



TAAPSEE IN TROUBLE

A complaint was filed against actress Taapsee Pannu for hurting sentiments after she donned a necklace with Goddess Lakshmi's sculpture

LEISURE P2



40 PERISH IN MEXICO FIRE

Fire by migrants at an immigration detention centre in northern Mexico claims at least 40 lives

INTERNATIONAL P10



BLUE TIGERS TRIUMPH

India beat higher-ranked Kyrgyz Republic 2-0 to win the Tri-National International football tournament

SPORTS P12



ON THE BOIL: A man gestures at burning cans during a demonstration in Paris, Tuesday. It's the latest round of nationwide demonstrations and strikes against unpopular pension reforms and President Emmanuel Macron's push to raise France's legal retirement age from 62 to 64

Govt: Link PAN with Aadhaar by June end

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 28: The Centre Tuesday extended the deadline for linking PAN and Aadhaar by three months to June 30, 2023, to provide some more time to taxpayers, an official statement said, adding that the earlier deadline was ending March 31.

A joint reading of Section 139AA of the Income Tax Act and the Aadhaar Act, however, clearly reveals that PAN-Aadhaar 'linking' is not mandatory. There is only 'quoting' mentioned and that does not mean mandatory linking under any law, it was learnt.

According to the Centre, persons can intimate their Aadhaar to the prescribed authority for Aadhaar-PAN linking without facing repercussions.

Under the provisions of the Income-Tax Act, 1961, every person who has been allotted a PAN as July 1, 2017, and is eligible to obtain Aadhaar number, is required to intimate his Aadhaar to the prescribed authority on or before March 31, 2023, on payment of a prescribed fee, it said.

"Failure to do so shall attract certain repercussions under the Income Tax Act with effect from April 1, 2023. The date for intimating Aadhaar to the prescribed

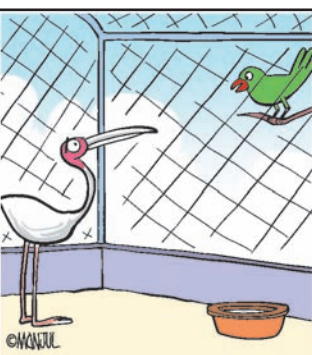


A joint reading of Section 139AA of the Income Tax Act and the Aadhaar Act, however, clearly reveals that PAN-Aadhaar 'linking' is not mandatory

authority for the purpose of linking PAN and Aadhaar has now been extended to June 30, 2023," the statement said.

From July 1, 2023, the PAN of taxpayers who have failed to intimate their Aadhaar, as required, shall become inoperative. Notably, more than 51 crore PANs have already been linked with Aadhaar till date.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



If you wanted to befriend a human, why didn't you look for someone from the ruling party?

Odisha lost 50 lives post Cov vaccination

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, March 28: The Centre might be emphasising on universal vaccination to save lives from dreadfulness of Covid-19, but Odisha has lost at least 50 lives due to Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) till March 15 this year, as per the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW).

Replying to a question from YSRCP MP from Andhra Pradesh Kuruva Gorantla Madhav in the Lok Sabha, March 24, Minister of State (MoS) for H&FW Bharati Pravin Pawar said as many as 1,156 deaths were reported from across the country following Covid-19 vaccination till March 15, 2023.

The highest of such deaths were from Kerala (244), followed by Maharashtra (102), Uttar Pradesh (86), Madhya Pradesh (85), Karnataka (75), West Bengal (70), Bihar (62) and Odisha (50), Pawar said.

Odisha has also reported 1,632 AEFI after Covid-19 vaccine administration - 1,552 minors, three severe and 77 serious - till March 15 this year, the H&FW Ministry said.

"AEFI of Covid-19 vaccines are reported and monitored through a well-structured and robust AEFI surveillance system under the Universal Immunisation

3.30cr
HAVE TAKEN THE SECOND DOSE OF COVID-19 VACCINE IN ODISHA

Odisha has reported 1,632 AEFI after Covid-19 vaccine administration - 1,552 minor, 3 severe and 77 serious - till March 15 this year

Program," Pawar said.

The YSRCP MP from Andhra Pradesh had asked for details of the mechanism in place to report Covid-19 vaccine-related AEFI and the number of AEFI cases reported from government and private hospitals, and the number of AEFI related deaths in the country.

The Lok Sabha MP also asked about steps taken by the government to sensitise the people and hospitals, in the private and government sector, regarding timely reporting of AEFI and to curb under-reporting of AEFI cases.

On reporting of AEFI cases, the Union minister informed that guidelines have been issued to the states to direct district immunisation officers to strengthen reporting of AEFIs following Covid-19 vaccination by networking with

hospitals and medical colleges in the private and government sector. Covid vaccination program managers in the government and private Covid Vaccination Centres (CVCs) including hospitals have also been oriented on it, the minister said.

"For the reporting of Covid-19 vaccination related AEFIs, the SAFEVAC (a web based application for AEFI) is integrated into Co-WIN and reporting of AEFIs is done through the Co-WIN SAFEVAC. The Co-WIN SAFEVAC has the provision of reporting AEFIs by the vaccinator, district immunisation officer and the beneficiary themselves," the minister said.

According to the Union government, at least 3.30 crore people have taken the second dose of Covid-19 vaccine in Odisha.

3 RBTs, 26 leopards poached in 10 years

Forest and Environment Minister Pradip Kumar Amat says as many as 55 big cats, including 6 Royal Bengal Tigers, died between 2012-13 and 2021-22

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: State has lost 29 big cats - three Royal Bengal Tigers (RBTs) and 26 leopards - to poaching in the last 10 years, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat told the Assembly Tuesday.

Replying to a question from Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati, Amat said as many as six RBTs died in the last 10 years of which three were killed by poachers.

Of the 49 leopard deaths from 2012-13 to 2021-22, 26 fell prey to poachers, the minister said. Based on 2018 data, Odisha has 28 tigers and 760 leopards as per the estimation made by the National Tiger Conservation Authority, Amat said.

Regarding the steps being taken to increase the tiger population in the state, the minister said two tiger projects have been set up in Odisha.

Anti-poaching camps have been set up and special squads have been deployed in the forests, he said.

The minister said foot patrolling has been intensified and steps



have been taken for the development of meadows to increase the population of herbivores.

Measures have also been taken to contain wildfires in the jungles, he said.

Earlier, the Forest Minister had informed in the Assembly that 784 elephants died during 2012-13 to 2021-22. According to the last elephant census conducted in 2017, there are 1,976 elephants in Odisha.

While 82 jumbos died in 2012-13, the figure was 86 in 2015-16, 93 in 2018-19 and 86 in 2021-22.

During the period, the state government has conducted investigations into 39 elephant deaths and chargesheets against 50 persons were filed. However, not a single accused has been convicted in these cases so far, Amat said in his statement.

EPFO raises FY23 interest rate to 8.15%

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 28: The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) Tuesday marginally raised interest rate on EPF deposits to 8.15 per cent for 2022-23 from a four-decade low of 8.10 per cent for its over six crore subscribers.

In March 2022, it had lowered the interest rate on EPF for 2021-22 to 8.10 per cent for its subscribers, from 8.5 per cent in 2020-21.

This was the lowest since 1977-78, when the EPF interest rate stood at 8 per cent.

The apex decision making body of EPFO, Central Board Trustees (CBT) headed by Union Labour Minister Bhupendra Yadav, recommended 8.15 per cent annual rate of interest to be credited on EPF accumulations in members' accounts for financial year 2022-23, a labour ministry statement said.

Atiq Ahmed gets life term in 2006 kidnapping case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj (UP), March 28: An MP-MLA court here Tuesday held gangster-politician Atiq Ahmed and two others guilty in the 2006 Umesh Pal kidnapping case, and sentenced the trio to life imprisonment.

Ahmed's brother Khalid Azim alias Ashraf and six others were acquitted in the case.

Special MP-MLA court judge Dinesh Chandra Shukla held Ahmed, Saulat Hanif, a lawyer, and Dinesh Pasi guilty in the case.

The three were pronounced guilty under Indian Penal Code section 364A (kidnapping or abduction in order to murder). The maximum punishment under the section is death sentence.

After the killing of then BSP MLA Raju Pal January 25, 2005, Umesh Pal, then a zila panchayat member, had told police he was a witness to the murder.

Umesh Pal had alleged that when he refused to retract and buckle under pressure from Ahmed, he was kidnapped at gunpoint February 28, 2006.

Water 'reservoir' discovered on Moon

FINDING IS THOUGHT TO BE ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT BREAKTHROUGHS YET FOR SPACE AGENCIES THAT HAVE SET THEIR SIGHTS ON BUILDING BASES ON LUNAR SURFACE

AGENCIES

Cape Canaveral (Florida), March 28: Tiny glass beads strewn across the Moon's surface with water trapped inside have been discovered, suggesting a potential reservoir of the precious resource which might help astronauts produce drinking water, breathable air and even rocket fuel, scientists say.

According to scientists, an analysis of lunar soil samples retrieved in 2020 during China's robotic Chang'e-5 mission showed that these spheres of glass-rock melted

and cooled - created in the impacts formed within them water molecules formed through the action of the solar wind on the Moon's surface.

"The Moon is constantly bombarded with impactors - for example micrometeoroids and large meteoroids - which produce impact glass beads during high-energy flash-heating events," said planetary scientist Sen Hu of the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Geology and Geophysics, a co-author of the study published in the journal Nature Geoscience.

The solar wind is a stream of

charged particles, primarily protons and electrons, emanating outward from the corona, the outermost part of the sun's atmosphere, and permeating the solar system.

"Solar wind-derived water is produced by the reaction of solar hydrogen with oxygen present at the surface of the lunar glass beads," Hu said, with these spheres then acting sort of like a sponge for the water.

For future Moon exploration, including potential long-term lunar bases staffed with astronauts, water is of vital importance not only as a drinking supply but as

a fuel ingredient. The Moon lacks the bodies of liquid water that are a hallmark of Earth. But its surface is thought to harbour a fairly substantial amount of water, for example in ice patches residing in permanently shadowed locales and trapped in minerals.

"Water is the most sought-after commodity for enabling sustainable exploration of planetary surfaces. Knowing how water is produced, stored and replenished near the lunar surface would be very useful for future explorers to extract and utilize it for exploration purposes," Hu said. **Contd...P4**



Lunar soil samples from China's lunar exploration program Chang'e-5 Mission are displayed during an exhibition at National Museum in Beijing

leisure



BIEBER WANTS TO QUIT MUSIC POST ILLNESS

Canadian pop star Justin Bieber is reportedly considering a retirement after selling his entire music catalogue for \$200 million. The singer revealed last year that he had been diagnosed with Ramsay Hunt syndrome, wants to focus on his health and his marriage to Hailey Bieber.

TAYLOR SWIFT WINS BIG AT IHEARTRADIO MUSIC AWARDS

Taylor Swift was the big winner at the iHeartRadio Music Awards Monday night, scooping the iHeartRadio Innovator Award, Song of the Year, Best Lyrics, TikTok Bop of the Year, and Favourite Use of a sample.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
A tough, action-packed day ahead! There may be difference of opinions with friends over trivial matters, but you will thrive on it. But all pending work will be completed, much to your relief. It's a promising and optimistic day, says Ganesh!

TAURUS
Today, you may have something at the back of your mind that will grip you with its complexity, says Ganesh. Speak freely as your words are capable of making a great impact on others. You may not be willing to confront unpleasant situations today. Don't worry, the stars seem in your favour, predicts Ganesh.

GEMINI
You are extremely competitive. And it doesn't matter how far behind the competition is. So today, you will continue your usual quest for getting better. You won't have it any other way as you despise mediocrity.

CANCER
Today is a good day for you. However, don't expect a windfall. It is just one of those days when you will be in a good mood, irrespective of your problems, if any. You will treat your subordinates well, and they will show their appreciation.

LEO
Che Guevara may not hold the beacon any more, and the best of the Beatles are long gone. But your desire to revolutionise the world is as strong as ever, sees Ganesh. The best ideas are the ones that come suddenly and subconsciously.

VIRGO
Professionalism will be overshadowed by personal preoccupations. Drill your way out of problems today by meeting them head-on. Don't get stuck up on the emotional front, especially in the evening, cautions Ganesh.

LIBRA
Gear up to play the peace maker today! Your ability to handle a 'Brady Bunch' hasn't gone unnoticed. So expect to be put in charge of handling disputes among your subordinates at work today, hints Ganesh. Research work may slow to a crawl today, but the offshoot is that it's an auspicious day to enter into new contracts. You might want to arrange that bit of business over lunch.

SCORPIO
Work pressure will keep on mounting today, predicts Ganesh. But you shall handle it with great style, all thanks to your patience. But keep a watch on the radar and learn how to spot stress early and then act on it as quickly as you can.

SAGITTARIUS
Your ship may be rocked by stormy controversies today. Ganesh advises you to steer clear of people looking to give you a piece of their mind. The storm looks to ease away if you lend a patient ear to all such elements, and try and accommodate their views.

CAPRICORN
You will starve for some free time, but will find it difficult to steal even a minute from your busy schedule, even if it is for unwinding your overworked soul, says Ganesh. In times like these, one can hardly think straight, let alone be innovative. You will, however, work your way out by prioritising matters. By the end of the day, your efforts may get paid off, leaving you with the thought that it was all worthwhile after all!

AQUARIUS
Your ideas are bang on target today! Everything you touch turns into gold. You have it in you to make it big, and the time is now. When the going gets tough, the tough get going — you've heard this before, now it's time for some action, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Stabbing with a pen is so much more satisfying than slicing with a sword. With these lofty ideals in mind, you will launch an assault upon your unsuspecting prey with your lethal presentation skills, eliciting cries of sheer ecstasy and tremendous applause.

Babil keeping his inner child alive

Mumbai: Actor Babil Khan, who garnered a lot of appreciation with his debut in Anvita Dutt's Qala, has created a character 'Bablu' on Instagram. The actor keeps sharing mini-episodes of the character's day-to-day life struggles.

Babil has posted eight episodes of this character till date. In the first

episode, Babil explains how he came up with the idea of the character and shared his reaction when a girl called him a 'fearless ball of life.' In the subsequent episodes, Bablu is seen struggling with maths, spelling, winters, prom, and even being a genie while giving advice.

Talking about the character, Babil said, "Bablu is the child inside of everyone, the child inside you that is free of worries, ego, burdens of social morality and responsibilities, living with a true sense of freedom." The actor further

mentioned, "As we age in this world, we lose touch with our inner child, Bablu is the representation of the idea that the child inside of you, the purity of you, is still alive, all you need to do is learn to access it."

On the work front, the actor will be soon seen in the upcoming web series The Railway Men.

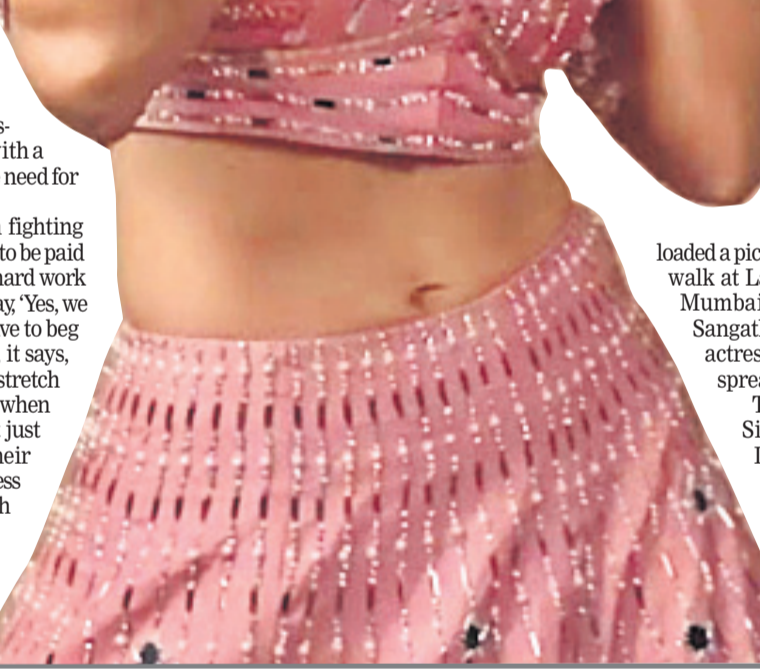


Samantha bats for pay parity

Mumbai: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who is on the peak of her career with pipelined projects from both the Hindi and South film industries, is known for holding her solidarity and raising her voice. Recently, in an interview with a media portal, she shared her views on the need for pay parity in the film industry.

The *Family Man 2* actress said, "I am fighting hard, not directly. It's not like I am fighting to be paid equally; I want it to be a byproduct of the hard work and success. People should just come and say, 'Yes, we want to pay you this much.' I shouldn't have to beg for it. When I put up this quote in my bio, it says, 'Whatever are your capabilities, you must stretch them to the limit and a little beyond. And when you are a woman in this industry, it's not just enough to stretch your capabilities to their limits; you need to go a little more. There's stress on a 'little more' because it's just that much harder."

Her upcoming film, *Shaakuntalam*, will hit screens April 17. After *Shaakuntalam*, Samantha will be seen in *Kushi* with Vijay Deverakonda.



Taapsee walks into trouble

Mumbai: A complaint against actress Taapsee Pannu and several others has been filed for hurting religious sentiments after she donned a necklace with Goddess Lakshmi's sculpture paired with a revealing set of clothing as per the complainant.

The *Manmarziyaan* actress had uploaded a picture and a video March 14 from the ramp walk at Lakme Fashion Week held March 12 in Mumbai. The religious outfit Hind Rakshak Sangathan has filed a charge against the Pink actress for violating religious emotions and spreading obscenity.

The allegation was made by Eklavya Singh Gaur, the convener of the outfit's Indore unit, who is also the son of BJP MLA Malini Gaur. Police said that they received a complaint from Gaur against actress Taapsee Pannu for hurting religious sentiments and the image of the religion. Taapsee is yet to react or issue a statement on the legal action.

'Movie is an experience to have in theatres'

Mumbai: *Mardaani* actress Rani Mukerji has always displayed potent performances in her more than 20 years of tenure in the film industry. Adding another charismatic acting to her resume, in her recent release, *Mrs. Chatterjee vs. Norway*, Rani portrayed the role of a doting mother. The actress spoke out about the cynicism around the movie's release along with other obstacles the film faced.

In a recent interview with a media portal, the actress said, "There was a lot of challenge for our film because the new fashionable word that is going on is OTT content. It is something that has bothered me a lot. Because I do believe that cinema is an experience to be had in the theatres." Further speaking about the cynicism the film faced, she said, "There was so much cynicism before the release of the film. So, it was really scary because you are all alone, fighting this cynicism, hoping and praying that the audience validates your belief in good cinema. And the audience has done that."

The film was released in theatres March 17 and did quite well at the box office.

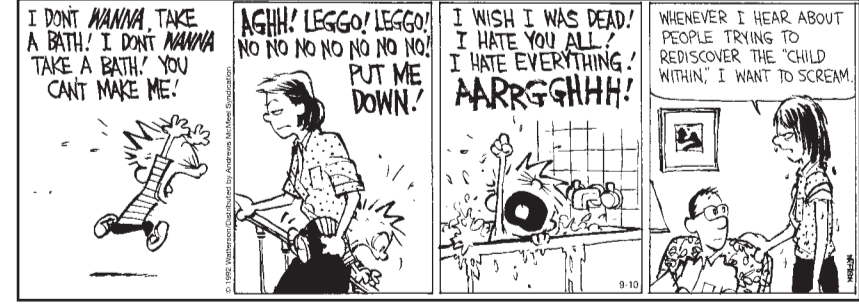


FUN

PEANUTS



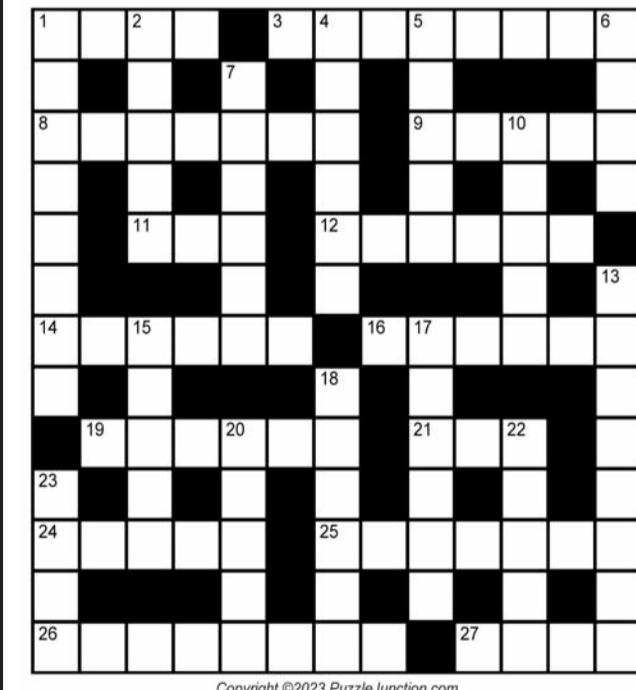
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



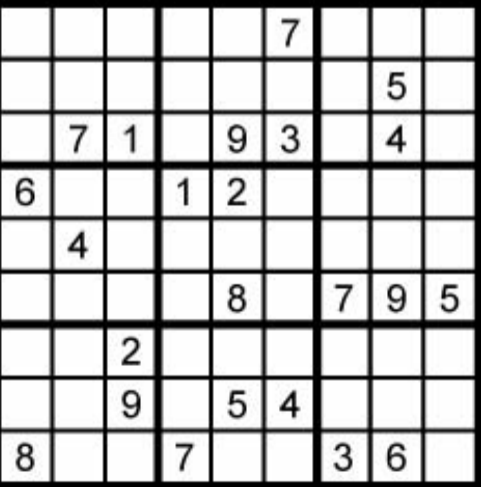
CROSSWORD



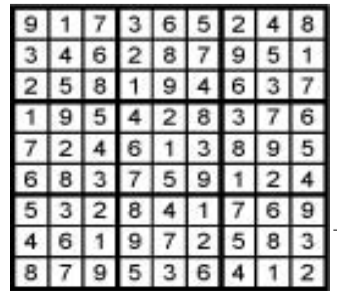
- Across**
- 1 Water disburser
 - 3 Hugged
 - 8 Certain exercises (4-3)
 - 9 Pace
 - 11 Aswan, e.g.
 - 12 Take for granted
 - 14 Teapot
 - 16 Tyre cover
 - 19 Large eel
 - 21 Carriage
 - 24 Wine grape
 - 25 Greed
 - 26 Interpret
 - 27 Incision
 - Down**
 - 1 Encouraging speeches (3,5)
 - 2 Pondered
 - 4 Accident
 - 5 Religious ceremonies
 - 6 Let fall
 - 7 Strike repeatedly
 - 10 Imitator
 - 13 Adversary
 - 15 Irritant
 - 17 Loud disturbance
 - 18 Overly decorative
 - 20 Arise (3,2)
 - 22 Use the hibachi
 - 23 Potato

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Illegal granite extraction kicks up row in Nayagarh

LACK OF REGULAR INSPECTION BY OFFICIALS OF REVENUE DEPARTMENT EMBOLDENING LEASE HOLDERS

POST NEWS NETWORK
Nayagarh, March 28: Illegal extraction of black granite stones, more than the permitted amount from the quarries auctioned in Nayagarh district has kicked up a row, sources said Tuesday. They added that lack of regular checking has led to loss of precious revenues for the Odisha government. The sources said that the lease holders are extracting the excess amount of granite stones with the support of Revenue department officials. Complaints have been lodged in this regard.
People in the know of things said that except in Gania, regular inspections are not being carried out in 45 quarries under seven tehsils of the district. Scores of complaints have been lodged with the authorities but they are yet to be addressed.
The sources said that earlier, the district collector and the sub-collectors used to conduct regular raids to prevent illegal extraction. Now it has stopped and has sparked resentment among the local residents which if not addressed in time, might snowball into a major agitation.
According to the complaints, 13



quarries have been leased out in Ranpur tehsil, 10 in Khandapara, seven in Nayagarh, five each in Bhapur and Daspalla, four in Odagaon and two in Nuagaon.
Sources informed that illegal extraction has reached such a stage where the lease holders are meeting the annual extraction limit in just a month. They pointed out that mining is also being done in quarries that do not fall in lease areas. They added that even though use of explosives has been banned, lease holders are flouting the rules with impunity.
Rules stipulate that tehsil officials should conduct a measurement of the lease areas every three months. They will also check whether ex-

traction is being done as per rules. However, the Revenue department officials are not carrying out its responsibilities, sources alleged.
Rama Chandra Sahu, a villager of Ranpur block supported the allegations of illegal extraction of granite stones. "All the lease holders are extracting quantities more than they are allowed to due to absence of raids or periodic inspections. The lease holders are allegedly bribing the Revenue officials," he said.
Subrat Sahu of Khandapara locality said the district collector in the recent past had conducted a surprise inspection. It had unnerved the lease holders. However, with no follow up action being taken, the lease holders are back again to plundering the mines. Sahu pointed out that more such raids should be conducted at regular intervals. Raj Kishore Nayak of Nayagarh tehsil said while the lease holders are earning in crores, the government is losing precious revenue.
When contacted, ADM Bidhan Chandra Ray said that the administration will never hesitate to conduct raids if they receives specific inputs on illegal mining of granite stones.



SOAKED IN FAITH: Devotees dressed in the attires of various deities take part in a procession for Shitala Yatra of Goddess Budhi Maa in Sambalpur, Tuesday

Engineering student found dead in Jajpur

POST NEWS NETWORK
Jajpur, March 28: Mystery surrounds the death of an 18-year-old girl student of the Government Polytechnic College here. The student, identified as Rojalin Patra, was found dead in her hostel room Tuesday. The deceased was a third-year electrical engineering student. Sources said that Rojalin was brilliant in studies and had been selected for four campus placement interviews.
Rojalin's family alleged foul play behind her death. Family members along with others blamed the college authorities for her death. They also accused some other students of abetting her to take the extreme step.
"A male student had texted my daughter saying that she got selected for four campus placements. However, he threatened that he would not allow her to appear for the interviews. Another student attempted to assault her Monday. She was so frightened and agitated that she wanted to leave the hostel immediately," Rojalin's mother told mediapersons. "However, she did not inform the college authorities about these incidents as she apprehended that other students would harm her once the matter became public," she added.
The deceased's uncle alleged on the same lines and blamed the college authorities. "Officials should have informed us about how Rojalin was being threatened by other students. They should have been aware of what was going on... how my niece was being intimidated by others," he stated.
On being informed, police reached Biraja Hostel and found Rojalin's body hanging from the fan. They brought down the body and sent it for post-mortem. Later, IICs from Korei and Jajpur Road police stations also reached the college to thwart any kind of law and order situation. A detailed probe is underway, police said.

ENCROACHMENT BY ANDHRA PRADESH

Construction of tube wells to start in Nandapur block



POST NEWS NETWORK
Nandapur, March 28: The Koraput district administration has noted Andhra Pradesh's efforts to allegedly grab land by setting up drinking water facilities in some villages of Nandapur block in Koraput district. Officials said Tuesday that work for installing new tube wells in Raipahad village, which is facing water scarcity, will start Wednesday. The neighbouring state is allegedly trying to get closer to the locals and wean them away from Odisha on the pretext of supplying drinking water to villages where there is a shortage.
On being directed by Nandapur block development officer (BDO) Sujit Kumar Mishra, RWSS engineers Kanhu Charan Sethi and Rabindra Nath Marandi visited Raipahad village under the block and took stock of the situation.
Preliminary inquiries indicated that the AP officials are drawing water from a stream which is approximately 250 metres from the

Raipahad village and connecting it with a water tank constructed by them for supplying drinking water to the villagers. The team also met a contractor who has been engaged by the AP government for setting up pipelines to supply water to houses in Raipahad village. They warned the contractor to stop work or face legal action immediately.
Sources said that the Nandapur BDO will visit the Raipahad village Wednesday and take steps for installation of tube wells. Tehsil officials, police personnel and public representatives will accompany Mishra. They will first demolish the water tank installed by the Andhra Pradesh government and take up other development works in conformity with the district collector.
The move by the district administration, although late, has drawn appreciation from observers and other residents in the block. They pointed out the four other villages in the block are also facing from water scarcity and efforts should be made to eradicate the problem as soon as possible.
However, it is not just the paucity of drinking water which is affecting the village. Senior lady, Jami Hantal alleged that she has been living in a pathetic condition as she has not been getting her pension for the last five months. This correspondent also found an information plaque where it was mentioned that the roads in the villages have been laid with paver blocks at an expenditure of ₹3 lakh in FY 2021-22. However, not a single paver block existed in the village.
Similarly members of 20 families in Raipahad village alleged that they have been deprived of getting houses under Awas Yojanas (centre or state).

Glitches mar MGNREGS in Rayagada

In many cases, workers do not get paid even after the completion of a project



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Rayagada, March 28: In a post-budget statement by the Peoples' Action for Employment Guarantee (PAEG) and NREGA Sangharsh Morcha (NSM), activists and academics have hit out against the low allocation for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) this year. Also various technical glitches found in various Apps associated with MGNREGS are becoming a headache for job-seekers
"Instead of adequately funding the programme, the Union government has repeatedly resorted to needless technical tinkering. The National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS) application for registering workers' attendance, mandated in the current FY, is one such anti-worker intervention," some job-seekers in parts of this district said.
The procedure to get work under the MGNREGS itself is a bit complex. Those who want work must inform the gram panchayat after which an acknowledgement form (C2) with details of the number of workers for a given project (from

a pre-approved list). The muster roll is generated.
An officials of MGNREGS has to take this muster roll to the work-site and record attendance on the NMMS application. Once the work is done, a bare foot technician (BFT) or a junior engineer will assess the progress of the work. Subsequently, the bill for the muster roll is approved and sent for payment.
The Ministry of Rural Development has made the use of NMMS compulsory for registering workers' attendance under the MGNREGS from January 1, this year. However, digital attendance has become a major headache for the workers. They now have to prove their attendance twice a day with the NMMS by uploading two time-stamped geo-tagged photographs. The first shows the worker during the 6.00am to 11.00am schedule and the second during the 2.00pm to 6.00pm shift.
"Due to technical issues, the attendance taken in the morning does not get registered in the App on many occasions. We are eligible

Man dies by suicide after assaulting wife

POST NEWS NETWORK
Baripada/Badasahi, March 28: A man attacked his wife with a sharp weapon Tuesday before dying by suicide at Chhelia 'B' village under Badasahi police limits in Mayurbhanj district. Locals said that the two had a heated argument over the excessive use of mobile phone by the woman following which the man attacked her.
The deceased was identified as Prashant Behera, 55. His wife Minati Behera suffered serious injuries and is currently undergoing treatment at the PRM Medical College and Hospital. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation.
The incident occurred when Minati was watching a movie on the mobile phone in front of their house. Enraged at not getting a reply from her, Prashant hit her with a billhook from her neck and limbs. A profusely bleeding Minati collapsed on the spot. Other family members rescued Minati and first took her to the Badasahi hospital and later shifted her to PRM Medical College and Hospital after her condition deteriorated.
Sources said that Prashant consumed poison when no one else was in the house. Family members found him dead on return.

3 sentenced to jail for ponzi fraud in Balasore



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, March 28: A special Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (OPID) court here Tuesday sentenced the director of a ponzi firm to five years imprisonment for fraud. Two other employees were also handed three-year sentences each. Judge Biswajit Das of OPID court passed the order after examining the statements recorded by 16 witnesses and 54 documents, special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda said. Panda pleaded the matter on behalf of the Odisha government.
The judge sentenced director Krushna Chandra Sahu of ponzi firm 'Anwasha-Inn India Pvt Ltd' to five years in prison and also slapped a fine of ₹2.40 lakh. In default, Sahu has to undergo an ad-

ditional two years in prison, the judge ordered.
The judge also awarded three years of imprisonment each to branch manager Pranay Kumar Behera and a staff Abhimanyu Mohapatra. They were each slapped with a fine of ₹10,000 each.
According to the case diary, 'Anwasha-Inn India Pvt Ltd' opened an office at Station Square in this town in 2012-13 and lured people with attractive deposit schemes by promising them higher rate of interest on maturity. The company's chief director-cum-chairman was Pradip Poddar while Sahu, Prabhakar Das, Prabodh Kumar Panda were the directors. Similarly, Pranay was appointed branch manager while Abhimanyu, Dilip Kumar Bhounik, Pushpal Ray, Anindya Chakraborty and

Basant Panigrahi worked as employees of the firm.
Among them, Dilip, Pushpal and Anindya were from West Bengal while the rest were from Balasore and Mayurbhanj districts. The fraud came to the fore after a woman, the wife of Jagannath Barik of Sheikhpada locality here, failed to get back her deposit after maturity. When she visited the office, she found it closed.

The lady by chance met Prabodh on road and narrated her ordeal. The latter took her documents and gave her six cheques of HDFC Bank amounting ₹7.37 lakh. The cheques however, bounced when she deposited them in the bank. Left with no option, she lodged a complaint at the Sahadevkhunta police station, February 28, 2015. Police registered a case and referred the matter to the court.

National Highways Authority of India (Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India)			
PUBLIC NOTICE			
The public is hereby informed that the User fee rate shall be revised w.e.f 01.04.2023 (00.00 hrs) up to 31.03.2024, in respect of Toll Plaza at Srirampur at Km.3.588 in Jajpur District for Chandikhole-Paradi section from Km.0.000 to Km.76.588 of NH-53 (Old NH-5A) in the State of Odisha, as per table below:			
Category of Vehicles	Fee for single journey (₹)	Fee for return journey within a day (₹)	Fee for monthly pass for 50 single journeys in a month (₹)
Car, Jeep, Van or Light Motor Vehicle	150	220	4940
Light Commercial Vehicle, Light Goods Vehicle or Mini Bus	240	360	7975
Bus or Truck (Two Axes)	500	750	16715
Three-Axle commercial vehicles	545	820	18235
HCM or EME or MAV (four to six axes)	785	1180	26210
Oversized Vehicles (Seven or more axes)	955	1435	31910

National Highways Authority of India (Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India)			
PUBLIC NOTICE			
The public is hereby informed that the User fee rate shall be revised w.e.f 01.04.2023 (00.00 hrs) up to 31.03.2024, in respect of Toll Plaza at Pipili at Km.21.000 in Puri District for Bhubaneswar- Puri section from Km.0.000 to Km.67.238 of NH-316 (Old NH-203) in the State of Odisha, as per table below:			
Category of Vehicles	Fee for single journey (₹)	Fee for return journey within a day (₹)	Fee for monthly pass for 50 single journeys in a month (₹)
Car, Jeep, Van or Light Motor Vehicle	135	200	4485
Light Commercial Vehicle, Light Goods Vehicle or Mini Bus	210	315	7000
Bus or Truck	430	645	14285
Heavy Construction Machinery (HCM) or Earth Moving Equipment (EME) or Multi Axle Vehicle (MAV) (Three to Six axes)	655	985	21915
Oversized Vehicles (Seven or more axes)	835	1255	27910

Pottery artisans face bleak future

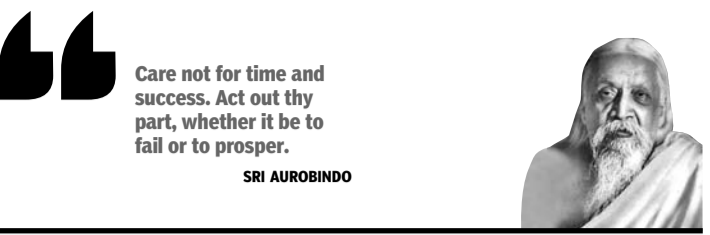
POST NEWS NETWORK
Pattamundai, March 28: When summer arrives, the first thing people without refrigerators remember is clay pots and vessels. Pottery is an art that has been thriving for centuries and many artisans make out a living out of it. Even in the modern world of plastic, steel and aluminium, some potters have not given up this art form despite a substantial decrease in earnings.
Yes, many of them have been forced to take up different types of work to

earn money. Earlier Sundays and Tuesdays, potters were seen displaying their products on the roadsides of Pattamundai Haat here. However, that number has sizeably reduced.
Sources said that though many residents of Matia, Gangarampur, Adhakanda, Oupada and Totasahi localities are still engaged with this ancestral profession, the lack of support from the government is forcing them to switch to other jobs. However, many belonging to the community said that



since they have not learnt anything else, building clay items is their only way to earn a living.
Nityananda Behera of Adhakanda village pointed out that people these days use aluminium, plastic and steel utensils. As a result demand for clay items has decreased.
So unless the government steps in, the potters face a bleak future.
Artisan Tulu Behera, on the other hand suggested that if they get training in the use of terracotta, it will be helpful to them. "Price of terracotta products vary from ₹10 to ₹200. If we are trained how to use the ma-

terial, we can make ₹1,500 to ₹2,000 per week. It will help us to maintain our family," Tulu stated.
Other artisans said that carrying clay objects to the market is also a hassle. "During transportation inevitably some of the objects will break. So we suffer losses during transportation also," stated an artisan.
Overall the clay artisans are in dire straits because of a number of reasons, informed the potters. First, cost of clay has increased. Secondly, the price of wood, needed for baking the clay, has also gone up. So families of all the potters are facing great financial hardships. They said that unless, the government intervenes, the art of pottery will die a painful and quick death.



Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.

SR1 AUROBINDO

Do Or Die

The world is dangerously poised to cross the limit of accepted level of global warming. It is only a few tenths of a degree away from the goal of restricting warming to 1.5 degree C above pre-industrial levels. It means within a decade the world will shoot past the target. This is no idle conjecture, but a revelation based on evidence by leading scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The recently released report of the IPCC, an outcome of eight years' work, however, does not give us hope nor does it paint a doomsday scenario. It says it is still possible to stay within 1.5 degree C. But, it all depends on government actions in the next few years to keep greenhouse gas emissions within permissible limits so that temperatures fall back to safe levels, instead of rising dangerously.

While it is known that developed countries have been contributing most to the catastrophic climate change, billions of poor people, who may be partly at fault, are bearing the brunt of the suffering in the form of flash floods, cyclones and other natural calamities which have already taken a toll on hundreds of thousands of lives across the globe. The emphasis of the report is on human efforts to deal with the situation. It says just as human activity has warmed the atmosphere, so also it is human action that can bring temperatures down. It has fixed the goal of cutting carbon pollution and fossil fuel use by nearly two-thirds by 2035 so as to keep the situation under reasonable control. This means a categorical 'No' to new fossil fuel exploration and stopping use of coal, oil and gas by rich countries by 2040.

The efforts of the IPCC scientists have succeeded in informing the world that climate change has not simply to do with increase in temperature, melting of ice and rise of the sea level. Apart from that it causes human disasters and makes life on earth unbearable with food insecurity, water shortages, increased mortality, higher transmission of diseases, and displacement. The damage is immense and it hits the poorest populations the hardest as they have limited means to cushion themselves against the effects of climate change. Almost half of humanity now lives in 'contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change', according to the report.

It would be suicidal to take the report lightly and dismiss it as an academic exercise. The way people in several countries, including India, Pakistan and Turkey faced flash floods last monsoon and Europe and the USA suffered from sweltering heat during last summer, the impact of climate change was brought home to the world in the most concrete manner possible. Even if it appears that the goal of keeping global warming to 1.5 degree C is difficult to achieve, adopting an ostrich-like policy pretending that not much harm would really be done would spell doom for humanity. When this goal of restricting global rise in temperature was set in 2015, in the Paris Agreement, the challenge was immense. During the past eight years, this challenge has only increased but it is also matched by growing insensitivity to the problem by governments and the people at large. Take for example India where the average population has been totally swayed by the governmental argument that, as a poor nation, India cannot do much and it is for the rich nations to compensate whatever it needs to do. Till such time, both the Indian government and the populace are happily going about their normal life and activities and India will soon become the country with the largest number of coal fired power production units. This attitude can only hasten the process of destruction.

What is of paramount importance is concerted international effort and each country, rich or poor, must shoulder its share of responsibility for reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. This can be done by bringing down the use of fossil fuels, which are responsible for 80 per cent of CO2 emissions.

Political decision-makers must stop hiding behind false narratives about climate change impact. They need to tell the truth so that the people can become aware that the way they lived the last few decades through reckless consumption of fossil fuel will no longer be possible in the coming years. Urbanisation, dietary habits and travel by using fuel need to be redefined.

The developed countries have money and technology to stop the planet from burning up. Yet climate financing has been woefully inadequate. The IPCC estimates that investment in climate mitigation and adaptation is three to six times lower than the need to meet the goal of limiting temperature rises to 1.5 degree C. Trillions of dollars of investments over the years are needed to save this planet for human existence. Governments have to rise to the occasion.

WISDOM CORNER

- By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest. —CONFUCIUS
- I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing. —SOCRATES
- The more sand has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it. —NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

WORDSWORTH

■ Grimoire

A grimoire is a book of magic that may contain spells, conjurations, instructions for divination and the construction of amulets, and other secret knowledge of a supernatural kind. The examples include such famous works as the Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses, The Book of St Cyprian, The Key of Solomon and The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage. The word is French, in the same sense. It began to appear in French-English dictionaries early in the nineteenth century but became more widely known in the 1850s. In French, it was a medieval modification of grammaire, a book of grammar, by which was meant Latin grammar, since at the time there was no other kind. It derives from the Latin grammatica, the study of literature in general, which by the Middle Ages had come to mean knowledge of Latin. The shift from book of grammar to book of magic isn't as weird as it might seem. Few among the ordinary people in those times could read or write. For superstitious minds books were troubling objects. Who knew what awful information was locked up in them? For many people grammar meant the same thing as learning, and everybody knew that learning included astrology and other occult arts. In medieval English, grammar was likewise the study of Latin grammar and this, too, took on undertones of occult learning, magic and necromancy. It fell out of use but was revived by Sir Walter Scott in his Lay of the Last Minstrel in 1805. Another of Scott's popularisations was the Scots glamour. This was also from grammar, with a small shift in pronunciation, and shared the idea that grammar was linked with witchcraft and sorcery. To us today glamour is physical allure but for the Scots of earlier times, and for Scott, it was enchantment, magic or a spell cast upon a person.

LOL

■ PLOUGHING THE LAND

A husband and wife were driving down a country lane on their way to visit some friends. They came to a muddy patch in the road and the car became bogged. After a few minutes of trying to get the car out by themselves, they saw a young farmer coming down the lane, driving some oxen before him. The farmer stopped when he saw the couple in trouble and offered to pull



the car out of the mud for \$50. The husband accepted and minutes later the car was free. The farmer turned to the husband and said, "You know, you're the tenth car I've helped out of the mud today." The husband looks around at the fields incredulously and asks the farmer, "When do you have time to plough your land? At night?" "No," the young farmer replied seriously, "Night is when I put the water in the hole."

FOCUS DEMOGRAPHY

THE POPULATION BOON

An easy way to start a long, heated debate is to mention global population. Thomas Malthus famously ignited furious arguments in the nineteenth century when he warned that, absent fertility-control policies, exponential population growth would outpace improvements in agriculture and cause recurrent bouts of famine and pestilence. Industrialisation would postpone the crisis, but not forever.

These arguments were still raging in the 1960s, when Paul and Anne Ehrlich added fuel to the fire with their bestseller, The Population Bomb. Their fears were reasonable, given the data. By 1975, the global population doubled to four billion — in just under 50 years. It has just doubled again, reaching eight billion last November. This raises a new question: Will the population double again to 16 billion?

The answer is a resounding no. In fact, the global population will not get anywhere close to that level, owing to a paradigm shift in demographics over the past 50 years. The population growth rate peaked in the 1960s and has been falling steadily ever since. Women around the world are choosing to have fewer children, and the global average fertility rate is now just above two children per woman.

Of course, this figure masks large geographic disparities. The number of children per woman is below two in places like Germany and Japan, but much higher in most low-income countries, especially fragile states. Still, the United Nations estimates that the global population could peak at 10-11 billion people this century, before starting to decline slowly. That is a huge number of mouths to feed, but it is nowhere near 16 billion.

Moreover, our own analysis in a new report, People and Planet: 21st Century Sustainable Population Scenarios and Possible Living Standards Within Planetary Boundaries, produced for the Global Challenges Foundation in Stockholm, concludes that the global population could peak at a much lower level — around nine billion — by mid-century. And if the

Moreover, while defusing the population bomb may be necessary for reducing the risk of future civilisational collapse, it is not sufficient. When we investigated the connection between population and planetary boundaries, we found that — contrary to popular myth — population size is not the primary reason that humanity is breaching these boundaries (reflected in problems like climate change). Rather, the main driver is consumption by the richest 10 per cent — a cohort that has an extremely large material footprint. Humanity's big problem is luxury carbon and biosphere consumption, not population. The places where population is rising fastest have extremely small environmental footprints per person, relative to countries that reached peak population many decades ago. If resources were distributed more fairly, today's global population would already enjoy living conditions exceeding the UN's minimum level, and without the need for significant changes in developmental trends.

People and Planet provides a hopeful outlook on global population. Our findings challenge the common misconception that population growth is the main cause of exceeding planetary boundaries. In reality, the world's wealthiest people are the ones driving us toward the cliff.

Through systemic economic change, we could still provide a good life for everyone within planetary boundaries. We hope our report will lead policymakers to re-examine the impact of consumption patterns and prioritise equitable distribution over economic growth for its own sake.

Beniamino Callegari, an associate professor at Kristiania University College, is a member of the Earth4All modeling team. Per Espen Stoknes, Project Lead of Earth4All, is Director of the Center for Sustainability and Energy at the BI Norwegian Business School.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

If the world invests more in economic development, education, and health, the global population could fall to levels at which everyone on Earth can have sustainable access to clean energy, shelter, food, and water. The bomb will have been defused, allowing everyone to live a good life within planetary boundaries

world invests more in economic development, education, and health, the global population could fall to levels at which everyone on Earth can have sustainable access to clean energy, shelter, food, and water. The bomb will have been defused, allowing everyone to live a good life within planetary boundaries. This should be cause for celebration.

Our projections come from a new system dynamics model, Earth4All, which allows us to explore two economic and population scenarios this century. In the first scenario, the world economy continues along a path similar to the one followed during the last 50 years, many of the poorest countries eventually break free from extreme poverty, and the global population peaks at 8.8 billion in the middle of the century before declining to 7.3 billion in 2100.

In the second scenario, which we call the "Giant Leap," the global population peaks at 8.5 billion by around 2040 and declines to just six billion by the end of the century. This would require unprecedented investments in poverty alleviation and human capital, along

with extraordinary policy turn-arounds on food and energy security, inequality, and gender equity. In this potential future, extreme poverty would be eliminated within a generation (by 2060), with a marked impact on global population trends.

Mainstream demographic projections often struggle to connect population growth to economic development. Yet we know that rapid economic development in low-income countries has a huge impact on fertility rates. Fertility rates fall as girls gain access to education and as women become more economically empowered through access to paid employment and better health-care and family-planning methods. When we incorporated these factors into our projections, population growth slowed dramatically.

But our findings come with a big caveat. To achieve the Great Leap, governments in low-income countries must commit fully to pursuing economic development based on large investments in education, rather than economic growth driven solely by natural-resources extraction.

IN JEST THIS

A privilege that not everyone has



Melvin Durai

IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO STOP WORKING COMPLETELY AND STILL AFFORD TO PUT A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD, FOOD ON YOUR TABLE, AND TEETH IN YOUR MOUTH

Let's talk about retirement. Assuming you're not already retired, how soon do you want to retire? Depending on your age, health, income and other factors, your answer may vary considerably from other working adults. But how soon would you retire if you had just won the lottery and were now rich enough to hire Gordon Ramsay to make breakfast for you every morning? I have a feeling that your answer, most likely, would be one of these three:

1. Just give me five minutes. I need to gather all my stuff at work and tell my boss where to stick my last performance review.
2. Just give me 15 minutes. I need to say goodbye to all my co-workers and give them my new address in the Bahamas.
3. Just give me 30 minutes. I need to write a note telling my boss that I'm going to miss him/her as much as I miss my last colonoscopy.

Many people dream about leaving their boss a farewell note: "Dear Boss, Remember when you told me that I need to be more decisive? Well, I just made the fastest decision of my life. I'm taking the day off. Actually, make that a week. Can I



Many people love their jobs, of course, and aren't eager to retire, whether willingly or otherwise. But many others want to retire as soon as they have the financial means to do so

take a week off? On second thoughts, a week is too short. Can I take the rest of my life off?

As of today I'm officially retired. I'm done working. No more early mornings, no more late nights. No more getting dressed up for meetings, no more getting dressed down in them.

I know I'm too young to be retired, but I'm old enough to be tired. I'm tired of working for you, tired of all your rules, tired of all the BS (business systems). Goodbye. Take care. And don't worry: I'll make sure the door doesn't hit me on the way out."

Many people love their jobs, of course, and aren't eager to retire, whether willingly or otherwise. But many others want to retire as soon as they have the financial means to do so. That's why scores of people are protesting in France, angry that a new law has raised the retirement age for French workers from 62 to 64. They won't be able to collect full pension benefits until they're old enough to refer to the president of America as "Uncle Joe."

Two years may not seem like a big deal, but imagine that you're

61 years old and counting down the days to retirement, when you can say "adieu" to your job. Then suddenly a new law is passed and you have to say "Re-bonjour, sale boulot" (hello again, you stinking job).

It's worth noting that the retirement age in France is still lower than in most western countries. It's as high as 67 in the United States for full social security benefits, though you can settle for a lesser amount at 62. In India, the retirement age ranges from 60 to 62, depending on the job. If you work for the government, you'll probably be nudged out at 60, unless you can get yourself a top job such as prime minister or president.

What we shouldn't forget is that it's a privilege to have a job that provides retirement benefits or allows you to save for retirement. It's also a privilege to stop working completely and still afford to put a roof over your head, food on your table, and teeth in your mouth.

I'm not a fan of mandatory retirement, but I also think that anyone who has worked 30 years in a job should be able to dream of a happy retirement, one that comes without buying lottery tickets.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Sagacity essential

Sir, Even though Article 19 of our Constitution promotes freedom of speech, nowadays we see the same being misused knowingly and unknowingly by politicians, leaders, factions and parties. Leaders of all parties just ignore or it seems as if they forget that the Article also has some restrictions. The words used by some of the politicians, irrespective of parties, sometimes go beyond the decency limit resulting in verbal and physical conflicts between party workers and ending up in complete chaos. The recent 'caste defamation issue' and its aftermath is a clear example of how expression of words without being prudent can end up in legal problems and lead to utter chaos and conflicts. Leaders of all parties go for a tirade at the drop of a hat ending up in court cases, arrests and conflicts. What leaders forget is that expressing words without being sagacious can result in counter derogatory remarks finally ending up in court cases and clashes. Leaders got to understand that they have to exercise restraint as the public is watching and listening. In this matter the famous aphorism by Benjamin Franklin "A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over" turns out to be hundred per cent apt.

M Pradyu, KANNUR (KERALA)

Combating pollution

Sir, Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in India's economy. About 30 per cent of country's GDP is from SMEs. These SMEs have been identified as a major source of air and water pollution as per different studies. One of the causes of pollution from these units is a lack of regulatory practises such as environmental monitoring, guidelines, and best practices, a comprehensive fuel policy, regulatory enforcement, and poor policy implementation on the ground. As a result of the alarming increase in air and water pollution, it is time for regulators to act as an ombudsman, working on pollution mitigation measures and ensuring effective policy implementation. For better compliance, SMEs should be trained by the Centre and state governments to make them understand environmental laws and regulatory strategies and also to make them aware of ambient and stack-based monitoring. These should be trained for pollution load assessment of industrial emission. SMEs should be trained for water audit for effective waste water management and also dissemination required for waste management to decrease pollution.

Vijay Kumar HK, RAICHUR (KARNATAKA)

'More than 200 child labourers rescued in Delhi since January'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: Delhi High Court was informed Monday that more than 200 children working as child labourers here have been rescued since January and further raids are underway.

A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sachin Datta granted four weeks to the Delhi government counsel to file a further status report in the matter and listed it for hearing May 4.

Advocate Prabhshay Kaur, representing the NGO, said during the hearing that there had been "unprecedented success" in rescuing child labourers from various units here since January 11 when the last order was passed for constitution of committees in each district. She said the government rescued more than 200 children and of the 183 complaints filed by the NGO, the authorities had taken action in most of them.

The Delhi government's counsel told the court that in pursuance of an earlier order, a status report had been filed in the matter and added that the process of conducting raids was still going on. In its status report, the Delhi government said 45 people were killed and 17 injured in the December 8, 2019, fire. It informed that a compensation of ₹10 lakh each was given to the victim's next of kin in all the 45 cases. In the case of the 17 injured, ₹1 lakh each was given to 13 people. Four people could only be traced only now and they are being paid the amount.

"In accordance with the directions of the court, in all revenue districts, district task force (DTF) on child labour has been constituted and is functioning under the chairmanship of (the) district magistrate with members from the Labour department, WCD (Women and Child Development) department, Police department, Education department, Health department and the MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi).

The report said the action of search or inspection or rescue shall be completed in next two weeks. It was stated by the NGO that many such units were still operational in the Anaj Mandi, Sadar Bazar and Nabi Karim areas and while the fire tragedy occurred December 8, 2019, the compensation had not been disbursed yet despite more than

The Delhi High Court was hearing a plea by NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan, which filed a petition in the aftermath of a fire that killed over 40 people, including several minors, at a factory in the Anaj Mandi area here in December 2019

The NGO had sought a direction to the authorities to inquire into the angle of trafficking and child labour

three years having been passed.

The high court, in its January 11 order, had said it was "extremely disturbing" that the government was taking a lackadaisical approach and showing extreme insensitivity in the case that had resulted in the deaths of 45 people, including 12 children aged between 12 and 18.

The Delhi Police, in its status report of January 10, had informed that of the 45 deceased, nine were minors -- the youngest being 12 years old -- and six children suffered injuries. It had said the factory where the fire broke out was illegally storing and using highly inflammable material without safety precautions and said that the deaths occurred due to burn injuries or suffocation and after an investigation, a charge sheet for commission of of-

fences under the Indian Penal Code and the Juvenile Justice Act had been filed against the accused persons, including the building's owner and manager. The petitioner had moved the court alleging that the child labourers were employed at the factory where the fire broke out December 8, 2019. It was also claimed that most of the children hailed from Bihar from where they were brought here by traffickers to work in the factories. The plea contended that the minors were "tutored and coerced" by the traffickers to say they were 19 years old and only visiting the factory if caught by the authorities.



SHOOTING LOCATIONS IN DELHI CP, Dilli Haat, Chandni Chowk in demand: Official

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: Dilli Haat-INA, Chandni Chowk and Connaught Place are among the most sought-after locations for film and web series shoots in Delhi, which has witnessed over a dozen productions since the implementation of the city government's film policy last May, an official said Tuesday.

Under the policy, a single-window e-Film Clearance portal has been created to bring over 20 agencies that grant the various approvals related to film production. The government has facilitated 13 film and web series shoots since the policy's implementation. These include two Hollywood films, the of-



The Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation acts as a facilitator for film productions in the capital

The Tourism department has received 52 applications for film and web series shoots since the Delhi Film Policy - 2022 was introduced last May, the official said

official said. "Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place, Dilli Haat-INA and Pritampura are the most sought-

after locations. Producers are also interested in filming at the Red Fort. Birla Mandir is also popular," he added.

The official said, "We have facilitated the production of 13 films and web series, including a few international movies. We have received applications (to film) at 52 locations as a movie requires multiple locations. At present, seven applications are in process."

The Delhi Film Policy - 2022 has brought up to 20 different agencies, including those of the Delhi government and the Centre, under one umbrella.

The policy aims to promote "artistic, creative and cultural expression, to brand Delhi as a vibrant film shooting destination by easing approval processes for movie shooting, and to develop and support local talent by providing a skilled ecosystem in the city", the

official said.

The e-Film Clearance - a completely online single-window clearance mechanism - was finalised by holding regular meetings with various agencies and stakeholders such as production companies even during the Covid pandemic through videoconferencing, the official added. "Earlier, filmmakers had to get approval from 20 different agencies for filming in the city...", he said.

Now, they can procure clearances for filming by visiting the Delhi Tourism website and applying on e-Film Clearance. The online process for clearances from agencies in a time-bound manner then begins, the official added.

Army promotes Kaman Post as tourist destination

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, March 28: The Kaman Post on the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district will be thrown open to tourists as a destination soon, defence sources said.

The decision to allow tourists to visit Kaman Post on the LoC has been taken by the army. Defence sources said that the Kaman Post would acquaint the tourists with the sacrifices made by the soldiers to protect the territorial integrity of the country.

The Kaman Post overlooks the 'Aman Setu Bridge' spanning the LoC. Half of the bridge is under Indian control while the other half is controlled by Pakistan.



NOBLE DEED: Security personnel give free medicines to locals at a medical camp organised by Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in Srinagar

400 BOGUS COs STRUCK DOWN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

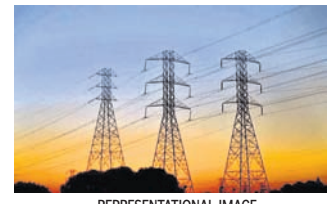
Srinagar, March 28: The Registrar of Companies in Jammu and Kashmir has struck off over 400 companies for non-filing of business status, an official said.

Continuing its drive against bogus companies in the union territory, the Registrar of Companies exercised powers under Section 10A of the Companies Act 2013 to strike off these companies.

"All the companies who haven't started business and have not filed the report with the registrar were struck off. A due procedure has been followed and an opportunity was given to the company to prove their businesses," a source in the know of things said. The registrar of companies further got the bank accounts of all these companies frozen immediately through DFS and by writing to the banking association. These companies can't use the bank accounts held in their names once frozen.

KPDCL starts drive to cut energy, commercial losses

The Union Territory administration announced an amnesty scheme for defaulters, waiving off the interest and surcharge accumulated in their outstanding bills



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, March 28: Facing high aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses in electricity distribution, Kashmir Power Development Corporation Ltd (KPDCL) has initiated several measures, including disconnecting services to defaulters, to reduce the deficit. "As far as KPDCL is concerned, it has the highest AT&C losses in the country. I would say we are around 64 per cent," Chief Engineer KPDCL Javeed Yousof

faulted. Any consumer who has not paid for three billing cycles is to be treated as a defaulter and the bill that goes to the consumer is to be treated as notice. The KPDCL reserves the right to disconnect service to any consumer who has not paid," he added.

The disconnection drive is vigorous and a large number of connections have been disconnected. The list of defaulters has been available with each and every electric sub-division. Arshad Ahmad, a resident, said the steps taken by KPDCL have resulted in improved electricity supply.

"The voltage has increased because the unnecessary use of electricity has dropped. The hooking (electricity theft) has also come down substantially," he said. Ahmad, however, said there was still room for improvement as load-shedding happens at crucial times like Iftaar and Seheri.

AAP to display posters against PM tomorrow

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 28: The Aam Aadmi Party will be displaying posters against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 11 languages across the country on March 30, party's state convener Gopal Rai said on Tuesday.

"The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will display posters in states across the country on March 30. All state units of the party have been asked to paste posters in their respective states. The posters have been printed in 11 languages," Rai, the Delhi AAP chief and environment minister, told PTI.

Last week, posters reading "Modi Hatao, Desh Bachao" (remove Modi, save India) appeared on walls and electricity poles across the national capital following which the police arrested six people and registered 49 FIRs.

The BJP had retaliated by pasting "Kejriwal Hatao, Delhi Bachao" (remove Kejriwal, save Delhi) posters across the national capital. Meanwhile, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal alleged Tuesday that the country is passing through difficult times as he mounted a no-holds-barred attack on the BJP-led central government.

"There is rampant loot by the Centre. They have looted more in seven years than what the Congress had looted in 75 years. The country is passing through difficult times. We are deeply worried about the situation," he charged.

Stepping up his attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the chief minister raised the Adani issue in the Delhi Assembly.

Speaking in the Assembly Tuesday, Kejriwal alleged, "PM is less educated and does not understand things properly. This is worrisome."



Modern technology to boost silk production in J&K

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, March 28: The Jammu and Kashmir government said Monday that to boost silk production in the UT, farmers will be trained in using modern technology.

An official said, "The Jammu and Kashmir government is working under a multi-pronged strategy towards revival and holistic development of the Sericulture sector in the Union Territory. "Cocoon growers are being facilitated with requisite skill development training, latest technological interventions and related infrastructural support for transforming the sericulture industry in J&K. "The futuristic roadmap for holistic growth of agriculture and allied sectors will help in ensuring product quality and quantity besides raising global demand.

"The government is working on area expansion under mulberry plantations to increase leaf availability for rearers and to enrich green wealth. "The Forest and Sericulture Departments are jointly working towards achieving J&K's Green Mission besides ensuring marketing support to the cocoon growers in their vicinity." Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha also said during a function, "Our prime objective is to better the lives of farmers associated with this dream fabric besides ensuring uniqueness, beauty and ingenuity of J&K's crafts dominate the global market". The official added that the futuristic roadmap for holistic growth of agriculture and allied sectors will safeguard the age-old skills being transferred from generation to generation. "The effort is aimed at helping preserve and promote the unique and



indigenous craft legacy of J&K across the globe. "The government is giving importance to adoption of latest technological advancements in the silk industry to reduce dependence on imported silk. One of the three important centers in

the country for Research and Development, Training, Transfer of Technology and IT Intervention has been set up at Kashmir's Pampore. "Recently, the Department of Sericulture, Rajouri, Mulberry Circle Lamberi organised Kissan

Ghosti/Scientific interaction under ATMA programme.

In a significant accomplishment, Kundan Lal, a progressive farmer of Lamberi Rajouri, has earned ₹91,666.50 in 20 to 25 days by selling 87.6 kg dry crop. Similarly, Tilak Raj of Lamberi Village of Rajouri has earned ₹1,32,356 in 20 to 25 days by selling 131,350 kg of silk. The official further said, "To cater to the research, training and extension needs of Jammu & Kashmir; the Central Silk Board (CSB) has set up the Central Sericulture Research and Training Institute (CSR & TI) at Pampore, Srinagar; in 1994 to

revive earlier activities of the CSB in J&K.

"The institute is actively involved in Research and Development besides human resource development through its network of two Regional Sericulture Research Stations (RSRS) and 8 Research Extension Centers." The High Yielding Silkworm hybrids and improved mulberry varieties have been developed by CSR and TI Pampore to increase the farmers' income through Sericulture. "The Central Silk Board is promoting bio-voltine production program extending technical support through six clusters (including two mega clusters) besides extending state of the art soil testing facilities. Due to the continuous efforts of the Institute and technological interventions, the average yield of bio-voltine cocoons has been enhanced significantly.

The main objective of the programme was to educate silkworm rearers about the latest technology and practice for silkworm rearing

of the day quote

Amit Shah: religion-based quota violates the Constitution. What about religion-based 1) politics 2) propaganda 3) speeches 4) agendas 5) programmes. Do they not violate the Constitution? KAPIL SIBAL | RAJYA SABHA MP

India is now setting new standards on the issue of gender justice during its G-20 presidency SMRITI IRANI | UNION MINISTER

Nitish Kumar deserves the Nobel Prize. He transformed Bihar from a 'Bimaru' province to India's fastest-growing state JITAN RAM MANJHI | HINDUSTANI AWAM MORCHA SUPREMO

SHORT TAKES

Five killed in Pune

Pune: At least five persons, including two minors, were killed and three others critically injured when a speeding pickup van rammed into two motorcycles near Lavanwadi village on the Kalyan-Ahmednagar highway, around midnight of Monday-Tuesday, officials said here. The victims are all farm labourers belonging to the same family, and were returning to their homes along with their minor children after completing the day's work. Suddenly, an oncoming loaded pick-up van collided headlong with the motorcycles which were thrown beside the road on the dark highway, around 11.30 p.m.

Girl molested

New Delhi: Delhi Police has arrested a 56-year-old doctor for allegedly molesting a four-year-old girl at a clinic in northwest Delhi's Adarsh Nagar area, an official said Tuesday. According to police, the incident took place on Sunday when the girl's mother took her daughter to the clinic in the locality after she complained of stomach pain. A complaint was filed by the victim's mother on Monday in which she stated that when she entered the clinic with her daughter, she remembered that she forgot her purse outside.

Cops stop Sharmila

Hyderabad: Tension prevailed at YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) leader Y.S. Sharmila's residence in Hyderabad on Tuesday when police prevented her from leaving for Osmania Hospital for a visit to know the problems faced by patients. Scuffle broke out between Sharmila's supporters and the police and in the melee she fell down. Police had shut the gates of Sharmila's Lotus Pond residence to stop her from leaving for the hospital. YSRTP said its leader wanted to conduct 'Janata Raid' at Osmania Hospital to know the plight of patients and pathetic facilities. She questioned the police action in stopping her and YSRTP workers.

Tripura gets new Deputy Speaker

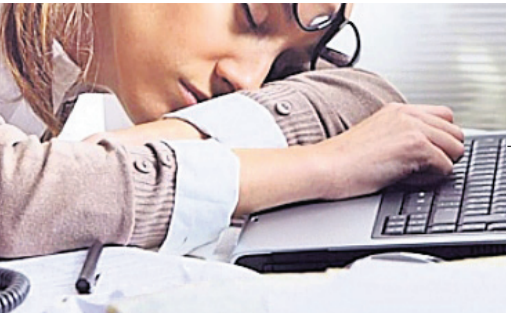
Agartala: Ruling BJP MLA and former Minister Ram Prasad Paul Tuesday was elected unopposed as the Deputy Speaker of the Tripura Assembly. Paul was among the four ministers of the first BJP-led government who did not find place in the second saffron party-led government led by Chief Minister Manik Saha. Saha along with eight other legislators, including a woman, on March 8 assumed office as the cabinet ministers against the total ministerial strength of 12.



Most people in India are not serious about following road safety rules, and unless their mindset and attitude change, it would be difficult to reduce number of road accidents in the country NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

SURVEY DISCLOSURE

In a loud wake-up call, a new survey has claimed that 61 per cent of Mumbaiers feel dozy at work and nearly 35 of them believe they suffer from insomnia



Lawyers' body moves SC against Dhankhar, Rijiju



New Delhi, March 28: The Bombay Lawyers Association Tuesday moved the Supreme Court against a high court decision dismissing its PIL against Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar over their remarks on judiciary and the Collegium system for appointment of judges.

Constitution, it would be difficult to say "we are a democratic nation".

"It is submitted that the Petitioner herein filed the PIL before the High Court of Judicature at Bombay praying therein to declare the Respondent no 1 and 2 as disqualified candidates to hold any constitutional posts of Vice President and Minister of the Union Cabinet, respectively, based on their behaviour, conduct and utterances made in public," it said.

The two constitutional functionaries, "by showing lack of faith in the Constitution by their conduct and utterances made in public and by attacking its institutions, including the Supreme Court, and showing scant regard for the law laid down by the Supreme Court. The conduct of Respondent Nos 1 and 2 appeared to have shaken public faith in the Supreme Court and the Constitution".

The plea said the vice president and the Union minister have affirmed oaths that they will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution. "However, their conduct has shown lack of faith in the Constitution of India," it said assailing the high court's order dismissing its PIL.

They have launched a frontal attack on the institution of judiciary, particularly the Supreme Court, in most derogatory language without any recourse which is available under the constitutional scheme to change the status quo as per the law laid down by the Supreme Court," it said.



Baby turtles at Guhagar beach, in Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra PTI PHOTO

DEFAMATION CASE

HC issues summons to Uddhav, Aaditya, Raut

Justice Prateek Jalan asked Uddhav, Aaditya and Raut to file their written submissions within 30 days after service of summons



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: The Delhi High Court Tuesday issued summons to former Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, his son Aaditya Thackeray and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut on a defamation suit filed by MP Rahul Ramesh Shewale for allegedly levelling frivolous corruption allegations against him and the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena faction.

Justice Prateek Jalan asked Uddhav, Aaditya and Raut to file their written submissions within 30 days after service of summons. The high court also asked Google and Twitter to file their written statements within 30 days on the plea. It also issued notice to the defendants on the interim plea seeking removal of the alleged defamatory content from social media platforms.

The judge, who refused to pass any interim order at this stage, said, "I would like to give them an opportunity to respond and keep it on a short date for further proceedings...These are political fights going on..." Justice Jalan, who posted the matter for further hearing on April 17, said, "I don't want to enter into a prima facie finding at this stage, I want to give him an opportunity to respond." Shewale was represented through senior advocates Rajiv Nayar and Arvind Verma and lawyers Chirag Shah and Utsav Trivedi. In the suit, Shewale sought permanent injunction and damages against the defendants, on account of alleged false, malicious and unsubstantiated allegations made and circulated on social media platforms and other offline and online media. He said the allegations are libellous, unfounded and misconceived, tainted with collateral objectives which were made knowingly and deliberately to harm the dignity of the plaintiff and his political party. "The present plaint demonstrates that the defendant no. 1 to 3 have conspired with each other and with other unknown individuals/ organisations to launch a series of scathing and belligerent attacks against the plaintiff and the political party which the plaintiff belongs to, that is, Shiv Sena, with the oblique motive to malign, defame and injure the plaintiff's reputation based on a series of blatant falsehoods and gross misrepresentations," the plea said.

EPS takes control of AIADMK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 28: In a watershed event for the AIADMK, the party Tuesday elevated Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS) as its supreme leader, the general secretary, moments after deposed leader O Panneerselvam (OPS) lost one more legal battle against his expulsion from the party.

While the Madras High Court rejected pleas of Panneerselvam and his aides against their expulsion from AIADMK, 68-year old Palaniswami for the first time became the general secretary after the post's revival last year. Before his elevation, EPS was the interim general secretary.

Party founder-leader M G Ramachandran (MGR), former party supremo J Jayalalitha, Navalar VR Nedunchezhiyan, P U Shanmugam and S Raghavanandam were the only other leaders who had held that top post in the AIADMK, which was founded in 1972.

On being elevated, cadres gave Palaniswami a rousing welcome and made him wear a dark glass and bright white cap just like MGR and he happily waved at cadres, seen as a gesture of bringing the party under his full control, very much like his iconic predecessors, MGR and Jayalalitha. He swung into action immediately and announced a new membership drive. Palaniswami assuming the top position though has brought down the curtain on the leadership issue, the battle is set to continue in courts as OPS camp is determined to take forward its legal struggle. Political commentator and observer of AIADMK since the 1970s, Durai Karuna said that this development does not mean that OPS could be "written off" from the political landscape of Tamil Nadu. Like in the past (1989), if the AIADMK faces electoral setbacks it may lead to a situation warranting factions eased out of the party to join hands once again, he said. "In politics, there are no permanent friends or enemies. It is the electoral outcomes and several other factors that prove to be decisive," he said.

IRKED BY BLACKOUT Man threatens to blow up Fadnavis' home

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Nagpur, March 28: Enraged by a power failure in his home, a Nagpur man allegedly threatened to blow up the Nagpur home of Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, sending the police into a tizzy, officials said here Tuesday.

Nagpur Police Commissioner Amitesh Kumar said Tuesday morning that the culprit who made the fake bomb threat has been traced and detained for investigations.

According to officials, around 2 a.m. on Tuesday, the Nagpur Police Control Room received a call warning that a bomb had reportedly been planted outside Fadnavis' home before the caller abruptly disconnected.

Not taking chances, a police team and a bomb disposal squad were rushed to the site and a thorough check was carried out inside and outside the VIP home, but nothing was found.

Fadnavis and his family are currently in Mumbai.

The police also traced the caller to his home in the Kanhan area of the city where he was staying in darkness due to a power failure, and in a fit of anger had allegedly made the bomb threat call to mislead the police.

The caller has been picked up and detained for questioning in the fake call matter, said Kumar.

critical review" of heat action plans at the city (nine), district (13) and state (15) levels across 18 states, said it was unclear to what extent actions prescribed in the HAPs were being implemented. "India has made considerable progress by creating several dozen heat action plans in the last decade. But our assessment reveals several gaps that must be filled in future plans. "If we don't, India will suffer damaging economic losses due to decreasing labour productivity, sudden and frequent disruptions to agriculture (like we saw last year), and unbearably hot cities as heat waves become more frequent and intense," said Aditya Valiathan Pillai, associate fellow at CPR and co-author of the report. India logged its hottest February in 2023 since record-keeping began



climate change within a set of scenarios. The conditions of each scenario are used to model possible future climate evolution. Heat waves are also projected to come earlier, stay longer, and become more frequent with urban

Heat action plans fail to identify, target vulnerable groups: Report

HEAT ACTION PLANS ARE THE PRIMARY POLICY RESPONSE TO ECONOMICALLY DAMAGING AND LIFE THREATENING HEATWAVES

By 2050, as many as 24 urban centres are projected to breach average summertime highs of at least 35 degrees Celsius, disproportionately impacting economically weaker sections. The International Labour Organisation estimates that working hours lost due to heat stress would increase to 5.8 per cent of working hours by 2030, or an equivalent of 34 million jobs.

Nearly all HAPs are poor at identifying and targeting vulnerable groups. Only two of the 37 HAPs explicitly carry out and present vulnerability assessments. This leaves the implementer with little data on where to direct their scarce resources and could lead to poor targeting," the CPR said in its report titled "How is India adapting to heatwaves?"

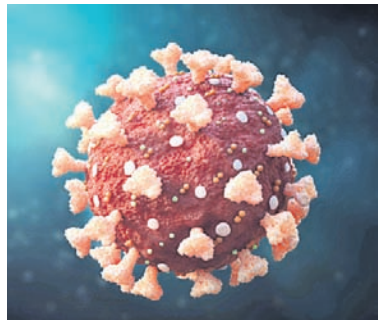
international



We must invest in the African ingenuity and creativity, which will unlock incredible economic growth and opportunities
KAMALA HARRIS | US VICE PRESIDENT

FRESH NORM

The World Health Organisation Tuesday changed its recommendations for Covid-19 vaccines, suggesting that high-risk populations should receive an additional dose 12 months after their last booster



of the day quote

There is an increased level of combat, active combat in the area of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. My teams there report daily about the attacks, the sound of heavy weaponry. This is practically constant

RAFAEL MARIANO GROSSI | IAEA DIRECTOR GENERAL

We expect 2023 to be another challenging year, with global growth slowing to below 3 per cent, as scarring from the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and monetary tightening weigh on economic activity

KRISTALINA GEORGIEV | IMF MANAGING DIRECTOR

We'll soon receive compensation of about 300 million euros (\$323 million) and Poland will be the biggest recipient of the EU's weapons fund

MATEUSZ MORAWIECKI | POLAND PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

2 dead in Muslim centre stabbing

Lisbon: Portuguese police shot a man suspected of stabbing two people to death at an Ismaili Muslim centre in Lisbon, authorities said Tuesday. Police were called to the centre late Tuesday morning where they encountered a suspect "armed with a large knife," a police statement said. Police ordered him to surrender but he advanced toward them and was "neutralised," the statement said. The suspect was taken to a Lisbon hospital where he was in police custody.

Greece to hold election May 2

Athens: Greece's centre-right prime minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, called a May 21 general election Tuesday as his party's long-standing lead in opinion polls has declined in the aftermath of the country's worst train disaster. A February 28 collision between a passenger train and a freight train in northern Greece left 57 people dead. The disaster stirred public anger, cutting the conservative New Democracy party's support by a half-point to 4 points over its left-wing main rival, Syriza, according to opinion polls.

Russia test-fires anti-ship missiles

Moscow: Russia's Defense Ministry says Moscow has test-fired anti-ship missiles in the Sea of Japan. The ministry said Tuesday that two boats launched a simulated missile attack on a mock enemy warship about 100 kilometers (60 miles) away. The ministry said the target was successfully hit by two Moskit cruise missiles.

Trump may make 2nd trip to Texas

Washington: Former US President Donald Trump might turn to "wild extremism" and whip up a frenzy on a possible second visit to Waco, Texas, ahead of an expected indictment from lower Manhattan courts on multiple probes of tax fraud and evasion, but the salacious stand out being the alleged "hush money" he paid to adult film star Stormy Daniels. Trump is virtually igniting his White House bid for 2024 in what the American media says is an unprecedented peril in the criminal investigations against -- a confluence that could send the US into a new political and legal collision.



SHOW OF STRENGTH: Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sumedha reaches port at Algiers, as a part of overseas deployment, in Algeria. The ship was received at Port Algiers by officers of the Algerian Navy and officials from Embassy of India, Algiers March 26

French police brace for fresh protests

Strikes against pension reforms kicked off again across France



Protesters march during a demonstration in Marseille, southern France. France's government is unfurling massively ramped-up security measures for a fresh blast of marches and strikes against unpopular pension reforms

AGENCIES

Paris, March 28: Tens of thousands marched as protests and strikes against unpopular pension reforms gripped France again Tuesday with police ramping up security after the government warned that radical demonstrators intended "to destroy, to injure and to kill". Concerns that violence could mar the demonstrations prompted what Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin described as an unprecedented deployment of 13,000 officers, nearly half of them concentrated in the French capital, where police faced down ultra-leftist radicals. In a sign that protests may be losing a little steam, sanitation workers in Paris announced that they are suspending their more than three-week-long strike that has left piles of stinking garbage uncollected on the capital's streets.

The CGT union, which organised the strikes, said in a statement that workers will return to their jobs Wednesday because "we hardly have any strikers left." It was unclear whether private companies responsible for keeping some Paris districts clean will return to work. The CGT reported a dive in the number of Paris demonstrators Tuesday after a record high of 800,000 five days earlier. Official figures, always far lower, weren't immediately available.

After months of upheaval, an exit from the firestorm of protest triggered by President Emmanuel Macron's changes to France's re-

irement system looked as far away as ever. Despite fresh union pleas that the government pause its hotly contested push to raise France's legal retirement age from 62 to 64, Macron seemingly remained wedded to it.

The French leader previously used a special constitutional power to ram the reform past legislators without allowing them a vote. His move this month further galvanized the protest movement. Violence has since flared and thousands of tons of reeking trash piled up on Paris' streets during the sanitation workers strike. The Eiffel Tower's website announced that strikers had closed down the world-famous tourist attraction. The Louvre Museum was similarly strike-bound Monday. "Everybody is getting madder," said Clément Sald, a train passenger at Paris' Gare de Lyon railway station, where tracks were temporarily invaded and blocked on Tuesday by protesting workers. He said he supports the strikes despite their impact on transportation and other services.

"I am 26, and I wonder if I will ever retire," he said. Another passenger, Helene Cogan, 70, said: "French people are stubborn and things are getting out of hand."

The wave of protests Tuesday marked the 10th time since January that unions have called on workers to walk out and for demonstrators to flood the nation's streets against Macron's retirement changes, which are a key priority of his second term as President.

Northern Ireland terrorism threat level rises

REUTERS

London, March 28: Britain's MI5 intelligence agency has increased the threat level in Northern Ireland from domestic terrorism to "severe" - meaning an attack is highly likely.

The move to return the level to its second highest category follows recent attacks on police offices and comes weeks before political leaders are due to gather in the province to celebrate the 25th anniversary of a peace deal that largely ended three decades of violence.

US President Joe Biden said this month that he had accepted an invitation to visit Northern Ireland in April, and both Bill and Hillary Clinton are due to attend anniversary-related events.

"The public should remain vigilant, but not be alarmed, and continue to report any concerns they have," Chris Heaton-Harris, the British minister for the province, said in a written statement.

The British government said the level had been increased from "substantial" following the re-



A forensic officer from Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) works at the scene of the Youth Sport Omagh sports complex on Killyclogher Road area, where off-duty PSNI Detective Chief Inspector John Caldwell was shot, in Omagh, Northern Ireland February 23

cent targeting of police officers, and it was not thought to be linked to the anniversary.

The threat for Northern Ireland had been held at severe since the system was introduced in 2010. It was lowered, for just over a year, in 2022. Chief Constable Simon Byrne

of the Police Service of Northern Ireland said his officers would not be deterred from "delivering a visible, accessible and responsive community focused policing service to keep people safe". While a 1998 peace deal largely ended three decades of sectarian violence in

40 dead in fire at migrant facility in Mexico: Official



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mexico City, March 28: Migrants fearing deportation set mattresses ablaze at an immigration detention centre in northern Mexico, starting a fire that killed at least 40 people, the president said Tuesday, in one of the deadliest events ever at a Mexican immigration lockup.

Hours after the fire broke out late Monday, rows of bodies were laid out under shimmering silver sheets, outside the facility in Ciudad Juarez, which is across from El Paso, Texas,

and a major crossing point for migrants. Ambulances, firefighters and vans from the morgue swarmed the scene. Twenty-nine people were injured and are in "delicate-serious" condition, according to the National Immigration Institute.

At the time of the blaze, 68 men from Central and South America were being held at the facility, the agency said. Immigration authorities identified the dead and injured as being from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador, with Guatemalans being the largest con-

tingent, according to a statement from the Mexican attorney general's office.

Many of them may have been from Guatemala, according to a Guatemalan official. President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said the fire was started by migrants in protest after learning they would be deported.

"They never imagined that this would cause this terrible misfortune," Lopez Obrador said, adding that the director of the country's immigration agency was on the scene. The detention facility is a short walk from the US border and across the street from Juarez's city hall.

Tensions between authorities and migrants had apparently been running high in recent weeks in Ciudad Juarez, where shelters are full of people waiting for opportunities to cross into the US or who have requested asylum there and are waiting out the process.

Nashville shooter was ex-student with detailed plan to kill

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nashville, March 28: The former student who shot through the doors of a Christian elementary school in Nashville and killed three children and three adults had drawn a detailed map of the school, including potential entry points, and conducted surveillance of the building before carrying out the massacre.

Metropolitan Nashville Police Chief John Drake did not say exactly what drove the shooter to open fire Monday morning at The Covenant School before being killed by police. But he provided chilling examples of the shooter's elaborate planning for the targeted attack, the latest in a series of mass shootings in a country that has grown increasingly unnerved by bloodshed in schools.

"We have a manifesto, we have some writings that we're going over that pertain to this date, the actual incident," he told reporters. "We have a map drawn out of how this was all going to take place." He said in an interview with NBC News that investigators believe the shooter had "some resentment for having to go to that school."

The victims included three 9-year-old children, the school's top administrator, a substitute teacher and a custodian. Amid the chaos, a familiar ritual played out: Panicked parents rushed to the school to see if their children were safe and tearfully hugged their kids, and a stunned community held vigils for the victims. Rachel Dibble, who was at a nearby church where children were taken to be reunited with their parents, described the scene as everyone being in "complete shock."

"People were involuntarily trembling," she said. "The children ... started their morning in their cute little uniforms, they probably had some Froot Loops, and now their whole lives changed today." The shooting led President Joe Biden to call again on lawmakers for stronger gun safety laws.

Printed receipts from ATM or grocery store may be toxic: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, March 28: Do you frequently handle purchase receipts while buying groceries from stores or taking out money from ATMs? Beware, the receipts carry an under-recognised source of hormone-disrupting chemicals in our bodies, finds a report.

According to the Ecology Center, a US non-profit working for environmental health, receipt papers contain high concentrations of bisphenols, particularly bisphenol A (BPA) and bisphenol S (BPS) - linked to reproductive harm.

For their report, they tested 374 receipts from 144 major chain stores in 22 US states and the District of Columbia. The most common were grocery stores,



restaurants, department stores, drugstores, and gas stations, among others. They found about 80 per cent receipts had the presence of bisphenol (BPS or BPA). "Receipts are a common expo-

sure route for hormone-disrupting bisphenols which readily absorb through the skin. Our studies show most retailers use bisphenol-coated receipt paper," Melissa Cooper Sargent, environmental health ad-

vocate at the Ecology Center of Michigan, said in a statement.

"Switching to the most common were grocery stores, restaurants, department stores, drugstores, and gas stations, among others. They found about 80 per cent receipts had the presence of bisphenol (BPS or BPA)

non-toxic paper is an easy shift. We urge retailers to stop handing out chemical-laced paper to their con-

sumers and putting employees at risk," she added.

The report also showed safer chemical alternatives such as BPS in 20 per cent of receipts. However, the researchers said while BPS is marketed as a safer replacement for BPA, both are endocrine-disrupting chemicals linked to health issues, including cancer. Besides consumers, people working at these stores could be more at risk because their "potential exposure to endocrine disrupting BPS or BPA is constant", the report said.

The report called on retailers to protect their "customers and employees by removing bisphenols from receipt paper", and also to stop "printing receipts altogether and offer a digital receipt option".

FRANCE, SERBIA SAIL ON India win Tri-Nation football tournament

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Dusan Vlahovic reacts after scoring against Montenegro



Kyllian Mbappe celebrates with Benjamin Pavard after the latter's goal against Ireland, Monday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Geneva, March 28: Kylian Mbappe is captaining France to a comfortable start in qualifying for the European Championship though Serbia's Dusan Vlahovic was the standout striker.

France's 1-0 win at Ireland was earned by defender Benjamin Pavard's rasping 50th-minute shot that was a rare show of attacking force in Dublin.

Like France, Serbia has begun its qualifying program with two wins thanks to Vlahovic striking twice late in a 2-0 win at Montenegro. The first in the 78th was a slick first-time shot to meet a cross from the left flank.

Poland got their first points after beating Albania 1-0 though it was a Major League Soccer (MLS) striker rather than superstar Robert Lewandowski who scored.

Karol Swiderski, who plays for Charlotte and was little used at the World Cup, got the decisive goal just before halftime.

For the second time in four days, France players were hugging goalkeeper Mike Maignan at the final whistle for their new No.1's stand-out saves. Maignan's leaping, stretching save to push away a goal-bound header by Ireland defender Nathan Collins ensured a 1-0 win in Dublin.

Depay opened the scoring on Monday for the Dutch with a 24th-minute header in a routine 3-0 win over minnow Gibraltar. It seemed like an attack vs. Defense practise even before Gibraltar's Liam Walker was sent off in the 51st for a high tackle on midfielder Mats Wieffer. One minute earlier, Nathan Ake scored with a header and the defender added his second in the 82nd when his deflected shot from the edge of the penalty area rolled softly into the net.

Vlahovic was not fully fit at the World Cup and Serbia went home early without a win and last in a group in which Brazil and Switzerland advanced. The Juventus forward was sharp Monday, scoring with a pair of left foot shots late in a 2-0 win at Montenegro.

Hungary captain Dominik Szoboszlai scored perhaps the goal of the night in a 3-0 win over Bulgaria. Szoboszlai fired in a fast, dipping free kick from 25 yards (meters) into the top right corner of the Bulgaria goal. Bulgaria's second straight loss already looks likely to extend its wait to play at a finals tournament beyond 20 years.

Belgium had a night off in the five-team group and plays Euro 2024 host Germany in a friendly

Tuesday. That let Austria go clear in the standings, adding a 2-1 win over Estonia to another home win Friday against Azerbaijan.

Austria trailed for much of the game to Estonia's 25th-minute opener, and led only in the 88th on Michael Gregoritsch's deflected shot from near the penalty spot. Coach Ralf Rangnick was punching the air in jubilation in his technical area, and next takes his team to play favored Belgium June 17.

Sweden got back on track after their 3-0 beating at home to the Belgians Friday, easing past Azerbaijan 5-0. Sweden managed without Zlatan Ibrahimovic, because of an unspecified injury for the 41-year-old forward, and eased some of the pressure that was building on coach Janne Andersson. Poland coach Fernando Santos got his first points in his new job since leaving Euro 2016 champion Portugal after the World Cup in December.

A modest 1-0 win over Albania was earned by Swiderski's strike in the 41st, when he reacted fastest at the edge of the six-yard box to collect a rebound from a shot that struck a post.

Czechia leads the five-team group with four points, though a 0-0 draw at Moldova was a drop in class from its 3-1 home win over Poland Friday

Imphal, March 28: India played some inspiring football against higher-ranked Kyrgyz Republic to snatch a 2-0 victory and bag the Tri-National International Tournament Trophy with an all-win record here Tuesday.

India had earlier defeated Myanmar 1-0 March 22. The opening goal Tuesday came from centre-back Sandesh Jhingan, who found the target in the 34th minute. India added insurance in the 84th minute with Sunil Chhetri firing home from the spot.

Midfielder Brandon Fernandes put the ball in front of the rival goal off a free-kick and Jhingan pounced on it to find the back of the net to open India's account in the first half.

If the Kyrgyz Republic goalkeeper Tokotaev Erzhan thought the tall Indian defender would go for a header, he was mistaken as Jhingan waited for the ball to land and then swung it with a deft touch into the goal.

India kept launching attacks whenever they had the opportu-



nity, and one such move in the 84th minute saw the Kyrgyz Republic defence crumble under pressure as Naorem Mahesh Singh was brought down inside the penalty box by Davydov Nikolai.

The ensuing spot kick saw Chhetri score his 85th interna-

tional goal. The striker stepped up to take the kick and tucked it into the corner of the net. This was India's fifth straight win on home turf. Stimac made six changes from the team that started against Myanmar, but it didn't break their rhythm one bit.

If preparations for the AFC Asian Cup in January next was the main purpose of hosting the tournament, then it was a success. The Indians showed that they are growing in confidence before they go for the all-important continental challenge.

Odisha FC host their 1st-ever 'Club Awards'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: Odisha FC hosted their first-ever 'Club Awards' ceremony Monday to celebrate the exceptional performances of their players throughout the 2022-23 season in collaboration with a city restaurant here.

THE WINNERS
FANS' MOMENT OF THE SEASON:
Nandhakumar Sekar

GOAL OF THE SEASON:
Pedro Martin (vs KBFC at home)

FANS' EMERGING PLAYER OF THE SEASON:
Isak Ralte

GOLDEN GLOVE (BEST GOALKEEPER):
Amrinder Singh

GOLDEN BOOT:
Diego Mauricio

FAN OF THE YEAR:
Sujin PS

CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S FOOTBALL:
Bala Devi

TEAM PLAYER OF THE SEASON (FOR SPORTSMAN SPIRIT):
Lalthuammawia Ralte

IRON MAN AWARD (FOR MENTAL TOUGHNESS):
Michael Soosairaj

RECOGNITION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO SPORTS:
DSYS

FITTEST PLAYER OF THE SEASON:
Carlos Delgado & Thoiba Moirangthem

FANS' PLAYER OF THE SEASON:
Diego Mauricio

PLAYERS' PLAYER OF THE SEASON:
Carlos Delgado

Stokes to play as specialist batter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 28: England Test captain Ben Stokes will be available only as a specialist batter for Chennai Super Kings in the early stages of the Indian Premier League 2023.

The star all-rounder, who was picked by the four-time IPL champions for Rs 16.25 crore during the auction held in December last year, arrived in India last week and has been training for the upcoming season starting March 31.

A report in 'ESPNCricinfo' said, Stokes will likely play as a specialist batter initially to manage his knee injury, for which he has taken a cortisone injection — an anti-inflammation medicine.

The 31-year-old has been hampered by recurring injuries to his left knee, with the most recent flare-up happening during England's tour of New Zealand. Stokes bowled only nine overs across two Tests and batted with a

lot of discomfort on the final day of the second Test in Wellington.

Termining the injury "very frustrating", Stokes said he hoped to "get into a position that I feel like I don't have to worry about my knee anymore" with England set to host Australia for the Ashes this June.

CSK batting coach Michael Hussey confirmed Stokes might not bowl at the start of the IPL. "My understanding is he's ready to go as a batsman from the start. The bowling might be wait and see. I know he had his first very light bowl yesterday (Sunday) since he had his injections in his knee," said Hussey.

"The physios from Chennai (CSK) and ECB (England and Wales Cricket Board) are working pretty closely together. My understanding is he won't be bowling much at all in the first few games of the tournament... It might be a few weeks. I'm not 100% sure, (but we will) hopefully get him bowling at some stage in the tournament," Hussey added.

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