supremo Sharad Pawar. "We have unanimously decided to field Margaret Alva as our joint candidate for the post of Vice President," Pawar announced after the two-hour meeting. **MORE P7**

#### BJD to support Dhankhar

**New Delhi:** Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik-led BJD has decided to support the NDA's Vice Presidential nominee Jagdeep Dhankhar, a party leader said Sunday. "After Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to (Chief Minister) Naveen babu, it has been decided that the party will support Dhankhar," senior BJD leader Pinaki Misra told PTI. The BJD has already announced its support to NDA's Presidential nominee Droupadi Murmu, who hails from Odisha. Last time, too, the Patnaik-led party had supported the NDA's Presidential nominee but in the Vice-Presidential elections, it had extended support to Opposition candidate Gopalkrishna Gandhi.

#### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You are mistaken. When I said I'm with the people, I meant people of Sri Lanka



**CLOSE SHAVE:** A man and his nephew (R) being rescued from drowning while taking a selfie on a rock platform on flooded Nagabali river in Rayagada district, Sunday. Fire services personnel after a four-hour-long operation saved the two. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in a tweet hailed the fire brigade personnel for the successful rescue operation. **OP PHOTO**

# GST on essential items from today

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 17:** Customers will have to pay 5 per cent GST on pre-packed, labelled food items like atta, paneer and curd, besides hospital rooms with rent above ₹5,000 from Monday with the GST Council's decision coming into force.

In addition, hotel rooms with tariff of up to ₹1,000/day, maps and charts, including atlases, will attract a 12 per cent Goods and Services Tax (GST), while 18 per cent GST will be levied on tetra packs and fees charged by banks for the issue of cheques (loose or in book form).

Last month, the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising her state counterparts, had pruned the exemption list and imposed tax on a host of goods and services.

The Council, based on an interim report of the Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation, had also removed duty inversion for goods where the taxes on inputs were higher than those on the output.

Tax rates on products such as printing, writing or drawing ink; knives with cutting blades, paper knives and pencil sharpeners; LED lamps; drawing and marking out instruments will be hiked to

## BURDEN ON COMMON MAN



- 5% GST** on pre-packed, labelled food items like flour, paneer and curd
- 5% GST** on hospital rooms (non-ICU) with rent above ₹5,000
- 12% GST** on hotel rooms with tariff of up to ₹1,000/day, maps, charts, atlases
- 18% GST** on tetra packs and fees charged by banks for the issue of cheques (loose or in book form)

18 per cent Monday, from 12 per cent currently, to correct the inverted duty anomaly.

Also, solar water heater will now attract 12 per cent GST as compared to 5 per cent earlier.

Some services such as work contracts for roads, bridges, railways, metro, effluent treatment plants and crematoriums too will

see tax going up to 18 per cent from the current 12 per cent.

Bio-medical waste treatment facilities shall attract 12 per cent GST, while non-ICU hospital rooms exceeding ₹5,000/day will be levied 5 per cent GST, without input tax credit, to the extent of the amount charged for the room.

# Malkangiri, Nayagarh reeling under floods

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** With heavy rain continuing to batter several parts of Odisha Sunday, at least two districts are reeling under floods, while a landslide has been reported in another, officials said.

The flood situation in Motu area in Malkangiri district adjoining Andhra Pradesh remained grim as backwaters of Godavari river inundated several villages, affecting many people.

Water levels in Sabari and Sileru rivers have risen, and at least three villages in Motu have remained marooned for the last three days, they said.

Adding to the woes, heavy rain continued to lash Malkangiri district, though its intensity has reduced Sunday, the officials said.

Road communication with neighbouring Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh has been cut-off as water is flowing at least eight feet above NH 326, as a result of which hundreds of trucks carrying essential items have been stranded, they said. Around six other villages in Motu are also under water and residents have been evacuated to safer places by the administration. Some people have also taken shelter on nearby hills as they could not reach the flood shelters.

"Backwaters of Godavari in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh have inundated villages and farmlands in Motu. At least 743 people have been shifted to flood shelters," Malkangiri Additional District Magistrate Maheswar Nayak said.

He said Odisha Disaster Rapid



Action Force (ODRAF) personnel have been deployed for rescue and relief operations.

In Nayagarh district, swelling Kurumi and Lunijhar rivers have inundated 20 villages in Odagaon and Nayagarh blocks following intense rain. Flooding has also been reported in Nayagarh district headquarters town.

A landslide has occurred in Jangidital village in Badakalakote gram panchayat, and rescue operations are underway, officials said. Although several houses have been damaged, there are no reports of any casualty so far, they said.

Nuagada in Nayagarh district recorded the highest rainfall in the state at 237 mm in the last 24 hours till 8.30am Sunday, followed by 233.4 mm in G. Udaygiri in Kandhamal and 210 mm in Khurda's Tangi.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued orange alert warning (be prepared), predicting heavy to very heavy rainfall of 7-20 cm in isolated places in Kalahandi, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Malkangiri and Bolangir districts in the next 24 hours till 8.30 am Monday.

# 99.97% CLEAR ICSE CLASS X EXAMINATION

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 17:** Four students have shared the top rank with a score of 99.8 per cent in the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Class X board exams, the results of which were declared Sunday.

## 4 FROM STATE GET 99.2%

**Bhubaneswar:** Four students from Odisha got 99.20% and are joint top-scors from the state. They are Rishi Sagar Satapathy of SCB Medical Public School, Cuttack, Sai Krishna Panda of ISPAT English Medium School, Sector 20, Rourkela, Shreedhara Barik of St. Joseph's High School, Bhubaneswar and Ashutosh Devapriyam Nayak of Nirmala Convent School, Keonjhar. **MORE P3**

The second rank has been shared by 34 students with a score of 99.6 per cent, while 72 are on the third spot with 99.4 per cent marks.

The four toppers are -- Hargun Kaur Matharu (Pune), Anika Gupta (Kanpur), Pushkar Tripathi (Balrampur) and Kanishka Mittal (Lucknow).

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) has announced a merit list after two years as results were declared on basis of alternative assessment scheme after exams could not be conducted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pass percentage for girls (99.98) is marginally higher than that for boys (99.97), officials said, adding the overall pass percentage was 99.97.

## LOAN APP SCAM

# Lookout circular against 3 Chinese

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** A lookout circular has been issued against three Chinese nationals for their alleged involvement in a mobile loan app scam, the Odisha Police said Sunday.

The action was taken by the Bureau of Immigration on the request of the state police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW).

The three -- Shen Zhenhua, alias Tony of Jiangsu, Quan Hongwei alias Paul of Jiangsu, and Yang Haiying, alias Doris of Sichuan, China, -- are the main accused in a case registered against Kredit Gold loan app. This is the second illegal loan app case investigated by EOW.

There are more than one lakh victims of Kredit Gold loan app across the country including many from Odisha, EOW officials said. The officials suspect that the Chinese nationals are also running a similar scam in countries like Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

"They also have links in the US and Hong Kong. They are in the process of expanding their financial criminal network in African and Middle East countries," an official said.

The mastermind operates in India in connivance with many shell companies and Indians are made directors of these companies. **Continued on P4**

# Cheetahs set to return to India after 70 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal/Sheopur, July 17:** A wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is getting ready to welcome its new inhabitants, African cheetahs, which are being brought under an intercontinental translocation project and if everything goes as per plan, the majestic beasts will be here as early as next month.

The fastest land animal in the world, declared extinct in the country in 1952, will find a new home in the Kuno-Palpur National Park (KNP) in Sheopur district probably at a time when India will be celebrating its 75th Independence Day, a senior forest department official said.

"We are working on it. Cheetahs will come to Madhya Pradesh in August," forest department's prin-

cipal secretary Ashok Barnwal told PTI.

When specifically asked if the big cats, which can sprint at speeds of 80 to 130 km per hour, will arrive

in the park August 15, he said, "It can happen."

Asked whether the world's fastest mammals will be brought from Namibia or South Africa, Barnwal said, "Initially from South Africa."

On the status of MoUs with these two countries on translocation of cheetahs, the top forest official said they are yet to be finalised. An MoU will be signed with South Africa

soon, Barnwal said without elaborating further.

The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) dean and senior professor Yadvendradev Vikramsingh Jhala also did not give any exact date for arrival of the fierce felines at KNP. The Dehradun-based institute is also involved in the translocation project.

When pointed out that India was still to sign an MoU, either with Namibia or South Africa, for the cheetah reintroduction programme, Jhala said a lot of legalities are involved in such projects.

"It depends on the (Indian) government. It (MoU) can be done in two days or it may take two months. There are a lot of legalities involved in it," the WII dean said.

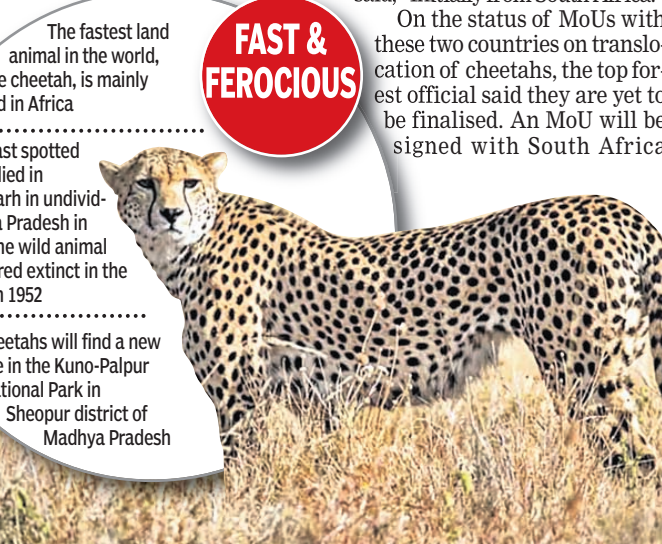
Another forest department official said the number of cheetahs to be brought to India will be decided by the central government, but added

preparations are on at KNP to receive and house them.

"Our preparations are going on in full swing to welcome cheetahs back to India but we don't know anything about the actual date of arrival or the number of big cats coming to Madhya Pradesh as it is being finalised at the level of Government of India," principal chief conservator of forest (PCCF-Wildlife) JS Chauhan said.

He said KNP has made preparations for housing 12 to 15 cheetahs, including females, and has earmarked an area of five square kilometre having eight compartments in it for initially keeping the translocated animals.

Sheopur's divisional forest officer (DFO) Prakash Verma, who underwent training to handle cheetahs along with other officials, said 90 per cent preparations to house the animals on Indian soil have been completed.



FAST & FEROCIOUS

The fastest land animal in the world, the cheetah, is mainly found in Africa

India's last spotted cheetah died in Chhattisgarh in undivided Madhya Pradesh in 1947 and the wild animal was declared extinct in the country in 1952

The cheetahs will find a new home in the Kuno-Palpur National Park in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh



# leisure



## BEYONCE DISLIKED HERSELF ON 2002 MOVIE POSTER

Singer-actress Beyonce starred in *Austin Powers In Goldmember* in 2002 as Foxy Cleopatra. She wanted to stay true to herself and her character's image as she looked too skinny in the film's poster. The film's makeup artist Kate Biscoe stated that the singer mentioned that she looked too skinny on the movie poster.

## POPSTAR ASHANTI REVEALS WHY HER NAME OFTEN CAUSES CONFUSION

Grammy Award-winning popstar Ashanti, whose full name is Ashanti Shequoiya Douglas, said that her unique name had caused confusion to other children growing up but revealed that it means 'woman of strength', and originates from a tribe in the West African country of Ghana.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Today you may want to do only those things that you love to do. You have a very optimistic outlook. Your decision making will be fast, but you may postpone some of them. Ganesha says you may go home dancing if that is what makes you happy.

**TAURUS**  
At work or in business, you are likely to feel uneasy about the people around you, says Ganesha. You will be unable to trust them and will be suspicious of their moves and intentions. Eventually you'll prefer to handle all major and sensitive things in your own hands. You will later devote some time in reaffirming your loyalty and commitment towards your friends and relations, honouring the whims and wishes of your loved one.

**GEMINI**  
Though you are always open to advice, you need to take your own, independent decision today. You may spend the afternoon putting things in order. In the evening, you will possibly have a romantic dinner with your sweetheart and may event want to propose marriage.

**CANCER**  
Both your physical and mental health will remain stable today, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may meet one of your clients for lunch. It is an auspicious day to propose and finalise wedding dates, hopes Ganesha.

**LEO**  
It's an early thanksgiving for you today, says Ganesha, as you feel full of the spirit of joy and blessing. Academically, this might push you towards developing a penchant for subjects like philosophy and metaphysics. Culturally, this translates into a desire to learn and hone your creative skills.

**VIRGO**  
Today, you shall be in a receptive frame of mind, open to all ideas; yet the stubborn will rule when decision-making matters, predicts Ganesha. Organise and sort out things at work today. But in the evening, enjoy a fine meal and then, may be, summon the courage to pop the question, says Ganesha.

**LIBRA**  
The mind is a pool of infinite thoughts; this is more true for you today than any other day. Ganesha says you will explore the depths of your thoughts. At work, you may share some precious moments with peers of the opposite sex. Intense thoughts and frivolous moments aside, today you may also cultivate a new interest in jewellery and artists.

**SCORPIO**  
The flamboyance with which you do your work leaves people awestruck. At work, your dedication will win rich favour from your bosses. After dusk, let your hair down and have a great time, says Ganesha. Unwind with music or meditation in the night, suggests Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
A delightfully emotional experience would stir up your soul today. Later perhaps, success will touch your feet either through the electronic media or through a brilliant idea. Love will steam and bubble as you expect to be asked out by your prospective life mate, says Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
You may have a good control over your temper, but Ganesha says you are very likely to lose it today, and most likely, at work. For this one day, think before you say anything and avoid getting into any sort of arguments or scuffle. Make sure you take measured steps, for it may not be a very good day, but you can do your bit to prevent it from getting worse.

**AQUARIUS**  
Your friends will make your day, especially those in high places will prove invaluable. With their assistance, you may even start a new venture without a hitch. If a professional, you will meet with wonderful success. If a student, have no worries about missing a few classes, says Ganesha. Your classmates will bail you out!

**PISCES**  
Your social standing ought to receive a boost today, and the financial success coming your way today plays no small part in it, says Ganesha. You may find yourself enjoying your own company in the afternoon, but come evening, you are likely to find yourself indulging in some intellectual discussion in the company of like-minded people.

## 'I dig deeper than gold'

Former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen shuts trolls calling her a 'gold digger' for dating Lalit Modi

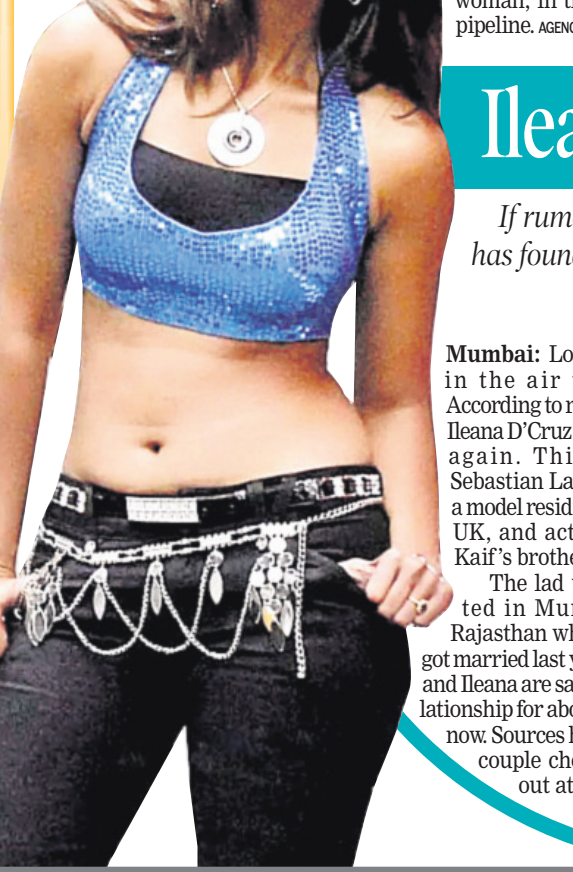
**Mumbai:** Sushmita Sen has been grabbing all the limelight ever since Lalit K Modi shared a couple of pictures with the actress and called her his partner. Well, since then many netizens called her a 'gold digger'. The actress had been keeping mum about everything till now, but Sunday she shared a note shutting down the trolls. The note read, "The so called intellectuals with their idiosyncrasies...the ignorants with their cheap & at times funny gossip The friends I never had & the acquaintances I've never met....all sharing their grand opinions & deep knowledge of my life & character...monetising the 'Gold Digger' all the way!!! Ah these geniuses!!!!" Sushmita Sen further added, "I dig deeper than Gold...and I've always (famously) preferred Diamonds!! And yes I still buy them myself!!! I love the all heart support my well wishers & loved ones continue to extend. Please know, your Sush is ABSOLUTELY fine.. cause I've never lived on the transient borrowed light of approval & applause. I am the Sun...perfectly Centred in my being & my conscience!! I love you guys!!! #stayblessed #stayhappy #rise #dig-gadugga #yourstruly."



## Nothing negative about having glam image: Disha

**Mumbai:** More than filmmakers, actor Disha Patani says it is the audience that perceives her as a diva, a label she is 'grateful' for. According to the actor, she has played glamorous characters in only two films *Malang* and *Radhe: Your Most Wanted Bhai*.

"It is a perception and I am grateful that I have some sort of identity. There is nothing negative about it. To be known for anything is big. I see people coming to me and of-



## NATYA DHARA Takkhyaka highlights life's win over death

**Bhubaneswar:** Koraput-based theatre troupe Nandanik Sunday presented Odia play *Takkhyaka* here at Rabindra Mandap under Natya Dhara, an initiative by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi (OSNA) in collaboration with Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, to promote art of theatre in the state.

Adapted from eminent playwright Manoj Mitra's original work in Bengali of the same name, the play's plot was derived from the *Mahabharata*.

Once, king Parikkhit, grandson of Arjuna, puts a dead snake around the neck of sage Shamika inside a forest as the latter doesn't respond to his request for water. The sage's son avenges his father's insult by inflicting a deadly curse on Parikkhit that he would die of a venomous snakebite. The curse works and whenever Parikkhit sprints water, he is terrorised by the snake Takkhyaka. Meanwhile, his charioteer Tantripal urges him not to die before death approaches him. Rather he should live in moments and life always wins over death, he says.

Directed by Sourav Gupta, the drama had Ranjit Jena, Sitangshu Rath, Sameer Paikray, Samir Rout, Ajaya Edding and Mritsa Hota playing important roles.

Earlier, OSNA Secretary Prabodh Rath, Odisha Natya Sangh president Haren Sahoo, joint secretary Sibashankar Tripathy and playwright Radha Raman Padhy flagged off the event. "The play was of very standard and kept the viewers glued to their seats till end," opined ONS president Sahoo.



A scene from the play *Takkhyaka* staged by Nandanik at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Sunday.

## Ileana finds love again!

If rumour mills are anything to go by, the 'Raid' actress has found love again in actor Katrina Kaif's London-based brother model Laurent Michel

**Mumbai:** Love is literally in the air these days! According to reports, actress Ileana D'Cruz has found love again. This time, it's Sebastian Laurent Michel, a model residing in London, UK, and actress Katrina Kaif's brother.

The lad was last spotted in Mumbai and in Rajasthan where his sister got married last year. Sebastian and Ileana are said to be in a relationship for about six months now. Sources have it that the couple chooses to hang out at Katrina's old residence in Bandra, at Ileana's pad around the same part of the suburb and in London, too. Sebastian, who keeps his account private, and Ileana also follow each other on Instagram.

Tongues began to wag from Saturday, July 16, after Ileana was spotted among Katrina's near and dear ones with whom the newly-married star celebrated her birthday in Maldives. Ileana herself posted one of the pictures which features Katrina, Vicky Kaushal, Sebastian, Isabelle, Anand Tiwari and Mini Mathur. It has been a few years since Ileana D'Cruz's relationship of several years with photographer Andrew Kneebone, ended.

### PEANUTS



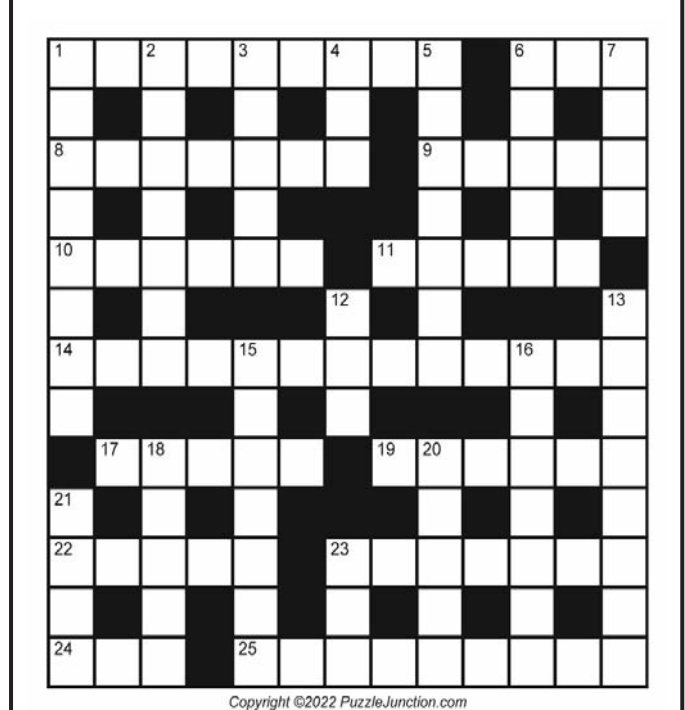
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



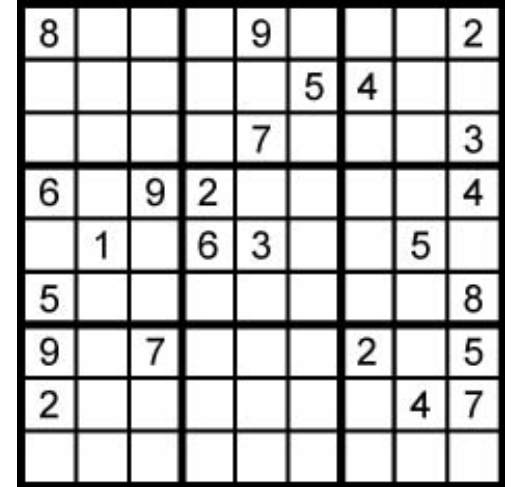
### FUN post CROSSWORD



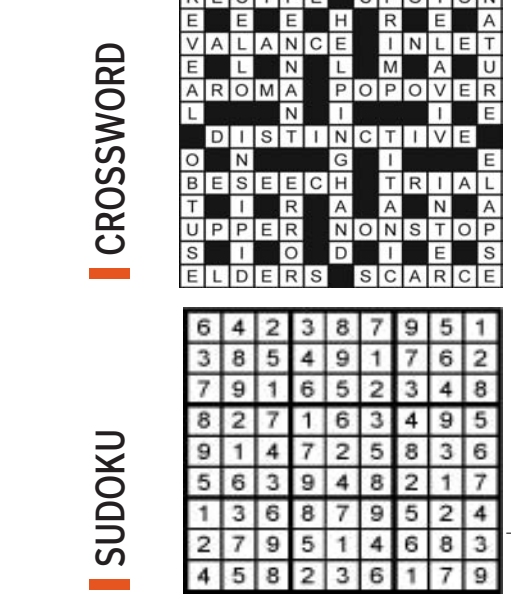
- Copyright ©2022 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Flagrant
  - 6 Menagerie
  - 8 Type of drum
  - 9 Speck in the ocean
  - 10 Saws
  - 11 Secret store
  - 14 Food made from curds of soured skim milk (7,6)
  - 17 Small hill
  - 19 International agreement
  - 22 Fragrant oil
  - 23 Book character
  - 24 Future fish
  - 25 Pleasure
  - 12 Casbah
  - 13 Racetrack
  - 15 Loose, like a criminal (2,5)
  - 16 Hard rubber
  - 18 Saltpetre
  - 20 Platitudeous
  - 21 It'll grow on you
  - 23 "The \_\_\_" (Uris novel)
- Down**
- 1 Beguile
  - 2 Fabric leftover, usually
  - 3 Fairy tale figure
  - 4 Sculler's need
  - 5 Leafy vegetable
  - 6 Zero
  - 7 Word of honour

### 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

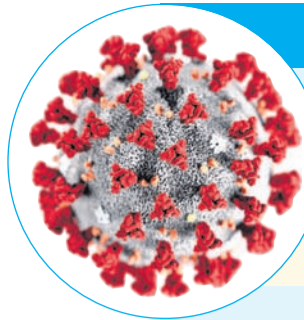


# downtown



## CRATER ON ROAD

A portion of Tulasipur TV Lane road in Cuttack caved in after a spell of heavy rain, Sunday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	56,74,54,851	53,85,10,804	63,87,404
India	4,37,50,599	4,30,81,441	5,25,709
Odisha	12,99,112	12,84,835	9,128

## ALL-PARTY MEETING FOR MONSOON SESSION

# BJD reiterates its plea for Legislative Council



BJD MP Pinaki Misra attended the all-party meeting, convened by the Centre, and pleaded for the introduction of a bill for establishment of a Legislative Council in Odisha during the Monsoon Session

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, July 17:** The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Sunday reiterated its demand for passing of the Women's Reservation Bill and establishment of a Legislative Council in Odisha during an all-party meeting ahead of the Monsoon Session

Misra also asked the Centre to pass the Women's Reservation Bill during the Monsoon Session of Parliament. Once passed, the Bill will pave the way for reservation of 33 per cent seats for women in the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies across the country

of the Parliament, scheduled to commence Monday.

BJD MP Pinaki Misra attended the all-party meeting, convened by the Centre, and pleaded for the introduction of a bill for establishment of a Legislative Council in Odisha during the Monsoon Session.

## 1.3 L candidates appear for NEET exam in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** National Testing Agency (NTA) conducted the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG 2022) Sunday. A record 18.72 lakh candidates across the country and abroad appeared for the examination.

Around 1.3 lakh students appeared in the exam at 106 centres across Odisha. Over 12,000 candidates appeared for the examination at 18 centres in Bhubaneswar.

The exam was conducted at 497 cities throughout the country and 14 cities outside India. The exam started at 2 PM and concluded at 5:20 PM Sunday.

NEET-UG is the qualifying entrance exam for admissions into MBBS, BDS, Bachelor of Ayurveda, Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) and many more medicine courses.



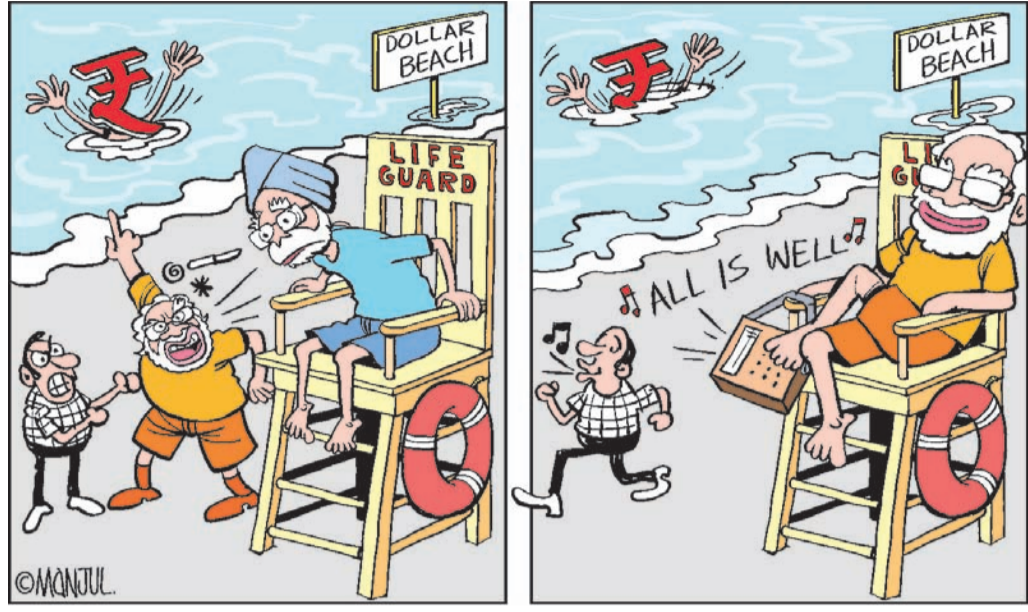
Earlier, National Testing Agency (NTA) had issued instructions for the candidates regarding the things that they need to follow before reaching their respective examination centres.

Candidates carried any one of the original and valid photo identification proof issued by the government. They include PAN card, Driving License, Aadhaar, Voter ID, 12th class board admit or registration card/ passport.

Candidates allowed to carry the items including personal transparent water bottle, additional photograph same as uploaded on the application form, which needed to paste on an attendance sheet, personal hand sanitiser (50 ml), admit card along with self-declaration (undertaking) with postcard size photograph affixed on the designated space (page 2) downloaded from NTA website.

Personal belongings including electronic devices and mobile phones were banned as per the items listed in the information bulletin.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# Cong backs Odisha bandh over Ruchika suicide case

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Sunday supported the Odisha bandh called by the Naba Nirman Krushak Sanghathan (NNKS) July 19 demanding a proper probe into the death of Ruchika Mohanty, a student of BJB Autonomous College here.

In a press meet, Sarat Patnaik, President, OPCC said, "we demand justice for Ruchika and strong action against those who were involved in her suicide. It is unfortunate that the state government ministers have not said anything till now or taken any strong step. Even police had misbehaved with the deceased girl's mother which is sad. We will support the bandh and will fight till the justice is given."

Mohanty committed suicide July 2 in a hostel room in BJB College campus, allegedly due to ragging by her seniors.

Earlier, NNKS Convener Akshaya Kumar called upon the people to make the 'Odisha Bandh' successful.

He said, "Naba Nirman Krushak Sanghathan has called upon political outfits and every responsible citizen of the state to come for-



Activists staged a dharna near the DGP office in Cuttack seeking justice for Ruchika Mohanty

**RUCHIKA MOHANTY COMMITTED SUICIDE IN A HOSTEL ROOM OF BJB COLLEGE JULY 2, ALLEGEDLY DUE TO RAGGING BY HER SENIORS**

**NNKS CONVENER AKSHAYA KUMAR CALLED UPON THE PEOPLE TO MAKE THE JULY 19 ODISHA BANDH SUCCESSFUL**

ward and raise voice against state government's failure to give justice to the victim."

The farmer leader alleged that the police are yet to get any clue even after 14 days of the girl's suicide.

The farmer leader said that ac-

tivists of the outfit staged a peaceful protest in front of the Police Headquarters in Cuttack Sunday over the issue. He has urged the leaders cutting across party lines to extend their support by joining the protest.

"The cops have ruled out ragging as the reason for the girl's suicide though she had mentioned it in her suicide note. While mother of the deceased was sitting on peaceful dharna, police personnel forcibly picked her up. The hostel warden and the superintendent should resign on moral grounds," said NNKS Convener.

On the other hand, Mohanty's mother has demanded a CBI probe into the death of the girl.

# Shreedhara only girl topper in ICSE exam

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** Shreedhara Barik made the City proud by becoming the joint topper in the ICSE Class X exam, the results of which were declared Sunday. She is the only girl student from among the four who have topped the exam securing 99.20 per cent marks in the state. Barik is the student of ST Joseph's High School, Bhubaneswar.

Four students who jointly secured the top position are Rishi Sagar Satapathy of SCB Medical Public School, Cuttack; Sai Krishna Panda of ISPAT English Medium School, Sector 20, Rourkela;



Shreedhara Barik of ST Joseph's High School, Bhubaneswar, and Ashutosh Devapriyam Nayak of Nirjala Convent School, Kendujhar.

Talking to **Orissa POST** Shreedhara Barik said that she was not ex-

pecting to be one of the toppers in the state. I was expecting to be school topper but not odisha topper, Barik said and added that the summative examination format in which she gave the exam had its challenges as well as opportunities.

She said that the subjective and objective type papers give us challenges of preparing for the exam in a special way. There was constant mental pressure on us as classes used to be in online format due to the pandemic. Online classes had its own challenges, Barik added.

She said that she believed in studies with interest. If you are interested and active then you can learn better and gain more.

## MATTER OF FAITH



Kanwariyas gathered at Gadagadia ghat of Mahanadi in Cuttack, Sunday, to collect holy water for offerings at Shaivite shrines on the first Monday of Hindu month of Srabana

# State reports 872 new Cov cases

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** Odisha recorded 872 fresh Covid-19 cases Sunday, pushing the tally to 12,99,112, a Health department bulletin said.

The positivity rate was at 4.49 per cent as the new cases were detected from 19,409 sample tests, and 123 children were among the fresh patients, it said.

The state had logged 1,065 coronavirus cases Saturday.

The death toll remained at 9,128 as no new fatality due to the infection was reported in the last 24 hours, it said.

Khurda district, comprising the state capital Bhubaneswar, reported the highest number of fresh cases at 282, followed by 144 in Sundargarh and 96 in Cuttack.

In a bid to curb the rising Covid cases, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday asked



Pic for representation

all business establishments not to sell goods or provide services to customers without facemasks.

The civic body has also asked the shopkeepers to put up 'no mask, no entry' and 'no mask, no goods' posters at their shops.

The BMC has issued similar order for fuel stations and requested heads of the private and govern-

ment offices to ensure their employees wear masks.

Odisha now has 5,696 active coronavirus cases, while 12,84,235 patients recovered from the infection, including 552 in the last 24 hours. Besides, 53 other Covid patients have died due to comorbidities so far, the bulletin added.

# 23% of people with Covid will suffer lasting symptoms: Study

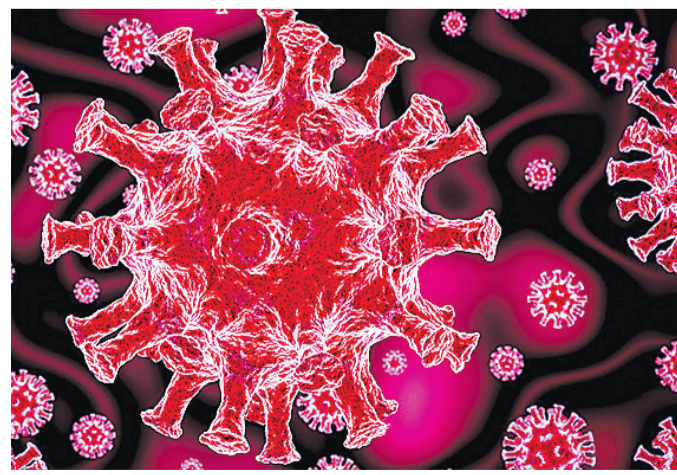
After accounting for pre-existing symptoms, about 23% of the participants reported that they had experienced new-onset symptoms, including headache (22%), runny nose (19%), abdominal discomfort (18%), fatigue (17%), and diarrhoea (13%)

About 23 per cent of people infected with Covid will become 'long haulers', finds a study that identifies predictors of who is likely to develop the sometimes-debilitating symptoms that can last for months.

The study finds that obesity and hair loss at the time of infection are predictors of long Covid, but that other underlying conditions such as diabetes or smoking status have no discernable link to long-lasting symptoms.

The research, which appears in Scientific Reports, is unique because it accounts for preexisting symptoms such as fatigue and sneezing that are common to other conditions and may be mistaken for Covid symptoms.

"Long Covid is a major public health concern. Twenty-three per cent is a very high prevalence, and it may translate to millions of people," said Qiao Wu, a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern California.



"More knowledge on its prevalence, persistent symptoms and risk factors may help health care professionals allocate resources and services to help long haulers get back to normal lives," Wu added.

While SARS-CoV-2 is typically an acute illness lasting about three

**Long Covid is a major public health concern. Twenty-three per cent is a very high prevalence, and it may translate to millions of people**

QIAO WU | DOCTORAL CANDIDATE AT UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

weeks, some people with Covid have symptoms that last months or longer.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines long Covid as symptoms that last 12 weeks or longer.

The team used an internet-based national survey and interviewed 308 infected, non-hospitalised individuals one month before, around the time of infection and 12 weeks later.

After accounting for pre-existing

symptoms, about 23 per cent of the participants reported that they had experienced new-onset symptoms, including headache (22 per cent); runny nose (19 per cent); abdominal discomfort (18 per cent); fatigue (17 per cent); and diarrhoea (13 per cent).

In addition, the researchers found that people had significantly higher odds of experiencing long Covid if, at the time of infection, they were obese; experienced hair loss; headache; and a sore throat.

Unexpectedly, the odds of long Covid among people who experienced chest congestion were lower. There was also a lack of evidence relating the risk of long Covid to pre-existing health conditions such as diabetes or asthma, or age, gender, race/ethnicity, education or current smoking status.

## BMC seals retail store over poor sanitation

**Bhubaneswar:** The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation Sunday sealed Reliance Fresh store at Gopabandhu Square for three days over poor sanitation. According to sources, the civic authorities issued the closure notice to the retail store after the latter failed to maintain cleanliness as per an advisory issued by the BMC. BMC sources said the store will be allowed to sell commodities once there is an improvement in the sanitation practices.

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
TEMP	MAX 31.7°C 30.5°C
	MIN 24.4°C 24.0°C
Humidity	95% 85%
Rainfall	4.4mm 9.2mm
Forecast	Light rain likely



# 3 held for murder in City

The trio had stoned to death Mukesh Chaudhury, an anti-social, near the dump yard in Mancheswar area March 3 this year



**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** The twin city Commissionerate Police claimed to have blown the lid off the murder of an anti-social in Mancheswar area here March this year with the arrest of three per-

sons, Sunday. Chandan Padhi of Bega village in Dhenkanal, Ranjan Kumar Sahoo of Jankia in Khurda and Rajesh Kumar Mohanty of Palasuni area in the Capital city have been arrested on charges of killing Mukesh Chaudhury, a petty thief, near the

dump yard in Mancheswar area here March 3, 2022 over distribution of booty, said a police official. The official said Mukesh and Ranjan, also a history-sheeter, were at loggerheads over sharing of items acquired through petty crimes like snatching and theft. "On the fateful day, the duo quarreled over the issue. Soon, a mountain was made out of a mole-hill and Ranjan with the help of Chandan and Rajesh stoned Mukesh to death near the dump yard in Mancheswar area," said the official, adding that soon after the crime they fled the spot.

About the crackdown, the official said they got a tipoff about Chandan's whereabouts in Dhenkanal.

"Soon after, we managed to arrest Chandan who was hiding at his sister's house at Nihalaprasad in Dhenkanal. Based on the leads given by Chandan, we arrested Rajesh from Palasuni area and Ranjan from his in-laws' house in the Temple City," said the official, adding that the crime scene has been recreated.

## PRAYERS FOR MURMU'S VICTORY



BJP workers light earthen lamps at Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar, Sunday, praying for NDA Presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu's victory

## Lookout circular against three



**Continued from P1**  
They also take help from some unscrupulous officials of mobile companies, chartered accountants/company secretaries, fintech companies, recovery agents/call centres, the official said. The Odisha police also suspect that these accused, along with some other Chinese groups, are running hundreds of illegal digital loan apps and extorting/abusing/mentally torturing lakhs of innocent loanees, mainly from lower middle-class.

The EOW also said that it will move the Interpol through proper channels for extradition of these criminals to India and also to alert law enforcement agencies of other countries.

It has already arrested several persons in connection with a fake loan app scam and written twice to Google to take down the illegal apps from its play store.

It has also requested the RBI to impress upon Google for early taking down of the illegal apps and requested Registrar of Companies to inquire and take necessary action against suspected shell companies.

Earlier, the Bureau of Immigration had issued a look out circular against Chinese national Liu Yi, the main accused in another case registered by the EOW in a mobile loan app scam.

## City to get first fleet of e-buses by end of July

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** The Capital city is all set to get its first fleet of electric buses by July end with the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) that manages the Mo Bus services starting its trial run Saturday.

According to a CRUT official, within six months, 50 electric buses will be added to the current fleet of 255 buses, running on fossil fuel, plying in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack with a daily shuttle to Puri.

"Initially, 10 e-buses will ply on various routes of the Capital city. Later, 40 more environment-friendly buses will be added to

the fleet," said the official.

According to the official, a temporary charging station has been set up in Patia area. "Each bus takes one and a half hours to be fully charged. With modern facilities like CCTV camera and USB charging points in every seat, the air-conditioned buses will be a big leap towards ensuring green public transport," added the official.

In 2020, CRUT had announced operation of more than 50 electric vehicles in the City in a bid to push eco-friendly motor vehicles in the state.

However, the project was delayed for more than two years owing to pandemic.

## Gulf Odia Assn holds 5th annual function

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** Gulf Odia Association (GOA) held its fifth annual function in Bhubaneswar Sunday with much fervour. A celebration was organised at a city hotel for the occasion.

Since the commemoration was happening offline after a long gap of three years due to Covid, the members of GOA were in high spirit and with unbounded enthusiasm. Hundreds of members, along with their families and well-wishers from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE and Abu Dhabi, attended the ceremony to cheer the exemplary achievements of the organisation.

Senior member of GOA, Bidya Bhushan Mohanty, extended a warm welcome to the participants. Delivering his speech, the presi-



dent of GOA, Ajay Kumar Das, highlighted the mission and vision of the organisation and its commitment towards the development of Odisha.

Das said that performing on its motto of "Service above Self," GOA has been consistent in promoting the social and cultural heritage of

the state in Odisha and across the Gulf countries. He thanked Sai Ashirbad Infratech's managing director, Subodh Kumar Rout for his unstinted support to the organisation's philanthropic pursuits.

Addressing the meeting, the chief guest, chairman of World Odisha Society Kishore Dwibedi, lauded the

noble initiatives being undertaken by GOA in projecting and popularising brand Odisha across the Gulf countries. Dwibedi praised the GOA team for providing aid and assistance to Odisha in health, education, and sanitation sectors during Covid.

In the event, renowned Odia humorist Gyana Hota, exhibited his outstanding satirical skill by making the audience roll in laughter. The secretary of GOA, Pyarimohan Mallick, in a power point presentation, outlined the various social and community services carried out by the organisation.

The anniversary celebration included an Odissi performance by Vedanshi Das. Noted singers Anindita Das, R S Kumar, Jyotirmayee Nayak, and Mousami Das entertained the audience with some musical numbers.

## SEMINAR IN CITY



Women at a state-level seminar organised by Akhil Bhartiya Terapanth Mahila Mandal at Terapanth Bhawan in Laxmisagar area of Bhubaneswar, Sunday

## Workshop on 'Stunting and Gut Dysfunction' in Capital

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** A one-day workshop on 'Stunting and Gut Dysfunction' was held by the Asian Institute of Public Health (AIPH) University, at the Indian Medical Association (IMA) House in Bhubaneswar, Sunday.

Georgetown University, US, and the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (Odisha chapter) were the collaborating partners of this event, organised to find means to combat stunting through research design and novel strategies.

A panel of eminent national and international scientific and action research experts presented the current status and research findings at the workshop.

A variety of topics were covered, including: the role and contributions of science to humanity,

stunting and malnutrition landscape in India and Odisha, changes in the rates of stunting during the last four decades in India and the world, economic impact of childhood stunting, the first 1,000 golden days of life, pathogenesis of stunting, enteric infections, mal-ud study results and stunting, cryptosporidiosis infection and the Vellore birth cohort, AIPH mother-baby cohort, neonatal infections, intestinal helminths, microbial secretions and dysbiosis, maternal and childhood anaemia and metabolic disorders, early bacterial colonization and infections, intestinal tight junctions and impact of dysbiosis, intestinal microbiome and its modulators, etc.

Stunting (arrested growth or lower height for age) has lifelong consequences on cognition and human capital.

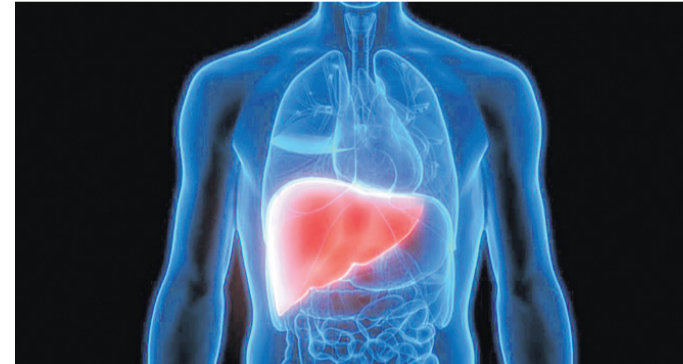
## Liver disease linked to higher risk of dementia: Study

People who have Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)—a build-up of fat cells in the liver—may have a higher risk of dementia, according to a new study.

NAFLD is the most common liver disease, affecting approximately 25 per cent of the world's population. Being largely asymptomatic, the disease may progress from the accumulation of fat in liver cells to liver inflammation and liver cirrhosis.

While excessive alcohol use can cause fatty liver, NAFLD can be caused by obesity and related conditions like high blood pressure or Type 2 diabetes.

The study, published in the journal Neurology, showed that people with NAFLD who also have heart disease or who have had a stroke may have an even higher



THE STUDY, PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL NEUROLOGY, SHOWED THAT PEOPLE WITH NAFLD WHO ALSO HAVE HEART DISEASE OR WHO HAVE HAD A STROKE MAY HAVE AN EVEN HIGHER RISK OF DEMENTIA

risk of dementia. When compared to people without liver disease, people with NAFLD had a 38 per cent higher rate of dementia overall.

When looking specifically at vascular dementia caused by inadequate blood flow to the brain, researchers found people with NAFLD had a 44 per cent higher rate than people without liver disease. Researchers did not find a higher rate of Alzheimer's disease.

People with liver disease who

also had heart disease had a 50 per cent greater risk of dementia. Those who had liver disease and stroke had more than a 2.5 times greater risk of dementia.

### WHAT'S NAFLD

Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) is the most common liver disease, affecting approximately 25 per cent of the world's population

Being largely asymptomatic, the disease may progress from the accumulation of fat in liver cells to liver inflammation and liver cirrhosis

While excessive alcohol use can cause fatty liver, NAFLD can be caused by obesity and related conditions like high blood pressure or Type 2 diabetes

associated with the development of dementia, which may be driven mainly by vascular damage in the brain," said Ying Shang from the Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

"These results highlight the possibility that targeted treatment of this form of liver disease and co-occurring cardiovascular disease may reduce the risk of dementia."

For the study, researchers identified 2,898 people aged 65 and older who were diagnosed with NAFLD. Researchers then identified 28,357 people without the disease who were matched for age, sex and city of residence at age of diagnosis.

After an average of more than five years of follow-up, 145 people with NAFLD, or 5 per cent, were diagnosed with dementia, compared to 1,291 people without liver disease, or 4.6 per cent.

## 5-year-old boy dies in Gangua

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** A five-year-old boy was washed away in Gangua canal here Sunday afternoon. The deceased identified as Gautam Reddy, son of Arakhsit Reddy, was a resident of Telugu Basti in Samantarapur area under Lingaraj police limits here.

According to sources, the victim had gone to attend nature's call near the canal when he slipped into the canal and washed away by the stormwater. His body was recovered by fire services personnel at Patitapabana Nagar in the evening.

An unnatural death case (23/22) has been registered at Lingaraj police station in this regard.

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SHORT TAKES

**Woman murdered over 'witchcraft'**

**Baripada:** A 70-year-old tribal woman was allegedly beaten to death by a villager who suspected her of performing witchcraft in Mayurbhanj district, police said Sunday. The deceased was identified as Gangi Jamuda of Badamtolia village under Jamda police station. Madan Pingua (60) of the same village beat the elderly tribal woman with a lathi Saturday night as he suspected that she was practising witchcraft that led to ailments in his family. Critically injured Jamuda was admitted to the Sub-Divisional Hospital Rairangpur where she succumbed to injuries. Police have registered a case and arrested the accused Madan Pingua, Kamalakanta Das, the Inspector In Charge of Jamda Police Station said.

**Youth arrested for raping minor**

**Berhampur:** Bada Bazaar police here rescued a minor girl from Surat and arrested a youth on charge of kidnapping and rape of the former, Sunday. The accused was identified as Sridhar Barad, 22, a native of Sikiri village under Hinjilicut police limits in Ganjam district. The breakthrough came after the police got a lead from the Instagram account of the survivor after registration of a case, IIC Prashant Bhupati said. A medical examination was conducted on the survivor. The survivor also recorded her statements in the court and was handed over to her parents. The accused kidnapped the minor girl studying Plus II in a local college and took her to Surat. There he married the girl at a temple and stayed at rented house where he repeatedly established physical relationship with her despite her unwillingness.

**Woman kills father-in-law**

**Parjang:** A man was hacked to death allegedly by his daughter-in-law over suspected family feud at Kuturia village under Parjang police limits in Dhenkanal, Saturday night. The deceased was identified as Benudhar Pradhan. The accused Jashoda Pradhan sustained critical injuries in the melee and was admitted to the Angul headquarters hospital. Preliminary inquiries revealed that the deceased and the accused were not in good terms and would often break into heated altercation over issues. Saturday night, an argument between the two took an ugly turn. Enraged, Jashoda picked up an axe and attacked Benudhar with the weapon. Benudhar died on the spot while Jashoda sustained injuries in the tussle.



Students participated in poetry writing and other competitions at Upper Kolab Project High School in Jeypore on the occasion of silver jubilee celebration of Pujya Pujya Sansad in the town, Sunday

CREATIVE PURSUIT

**Mahakalapara sees sharp surge in child marriages**

*The problem is rampant in Batighar, Jambu, Suniti, Kebi Dandua, Baulakani, Petachhela, Ramnagar and Kharinasi panchayats of the block*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Mahakalapara, July 17:** Child marriage or marriage of underage girls has seen a sharp spike in various villages under this block in Kendrapada district. The issue has acquired prominence with the number of child marriages increasing day by day. Observers claimed that on an average, around 100 underage girls are getting married every year in villages under this block.

The marriage of a minor girl held secretly at a temple shrine late Friday night is a case in this point. The priest hurriedly completed the marriage rituals after local youths rushed to the spot and opposed the marriage.

The girls after their marriage are attaining motherhood at an early age. This poses serious threats to their life and to the child in their womb. The law has banned such marriages and termed it as social evil.

There is sufficient provision of punishment for the family members and middlemen facilitating such marriages. However, such marriages take place unabated due to negligence of administrative officials and child rights officials.

As the girls get married at an early age, they fail to reap the benefit of Mamata Yojana, a maternity benefit scheme which has been instituted by the state government to assist pregnant and lactating women of age 19 and above across the state. As a result,



**Child marriages are mostly taking place in traditional Bengali speaking community where girls above the age of 12 and 16 years are married off secretly without any fanfare to avoid getting caught**

over 200 minor girls under this block married off at an underage have been deprived of the benefits of Mamata Yojana.

Child marriages are taking place in active connivance of the parents, locals, middlemen as well as sue to negligence of administrative officials. The middlemen take hefty sums as commissions and facilitate such marriages.

The parents of the girls and middlemen are tampering or editing the age of the minor girls in their Aadhaar cards and marrying them off to men much older to them in age. In many cases, parents, lured by money, marry off their underage daughters to persons much older to them in far-off places like Jhansi, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Rajasthan.

The problem is rampant in Batighar, Jambu, Suniti, Kebi Dandua, Baulakani, Petachhela, Ramnagar and Kharinasi panchayats of the block where minor girls are married off soon after attaining puberty.

Child marriages are mostly taking place in traditional Bengali speaking community where girls above the age of 12 and 16 years are married off secretly without any fanfare to avoid getting caught by the public, administrative officials or child rights officials.

The marriages are secretly held in a most clandestine manner in mutts, temples or religious shrines in the presence of close family members and middlemen.

When contacted, some Anganwadi workers requesting anonymity said that many girls are getting married at 16 or 17 years of age for which they are getting deprived of state sponsored Mamata Yojana benefits. One has to be 19 years in age to reap the benefits of the scheme.

The girls are getting affected physically and mentally due to marriage at an underage. As a result, many of them die during child birth and even if they give birth, the child born faces deformity and health issues, they added.

**3 GPs in Chittrakonda demand new bridge**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri, July 17:** People of three panchayats in Swabhim Anchal of this district have demanded construction of a bridge at Orapad launch ghat near Andarapalli village.

The issue was taken up at a meeting where over a hundred people from Panaspur, Jantri and Andarapalli panchayats had assembled.

They said that after commissioning of the Gurupriya Setu, various developmental works have been undertaken in Chittrakonda area/Swabhim Anchal.

They pointed out that the Gurupriya Setu has certainly facilitated communication to Swabim Anchal, but for people of these three panchayats, taking the route of Gurupriya bridge is a long arduous journey to Malkangiri or some parts of Chittrakonda. "If a bridge is built at Orapad ghat, it will reduce the distance between the three panchayats and Chittrakonda by several kilometres," they observed. They added that the state government should pay attention to the demand in the larger interest of the people of the three remote panchayats.

**COUPLE SWEPT AWAY IN RIVER**

**Koraput, July 17:** A couple was swept away by strong water current while crossing Jhanjabati river in Bandhugaon bock of Koraput district, Saturday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Nari Hulka (55) and Saheb Hulka (50) of Gulumiguda. Their bodies were found afloat at Gumuda ghat Sunday. Later, police and Fire service personnel fished out the bodies from the river. The bodies were sent for post mortem.

**Scam alleged in supply of kits to Anganwadis**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Derabish, July 17:** A plethora of programmes are being executed under integrated child development scheme (ICDS) for all-round development of children through Anganwadi centres (AWCs). However, massive irregularities have allegedly been committed in the purchase and supply of medical kits and toy kits for children in Derabish block of Kendrapada district, a report said.

According to the report, there are 324 Anganwadi and Mini Anganwadi centres in 26 panchayats under this block. Recently, health kits and toy kits have been provided to these centres. The price of each health kit was shown to be ₹1,500 and that of a toy kit ₹2,500.

Local people and many Anganwadi workers on condition of anonymity said that a scam has been committed in supply of these kits. Anganwadi workers said that vendors have been unofficially engaged in supply of such kits and they forcibly want Anganwadi workers to buy such

kits from them.

In some cases, funds have been transferred to bank accounts of some Anganwadi workers. In fact, a health kit would cost around ₹500 to 700 in the market while a toy kit will be available in between ₹800 and ₹1,000, locals said.

When contacted, ICDS officer Snehalata Sahu blamed the Anganwadi workers for this. "Funds have been credited to the bank accounts of Anganwadi workers who are supposed to buy the kits from the markets, but they buying kits from traders. I will visit the AWCs and look into the alleged irregularities," she added.

The ICDS officer; however, dismissed the allegation of unofficially engaging some vendors to supply kits to the AWCs.

Former zilla parishad member Raghunath Satpathy said that such irregularities are only defeating the purpose of the ICDS and the officials are tactically promoting such irregularities through vendors. He demanded an impartial investigation into the alleged irregularities.

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 The concerned shareholders are hereby given an opportunity to claim dividend by sending a letter along with their bank account details so as to reach the Investor Relation Department, IMFA Building, Bomikhal, Po: Rasulgargh, Bhubaneswar - 751010 by 15th September 2022. If no reply is received by the Company with in the stipulated time, the Company shall transfer the shares to the Demat Account of the IEPF Authority.  
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**No.O-673: NO-EERWELBBSR-06/2022-23**

1	Name of the work with Estimated Cost in Rs.	I) Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning of one no. 8 passenger lift (G+2) at MCH building at Danagadi in Jajpur District (Make: Otis, Jhonson, & Thyssenkrup). Rs. 1550575/- (Excluding GST) II) Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning of one no. 15 passenger Bed cum stretcher type lift (G+2) at MCH building at Danagadi in Jajpur District (Make: Otis, Jhonson & Thyssenkrup). Rs. 1820525/- (Excluding GST). III) Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning of lift (one no. 13 passenger (G+3) 4 stop MRL type Hairline finish, Stainless steel) to be installed at (Mechanical, Electrical and PH) Divn. Bhubaneswar at Bomikhal (Make- Otis, Jhonson, Thyssenkrup & Schneider). Rs. 1377656/- (Excluding GST). (IV) Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning of one no. 125KVA D.G Set with AMF control panel at RRRNMU building at Sartol in Cuttack District. (Make- Kirloskar / Jaksol / Mahindra) External E.I. to Olaver degree college at Olaver in Kendrapada District - Rs. 892924/- (Excluding GST). V) External E.I. to Olaver degree college at Olaver in Kendrapada District- Rs. 1486812/- (Excluding GST).
2	Total No. of Projects	Five nos. (05)
3	Period of completion	30 days to 60 days
4	Bid Identification No.	EERWELBBSR-06/2022-23
5	Date and time of availability of Bid documents in the portal	From 22.07.2022 at 12.30 A.M. to 31.07.2022 upto 5.00 P.M.
6	Date & Time of opening of tender	Dt. 01.08.2022 at 03.00 P.M.
7	Procurement officer/ Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bids.	Executive Engineer, R/W ELDIVN BBSR At- 1st floor of Divn. Complex, Rasulgargh Behind Explanade Mall, Dist. -Khurda, Odisha. Pin code-751010

Further detail can be seen from the Govt. website www.tenderorissa.gov.in.  
 Sd/- Executive Engineer,  
 Rural Works Electrical Division, Bhubaneswar  
 OIPR-25168/11/0005/2223

**Girl rescues orphan picking food from garbage, takes him to hosp**



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Udala, July 17:** Udala town in Mayurbhanj was shocked to see a picture of hunger that came to the fore Saturday. A girl saw an emaciated lanky boy picking up remnant food from a dustbin. She took him to her house, gave him food before taking him to a nearby hospital. Report said, Gitanjali Kar, a resident of Udala NAC, went near a dustbin to dump garbage, but what

she saw left her in a state of shock. A minor boy was sitting there and eating food from the garbage. She could not bear such a sight. Pricked by her sense of humanity, she took him to her house and served him some food.

But the boy, Akash, who was later found to be an orphan, was afflicted with some stomach problem. He was taken to Udala hospital where she was given preliminary treatment. Later, Gitanjali and her brother took him to PRM Medical College and Hospital.

Later she contacted the district child welfare committee to look after the boy.

Child protection officer Mamatamayee Biswal said that she would make sure of the boy's treatment.

Locals praised Gitanjali and her brother for such kindness to the orphaned boy.

**Aditya Aluminium's efforts to resolve water crisis in Rengali**



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, June 17:** Water shortage is a perennial issue in areas under Rengali block in Sambalpur district. Water crunch has posed a grave threat to the agricultural economy of the area, given the erratic rainfall.

To provide relief, Aditya Aluminium, an Aditya Birla Group company has come forward to restore water bodies and conserve runoff water, rainwater and wastewater in the township and villages under the block. This will benefit the ecosystem and the farmers in a go.

Unit head of Aditya Aluminium, Sameer Nayak says, "Our teams have been working relentlessly to contribute towards biodiversity management. The result is reflected in the Aditya Township which has a vibrant flora and fauna. We have developed a rainwater harvesting pond with 60,000 cubic metre capacity in the township. Over 1,80,576 cubic metre capacity rainwater harvesting structures have been renovated/constructed in the last five years." "Besides, we have developed more than

50 ponds for the benefit of the community. This has helped 178 farmers who can now cultivate 352 acres of land and grow multiple crops. The irrigation facility provided by the government and facilitated by Aditya Aluminium has augmented the local farmers' income manifold from ₹11,000 in the year 2013-14 to ₹50,000-₹1 lakh per annum now. In Dhorropani, over 50 acre of land is cultivated by using water from these ponds. This apart, we have partnered with the government to dig and renovate 5 of the 9 Amrit Sarovars (ponds) allocated to Rengali block as part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebration," Nayak added.

Sriram Padhan, a progressive farmer from Dhorropani village, has been growing multiple crops over many years with Aditya Aluminium's proactive interventions, such as, capacity building, implementation of best agriculture practices, agri-input, drip irrigation and ensuring insurance. He draws water from the ponds that have been dug by Aditya Aluminium. Pradhan now earns over ₹1.5 lakh annually.

**Curious Cubs opens centre in Jharsuguda**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jharsuguda:** With an aim to bridge the gap in standard and quality of early childhood education between eastern India and rest of the country, Curious Cubs Pre-School Sunday opened its new centre in Jharsuguda. The new centre was inaugurated by chief guest Sunil Gupta, CEO Vedanta, Jharsuguda along with Deepali Das, the official representative of the minister of

Health and Family Welfare for government of Odisha. Curious Cubs had its first branch in Sambalpur, which is one of the leading pre-schools with over 600 students. Co-founder Debashri Debjani in her speech discussed the journey of the school from seven students to more than 600 along with five centres. She also felt proud of the fact that it is an all-women organisation with a working staff of over 80 women.





A smile acts upon the difficulties as the sun upon the clouds - it disperses them.

THE MOTHER



# Freebies

Bundelkhand, in Jalaun of Uttar Pradesh, a highly impoverished area at the border of UP and Madhya Pradesh, had the privilege of seeing the Prime Minister of India as the inaugurator of the 296 km long Bundelkhand Expressway last week. PM Modi, in his speech at the function, drew attention to the freebies culture being propagated by all non BJP state governments with the sole aim to garner support from voters. He further stated that people offering 'revadi', a popular north Indian sweet, are incapable of thinking big and therefore are unable to create large projects such as expressways, airports or defence corridors. Since they were pre-occupied with distributing government sweets (freebies), it was only Modi and his BJP that were thinking for development of the country. His call was for defeating this kind of low level thinking currently observed in the country's politics. The PM said the youth of India had to especially guard against the growth of such a culture.

Undoubtedly, the offering of freebies by all, yes all, parties before elections is an unhealthy practice in a democracy. Yet, many social welfare projects that have been not only declared but also very successfully implemented by most state governments across the length and breadth of this nation have definitely helped the poorest of the poor. Such freebies, once a standard operating procedure for all parties in Tamil Nadu, have now spread all over this country. It is not as if the BJP has not offered such pre poll condiments itself even in Uttar Pradesh. India's economy still suffers from the Demonetization of November 2016. That sudden blow on cash was claimed to have been done to kill black (unaccounted) money, stop terror funding and destroy the counterfeit currency business that was being promoted by Pakistan. All these assertions are being proven false over and over again. Only one goal was successfully achieved. The opposition to the BJP in UP lost all its cash at that time and the 2017 elections went in favor of Modi's political outfit. The cost to the nation, for that electoral victory of the BJP, has been stupendous. Similarly, the 2022 UP Assembly elections also saw a slew of promises from the incumbent Yogi Adityanath led BJP government which included bicycles, laptops and uniforms for students to specially and temporarily hiked payment for collection of sugar cane to farmers among various other such freebies. Therefore, it is untrue to claim that the culture of 'revadi' (pre poll pots) is limited to non BJP parties alone.

Come elections and all those big sounding, holier than thou political leaders change to meek little scurrying rats holding out attractive gifts for the bulk of the voters. Sad truth is that none of them has been seen even trying to be different and calling a spade a hammer. On the other hand, many recent developments demonstrate the mindset controlling the Central government decisions. Most airports and ports of India, we are told, now belong to only one single individual. The policies implemented lately have all gone to favor only one huge corporate body which has successfully cornered the airlines market. In other words, the sky above India, too, has been privatized. Railways are under the hammer, only delay is an opportune moment. Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has been grievously damaged in the market because of the Central government initiatives to do so. Hindustan Aeronautics is down in the dumps because no new project is being given to it but, instead, private players are being encouraged to enter the defense production arena. Government bends to pressure from the automobile industry lobby not to allow entry of a 100% electric vehicle like Tesla, whereas that same lobby accepts a Volvo to enter the market as it is going to introduce a dated IC based engine technology. Banks are being merged and the government is on an overdrive to privatize them, without ever considering how to make the nationalized banks healthy and trustworthy. If the Congress led government had damaged the banks, these long 8 years of the BJP administration should be considered as ample time to turn them around.

All these must not divert our attention from the severe blow given to the poor by the increase of GST from today on essential food items, whether living in Bundelkhand or Bhubaneswar, and the resultant economic damage that will be caused to their finances.

## WISDOM CORNER

For small creatures such as we the vastness is bearable only through love.

CARL SAGAN

Treasure the love you receive above all. It will survive long after your good health has vanished.

OG MANDINO

It is never too late to be what you might have been.

GEORGE ELIOT

## WORDSWORTH

### Umami

It's usually said that the human tongue can detect only four basic tastes: sweet, sour, bitter and salty, and that all tastes are combinations of these. Many specialists now believe that taste is actually more complicated than this, with the taste buds being helped along by sense of smell, by the feel of substances in the mouth and even by the noise that food makes when we chew it. In recent years some workers have added a fifth taste, umami, to the other four, though western food scientists are divided about whether it really exists or not. It has been suggested that the taste is triggered by compounds of some amino acids, such as glutamates or aspartates, especially the flavour-enhancing substance monosodium glutamate. Both the word and the concept are Japanese, and in Japan are of some antiquity. Umami is hard to translate, to judge by the number of English words that have been suggested as equivalents, such as savoury, essence, pungent, deliciousness, and meaty. It's sometimes associated with a feeling of perfect quality in a taste, or of some special emotional circumstance in which a taste is experienced. It is also said to involve all the senses, not just that of taste. There's more than a suggestion of a spiritual or mystical quality about the word.

### Umbrage

Umbrage is offence or annoyance. These days we almost always take umbrage, the two words having been conjoined into a fixed phrase. It is less common to hear of people giving umbrage, though someone who takes umbrage presumably has had it inflicted on him by another. Or does this imbalance imply that the perceived offence is almost always in the mind of the receiver? Umbrage derives from Latin umbra, shadow, and that was its first meaning in English. A tree might cast umbrage and in later centuries its foliage came to be its umbrage. Shelley wrote "The tall ash and oak, in mingled umbrage, sighed far above their heads." In the time of Shakespeare, an umbrage was a shadowy outline (Hamlet uses it for the shadow of a man), which led to its suggesting somebody lurking out of plain view. From this grew ideas of being under the shadow of suspicion and being in disfavour and indirectly to our modern senses of annoyance, offence or resentment. Umbrage has almost entirely severed its associations with shadows, but its adjective umbrageous usually refers to shade, most often that cast by trees. We have lost its relative umbratile, which once referred to a reclusive person, one who kept in the shade by staying indoors. However, we retain another relative, umbrella, originally a sunshade, which came into English via Italian.

# NO NET ZERO SANS NATURE

## FOCUS CLIMATE ACTION

Businesses, investors, and governments that are serious about fulfilling net-zero emissions pledges before 2050 should be rushing to protect, conserve, and regenerate the natural resources and ecosystems that support our economic growth, food security, health, and climate. Yet there appear to be worryingly few trailblazers out there.

Worse, we are quickly running out of time. The science makes clear that to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change and to build resilience against the effects that are already inevitable, we must end biodiversity loss before 2030. That means establishing lasting conservation for at least 30% of land and sea areas within eight years, and then charting a course toward living in harmony with nature by 2050.

Though the challenge is massive, ignoring it makes no sense from a business perspective. A World Economic Forum white paper estimates that nature-positive policies "could generate an estimated \$10 trillion in new annual business value and create 395 million jobs by 2030." Among other things, such policies would use precision-agriculture technologies to improve crop yields—diversifying diets with more fruit and vegetables in the process—and boost agroforestry and peatland restoration.

A nature-positive approach can also be more cost-effective. For example, the Dasgupta Review (the Final Report of the United Kingdom's Independent Review on the Economics of Biodiversity) finds that green infrastructure like salt marshes and mangroves are 2-5 times cheaper than grey infrastructure such as breakwaters.

Nonetheless, private-sector action is lagging, including in economic sectors where the health of value chains is closely tied to that of nature. That is one key finding from an analysis just released by the UN Climate Change High-Level Champions, Global Canopy,



Nature functions as a kind of global capital, and protecting it should be a no-brainer for businesses, investors, and governments

Rainforest Alliance, and others.

Out of 148 major companies assessed, only nine – or 6% – are making strong progress to end deforestation. Among them are the Brazilian paper and pulp producer Suzano and five of the largest consumer goods companies: Nestlé, PepsiCo, Unilever, Mars, and Colgate-Palmolive.

Unilever, for example, is committed to a deforestation-free supply chain by 2023, and thus is focusing on palm oil, paper and board, tea, soy, and cocoa, as these contribute to more than 65% of its impact on land. Nestlé has now made over 97% of its primary meat, palm oil, pulp and paper, soy, and sugar supply chains deforestation-free. And PepsiCo aims to implement regenerative farming across the equivalent of its agricultural footprint by 2030, and to end deforestation and development on peat.

These are positive steps, but they represent exceptions, rather than any new normal. Moreover, the financial sector has also been slow to turn nature-positive. Since the COP26 climate-change conference in Glasgow last year, only 35 financial firms have committed to tackle agricultural commodity-driven deforestation by 2025. The hope now is that more firms will

join the deforestation commitment by COP27 this November. Under the umbrella of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero, 500 financial firms (representing \$135 trillion in assets) have committed to halving their portfolios' emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050. And now, the Alliance has issued new net-zero guidance that includes recommended policies for addressing deforestation.

Nature functions as a kind of global capital, and protecting it should be a no-brainer for businesses, investors, and governments. The World Economic Forum finds that "\$44 trillion of economic value generation – over half the world's total GDP – is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services." But this profound source of value is increasingly at risk, as demonstrated by the current food crisis, which is driven not just by the war in Ukraine but also by climate-related disasters such as drought and India's extreme heatwave, locust swarms in East Africa, and floods in China.

Businesses increasingly have the tools to start addressing these kinds of problems. Recently, the Science Based Targets initiative released a methodology for targeting

emissions related to food, land, and agriculture. Capital for Climate's Nature-Based Solutions Investment platform helps financiers identify opportunities to invest in nature with competitive returns. And the Business for Nature coalition is exploring additional moves the private sector can make.

Governments have also taken steps in the right direction. At COP26, countries accounting for over 90% of the world's forests endorsed a leaders' declaration to halt forest loss and land degradation by 2030. And a dozen countries pledged to provide \$12 billion in public finance for forests by 2025, and to do more to leverage private finance for the same purpose. They can now start meeting those commitments ahead of COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, by enacting the necessary policies, establishing the right incentives, and delivering on their financial promises.

Meanwhile, the UN-backed Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns will continue working in parallel, helping businesses, investors, cities, and regions put conservation of nature at the heart of their work to decarbonize and build resilience. The five strong corporate performers on deforestation are in the Race to Zero, and the campaign's recently strengthened criteria will pressure other members to do more to use biodiversity sustainably and align their activities and financing with climate-resilient development.

The world is watching to see if the latest promises of climate action are robust and credible. By investing in nature now, governments and companies can show that they are offering more than words.

*Nigel Topping is the United Kingdom's High-Level Climate Champion for COP26 in Glasgow. Mahmoud Mohieldin is Egypt's High-Level Climate Champion for COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh.*

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BY INVESTING IN NATURE NOW, GOVERNMENTS AND COMPANIES CAN SHOW THAT THEY ARE OFFERING MORE THAN WORDS



Nigel Topping & Mahmoud Mohieldin

Piate  
Tathagata Satpathy

## SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

# The varieties of climate-driven medical risk

When natural disasters force people to pack a bag and flee to safety, important items are often forgotten. Following California's 2007 wildfire season, it was estimated that "at least one family member per household left prescription medication behind during evacuation." Likewise, when Hurricane Harvey threatened to flood my own mother's Texas home in August 2017, she forgot to grab her medication in her rush to escape the storm's path—even though she was normally meticulous when packing for a trip.

With climate change contributing to the increased severity and frequency of such disasters, preventing interruptions in health care and meeting displaced people's unmet health needs will become an increasingly urgent task. We already know that extreme weather drives migration and statelessness, displacing 21.5 million people per year—41 people per minute. Hurricanes, cyclones, floods, and wildfires regularly disrupt access to preventative services (such as routine cancer screening), mental-health services, and treatments for chronic diseases. Owing both to a severe drought and civil war, many Syrian refugees lost access to health care and were later found to be suffering from chronic diseases such as cancer, hypertension, and diabetes.

Climate-driven disasters pose both direct and indirect threats to the continuity of health care.

According to a 2019 study in the Journal of General Internal Medicine, the ten-year survival rate of breast cancer patients whose treatment was directly interrupted by Hurricane Katrina was markedly worse than that of a control group.

Likewise, indirect exposures to chemicals, water- and airborne pathogens, and particulate air pollution from natural disasters are known to increase the risk of cancer. During Hurricane Harvey, for example, chemical plants and oil refineries were flooded, releasing cancer-causing substances into the surrounding environment. And researchers warn that currently inert chemicals like the insecticide lindane may become carcinogenic as the planet warms.

Wildfires pose similar threats, not only by destroying homes and health-care facilities but also by churning out harmful ambient particulate matter that increases the risk of death from lung, breast, and liver cancers. Heart attacks, strokes, and respiratory conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease often follow in the wake of the flames. New research, conducted over the course of 20 years, shows that people living within 50 kilometers (31 miles) of wildfires in Canada had a 10% higher risk of incident brain tumors and a 4.9% increased risk of incident lung cancer compared to people living farther away.

While relief efforts necessarily

focus on the immediate aftermath of disasters, these direct and indirect health effects tend to persist. Without greater efforts to maintain continuity of care, the annual wildfire season may come to be known as cancer season.

We urgently need more equitable approaches to address the heightened risks of cancer and chronic disease following climate emergencies. Mobile alerts and checklists for chronic-disease care can help save lives during emergencies and evacuations. In addition to ensuring safe shelter, disaster-preparedness protocols should also include measures to provide common prescription medicines, telehealth, virtual mental-health services, virtual crisis training for health-care providers, and resource-stratified treatment guidelines.

Among the many tragedies of the climate crisis is that those who contributed the least to the problem stand to bear the brunt of the costs. To address this inequity, the Union for International Cancer Control (and its partners) has launched the Access to Oncology Medicines Coalition to improve access to cancer medicines in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

A related issue is the health sector's carbon footprint. Here, surgical care is notable for its contributions to greenhouse-gas emissions. Administering the anesthetic sevoflurane for one hour is tantamount to driving an internal com-

bustion vehicle 20 miles, and an hour's worth of desflurane is approximately to driving 400 miles. As a result, the Michigan Medicine Department of Anesthesiology has introduced a Green Anesthesia Initiative to explore ways to reduce the field's emissions, such as by promoting greater use of sevoflurane instead of desflurane. Recently, health-care leaders have pledged to cut greenhouse-gas emissions.

Finally, though we know that people displaced by climate change are subject to a range of health risks, more research and education is needed to improve our understanding of this broad, complex issue. For example, there is more to learn about how scorching heat waves, water scarcity, food insecurity, comorbidities, and the dehydrating effects of cancer treatment might amplify disparities associated with poor cancer outcomes for people displaced by climate emergencies. Addressing the burgeoning climate-driven health crisis is a moral imperative for the World Health Organization, governments, health-care professionals, and health advocacy groups. Our ability to lead healthy lives depends on having a healthy planet. As the climate changes, so must our health policies and protocols.

*The writer is an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School.*

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Aditi Hazra

OUR ABILITY TO LEAD HEALTHY LIVES DEPENDS ON HAVING A HEALTHY PLANET

## Overworked Indians

Sir, It's interesting to note that Indians, who are among the most overworked workers in the world, get the lowest minimum statutory income in the Asia-Pacific region, second only to Bangladesh, according to a recent study by the International Labour Organization (ILO). According to the Global Wage Report, 2020-2021, India is placed fifth globally among countries with long work weeks that routinely surpass 48 hours. The survey also revealed that with the exception of some Sub-Saharan African nations, the minimum statutory salary for an Indian worker is the lowest in the world. The report also said Indians don't spend much time relaxing, which is bad for maintaining a healthy work-life balance. As per the report, Indians spend less than a tenth of their day on leisure activities, with women getting less time than men for leisure. The data in the ILO report is based on 2019 estimates presented by national agencies. According to statistics from the 2018-19 Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), self-employed and salaried males in urban areas of India worked more hours per week than their counterparts in rural areas. Recently, India made a historic decision to replace 29 existing labour laws with four new labour codes that deal with pay, social security, industrial relations, and occupational safety. This historic decision was made with the goal of rationalising, simplifying, and streamlining complicated labour laws. This will result in a significant shift in the nation's work culture. Everything is expected to change if the new laws go into effect, from working hours to the pay received in cash.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

## Throes of change

Sir, As former Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled to escape the protesters who are upset with his rule, leaving the people struggling with a severe shortage of food, fuel and other essential items, the political instability in the midst of an economic crisis is a clear indication that only a popular government can bring peace and put the economy back on track in the island nation. It also sends the message that the Rajapaksa, blamed for the destruction of the economy, will find it difficult to survive politically now. Clearly, Sri Lanka is in the throes of a political change.

Vishal Mayur, TUMKUR (KARNATAKA)

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST  
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## of the day quote

As I have stressed in all my meetings and media interactions, this election is not about the identities of the two candidates in the fray but about the ideologies and ideals they represent

**YASHWANT SINHA** | OPPN'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

The Samajwadi Party does not need advice from anyone

**AKHILESH YADAV** | PRESIDENT OF SAMAJWADI PARTY

People have been in favour of a Uniform Civil Code ever since the country adopted the Constitution on January 26, 1950. The government's job is to introduce it if people are in favour of it. It is not against Muslims. It is for the country's benefit. The Government of India may bring it very soon as the country needs it

**RAMDAS ATHAWALE** | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

## SHORT TAKES

### Flood situation improves in Assam

**Guwahati:** The flood situation in Assam improved further as no major river was flowing above the danger mark Sunday, though a little over 90,000 people continued to be affected due to the deluge, an official bulletin said. There was no report of any fresh fatality, as the number of people losing lives in this year's flood and landslides in the state remained at 195. Altogether 90,875 people in Biswanath, Cachar, Dima Hasao, Morigaon and Tamulpur districts were still reeling under the impact of the deluge, the bulletin issued by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said.

### Kerala: Heavy rains continue

**Thiruvananthapuram:** With heavy rains continuing to lash parts of Kerala, water levels in several dams, including the Mullaperiyar and Idukki, in the state are reaching their respective storage capacities and some even reached red alert status on Sunday. According to figures provided by the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA), water in six dams -- of which four are in Idukki -- under the control of Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) are at red alert levels and in one at orange alert level.

# Old newspaper wrappings are back but traders aren't happy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, July 17:** The good old newspaper 'thonga' or 'thongey' is back with a bang, thanks to the ban on single use plastic (SUP) but shopowners are complaining, even as 'kabadi walas' reselling old newspapers to packet makers are all smiles. Over the last fortnight, the price of these packets have gone up by over 40 per cent in Kolkata and the suburbs.

"We used to buy newspaper packets for Rs 35 a kilogram till June 30. This has now gone up to Rs 50. It is now turning out to be more expensive than the SUP bags we used earlier. The other option is to provide plastic bags that are made of thicker material. These are also expensive. Customers are still not keen to pay Rs 2-3 for such bags and demand them for free," a shop owner in Bhowanipore said.

He maintained that he earns a profit of merely Rs 5-6 by selling a dozen eggs. Of this, 50-60 paise is lost for the newspaper packet. A fur-

# Another comeback for Gandhi family loyalist Margaret Alva

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** Joint opposition candidate for the August 6 vice presidential election Margaret Alva, a Congress veteran, is not new to comebacks.

Barring a brief lull in 2008 triggered by her standoff with Congress President Sonia Gandhi over the issue of family entitlement in ticket distribution, the suave and soft-spoken Alva's career has largely been a dream run. Alva, 80, has a political career spanning over four

decades during which she occupied several positions including a five-time Congress MP, a union minister and then governor. Alva had publicly alleged the "sale of Congress tickets in Karnataka" in 2008 when her son Nivedith's ticket claim was shot down by the then party in charge of the state. Alva had then openly questioned the denial of ticket to her son while wards of leaders in some other states had been accommodated.

She was dropped at the time as AICC general secretary and also



from the party's election committee but made a comeback later and retired as governor of Rajasthan



**Don't ask questions. Don't raise your voice. Don't protest peacefully. Arrests will be made for seeking rights in New India**

**RAHUL GANDHI** | FORMER CONGRESS CHIEF

## BACK ON TRACK

After around 70 days, the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), following the restoration of the damaged railway tracks, will resume passenger train services in the Lumding-Badarpur section in Assam July 22 to connect Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and the southern part of Assam with the rest of the country, officials said Sunday



## SRI LANKA CRISIS

# Govt calls all-party meet tomorrow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will brief leaders of various political parties on the Sri Lanka crisis during an all-party meeting Tuesday, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said Sunday.

During a meeting of all parties convened ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, Tamil Nadu-based DMK and AIADMK demanded that India should intervene in the crisis surrounding the neighbouring country, Sri Lanka, which is facing a debilitating economic crisis. Both DMK and AIADMK raised the Sri Lankan issue, especially the condition of the country's Tamil population.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, AIADMK leader M Thambidurai said India should intervene to resolve the crisis in Sri Lanka. DMK leader TR Baalu also demanded India's intervention in

addressing the situation confronting the island nation.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Union minister Joshi said the government would hold an all-party meeting on the Sri Lanka situation Tuesday which will be chaired by union ministers Sitharaman and Jaishankar.

Citing an office memorandum dated July 16, a senior government official said that the briefing by the finance and external affairs ministries has been scheduled for the evening of July 19, the second day of the monsoon session of Parliament. The briefing will be attended by the floor leaders of various political parties, the official added. The monsoon session will begin July 18 and is scheduled to continue till August 12.

India has assured Sri Lanka that it will continue to support democracy, stability and economic recovery in the country, which is at a crucial juncture, amid the unprecedented political crisis and economic turmoil.

## ALL-PARTY MEET

# Oppn rakes up KP issue, Chinese incursion

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 17:** In the all-party meeting called by the government Sunday, the opposition demanded discussion on 13 prominent issues including the attacks on Kashmiri Pandits and Chinese incursion.

Leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said, "The issue of Chinese incursion, foreign policy, changes in Forest Conservation Act and attack on Kashmiri Pandits and Congress leaders need to be discussed in the House."

The opposition took up 13 issues in the meeting while the government wants to pass 32 Bills, Kharge said.

The government, on the other hand said they are open to discussion.

Pralhad Joshi Minister of Parliamentary affairs said that an all-party meeting has been convened on Tuesday to discuss the issue of Sri Lanka where Minister of External Affairs Minister will be present.

The AAP raised the issue of Arvind Kejriwal's Singapore visit,



saying that the LG was not clearing the file, sources said.

Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh said the Prime Minister was not present in the meeting.

"Today in the all-party meeting many political parties, including those supporting NDA, pointed out the contradiction in the Modi

Sarkar: On one hand it is claiming credit for its Presidential candidate on the other hand it is killing off the Forest Rights Act, 2006."

As many as 24 new Bills will be introduced in the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, including the Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2022. "The Bill seeks to replace the Press and

Registration of Books (PRB) Act, 1867 by decriminalisation of the existing Act, keeping the procedures of the extant Act simple from the view point of medium/small publishers and uphold the values of Press Freedom".

Training, a body established to improve the levels of the legislative function of Parliament and state legislatures. Alva was also made AICC general secretary in charge of crucial states Maharashtra, Punjab and Haryana. She also went on to become the first woman governor of Uttarakhand besides serving as governor of Goa, Gujarat and Rajasthan. A little-known fact about Alva is that she was encouraged to enter politics by her father-in-law Joachim Alva and mother-in-law Violet Alva.

The Bill may see stiff opposition as it is said that it is being brought to control the small publishers and digital media. The Opposition has already alleged that the government is trying to stifle the voice of dissent in the country.

Another important Bill is the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022, which seeks to provide a regulatory framework for Carbon Trading in India, to encourage penetration of renewables in energy mix, and effective implementation and enforcement of the Energy Conservation Act.

Four other Bills have been referred to the standing committee: Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021; Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill, 2019; Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019; and National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021.

## PURE DEVOTION



Sadhus wait in a queue to get themselves registered for the Amarnath Yatra 2022, at Ram Mandir base camp in Jammu

# SC to hear pleas filed by Uddhav, Shinde July 20

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear July 20 a batch of pleas pertaining to the recent political crisis in Maharashtra that led to the fall of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in the state.

A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli, which was urged by senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Uddhav Thackeray faction, that the matters required urgent listing and hearing, has now fixed as many as five petitions for hearing Wednesday.

The CJ-led bench, July 11, had granted an interim relief to the Uddhav Thackeray faction



The turmoil began with a rebellion in the Shiv Sena following which Uddhav Thackeray resigned as Chief Minister June 29

A day later, rebel Sena leader Eknath Shinde took oath as Chief Minister with the BJP as his partner

MLAs by asking Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar not to proceed with the plea seeking their disqualification as sought by the Shinde group on the ground of defying party whip during the trust vote and the election of the speaker.

The top court seized of five petitions as on date and the first one was filed by the Shinde faction during the summer vacation when some rebel Sena MLAs moved before it challenging the disqualification pro-

ceedings initiated by the deputy speaker.

On June 27, the vacation bench had extended the time for the rebel MLAs to file written responses to the deputy speaker's disqualification notice till July 12.

While agreeing to the submission of Sibal for an early hearing, the CJ had said that it will have to set up a bench for hearing the batch of petitions. On July 3, Rahul Narwekar of the BJP was elected Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly.

# Govt encourages online dating to bump up Parsi population

About 30 per cent of eligible adults are unmarried in the Parsi community, statistics show

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** The Minority Affairs ministry has devised a scheme to 'restore' the Parsi population in country, which apparently has been seen to be dwindling because of little interest in marriage among the eligible bachelors.

About 30 per cent of eligible adults are unmarried in the Parsi community statistics show. In light of the fact, the ministry has come up with 'Jiyo Parsi', a scheme that encourages 'online dating' and marriage counselling among Parsi men and women. Shernaz



Cama, Director of Parzor Foundation, one of the implementing bodies for this scheme, said that it is necessary to encourage people of the Parsi community to marry and have children because the total fertility rate in this community is about 0.8 per couple and an average of 800 people die every year against the birth of 200 to 300 children, which is worse in comparison to the situation of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians.

According to the new National Health and Family Welfare Survey (NHFW), the total fertility rate is 1.94 in the Hindu community, 2.36 in the Muslim community, 1.88

in the Christian community and 1.61 in the Sikh community. According to the 2011 census, the population of the Parsi community in the country was 57,264 as against 1,14,000 in 1941.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs launched the 'Jiyo Parsi' scheme in November 2013 with the intention to balance the population of the Parsi community and increase the total fertility rate, for which a budget of 4 to 5 crore is provided every year. "Since the launch of the scheme (till July 15), 376 babies are born, which is more than the average of 200 babies born in the Parsi community every year," Cama told PTI.

He said that the biggest reason for the low birth in the community is unmarried adults. "It has been found in the study that about 30 per cent adults of Parsi community are unmarried even though they are eligible for marriage.



# Uttar Pradesh is now 'Expressway Pradesh'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, July 17:** Uttar Pradesh, until not so long ago, was known for its pot-holed roads that made one break the journey instead of complete it.

Today, the state has emerged as the expressway capital of the country with 13 expressways – six expressways having been completed and seven under various stages of construction.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sunday, inaugurated the sixth 296-km-long Bundelkhand Expressway that directly connects with Delhi.

It will connect the backward districts of the region such as Chitrakoot, Banda, Mahoba, Hamirpur, Jalaun, Auraiya and Etawah.

According to a government spokesman, "Realising that infrastructure is the growth engine of the economy and roads are the mirror of progress, the double-engine Bhartiya Janata Party-led government has worked extensively for the rejuvenation of roads and improving connectivity."

The access-controlled road network is being developed by the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA), the agency set up by the state government to steer its expressway expansion programme.

All the four expressways, inter-linked, will bring the remotest and backward regions closer to not only state capital Lucknow but also Delhi and beyond, opening up markets and giving a big boost to socio-economic development in the region.

"These corridors will give impetus to rapid, balanced and inclusive growth as well as immense



employment potential. Lands have been marked for this. Airstrips are also being built on the expressways for landing and take-off of Air Force aircraft in case of emergency," said Avnish Awasthi, UP Home Secretary and Chief Executive, UPEIDA.

While the Yamuna expressway, which came up in 2012, and the Agra-Lucknow Expressway that opened to public in 2018 started the trend, it is the four new expressways: the 340-km Purvanchal, 296-km Bundelkhand, 91-km Gorakhpur Link, and the 594-km Ganga expressways that are scripting a silent transformation in the state.

Once these are complete, UP would have a network of 1,788 km of expressways in all, the highest in the country.

Currently, the total expressway network in India is around 1,822 kilometres which has earned UP the sobriquet of 'Expressway Pradesh'.

The government spokesman said that from village streets to block headquarters and district head-

quarters, a network of roads connecting other states and other countries has been created.

He said that apart from boosting connectivity, the expressway network will also spur economic activity in eastern UP, bring investment and jobs.

Also, the foundation stone of the 594 km-long Ganga Expressway has been laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This expressway will not only reduce the distance between East and West but will also serve to connect people.

Additional Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal said, "The industrial hubs are being developed but we are already seeing the impact of the high-speed expressways."

Not only will the expressways bring the remote areas of the region on the expressway network, it will drastically cut down the travel time.

For instance, the travel time between Delhi and Chitrakoot district in Bundelkhand will come down to eight hours from 12-14

hours now via the Yamuna, Agra-Lucknow, Purvanchal and Bundelkhand expressways. Currently, there is no direct road link between Delhi and the Bundelkhand region.

While work is underway on the expressways, UPEIDA is also working on creating industrial hubs around the area. Work is also underway on the defence corridor project, where land is being allotted to defence companies to set up their manufacturing unit.

"Take for instance the famed mangoes from Malihabad. Mangoes are a highly perishable commodity. But the Agra-Lucknow expressway has meant that the mangoes get transported to Delhi and beyond during the season," Sehgal added.

The Purvanchal Expressway will be completed in about 22 months. The Bundelkhand Expressway is expected to open a year ahead of its scheduled deadline.

According to Awasthi, one of the main reasons for the change in work culture was because of the push given to infrastructure development by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

"UPEIDA was empowered to make quick decisions, be it land acquisition, getting forest and environment clearance, shifting utilities, etc. We managed to get environment clearance for Purvanchal and Bundelkhand expressways in record time," he said.

The fast-track decision-making and availability of land ensured that developers promptly came forward to bid. Another reason that developers were confident to take up projects was because UPEIDA did not keep their dues pending for

## EXPRESSWAY NETWORK IN UP

1. Yamuna expressway - 165 km
2. Noida-Greater Noida expressway - 25 km
3. Agra-Lucknow expressway - 302 km
4. Delhi-Meerut expressway - 96 km
5. Purvanchal expressway - 341 km
6. Bundelkhand expressway - 296 km

TOTAL LENGTH 1,225 KM

## EXPRESSWAYS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

1. Gorakhpur Link expressway - 91 km
2. Ganga expressway - 594 km
3. Lucknow-Kanpur expressway - 63 km
4. Ghazipur-Kanpur expressway - 380 km
5. Gorakhpur-Siliguri expressway - 519 km
6. Delhi-Saharanpur-Dehradun expressway - 210 km
7. Ghazipur-Ballia-Manjhiat expressway - 117 km

TOTAL LENGTH (UNDER CONSTRUCTION) 1,974 KM

long. This is also the first time that a small stretch of two of the expressways - Agra-Lucknow and Purvanchal - has been converted into an airstrip, for emergency landing of flights.

# Experts' take on Guj civic woes exposed by recent rain havoc



**FORMER CHIEF TOWN PLANNER OF THE STATE PARESH SHARMA SAID HISTORICAL DATA ON RAINFALL IS USED FOR FUTURE PROJECTIONS AND PLANNING AND THIS OLD METHOD NEEDS TO BE REPLACED WITH PROJECTION BASED PLANNING, CONSIDERING CLIMATE CHANGE AND MONSOON PATTERNS**

**THE RAINY DAYS HAVE REDUCED BUT THE INTENSITY HAS INCREASED, SO INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO MEET THESE ERRATIC RAIN PATTERNS IN THE COMING YEARS, HE SUGGESTED**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Gandhinagar, July 17:** In three hours Ahmedabad received 125 mm rain July 10, and faced water-logging, Rajkot received 133 mm in 24 hours, yet the roads were still flooded July 11. The same was the story of Surat, Vadodara and other cities in Gujarat. This is because urban planning for storm water is based on historical data and not on projected data, climate change is not considered while planning, is what the experts say.

When one listens to the officers or the elected representatives, they prove the experts right. Take the example of Ahmedabad, the Municipal Corporation Water Committee chairman Jatin Patel said, "The city has 980 kilometres storm water pipeline, its capacity is to carry one inch of rain in an hour, if it rains more water-logging will happen."

In another major city Vadodara, the municipal corporation website says in 2012 the storm water network was 108 square kms, re-designed and maintained natural drains of 33 kms, for a city spread over 158 square kms with a population of 16 lakh in 2011.

City executive engineer Rajesh Shimpi did not answer queries whether this capacity was expanded or not in the last 10 years.

Again, Saurashtra's financial capital Rajkot's present storm water capacity is not enough for its requirements. The city's west zone

deputy engineer KS Gohil said, "Based on other colleagues' experience, where it rains heavily and where less, a pipeline with 1400 mm to 300 mm diameter is installed. Our aim is to bring down the water-logging time, there can't be a 100 per cent solution. Earlier water used to stagnate for one and a half hours, but that has been reduced to 40 to 45 minutes."

According to Devang Parekh, Dean of Indubhai Parekh School of Architecture, Rajkot, the water-logging for hours and sometimes for a day or two in the cities can be attributed to two reasons – firstly, very heavy rain and secondly, poor planning.

For decades climate change has been talked about and even budgets have been allocated, but no one is serious, felt Mahesh Pandya, an environmentalist. Citing a recent example, he said June 7 the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation held a public consultation event to plan how to use a Rs 3000 crore World Bank loan to create storm water and drainage facilities. But no brainstorming happened, only the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Commissioner were felicitated.

Sharma and Parekh are of the view that as population growth is estimated, similarly rainfall should be estimated for the next five to ten years. Based on such estimates the drainage/storm water pipeline size and even cement ducts can be planned and designed that can clear rainfall of 4 or 5 inches in an hour.

## PREZ POLL

# UP MLAs' vote value highest; 5 MLAs to vote outside state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, July 17:** With the highest vote value of 208 for each of the total 403 MLAs, Uttar Pradesh will be an important state to watch out for in Monday's Presidential election in which NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu will take on opposition nominee Yashwant Sinha.

Brij Bhushan Dubey, the returning officer for the presidential election in Uttar Pradesh, said, five MLAs of the state will cast their vote outside the state poll due to personal reasons.

Elaborating on the instructions issued for the poll, he told PTI that All MLAs have been informed, and told as to what precautions they have to take. The MLAs will have to use a special pen of the ECI to vote for the candidate of their choice.

Voting will take place through ballot paper at Tilak Hall in the UP Vidhan Bhavan from 10am to 5pm, Dubey said, and added three polling booths have been set up.

Two ballot boxes, which have come from Delhi, will be sent back to the national capital after voting is completed July 18 itself, he said.

Counting of votes will be held in Delhi July 21, Dubey said. Out of the five MLAs from the state who will vote outside, four will cast their vote in Delhi, while one would

## Day before poll, Murmu meets BJP MLAs in Guj

**Ahmedabad:** A day before the election for the country's president, the National Democratic Alliance's nominee Droupadi Murmu met Gujarat BJP MLAs here on Sunday to seek support for her candidature. Earlier, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and state BJP chief CR Paatil received Murmu on her arrival at the Ahmedabad airport. Murmu later interacted with the state BJP legislators at the Narayani Heights Hotel in Ahmedabad city. The meeting was earlier supposed to be held at Kevadia near the Statue of Unity in Narmada district Wednesday, but was postponed due to heavy rains in the region.

do so in Thiruvananthapuram.

The five MLAs are Mukesh Choudhary (BJP MLA from Nakur in Saharanpur district), Ziaur Rahman (Samajwadi Party MLA from Kundarki in Moradabad district), Pradeep Kumar Singh (Rashtriya Lok Dal MLA from Sadabad in Hathras), Brijbhushan Rajput (BJP MLA from Charkhari in Mahoba) and Neel Ratan Patel (BJP MLA from Sevapuri in Varanasi).

## SOWING HOPES



Farm workers sow paddy in a field in Surat, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

# Techie makes smart cradle to make life easier for parents

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Ahmedabad, July 17:** It's hard for working new parents to stay awake all night to care for their child, even during the day they can't be by the cradle the whole day. It's a real challenge for the new parents to calm the crying child every time the cradle stops swinging. A start up from Ahmedabad has come up with an affordable idea. Rushabh Sheth has created an electronic cradle with some interesting features.

Rushabh shared with IANS, "I had to do a project during my final

semester of mechanical engineering in 2017. I used to see the mothers doing labour work at construction sites. How they had to create some temporary cradle out of bedsheets or sarees. They could not even stay near their children to swing them. Sometimes their children got out of the cradle and started playing in the risky areas as the cradle stopped swinging. I saw a similar situation at my home too. That drew me to build a motorised cradle."

Rishabh shares about the journey of his cradle design. "I made a working model with a normal steel cradle as I did not have much money.



But Gujarat Technological University saw potential in my design. So they promoted it, I also got some media coverage at that time."

Rishabh describes the design, he says this cradle uses a power adapter like laptops and mobile charger, so it doesn't pass an electric current. It has a timer of 20 minutes and speed variation options

that can be changed according to the weight. We make a full cradle and also a user-friendly cradle kit that can be installed with any normal cradle by the customer themselves, he adds.

Rushabh said right now the cradle costs between Rs 2,500 and Rs 5,000, 6,000. I have about 6,000 happy customers. We are trying to make it more affordable along with adding some features like more timer variation options, adding some attractive toys to the cradle and connecting the system with some mobile app to entertain the child with lullabies.

# Lucknow's Lulu mall turns into communal cauldron

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, July 17:** The newly opened Lulu Mall in Lucknow is turning into a communal cauldron with right-wing activists going overboard in protesting against the alleged namaz incident that took place in the mall last week.

Groups of activists belonging to Karni Sena and Rashtriya Hindu Sanrakshak Dal, are storming the mall, claiming to recite the Hanuman Chalisa there in response to the group that offered 'namaz' in the mall.

A video of two men reciting Hanuman Chalisa in the mall

went viral Saturday afternoon.

Later in the night, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) South, Gopal Krishna Choudhary was shifted after the controversy. Subash Chandra Shakya, who was DCP traffic, has been made new DCP South.

Also, inspector in-charge, Sushanti Golf City police station, Ajay Pratap Singh was removed for negligence. Inspector, Gosaiganj police station, Shaileendra Giri has replaced Singh, who has been sent to reserve police lines.

Police officials said that drones will now be used for surveillance

at the mall from Sunday. So far, more than 20 people have been taken into custody on the issue. Meanwhile, huge crowds have been thronging the mall since it opened Monday last.

The mall management has put up a notice stating that no religious work or prayers will be permitted inside the mall and police personnel were deployed outside.

Police officials said that they were investigating the matter of offering namaz after an FIR was registered on the complaint of mall PRO Sibtain Hussain who said that the persons offering namaz, as seen in the viral video,



are not their employees.

The FIR was lodged under sections 153 A (1) (promoting enmity by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations on grounds of religion), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting religion or religious beliefs), 341 (wrongfully restraining any person) and 505

(statements conducing to public mischief) of the Indian Penal Code.

Shishir Chaturvedi of the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha (ABHM) has claimed that the Lulu Mall was promoting love jihad by ensuring that 80 per cent of its male employees belong to one community while the female employees are from another community.

# Scientists grow potato, tomato in one plant

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Varanasi, July 17:** Potatoes and tomatoes are the almost essential ingredients of Indian cuisine, but did anyone ever believe that the two could be grown in one plant?

The Indian Institute of Vegetable Research (IIVR) in Varanasi has developed a technique through which potato and tomato can be grown on a single plant and the same is named as 'pomato'.

Pomato was developed last year and IIVR scientists have been trying to further improve the quality and quantity of the same.

They have now succeeded in growing brinjal on the pomato plant and this is aptly called 'Brimato'. Chillies are also being grown on the Brimato plant.

Scientist Anant Kumar said that it had taken five years of research to develop the new multiple varieties.

## IT'S A POMATO!



"Each plant of pomato can yield up to two kilograms of tomatoes and 600 grams of potatoes. The lower layer of soil is for potatoes and the upper layers for tomatoes. Similarly additional layers are used to grow brinjals and chillies. These plants can be grown in pots and are ideal for households," he added.

He further said that for larger cultivation areas, these plants are grafted into the soil but take longer time to be ready for use.

"The brinjal takes about 25 days to get ready to be plucked while tomato takes 22 days," he said.



of the day quote

Barbados has a population of 2.5 lakh and yet has a cabinet of 27. Maharashtra's 12-crore population has a cabinet of 2 members that are taking arbitrary decisions. Where is the regard for the constitution?

TEJASHWI YADAV | RJV LEADER

We do not want to install a statue inside the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Has anyone of you ever heard her (Murmu.s) voice? She has not even addressed a press conference since her name was announced. At least we have all heard from Yashwant Sinha and have an idea of what he stands for

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

We ensured that the vaccine was available free of cost to everyone and the support of the Union Government was imminent. Today, I am appealing to all of you to take the precaution dose at the earliest. This dose needs to be administered after the first and second dose. Those who are yet to take the precaution should do it immediately

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Trooper killed in terror attack

Srinagar: One CRPF Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) was killed after terrorists fired upon the troopers at Gangoo in South Kashmir's Pulwama district, officials said Sunday. "Terrorists fired upon Naka party at Gangoo Crossing Pulwama from nearby Apple orchard. In this terror incident one CRPF personnel ASI Vinod Kumar got seriously injured. He was shifted to hospital for treatment where he attained martyrdom. Area cordoned off. Search in progress." Additional police parties have reached the spot and an operation has been started to nab the attackers.

Godavari showing signs of let-up

Amaravati: River Godavari which was in spate showed indications of a let-up Sunday evening at Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage at Dowaleswaram near Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh, belying fears that the water level might rise to a higher level. The Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Information and Management System recorded 25.20 lakh cusecs at the Cotton Barrage at 5.29 PM down from 25.93 lakh cusecs in the morning. Given the situation, the deluge may not touch the 28-lakh cusecs mark as was anticipated, with the discharge at upstream Bhadrachalam in neighbouring Telangana dropping drastically to 18.20 lakh cusecs.

Seven missing as boat capsizes

Giridih (Jharkhand): At least seven people from two families went missing after the boat they were on capsized in Panchkhero Dam in Jharkhand's Giridih district Sunday, an official said. The incident took place between 11.30 am and noon when the two families, hailing from Giridih district, hired a country boat for a water ride. Eight people were on board but the boatman succeeded in swimming to the shore, he said.

Two workers buried alive

Chennai: Two contractual workers were buried alive after a landslide occurred while they were working inside an underground for laying drainage pipelines. The incident occurred in the wee hours of Sunday at Suttur in Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu.

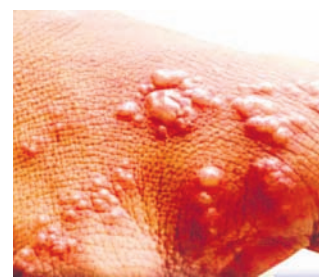


The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in Karnataka is 2 percent (around 20 per 1000 live births), and the aim is to bring it down to single digit

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

SUSPECTED MONKEYPOX CASE

A man, who reached Kannur district in Kerala from a Middle East country, was admitted to the government medical college after he showed signs of monkeypox. The hospital authorities told IANS that the youth was under observation in an isolated ward and that his samples have been sent for testing to the Pune Virology lab



MURMU VS SINHA

MPs, MLAs to vote today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 17: Nearly 4,800 elected MPs and MLAs will vote Monday to elect the 15th President of India, with NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu having a clear edge over Opposition's Yashwant Sinha as over 60 per cent votes are expected to be cast in her favour.

With the support of regional parties such as BJD, YSRCP, BSP, AIADMK, TDP, JD(S), Shiromani Akali Dal, Shiv Sena and now JMM, Murmu's vote share is likely to reach nearly two-thirds and she is set to become the first woman from the tribal community to occupy the top constitutional post.

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) nominee now has over 6.67 lakh votes after the support of various regional parties, out of a total of 10,86,431 votes.

The electoral college which elects the President through the system of proportional representation comprises elected MPs and members of state legislative assemblies. Nominated MPs and MLAs, and members of legislative councils are not entitled to vote in this election.

The system of secret ballot is followed and parties cannot issue whip to their MPs and MLAs with regard to voting. The value of the vote of a member of Parliament has



gone down to 700 from 708 in this presidential poll due to the absence of a legislative assembly in Jammu and Kashmir.

The value of vote of an MLA varies in different states. In Uttar Pradesh, the value of vote of each MLA stands at 208, followed by 176 in Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu. In Maharashtra, it is 175. In Sikkim, the value of vote per MLA is seven, while it is nine in Nagaland and eight in Mizoram.

Before naming Sinha, a former Union minister and a BJP leader, the opposition camp had approached Gopalkrishna Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and a former governor of West Bengal, NCP supremo Sharad Pawar and

National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah to contest the poll.

After their refusal to be part of the electoral battle, Sinha, then the Trinamool Congress vice president, was named as the Opposition's candidate. The election of the President is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote.

In accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote, every elector can mark as many preferences, as there are candidates contesting the election.

These preferences for the candidates are to be marked by the elector, by placing the figures 1, 2,

The polling will take place in Parliament House and state legislative assemblies between 10 am and 5 pm for which ballot boxes have already reached their destinations

The counting of votes will take place at Parliament House July 21 and the next President will take oath July 25

3, 4, 5 and so on, against the names of the candidates, in the order of preference, in the space provided in column 2 of the ballot paper.

This is the reason why electronic voting machines are not used in this as well as vice presidential, Rajya Sabha and legislative council polls. The EVMs are based on a technology where they work as aggregator of votes in direct elections such as the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. According to Election Commission's directions, while MPs will get a green-coloured ballot paper, the MLAs will get a pink ballot paper to cast vote. Separate colours help the returning officer ascertain the value of vote of each MLA and MP. Seeking to maintain secrecy of voting, the EC has issued a specially designed pen with violet ink to enable voters mark their ballot papers in the presidential poll.

Indian carriers face tough time



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 17: Indian carriers which were looking forward to sunny days with the receding of Covid-19 pandemic have hit serious turbulence, as they are now faced with an issue they left unaddressed in the past two years: employees' disaffection over low pay.

On July 2, around 55 per cent of IndiGo's domestic flights were delayed as a significant number of its cabin crew went on leave, with sources saying they reportedly went for an Air India recruitment drive. On July 13, some SpiceJet pilots circulated a message that the airline's captains and first officers will be going on sick leave Thursday to protest their low salaries. However, on the said day, all pilots reported on duty, according to the airline.

Indian carriers, which saw their revenues sapped dry during the global virus attack, had cut down salaries of their employees during the peak of the pandemic to save cash. Most of them are yet to bring these salaries back to pre-pandemic levels.

A senior executive of a low-cost carrier said employees are not lost on the fact that while their workload at present is as huge as it was before the pandemic, they are getting lower salaries, even as a rising inflation nibbles away at this circumscribed income.

This has created a lot of discontent among the employees, especially those who are at the bottom of the hierarchy, like technicians, the executive added.

Two technicians - who took part in this 'sick leave protest' - said the new joinees in the low-cost carriers are paid anywhere between Rs 8,000-Rs 15,000 per month, which is extremely less.

While it seems that the issues of low pay have cropped up only now, the revolt reveals a deeper malaise

A significant section of aircraft maintenance technicians of IndiGo and Go First have gone on sick leave in the last one week to protest their low salaries

However, despite the staff crunch, both carriers have managed to keep their flight operations unaffected, barring a few embarrassing incidents

The truancy among the employees of these airlines is also being cited as occasioned by the hiring spree launched by carriers such as Akasa Air, a revamped Jet Airways, and Tata-owned Air India

within the aviation industry.

In September and November last year, there were two instances where SpiceJet employees - primarily from its security department or aircraft maintenance department - went on strike in front of the Delhi airport protesting reduced salaries and their irregular disbursement.

In a report issued in December 2020, aviation consultancy firm CAPA had said Human Resources (HR) planning is an afterthought in Indian aviation sector's growth equation, and this has been visible since 2003-04.

IndiGo flight makes emergency landing

New Delhi/Karachi: IndiGo's Sharjah-Hyderabad flight was diverted to Karachi as a precaution Sunday after pilots observed defect in one of the engines, officials of aviation regulator DGCA said.

Two technicians - who took part in this 'sick leave protest' - said the new joinees in the low-cost carriers are paid anywhere between Rs 8,000-Rs 15,000 per month, which is extremely less.

While it seems that the issues of low pay have cropped up only now, the revolt reveals a deeper malaise

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is investigating both the incidents, officials noted.

India crosses 200cr Covid-19 vax doses mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 17: India Sunday reached the historic milestone of 200 crore mark in Covid-19 vaccination. The milestone has been achieved after 18 months when the nation began the mass vaccination January 16, 2021.

According to the Co-Win Portal, with a total 1.91 lakhs of vaccine being administered so far Sunday, the number crossed the milestone mark of 200 crore. A total of 199.97 crore Covid vaccine doses were administered across the country until Saturday night, which includes 5.48 crore doses of the precaution dose. On January 16, 2021, two Made-in-India vaccines - Covaxin and Covishield - were made available for the Indian citizens. After nine months, India completed the first 100 crore vaccination mark October 21, 2021. The nation has completed 200 crore mark again after nine months July 17, 2022.

It took 277 days to reach the earlier milestone of 100 crore doses. On September 17 last year, the highest 2.5 crore vaccine doses were administered in a single day.

Congratulating the nation on this historic mark, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said that India has made a new record. "India has set a new record by completing the target of 200 crore vaccinations in just 18 months. Hearty congratulations to all the countrymen on this achievement", said Mandaviya in a tweet. He said that this day is to be remembered forever. Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director WHO South-East Asia, also congratulated India on administering 2 billion Covid-19 vaccine doses.



MONSOON RIDE



A man wearing a raincoat rides a two-wheeler during monsoon rain in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

AAP makes entry in MP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, July 17: The debutant Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has made its entry in Madhya Pradesh politics after winning mayoral post of Singrauli Municipal Corporation, the district which is filled with coal mining and also called - 'energy capital of India'. AAP candidate Rani Agrawal has won the election for mayoral post against BJP's Chandra Prakash Vishwakarma.

Agrawal won the election by a margin of 9,159 votes, leaving the BJP and Congress at second and third position.

AAP candidate received a total 34,038 votes, BJP 24,879 and Congress nominee Arvind Chandel got 24,600 votes.

A year before the Assembly elections to be held in 2023, Agrawal's victory has come as a morale booster for AAP cadre in Madhya Pradesh. AAP convenor and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal had campaigned for her



in a road show in Singrauli. After Agrawal's victory, Kejriwal congratulated her in a tweet, saying, "I congratulate Singrauli mayor elections winning candidate Rani Agrawal ji, other winners and party workers. You should continue to work hard for the people. The people across the country are liking the honest politics of the Aam Aadmi Party."

Born in 1976, Rani Agrawal has been a sarpanch of Baragwa village panchayat. She was also elected from ward 3 as a zila panchayat member. Agrawal had also contested the 2018 Assembly elections from the Singrauli seat, but had lost. She stood third and secured 32,500 votes.

VIOLENCE BREAKS OUT IN TN OVER GIRL'S DEATH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kallakurichi (TN), July 17: Violence broke out Sunday near here as protesters demanding justice over the death of a girl student went on a rampage setting fire to vehicles and indulged in stone pelting, in which police personnel also became the target.

Police opened fire in the air at least twice to restrain the violent mobs. Chief Minister M K Stalin appealed to the people to maintain peace and assured them that those guilty would be punished. Stalin tweeted saying he has directed top officials to rush to Kallakurichi. The agitators, pushing down barricades put up by the police, stormed the premises of an 'international' school at nearby Chinnasalem and set buses parked inside the institution's premises on fire, police



A-17 year old girl, studying Class 12 in a private residential school in Chinnasalem, about 15 km from here was found dead July 13 in the hostel premises

A postmortem report reportedly indicated that she had sustained injuries before her death

Police registered a case and a probe is on

said. Some of them set ablaze a police bus as well.

A car was turned upside down and damaged using hammers. Several protesters managed to reach the terrace and vandalised the school name board and held high banners seeking justice for the dead girl. Outnumbered for a while, the best efforts of police to disperse the protesters proved futile. Police personnel from nearby districts have begun arriving here as

part of measures to tackle the situation. A chunk of agitators had a free run and indulged in vandalism inside the school premises. Some of them took away things like furniture and almirah from the school, damaged them and set them on fire on the road. The protesters include volunteers of a youth outfit and they had gathered in huge numbers following messages in social media urging solidarity for justice.



Sinha facing tough times

After Jharkhand gave a snub to the Joint Opposition Presidential candidate and Mamata Banerjee said he need not come, Yashwant Sinha has been dumped by Shiv Sena too. His problems grew from day one

when he was announced as a candidate and the government led by Uddhav Thackeray in Maharashtra fell within days. Sinha was trying hard to speak to Uddhav Thackeray over phone. But Uddhav was not willing. Finally Uddhav Thackeray relented and spoke to Sinha and gave no commitment of support. Now Uddhav has decided to support Droupadi Murmu.

The three-hour Fadnavis mystery

The Maharashtra coup continues to baffle political pundits as no one has a clue as to what happened during the crucial three hours- 3.30 pm- 6.37 pm- on June 30. The information is trickling down in bits and pieces as to how the 'Man of the Moment' Devendra Fadnavis agreed to

become the Deputy Chief Minister after declaring that he will not be part of the Eknath Shinde government. What exactly happened during these 187 minutes- from Fadnavis' declaration (when he said that he will be out of the government) to BJP Chief J P Nadda's tweet at 6.37 pm, (saying Fadnavis will be part of the new government) is still shrouded in mystery.

PM Modi wants Maha's 44 LS seats

The BJP has many objectives in installing Eknath Shinde as Maharashtra Chief Minister to erase a popular impression that it did not destabilize the MVA government to make Devendra Fadnavis as Chief Minister. Secondly, Modi also wanted to send a

signal to all its allies that BJP doesn't follow the policy of "Ekla Chalo" and it cares for its allies. The BJP doesn't believe in swallowing the space of its allies. The most important objective is that Modi wants 44 Lok Sabha seats for the NDA in Maharashtra out of 48. The BJP-Sena alliance had won 42 in the past but Modi wants at least two more seats. Another objective is to dislodge Uddhav's Sena from BMC.

PM's growing headache

Two leaders are giving headache to the Prime Minister and the BJP. While the BJP's 'Young Turk' leader Varun Gandhi was inherited by Modi in 2014 when he took the command of affairs, Satyapal

Malik is his own creation. It is said that Modi was averse to giving Varun Gandhi Lok Sabha ticket even in 2014. He relented on the advice of the then BJP president, Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari. Varun Gandhi, who missed the ministerial bus in the last reshuffle, has been posting almost one tweet a day critical of government policies. If sources are to be believed, Varun Gandhi wants to be expelled from the BJP so that he can chart out a new journey outside the party. But Modi is not inclined to oblige him. The case of Satya Pal Malik, Governor of Meghalaya, is more classic. While holding the office, he is launching one tirade or the other on a daily basis against the Modi government. Once he even went to the extent of saying the people should dislodge the government if it goes against the people.



# international

## of the day quote

The Pakistani military should take a U-turn on its support to the failed government headed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

IMRAN KHAN | FORMER PAK PM

For the first time in modern history, the East can be on equal terms with the West, as the global dominance of the US and its allies comes to an end

TONY BLAIR | FORMER BRITISH PM

South Korea will push to exempt taxes on interest income and capital gains from foreigners' investment in government bonds and monetary stabilisation bonds in a bid to help stabilise the debt market

CHOO KYUNG-HO | DEPUTY PM OF SOUTH KOREA

## SHORT TAKES

### 12 killed in Sudan

**Cairo:** Flashfloods triggered by seasonal torrential rains in Sudan's western Darfur region killed at least 12 people, including children, the UN and an aid group said Sunday. Heavy rains started late on Friday in the Kass locality in South Darfur province, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Citing Sudan's Humanitarian Aid Commission, OCHA said around 540 people were affected by the flooding, which also destroyed or damaged more than 100 houses in an area inhabited by displaced people.

### Pak PM Shehbaz suffers setback

**Lahore:** Ousted premier Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Sunday made a 'clean sweep' in the crucial Punjab assembly by-polls, in a major setback to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif whose Chief Minister son Hamza Shehbaz is all set to lose his post. The election for the chief minister will be held on July 22 on the Supreme Court's order and PTI-PMLQ joint candidate Chaudhary Parvez Elahi is likely to be the new chief minister of politically crucial province Punjab.

### 7 die in accident

**Beirut:** Seven persons were killed and several others were injured when a truck loaded with more than 40 ton of stones crashed into several other vehicles in the Lebanese border town of Arsal in Baalbek, Elnashra news website reported. The incident took place Saturday evening.

### Six dead in highway pileup

**Los Angeles:** At least six people died after a dust storm caused a 21-car-pileup on a highway in the US State of Montana. Six people are confirmed dead and eight people were transported to nearby hospitals after the pileup, which is described as one of the most intense multi-vehicle accidents in Montana on Friday evening, a local television station reported on Saturday morning.

### China renews yellow alert

**Beijing:** China's national observatory Sunday continued to issue a yellow alert for high temperatures as intense heat waves linger in many regions of the country. During daylight hours on Sunday, parts of Xinjiang, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Hebei, Beijing, Hubei and other areas are expected to experience temperatures of over 35 degrees Celsius, the National Meteorological Centre said.



This is a war in Ukraine that Russia started, that Russia continues and that Russia does not want to end. Ukraine defends its own land, its sovereignty, its territory. Ukraine is fighting for peace

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT

## STUDY REVELATION

Drinking green tea may not only help in reducing your waistline, but may also prove beneficial in lowering diabetes, finds a study



## GRAPPLING WITH INTENSE HEAT

# Fires scorch France, Spain

**FIRE SEASON HAS HIT PARTS OF EUROPE EARLIER THAN USUAL THIS YEAR AFTER A DRY, HOT SPRING THAT THE EU HAS ATTRIBUTED TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

REUTERS



In Spain, helicopters dropped water on the flames as searing heat and often mountainous terrain made the job harder for firefighters

In France, wildfires had now spread over 11,000 hectares (27,000 acres) in the southwestern region of Gironde, and more than 14,000 people have been evacuated, the regional authorities said Sunday

More than 1,200 firefighters were trying to control the blazes, the authorities said.

### DROUGHT IN PORTUGAL

In Portugal, firefighters were trying to control five forest and rural fires in the center and north of the country, the largest near the northern city of Chaves.

Portugal's Health Ministry said late on Saturday that in the last seven days 659 people died due to the heatwave, most of them elderly.

It said the weekly peak of 440 deaths was on Thursday, when temperatures exceeded 40C (104F) in several regions and 47C (117F) at a meteorological station in the district of Vizeu in the centre of the country.

**Lisbon, July 17:** Authorities across southern Europe battled Sunday to control huge wildfires in countries including Spain, Greece and France, where thousands of people have been evacuated in soaring temperatures.

In Spain, helicopters dropped water on the flames as searing heat and often mountainous terrain made the job harder for firefighters. National weather agency AEMET issued high temperature warnings for Sunday, with highs of 42 Celsius (108 Fahrenheit) forecast in Aragon, Navarra and La Rioja, in the north. It said the heatwave would end Monday, but warned temperatures would remain "abnormally high."

Spain has been experiencing a nearly week-long heatwave, with highs of 45.7C (114F). In Malaga province, wildfires raged into the night, affecting local residents near Mijas, a town popular with northern European tourists.

British pensioners William and Ellen McCurdy had to make a quick escape from their home on Saturday. They were taken to a local sports centre with other evacuated people. "It was very fast .... I didn't take it too seriously. I thought they had it under control and I was quite surprised when it seemed to be moving in our direction and then we were told to go. So we have left a lot of stuff behind," William, 68, said. "We just grabbed a few essentials and just ran and by that stage

everybody along the street was on the move," Ellen said. Mari Carmen Molina, a local councillor in Alhaurin, one of the evacuated towns, said she was worried homes could be destroyed. "It's terrible. It's a very difficult situation", she said.

In France, wildfires had now spread over 11,000 hectares (27,000 acres) in the southwestern region of Gironde, and more than 14,000 people have been evacuated, the regional authorities said Sunday afternoon.

## 90-yr-old Indian woman visits ancestral home after 75 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lahore, July 17:** An Indian woman's long-cherished dream of visiting her ancestral home in Rawalpindi materialised when Pakistan granted 90-year-old Reena Chhibber Varma a visa and she arrived here Saturday via the Wagah-Attari border, 75 years after leaving the country at the time of Partition.

Moist-eyed Varma, immediately after her arrival in Pakistan, left for her hometown Rawalpindi, where she will visit her ancestral dwelling Prem Niwas, her school, and childhood friends. In a video she uploaded on social media, Varma, who is from Pune, said her family was living on the Devi College Road in Rawalpindi when the Partition took place.

"I studied at the Modern School. My four siblings had also gone to the same school. My brother and a sister also studied at the Gorden College located near the Modern School," she recalled.

"My elder siblings had Muslim friends who would come to our home as my father was a man of progressive ideas and had no issue in meetings with boys and girls. Before the Partition, there was no such issue of Hindus and Muslims. This happened after the Partition," she said.

"Although the Partition of India was wrong, now that it has happened, both the countries should work together to ease visa restrictions for all of us," she said.

The Pakistan High Commission in India, in a goodwill gesture, has issued a three-month visa to Varma, who was only 15 years old when her family moved to India during the Partition in 1947.



My elder siblings had Muslim friends who would come to our home as my father was a man of progressive ideas and had no issue in meetings with boys and girls. Before the Partition, there was no such issue of Hindus and Muslims. This happened after the Partition

REENA CHHIBBER VARMA

Varma had applied for a Pakistani visa in 1965 but failed to get it then as tensions between the two neighbours were high because of the war.

The elderly woman said she had expressed her desire to visit her ancestral home on social media last year. Sajjad Haider, a Pakistani citizen, contacted her on social media and sent her images of her home in Rawalpindi.

Recently, she again applied for a Pakistani visa which was denied. She then tagged her desire to Pakistan's Minister of State on Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar who facilitated her visa to visit her ancestral town.

# Russia preparing for next stage of offensive: Ukraine

REUTERS

**Kyiv, July 17:** Russia is preparing for the next stage of its offensive in Ukraine, a Ukrainian military official said, after Moscow said its forces would step up military operations in "all operational areas".

As Western deliveries of long-range arms begin to help Ukraine on the battlefield, Russian rockets and missiles have pounded cities in strikes that Kyiv says have killed dozens in recent days. "It is not only missile strikes from the air and sea," Vadym Skibitskyi, a spokesman for Ukrainian military intelligence, said Saturday. "We can see shelling along the entire line of contact, along the entire front line. There is an active use of tactical aviation and attack helicopters. Clearly preparations are now underway for the next stage of the offensive." The Ukrainian military said Russia appeared to be re-grouping units for an offensive toward Sloviansk, a symbolically important city held by Ukraine in the eastern region of Donetsk.

The British defence ministry said Sunday that Russia was also reinforcing defences across areas it occupies in southern Ukraine after pressure from Ukrainian forces and pledges from Ukrainian leaders to force Russia out. Ukraine says at least 40 people have been killed in Russian shelling of urban areas since Thursday as the war launched by Russian President Vladimir Putin February 24 intensifies. Dozens of relatives and local residents attended the funeral of 4-year-old Liza Dmytrieva



It is not only missile strikes from the air and sea. We can see shelling along the entire line of contact, along the entire front line. There is an active use of tactical aviation and attack helicopters

VADYM SKIBITSKYI | A SPOKESMAN FOR UKRAINIAN MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

## GEARING UP

RUSSIA SHELLING 'ALONG THE ENTIRE FRONT LINE' - UKRAINE MILITARY

RUSSIA REGROUPING FOR OFFENSIVE TOWARD SLOVIANSK, KYIV SAYS

MOSCOW ORDERS STEPS TO PREVENT UKRAINIAN STRIKES IN EAST

in the central Ukrainian city of Vinnytsia on Sunday. The girl was killed in a missile strike on central Vinnytsia on Thursday that killed 24 people, according to Ukrainian authorities.

Rockets hit the northeastern town of Chuhuiv in Kharkiv region on Friday night, killing three people including a 70-year-old woman and wounding three others, said regional

Governor Oleh Synehubov. "Three people lost their lives, why? What for? Because Putin went mad?" said Raisa Shapoval, 83, a distraught resident sitting in the ruins of her home. To the south, more than 50 Russian Grad rockets pounded the city of Nikopol on the Dnipro River, killing two people who were found in the rubble, said Governor Valentyn Reznichenko.

## STRUGGLE CONTINUES Lanka protest movement reaches 100 days

Lanka's state-run Ceylon Petroleum Corporation Sunday reduced the diesel and petrol retail prices, the first decrease after five hikes since February

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Colombo, July 17:** Sri Lankan protesters have vowed to continue their struggle for a complete change of the system by abolishing the presidency, as the popular uprising that ousted Gotabaya Rajapaksa as President marked the 100th day on Sunday. The anti-government protest

began April 9 near the presidential office and has been continuing without a break. "We will continue our fight till we achieve our goal for a complete change of the system," Father Jeewantha Peiris, a leading activist of the movement, said. "This is a freedom struggle. We managed to send home an authoritarian President through people's power," Peiris said.

Rajapaksa, 73, who fled to the Maldives on Wednesday and then landed in Singapore on Thursday, formally resigned on Friday, capping off a chaotic 72 hours in the crisis-hit nation that saw protesters storm many iconic buildings, including the President and the Prime Minister's residences here.



Acting president Wickremesinghe appears to be their next target for the protesters and the campaign to oust him

has already begun. "On July 5, we issued an action plan. Foremost of that was removing Gotabaya and defeating Ranil

Wickremesinghe and the Rajapaksa regime," he said.

"We press for the abolition of the presidency to make it a true realisation of our action plan," he said. "We do not fear the government," the protesters chanted in chorus.

After occupying the three most important administrative buildings in the capital, the protesters vacated three of them other than the presidential office. The protest had seen violence since it began mid-April.

Some elements with extremist political agendas have been blamed for arson attacks on the personal properties of Sri Lankan leaders. Wickremesinghe's private house suffered an arson attack the same day

when Rajapaksa fled the country.

He is one of the four candidates who seek to succeed Rajapaksa in the vote in Parliament scheduled for July 20. Wickremesinghe, who is also the prime minister, on Friday pledged to maintain law and order after he was sworn in as Sri Lanka's interim president.

He said that the armed forces have been given the powers and the freedom to deal with any acts of violence and sabotage. "I am one hundred per cent supportive of peaceful demonstrations. There is a difference between rioters and protesters," he had said. Wickremesinghe said the true protesters would not resort to unleashing violence.

## 8 dead in cargo plane crash

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Palaiochori (Greece), July 17:** Experts investigating the site of a cargo plane crash in northern Greece said Sunday they have found no evidence of dangerous substances but say there is still a lot of widespread ordnance, while Serbia's defence minister confirmed that all eight crew members had died in the crash.

The An-12 cargo plane from Serbia flown by a Ukrainian aviation crew smashed into fields between two Greek villages late Saturday. Its fuselage dragged on the ground for 170 metres before it disintegrated. Locals reported seeing a fireball and hearing explosions for two hours after the crash.

Serbian Defence Minister Nebojsa Stefanovic told a news conference on Sunday about the crew deaths.

He also said the plane was carrying 11.5 tons of Serbian-made mortar ammunition to Bangladesh, which was the buyer.

It had taken off from the Serbian city of Nis and had been due to make a stopover in Amman, Jordan. "These were illuminating mortar mines and training (mines). ... This flight had all necessary permissions in accordance with international regulations," Stefanovic said.

The plane was operated by Ukrainian cargo carrier Meridian. The Ukrainian consul in Thessaloniki, who arrived at the crash site, told local officials that the crew were all Ukrainian. The Greek Army's Special Joint Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence Unit cleared two paths on Sunday for Fire Service forensics experts to move in before leaving.



## of the day quote

I believe it (luxury car segment sales) remain kind of suppressed because of taxes, duties on duties and registration cost

**BALBIR SINGH DHILLON** | HEAD, AUDI INDIA

Market will react to HDFC Bank's numbers Monday, while Ambuja Cement, HUL, IndusInd Bank and Wipro will be the other prominent names for Q1 earnings this week

**SANTOSH MEENA** | HEAD OF RESEARCH, SWASTIKA INVESTMART

I absolutely believe that the India startup story, tech innovation, products, all of that coming out of India, is very vibrant. Obviously there is some kind of reduction in valuations... But barring that, the big picture is very vibrant

**C VIJAYAKUMAR** | CEO, HCL TECHNOLOGIES

## SHORT TAKES

### Fuel demand falls

**New Delhi:** India's demand for petrol and diesel fell in the first half of July over the previous month as the onset of monsoon chipped away consumption in some sectors and restricted mobility, preliminary industry data showed Sunday. Diesel, the most widely used fuel in the country, saw consumption drop 13.7 per cent during July 1-15 to 3.16 million tonnes from 3.67 million tonnes demand in the same period of the previous month. The arrival and intensity of monsoon weighs heavily on diesel demand in the country and consumption traditionally is lower in July-September than in April-June. Floods restrict mobility and demand from the farm sector, which uses diesel in irrigation pumps and trucking, also drops with the onset of rains. Consumption of diesel was 43.6 per cent higher than the 2.2 million tonnes demand during July 1 to 15 of 2020. It was 13.7 per cent more than pre-Covid July 2019, the data showed.

### Hindustan Zinc plans huge plant

**New Delhi:** Vedanta group firm Hindustan Zinc is looking at expanding its footprint in the production of zinc alloys and has received approval to set up a 30 kilo tonne per annum plant (KTPA), company's CEO Arun Misra has said. The move will make way for the production of value-added zinc alloy products and enable the company to deliver international quality products in the domestic market. "As we surge ahead towards the fulfillment of our ambitions, we are also looking at expanding our footprint in the production of zinc alloys and have obtained the Consent to Establish (CTE) a 30 kt plant for Hindustan Zinc Alloys Pvt Ltd (HZAPL)," Misra said in the company's integrated annual report for 2021-22.

### Amazon sees \$12bn sales on Prime Day

**San Francisco:** Amazon saw sales worth at least \$12 billion (according to third-party estimates) during its Prime Day event in the US and 15 more countries on July 12-13. It was the first Amazon Prime Day event under the new CEO Andy Jassy who took over from Jeff Bezos last year. According to an analysis by Digital Commerce 360, consumers worldwide spent more than \$12 billion during the e-commerce giant's eighth annual Prime Day. That's up 8.1 per cent (year over year) from last year's Prime Day which ran from June 21-22. In 2021, Prime Day sales reached \$11.19 billion and represented a 7.7 per cent increase over Amazon's 2020 event.



We have planned for about Rs 12,000 crore of capex for the year of which about Rs 8,500 crore will be spent in India and the balance in Europe

**TV NARENDRAN** | CEO, TATA STEEL

## RECORD AC SALES IN FIRST HALF OF 2022

Amid soaring temperature, demand for cooling products, particularly air conditioners has witnessed a sharp uptick and the industry has registered a cumulative record domestic sales of nearly 6 million units in the first half of this year. The industry AC sales number zoomed even though makers took a price increase two to three times in the last six months



## SELLING MODE

# FPIs take out ₹7,400 crore from equities in July so far

Amid a weakening Rupee and recession fears in the US there has been an exodus of foreign funds from the Indian equity market over the last nine months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** Foreign investors continue to be cautious about the Indian equity market and have pulled out over Rs 7,400 crore this month so far amid sustained strengthening of the dollar and increasing concerns over a recession in the US.

"Given the uncertainty in the forex market and the sustained strengthening of the dollar, FPIs are unlikely to turn aggressive buyers in the Indian market and at higher levels they may again turn sellers," said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Going forward, FPI flows will remain volatile in the emerging markets on account of rising geopolitical risks, rising inflation and tightening of monetary policy by central banks, Shrikant Chouhan, Head - Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities, said. According to data with depositors, FPIs pulled out a net amount of Rs 7,432 crore from Indian equities during July 1-15. While there have been sporadic net inflows by FPIs last week, the



WITH THE LATEST PULL OUT, NET OUTFLOW BY FPIs FROM EQUITIES THIS YEAR SO FAR HAS REACHED AROUND RS 2.25 LAKH CRORE - A RECORD HIGH

FPIs WITHDREW RS 50,203 CRORE IN JUNE. THIS WAS THE HIGHEST NET OUTFLOW SINCE MARCH 2020, WHEN THEY HAD PULLED OUT RS 61,973 CRORE

FPIs WITHDREW A NET AMOUNT OF RS 879 CRORE FROM THE DEBT MARKET DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW

Rupee has touched the psychologically key 80 per dollar mark briefly during the week, highlighting the trouble RBI faces on controlling the currency. Most central banks are struggling in this currency war which is a collateral damage of the war in Europe, where the euro is now at par with the dollar, suggesting the Euro zone is staring at a deeper recession than the US

**VIJAY SINGHANIA** | CHAIRMAN, TRADESMART

broader trend continues to be cautious, Srivastava added.

With the latest pull out, net outflow by FPIs from equities this year so far has reached around Rs 2.25 lakh crore - a record high. Before this, they withdrew Rs 52,987 crore in the entire 2008, data showed.

According to Chouhan, Indian equities witnessed weakness as global inflation prints remained elevated, concerns of US recession increased, dollar index continued its sharp rally and Q1 results of large IT companies were weaker than expected.

According to Vijayakumar, a

positive development from the Indian market perspective is the strength of the retail investor segment. Retail investors - directly and through domestic institutional investors (DIIs) - are absorbing the FPI selling, thereby preventing a crash in the market.

In addition to equities, FPIs withdrew a net amount of Rs 879 crore from the debt market during the period under review. From the risk-reward perspective and with interest rates rising in the US, Indian debt does not appear to be an attractive option for foreign investors, Srivastava said.

## Six of top-ten firms lose ₹1.68L-crore in m-cap; TCS top drag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** Six of the 10 most valued firms suffered a combined erosion of Rs 1,68,260.37 crore from their market valuation last week, mainly dragged down by IT major TCS amid an overall weak trend in the equity market.

The 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex fell 721.06 points or 1.32 per cent last week.

From the laggards, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) took the biggest hit as its market valuation tumbled Rs 99,270.07 crore to reach Rs 10,95,355.32 crore. Shares of TCS dropped last week after the company's June quarter earnings failed to meet market expectations.

Another IT behemoth Infosys also suffered an erosion of Rs 35,133.64 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 6,01,900.14 crore.

HDFC Bank's market valuation fell by Rs 18,172.43 crore to Rs 7,57,659.72 crore and that of State Bank of India (SBI) declined by Rs 8,433.76 crore to Rs 4,27,488.90 crore.

The market capitalisation (m-cap) of HDFC dipped by Rs 4,091.62 crore to reach Rs 4,02,121.99 crore and that of ICICI Bank went lower by Rs 3,158.85 crore to Rs 5,22,488.11 crore.

## In the ranking of top-10 firms, Reliance continued to remain the most valued domestic firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, HUL, Infosys, ICICI Bank, LIC, SBI, HDFC and ITC

In contrast, the valuation of Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) jumped Rs 17,128.52 crore to Rs 6,03,551.26 crore. Reliance Industries added Rs 6,801.72 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 16,24,681.08 crore.

## EXPORTS MORE COMPETITIVE

# Falling rupee darkens fight to tame inflation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** Rupee depreciation has impacted the current account deficit and fuelled inflationary pressures but at the same time it has made Indian exports more competitive, according to experts.

The Indian rupee has been depreciating against the USD dollar and is nearing the psychologically key mark of 80, making imports expensive.

"The depreciation of the rupee has multiple impacts on the economy. Given we have a negative trade balance, though a depreciation of the rupee makes our exports more competitive, our import bills go up significantly. It has an impact on the current account deficit thus further putting pressure on the rupee as well as imports inflation too as the price of imports in rupee terms is higher," said Ranen Banerjee, Leader, Economic Advisory Services, PwC India.

Rumki Majumdar, Economist, Deloitte India, said the US dollar has strengthened amid economic uncertainties marked by rising global inflation and commodity prices, rapidly tightening monetary policy in advanced nations, rising geopolitical tensions, fears of a global economic slowdown, and even a possible recession in the US and a few major European nations. However, not always does currency depreciation hurt an economy, she added.

"The opportunity to boost services exports revenue on the back of the global digitisation wave is promising. A weaker domestic currency also is an opportunity for FPIs to enter the equity market to earn handsome returns in the medium to long term," she opined.



A recent FinMin report cautioned that India's current account deficit is expected to deteriorate in this fiscal on costlier imports and tepid merchandise exports. Primarily driven by an surge in the trade deficit, the CAD stood at 1.2% of GDP in 2021-22

Khalid Khan, vice-chairman of exporters' body FIEO, said while a depreciating rupee will help exporters, exporting goods which have import content in terms of raw materials will not be benefited that much.

It is widely expected that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may go for the third consecutive hike in the key interest rate next month as retail inflation continues to rule above 7 per cent - higher than its upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent.

Banerjee further said the matching rate hikes by the RBI in response to the US Fed actions will also provide support to the rupee. These counterbalancing forces have helped the rupee in the past few months wherein it has not depreciated to the extent of other emerging market currencies, he added.

## BIZ BUZZ

### PNB's Balasore Zonal Head holds review meet, stresses focus on digitalisation, loan recovery

**Balasore:** Punjab National Bank, Circle office, Balasore conducted a review meeting of the branch heads of the Circle, which was presided by the Circle head Purusottam Patnaik. General Manager AUB Reddy, Zonal Head, Bhubaneswar attended the meeting and reviewed the performance of branches under Balasore Circle. Reddy advised the branch heads to work hard and achieve the business targets. He urged the branch heads to take necessary steps to focus on digitalisation, lending and timely recovery of loans. Speaking on the occasion, PNB Balasore Circle Head Patnaik emphasised on CASA, Retail Credit, Recovery and Financial Inclusion. On this occasion, certificates of appreciation were handed over to branch heads who achieved their targets in various segments. Before attending the review meeting, Reddy inaugurated the new premises of Rasalpur branch and an ATM at Janha of Jajpur Road Branch.



# Sequoia and Tiger Global top startup funding in Q2

## FUNDING IN STARTUPS DROPPED BY 17% TO \$6 BILLION AND THE QUARTER WITNESSED ONLY FOUR UNICORNS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 17:** Venture capital firms Sequoia Capital and Tiger Global led funding in Indian startups during April-June, with the fintech sector attracting most of the \$6 billion (about Rs 47,870 crore) investments made during the quarter; industry body Nasscom said in a report.

"Prominent investors Sequoia Capital, Tiger Global, Alpha wave and Accel have done over 6 deals across sectors," it added.

Out of Tiger Global's total investments, 40 per cent were in the



fintech sector and 20 per cent in the enterprise technology domain. For Sequoia, enterprise technology accounted for about 25 per cent of the funding, and financial technology (fintech) 20 per cent.

Around 60 per cent of the investments by Tiger Global and Sequoia were made in the growth stage of the startups.

The April-June quarter saw only four unicorns - neobanking firm Open, SaaS platform LeadSquared,

## FIRMS FUNDING DATA

- Fintech: 26%
- Media & entertainment: 19%
- Enterprise tech: 16%
- Retail tech: 9%
- Edtech: 8%
- Health tech: 5%

edtech start-up PhysicsWallah and online beauty products marketplace Purple. Open became the first neobanking unicorn after raising \$50 million. LeadSquared raised \$153 million, while PhysicsWallah raised \$100 million. Purple raised \$34 million.

The preceding January-March period had witnessed creation of 16 new unicorns, which dropped to only four in the reporting quarter due to decline in fund inflows into the Indian startup space, it added.

# Rise of preventive health care in Indian insurance sector

## THE ULTIMATE AIM OF THE INSURERS IS TO GIVE END-TO-END HEALTH CARE SOLUTIONS TO THEIR CUSTOMERS AND PLAY AN INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN BUILDING A HEALTHIER AND FITTER INDIA

It is established that the need for a well-designed, comprehensive health insurance cover is a basic necessity in today's times. Due to the rise of lifestyle diseases, early onset of health issues, and ever-increasing medical inflation, today having health insurance to cover critical treatment expenses has become vital to ensure a life of dignity for everyone. Health insurance addresses tertiary care and covers the curative or remedial aspect of health, and needs to be amended. Today, there is a rising demand for preventive care and

wellness proposition amongst the customers, which helps them acquire 360-degree health protection.

Amid the rush and hustle-bustle of the modern lifestyle, sadly healthcare is being neglected by many. In India we are witnessing an alarming rise in non-communicable diseases. Each year more and more youngsters are acquiring new disorders. Cases of diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disorder are on rise. As per the ASSOCHAM report titled 'Non-Communicable Diseases in India,' released in July 2021, more than 2/3rd of the individuals who are suffering from NCD are between the age group of 26-59 years.

The report highlighted that NCDs increase after the age of 18 and show a quantum leap after the age of 35. To help curb these disturbing trends, the insurance industry is working passionately to design solutions that will help pave a solid path towards a healthier India. Many of these health disorders are a result of the modern-day, stressful, unhealthy lifestyle. To address this issue two broad focus areas for insurers are offering wellness propositions to their customers and designing products

that have the element of preventive care embedded.

The wellness programmes are designed to nudge policyholders to adopt healthy behavior; the general theme is 'staying fit is beneficial'. The policyholders are rewarded for participating in sporting events or marathons, for acquiring healthy lifestyles like going to the gym, practicing yoga, etc. Such reward points can be redeemed against health vouchers or can be used to gain a discount on renewal premium; the reward system varies from insurer to insurer and product to product.

Additionally, insurers have launched their wellness apps which will help customers in keeping up with their fitness regime. The app helps you to keep a track of your vitals, and suggest you right kind of food and exercise tips. You will have a personal health coach, to guide you and your family members in your mission to a healthier life. The industry is also working to design disease management programs for their customers, which are well-researched and well-designed treatment programs for people suffering from chronic diseases. These programs aim to help

the patient to manage their chronic diseases, how they can avoid worsening their health issues, and keep a check on their condition.

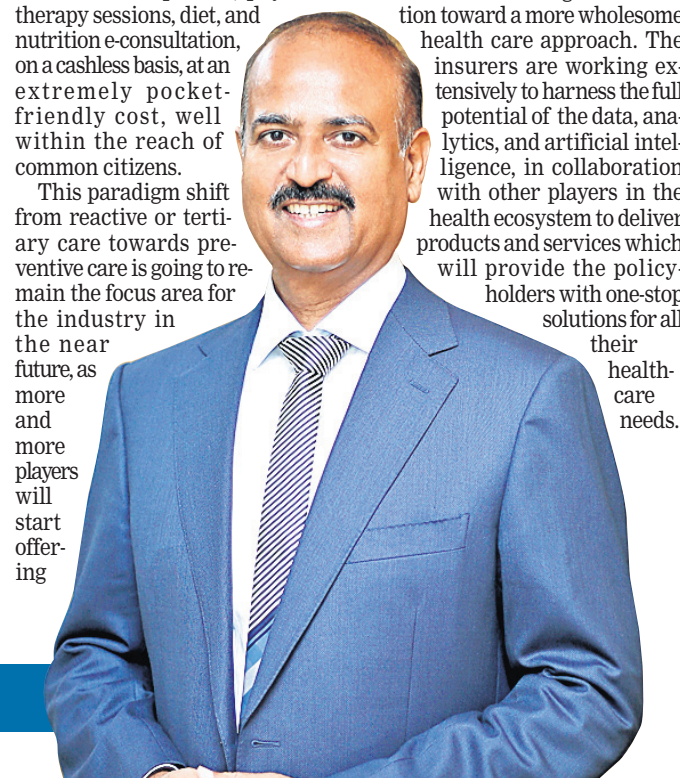
Apart from focusing on wellness proposition, the other upcoming focus area for the industry is preventive health care products. Early detection of health issues improves the chances of cure and smooth treatment by many folds. It also reduces complications and treatment costs substantially. Preventive healthcare requires regular health check-ups, consultation with doctors, health investigation, or tests; and these preventive measures come at a cost.

The consultation fees and the cost of pathology tests are increasing every year, thus gradually taking preventive health care out of the common man's bounds. We as an industry understand the underlying need of our customers and to ensure that the rising medical costs doesn't become a roadblock towards their goal of a healthy life, insurers have launched products that cover various elements of preventive care. Insurers are of-

fering health insurance add-ons that cover teleconsultation costs, lab-tests costs, doctor consultation cover, and even annual preventive health check-up cover, physiotherapy sessions, diet, and nutrition e-consultation, on a cashless basis, at an extremely pocket-friendly cost, well within the reach of common citizens.

This paradigm shift from reactive or tertiary care towards preventive care is going to remain the focus area for the industry in the near future, as more and more players will start offering

products that go beyond the realm of standard health insurance indemnity products. Artificial Intelligence, analytics, and digitisation will be driving this transition toward a more wholesome health care approach. The insurers are working extensively to harness the full potential of the data, analytics, and artificial intelligence, in collaboration with other players in the health ecosystem to deliver products and services which will provide the policyholders with one-stop solutions for all their health-care needs.



**Tapan Singhel, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance**



# Sindhu triumphs in Singapore

3RD TITLE OF THE SEASON FOR THE ACE HYDERABADI LEGEND



**TOTAL CONCENTRATION:** PV Sindhu watches closely as he plays a backhand shot during the final Sunday in Singapore

## Modi hails PV

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated PV Sindhu on winning her first ever Singapore Open title. He said Sunday it is a proud moment for India and her victory will inspire upcoming players. "I congratulate PV Sindhu on winning her first ever Singapore Open title. She has yet again demonstrated her exceptional sporting talent and achieved success. It is a proud moment for the country and will also give inspiration to upcoming players," Modi tweeted.

rallies. While Wang seemed charged up initially, Sindhu was patient and after an initial duel of 5-5, played a superb smash and then finished a long rally with a delectable drop shot to leave her opponent on the floor.

The Indian grabbed a five-point advantage at the interval after producing another superb cross-court smash from a deep forehand corner.

The Chinese reduced the deficit to 11-12, but that was the closest she got. Sindhu again built a lead of four points and from 16-12 never looked back. Then as Wang hit the ball wide on match point, Sindhu threw up her hands in celebration.

Earlier in the season, Sindhu had won two titles at the Syed Modi International and Swiss Open.

over Wang, having beaten the Chinese player in their only meeting at the All England Championships this year.

Toss played a major role in the match with drift in the hall making life difficult for the shuttlers. Wang's decision to choose the side put her in an advantageous position as she played against the drift after the final change of ends. However, Sindhu managed to limit the errors and keep her nerves to emerge victorious in the end.

In the first game after falling 0-2 behind, Sindhu reeled off 11 points in a row to lead 11-2 at the interval. The Indian maintained her firm grip on the match after resumption to quickly wrap up the opening game.

However, in the second game, Wang dominated the show to lead 11-3 at the break. She did not give Sindhu any chance of a comeback and restored parity in the match.

The match came alive in the decider as the duo played some long

# Pant, Pandya heroics ensure ODI series victory over England



**AWESOME DISPLAY:** Hardik Pandya and Rishabh Pant played their parts to perfection to help India win, Sunday against England

AGENCIES

**Manchester, July 17:** Rishabh Pant's (125 n o, 113b, 16x4, 2x6) and an all-round show by Hardik Pandya (4/24; 71, 55b, 10x4) helped India beat England by five wickets and clinch the ODI series 2-1 here Sunday. The two also saw to it that Rohit Sharma's gamble of electing to field after winning the toss was successful. Teams batting first had won eight out of the last nine

matches that had been played on this ground.

There are certain days when the script is tailor-made for Pant. Coming in to bat with the score reading 21 for two, the wicket-keeper-batter ensured India win the game with 47 deliveries to spare. He and Pandya put on 133 runs for the fifth wicket when England threatened to take the game away with India four down for 72.

Both Pant and Pandya played

## Brief scores

**England 259 in 45.5 overs** (Jos Buttler 60, Hardik Pandya 4/24, Yuzvendra Chahal 3/60) lost to **India 261 for 5 in 42.1 overs** (Rishabh Pant 125 n o, Hardik Pandya 71, Reece Topley 3/35) by five wickets.

the England bowlers with disdain hitting them to all parts of Old Trafford. Except for Reece Topley (3/35) none were able to make any impression on the two Indian batters. It augurs well for the India that the two 'Ps' are striking a good vein of form with the T20 World Cup looming large on the horizon.

Earlier Pandya and Mohammed Siraj (2/66) struck vital blows after England had been put in. Siraj, playing in place of Jasprit Bumrah, who miss the match with back spasms, dismissed Jonny Bairstow (0) and Joe Root (0) in quick succession to have the hosts tottering at 12 for two. It was only skipper Jos Buttler's (60, 80b, 3x4, 2x6) innings which gave the England score a semblance of respectability.

Some lower-order contributions from Moeen Ali (34), Craig Overton (32), Liam Livingstone (27) and David Willey (18) helped England go past the 250-mark. However, the Indian bowlers chipped away with wickets at regular intervals to prevent England from putting up a threatening total.

## SHORT TAKES

### Bayern agree to Lewandowski deal

**Munich:** Bayern Munich have confirmed that they have agreed a deal with Barcelona for the sale of Polish star Robert Lewandowski to the Spanish club. "We have a verbal agreement from Barcelona. It's good for both sides that we have clarity," Bayern president Herbert Hainer said on Twitter. "Robert is a very deserving player, he has won everything with us. We are incredibly grateful to him," Hainer added. Bayern did not give details but Spanish and German media reported the two-time FIFA 'Men's Player of the Year' had agreed to a four-year deal worth 50 million euros (USD 50.4mn).

### Noble decision

**London:** Recently-crowned Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina has reportedly turned down the bonus the Kazakhstan Tennis Federation had offered to her for her exploits at SW19. Rybakina had asked them to instead invest the money in promoting grassroots tennis in the country. A report in 'Astana Times' said the Kazakhstan federation was keen to show its appreciation to her by offering Rybakina a bonus. However, Rybakina said, "First of all, of course, I would like to help the juniors, most of it (money) will go to them. It is important for tennis that more players come out of Kazakhstan," Rybakina stated.

### Tamim quits T20s

**Georgetown (Guyana):** Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal has announced his retirement from T20 Internationals following his side's 50-over series win Saturday against the West Indies. "Please consider me retired from T20s from today. Thank you everyone," Tamim wrote on his official Facebook page. He played his last T20 International in March 2020. The 33-year-old has played 78 T20Is, scoring 1758 runs at 24.08.

### Bhagat loses

**New Delhi:** India's Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan won the women's singles SH6 class title, but World No.1 Pramod Bhagat finished runner-up Sunday in men's singles SL3 category in the '4 Nations Para Badminton International' in Dublin, Ireland. Nithya beat Rachel Choong of England 21-14, 18-21, 21-7 in a 32-minute final, while Bhagat went down 17-21, 9-21 to England's Daniel Bethell in the summit clash. "I am disappointed with my performance. I tried my best, but couldn't execute. This loss will motivate me to perform better in the upcoming events," Bhagat said.

# Shuttler savours Singapore success

Player now eyeing medals at the CWG and World Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Singapore, July 17:** A 'relieved' PV Sindhu hopes to continue her rich vein of form in the upcoming events, including the Birmingham Commonwealth Games (CWG), after winning the Singapore Open title here Sunday.

"In the last couple of tournaments, there were hard-fought matches, and losing in the quarterfinals and semifinals was a bit upsetting but each match mattered and finally I could get this," Sindhu told reporters after the win. "I am very happy because after a long time I am coming to Singapore and winning this, means a lot to me. I hope the same tempo continues for the rest of the tournaments and I do well in the upcoming events," the double Olympic medallist added.

Living out of a suitcase is the norm for international athletes. Sindhu admitted there is no time to celebrate as she shifts focus to the CWG starting July 28.

"I just have a week after that again we leave for Commonwealth Games. Maybe I can take a day off, and spend time with my family," she

**Hopefully, the triumph in Singapore will give me the confidence to do well in the CWG and the World Championships**

PV SINDHU

said. "It has been a long tour for me, there was Indonesia, Malaysia for two weeks, and now Singapore. So it is time to go back home and just relax for a bit and then get back to training but definitely, I am going to enjoy this win, it means a lot," Sindhu informed.

Sindhu was asked if the Singapore Open title augurs well for the CWG and the World Championships to follow. "Yes it does. I want to be more successful (laughs). Right now it is time to just go and relax and then focus on the CWG and hope I get a medal in that," Sindhu said.

"Followed by that we have the World Championships and Japan Open, of course, hope for a medal in that too. I have to be physically and mentally fit and can't take anyone lightly," she signed off.

# Shooters continue to shine

INDIA WIN 2 MEDALS AT WORLD CUP TO DOMINATE SHOW

AGENCIES

**Changwon, July 17:** India's Anjum Moudgil won a bronze medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event at the ISSF Shooting World Cup here Sunday. Anjum shot 402.9 points in the final round to finish third behind Germany's Anna Janssen (407.7) and Italy's Barbara Gambaro (403.4), who won the gold and silver medals respectively.

Sanjeev Rajput, Chain Singh and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar clinched the silver medal in the men's 3P team event. The Indian trio, who had finished second in the qualification stage, faced a strong Czech Republic team in the gold medal match.

But despite putting up a good fight, the Indians went down 12-16 to the trio of Petr Nymbursky, Filip Nepechal and Jiri Privratsky. Anjum, a World Championship silver medallist, had qualified for the finals after finishing sixth in the ranking round Saturday. This is the 28-year-old shooter's second individual medal in consecutive World Cup stages. She had won silver in the same event at the Baku World Cup held last month.

While Anjum was off the radar and slipped to sixth position after the second prone series, she re-



**THREE TO TANGO:** Shooters (from left) Sanjeev Rajput, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Chain Singh pose with their silver medals Sunday

covered steadily in the final standing position.

By the time the fifth and sixth place shooters were eliminated after the 15th standing position shot, Anjum was 0.2 points ahead of fourth-placed Rebecca Koeck

of Austria.

With one bronze and silver apiece, India consolidated their position at the top of medal's table. They now have a total of 11 medals (four gold, five silver and two bronze).

# Poor display by Sreeshankar in Athletics Worlds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Eugene (USA), July 17:** Long jumper Murali Sreeshankar failed to live up to the expectations as he finished seventh in the finals with his best effort of 7.96m on day two of the World Athletics Championships here Sunday. Having become the first Indian male athlete to qualify for the long jump finals in the Athletics Worlds, the Indian had raised hopes of a historic medal in the showpiece. But his performance in the final was way below his season's and personal best of 8.36m.

Sreeshankar had had three legal jumps - the opening jump of 7.96m, fourth round effort of 7.89m and last attempt of 7.83m. The other three tries were fouls. The 23-year-old must be disappointed as he could not cross the 8 metre mark in six attempts. He has been a consistent performer this season having jumped 8.17m, 8.36m, 8.31m and 8.23m since March and going into the World Championships. He had qualified for the finals with a best jump of 8m in the qualification round Saturday, finishing second in Group B and seventh overall.

China's Jianan Wang won the gold with a sensational final round jump of 8.36m while Olympic champion Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece, won the silver.

# Srikanth replaces Jaffer

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 17:** Former India batter Wasim Jaffer who had been appointed as the head coach of the Odisha senior cricket team has stepped down from his position. The Odisha Cricket Association (OCA) has said that Jaffer will be replaced by former state player R Srikanth as the head coach of team for now. Srikanth till now had been functioning as the technical director of the Odisha Cricket Academy.

Jaffer had been appointed on a two-year contract. However, he resigned from his position as he accepted an offer from the Bangladesh Cricket Board to become the chief coach of their under-19 cricket team. After several round of discussions, the OCA finally accepted his resignation, informed secretary Sanjay Behera in a release.

Srikanth at present has been appointed head coach just for the 2022-23 domestic season. He was earlier grooming aspiring Level-1 and Level-2 coaches in the state for the NCA programmes and has a successful coaching background from past 20 years at different levels.

It remains to be seen what Srikanth can do with the senior team keeping in mind their past performances. Last season, Odisha failed to qualify for the knockouts in the Ranji Trophy and did not fare well in other tournaments as well. However, just a change in the



coaching staff will not help Odisha unless the players deliver. In the last few seasons (no cricket was played during the pandemic), Odisha cricketers have failed to perform on a consistent basis.

In the 2021-22 season only opener Shantanu Mishra was able to score a century while Rajesh Dhupar and Abhishek Raut were the two other batters to register 50-plus knocks. Dhupar did it on three occasions while Abhishek scored a half century once. Among the bowlers, none were exceptional.

# Asia Cup may be shifted to UAE: SLC

CHANGE IN VENUE DUE TO POLITICAL TURMOIL IN SRI LANKA



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 17:** The Asia Cup is 'likely' to be moved out of Sri Lanka in the wake of political unrest in the island nation, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) secretary Mohan de Silva said Sunday. He added that the tournament could be played in the UAE. In a separate development the SLC also announced that the Lanka Premier League 2022 has been postponed with immediate effect. The tournament was scheduled for August 1-22.

Sri Lanka, which has been battling an economic crisis, has witnessed widespread protests against

the government for weeks.

"The Asia Cup is very likely will be held in the UAE," De Silva told this agency when asked about a possible change in the venue of the 2020 tournament.

The dates for the six-team tournament are expected to remain the same as scheduled earlier from August 26 to September 11. A qualifier will also take place before the main event with Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuwait and UAE battling out for the one qualification spot. Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh will be the five full member teams for the Asia Cup.

TOURNAMENT TO BE PLAYED AUGUST 26 TO SEPTEMBER 11

5 COUNTRIES INCLUDING INDIA HAVE GOT DIRECT ENTRY

HONG KONG, SINGAPORE, KUWAIT AND UAE TO FIGHT FOR 6TH SPOT

With Australia tour of Sri Lanka going off smoothly and Pakistan currently playing Test cricket in the island nation, there were hopes that SLC might be able to host the continental event. The tournament will serve as good preparation for the Asian teams ahead of the T20 World Cup in Australia in October-November.

An official announcement from the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) on the change in tournament venue is expected soon. The ACC is headed by BCCI secretary Jay Shah.

The Pakistan Cricket Board had earlier said Saturday said that it wanted the Asia Cup to be played in Sri Lanka. "Our first preference is to support Sri Lanka and play the Asia Cup there. If this tournament does not take place in Sri Lanka, it will be a huge cricketing and financial loss for them. Australia's recent tour of Sri Lanka went off without any problems," PCB chief executive Faisal Hasnain had said in a statement.