



MOTIVATIONAL TALK

Actor Kajal Aggarwal says the body of a person can change but the indomitable spirit need not

LEISURE | P2



PUTIN WARNS WEST

President Vladimir Putin warns the West about using nuclear weapons for defending Russia if the situation demands

INTERNATIONAL | P10



VENUES ANNOUNCED

The Oval and Lord's in London will host the World Test Championship finals in 2023 and 2025, announces ICC

SPORTS | P12

SHORT TAKES

OCS prelim exams to be held October 16

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha Civil Services (OCS) preliminary examination-2021 will be conducted by the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) October 16, the commission said in a notification Wednesday. The examination will be conducted in five zones – Balasore, Berhampur, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Sambalpur. Admission certificates and instructions to candidates eligible to appear for the exams will be available on the website of OPSC. Candidates with disability will get 40 minutes of extra time.

Heroin worth ₹17K cr seized in Mumbai port

New Delhi: The Special Cell of Delhi police have made one of the biggest seizures of heroin from Mumbai with the contraband amounting to ₹1,725 crore in the international market, a senior official said Wednesday. “A container having more than 22 tonne of Licorice coated with heroin has been seized from Nhava Sheva Port, Mumbai,” the official informed and added that a total of 345kg of heroin has been seized.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



When we suggested transparency, it was on cash transactions, sir. Not electoral bonds!

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	59456.78	↓ 262.96
NIFTY	17718.30	↓ 98.00
DOLLAR	80.21	↑ ₹0.23
EURO	78.99	↓ ₹0.51
GOLD	₹49,306	↑ ₹131
SILVER	₹56,938	↑ ₹595

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	31.0°C	31.0°C
TEMP MIN	25.5°C	24.6°C
Humidity	95%	92%
Rainfall	27.1mm	Nil
Forecast		
Light rain likely		

COMEDIAN SRIVASTAVA BREATHES HIS LAST

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 21: Popular comedian Raju Srivastava, who dabbled in movies, made a mark as a stand-up comic and later entered politics, died Wednesday after more than 40 days in hospital. He was 58. Srivastava, who joined the BJP in 2014 after a stint with the Samajwadi Party, suffered a heart attack August 10 while working out at a Delhi hotel. He was rushed to AIIMS where he underwent an angioplasty. He had been on the ventilator since then and never regained consciousness. “I got a call in the morning saying he (Raju) is no more. It is really unfortunate news. He had been waging a struggle for life in hospital for over 40 days,” Raju’s brother Dipoo



Srivastava said. Raju, counted as among the most high profile and experienced comics in the country, is survived by his wife and two children. Dignitaries from all walks of life including superstars Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh paid their condolences as the news of Raju’s demise spread. **MORE P2**



PROVIDING LIFELINE: A man pours water Wednesday on one of the more than 230 whales that have been swept ashore on Ocean Beach in the town of Strahan in Tasmania, Australia (Report P10) AP PHOTO

Woman gangraped in Balasore; 4 arrested

The victim and her husband were returning home when they were attacked by 6 goons including 2 minors

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Sept 21: In a horrific incident, a group of armed miscreants gangraped a woman after assaulting her husband at Ananda Bazaar locality under Sahadevkhunta police limits of this town, in the wee hours of Monday. The incident has left the entire locality shell-shocked. Launching a probe into the incident on the basis of a complaint filed by the victim, police have so far arrested four persons and detained two minors. The four were produced in court Wednesday and remanded to judicial custody. The incident had taken place in the at around 2.00am when the victim and her husband were returning to their rented house in Arada Bazaar locality from the railway godown which is their place of employment. The couple was waylaid at Ananda Bazaar Chowk by six people. First they assaulted the man and snatched valuables from him including ₹10,000. The miscreants also attacked the man with sharp weapons due to which the victim’s husband lost consciousness. Seeing the man senseless, the goons then turned their attention to the victim. They forcibly took her to the Godhibasa ground and gangraped her. Allegedly three of



the six raped the victim. The torture would have continued, but the woman somehow managed to escape from the clutches of the miscreants. She rescued her husband and took him to a hospital and got him admitted. Then she went and filed a police complaint here Monday morning. Police registered a case under various sections of IPC and SC/ST (POA) Act and sent the woman for medical examination. Police also launched a manhunt for the accused. The woman managed to identify one of the accused as Debendra Singh (28), a resident of Sahadevkhunta locality. Police first detained and then arrested him. After interrogating Debendra, police nabbed three of the other accused namely Kanka Singh (25), Bula Sahu (26) and Salkha Murmu (27). Two minor boys were also detained for their involvement in the case. The statement of the woman has been recorded, police said Wednesday and added that further probe was underway. Police have seized a scooter, a sharp-edged weapon, a country-made pistol, three cell phones and ₹2,500 in cash from the accused. DSP Manas Deo said at a press meet here Wednesday. Sources said that all the four have confessed to their crime. Police are now trying to ascertain the role of the minors in the ghastly act.

More shelters for flood-prone areas

■ A decision was taken during the meeting to beef up the disaster management system by getting the latest equipment and strengthening river banks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Gaining experience from the recent floods that occurred in many districts of Odisha, the government has decided to increase the number of shelters in areas that get inundated regularly. This decision was taken during a meeting Wednesday of the State Executive Committee on disaster management held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra. The Revenue and Disaster Management department has been asked to identify the flood-prone villages with insufficient shelters. In the meeting it was also decided to strengthen and increase the height of embankments in vulnerable areas like Bari, Dhamnagar, Gop and other villages situated besides rivers as a permanent measure. A decision was taken to invest ₹400 crore to strengthen the overall disaster management system. Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena asked the departments to submit utilisation certificates against grants already released to them for relief, repair, restoration and distribution of various assistances to the people. Considering the changing cli-

matic scenario, the committee also decided to strengthen the disaster management capacity with latest modern equipment and intensive training to front-line organisations like ODRAF and fire service units. Special emphasis was laid on providing proper water supply and evacuation in flood-hit areas. Mahapatra also directed the Housing and Urban Development department to remove encroachments on drains and maintain in a proper manner their widths for smooth clearance of rain/storm water. He also directed officials to enhance the in-house capacity for instant urban flood management. The proposal for post disaster needs assessment (PDNA) was discussed in the meeting. It was decided that a quick PDNA against the last heavy rains and flood situation would be conducted. After proper assessment of the needs, additional support would be mobilised for long-term recovery, reconstruction and future damage reduction. Jena informed that the PDNA would be conducted in collaboration with National Disaster Management Authority and National Institute of Disaster Management. The sectors like housing and re-settlement, protection of civic amenities including health and educational infra, drinking water, local critical infrastructure needs like roads, bridges etc would be the principal focus for PDNA. The chief secretary directed officials to complete the PDNA in about a month’s time.

3 suicide deaths reported in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: There seems to be no end in the spate of death by suicides in the Odisha capital. Three persons including a couple have died by suicide here, police said Wednesday. In the first incident, a couple – Somnath Sahu 36 of Nayagarh district and Sulochana Nayak, 32, of Rasol locality in Dhenkanal district – ended their lives allegedly by drinking poison at their residence in Phuleswari slum under Bharatpur police limits. Police sources said that some neighbours had Tuesday night spotted the duo lying unconscious in their house. They tried to wake the couple up, but the two did not respond. Smelling something amiss, the neighbours broke into the room and rushed the couple to AIIMS where the duo breathed their last Wednesday. Personnel from the Bharatpur police station reached the hospital after being informed of the tragedy by the local corporator and sent the bodies for post-mortem. Sources claimed Somnath, an auto driver, had got married before he came into contact with Sulochana, a housemaid, who was staying at Tapoban slum under Bharatpur police limits. The two developed a relationship and Sulochana moved in with Somnath around two years back. The move however, backfired as Somnath’s wife and other family members opposed the relationship. This put the couple under severe mental pressure and after a brief argument Tuesday, the two consumed poison. **Continued on P4**

‘Hate speech’ a slow killer: SC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Supreme Court held the ‘role of anchor’ as ‘very important’ Tuesday as it slammed various TV channels over hate speech. The apex court also questioned why the government is ‘remaining a mute spectator’ when many channels are promoting hate speeches. “These speeches on mainstream media or social media are unregulated. It’s (the anchors’) responsibility to see that hate speech doesn’t continue the moment someone indulges in it. Freedom of press is important, but we should know where to draw a line,” Justice KM Joseph observed at the hearing of a batch of petitions filed since last year. “Hate speech is layered... Like killing someone, you can do it in multiple ways, slowly or otherwise,” said the court. “Government should not take an adversarial stand but assist the court,” it further observed. The matter will be heard November 23, when the court wants the Centre to clarify if it intends to act on Law Commission recommendations on curbing hate speech.

Teen debuts in India’s ₹1,000cr club

■ Despite the war and the effect of Covid-19 pandemic, the number of richest Indians increased to 1,103 persons from 1,007 in 2021

AGENCIES

Chennai, Sept 21: Regardless of the Covid-19 pandemic, inflation or the Ukraine war, India’s richest grew by 96 persons to 1,103 spread over 122 cities. All these persons have ₹1,000 crore or more as per the ‘IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List 2022’. The youngest on the list is Kaivalya Vohra, 19, who founded ‘Zepto’ which shows the impact of the startup revolution. The latest rich list includes several promoters of startups, including those

floated by women. “Cumulative wealth has increased by 9.4 per cent, while average wealth has decreased by one per cent. A total of 602 individuals saw their wealth increase or stay the same, of which 149 are new faces, whilst 415 saw their wealth decrease and there were 50 dropouts from the ₹1,000 crore club,” as per a statement issued by ‘IIFL Wealth’. According to the report, India has 221 billionaires, down by 16 compared to last year. While chemicals and financial services added the greatest number of new entrants to the list, pharma is still at number one and has contributed 126 entrants to the chart. “Despite the slump in economy owing to geo-political challenges and sharp spike in oil prices, India has successfully made an impression



Kaivalya Vohra is the youngest to find a place in India’s rich list

on the world’s economy/wealth map,” said Yatin Shah, CEO of the company. Shah informed that there are 65 founders of 37 unicorns along with

14 professional managers who have emerged as the cornerstone of wealth creation this time in the list. As per the list, Adani Group promoter Gautam Adani continues

- For the first time, 100 start-up founders having an average age of 40 years, feature in the latest rich list
- 12 Indians are worth ₹1 lakh crore or more, down from 13 in 2021

to hold his position at the top spot ahead of Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries. Adani is ahead of Ambani by ₹3 lakh crore and his wealth has increased by 116 per cent in the last year. Vaccine maker Cyrus S Poonawalla and family also moved up three ranks after their wealth increased by 25 per cent year-on-year. Three families belonging to Shiv Nadar, SP Hinduja and LN Mittal have reported a decline in wealth, but still find a place in the top 10.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You will achieve things today, not by the sleight of your hand but by your communication skills, says Ganesha. Your eloquence shall win many hearts. The stars suggest monetary benefits, but you need to guard against injury and minor ailments.

TAURUS

It will be a thought-provoking day with titbits of success and rewards scattered here and there, says Ganesha. If you feel you got the short end of the stick, do not let it affect your morale. Every sunrise comes with a different promise and today is not the end of the world.

GEMINI

Some of your personal belongings are very dear to you. You may have to grudgingly share them with someone else. A mild pang of jealousy may kick in. But, you are merely being protective of something very personal, so there is nothing wrong with that, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Today is a crucial and fascinating day for you, predicts Ganesha. You will learn and gain from your bosses and elders. Peers and siblings may extend their full support to you. Your chances of winning legal battles are remote, so an out-of-court settlement may be your best bet.

LEO

If it's a fresh start that you have been looking for, then this day promises to give you just that, predicts Ganesha. If you have already chalked out any plans for your future, today is the day to initiate the implementation. Remember Lions, though, that rushing blindly into anything is not the solution.

VIRGO

You will be in a very ambitious and conscientious mood today. Your actions will speak louder than words. You set the pace with your meticulous planning and careful execution. Ganesha says you may expect a lot of appreciation and recognition for your work coming from your boss and your colleagues.

LIBRA

Of late, you have been very concerned about the health of one of your close friends. Take this day to lay your fears to rest by spending time with that friend. Work can wait, as today you must prove to yourself, if not to others, that 'a friend in need is a friend indeed'. Ganesha wishes you the very best.

SCORPIO

Your mind shall take over the proceedings today. And it shall, in all likelihood, draw you to the work bench and keep your nose to the grindstone. But your heart will flutter like a butterfly, and if you manage to strike the right balance, you may win over your special one and your boss too, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Be set to capture the flag and sing the victory song in whatever task you take up today. Your subordinates will be the ones needing your support and motivation. At the end of the day, the icing on the cake would be the smile you take to bed.

CAPRICORN

You'll be popular today at your workplace. Your honesty and efforts will be recognised, which will be fulfilling for you. But, tomorrow will be a different day and times may not be favourable for you. It is, therefore, necessary for you to understand the importance of today and utilise it to the maximum, advises Ganesha.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will experience the harmonious balance between logic and emotion. You will consequently know how to mix business with pleasure. Money wise, you are content, but trivial issues may bother you today, says Ganesha.

PISCES

The focus is firmly on career advancement today. Business deals, which have been a long time in the making, will finally come through. Those pursuing a profession can expect pay rises or promotions.



KIM BUYS CINDY'S FORMER HOME FOR OVER 70 MILLION

Reality star Kim Kardashian has reportedly bought supermodel Cindy Crawford's former Malibu oceanside home for over \$70 million. The property measures at almost 7,500 square feet and is on a 3.18 acre estate.

BROOKE SHIELDS KEEN TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Brooke Shields is determined to change the whole conversation around age. The 57-year-old star has created an online platform called *Beginning is Now*, and she is keen to keep empowering women of all ages.



RAJU SRIVASTAVA'S INSPIRING LIFE

From ₹50 per show to 'King of Comedy'

The Indian comedy galactic cluster lost its brightest star in the form of Raju Srivastav, whose journey to become one of the most widely recognised Indian comedians was rife with struggles and reinventions as an artiste and as a person.

Born in Kanpur to a government employee and poet, Ramesh Chandra Srivastava, and homemaker, Saraswati Srivastava, Raju harboured the dream of becoming a comic artiste since his childhood and he moved to Mumbai in the 1980s to give a definitive shape to his dream.

He initially struggled to get work because comedy was a new art form for the mainstream back then. To make ends meet, Raju started driving an auto-rickshaw but kept his passion alive by performing in stand-up shows for a measly sum of Rs 50.

After a few years later, he landed a small role in the Hindi movie Tezaab in 1988. He then went on to work in the Salman

To make ends meet, Raju started driving an auto-rickshaw but kept his passion alive by performing in stand-up shows for peanuts

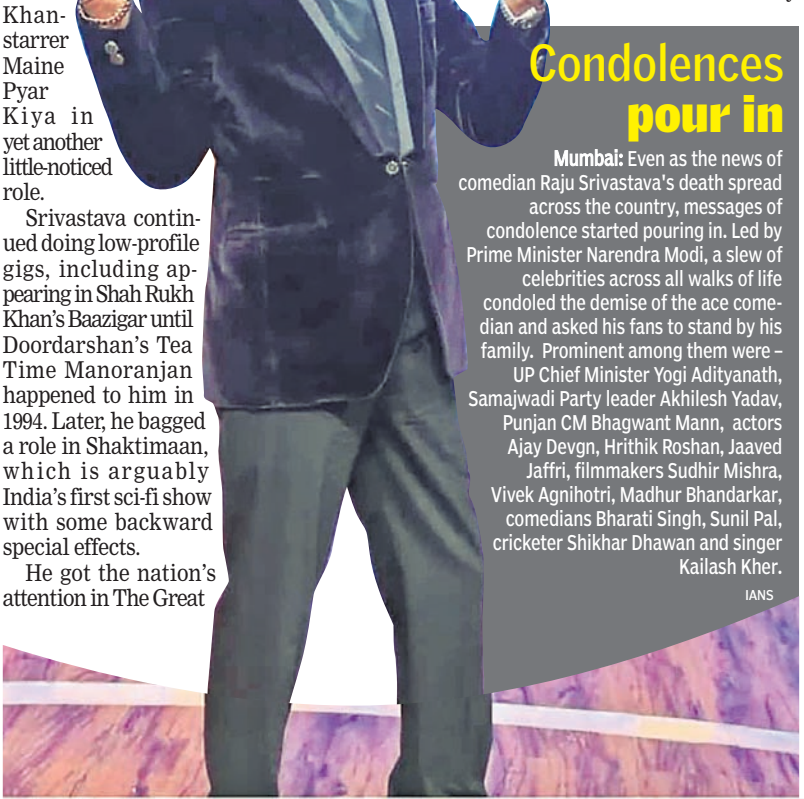
Indian Laughter Challenge, where he was the second runner-up, but he went on to win the title of King of Comedy in the spin-off show, The Great Indian Laughter Challenge - Champions.

He also appeared in the third season of the reality television show Bigg Boss, Nach Baliye 6 and Comedy Nights With Kapil.

Later in 2014, he ventured into politics and was fielded on the ticket of the Samajwadi Party from Kanpur for the Lok Sabha elections. He returned the ticket, however, saying he was not getting enough support from the local units of the party. After that, he joined Bharatiya Janata Party March 19, 2014.

Later, he served as the brand ambassador of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swachh Bharat campaign and was the Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Film Development Council. In that capacity, he laid the foundation for the upcoming NOIDA film city project.

Battling odds, but on his own terms, was Srivastava's way of life. A mortal human at the end of it, he lost his last fight, stretching over 43 days, against death. But his work has assured him immortality.



Condolences pour in

Mumbai: Even as the news of comedian Raju Srivastava's death spread across the country, messages of condolence started pouring in. Led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a slew of celebrities across all walks of life condoled the demise of the ace comedian and asked his fans to stand by his family. Prominent among them were - UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann, actors Ajay Devgn, Hrithik Roshan, Jaaved Jaffri, filmmakers Sudhir Mishra, Vivek Agnihotri, Madhur Bhandarkar, comedians Bharati Singh, Sunil Pal, cricketer Shikhar Dhawan and singer Kailash Kher.

IANS



Kajal talks about passion, human spirit

Mumbai: Actress Kajal Aggarwal, who has now taken a liking for horse riding, said that our bodies could change but our indomitable spirit and burning passion need not.

The actress, who only months after delivering a baby, is back at work shooting for director Shankar's much-awaited *Indian 2*, featuring Kamal Haasan in the lead, took to Instagram to explain how she has got back into the grind because of her determination and passion for cinema.

Posting a video clip of her riding a horse, she wrote: "Eager and excited, I jumped back into work four months post-partum! Little did I realise that it would feel like starting from scratch. My body wasn't the same as how it used to be."

"Post baby, it's been hard to get back my energy levels. Mounting a horse, let alone riding it seemed like a huge task! My body protested with the martial arts training that came so easily to me earlier."

"Our bodies can change/ may change/ will change but our indomitable spirit and burning passion need not. We've got to just keep showing up for ourselves and consistently making each day count. It's all about what we choose to prioritise to focus on and not feel guilty about our choices," signed off the *Singham* actress. AGENCIES

When Deepika refused movie over pay disparity

Mumbai: Over the past few years we have seen Hindi film actresses coming to the forefront and speaking up about the pay disparity between lead actors and actresses that persists in the industry.

In one such incident Deepika Padukone had revealed turning down a project over the gender pay gap.

The *Gehraiyaan* actress had once appeared at an event where she opened up about the gender pay disparity. She was heard saying, "I know what I'm worth. I know that this actor's films haven't been doing well as my films have been doing. So, I was okay to say no to that film based on that one thing."

"I'm ready to take those steps or measures or decisions for myself because I want to be able to sleep peacefully at night. I don't think I'll be able to live with the thought knowing that I have been a part of a film, had the same creative contribution or bringing the same value to a film but being underpaid," the Piku actress added.

In terms of work, Deepika is currently gearing up for her upcoming film *Pathaan* where she'll be reuniting with her *Chennai Express* co-star Shah Rukh Khan. AGENCIES



8th national solo play festival begins

NSDian Dolgovind Rath gets Asim Basu Samman while young theatre director Satya Jena was honoured with Anant Mahapatra Samman

Bhubaneswar: After a forced break of two years, Ekaa, a city-based theatre troupe resumed its two-day solo play festival here at Bhanjakala Mandap, Wednesday.

Three plays were staged on the inaugural of the evening.

First drama titled *Anamara Atmalipi*, written, directed and performed by Bhaskar Mohapatra was a presentation by Samparka troupe of Rourkela. The second play of the evening was *Jigyansa*, written and acted by Nabin Parida and presented by Nabina-Barnali (Bhubaneswar). It was directed by Debabrata Pattnaik. Last play *Priyadarshini Urvashi* was written by Arati Pattajoshi and directed by Govinda Jena. Bebi Mandal performed for the play, presented by Arpan group of Bhubaneswar.

Eminent theatre practitioner and NSDian Dolgovind Rath was honoured with fifth Asim Basu Samman, instituted in the name of legendary painter, actor and theatre per-



OP PHOTO

Playwright, actor and director Bhaskar Ch Mohapatra performed in play *Anamara Atmalipi*

sonality late Asim Basu while young director Satya Jena received third Anant Mahapatra Samman, named after the famous theatre director of the same name. Both received memento and cash award of Rs 10,000 each. Mahapatra was present on stage to present the award. Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Secretary Prabodh Rath was also present. Talking about this unique festival, Ekaa

secretary Siba Sankar Tripathy said, "I believe that solo play is one of the best ways of showcasing one's emotion and acting skills. Since I had no experience at the beginning, I approached great Asim Da (Basu) for help and he readily agreed. After that, there was no looking back."

Two more plays will be staged on the second and final day of the festival.

FUN post

PEANUTS



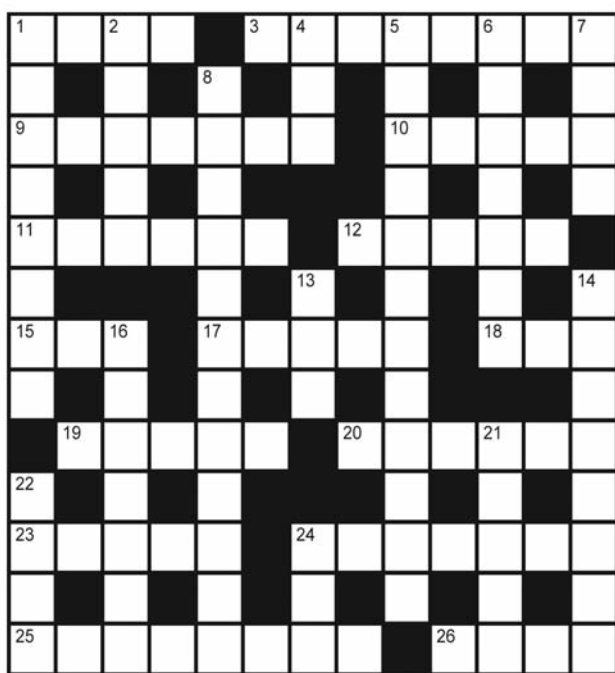
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



Across

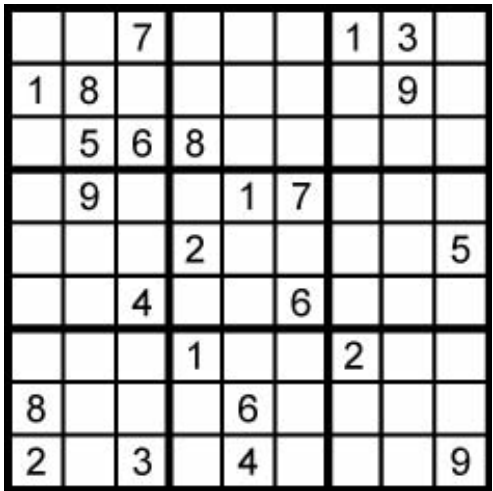
- Roman god of war
- Sleds
- Renaissance man (2,5)
- Blow one's top
- Large European flatfish
- Lukewarm
- Make lace
- Chubby
- Samuel's teacher, in the Bible

Down

- Do Zen
- Aare, for one
- Sapporo sash
- Type of sound system
- Ziti, e.g.
- Entree with a crust
- Post-op time
- Cut of meat
- Assassin
- Foreboding
- Hard to pin down
- Fill to the gills
- Not harmonious
- North Sea diver
- Alfred Hitchcock, e.g.
- Educator
- Type of tea
- Streetcar
- Social gathering

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.

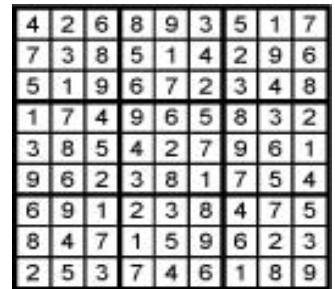


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

This puja, Old Station Bazar to turn Varanasi



POST NEWS NETWORK

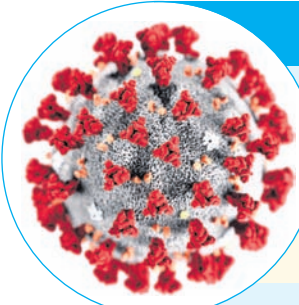
Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: As the Capital city is bracing for a curbs-free Durga Puja this year, Old Station Bazar Durga Puja Committee has come up with the idea of recreating the city of Varanasi as the theme for its puja pandal.

Old Station Bazaar puja committee Secretary Deepak Kumar Jena said, “Varanasi is a city on the banks of River Ganga in north-east India that has a central place in pilgrimage, death and mourning in Hindu traditions and rituals. The name Varanasi was officially revived after 1947, but the city is



PANCAKE EXPO

Governor Ganeshi Lal admires the pancakes displayed at Engineer Karisma Sahu Smaraki Tailika Mahila Sammilani in Cuttack, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	61,82,45,132	59,81,81,762	65,33,774
India	4,45,45,011	4,39,72,980	5,28,403
Odisha	13,32,281	13,21,857	9,186



PUIJA PREP: An artisan decorates a tableau for Station Bazar Durga Puja in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

DCP alerts citizens of cybercrimes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Commissionerate Police Wednesday urged denizens of the Capital city to never share their personal bank details online on being lured by false promises of the cyber-fraudsters.



credit card details. They also tell people that they have won some lotteries and huge sum of money will be credited to their bank accounts. They ask people to share the OTP with them. The users will be told that they can get certain gift coupons against purchase of ornaments and other goods from a particular shop or online platforms.” He advised people not to believe in tempting promises of the fraud-

Gullible girl loses ₹1L to cyber crook

Bhubaneswar: A girl student of private educational institution here has lost around ₹1 lakh to a cyber fraudster. The victim identified as Ruchika Kerketta from Guwahati in Assam, after clearing her final exams, had planned to shift to her native place. She posted advertisements on OLX seeking customers to sell off her furniture and other household articles before leaving for Assam. A cyber fraudster Wednesday contacted her and showed his interest to buy her used goods. After price negotiations, Ruchika asked the fraudster to deposit the amount through her Google Pay account. A few minutes later, the accused told Ruchika that he was failing to trace her Google account. The conman asked her to send him ₹1 from her Google Pay account. She also paid the amount and the trickster confirmed it. Subsequently, the fraudster asked Ruchika to send ₹5,995 to his account which she did. In this way, she went on to send a total of ₹96,000 to the account of fraudster in various installments. Following the receipt of the money, the fraudster did not pick her phone call and also switched off mobile. The girl lodged a complaint with Info City police Wednesday.

sters and requested not to share their account or credit card details and monetary transactions with anyone. He instructed the residents of the Capital city to contact the cyber police on helpline

no-7440006709 whenever they are getting any suspicious calls or messages. He also asked the victims to file complaints with police immediately after losing money to cyber fraudsters.

PURI UNIVERSITY PROJECT ROW

Mining likely purpose of land acquisition, SC told

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 21: Advocate Prashant Bhushan Wednesday informed the Supreme Court that the land acquired for the proposed Vedanta University in Puri by Anil Agarwal Foundation (AAF) is likely to be used for the extraction of minerals.

Making his submissions against the land acquisition, Bhushan said the area is rich in minerals and is likely to be used for mining purposes by Vedanta.

“The foundation initially sought 15,000 acres of land and then the demand was reduced to 10,000 acres. Finally they acquired around 3,600 acres of land. The land also has an eco-sensitive zone in around 500 metres. There are nallas and rivers. The land is now in patches. But they are still saying that please give us that land which is roughly 2,500 acres to set up a university for 1 lakh students,” Bhushan submitted.

Significantly, a two-judge bench of Justices MR Shah and Krishna Murari concluded the hearing and reserved the judgement. The bench said that it will decide whether the Vedanta foundation was a private company or a public company. The bench also observed that it may have to interpret the Section 4 of the Land Acquisition (Companies) Rules, 1963.

Bhushan opposed the foundation’s claim that it is a public company and submitted that Vedanta foundation is a private company and the state government signed MoU with Vedanta foundation, a private company, in July 2006 and acquired the land for it illegally.

Citing the Section 4 of the Land Acquisition (Companies) Rules, Bhushan submitted that it is the re-



sponsibility of the Collector to conduct an enquiry as to what is the minimum requirement of land, whether the company is in a position to utilise the land expeditiously and wherever the land is agricultural land, no alternative suitable site can be found so as to avoid acquisition of that land. He said according to an RTI response, the Collector didn’t hold any enquiry. Bhushan further submitted that Section 4 of the rules cannot be escaped even if the state government identified the land.

The advocate contended that Rule 4 of the Land Acquisition (Company) Rules prohibits issue of notification under Section 6 of Land Acquisition Act of 1894 for declaration that the land is required for public purpose unless an agreement with the company has been executed. Bhushan submitted in Vedanta’s case the notification issued before the agreement executed with the company. He contended that the agreement with Vedanta was signed in July 2006 while the notification for declaration was issued in June 2006.

He also submitted that as per the 2006 sale deed the cost of 1 acre of land in the area was ₹20 lakh but the company acquired the land by paying a meagre amount of ₹1.2 lakh per acre.

‘Ahimsa Rath’ reaches Jajpur, Gajapati dists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: ‘Ahimsa Rath’ that was flagged off by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on the occasion of ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’ and 76th anniversary of India’s Independence has reached Jajpur and Gajapati districts.

‘Ahimsa Rath’ was inaugurated by Patnaik to spread the messages of nationalism, brotherhood, peace, non-violence and harmony in the nook and corner of the state.

Everywhere a grand welcome is being accorded to Ahimsa Rath by the respective district administrations, zilla parishad members, SHGs, voluntary organisations, Mission Shakti groups, PRI members, students and teachers. People are welcoming Ahimsa Rath with traditional dance and song, pa-



triotic slogans, rallies with national flag, sankirtan, pala and in numerous innovative ways. Video shows of inspiring stories of freedom struggle are being displayed on LED screens at different halting places of Ahimsa Rath.

The mobile video chariot will move across the state till October 2.

The awareness campaign has been designed by the Information and Public Relations (I&PR) department of the state government.



CAUGHT IN RAIN : Commuters wait under the Rajmahal flyover as rain lashes Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

Heavy rain to lash western Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: A heavy rainfall warning has been issued for several western and interior districts of Odisha till Thursday morning.

The coastal and southern regions of the state had experienced heavy rain induced by the formation of low pressure for two consecutive days.

“Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places in Koraput, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh,” the IMD said in its forecast.

Meanwhile, an intense spell of rain continued in Bhubaneswar, along with western and interior parts of the state, Wednesday.

The weather office said that the low pressure area over north Odisha and its neighbourhood now lies over north Chhattisgarh and adjoining area with associated cyclonic circulation extending up to 5.8 km above mean sea level.

It is very likely to move west-northwestwards during the next two

Dabugaon in Nabarangpur district recorded the highest rainfall of 135.2 mm in the last 24 hours. Other places, including Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, recorded rainfall below 50 mm in the last 24 hours

days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in its bulletin Wednesday.

The local weather office said that Dabugaon in Nabarangpur district recorded the highest rainfall of 135.2 mm in the last 24 hours, followed by 76 mm at Deogaon in Jharsuguda district, 70.8 mm at Jujumara in Sambalpur district, 65 mm at Hemgiri in Sundargarh district, and 57.2 mm at Salebhatha.

Other places, including Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, recorded rainfall below 50 mm in the last 24 hours.

Marriage is not a milestone for everyone: Survey

MATCHMAKING WAS TRADITIONALLY SYNONYMOUS WITH MARRIAGE BUT WITH CHANGING TIMES SINGLE INDIANS SEEK OTHER TYPES OF COMMITMENTS LIKE COMPANIONSHIP AND DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS

A dedicated, loving partnership is a lovely thing. It is about two people who decide to form a partnership. It is also about the meeting of two families.

Currently, marriage is the preferred socially acceptable option when it comes to long-term commitment. It is something that families plan for even before their children reach adolescence. However, times are changing and single Indians are looking for other alternatives to a committed relationship. While many are getting married, many are also entering into domestic partnerships or opting for companionship as a long-term committed relationship.

A domestic partnership or living together is when the couple lives and shares their life as someone who is married but without a legal contract. Companionship is when a committed couple decides to live in their own homes while in a long-term relationship.

Sharing her views on the relationship scenario, Shalini Singh,



Founder of andwemet, states that “Matchmaking was traditionally synonymous with marriage. However, with changing times, single Indians seek other types of commitment, such as companionship and domestic partnerships besides marriage. That is where andwemet comes in. We provide a service in which like-minded individuals can form a meaningful relationship, which may not necessarily result in a marriage.”

To seek further clarification on

80%

of the people surveyed would like to be in a committed relationship without giving it a label

65%

of the subscribers did show an interest in marrying after their relationship passes the test of time

the same, andwemet surveyed their community members aged between 25-35 years old from Tier A Indian cities like Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Bangalore and came up with the following results:

Seek a committed relationship but fear marriage

According to the platform’s subscribers, 80 per cent of them would like to be in a committed relationship without giving it a label. Whereas 65

per cent of them did show an interest in marrying after their relationship passes the test of time.

Most of them believe that marriage is only a label and that they value commitment and a healthy relationship more than the label. More women than men also worry that marriage will change things in their relationship, especially because of societal expectations. Post marriage, women are expected to undergo adjustments in their lives, such as changing their last name in all official records, giving up on their birth home, considering their married home to be theirs, and adhering to the ways of their “new home”. For woman, there is a sense of a ‘change of ownership’ from her parent’s house to her married home, which many times can result in a loss of identity and an inability to grasp, the question arises why?

The female subscribers stated that marriage makes them feel overwhelmed, which they wish to avoid, and they wish to focus

on their relationship to make it stronger.

Domestic Partnership

Successful long-term partnerships understand the importance of partners always expressing their emotions to one another. Yes, this is legal in India and is known as a domestic partnership. A domestic partnership is regarded as the legal equal of marriage and avoids the financial strain of a traditional wedding.

However, given our deeply ingrained cultural conventions, people seeking domestic partnerships must feel quite safe from within and locate a partner who shares his/her viewpoint.

According to andwemet’s survey, 30 per cent of their subscribers are willing to form domestic partnerships with their love interests rather than tie the knot of marriage, whereas 5 per cent of subscribers even plan to have babies or adopt them in the future if the relationship turns out to be fruitful.

IANS

Livestock sector is growth engine for rural Odisha: CM

146 VETERINARY DOCTORS, 588 LIVESTOCK INSPECTORS, 67 JUNIOR FISHERIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS & 3 JUNIOR ENGINEERS JOIN SERVICE



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday said the fisheries and livestock sector has been identified as a growth engine for farmers, women self-help groups (SHGs) and entrepreneurs.

Patnaik said this while addressing the orientation programme organised for newly-appointed veterinarians, livestock inspectors (LIs), junior technical assistants (fisheries) and junior engineers through videoconferencing Wednesday evening.

A total of 146 veterinarian doctors, 588 LIs, 67 junior assistants and three junior engineers (JEs) joined the service.

Stating that Odisha is an agro-economy state and more than 70 per cent of the rural population are engaged in various agricultural activities the Chief Minister said that most of them are enhancing their income through livestock and fishery. The state government is also making continuous efforts to make the life of these farmers more comfortable, increase their income and put a smile on their faces, he said.

That is why the fisheries and livestock development sector has been identified by the government as the growth engine for the farmers, women SHGs and entrepreneurs, he said.

Patnaik further said that fisheries and livestock sector has a special

role to play in meeting the protein calorie requirements of the people in rural areas, providing nutrition and above all ensuring food security. Therefore, the officers of the Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (FARD) department should realise the importance their responsibilities, he said.

Emphasising the 5T initiatives, the Chief Minister said that real change can be ensured at the grass-roots level by maintaining complete transparency, working in team spirit and applying scientific knowledge that would pave the way for the development of fisheries and livestock sector.

He hoped that the newly-appointed officials would maintain integrity and work with dedication.

FARD Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain said, “In the last 20 years, state’s milk production has increased by three times, meat production by six times, eggs three times and fish production by four times.”

5T Secretary VK Pandian said that the Chief Minister has upgraded the post of veterinary doctor from Group-B to Group-A. Stating that there has been a lot of progress in the area of animal husbandry in the state, Pandian said animal husbandry has played a crucial role in doubling the incomes of farmers.

He advised all the department officials to follow 5T principles to triple the income of the farmers in the coming years.



CRUCIAL MEETING: Newly-elected AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey (R) and secretary-general Shaji Prabhakaran met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at his residence, Wednesday, and discussed details about the upcoming matches of the U-17 Women’s World Cup football tournament to be played in Bhubaneswar

State logs 199 new Covid-19 cases

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: State’s Covid-19 tally rose to 13,32,281 Wednesday as 199 more people, including 40 children, tested positive for the infection, a health bulletin said.

The state had recorded 164 infections Tuesday.

The toll remained unchanged at 9,186, with no reports of any new casualties. Besides, 53 other patients have died due to comorbidities, it said.

NMA nod to beautification of Srimandir, Lingaraj with riders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: The National Monuments Authority (NMA) has issued no objection certificates (NoCs) to the Odisha government for its development and beautification projects at Srimandir in Puri, Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar and Sun Temple at Konark, but with riders.

The Shree Jagannath Reception Centre will now come up in the regulated zone of the monument instead of in the prohibited zone

grant of NoC for construction of Shree Jagannath Reception Centre in the regulated area at a distance of 101.50 metres from the protected monument,” said the NMA document which is available with PTI.

According to the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, the area within 100 metres of a monument is a ‘prohibited’ zone while that within 200 metres falls under the ‘regulated’ category.

However, the state government had earlier planned to set up the reception centre within the prohibited zone.

The NMA put general conditions for the heritage projects saying that all new structures to be constructed should be non-intrusive and devoid of any heavy architecture, undertake temporary structures wherever possible, and use of heavy machinery for digging work should be avoided.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik along with Puri’s titular king Gajapati Dibya Singha Deb had last year laid the foundation stone for the project which seeks to provide better amenities to pilgrims, including toilets and cloakrooms.

In the face of protest and opposition, the state government submitted a fresh proposal for the reception centre and sought permission to shift the proposed structure to the regulated zone from the prohibited zone in April.

The NMA took the decision at a meeting held September 9.

This apart, the NMA has also issued NoC to execute developmental works in the prohibited zone of the 11th century Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar.

The Odisha Bridge & Construction Corporation (OBCC) had submitted a revised Detailed Project Report (DPR) with NMA.

Construction of a heritage park and entrance plaza and some other items for the temple has also been approved.

Similarly, the NMA has also allowed construction of a foot over-bridge, transit hub, boulevard, landscaped plaza and information centre in the regulated area at the Konark Sun temple, 13th century World Heritage Site.

The NMA said that the works would have to be executed under the supervision of the Archaeological Survey of India to mitigate any adverse impact on the protected monuments.

Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi, who had raised the issue of ‘illegal construction’ at Srimandir in Lok Sabha thanked the NMA for asking the Odisha government to shift the reception centre to the regulated zone from the prohibited area.

State schools shine in nat’l ranking survey

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Odisha-based schools secured top ranks in a national survey conducted by Education World in association with Centre for Forecasting and Research Pvt. Ltd.

This survey features schools of Bhubaneswar in the top rankings nationwide, which is a matter of great pride for the City/state.

In the nationwide day-cum-boarding school ranking 2022-23 category, SAI International School secured second rank while in nationwide state government day schools ranking category, Odisha Adarsh Vidyalaya (OAV), Hatiota in Ganjam secured the fifth rank and the OAV at Patharchepa in Bolangir district got 10th rank in government boarding school category.

Similarly, in Odisha-based day-cum-boarding schools rankings



IN NATIONWIDE DAY-CUM-BOARDING SCHOOL RANKING CATEGORY, SAI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SECURED SECOND RANK

IN NATIONWIDE STATE GOVERNMENT DAY SCHOOLS RANKING CATEGORY, ODISHA ADARSH VIDYALAYA (OAV), HATIOITA IN GANJAM SECURED THE FIFTH RANK

Bangalore, Wednesday. The survey rates and ranks the country’s top 4,000 schools in four main and 22 sub-categories. It also rates and ranks India’s best Special Needs, Private Budget, State Government Day, Central Government Day and Government Boarding schools.

The 14 parameters of education excellence on which the schools were ranked are: academic reputation, competence of faculty, individual attention to students, leadership/management quality,

curriculum and pedagogy (hybrid learning readiness), co-curricular education, sports education, community service, parental involvement, teacher welfare and development, value for money, mental and emotional well-being services, infrastructure provision and leadership/management quality.

“EWISR 2022-23 which rates and ranks 3,500-4,000 of India’s most admired schools in 392 cities and towns countrywide will aid parents to select the suitable school for their children. Simultaneously, a parallel objective of the annual EWISR is to stimulate and motivate institutional managements to strive for all-round perfection and benchmark themselves with globally respected schools. India’s 1.5 million schools, including 450,000 private schools, have a key role to develop the world’s largest and most high-potential child and youth population,” says Education World’s Dilip Thakore.

3 suicide deaths reported in City

Continued from P1

Police have started as investigation by registering a case in this regard.

In the second incident, a newlywed lady allegedly died by suicide by hanging herself in her residence at the rear of Police Bhawan here under Capital police station. However, the deceased’s family alleged that their daughter was killed by her husband and brother-in-law.

As per sources, the deceased Sumitra Katia and her husband, Ganesh Katia, hail from Khandapada in Nayagarh district. Sumitra married Ganesh around two years back.

Ganesh who works in a private company spotted Sumitra hanging from the ceiling late Tuesday night. He rushed her to the Capital hospital where doctors declared her brought dead on arrival.

Sumitra’s father, Harihara Behera, in his complaint alleged that Ganesh and his family members used to torture her regularly demanding dowry since they got married in 2020. She had also informed her family about the torture.

Harihara alleged Ganesh and his younger brother, Ajit hanged her body after murdering Sumitra.

Teachers report rising behavioural issues among kids post pandemic

As schools across the country are now open after two years of online education, principals, teachers and behavioural experts Wednesday reported a significant rise in behavioural issues among schoolchildren like aggression, attention span deficit, sleeplessness, and emotional disturbances, especially among those who lost their near and dear ones in Covid.

Stressing upon the need to introduce social emotional learning programmes and counselling sessions across schools, they said the situation is delicate and will need at least a year or so to bring affected kids back into the normal course of life.

“Post-pandemic, there have been huge changes in children, in terms of how they view their teachers, their schools, their peers and so on. Their attention span has reduced and writing skills have taken a toll for sure. Their sleep patterns have also gone for a toss, leading to irritability,” Nikita Tomar Mann, Principal at Indraprastha Global School in Noida, said.

Several schoolchildren have gone through a lot of trauma as their parents

went through financial distress in the last two years, resulting in deep emotional issues creeping in among them.

“Children do understand that their parents faced financial issues like unable to pay school fees or house rent as some of them lost jobs or faced pay cuts. They came back to school with that kind of understanding, which changed the way they look at life as well. I think for each kid, it’s a different story and the intensity of it also varies from child to child so we need to handle this situation very, very carefully,” Mann elaborated.

The concerns are real as a latest survey by the government has revealed that a majority of school students’ mental health has declined in the country. The survey findings were based on the responses of 3.79 lakh students in 36 states and Union Territories.

The 2022 NCERT survey found that changes in the schooling system like prolonged school closure, online classes, changes in Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) exams and postponement of exams directly affected lakhs of



students.

According to Sameer Malhotra, Director, Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences, Max Hospitals, they have seen an increase in behavioural issues in kids due to increase in internet usage, gaming, and excessive mobile use.

“It has led to irritability, disturbed sleep-wake schedule, irritable and demanding behaviour. These kids also display restlessness and conduct problems. Ways out to help these kids should be well coordinated, consistent logical ways to resolve problems,” said Malhotra.

Sr. Pramila Judith Vas, Principal of Fr. Agnel School in Greater Noida, said that the pandemic changed the education landscape dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning.

“Many parents suffered financially too and expressed their inability to pay fees. Counselling sessions were provided to the parents and their families. Supportive hand was extended to the students to cope up with their emotional responses,” said Vas.

Acting upon the study, the NCERT has now issued guidelines to schools for early identification

and intervention of mental health problems among students.

Under the guidelines, they have recommended mental health advisory panels, mental health awareness programmes, and pedagogical support.

Samir Parikh, Director, Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences, Fortis Healthcare, said that children now need to refocus on the importance of physical activities, sports, arts, creativity, friends, learning social skills and communication with friends in the peer groups to effectively deal with the situation.

“Our initial focus needs to be an adjustment of children to mainstream schooling so that they learn the routine, able to enjoy it, focus a lot on their physical growth, development and sports and help them develop meaningful relationships. That’s a way to look out and both parents and teachers need to have these goals in mind,” Parikh noted.

Schools have also noticed that school kids are taking frequent breaks as they cannot sit for even 30-35 minutes in the class.

Mann said that once the pandemic

situation eased and the school reopened, the first thing they did was to introduce the curriculum for social emotional learning.

“It has two components to it; one is financial literacy and the other is social emotional learning. It is all structured where we give an opportunity for children to have discussions with the teachers and express what they feel about a certain thing, without being judged for what is right and what is wrong,” said Mann.

Divya Mohindroo, a city-based counselling psychologist and mental health expert, said that parents need to keep a separate area or zone at home for studying and children should be told to do ‘digital detox’ and not use screens before sleeping and after getting up.

“Time management for the children should be balanced with giving them time to rest, nourish their body which includes eating well, hydrating well and at least 45 minutes of some physical activity they enjoy. Sharing the schedule and giving small incentives to them on achieving the tasks will help them strike a balance,” she noted.

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'Ecocide' for murram mining

LOCALS SEEK PROBE, THREATEN TO MOVE NGT



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 21: Tonnes of murram have been illegally lifted out from a vast swathe of forestland near a hill, about one and half kilometre from Bansapal teshil office in Keonjhar district. Such an illegality has triggered a controversy as fuming locals threatened to move the NGT demanding for a probe.

A contractor made space for murram mining after felling scores of valuable trees in the area, locals alleged asserting that environment was largely affected with

tree felling. A huge sprawling crater that has been created after mining murram will also pose danger to wildlife and humans, the locals expressed concern.

Moreover, illegal murram lifting has caused huge revenue loss to the state exchequer, but the fact that officials of the Revenue department were unaware of the large-scale loot of the minor mineral has raised many an eyebrow.

Environmentalists and local lawyers have expressed concern over development that has harmed the local ecology of the area. They have decided to take up the issue

with the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

"The revenue officials of the tehsil should look into the illegal murram lifting from the forest area, measure the extent of loss and impose penalty on those involved in it," said lawyer Suraj Mohapatra.

Reports said, the contractor was awarded construction work of a bus stand at the Bansapal block headquarters. He has been lifting murram from the area for the construction work.

"The massive pits created after lifting of murram will pose serious danger to elephants and other wildlife residing in the area while the local ecology suffered huge loss in terms of tree felling. The state government also lost huge amount of revenue due to illegal murram mining," Mohapatra said.

Locals have demanded stern action against the contractor.

Bansapal tehsildar Sapan Sahu said that murram lifting has been stopped while fine will be collected from the contractor.

Contacted, DFO HD Dhanraj said that appropriate step will be taken in this connection.

Admin reviews infra projects in Rourkela for Hockey WC 2023

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 21: Sundargarh Collector Parag H. Gavali reviewed the progress of various infra-structural projects currently underway in Rourkela city for the upcoming FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023, to be held in January.

In the review meeting held at the Conference Hall of the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC), Tuesday, the Collector took briefings on the status of road construction, beautification, illumination, parking space and tree plantation from the concerned departmental officials.

Players, officials and various sports personalities will converge in Rourkela for the Hockey World Cup. The Collector directed the concerned officials to identify

places for creating parking spaces for their vehicles. He issued directions for wrapping up all arrangements within the stipulated deadline.

The district administration is installing CCTV cameras at strategic locations in Rourkela city. The Collector directed the concerned officials to complete the work before the Hockey World Cup. He also asked for regular inspection of the quality of food sold at temporary roadside stalls in the city.

Various programmes involving the administration and the general public are in the offing to make the Hockey World Cup a success.

While various sports competitions will be organised at the panchayat level, thematic and creative events like elocution, essay writing and drawing competitions will be held

for school students in the run-up to the mega event. The Collector sought everyone's cooperation for the same.

ADM Rourkela cum commissioner, RMC and CEO Smart City Rourkela, Subhankar Mohapatra, SP Rourkela Mukesh Bhamoo, DFO Jashobanta Sethi, ZP CDO and EO Bhairab Singh Patel, sub-collector, Panposh Daulat Chandrakar, Deputy Commissioner RMC Sudhanshu Kumar Bhoi, Sitadebi Majhi, Ronit Kumar, tehsildar Rourkela Chandrakant Mallik and officials from various departments attended the review meeting.

Odisha will host the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2023. The matches for the tournament will be played at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar and the Birs Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela.

JUMBO MENACE



People in Sadar forest range of Keonjhar district were left panicked after a herd of 11 elephants went on a damaging spree at Ukuchabada near Basantpur, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

Tribals in Mayurbhanj tie rakhis to trees

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mayurbhanj, Sept 21: Hundreds of acres of forestland in Mayurbhanj district are safe today, thanks to the Jungle Raksha Bandhan Utsav organised annually by the tribal communities here. As part of the festival, they tie rakhis to the trees with a promise to protect them from illegal felling and forest fires.

In the summer season, people actively participate in clearing dried branches and dead trees from as many as 750 village forests in 21 blocks of the district. They repeat the process every three or four days to keep forest fires at bay.

"Be it celebrations or funerals, we need forest produce. However, we did not understand its importance until about three decades ago. At that time, timber mafias from West Bengal and Jharkhand ruled the roost here," said Mohan Murmu (50), a village committee member of Hatimada in Suliapada block.

According to him, the situation became so dire that they had to travel about 10km to access basic forest produce. Food scarcity was acute, forcing villagers to migrate to Kolkata and Midnapur in West Bengal.

In those tumultuous days of 1992, some tribal families in Hatimada understood the importance of their village forest and formed several groups with around 10 people in



each to offer full-time forest protection. This way they managed to save 150 acres of forestland!

Hatimada again set an example in 2004, when the tribal communities launched a unique tradition of tying rakhis to trees. Soon, the entire district followed suit.

On the eve of the ritual, the priests officially invite the villagers, decked in traditional attire, to the celebrations. Every year, preparations begin with a community meeting before Rakhi Purnima, presided by the Majhihadam or the Santhal head priest of Sajanti village, and Dehuri Nayak, another priest. A decision is made on budget allocation and other festival-related matters. In addition,

rules to ensure forest protection and procure minor produce are laid out.

On the eve of parvan (ritual), the Majhihadam and Dehuri Nayak officially invite the villagers for the celebrations. Men and women join the parvan in traditional attires, and dance to the tune of madal and dhamsa.

The Nayak takes mango leaf, sal leaf, honey, ghata, kalasi, jhuna and deepa to the forest and begins the rituals. As per the tribal tradition, the priest ends the prayer with a chant in Santhali language. "Oh universe, today, on this auspicious day, we offer you prayers unitedly and commit to taking care of you. Please take care of us and bear all of our sorrows. Give us health, food and rain," he prays.

PUJA PREP



A labourer was busy putting up bamboo poles for construction of a make-shift puja pandal ahead of Durga puja in Angul, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

Salandi erodes bank; locals panicked

POST NEWS NETWORK

Aradi, Sept 21: Salandi river has been eroding its banks at some places in Aradi panchayat under Chandbali block of Bhadrak. Absence of stone packing on the embankments is allegedly responsible for collapse of river banks in the area. Continuous bank collapse has triggered panic among people living in riparian villages of the panchayat.

According to the reports, with torrential rains and rising water level in Salandi, a portion of the river bank caved in Tuesday at Shitalpur while a major portion of a house collapsed along with the bank.

In February this year, a portion of the bank along with some trees had also been washed away. Foundation of some nearby houses in the same area had sunk. The then Collector Trilochan Majhi visited the spot and took stock of the situation. He had directed the top officials of the Jajpur Irrigation division to build stone-packed embankments to prevent further erosion.



Besides, Majhi had asked members of five families living on the river banks to shift to safer places.

On the other hand, local people alleged that a contractor who was awarded the work of stone-packing the embankment has only dumped a few truck-loads of murram at the weak patch and work has not moved forward beyond that.

A few days back, some officials of the Irrigation department held talks with the villagers and assured financial assistance to the families that have lost their houses

due to collapse of the river bank.

The officials had hinted that work of the embankment would start in November. However, the recent collapse of the river bank has robbed the villagers of their sleep.

Contacted, junior engineer of the Irrigation department Kishore Das said that he was unaware of the bank erosion. "Some houses at the place were prone to collapse. There was discussion on this with the families a week ago. The embankment work will start in next two months," he added.

Admin steps up security as Reds mark foundation day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 21: The district administration here intensified security measures Wednesday as Maoists have started the weeklong observation of their foundation day from September 21.

The ultras will observe the 18th foundation day from September 21 to September 27. The district administration tightened the security measures in view of possible violence by ultras during the period to establish their presence. It was known after the Andhra-Odisha Border Committee of Maoists released an

audio tape and a booklet, Tuesday. In the audio tape, Andhra-Odisha Zonal Border Committee secretary Ganesh appealed to people to strengthen the revolutionary movement by inducting more and more youths in the guerilla army of the Maoists. The ultras also remembered in the tape the slain Maoist cadres like RK, member of the Central Maoist Committee, comrades Anil, Soni and Chinna Rao and the courage they have displayed. The tape also highlighted the youths who have joined the guerilla army and have been fighting for water, forest and land by abstaining from all comforts of life.

Ashram in reserve forest sealed; godman arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Parjang, Sept 21: Forest officials arrested a self-proclaimed godman, locally called 'Baba' and sealed an ashram he was illegally running inside Kankili Kunderakhol reserve forest under Muktapasi forest section of Dhenkanal district, Wednesday.

The godman was identified as Ananta Charan Das alias Khandia Baba. He had encroached upon a patch of forest land and was running his ashram there.

He had cleared scores of valuable trees two years ago and set up his ashram. The Dhenkanal DFO had earlier received complaints from some local residents that the self-styled godman and his aides were poaching wild animals wandering into their area in search of food. He was also accused of selling wildlife body parts.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF VIDEO WALLS AT NINE (09) STATIONS OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION

No. Comm/ISBP/E-auction/Publicity/22

Dtd.: 16.09.2022

Asset Description: INSTALLATION & OPERATION OF VIDEO WALLS FOR COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENT PURPOSE. (100 SQFT AREA WILL BE PROVIDED AT EACH STATION)

Locations: (1) Sambalpur (SBP), (2) Titlagarh (TIG), (3) Bargarh Road (BRGA), (4) Balangir (BLGR), (5) Kesinga (KSGN), (6) Sambalpur City (SBPY), (7) Kantabanji (KBJ), (8) Muniguda (MNGD), (9) Mahasamund (MSMD)

Auction Start Date & Time : at 1200 hrs. of 29.09.2022 (For all locations) Auction Close Date & Time: 29.09.2022 at 1230 hrs. (Sl. No. 1), 29.09.2022 at 1240 hrs. (Sl. No. 2), 29.09.2022 at 1250 hrs. (Sl. No. 3), 29.09.2022 at 1300 hrs. (Sl. No. 4), 29.09.2022 at 1310 hrs. (Sl. No. 5), 29.09.2022 at 1320 hrs. (Sl. No. 6), 29.09.2022 at 1330 hrs. (Sl. No. 7), 29.09.2022 at 1340 hrs. (Sl. No. 8), 29.09.2022 at 1350 hrs. (Sl. No. 9)

For details please visit website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Sambalpur

PR-516/N/22-23

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Mr. SONAM PRADHAN issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID Card No. 2209923 has been found missing and/or lost on 15.09.2022. Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager, Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited,

Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID Card No. 2209923.

Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment. Date: 22.09.2022 Sd./- Place: BHUBANESWAR

For ICICI Bank Limited

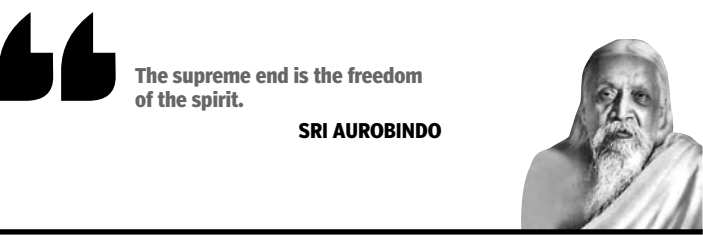
PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Mr. SURYAKANTA DALAI issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID Card No. 2221421 has been found missing and/or lost on 15.09.2022. Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager, Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited,

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Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment. Date: 22.09.2022 Sd./- Place: BHUBANESWAR

For ICICI Bank Limited



Confluence of Shocks

Make no mistake: We no longer live in a stable international rules-based order. The days of unipolarity and global liberalism are over, and we are now facing a confluence of shocks unlike anything most of us have seen in our lifetimes. No pilot is flying the plane: the closest thing we have to a cockpit, the G20, is fractured and deadlocked, despite Indonesia's valiant efforts as this year's president.

The international institutions, norms, and practices that we continue to rely on are increasingly being eclipsed by geopolitics. Whatever their rhetoric, China, Russia, and the United States have lost faith in global institutions, withholding their support whenever it suits their interests. While the European Union, Japan, the United Kingdom, Canada, and major players from the Global South continue to support multilateralism, global governance cannot really be sustained without the participation of the world's largest economies and military powers.

Making matters worse, the world is facing at least eight systemic challenges simultaneously. As former Canadian central bank governor Stephen Poloz explains in his book *The Next Age of Uncertainty*, "when multiple long-term forces are acting together on the economy through time, and interacting with one another as well, the economy itself can behave erratically and appear unstable." Under these conditions, predictions and conventional policy tools stop working.

The first major challenge is Russia's war in Ukraine, which shows no end in sight (notwithstanding the Ukrainian armed forces' recent gains). The tit-for-tat weaponisation of economic linkages has generated a huge global energy shock that will aggravate deeper social and political crises in Europe and around the world this fall. While the G7, Australia, and South Korea have taken steps to freeze Russia out of the global dollar system and interbank messaging network (SWIFT), Global South powers have not joined the sanctions regime, leaving the G20 split on this issue.

Second, despite the Biden administration's recent legislative breakthroughs, US democracy is in deep crisis. Most decision-making remains crippled by legislative gridlock and an activist Supreme Court, and extremism is on the rise. In a recent book, the international relations scholar Barbara F. Walter warns that many well-known indicators of impending civil war are flashing red in the US. A major survey published in November 2021 found that 30 per cent of Republicans, and 18 per cent of Americans overall, agree with the statement: "Because things have gotten so far off track, true American patriots may have to resort to violence in order to save our country."

Third, China is at a fork in the road. The 20th Party Congress this October almost certainly will solidify President Xi Jinping's rule and install key powerholders for the next five years or longer. We will then see whether the regime intends to double down on its nationalist mobilisation and intensifying social control – including its economically disastrous "zero-COVID" policy, closed borders, and other restrictions.

Will China entrench its new isolation, or will it take some steps back toward international connectivity and economic liberalisation? The answer to that question will determine the answers to many others. As matters stand, the US and Chinese political trajectories are fueling a confrontational spiral that cannot end well for either side.

Fourth, after a period of remarkable unity in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU is entering an extraordinarily risky period of intertwined energy, economic, and social shocks. Italians seem poised to elect a Right-wing nationalist government later this month; French governance is divided; and eastern member states remain vulnerable to Russian threats.

Fifth, climate-related disasters are intensifying globally – and much earlier than expected. Across South Asia, the Pacific, China, Europe, Africa, and the Americas, heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, and mega floods are disrupting lives, reducing food supplies (which were already endangered by Russia's war), and fragmenting societies.

Sixth, there are still deep post-pandemic uncertainties with respect to supply chains, energy and food markets, and inflation. It is anyone's guess what global financial markets will do this fall, but talk of tighter financial conditions and recession is in the air.

Seventh, these food, energy, climate, and economic shocks are likely to trigger social and democratic breakdown in many parts of the world, especially if the G20 cannot agree on safety-net measures such as debt relief. Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Ethiopia are already in the throes of political and socioeconomic chaos.

Finally, the coming months will stress test global-governance mechanisms like never before. All eyes will be on the November 15-16 G20 summit in Bali, the November 18-19 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Thailand, and the November 6-18 COP27 climate conference in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. Sadly, it is hard to expect much from any of these gatherings.

What should be done?

First, these interacting shocks must be faced with pragmatism, rather than ideology, recognising that a failure to act collectively will put the future of human civilisation itself at risk. Since we remain closely connected through technology, climate, travel, and the broader world economy, global governance through exclusive regional or ideological clubs simply will not suffice.

Second, political leaders and policymakers must figure out how to match the kind of imagination that business and technology leaders have demonstrated in recent decades. There are huge untapped possibilities to be explored through alternative approaches to global and collective governance. These include new platforms like the Paris Peace Forum, Global Solutions Initiative, and Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity which bring multiple actors together to incubate new models, or inter-regional groups such as the Alliance for Multilateralism. The G20 should initiate a taskforce on common long-term existential questions and mutual misperceptions. We urgently need a competitive, bottom-up search for new ideas.

Third, large, systemically important players have a historic responsibility to contain their own military and security rivalries, and to support countries that face hardship as a result of the large powers' actions. In the past, we have found ways to defuse the threat of mutual insecurity through regular global meetings and platforms like the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe; we must do so again today.

As for all the other countries, companies, foundations, civil-society groups, and NGOs, the task now is to generate ideas and form networks and coalitions, with a focus on building resilience and developing anti-fragile systems. If the big players fail to do their part, our last chance may rest with these stakeholders in the middle.

Bertrand Badré is a former managing director of the World Bank. Yves Tiberghien is Director Emeritus of the Institute of Asian Research at the University of British Columbia.

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WISDOM CORNER

The degree of freedom from unwanted thoughts and the degree of concentration on a single thought are the measures to gauge spiritual progress. RAMANA MAHARSHI

Truth, like gold, is to be obtained not by its growth, but by washing away from it all that is not gold. LEO TOLSTOY

Keep me away from the wisdom which does not cry, the philosophy which does not laugh and the greatness which does not bow before children. KAHILIL GIBRAN

FOCUS PM SHRI

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

Neither the NEP nor the PM SHRI scheme offers any tangible roadmap to address the critical issues -- absenteeism, untrained and ill-equipped proxy teachers, large vacancies, and innumerable scandals involving recruitment of teachers

Bikash Narayan Mishra

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO BASIC AMENITIES IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS ARE FAR FROM SATISFACTORY

Recently the Union government announced upgrading 14,500 schools through a centrally sponsored scheme - PM SHRI (PM Schools for Rising India). These schools are expected to mentor and provide leadership to other schools in their vicinity. Among other things, PM SHRI will provide high quality education in an equitable, inclusive and joyful school environment, as per the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The schools will be developed as green schools and the focus will be on the learning outcomes of every child in every grade.

These schools will be selected through a process called "Challenge Mode". The elementary schools and the secondary/senior secondary schools managed by Centre/state/UT/local self government would be considered for selection under the scheme. More than 18 lakh students are expected to benefit from this ambitious scheme where the central government is expected to spend Rs 27360 crore for a period of five years beginning from 2022-23.

Sounds good! It is universally accepted that children with special talent or aptitude should be provided opportunities to proceed at a faster pace by making good quality education available to them irrespective of their capacity to pay for it. The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan was established in December 1963 to network a system of central government schools across India. There are 1245 schools in different parts (03 abroad) and some 15 lakh students are enrolled there. Similarly, a Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) was set up in 1986 with a target of one Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) in every district basically to benefit the students from rural areas. Now there are 661 such schools and some of the schools are taking students from more than one district. The scheme is operational in all the 775 districts benefitting some three lakh odd students (from class 6 to 12). While these are central government sponsored and funded schemes, some state governments have also followed

suit. The Odisha government's Adarsh Schools in every block in line with JNV and the 5T initiatives are indeed praiseworthy. The KVs and JNVs have produced outstanding sportsmen, cinema showmen, authors, bureaucrats, politicians, army personnel and academicians.

But then this brings a kind of distortion to the already multi-layered school system. Our Constitution envisages universal elementary education as a public good that contributes to the building of an egalitarian, just and democratic social order by providing free and compulsory schooling to all children of our country up to the age of 14 years. The NEP 2020 underlines the vision of India's education system and reiterates the provisions in the Constitution in this regard.

Against this backdrop, let us introspect where do we stand. Everyday about 67,000 children are born in India - one sixth of the world's total child births. There are as many as 12.22 lakh schools in India imparting elementary education. Out of them about 80 per cent are government/gov-

ernment aided. While there are approximately 187 million students in elementary schools, 115 million are in government schools (62 per cent), mostly children from the marginalised sections. The share of government schools in elementary category is coming down. It was 87 per cent in 2006 and now stands at 62 per cent. The quality of education and access to basic amenities in government schools are far from satisfactory. Neither the NEP nor the PM SHRI scheme offers any tangible roadmap to address the critical issues -- absenteeism, untrained and ill-equipped proxy teachers, large vacancies, and innumerable scandals involving recruitment of teachers. All these only lead to further marginalisation of all the already marginalised.

Besides, as per UNICEF findings, over a third of India's children are stunted, resulting in an underdeveloped brain with the inevitable consequence of poor academic performances and reduced earnings. True, we have the best of IITs, NITs and IIMs. But how many from these 115 million can reach such institutions? The

prospects of the KVsites, JNVites and after some time that of the PM SHRIites may be better; but all these institutes put together have the capacity to groom less than three per cent of our total underprivileged students.

Tawney RH, the renowned economic historian, says: "Equity of opportunity requires not just an open road; but also, an equal start." The overall development of a human being is laid in early years, any intervention later will not compensate for the early childhood deprivations. We have to fundamentally change how we treat the most vulnerable sections of our society - our children.

The recent findings of Pratham, one of the largest non-governmental educational organisations in India that carries out an Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER), are very disturbing. The findings are based on a survey of over 5 lakh students in 15,000 villages located in 500-odd rural districts. They have been doing this since 2005. The latest survey done in 2018, pre-COVID period, was to assess what proportion of students in class 5 could read class 2 texts. This was 53 per cent in 2008 and in 2018 it has fallen to 44.2 per cent. In the test for numeracy, which is to ask children in class 5 to do simple division, the success rate has dropped from 34.4 per cent in 2008 to 22.7 per cent in 2018. In other words, more than 75 per cent students in our government schools in class 5 could not perform simple division. The success rate even for class 7 students was only 40 per cent.

We need more KVs and JNVs, maybe one in every block, and the proposed PM SHRI number is too little and too late! Notwithstanding our focus on digitisation and on Artificial Intelligence, the marginalised children will be further marginalised unless drastic policy measures are taken for improving the affairs in about a million government schools and the nation may lose the demographic dividend!

The writer is Senior Advisor, Indian Banks' Association. Views are personal.

SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

The frog, the scorpion and Pakistan

Amjad Ayub Mirza

PAKISTAN WAS CREATED IN THE NAME OF RELIGION AND COMMUNAL DIVISION, SOMETHING THAT IT NURTURES EVEN TO THIS DAY

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is in New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) 77th session. On September 23 he will address the UNGA. Talking to Pakistan media in New York, Sharif said that his aim would be to make the world community aware of the devastation that monsoon rains have caused in his country, one-third of which remains submerged under floodwater.

The devastation caused by the recent floods in Pakistan is no doubt catastrophic. Nearly 40 million have become homeless, thousands of kilometres of roads and scores of bridges have been swept away, millions of rupees' worth of livestock is dead, crops have gone and thousands are suffering from diseases such as dengue, dysentery, cholera, malaria and typhoid.

But the Pakistani Prime Minister mentioned to the press something that was totally out of context. He said that the 'Kashmir issue' will also be mentioned during his address to the UNGA.

This reminded me of a story in which a scorpion approaches a frog and asks it to carry him on its back across the river. The frog hesitates and tells the scorpion that he does not trust the scorpion since the latter might sting the former. The scorpion begs the frog to take him across and promises that he will cause no harm to the frog. As the frog carries the scorpion on his back, gets to the middle of the river, the scorpion stings the frog releasing his poison under the skin of the frog. The frog asks the scorpion why he stung him despite promising that he would not. To this the scorpion said apologetically, "I just couldn't help it, you see to sting is my nature."

Pakistan shares the same nature. No matter how many times one trusts Pakistan it always stings its benefactor. At the time of partition of the Indian sub-continent in August 1947, Pakistan had signed a stand-still agreement with the Maharaja of the state of Jammu and Kashmir promising to accept the sovereignty of the state. Yet on October 22, 1947, Pakistan attacked the state of Jammu and Kashmir!

In 1999 when Nawaz Sharif was

Pakistan's Prime Minister and was expressing his profound desire to trade with India, his Army Chief attacked Indian territory in Kargil.

Pakistan was created in the name of religion and communal division, something that it nurtures even to this day. In order to remain relevant, the Pakistan military establishment has to keep the threat of an Indian attack and an imaginary suppression of Muslims in Kashmir and wider India alive.

Shehbaz Sharif's coalition government that has been allegedly propped up by the anti-Imran Khan section of the Pakistan military establishment led by its chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, is only dedicatedly following the official foreign policy line designed for nearly seven decades by the Pakistan military establishment.

On September 23, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, Imran Khan is due to address a public rally in Muzaffarabad, the capital city of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. He will very subtly be portraying India as a hurdle in achieving regional peace by using the Kashmir card and will use the

Islamic communal hate card to garner support and prove himself to be a great Islamic warrior who could turn Pakistan into a great fort of Islam, thus laying the ground for future generation to carry the Ghazwa-e-Hind across the Indian sub-continent.

On September 23, the Pakistani Prime Minister will be asking for the Kashmir issue to be resolved and continentally forgetting that it is Pakistan and not India which remains the root cause of the breakup of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and must withdraw its military from Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. Gilgit-Baltistan.

To talk about Kashmir at a forum extended to Pakistan by the world community to make an appeal to help it with the cost of the damage caused by flood is akin to the story of the frog and the scorpion. To mention anti-Indian communal hate narrative in the backdrop of Kashmir is in Pakistan's nature.

The writer is an author and a human rights activist from Mirpur in PoK. He currently lives in exile in the UK.

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Ensure inclusive growth

Sir, The Indian economy is back on track after the worldwide upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. The green shoots are clearly visible. Gross direct tax collections rose by 30 per cent to Rs 8.36 lakh crore till September 17 of the ongoing financial year compared to the year-ago period. Some economic gains are attributed to pragmatic diplomacy. New Delhi has done well to hold its ground and prioritise its interests amid the war in eastern Europe. It is estimated that India saved Rs 35,000 crore by importing Russian crude at discounted prices in the past over six months, resisting pressure from Western powers to scale down trade ties with Moscow. However, the onus is on the government to use all this money judiciously and ensure that economic growth is sustainable as well as inclusive. The Centre is laying emphasis on massive infrastructure build-up, but at the same time adequate attention must be paid to job creation. It's worrying that India's unemployment rate shot up to a one-year high of 8.3 per cent last month. The restoration of crores of jobs lost during the pandemic remains a huge challenge. The government needs to bolster the purchasing power of people in order to spur demand and consumption. This is achievable through optimum utilisation of burgeoning financial resources.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Credit war

Sir, The credit war between the ruling BJP and the Congress for the success of 'Project Cheetah' paints an ugly and narrow picture. However, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's letter in October 2009 - which he has released to the media now - asking the then Chairman, Wildlife Trust of India to go ahead with the plans for the reintroduction of cheetahs, is proof enough that cheetah translocation project had actually started way back in 2009-10 during the UPA regime. Bringing back the cheetahs to India has been a long-drawn battle, and it hardly makes sense in seeking credit for the same now by any political party, trying to score brownie points. And the reintroduction of cheetahs in India is certainly not the day's game, as there are a lot of other bigger and more important issues that require the Centre's attention. Meanwhile, let the nation welcome the cheetahs.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

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of the day quote

The Constitution stipulates that the Governor should act in accordance with the help and advice of the cabinet

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

I don't want anything for myself...whatever I am doing, it is for the younger generation...for people like Tejashwi Yadav

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

The Tamil Nadu government is in contact with some of the trapped Indians who are desperately trying to escape their forced captivity by criminal elements in Myanmar

MK STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

SHORT TAKES

Chargesheet filed against Setalvad

Ahmedabad: A special investigation team (SIT) Wednesday submitted a charge sheet against activist Teesta Setalvad, retired Director General of Police R B Sreekumar and former IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt in a case of alleged fabrication of evidence in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots cases. The Ahmedabad crime branch had registered the case soon after the Supreme Court in June upheld the clean chit given to then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi and 63 others in response to a petition filed by Zakia Jafri alleging larger conspiracy behind the 2002 violence.

CBI arrests ABG Shipyard founder

New Delhi: The CBI Wednesday arrested Rishi Kamlesh Agarwal, the founder of ABG Shipyard Limited, in connection with an alleged bank fraud of more than Rs 22,842 crore, officials said. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had booked Agarwal, a former chairman of the company, the then executive director Santhanam Muthaswamy, and directors Ashwini Kumar, Sushil Kumar Agarwal and Ravi Vimal Nevetia February 7.

India wins UN award

New Delhi: In a significant achievement and recognition to country's efforts against hypertension, India Wednesday won a UN award for its 'India Hypertension Control Initiative (IHCI)'. A collaborative initiative of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), State Governments and World Health Organisation-India, IHCI has won the '2022 UN Interagency Task Force and WHO Special Programme on Primary Health Care Award' at the UN General Assembly side event held September 21 in New York.

DGCA extends flight caps on SpiceJet

Mumbai: Aviation safety regulator DGCA has extended the cap on SpiceJet flights by a little over one month as a matter of "abundant caution", according to an official order Wednesday. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had July 27 ordered SpiceJet to operate a maximum of 50 per cent of its flights, which were approved in the summer schedule for a period of eight weeks owing to a series of incidents involving its flights.



There is need to preserve the history of the country's freedom struggle

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

PREGNANT LADY GANGRAPED

A pregnant woman was allegedly gang-raped by three men, leading to her miscarriage in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly. The accused allegedly raped the 3-month pregnant woman when she had gone to the farm for some work. They later fled the spot. Meanwhile, when the woman did not reach home for a long time, her family members went looking out for her only to find her in a serious condition. Following this, she was rushed to a private hospital where doctors informed that the woman had suffered a miscarriage



Gehlot indicates he can enter fray

CONG PREZ POLL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The race for the Congress president's post hotted up Wednesday with Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot giving a clear indication that he could enter the poll fray and Shashi Tharoor meeting the party's poll panel chief to enquire about the nomination formalities.

Gehlot also hinted that he would like to continue as the Chief Minister but suspense continued over whether he would stay on or get a person of his choice to helm the Rajasthan government, or the post would go to his bete noire Sachin Pilot.

On whether keeping both posts of the Chief Minister and party president could be a violation of the party's pledge of 'one person, one post' taken at Udaipur, Gehlot said that those applied when the high command nominates people.

The AICC president polls were an open election and anybody among the 9,000 Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) delegates, irrespective of whether that person is an MP, MLA or minister, can contest, he noted. Citing an ex-



ample, he said if a minister in a state stands for Congress president election, that person can stay as minister.

"Time will tell where I remain. I would like to stay where the party benefits from me, I will not back down," he asserted when asked if he would remain Chief Minister if he is elected the party chief.

Asked whether 'one person, one post' formula could apply in the polls, the party's central election authority chairman Madhusudan Mistry told PTI that being on a post does not stop anyone from contesting polls and the party constitution states that any delegate can fight the elections. With Rahul Gandhi likely to stick to his earlier

stance of not taking on party presidency, a Gehlot versus Tharoor contest seems likely. In the next few days it would also be clear if a surprise candidate or candidates also throw their hat in the ring.

Interestingly, a TV channel quoted Digvijaya Singh as saying that he was not ruling himself out of the race. However, taking to Twitter, Singh, in a tongue-in-cheek remark, thanked the channel "for the spin".

Also, it could be a keener contest than the one in 2000 when Sonia Gandhi trumped Jitendra Prasada as she has asserted that she would remain neutral in the polls and there would be no "official candidate".

Chorus grows for Rahul's return

New Delhi/Chandigarh/Hyderabad: The Congress' state units in Punjab and Telangana Wednesday passed a resolution backing Rahul Gandhi for the post of the party president. Around a dozen Pradesh Congress Committees have so far come out in support of Gandhi, even as it appears that after over two decades, the Congress is likely to see a contest for the post of party chief.

Gehlot met Sonia Gandhi at her 10, Janpath residence and later left for Mumbai. The Rajasthan Chief Minister is expected to reach Kochi Thursday and make a last-ditch effort to convince Rahul Gandhi, who is undertaking Bharat Jodo Yatra, to take over the reins of the party.

Pilot was Wednesday with Rahul Gandhi during the yatra as it moved through Kochi city and said the average party worker wants Gandhi to lead from the front.

said Gehlot conveyed to Sonia Gandhi that he will try to convince Rahul Gandhi to take on the post of party chief and it was time that he should lead the Congress as he is already combating the Modi government. In a clear indication that he could throw his hat in the ring for the Congress president polls, Gehlot said he will file his nomination if his party people wish so and fulfil any responsibility given to him. Meanwhile, Tharoor, who is also set to contest the polls, met party central election authority chief Mistry at the AICC headquarters here.

Sources said that Mistry assured Tharoor that the election would be free, fair and open. The notification for the polls will be out Thursday and the process for filing nominations for the election will be held from September 24 to 30. The date of scrutiny of the nomination papers would be October 1, while the last date of withdrawal of nominations would be October 8. The election, if there is more than one candidate, will take place October 17. The counting of votes and the declaration of results would be October 19.

Truck runs over people sleeping on road divider

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: Four people sleeping on a road divider were killed and two others injured after they were run over by a speeding truck in the early hours of Wednesday in northeast Delhi's Seemapuri area, police said.

They said driver of the offending vehicle was nabbed from Shamli district in Uttar Pradesh.

A CCTV footage, which recorded the incident at 1.51 am, showed a truck crossing a DTC depot traffic signal and mowing down people sleeping on the road divider, while heading towards the DLF T-point. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) R Sathiyasundaram said the truck driver was driving rashly and negligently.

A case has been registered under Indian Penal Code sections 279 (rash driving or riding on a public way), 304A (causing death by negligence) and 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) against the accused driver, police said.

READY FOR ANY PROBE: PAWAR

The BJP Tuesday demanded a probe against Pawar in connection with the controversial chawl redevelopment project

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 21: After the Enforcement Directorate filed a charge sheet in the Patra 'chawl' redevelopment case and mentioned a meeting involving him, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar Wednesday said he was "always ready" for any kind of inquiry.

Addressing reporters here, Pawar also said filing cases and arresting Opposition leaders seem to be the flagship project of the Centre.

"Whenever they have some doubts about the outcome of an election, such steps are taken as an important work. The key issues and challenges before the society are kept aside," Pawar said in a swipe at BJP-ruled Centre.

We will respond to it politically, said the NCP chief. A prime witness in Mumbai's Patra 'chawl' redevelopment project case has told the ED that during 2008-09, some residents of the area had approached Sharad Pawar through local politicians for the redevelopment of the tenement in suburban Goregaon.

After various meetings, accused Sanjay Raut and Pravin Raut, along with Rakesh Wadhawan, of HDIL

(Housing Development Infrastructure Ltd) were asked to handle the project, the witness had told the ED. Her statement is part of the supplementary charge sheet filed last week.

The federal agency is probing the alleged money laundering aspect in connection with the Patra chawl case, in which Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut is an accused. He is currently in judicial custody.

In a letter to Maharashtra deputy chief minister and home minister Devendra Fadnis, BJP leader Atul Bhathalkar stated that the ED had referred to a former secretary of the state housing department.

"The charge sheet says the then Union agriculture minister, Sharad Pawar, had held a meeting in Mumbai along with then chief minister. Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut was also present there, where the decision to allot the redevelopment work (of Patra chawl) to Guru Ashish Construction company was taken," the BJP leader had alleged.

If you check today's Indian Express, it has detailed how Central probe agencies have increased their actions against Opposition parties and leaders. It seems that filing cases and arresting Opposition leaders are the flagship project of the Centre

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP CHIEF



DAILY GRIND



Workers load sacks containing rice grain into a truck, at a wholesale grain market in Amritsar, Punjab

PTI PHOTO

CBI gives clean chit to Niira Radia

CBI RESPONSE ON PLEA BY RATAN TATA, WHO WANTS INVESTIGATION INTO HOW THE PHONE CONVERSATIONS, RECORDED BY GOVERNMENT IN 2008-09, LEAKED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Wednesday told the Supreme Court that no criminality has been found following an investigation into the intercepted conversations of the corporate lobbyist Niira Radia with some politicians, businessmen, media persons, and others.

Taking note of the submissions of the probe agency, the top court directed it to file a status report on the matter. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the CBI, also told a three-judge bench headed by Justice D Y Chandrachud that petition filed by industrialist Ratan Tata seeking protection of the right to privacy in view of the emergence of the Radia tapes may be disposed of in the light of the right to privacy judgement of the apex court.

"I must inform you that the CBI was directed by your lordship to investigate all these conversations. Fourteen preliminary inquiries were registered and the report was placed before your lordships in a sealed cover. No criminality was



found in those. Also, now there are phone-tapping guidelines in place," Bhati said. The law officer said nothing remains in the matter after the privacy judgement.

The bench, also comprising Justices Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha, said it will hear the matter after the Dussehra vacation as there is a Constitution Bench next week. "Meanwhile, the CBI may file an updated status report," said the bench and posted the matter for the next hearing October 12.

At the outset, the counsel, appearing for Tata, sought an adjournment. The counsel for the

petitioner informed the apex court that there is another petition filed by NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL), which had sought that these transcripts be made public in the larger public interest.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the CPIL, said Radia was a corporate lobbyist for two of the most important companies and there were attempts to influence public persons, etc., which was revealed. The apex court in 2013 directed a CBI inquiry into six issues arising out of the analysis of corporate lobbyist Niira Radia's taped conversations.

NICOBAR TO LOSE 8.5L TREES FOR MEGA PROJECT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Union environment ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee has given its nod for the development of a strategically-crucial, multi-component mega project in the Great Nicobar Island which will involve felling of around 8.5 lakh trees in pristine rainforests, loss of 12 to 20 hectares of mangrove cover and considerable coral translocation.

The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) recommend granting environmental and coastal regulatory zone clearance to the project in a meeting August 22-23.

According to a Union home min-

istry letter dated March 30 to the environment ministry, the airport proposed at Gandhi Nagar-Shastri Nagar area would be a joint military-civil, dual-use airport, under the operational control of the Indian Navy.

"This project is for defence, strategic, national security, and public purposes. In view of this, the portion of deliberation made for the airport component may not be made public," it said.

The Great Nicobar Island (GNI), which is the southernmost part of the Indian territory, is one of the most strategically important areas. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands provide India a commanding



geostrategic presence in the Bay of Bengal and access to South and Southeast Asia.

The project site is within a 10 km radius of the Galathea Bay National Park and the Campbell

- The project involves development of a military-civil, dual-use airport; international container trans-shipment terminal; a gas, diesel, and solar-based power plant, and a township
- The project is likely to affect 1,761 people, including the indigenous Shompen and Nicobarese communities
- The island is home to rare flora and fauna including the leatherback sea turtles, Nicobar megapode -- a flightless bird endemic to the Nicobar islands; Nicobar Macaque and saltwater crocodiles

Bay National Park but is outside the ecologically-sensitive zone notified around the two national parks.

Three premier institutes -- Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) -- provided scientific inputs to the EAC on the impact of the project on the flora and fauna of the GNI.

The EAC said it is clear that about 30 of the 51 active nests of Nicobar megapode within the proposed project areas will be permanently destroyed. SACON and WII have provided a 10-year mitigation plan in this regard. The Department of Environment and Forests, Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Administration has prepared a mangrove conservation and management plan.

Since 1981, vehicles up over 21X in Delhi, roads only doubled



An annual report by the Delhi Traffic Police counted over 1.22 crore registered vehicles of all categories in Delhi in 2021

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 21: The amount of blood circulating within an individual depends on his or her size and weight, but the average human adult has nearly five litres of blood circulating within the body with the help of veins and arteries, delivering oxygen and other nutrients every second.

But what would happen to the human body if the volume of blood or the nutrients it is transporting is doubled or tripled? Most probably the arteries would burst!

Just like veins and arteries, roads in a city perform the same function. Decongested and properly maintained roads of a city keep it alive and booming. But unfortunately, the ever-increasing population and economic development may one day 'clog the city's veins', choking it to an untimely death.

Delhi is one of the cities that have been suffering from this problem. The number of motor vehicles on Delhi roads has increased by approximately 21 times in the past three decades, while the road length has only doubled.

According to an annual report prepared by the Delhi Traffic Police, there were over 1.22 crore registered vehicles of all categories in Delhi in 2021.

Although the number of motor vehicles increased by approximately 21 times between 1981 and 2021, the road length has only doubled, from 15,487 km to 33,198 km during the period under review.

Thus, the vehicle density per sq km has increased manifold. Theoretically there are 371 vehicles per sq km in Delhi.

The ever-increasing congestion on the capital roads has manifested itself in numerous transportation problems. The traffic volume on main corridors has almost crossed the threshold of carrying capacity of the roads. With the rise in population, and more vehicles on the road, the risk of crashes has also increased.

The heterogeneity and magnitude of vehicle population, unpredictability of human behaviour, economic constraints,

insufficient road markings and signages, defective road designing, deficiencies in vehicle design, are some of the factors leading to road crashes in Delhi.

In addition to this, drink-driving, overspeeding, overloading, violation of traffic rules are the common causes of traffic crashes.

As per the traffic police, as many as 1,239 people lost their lives in road accidents in the national capital in 2021, while 4,273 others suffered injuries.

In 2020, Delhi reported the highest number of road crash deaths (1,196) followed by Chennai (872) and Bangalore (646).

Further, due to fast development of the National Capital Region and particularly the satellite towns around Delhi, such as Noida, Gurugram, Manesar and Sonapat, the capital city is facing an additional brunt of an influx of higher volume of traffic, thereby congesting important inter-state roads and highways connecting the city.

Undoubtedly, it is an uphill task to maintain traffic in a city with such a huge population and number of vehicles. However, the traffic police officials say that they are effectively enforcing the law on the road.

Enforcement is necessary for making people follow the road safety laws. Effective enforcement is the key deterrent factor in ensuring road discipline and also for increasing public awareness.

In 2020-2021, the strategies for prosecution of errant road users were pro-actively made, reducing the number of crashes. Emphasis was given on selective quality prosecution to maximise the positive impact of enforcement on road discipline, officials said.

In 2021, a total of 13,23,556 on the spot challans and 65,69,985 notices were issued and a compounding amount of Rs 9,79,80,500 and Rs. 71,82,19,300, respectively, was realised.

The prosecution includes spot challans by traffic circle staff, notices issued on the complaints received on social media or through traffic helpline, Traffic Sentinel, RLVD, OSVDs and interceptors, etc.

According to the traffic police officials, 2020 and 2021 were especially challenging for them because of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown and requirement of social distancing in all aspects of life.

'PayCM' posters surface in B'lore

BOMMAI ORDERS INQUIRY; DUBS IT A 'PSEUDO CAMPAIGN'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 21: 'PayCM' posters with the photo of the Karnataka Chief Minister surfaced in several parts of the city Wednesday, following which an angry Basavaraj Bommai ordered an inquiry.

He also dubbed it a 'pseudo campaign', which not only maligns his image but also of Karnataka.

"It is a systematic conspiracy to spoil my name and also that of Karnataka. I have directed the officials concerned to book a case. We will get it investigated to find out the people behind it," Bommai told reporters here.

"This is a baseless campaign in social media. Everyone knows how to do such things. Also, people know who is running the campaign. These are pseudo campaigns, which have intensified only recently. This has no value," he added.

The CM said he is hurt because more than him, Karnataka is getting a bad name due to such a campaign. "So, we have decided to put a brake on such activities," Bommai said.

The posters, which appeared in the central region of the city resembled advertisements of electronic wallet Paytm.

Bommai's face figures in the middle of the QR code with the message "40 % accepted here".



Scanning the QR code takes the user to the 40 per cent 'sarkara' website launched by the Congress for the (bribery) complaints

Scanning the QR code takes the user to the 40 per cent 'sarkara' website launched by the Congress for the (bribery) complaints, according to sources.

The development comes in the midst of an aggressive campaign against the state government by the Congress, which charged it with corruption in awarding public contracts and government recruitment.

A contractors' body had recently levelled bribery charges that contractors had to pay 40 per cent com-

mission to get public works contracts, an allegation strongly denied by the government.

Soon after the matter came to the notice of the authorities, these posters in public places were removed.

The BJP alleged that this was the handiwork of Congress.

"It's undoubtedly the handiwork of the Congress. Already Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has ordered an investigation and booked cases against those involved in this mischief," BJP state media cell in charge Karunakara Khasle told PTI.

He added that the BJP state unit has also appealed to the Chief Minister to expose those who were behind this act.

Khasle dared the Congress to submit proof of corruption if they have or else apologise to the government.

CONG, BJP'S QR WAR

The ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress in Karnataka have begun a war of QR code posters to trade corruption charges against each other. Opposition Congress came with the idea first by releasing 'PayCM' posters to which the BJP later responded with QR code posters containing Opposition leader Siddaramaiah and State Congress President DK Shivakumar Wednesday. The poster allegedly released by BJP containing the photos of Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar asks people to scan the QR Code for uprooting both from the state for looting the state and destroying the system. It also describes at the bottom that both are discussing how to destroy the state, how to spread lies and disturb peace. The authorities have pressed the services of BBMP personnel to take off the posters from walls, establishments in Bangalore.



Workers repair the damaged Sumanahalli flyover on Bangalore's Outer Ring Road (ORR) stretch after a patch of the flyover caved in, Wednesday PTI PHOTO

K'TAKA ASSEMBLY PASSES ANTI-CONVERSION BILL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 21: Amid opposition Congress' protest and walkout, Karnataka Legislative Assembly Wednesday passed the Anti-conversion Bill, passed by the Legislative Council last week with minor amendments, seeking to replace the ordinance that was in place to give effect to the Bill.

The 'Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill' was earlier passed by the Legislative Assembly in December last.

As the bill was pending for pas-

sage in the Legislative Council, where the ruling BJP was short of majority then, the government had subsequently promulgated an ordinance in May this year to give effect to the bill.

The bill was finally passed by the Legislative Council September 15.

Home Minister Araga Jnanendra Wednesday moved the 'Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill, 2022 (As passed by the Legislative Assembly and as passed by the Legislative Council with amend-

ments) for its reconsideration and passage.

Piloting the bill, he said, "The bill was passed by the Assembly during the Belagavi session (in December), it was pending in the council, so an ordinance was prom-



ulgated, to replace the ordinance.

This Bill is being introduced with a minor amendment that the law will come into effect from May 17, 2022; the Bill, after getting passed with amendment in the Council,

Restriction only in classroom, not outside, K'taka to SC on hijab row

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Karnataka government Wednesday told the Supreme Court that there is no restriction on wearing hijab on the school campus, and it is only restricted in the classroom while deferring its decision to disallow hijab in classrooms of pre-university colleges.

It also emphasised that it has not touched any 'religious aspect' in the hijab ban row.

Advocate General Prabhuling K Navadgi, representing the Karnataka government, contended before a bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Sudhanshu Dhulia that it has never happened in Karnataka that a group of students came to school in hijab and began banging the gates.

"There was a possibility of a public order issue," he said, and emphasised that restriction on hijab was only in the classroom and when it was asserted militantly that they want to wear hijab and retaliated by others, it became a concern.

He said that it has to be demonstrated that wearing of hijab is a right to expression and right to privacy is still evolving jurisprudence and can't be exercised in all zones.

The AG said France has prohibited hijab and the women there have not become any less Islamic. He added that the state has not touched any religious aspect or religious issue. "Much hue and cry is made by saying that hijab is banned. Let me clarify, hijab is not banned and the state never intended," he said.

Navadgi submitted assuming wearing of hijab is a religious practice ordained in Quran and every mundane activity connected with the religion can't be an essential religious practice. He added that if it were to be accepted that whatever is said in the Quran to be essential, it will defeat the tests of essentiality.

Citing Article 51A(j) of the Constitution, the AG contended that one should rise above religious identity to become part of one group, and the right to wear a dress cannot be absolute.

He said the right to wear dress as part of expression can't be readily given at the mere asking and it has to be established what is the expression they want to convey and to whom they want to convey. He said that "they say they wear hijab as Islam mandates. That is no expression."

TREATED AS CELEBRITIES, VIEWED WITH SUSPICION

Delhi's women bus drivers have seen it all

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: It has been almost a month since women bus drivers are driving on Delhi's roads and they say that from being treated as celebrities to being observed with a hint of doubt, they have seen it all.

Komal (23), one of the 11 women bus drivers who were handed appointment letters last month, said she is treated like a celebrity.

When people board the bus, they do not realise that a woman is behind the wheels. But when they are about to get off, they see me, come up to me and say, "Oh, we did not realise that a woman was driving such a huge bus!" "They also take selfies and videos with me. I feel like a celebrity," she said.

Komal said the on-road experience of driving a bus is entirely different from what they had experienced during the training period.

"While we were being trained, we did not have to stop at the bus



stops or navigate through difficult roads carrying passengers. It is a different experience altogether," she told PTI.

Santosh Kumari, a 40-year-old mother of a Class-12 student, said apart from riding a bicycle as a child, she had never driven a vehicle.

"Now, I am riding a bus. From people viewing us with suspicion to some appreciating my driving skills, I have seen it all from the day I started driving on Delhi roads. I have been driving on the Karnal Bypass bus route."

It has happened that if the bus shook while navigating a diffi-

“Apart from riding a bicycle as a child, I had never driven a vehicle. Now, I am riding a bus. From people viewing us with suspicion to some appreciating my driving skills, I have seen it all from the day I started driving on Delhi roads”

SANTOSH KUMARI | DTC BUS DRIVER

cult turn, people said, "This is happening because a woman is driving!" while there have also been some who said they had an extremely smooth ride, she said.

Santosh Kumari said during the training period, they were not required to drive for long durations but now that they are on the road for long hours, finding public facilities becomes difficult on certain routes.

"There are some routes where it is difficult to find washrooms and

we sometimes use the washrooms at petrol pumps. There is also a problem of cleanliness at such facilities so we often wait till we reach the bus depots," she added.

The Twitter handle of the Delhi transport department had recently shared the story of Sharmila, another bus driver.

"Meet Sharmila. Till a few years ago, she did not even know how to ride a cycle but today, she is driving DTC buses after being trained by the Delhi government," it said.

In a video uploaded on the handle, Sharmila is heard saying people have been lauding her driving skills.

"My daughter finds it difficult to stay without me but my mother-in-law said she will take care of her. My daughter still calls me asking when I will return home. There are people who say women cannot do anything apart from cooking but I tell them, 'Come with me and sit in my bus,' she says in the video.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 21: Gauri, a documentary based on late journalist-activist Gauri Lankesh, directed by her sister and award-winning director Kavitha Lankesh, has won the 'Best Human Rights' film at the Toronto Women's Film Festival 2022.

The film has been selected also for the South Asian Film festival of Montreal and is in consideration at Doc New York, International Documentary Film Festival of Amsterdam, Sundance Film Festival, and other festivals across the world.

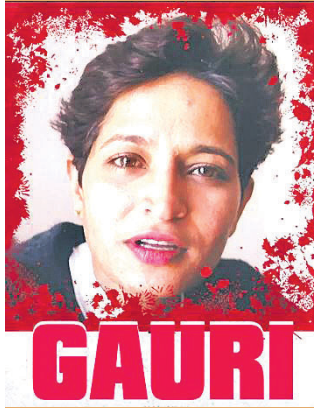
Kavitha Lankesh, in a statement, said the documentary exposes the physical and verbal threats journalists face every day in India.

There were over 200 reported attacks on journalists in India in the last five years, out of which over 30 of them were murders in the last decade, she said. The attacks range in severity but the intention behind them matter, she said.

India's number in the global

press freedom index is 150 out of 180, she further said and added that attacks on dissenters and journalists are unfortunately not new nor limited to India, but it is the intensity in which the attacks have taken place in the last decade is something to be concerned about.

Gauri Lankesh was shot dead on the night of September 5, 2017, from close range near her house in Rajarajeshwari Nagar in Bangalore.



of the day **quote**

Even in the Legislative Assembly, despite having a huge force, the SP looks very helpless and weak against the government, very worrying

MAYAWATI | **BSP SUPREMO**

In 1947, the Muslim majority Jammu and Kashmir heard the chants of Allah-u-Akbar (God is great) but we never accepted the two nation theory. Had we gone there, what would have happened to Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists (of Jammu and Kashmir). Today, the same fight continues. We are not ready to accept that India is communal

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | **NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT**

The atrocious style of functioning of the BJP-led NDA rule at the Centre could come to an end only if Rahul Gandhi takes over the mantle of the leadership in the party

V NARAYANASAMY | **EX- PONDICHERRY CM**

SHORT TAKES

Bihar: 20 wagons of goods train derail

Patna: At least 20 wagons of a goods train derailed in Bihar Wednesday, a statement issued by the East Central Railway (ECR) said. However, no injuries were reported in the incident that took place near Kumhau Railway Station located close to Sasaram, it said. "The incident took place around 6.30 AM. Work is underway to restore connectivity," it said.

Manipur bandh hits normal life

Imphal: A 24-hour bandh called by a proscribed outfit in Manipur Wednesday disrupted normal life in Imphal valley. Inter-district and inter-state public transportation came to halt, reports from the districts said. Business establishments and shops remained closed while few private vehicles were seen on roads.

Ansari sentenced to 7 years in prison

Lucknow: The Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court Wednesday sentenced former MLA Mukhtar Ansari to seven years in prison for threatening a jailer and pointing a pistol at him. Justice DK Singh passed the order while allowing an appeal by the Uttar Pradesh government.

Manoj Tiwari moves SC

New Delhi: BJP MP Manoj Tiwari has moved the Supreme Court against the Delhi government's decision against production, storage, sale and use of all types of firecrackers in order to check the rising pollution levels in the city. Contending that freedom of religion cannot be taken away under the pretext of right to life, Tiwari has sought directions to the city government to issue fresh guidelines with regard to sale, purchase and bursting of permissible firecrackers.

Indoor pollution can cause headaches, itchiness: Study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 21: A headache, itchy skin and a stuffy or runny nose may not be just symptoms of cold. It could be because of poor indoor quality in your home. Research carried out among women and children in Lucknow, has found poor indoor quality leading to over 10 ailments, including cough and wheezing, dry throat, shortness of breath, itchy eyes and more. The research was undertaken by a team led by Alfred Lawrence of the chemistry faculty at the Isabella Thoburn College of the University of Lucknow to assess the

health risk among the women and children specifically due to indoor air pollution. The findings of the research presented recently at an international conference at the University College of Stockholm, Sweden, found headache as the most common symptom as reported by 60 per cent women, while in children it was stuffy nose as reported by 62 per cent. The participants included 560 women from three microenvironments. While 434 (77.5 per cent) women were from planned residential areas, 107 (19.1 per cent) were from the industrial belt of the city, whereas 19 (3.4 per cent) were from the commercial belt of



China remains a formidable challenge and has increased its presence not only along the land borders, but also in India's maritime domain

ADMIRAL R HARI KUMAR | **INDIAN NAVY CHIEF**

GUJ ASSEMBLY WITHDRAWS GCCUA BILL

The state Assembly Wednesday unanimously withdrew the Gujarat Cattle Control (Keeping and Moving) In Urban Areas bill (GCCUA) which was aimed at controlling the movement of stray cattle from wandering on the roads and public spaces



15 Congress MLAs evicted by marshals from Guj Assembly

With the majority voice vote, Speaker Nimaben Acharya suspended Mevani and 14 other Congress MLAs for the day



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gandhinagar, Sept 21: Independent MLA Jignesh Mevani and 14 legislators of the opposition Congress were suspended for a day from the Gujarat Assembly for unruly behaviour and were forcibly evicted by marshals amid chaotic scenes.

As soon as the proceedings of the two-day Legislative Assembly session began, Leader of Opposition Sukhran Rathva demanded a special half-hour discussion on the issues concerning agitating government employees, farmers, Anganwadi workers and ex-servicemen.

When Speaker Nimaben Acharya refused Rathva's demand, Mevani and other MLAs of Congress rushed near the well of the House and started shouting slogans. They raised placards with slogans "give justice to employees", "give justice to forest staff", and "give justice to ex-servicemen". "When so many employees of almost all the departments are agitating over their pending issues, why is the BJP not ready to hold a discussion in the House?" asked Deputy Leader of Opposition, Shailesh Parmar, amid continuous sloganeering by his party colleagues.

When Opposition MLAs refused to go back to their seats as directed by the Speaker, Legislative and

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Rajendra Trivedi proposed suspension of the legislators sitting in the well. With the majority voice vote, Acharya suspended Mevani and 14 other Congress MLAs for the day. As the MLAs refused to leave the House even after they were suspended, the Speaker called in Assembly sergeants to forcibly evict them.

The marshals moved out most of the suspended MLAs by holding them by their hands. However, some law-markers were physically lifted and carried out.

Following the action, at least 30 other MLAs of Congress staged a walkout minutes after the House met in the afternoon.

The two-day session is the last one before Gujarat goes to polls, expected to be held in the next few months. Some of the suspended MLAs of Congress include Imran Khedawala, Geniben Thakor, Amrish Der, Puna Gamit, Babu Vaja, Naushad Solanki and Pratap Dudhat. The majority of Congress MLAs, including those who staged a walkout and those who were evicted, entered the Legislative Assembly after nearly ten minutes to take part in proceedings.

The Speaker objected to the suspended MLAs, including Mevani and others, returning to the House and directed them to go out. After her reminder, these MLAs left the House.

ISRO successfully tests hybrid motor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 21: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully tested a hybrid motor; potentially paving the way for a new propulsion system for the forthcoming launch vehicles.

The 30 kN hybrid motor tested at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu Tuesday is scalable and stackable, the Bangalore-headquartered space agency said.

The test was supported by ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC). The motor used Hydroxyl-terminated polybutadiene (HTPB) as fuel and liquid oxygen (LOX) as the oxidiser. Unlike solid-solid or liquid-liquid combinations, a hybrid motor uses solid fuel and liquid oxidiser; it was noted. "Today's (Tuesday's) test of a flight equivalent 30 kN hybrid motor demonstrated ignition and sustained combustion for the intended duration of 15 seconds. The motor performance was satisfactory", an ISRO statement said. The use of liquids facilitates throttling, and the control over the flow rate of LOX enables the re-start capability, it was explained. While both HTPB and LOX are green, LOX is safer to handle, ISRO noted. "The hybrid motor tested today (Tuesday) is scalable and stackable, potentially paving the way for a new propulsion system for the forthcoming launch vehicles", it said.



PHARMA MARKETING PRACTICES

Govt forms body to regulate firms

THE FIVE-MEMBER COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY DR VK PAUL, NITI AAYOG MEMBER (HEALTH) WILL ALSO REVIEW VARIOUS OTHER ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE UNIFORM CODE OF PHARMACEUTICAL MARKETING PRACTICES (UCPMP)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The government has constituted a high-level committee to hammer out a legal mechanism to address the issue of pharmaceutical companies giving inducements for promoting their drugs and products.

The five-member committee chaired by Dr VK Paul, NITI Aayog member (health) will also review various other issues pertaining to the Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP).

The panel includes secretary of the department of pharmaceuticals S Aparna, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan, and Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) chairman Nitin Gupta as members, and a joint secretary (policy) from the department of phar-



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

maceuticals as member secretary. The committee was constituted on the recommendation of Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Chemicals and Fertilizers, Mansukh Mandaviya.

An office memorandum issued September 12 stated that the department of pharmaceuticals has also put in place a code of ethics, the UCPMP, for pharma companies, which has been in effect since January 1, 2015 and has been adopted by all the major pharmaceutical associations.

The code provides for the procedure of filing complaints, inquiry by the Apex Committees of the Associations, penal actions, etc to be taken by the pharma association of which the company is a member. The code is not enforceable under any law/statute

of the government, the office memorandum read.

The Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002, under the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956, as amended from time to time, mention in detail the relationship of the healthcare professionals with pharmaceutical companies and prohibits the physicians and medical practitioners from committing such acts which are "unethical" in nature, the office memorandum stated.

The regulations also lay down the manner of enforcement in case complaints are received which are in violation of these regulations.

The regulations are enforced by the National Medical Commission under the department of health and family wel-

RAIN WOES



Commuters waded through a waterlogged street following heavy rains in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Seat belt alarm to be made mandatory in cars

India has been considering enforcing the use of rear seatbelts after Cyrus Mistry, the former chairman of Indian conglomerate Tata Sons, died in a car crash recently

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Union Ministry of Road, Transport and Highway has issued draft rules making installation of alarm systems mandatory in all seats of the cars.

As per the proposal, seat belt reminders or alarms will be mandatory in M and N category vehicles, with audio-video warning in case the seat belts, including the rear



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

ones, are not worn.

Besides, there will be a speed alert system to check over-speeding and manual override for the central locking system.

"Safety-belt reminder" means a system dedicated to alerting the driver when the driver and all other front-facing seat occupant(s) do not use the safety-belt. The system

is constituted by a detection of an unfastened safety-belt and by a driver's alert which is a first level warning and a second level warning. "First Level Warning" means a visual warning activated when the ignition switch is engaged (engine running or not) and the driver's and front-facing seat occupants' safety-belt is not fastened.

was placed at least two meters away from doors and walls of the room.

It found the concentration of PM 2.5 pollutants indoor to be almost six times higher than the WHO standards.

Research scholar Samridhi Dwivedi said the study also found 51.1 per cent of women consciously unaware of household air pollution. The study found that the deposition of particles in women was the highest in the head region (61.1 per cent) followed by pulmonary (21.1

per cent) and tracheobronchial region (17.3 per cent). Among 408 children, who were part of the study, 62 per cent complained of a stuffy nose, followed by dry/sore throat reported by 30.6 per cent children.

The study found that in most of the cases, these symptoms were more prevalent during October and November, followed by February and April.

The study found that poor indoor quality is also keeping children at increased risk of attention deficit hyperactivity.

The concentration of PM 2.5 pollutants indoor to be almost six times higher than the WHO standards



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

the city. The study was done using a real time portable air sampler

that was placed in the living area to study the variation pattern and

international

of the day quote

The rains and floods have already claimed the lives of more than 550 children. Without a significant surge in support, we fear many more children will lose their lives

GERIDA BIRUKILA |
UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE, PAKISTAN

In the era of digital sophistication, one of the most urgent tasks for the global community and the UN is promoting global cooperation to narrow the digital divide which exacerbates polarisation between nations

YOON SUK YEOL | PRESIDENT, SOUTH KOREA

The effects of climate change are uneven and reflect a historical injustice: Those who are least responsible suffer the most. This injustice must be corrected and those who need to do more must act now

FERDINAND MARCOS JR |
PRESIDENT, PHILIPPINES

SHORT TAKES

Biden vows \$2.9bn for food security

New York: President Joe Biden Wednesday is announcing \$2.9 billion in global food security aid to address shortages caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the effects of climate change. The White House says Biden will use his speech at the UN General Assembly to announce the funding, which includes \$2 billion in direct humanitarian assistance through the United States Agency for International Development. The balance of the money will go to global development projects meant to boost the efficiency and resilience of the global food supply.

UK caps energy bills for businesses

London: Britain's government said Wednesday it will cap wholesale energy bills for businesses this winter as part of a package of measures to protect people and companies from soaring energy prices. Prime Minister Liz Truss said the cap will apply for six months from October 1 and will ensure businesses "are able to get through the winter." She added that shops and pubs will benefit from financial help on their energy bills beyond the initial support period.

Turkey sells 20 drones to UAE

Ankara: Turkish defence firm Baykar has delivered 20 armed drones to the United Arab Emirates this month and could sell more, two Turkish sources said, as a diplomatic detente between the former regional rivals expands into military contracts. International demand for Baykar's drones soared after their impact on conflicts in Syria, Ukraine and Libya, where their laser-guided armour-piercing bombs helped repel an offensive by UAE-supported forces two years ago.

Man sets himself on fire in Japan

Tokyo: A man set himself on fire near the Japanese prime minister's office in Tokyo early Wednesday in apparent protest against the state funeral planned next week for former leader Shinzo Abe, officials and media reports said. The man, believed to be in his 70s, sustained burns on large parts of his body but was conscious and told police that he set himself on fire after pouring oil over him, Kyodo News agency reported. The man was taken to a hospital. A note apparently written by the man was found with him that said, "Personally, I am absolutely against" Abe's funeral, Kyodo said.



Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India was right when he said the time is not for war. It is not for revenge against the West, or for opposing the West against the east

EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

DANISH QUEEN TESTS COVID POSITIVE

Denmark's Queen Margrethe II has tested positive for the coronavirus after attending the funeral of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, the royal palace said Wednesday. In a statement, the royal household said that Margrethe, 82, who has been on the throne for 50 years, cancelled her official duties after the Tuesday night test



Pod of 230 whales stranded in Australia; over half feared dead

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Sydney, Sept 21: A pod of 230 pilot whales was found stranded on the rugged west coast of Tasmania Wednesday, with Australian officials saying only half appeared to be alive.

Aerial images showed a devastating scene of dozens of black glossy mammals strewn across a long beach, stuck on the waterline where the frigid southern ocean meets the sand.

Locals covered survivors with blankets and doused them with buckets of water to keep them alive, as other whales nearby tried in vain to twitch free and yet more lay dead.

The whales were "stranded near Macquarie Harbour" said the state's Department of Natural Resources and Environment. "It appears about half of the animals are alive."

Officials said marine conservation experts and staff with whale rescue gear were en route to the scene.

They will try to refloat animals that are strong enough to survive and likely tow the carcasses out to sea, to avoid attracting sharks to the area. It is almost two years to the day since Macquarie Harbour was the scene of the country's largest-ever mass stranding, involving almost 500 pilot whales.

More than 300 pilot whales died during that stranding, despite the efforts of dozens of volunteers who toiled for days in Tasmania's freezing waters to free them. Scientists have suggested they could be caused by pods going off track after feeding too close to shore. Pilot whales - which can grow to more than six metres (20 feet) long - are highly sociable and can follow podmates who stray into danger.

That sometimes occurs when old, sick or injured animals swim ashore and other pod members follow, trying to respond to the trapped whale's distress signals.

FRIGHTENING ESCALATION

Not bluffing on nukes: Putin warns

Citing NATO expansion towards Russia's borders, Putin said the West was plotting to destroy his country, engaging in "nuclear blackmail" by allegedly discussing the potential use of nuclear weapons against Moscow

REUTERS

London, Sept 21: President Vladimir Putin Wednesday ordered Russia's first mobilisation since World War Two and backed a plan to annex swathes of Ukraine, warning the West he was not bluffing when he said he'd be ready to use nuclear weapons to defend Russia.

In the biggest escalation of the Ukraine war since Moscow's February 24 invasion, Putin explicitly raised the spectre of a nuclear conflict, approved a plan to annex a chunk of Ukraine the size of Hungary, and called up 300,000 reservists.

"If the territorial integrity of our country is threatened, we will without doubt use all available means to protect Russia and our people - this is not a bluff," Putin said in a televised address to the nation.

The address, which followed a critical Russian battlefield defeat in northeastern Ukraine, fuelled speculation about the course of the war, the 69-year-old Kremlin chief's own future, and showed



In its aggressive anti-Russian policy, the West has crossed every line. This is not a bluff. And those who try to blackmail us with nuclear weapons should know that the weathervane can turn and point towards them

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

PUTIN ANNOUNCES PARTIAL MOBILISATION

RUSSIA'S FIRST MOBILISATION SINCE WW II

OVER 109 PEOPLE WERE DETAINED ACROSS RUSSIA AT PROTESTS AGAINST MOBILISATION

Putin was doubling down on what he calls his "special military operation" in Ukraine.

In essence, Putin is betting that by increasing the risk of a direct

confrontation between the US-led NATO military alliance and Russia -- a step towards World War Three -- the West will blink over its support for Ukraine, something it has

'Russia shamelessly violating UN Charter'

United Nations: US President Joe Biden tore into Vladimir Putin Wednesday as he addressed the United Nations, saying the Russian leader "shamelessly violated" the UN Charter when he invaded neighbor Ukraine.

"Russia has shamelessly violated the core tenets of the United Nations Charter," Biden said as he addressed the annual UN General Assembly in New York.

Russian forces have attacked Ukrainian schools, railway stations and hospitals, as part of Moscow's aim of "extinguishing Ukraine's right to exist as a state," Biden said.

While delivering a rebuke to the

Kremlin, Biden notably reached out to rivals on issues he said were of global importance, including climate change and nuclear arms control.

"A nuclear war cannot be won, and must never be fought," Biden said.

"We are seeing disturbing trends. Russia (is) making irresponsible nuclear threats to use nuclear weapons," he said. However, "the United States is ready to pursue critical arms control measures."

While once again vowing that Washington will not allow Tehran to obtain atomic weapons, Biden also underlined that "diplomacy is the best way to achieve this outcome."



'UNCONSTITUTIONAL MOVE'

Nepal Prez refuses to sign Citizenship Amendment Bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Sept 21: Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari has refused to sign within the stipulated deadline a key bill to amend the Nepal Citizenship Act, which was endorsed twice by both the houses of Parliament, a move described by constitutional experts as a serious blow to the Constitution.

A senior official at the President's Office Bhesh Raj Adhikari said that the bill was not signed as of midnight Tuesday -- the deadline to authenticate the bill re-endorsed by both the House of Representatives and the National Assembly -- after the President earlier sent it back noting that the Parliament required to reconsider the bill as per the Constitution.

The second amendment to the Citizenship Act was aimed at addressing concerns of the Madhesh-centric parties and the Non-resident Nepali Association. The rejection of the bill has affected at least half a million stateless people waiting for its passage to get their national identity cards.

The Bill that defines the entitlement for Citizenship based on marital grounds and ensures non-voting Citizenship to non-resident Nepalis living in non-SAARC countries has come under criticism from some quarters of the society, citing it did not prevent foreign women marrying Nepali men from getting citizenship easily.

Dinesh Tripathi, a constitutional expert and advocate, said: "This is a serious blow to the Constitution." "The Constitution has been hijacked, the President has acted out of the Constitution," he said. "Now we are facing a deep constitutional crisis. The President cannot go against the Parliament. It is the duty of the president to authenticate the bill passed by the parliament. The whole constitutional process has now been derailed."



Taiwan denounces China's peaceful 'reunification' vow



REUTERS

Taipei, Sept 21: Taiwan will never allow China to "meddle" in its future, the government said Wednesday, after a Chinese government spokesperson said Beijing was willing to make the utmost effort to strive for a peaceful "reunification" with the island.

China claims democratically-governed Taiwan as its own territory. Taiwan's government rejects China's sovereignty claims.

China has been carrying out military drills near Taiwan since early last month, after US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taipei, including firing missiles into waters near the island, though the activities have since scaled back.

Ma Xiaoguang, a spokesperson

for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, told a news conference in Beijing ahead of next month's once-in-five-years Communist Party congress that China was willing to make the greatest efforts to achieve peaceful "reunification".

"The motherland must be reunified and will inevitably be reunified," Ma said.

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said the island's future was up to its 23 million people to decide. "It allows no meddling by the other side of the Taiwan Strait," it said in a statement.

China uses illegal military exercises and legal and economic retaliation to attempt to coerce Taiwan's people, the council added, labelling Beijing's behaviour as "abominable".

IRAN HIJAB DEATH ROW

Death toll rises as stirs intensify

People rallied again Wednesday in Tehran, with hundreds shouting "death to the dictator" at Tehran University

REUTERS

Dubai, Sept 21: Iranian authorities said three people including a member of the security forces had been killed Tuesday during unrest sweeping the country, as anger at the death of a woman in the custody of the morality police fuelled protests for a fifth day.

Official sources now say a total of seven people have been killed since protests erupted Saturday over the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old from Iranian Kurdistan who died last week after being arrested in Tehran for "unsuitable attire".

Reports from Kurdish rights group Hengaw said seven protesters had been killed by security forces, three of them Tuesday, in or near Kurdish areas in the northwest of the country where unrest has been particularly intense and deadly.

He said a total of 450 people had



been injured in addition to the seven Kurdish protesters it said had died as a result of "direct fire" from government forces in the last four days.

Officials have denied that security forces have killed protesters.

Hengaw also said access to the internet had been cut in Kurdistan province - a move that would hinder videos being shared from a region where the authorities have previously suppressed unrest by the Kurdish minority.

The internet shutdown obser-

vatory NetBlocks and residents said Iran has restricted access to Instagram, the only major social media platform that Iran does not usually block. A senior official said recently it had about 48 million users in the country.

Amini's death has unleashed anger over issues including freedoms in the Islamic Republic and an economy reeling from sanctions. Women have waved and burnt their veils during protests, with some cutting their hair in public.

Israel finds 'world's earliest' record of opium use

RESEARCHERS REVEALED THAT THE CANAANITES -- A SEMITIC-SPEAKING CIVILIZATION AND REGION IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST DURING THE LATE 2ND MILLENNIUM BC -- USED THE HALLUCINOGENIC DRUG IN BURIAL RITUALS AS AN OFFERING FOR THE DEAD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Tel Aviv, Sept 21: Israeli researchers have found the world's earliest known evidence of the use of opium, remains of which were discovered in pottery vessels dating back to about 3,400 years ago.

The announcement was made by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) and Tel Aviv University (TAU) in a joint statement Tuesday, reports Xinhua news agency.

In a study, conducted by the IAA, TAU and the Weizmann Institute of Science and published in the journal Archaeometry, the team revealed that the Canaanites -- a Semitic-speaking civilization and



region in the Ancient Near East during the late 2nd millennium

BC -- used the hallucinogenic drug in burial rituals as an offering for

the dead.

The ceramic vessels, some of which were made in Cyprus, were discovered back in 2012 in Canaanite graves among the remains of the ancient city of Tel Yehud, in today's city of Yehud-Monosson.

The vessels were put in the graves as offerings with the belief that they would be used by the dead in the afterlife, the statement said.

Through an organic residue analysis, the researchers found opium residues in eight vessels.

The findings confirm an assumption that opium and its trade played a role in the Near East cultures, the statement added.

"It may be that during burial ceremonies, participants attempted to raise the spirits of their dead relatives in order to express a request, and would enter an ecstatic state by using opium," said IAA researcher Ron Be'eri.

"Alternatively, it is possible that the opium, which was placed next to the body, was intended to help the person's spirit rise from the grave in preparation for the meeting with their relatives in the next life," he added.

"The opium was brought from Turkey, through Cyprus, indicating the importance that was attributed to the drug," said TAU researcher Vanessa Linares.

of the day **quote**

Investors don't have to think about the market fluctuations as the SIP route averages out the investment price over the time. It helps them avoid timing the market which is very difficult to do consistently for a retail investor if not impossible

SWAPNIL BHASKAR | HEAD OF STRATEGY, NIYO

What the government is doing is that they're taking out the entire P&L (profit and loss) opportunity for us. So if you look at the payments space, no one can make any money in the country at all

AMITABH CHAUDHRY | CMD, AXIS BANK

Most prominent luxury housing markets witnessed double-digit growth in rentals in the last two years

ANUJ PURI | CHAIRMAN, ANAROCK

SHORT TAKES

SL inflation rate surges to 70.2%

Colombo: Consumer inflation in Sri Lanka accelerated to 70.2% in August, the statistics department said Wednesday, as the island nation reels under its worst economic crisis in decades. The National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) rose 70.2% last month from a year earlier, after a 66.7% increase in July, the Department of Census and Statistics said in a statement. Food prices climbed 84.6%, while prices of non-food items rose 57.1%.

Mineral output dips 3.3% in July

New Delhi: The government Wednesday said the country's mineral production declined by 3.3 per cent in July 2022 over the same month a year ago. The index of mineral production of mining and quarrying sector for the month stood at 101.1, which is 3.3 per cent lower as compared to the level in July last year, the mines ministry said in a statement. As per the provisional statistics of the Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), the cumulative growth during the April-July period of the ongoing fiscal over the corresponding period of previous year stood at 6.1 per cent.

Shares of Central Bank jump 7%

New Delhi: Shares of Central Bank of India on Wednesday jumped nearly 7 per cent after the RBI said the company has been removed from the Prompt Corrective Action Framework (PCAF). The company's shares climbed 6.63 per cent to settle at ₹21.70 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it zoomed 15.47 per cent to ₹23.50. On the NSE, it jumped 6.38 per cent to end at ₹21.65 apiece. On Tuesday, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Central Bank of India has been removed from the PCAF watchlist following improvement in various parameters and a written commitment that the state-owned lender will comply with the minimum capital norms.

VW to hike prices by 2%

New Delhi: Volkswagen Passenger Cars India Wednesday said it will increase prices of its entire product range by up to 2 per cent from October 1 in order to offset the impact of rising input costs. The automaker sells models like Virtus, Taigun and Tiguan in the domestic market. "Effective October 1, 2022, Volkswagen Passenger Cars India will be increasing prices by up to 2 per cent across its product portfolio owing to rising input costs," a company spokesperson said.



We are not for or against algo trading as long as there is sufficient transparency and disclosures. Business models cannot rely on a black box. Therefore any claim that cannot be audited and validated cannot be permitted

MADHAVI PURI BUCH | CHAIRPERSON, SEBI

Govt okays ₹19,500cr PLI for mfg solar PV modules

The national programme on high-efficiency solar PV modules aims to build an ecosystem for manufacturing of high-efficiency solar PV modules in India, and thus reduce import dependence in the area of renewable energy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Cabinet Wednesday approved a ₹19,500-crore production linked incentive (PLI) scheme on 'national programme on high efficiency solar PV modules' with an aim to attract ₹94,000 crore investment in the sector.

One of the the benefits expected from the PLI scheme is that about 65,000 MW per annum manufacturing capacity of fully and partially integrated solar PV modules would be installed.

Giving details about the Cabinet decision, information and broadcasting minister Anurag Thakur said that about 2 lakh direct jobs would be created in the sector.

The national programme aims to build an ecosystem for manufacturing of high efficiency solar PV modules in India and reduce import dependence in the area of renewable energy. Solar PV manufacturers will be selected through a transparent selection process. PLI will be disbursed for 5 years after commissioning of solar PV manufacturing plants and sales of high efficiency solar PV modules from the domestic market will be incentivised.

Union Power Minister R K Singh Wednesday exuded confidence that the second version of production



■ The initiative will save ₹1.4L-cr forex: Power Min

■ The scheme will bring a direct investment of around ₹94K-crore

■ The scheme is expected to create direct employment of about 1,95,000 and indirect employment for around 7,80,000 people

linked incentive (PLI-II) scheme for solar manufacturing worth ₹19,500 crore, will help save close to ₹1.4 lakh crore forex every year.

The government has expanded the scope under PLI-II as the domestic manufacturing capacity will also boost exports. The PLI-I for solar modules was worth ₹4,500 crore, which was brought with intent to meet domestic requirement mainly as India has been importing solar equipment.

"This (PLI-II for solar module) will lead to a saving of ₹1.40 lakh crore saving because of domestic manufacturing. And it will also result in a huge quantity of in-flows on account of exports," Singh told reporters on the sideline of the launch of 'Agni' campaign here.

The minister told that the first round PLI-I was worth ₹4,500 crore for 8,700 MW of manufacturing capacity.

The PLL-II was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech February 1, 2022. Asked about his view of free power being provided

The government focus on R&D will further enhance the efficiency of the solar PV modules and simultaneously indigenize technology and help in raw material selection

CHANDRAJIT BANERJEE | DIRECTOR GENERAL, CII

by some states, Singh said. "I haven't spoken against free power... So, if state governments pay for the subsidies they have announced in their budget absolutely no problem, you can give free power to everybody. The state government will have to pay for it."

He also said that the states owe their discoms about ₹1.35 lakh crore on account of subsidy dues (for providing free power).

"The problem is in a large number of states. In fact, most of the states whose figures I have seen, (they) don't have the money to pay for the free power, which they have announced. They are taking loans for giving free power. So they are burning their state with additional debt which will have to be paid by later generations," he added.

He pointed out that the revenue inflows are eaten up by salaries, pensions and repayment of past loans and interest of past loans.

"Whatever (development) work they do, they do by borrowing. This is what is making the states more and more indebted," he stated.

WIPRO SACKS 300 FOR MOONLIGHTING

Wipro Ltd has sacked some 300 employees for 'moonlighting' as the IT services firm toughens its stand against staffers taking a second job after work hours. Its chairman Rishad Premji, who has been a vocal critic of moonlighting, said the company has no place for any employee who chooses to work directly with rivals while being on Wipro payrolls



India's exports to GCC nations grew by 44% in 2021-22

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 21: Indian exports to the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries grew by 44 per cent to about \$43.9 billion in 2021-22 fiscal year compared to previous fiscal's \$27.8 billion with the UAE leading the trade with a remarkable 68 per cent growth, according to an apex trade promotion body.

Exports to the UAE, India's second-largest trading partner and largest in terms of exports, surged to \$28 billion in the past fiscal year that ended March 31, 2022, from \$16.7 billion in the 2021 fiscal, according to the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), the apex body of India's export promotion councils.

The GCC was established in May 1981. Its members are Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

In a statement at the niche expo, Super Sourcing Dubai (SSD), co-located with Propaper Dubai 2022 at Festival Arena, Dubai Festival City, top FIEO officials said paper and allied products exports to the GCC touched \$638 million in 2021 with the UAE taking a major share in the trade at \$386 million.

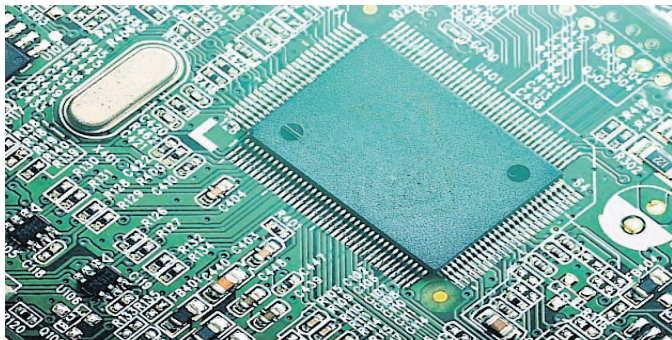
"Our exports performance in the GCC in FY 2021-22 has been marvellous. Apart from the UAE, our exports to Saudi Arabia grew by 49 per cent, Oman by 33 per cent, Qatar by 43 per cent, Kuwait by 17 per cent and exports to Bahrain increased by 70 per cent," said Ajay Sahai, Director-General and CEO of FIEO.

In the case of the paper industry, India has a 16 per cent market share in GCC and the target is to corner a 25 per cent market share by 2027 with the signing of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with other Gulf countries.

India and the UAE signed the CEPA in February this year which came into force May 1 2022.

FISCAL SUPPORT RAISED

India expects \$25bn under semiconductor incentive scheme



Chandrasekhar said the government is in conversations with many of the global players to invest in India's chip sector

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 21: India is expecting to court a total investment of at least \$25 billion as a result of its incentive scheme meant to boost local manufacturing of chip and display panels, junior IT minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar told reporters Wednesday.

His comments came hours after the Indian government raised fiscal support for new semiconductor facilities to cover 50% of project costs, and said it will remove a ceiling for maximum permitted investment to enable incentives for display manufacturing.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is seeking to attract more big-ticket investments under a \$10 billion incentive plan for chip and display production, aiming to make India a key player in the global supply chain.

The government had previously agreed to cover between 30% and

50% of the cost of setting up new display and chip plants. It said Wednesday that it will also cover 50% of the capital expenditure required to set up semiconductor packaging facilities.

Chandrasekhar said the government is in conversations with many of the global players to invest in India's chip sector, without naming any.

"These conversations are happening in the context of multiple incentive packages and programs that have been announced by various countries," Chandrasekhar said.

"Our proposition is ... we have a proven track record of growing the electronics industry And we also come along with the basic infrastructure requirement to set up manufacturing," he added.

Last week, oil-to-metals conglomerate Vedanta and Taiwan's Foxconn signed a pact with Gujarat to invest \$19.5 billion in the western state to set up semiconductor and display production plants.

Vedanta is the third company to announce a chip plant location in India after international consortium ISMC and Singapore-based IGSS Ventures, which are setting up in the southern states Karnataka and Tamil Nadu respectively.

ADB cuts India's GDP forecast to 7%

ADB HAD PROJECTED THE INDIAN ECONOMY TO GROW AT 7.5% IN FY23 AND 8% IN FY24 IN APRIL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) Wednesday slashed India's GDP growth forecast for FY23 to 7 per cent from the earlier estimate of 7.2 per cent mainly on account of higher inflation and a tight monetary policy.

India's economy grew 13.5 per cent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2022-23, reflecting strong growth in services, ADB said in its second supplement to Asian Development Outlook Report 2022 (ADO 2022).

However, GDP growth is revised down from ADO 2022's forecasts to 7 per cent for FY2022 (ending March 2023) and 7.2 per cent for FY2023 (ending March 2024) as price pressures are expected to adversely impact domestic consumption, and sluggish global demand and elevated oil prices will likely be a drag on net exports, ADB said.

In the first supplement to ADO 2022 in July, it however trimmed the growth forecast for FY23 to 7.2 per cent and for FY24 to 7.8 per cent citing higher-than anticipated inflation since April and monetary tightening by RBI due to fallout of the economic impact



of the war in Ukraine, among others.

Rising global oil and commodity prices and supply constraints following the Russian invasion of Ukraine have stoked inflation, said the report, adding that domestic factors, such as heatwaves and heavy rainfall, are having a major impact on inflation.

Inflation has turned out to be more persistent than expected, and led to a sharp tightening in monetary policy, it said.

India's headline inflation averaged 7.3 per cent in April-June, 2022-23 and continued to breach

RBI's monetary policy target of 2-6 per cent in July and August. It was mainly due to increases in food prices, accounting for nearly 45 per cent of the consumption basket, the report said.

Rising prices of domestically-grown vegetables accounted for 35 per cent of food inflation. However, India's dependence on food imports has come down over the years to 4.3 per cent of total merchandise imports.

RBI has increased the policy rate by 140 basis points in this fiscal year to contain inflationary expectations.

Last week, Fitch Ratings slashed India's growth projection to 7 per cent for current fiscal year citing elevated inflationary levels and higher interest rates.

ADB in its latest report has also cut China's GDP forecast to 3.3 per cent in 2022 from 5 per cent projected earlier. Lockdowns from the zero-Covid strategy, problems in the property sector, and weaker external demand continue weighing on economic activity in China, said the report.

"This will be the first year in more than 3 decades that the rest of developing Asia will grow faster than the PRC (People's Republic of China)."

For developing Asia and the Pacific, it has cut the region's economic growth to 4.3 per cent from an earlier forecast of 5.2 per cent on mounting challenges due to increased monetary tightening by central banks, fallout from the Russian-Ukraine war, and recurrent Covid-19 lockdowns in China.

For next year, the growth forecast for the region has been lowered to 4.9 per cent from 5.3 per cent, while raising the inflation forecast. East Asia and South Asia account for most of the downgrade.

Recession unlikely to hit India due to its independency: S&P

Despite headwinds, experts believe that Indian economy will perform a lot better than the rest of the world

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 21: Global rating agency S&P Tuesday said even though the US and the Euro zone are headed to recession, India is unlikely to face the impact given the "not so coupled" nature of its economy with the global economy.

"Indian economy is a lot decoupled from the global economy than we normally think of, given its large domestic demand, even

though you (India) are a net importer of energy. But you have enough forex reserves on one hand and your companies have managed to maintain healthy balance sheets," Paul F Gruenwald, S&P global chief economist and managing director, told reporters here.

In fact, India was never coupled fully with the global economy and so is relatively independent of global markets, he said, adding that a lot depends on how global fund flows behave if there is a recession in the US and Europe. Their inflation numbers continue to dodge the monetary actions by their central banks as the gap between the US core inflation target and the actual number is three times at 6 per cent.



Listing out inflation and the resultant measures by the US Fed as the main threat to the US economy, he said, the world's largest economy is headed towards recession, which is the result of an overheated economy because even after inflation hitting a four-decade

high, unemployment rate is so low at 3.7 per cent.

"Our house view is of a 50-50 chance of recession in the US as the output gap is still positive but the consumer and business sentiment is negative. Whether this will be a soft-landing or not, it will be known

either later this year or early next year as the impact of the massive rate hikes by the US Fed will be known only by then," Gruenwald added.

On the Euro zone, the managing director said the problem is more entrenched and structural. It will take time to recover as the crisis is the result of the geopolitical issues (Russia-Ukraine war) the sky-high energy prices after the EU nations began to lower their dependence on gas from the Russia since February. But again the EU joblessness rates are low at 6.5 per cent.

The continent will face the crisis if joblessness becomes more pronounced, Gruenwald said, adding, the house view is less than

a 50 per cent chance for a recession in the Euro zone which is saddled by the Russia-Ukraine war and by the resultant energy security issues. It will take a couple of years to recover if it falls into a recession unlike the US which may recover much faster.

To a question given all these global headwinds whether the agency has a new view on Indian growth numbers, Crisil Ratings (which is majority-owned by S&P Global Ratings) chief economist DK Joshi told PTI that they hold their recent forecast wherein they "expect the economy to grow at 7.3 per cent this fiscal and slow down to 6.5 per cent next fiscal, with more downside risks to both the numbers."

Sunny wary of Bhuvi's form

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The legendary Sunil Gavaskar feels senior pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar's poor show at the death overs is a "real concern" for India, going into next month's T20 World Cup.

Bhuvneshwar has leaked quite a lot of runs at the death in the last few matches. His 16-run 19th over allowed Australia to pull off a record chase of 209 in the first T20I in Mohali Tuesday night.

"I don't think there was too much dew. We didn't see the fielders or bowlers trying to use the towel to try and dry their fingers. That's not an excuse. We didn't bowl well. For example, that 19th over... That's a real concern," Gavaskar said on 'Sports Today'.

"Somebody like a Bhuvneshwar Kumar is going for runs every single time, when he is expected. In 18 deliveries he has bowled in three matches against Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and now Australia, he has given away 49 runs.

"It is almost three runs per ball. Somebody with his experience and calibre, you expect he will give 35-36 runs in those 18 deliveries. That really is an area of concern."

The former skipper said India have not been able to defend good totals but hoped a fit-again Jasprit Bumrah's return will strengthen the bowling department. Bumrah has been out of action since the limited-overs series against England in July earlier this year as he was recovering from an old back injury.

"What we have seen in last few years is that it has been one of the areas where India have suffered. They have not been able to defend good scores," said Gavaskar.

"Maybe when Bumrah comes in, it might be a completely different situation because he gets wickets at the top. India didn't get those today (Tuesday) as Australia got off to a flying start.

"Having said that, it's only the



Bhuvneshwar Kumar wears a gloomy look during the first T20I against Australia, while Rohit Sharma sets the field for the pacer, Tuesday

first match. Don't forget, Australia are world champions. They are expected to do extraordinary things."

Former head coach Ravi Shastri also came down heavily on India for their "sloppy standard of fielding" in the first T20I. Defending 208, Indian fielders dropped as many as three catches, including that of Cameron Green (61) and Matthew Wade (45 n.o.).

"If you look at all the top Indian teams over the years, there is youth and experience. I find the youth missing here and hence the fielding," Shastri, who was in the commentary box, said.

"If you look at the last five-six years, I think this side is no match to any of the top sides when it comes to fielding. And that can hit badly in big tournaments.

"It means that as a batting side you have to get that 15-20 runs game after game, because if you look around the field, where is brilliance? There is no Jadeja. Where is that X-factor?"

Axar Patel was the first offender as he dropped a regulation catch at deep mid-wicket to give a life to Green when he was on 42. KL Rahul then failed to grab a chance in

long-off in the next over.

However, the catch that proved costly was that of Matthew Wade, who was dropped by Harshal Patel on his own bowling in the 18th over when the batter was on 1. Wade went on to score an unbeaten 45 off 21 balls to take Australia home with four balls to spare.

"What I was disappointed today with was the standard of fielding. I mean, it looks sloppy and I think you need a big upping of the ante when it comes to the fielding if you have to beat big sides in big competitions," Shastri said.

Hardik backs Bumrah's omission

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mohali, Sept 21: Star all-rounder Hardik Pandya said the team will not put too much pressure on Jasprit Bumrah and give him ample time to make his comeback from an injury after the pacer was not included in India's playing XI for the first T20I against Australia here.

Bumrah was missed badly in the series opener against Australia Tuesday as the visitors chased down 209 rather comfortably to register a four-wicket win and take the lead in the three-match series. Barring Axar Patel, all Indian bowlers leaked more than 11 runs per over.

Bumrah, who did not play the Asia Cup due to a back injury, has been named in the T20 World Cup squad and the preceding series against Australia and South Africa.

"We all know what he brings to the table and how important he is for us. There will be concerns here and there (about bowling) which is fine. We got to trust our boys. These are the best 15 in the country and that is why they are there in the squad," Hardik said.

"Jasprit not being there obviously makes a big difference. He is



Umesh Yadav played the first T20I in Mohali in place of Jasprit Bumrah, who was rested after returning to the side from an injury

coming back after an injury, it is important for him to get enough time to kind of come back and may be not put a lot of pressure on himself."

Hardik smashed 71 not out off 30 balls to take India past 200. He has

WADE OPENS UP ON SUCCESSFUL OZ CHASE

Mohali: The Indian conditions allow batters to put even good balls away for boundaries and that played a part in Australia's successful chase of 209 in the first T20I, feels Matthew Wade. Talking about his role as a finisher, the 34-year-old Wade said experience has made him a lot wiser and he doesn't rush into playing attacking strokes. "The run rate dictates way you have to play. Grounds like we play in India, you hit the ball in the ground and you can still find the boundaries that puts a lot of pressure on the bowlers," said Wade in the post-match press conference. "They bowled me some yorkers and I managed to put them away. That keeps you calm, in the middle."



Surya leapfrogs Babar to 3rd in T20 rankings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 21: India's Suryakumar Yadav has replaced Pakistan captain Babar Azam to occupy the third spot in the T20I batter's list in the latest ICC Men's Player Rankings issued Wednesday.

Yadav impressed with a classy 46 during India's four-wicket loss to Australia in the opening match of their three-game series at Mohali Tuesday. The knock helped him to close in on Pakistan opener Mohammad Rizwan at the top of the T20I batter's chart. The right-hander dethroned Babar from the third spot, with Rizwan now just 45 rating points ahead of him.

Rizwan hit a half century in Pakistan's loss to England in Karachi Tuesday and maintains a narrow advantage at the top of the rankings with a career-high total of 825 rating points. South Africa's Aiden Markram (792 rating points) is in the second position ahead of Yadav (780).

Babar dropped to fourth in the latest rankings following his below par Asia Cup and a 31 against England in the series opener. England's Dawid Malan (725) and Australia skipper Aaron Finch (715) complete the top 6.

Besides Yadav, star India all-rounder Hardik Pandya jumped 22 places to 65th overall following his superb 71 not out against



Australia, while teammate Axar Patel shot up 24 spots to 33rd in the list for bowlers after he collected three wickets Tuesday.

Australia seamer Josh Hazlewood maintained his top spot among bowlers after picking up the key wickets of Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul in the opening T20I.

England spinner Adil Rashid is third and on the coat-tails of Hazlewood and second-placed Tabraiz Shamsi following a two-wicket haul against Pakistan, while returning veteran Alex Hales re-enters the T20I batter rankings following a three-year hiatus from 20-over international cricket.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 21: Roger Federer is known for his elegant style of play for his longevity, for his 20 Grand Slam titles — and for occasional tears in his most emotional post-match moments, whether after victory or defeat.

There was none of that sort of sadness Wednesday, just smiles and some chuckles at his own jokes, as Federer appeared at a news conference to discuss his retirement from professional tennis at age 41 after a series of knee operations. He will close his career with a doubles match at the Laver Cup Friday — perhaps alongside longtime rival Rafael Nadal.

Federer said he is now at peace with the decision to walk away, which comes a few weeks after Serena Williams played what is expected to be her last match at the US Open, and he wants this farewell to be a celebration.

"I really don't want it to be a funeral," Federer said. "I want it to be really happy and powerful and party mode."

Wearing a blue blazer with the sleeves rolled up to his elbows and a white polo shirt, Federer took questions for about a half-hour at the arena that will host the team competition founded by his management company.

"I'm nervous going in, because I haven't played in so long," he said. "I hope I can be somewhat competitive."



Federer, who announced last week via social media that he would be retiring after the Laver Cup, said it took him a bit to get used to the idea of stepping away from competition.

But it was something he understood he needed to do after running into setbacks in July during his rehabilitation from what was his third surgery on his right knee in about one and 1/2 years.

"You try to go to the next level in training, and I could feel it was getting difficult. Then, I guess, I was also getting more tired, be-

cause you have to put more effort into it to be able to sort of believe that it was going to turn around. You start getting too pessimistic. Then I also got a scan back, which wasn't what I wanted it to be," Federer explained.

"At some point, you sit down and go, OK, we are at an intersection here, at a crossroad, and you have to take a turn. Which way is it? I was not willing to go into the direction of: 'Let's risk it all.' I'm not ready for that. I always said that was never my goal."

And the hardest part came when

he knew he needed to stop. "You're sad," Federer said, "in the very moment when you realize, OK, this is the end."

The last procedure on his knee came shortly after a quarterfinal loss to Hubert Hurkacz at Wimbledon in July 2021, which will go into the books as the last singles match of a superlative career that began in the 1990s and included 103 tournament titles, a Davis Cup championship for Switzerland, Olympic medals and hundreds of weeks at No.1 in the ATP rankings.

He will play doubles for Team Europe against Team World on Day 1 of the event, then will give way to 2021 Wimbledon runner-up Matteo Berrettini for singles over the weekend. That plan was run by the ATP and both team captains, John McEnroe and Bjorn Borg, Federer said.

As for his doubles partner for the last hurrah? Federer would not say definitively — he said that's up to Borg — but the not-so-hidden secret is that it is expected to be Nadal, who holds the men's record of 22 major championships.

Back in February, when word emerged that Federer would be in London this week, he said Nadal messaged him last year suggesting they play doubles together again. They teamed up to win a doubles match during the first Laver Cup in 2017.

"If we're able to possibly share the court one more time as a doubles pairing," Nadal said in February, "then this would be a truly special experience for us both at this stage in our careers."

As for his future? The father of two sets of twins — girls 13, boys 8 — wouldn't say exactly what he has planned, other than a vacation, but he did say he would remain connected to tennis in some capacity.

Recalling the way Borg stayed away from the sport for years after retiring, Federer sought to reassure his own fans by saying: "I won't be a ghost."

MotoGP commits long-term plan to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: In a massive boost for motor sport in the country, the MotoGP organisers Wednesday announced that the biggest two-wheel racing event could come to India as early as next year.

An MoU, which promises seven races in as many years, was announced, but MotoGP organisers Dorna Sports and Indian promoters Paristreet Sports did not set a date for the first race, which is being branded as 'Grand Prix of Bharat'.

If 2023 doesn't work out, both parties aim to conduct a testing event the same year before the inaugural round in 2024. Dorna will announce the 2023 calendar soon.

The MoU was announced in the presence of Dorna Sports MD Carlos Ezpeleta and Indian promoter Fairstreet Sports (FSS) COO Pushkar Nath and director Amit Sandill. The round when it happens



will also include races in junior category — Moto2 and Moto3. PTI had reported last week that a race was on the cards in the winter of 2023.

The race venue will be the state of the art Buddh International Circuit, home to the defunct Indian Grand Prix. Once the stakeholders can decide the dates, the track race will be homologated by world governing body FIM, which is seen as a formality since the track has already hosted an event of the stature of Formula 1.

Formula 1 departed after three

seasons due to financial, tax and bureaucratic hurdles but Ezpeleta expressed surprise that India, the world's largest two-wheeler market, has not hosted MotoGP yet.

"Honestly from Dorna's side it is surprising the call has not been made before. MotoGP is a product meant for India and India is a country meant for MotoGP. The match is a good one," Ezpeleta said.

"We had not been approached for MotoGP in previous years but with support of the Indian promoters, all the parts boxes have been checked.

All the major manufactures that are part of MotoGP have shown a lot of interest in coming to India," he added.

Though the official statement clearly mentioned the race will happen in 2023 but Ezpeleta said getting all the pieces together to host a race of this scale is always a complicated affair. Around 5000 people including riders and staff work during a MotoGP round. Ezpeleta claimed that a MotoGP weekend generates economic activity of 100 million euros.

"The MoU is for seven years which can start as soon as next year. Putting together a MotoGP round is a huge job. A pre season test of machinery and tyres have to be tested at the venue."

"We publish our calendar season before. We are working out the dates whether we can make 2023 possible or whether there will be a test for the first event in 2024. It is complicated to organise, many pieces will have to fall into place," said Dorna Sports MD.

WTC Finals host named for 2023, 2025



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 21: The Oval and the iconic Lord's will host the World Test Championship (WTC) Final in 2023 and 2025 respectively, the game's governing body ICC said Wednesday.

England were identified as the hosts for the next two WTC Finals during the ICC Annual General

Meeting in Birmingham in July.

"We are delighted to be hosting next year's ICC World Test Championship Final at The Oval which has such a rich legacy and an amazing atmosphere, which is ideal for such an important fixture on the calendar," ICC chief executive Geoff Allardice said in a statement.

"Following that we will then take the 2025 Final to Lord's which will

provide a fitting backdrop to the ultimate Test. Last year's final between New Zealand and India in Southampton was an engrossing encounter and I am sure fans the world over would be looking forward to the next WTC final at The Oval."

While the venues have been announced, the dates for both the 2023 and 2025 ICC World Test Championship Finals has not been confirmed yet.

Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) chief executive and secretary Guy Lavender, added: "We are delighted that Lord's will be hosting the ICC World Test Championship Final in 2025. It is fantastic news that the ICC has opted to host the next two finals in London, with both grounds providing fitting venues for the culmination of the championship."

The second edition of the World Test Championship begun August 4 and is scheduled to finish March 31 next year. Australia and South Africa are currently leading the WTC standings.