



BHUMI'S CONFIDENCE

Bhumi Pednekar says she always has the confidence to take on challenging roles that push her as an actor

LEISURE P2



SUNAK'S WEALTH DECLINES

The wealth of British PM Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murty has decreased, putting them in 275th place in UK's rich list

INTERNATIONAL P10



ARCHERS SHINE

Compound archers Ojas Deotale and Jyothi Surekha Vennam confirm a silver medal

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

Defence production crosses ₹1L-cr mark

New Delhi: For the first time, the value of India's defence production has crossed the rupees one lakh crore mark in the financial year 2022-23, the Defence Ministry said Friday. The value of total defence production in India in 2021-22 was over ₹95,000 crore. In the last few years, the government has taken a series of measures to promote the domestic defence industry. "The value currently stands at ₹1,06,800 crore," the Defence Ministry said in a statement. P11

'Press' vehicle with 150kg ganja seized

Koraput: Police arrested late Thursday night two people for smuggling over 150 kilograms of ganja in 'press' vehicle from Nandapur block in this district. Acting on a tip-off police intercepted an SUV with 'press' stickers both at the front and rear near Badadebata locality. During the search police found the cannabis stored in seven polythene bags. The two arrested have been identified as Milind Chikde and Subham Sanjay Shinde of Aurangabad district in Maharashtra.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Thanks to the govt policies, sir. We don't even have Rs 500 notes

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	61729.68 ↑ 297.94
NIFTY	18203.40 ↑ 73.45
DOLLAR	82.38 ↑ ₹0.12
EURO	89.6180 ↑ ₹0.52
GOLD	₹59850 ↑ ₹127
SILVER	₹72473 ↑ ₹330

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	38.4°C	37.5°C
MIN	28.0°C	28.5°C
Humidity	69%	68%
Rainfall	Trace	Trace
Forecast	Light rain very likely	



FUN TIMES: Cricketer Shubman Gill, who has lent his voice for the Hindi version of 'Spiderman: Across the Spider-Verse' poses with models during the trailer launch of the film in Mumbai

6 dead in mishaps in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: In a number of mishaps that took place Friday in various parts of Odisha, six persons including three kids lost their lives. All the three minors who met their untimely demise were drowned while the three others died in a road accident.

The road mishap took place on Loisingha-Bharasuja road near Karkachia Square in Bolangir district when a bike with three people collided head-on with an SUV. All the three deceased were on the bike and were identified as Rajesh

Patel of Rota, his brother-in-law Tulsiram Patel of Sadeipali and Suranjan Patel of Kusanga, police said. The trio was on their way to Rota when the accident occurred.

The three suffered serious injuries and were rushed to a nearby hospital locals. However, doctors declared the three dead on arrival. Loisingha police said they have seized the vehicle and detained the driver.

In another incident which occurred in Pipalpur village under Lamtaput block of Koraput district, two minor siblings drowned while taking a bath in a pond. They were identified as Yogesh (5) and his

10-year-old sister Saathi, both children of Jitu Ladanai. They slipped into deep waters while bathing and with no one around to help them, both drowned. The bodies of both the kids were found floating in the pond after Jitu started searching for them.

In another tragic incident, Chandan Mohapatra, a resident of Srirampur village under Charampa panchayat in Bhadrak block died while trying to swim in the village pond. He had secured 519 marks (86%) in the BSE Matric results which were announced Thursday.

Cong questions SC panel report on Adani deals

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 19: In a relief to embattled billionaire Gautam Adani, a Supreme Court-appointed expert committee said it has found no evidence of stock price manipulation in Adani group companies, while a separate Sebi probe into alleged violation in money flows from offshore entities has 'drawn a blank'.

Congress however, questioned the findings of the expert committee and said that it has been saying all along that the panel will be 'unable to unravel the Modani scam in all its complexity'.

In a series of tweets Congress Rajya Sabha member said 'contrary to the boasts of the Modi government, the committee has found that regulations have moved in direction of opacity that facilitates the disguise of ultimate beneficial ownership'.

In another tweet Ramesh said, "The committee is unable to come to any definitive conclusion regarding violation of Sebi laws."

HC junks ASO merit list

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, May 19: The Orissa High Court scrapped Friday the merit list prepared by the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) for recruitment of 796 Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) in the State Secretariat.

While hearing pleas filed by a few of the ASO aspirants, Justice Aditya Kumar Mohapatra asked the OPSC to come up with a fresh merit list of candidates within two months on the basis of marks obtained by them in the written examination conducted August 27, 2022, said petitioners' lawyer Manoj Kumar Mishra.

The OPSC had conducted the written examination for recruitment of 796 ASOs, the results of which were announced November 7, Mishra said. A total of 1,48,888 candidates had appeared for the written examinations.

The commission prepared the merit list in line with the new 'qualification mark rule' wherein candidates who secured at least 40 per cent in each paper were selected.

A few unsuccessful candidates, however, approached the Orissa HC stating that the commission did not mention the new 'qualification mark rule' of evaluation in its advertisement and introduced it at a later stage, the petitioner's lawyer said, demanding scrapping of the merit list.

"OPSC had no right to decide on the cut off marks. It had violated the service norms by issuing cut off of 40 per cent. Taking this into consideration, the HC had February 10, 2023 concluded the hearing and reserved the judgement," Mishra informed.

'Wagner' chief slams Putin, Russian army

The head of the paramilitary group has held Putin responsible for failing to end the battle with Ukraine in a decisive manner

AGENCIES

Moscow, May 19: Yevgeny Prigozhin, the chief of the paramilitary 'Wagner' group has slammed the Russian military as well as President Vladimir Putin for their failure to end the Ukraine war in a decisive manner. Prigozhin has gone on to call some of the military commanders 'stupid' and Putin 'a grandfather' not fit to handle war situations. He has criticised some of the military decisions as 'criminal' and has also expressed doubt as to whether Russia will be able to defend its own territory if attacked.

The 'Wagner' group has supplied men and weapons to Russia that have been used in the war against Ukraine. However, Prigozhin is upset with the slow delivery of munitions. He filmed himself next to the bodies of Wagner fighters, issuing a tirade at Russia's defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, and its chief of the



Vladimir Putin and Yevgeny Prigozhin

general staff, Valery Gerasimov.

"Shoigu! Gerasimov! Where are the shells?" Prigozhin is heard shouting in the video. "Look at them! Look at them!" he fumed, gesturing at the corpses. "You sit in expensive clubs, your children make YouTube videos, while 'Wagner' fighters die so you can gorge yourselves in your offices!"

Astonishingly, Prigozhin even took aim at Putin, referring to the president as 'happy grandfather' who thought the war in Ukraine was proceeding smoothly. "But what if it turns out that this grandfather is a complete fool," he said.

The infighting between Wagner and Russia's military has become a soap opera played out in front of a global audience. In the most recent episode, an

article in 'The Washington Post' this week said that Prigozhin had on several occasions made contact with Ukrainian military intelligence and is ready to shift allegiance. The story claimed Prigozhin had offered to turn over information about the positions of Russian forces if the Ukrainian military withdrew from the city of Bakhmut, where Wagner fighters have been fighting Ukrainian forces for months. If the Kremlin accepts that line, Prigozhin will be in serious trouble.

According to political analysts, it is not that Putin is unaware of the developments fostered by the Wagner group. In the past he had dealt with such rebellions with an iron fist. However, the fact is that he now seems unable (or unwilling) to do so with Prigozhin. It indicates that Putin's ability to control the Kremlin's fiefdoms isn't what it used to be.

Authoritarian governments need narratives about success, trading on tales of triumph against foreign or domestic evils. Putin's Russia has been no exception to this rule. However, when things go badly, it becomes imperative to punish scapegoats, deflecting blame from the leader. This is what is happening now, with Russia's armed forces and Wagner attempting to pin culpability on one another.

NO MORE

When the Modi government introduced demonetisation in November 2016, it expected to wipe out at least ₹3-4 lakh crore of black money. It had introduced the ₹2,000 denomination note, but now its withdrawal proves that the project has been a failure

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, May 19: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced Friday the withdrawal of ₹2,000 denomination bank notes from circulation. The notes will, however, remain legal tender and people can exchange these notes with other denomination banknotes till September 30, the RBI said.

The ₹2,000 notes were introduced in 2016 after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced demonetisation in November the same year. While the Union government claimed that the decision to withdraw ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes was to flush out black money and also to tackle flow of counterfeit currency in the economy the decision turned out to be a drastic failure with 99 per cent of invalidated notes returned to the banks and instances of counterfeit currency increased.

According to an RBI report, fake notes of ₹2,000 denominations increased by more than 54 per cent.

The RBI, though, stated that ₹2,000 notes were introduced to meet currency requirements of the economy post-demonetisation



- Last date of exchange of ₹2,000 notes in banks is September 30
- 89% of ₹2,000 denomination notes issued prior to March 2017
- Currently denominations of ₹2,000 constitute 10.8% of the total notes in circulation

stated that 89% of ₹2,000 notes were issued prior to March 2017 and is at the end of their estimated life span of 4-5 years.

The RBI informed that people can exchange ₹2,000 notes with other denominations at any bank branch from May 23. The exchange can be made up to a limit of ₹20,000 at a time.

"To complete the exercise in a time-bound manner and to provide adequate time to the members of the public, all banks shall provide deposit and/or exchange facility for ₹2,000 banknotes until September 30. The banks are also advised to stop issuing ₹2,000 denomination banknotes with immediate effect," the RBI said in a notification.

Unlock your potential

Results that Inspire, Empower, and Excel!

STATE TOPPER OF ODISHA

99.2%

Swati Sucharita Sahoo

CLASS X - 2023

CLASS X RESULTS 2023

SUVRAM

99%

ADITYA

98.8%

AYUSH

98.6%

95% Above 44 Students (20% of the Batch)

90% Above 107 Students (35% of the Batch)

84% School Average

CLASS XII RESULTS 2023

AROSHISH

98.2% (SCIENCE)

SOUMYAKANTA

98.2% (SCIENCE)

SPARSITA

95.8% (COMMERCE)

97% Above 12 Students

95% Above 49 Students

90% Above 151 Students

82% School Average

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leisure



BRITNEY SHARES RARE UPDATE ON RELATIONSHIP WITH HER SONS

Pop icon Britney Spears has given her loyal legion of fans an update on her relationship with her two sons. The singer, 41, allegedly hasn't seen her sons in over a year, with her two boys now looking to move away from Los Angeles, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.

BALDWIN'S UPCOMING FILM WON'T HAVE GUNS ON SET

Hollywood star Alec Baldwin's next project will have no guns on set despite the nature of the upcoming feature. The movie, titled *Kent State*, will follow the story of the tragic 1970 war protest shootings, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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ARIES

Today the stars advocate that you concentrate on money matters and how to save some, and in this purpose you will remain engrossed. However, Ganesh advises you not to neglect domestic duties lest you encounter a morose spouse. So carry on and make a dash for that movie as planned. Don't cancel it.

TAURUS

You are likely to turn excessively self centred today, says Ganesh. This could cause you to be very insecure. You will have a tendency to control and dominate others. There is a likelihood that you may, thereby, jeopardize important relationships.

GEMINI

Ganesh opines that today you might feel a little blue and under the weather. You may harbour feelings of loneliness today. Your repressed emotions and yearnings as well as your intellectual leanings will likely come to the fore today, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Your ideas today are source of your energy. A situation may arise, which will force you to take hard decisions later. A new business or venture may prove beneficial. Your magical touch will bestow success in every endeavour. Ganesh is with you.

LEO

You might be the man of the house, but to make that house a home, you need a family. So keep that in mind, says Ganesh, and remember that your family is the foundation of your success. Make every possible effort to make your family's roots stronger.

VIRGO

Today might just bring those emotions to the fore that have been lying in the closet of your heart since long. You will even develop a bonding - a sentimental attachment - with your belongings. But, if and when you don't find the surroundings to your liking, you shall be like a fish out of the water.

LIBRA

Unleash the artist in you today! Don't be surprised if you happen to discover a love for the fine arts. The stars bestow on you refined aesthetic sense. As a result, your penchant for interior decoration is sure to get a boost. There is also the possibility of you capitalising on the commercial aspect of your newly acquired hobby, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO

Family matters have been screaming for long for your attention now. Your estranged spouse may deal the final blow to sever all ties, foretells Ganesh. But keep calm, and hold that tongue, advises Ganesh. Your priority should be to secure your family's peace.

SAGITTARIUS

The nerd in you will rise to the fore today. Religious literature will catch your fancy. Ganesh also sees you diving deep into pages of detective tomes, murder and science fiction. Au contraire, find some relief from the roller-coaster by listening to some soothing music.

CAPRICORN

The chances of you meeting financial success are few, but they are there nonetheless, says Ganesh. If you really want to improve your account balance and settle all the burgeoning debts, focus on what all needs to be done, and get it done without delay. You will make merry later in the day and will enjoy the company of your loved ones.

AQUARIUS

The day is taxing. You may find that others have dumped their share of work on you. But you are not one to admit defeat, and will deal with the challenge squarely, says Ganesh. You will outwit your opponents, and toast your success by starlight!

PISCES

While your day is unlikely to be very satisfactory, keeping your expectations low will help lessen your disappointment, says Ganesh. However, the evening is likely to be as refreshing as your day was depressing, with all the socialising in store for you.

AMITABH'S CRYPTIC POST ABOUT GETTING 'ARRESTED'

Mumbai: Veteran actor Amitabh Bachchan, who is known for often entertaining his followers on social media, recently shared a picture and notified his fans about an 'arrest'.

Taking to Instagram, he shared a cryptic post after being reprimanded by the Mumbai Police for not wearing a helmet while riding a bike in the city. Taking to Instagram, Friday, Big B posted a photo of himself, standing disappointed near a police jeep. In the caption, Amitabh wrote, 'arrested'. In the picture, the actor can be seen standing dejected near a police

jeep in a chequered shirt and pair of black pants that he paired with white sports shoes and transparent glasses.

Amitabh's post tickled fans and colleagues' curiosity in no time. One of the users wrote: "Don ko pakadna Mushkil hee nahia Naamumkin hai Sir."

"It must be a joke...!! arrest karne ki taakat kisi mein nhi...!! yeh shayad kuch normal si formalities puri krne gaye honge.. sir ji ko chhoo bhi sake aisa koi paidaa nhi hua...!!", another commented.

Another fan commented: "Sir, again without a helmet."



Looking forward to stories that challenge me as an artiste: Baisali

The recently released 'Phalguna Chaitra', the first ever Odia movie to screen in over 15 countries including Germany, Australia, the US, the UK, Canada and the Netherlands, is garnering rave reviews from the critics. Much of the film's appreciation has been attributed to BM Baisali, one of the most promising actors of this generation. On the sidelines of a promotion, **Bijay Mandal of Orissa POST** caught up with the powerhouse performer for a quick chat. Here are some excerpts:

under the supervision of my Gurus - Padma Shri Aruna Mohanty and Bichitrananda Swain.

You recently performed on stage in Devdas and your work was widely appreciated. How challenging was it?

It was altogether a very surreal experience. Performing in a completely new format and live in front of an audience is always daunting. It is indeed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with names like

Devdas Chotray, Susmita Das and Omprakash Mohanty. Also, playing the iconic character 'Chandramukhi' was like a dream come true for me both as an actor and dancer. The instant audience reaction just enhanced my performance. I also had the opportunity of sharing the stage with one of the seasoned actors of Bengali film industry Rano Joy aka Devdas which was a great learning experience for me. I am forever indebted to director Dev Meher and choreographer Bidyut Shethi for Devdas.

What next?

I am looking forward to doing more stories that challenge me as a performer. I am committed to lifelong learning to hone my skills. Therefore, I am excited to see what the future holds.

Taking risks leads to success: Bhumi

Mumbai: Having worked in the Indian film industry for just seven years, Bhumi Pednekar has won 26 acting awards, making her one of the best actors that this country has ever seen.

Speaking to a news portal, Bhumi recently says, "I hope I always have the determination and confidence to take on challenging roles that push me as an actor on screen. I'm always drawn to the new, the fresh and the

disruptive and every validation, and every award of my career has solidified my belief that I should chase for excellence."

She adds, "Taking risks leads to success. I don't think I would be anyone today without taking risks. It is who I'm as an artist and has become my identity and I love it. The idea to be disruptive didn't really happen by chance. I always wanted to do something different, off the beaten path and have a lasting impact as an actor on the minds of people. From my first film to every film that I sign now, I first look for what is new in the script. I have always focused on choosing great content and I'm lucky that the filmmakers have chosen me to helm their visionary projects." AGENCIES



Your acting in Phalguna Chaitra is winning hearts. How was the shooting experience?

It is truly a humbling experience. I have learnt a lot during the entire process of making it. It fills me with immense joy to see my DMs from random people from all walks of life. Grateful for all the love.

What was your preparation to play 'Smruti' in the movie?

I would like to thank Dr Sulagna Mohanty (storywriter) for making me understand the nuances of the character. I have also taken several cues from my own life experiences to be able to relate to the character. I am very fortunate to have amazing co-stars who made it easy to get into the character. As a person I and 'Smruti' share a lot of similarities.

Your Odissi recital adds a new dimension to the character. Dance or acting, which one is your weakness and how did it start?

I am extremely grateful to have a character who shares the same passion as me. Odissi, in its truest essence, encompasses acting (in the form of Abhinaya) to evoke emotions. I

would say both are integral parts of me and both complement each other when it comes to artistic expression. I am blessed to have the opportunity to learn Odissi



Janhvi transforms into 'Princess Ariel'

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor turned into a mermaid for a new promotional asset of the upcoming film *The Little Mermaid*. The actress took to her social media platform

Friday to share a video with magical realism.

In the video, she can be seen stepping into the magical world of Princess Ariel as a fan and magically fits into it for her young fans as she recites a Machhli Jal Ki Rani Hai.

The *Little Mermaid* directed by Rob Marshall, features Halle Bailey

as Ariel, Melissa McCarthy as Ursula, Jonah Hauer-King as Prince Eric, Javier Bardem as King Triton, Daveed Diggs as Sebastian, Jacob Tremblay as Flounder, Awkwafina as Scuttle, Noma Dumezweni, and Jude Akuwudike.

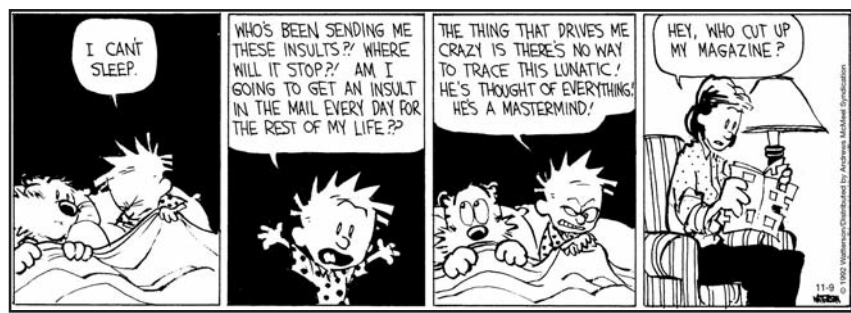
Disney India is set to release *The Little Mermaid* in cinemas May 26 in English.

FUN post

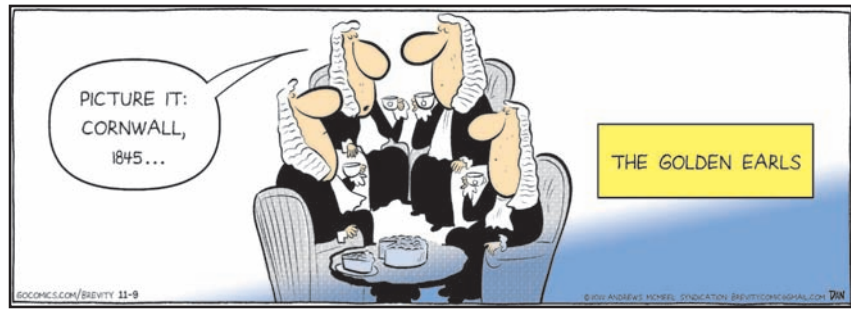
PEANUTS



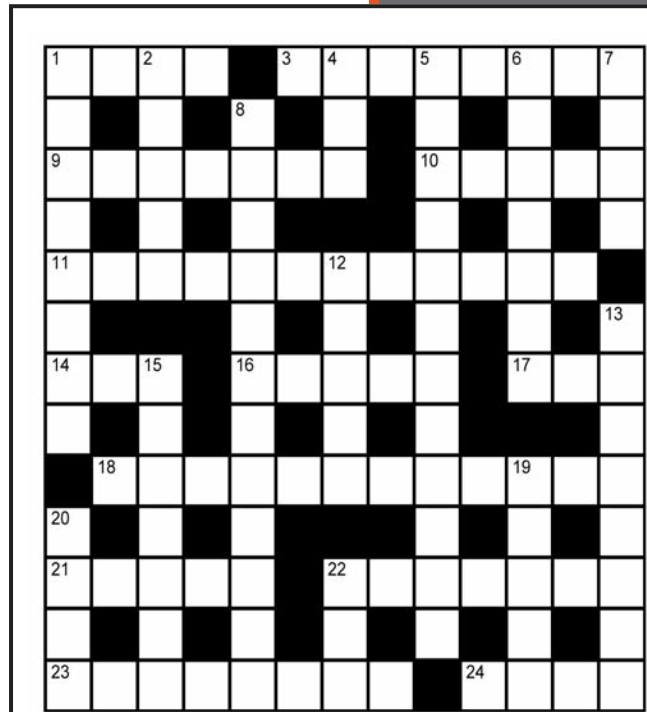
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



Across

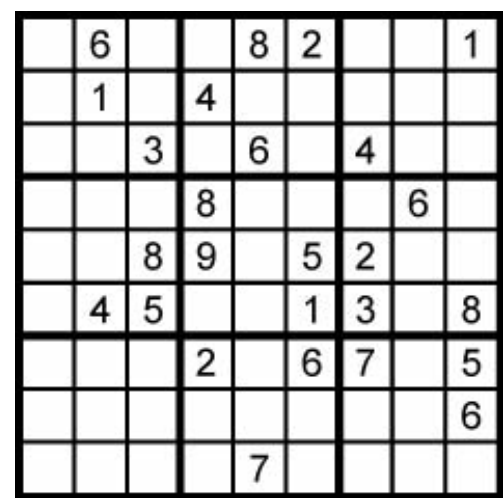
- 1 Position
- 3 Bird measurement
- 9 Widget
- 10 Images
- 11 Between noon and midnight (4,8)
- 14 Hopkins or McCartney
- 16 Authority (3-2)
- 17 Tear
- 18 Dandy
- 21 Having some resemblance
- 22 Large city in Israel (3,4)
- 23 Prowess
- 24 Ring
- 4 Sort
- 5 Bog down (5,2,1,4)
- 6 Trailblazer
- 7 A light meal
- 8 Conjoined (7,5)
- 12 Verse
- 13 Agitation
- 15 Dependent
- 19 Variety show
- 20 Greenish blue
- 22 Sea dog

Down

- 1 Shows the way
- 2 Casts aside

SUDOKU

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

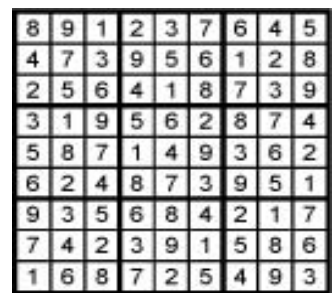


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



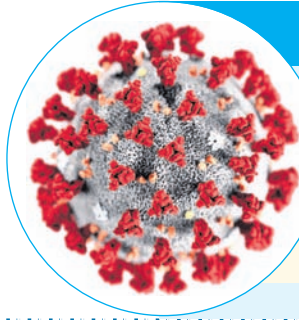
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



AT LORD'S SERVICE

A blacksmith shapes nails for chariots in Puri, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,87,15,476	66,10,53,484	68,77,230
India	4,49,84,923	4,44,44,013	5,31,818
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

CB rolls up sleeves to curb fake SIM menace



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: In a bid to curb misuse of fake and pre-activated SIM cards, the Crime Branch (CB) of Odisha Police has suggested a host of measures to telecom service providers (TSPs), an official said Friday.

Only those dealers who have permanent shops should be allowed to sell SIM cards as it would go a long way to curb illegal sale of pre-activated SIMs at makeshift stalls, the CB asked the TSPs during a special meeting here.

The TSPs have been asked to en-

sure prompt tele-verification of new SIM cards. "TSPs should ensure expeditious tele-verification of new SIM cards by calling to Aadhaar-linked phone numbers only," said a CB official. TSPs have also been instructed to devise a mechanism through which customers can easily lodge complaint about the fake SIM registered in their name and subsequently get it deactivated.

The CB officials asked the TSPs to blacklist Point of Sales (POS) violating the standard operating procedure (SOP) of SIM activation. "TSPs should create awareness among the customers regarding

Telecom Analytics for Fraud Management and Consumer Protection (TAFMCP) tool that enables the customers to verify and ascertain as to how many SIM cards are in use in their name with or without their knowledge. TSPs should have internal surveillance mechanism over the activated SIMs lying dormant continuously but are being recharged regularly," the CB said.

While speaking in the meeting, CB ADG Arun Bothra urged telecom service providers to strengthen their internal vigilance mechanism

Bothra urged the TSPs to strengthen their internal vigilance mechanism and conduct regular checks and verification and deactivate such SIMs to check the misuse. He also requested Department of Telecom officials to regularly provide inputs to police against such fraudulent activities.



FOR HUSBAND'S WELLBEING: Women at Arya Sanskriti temple in Bhubaneswar to observe 'Sabitri Brata', Friday
PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

Naveen's property up ₹42.90L in 2022

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's property increased by ₹42.90 lakh in 2022, according to the property statement uploaded to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) website.

The CM and his Council of Ministers have submitted the details of their movable and immovable property for the financial year 2021-22, which was uploaded to the CMO website.

Patnaik's property, which was ₹64.97 crore (approx) as of December 2021, stood at ₹65.40 crore as of December 2022. While there was an increase in Patnaik's movable property in 2022, the immovable property remained the same, as per the declaration.

The website, which was updated Friday with the latest information about assets and liabilities of pub-

THE FIVE-TIME CHIEF MINISTER HELD IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES WORTH ₹52.88 CRORE, ALL OF WHICH WERE INHERITED FROM PARENTS BIJU AND GYAN PATNAIK

NAVEEN OWNED MOVABLE PROPERTY WORTH ₹12.52 CRORE, WHICH INCLUDED BANK ACCOUNTS IN NEW DELHI, BHUBANESWAR, HINJILICUT, AND BARGARH, ALONG WITH JEWELLERY AND A FOUR-WHEELER

lic representatives, showed that Patnaik owned movable property worth ₹12.52 crore, which included bank accounts in New Delhi, Bhubaneswar, Hinjilicut, and Bargarh, along with jewellery and a four-wheeler.

Out of the movable properties, Patnaik has fixed deposits worth ₹1 crore in HDFC Bank, RBI bonds of ₹9 crore and ₹1.50 crore in post office.

The CM has deposits of ₹70.11

lakh in a bank at Janpath, New Delhi, and ₹20.87 lakh in the State Bank of India at Bhubaneswar. The gold jewellery was valued at ₹3.49 lakh and the old Ambassador car of the 1980 model at ₹6.434.

The five-time Chief Minister held immovable properties worth ₹52.88 crore, all of which were inherited from parents Biju and Gyan Patnaik, according to the CM's property statement.

His immovable assets included

his share in Naveen Niwas, near Bhubaneswar airport, worth ₹9.52 crore, and 50 per cent share in the property at 3, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Road, New Delhi worth ₹43.36 crore.

As of December 31, 2022, Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari has a total property worth ₹2.89 crore, while his wife Binapani has assets worth ₹1.77 crore.

Pujari possessed nine landed properties worth ₹1.41 crore, bank balance of ₹76.60 lakh, ₹20.79 lakh investments in LIC policies, three vehicles worth ₹9.27 lakh, jewellery worth ₹31.21 lakh and ₹4.73 lakh cash in hand.

Similarly, Rural Development Minister Pritiranjana Gharai, Handlooms, Textiles and Handicrafts Minister Rita Sahu, Steel and Mines Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallik mentioned that they do not have any four-wheeler.

Cong for interim order by Mahanadi Tribunal

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 19: Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Friday wanted the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal (MWDT) to pass an interim order considering the acute water crisis in Odisha during non-monsoon period.

Addressing a press conference here, OPCC president Sarat Patnaik, media cell chairman Ganeswar Behera and campaign committee chairman Bijay Patnaik said the water flow in Mahanadi has drastically reduced during non-monsoon period leading to acute shortage of water for irrigation and drinking purpose.

Expressing their concern over the delay in resolve of the water dis-



pute, they wanted the MWDT to issue an interim order. They also asked the Tribunal to give a specific deadline for the verdict.

The Congress leaders said though two committees—one under the chairmanship of Chief Minister and another under the chairmanship of the Speaker—were formed to initiate steps for the resolve of the Mahanadi water dispute, the committees have not met even once

during the last five years.

They said though the Tribunal was formed five years back, it has not given a single verdict so far.

They said the common information format has not yet been finalised by the Odisha government.

The Congress leaders alleged that the water flow to Hirakud has been reduced by more than 77 per cent in May following the construction of barrages by Chhattisgarh. Meanwhile, a team of the MWDT arrived in Odisha Friday on a 10-day field survey. The team is scheduled to visit 30 locations during the survey. The team has already conducted its field survey in Chhattisgarh in two phases from April 18 to May 3 last and assessed the situation there.



TALENT FETED: Singer Pranab Patnaik conferred Sangeet Sudhakar Balakrushna Dash Puraskar during an event at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Friday
OP PHOTO

12 STONE MINES TO GO UNDER HAMMER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: The state government has issued notice inviting tenders for e-auction of 12 decorative stone mineral blocks in Odisha.

The Director of Mines and Geology has invited the tender as per Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and in accordance with the Odisha Minor Mineral Concession Rule, 2016 and Odisha Specified Minor Mineral Auction Rule, 2019.

The 12 decorative stone mineral blocks put for electronic auction are—Baharapada-Jamurhiha (East), Baharapada-Jamurhiha (West), Betarsing Block-A, Betarsing Block-B, Damba, Derab (East), Derab (West), Jhadapada, Lausahi, Nuagan (Nuagan), Nuagan (Tuburuba Mouza) and

Tentulikhunti.

The government has invited financial bids in digital format only, while technical bids can be submitted both in digital and physical format from eligible bidders.

The interested bidders can purchase tender documents after payment of a fee on the e-auction platform by June 29, 2023, and the last date for submission of the bid is July 7, 2023. A bidder will have to pay ₹50,000 (excluding GST) to purchase tender documents for each of the mineral blocks.

The state government had transferred the administration of minor minerals from the Revenue and Disaster Management department to Steel and Mines department. After that, this is the first tranche of e-auction of the minor minerals, sources said.

HC summer vacation starts May 22

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, May 19: The Orissa High Court will remain shut from May 22 to June 20 for summer vacation, an official said, adding that it will reopen June 21.

However, the vacation benches of the high court will sit May 23, May 25, May 30, June 1, June 6, June 8, June 12 and June 13 to hear urgent cases, said the official.

A two-member bench of Justice MS Sahoo and Justice KR Mohapatra and single-judge benches of Justice V Narasingh and Justice Chittaranjan Dash will sit May 23 and 25.

Similarly, the two-judge bench of Justice KR Mohapatra and Justice MS Sahoo and single-judge benches of Justice V Narasingh and Justice Gourishankar Satapathy will hear cases May 30, said the official.

The two-member bench of Justice SK Sahoo and Justice Murahari Sri Raman and single-judge benches of Justice BP Routray and Justice Gourishankar Satapathy will sit June 1.

The two-member bench of Justice SK Sahoo and Justice Murahari Sri Raman and single-judge benches of Justice Sashikanta Mishra and Justice BP Satapathy will hear cases June 6 and June 8.

Similarly, the two-member bench of Justice Sashikanta Mishra and Justice SK Mishra and single-judge benches of Justice Aditya Kumar Mohapatra and Justice BP Satapathy will sit June 12 and 13 to hear urgent cases.

UNSAFE HABITS CLAIM OVER 4L LIVES ANNUALLY

Unsafe foods, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), contribute to poor health, including impaired growth and development, micro-nutrient deficiencies, non-communicable and infectious diseases, and mental illness.

Globally, one in 10 people is affected by food-borne diseases each year. Antonina Mutoro, a nutrition researcher at the African Population and Health Research Centre, explains what causes food contamination and how we can lower the risk of disease.

Access to safe and nutritious food is a basic human right which many do not enjoy, partly because of food contamination. This is defined as the presence of harmful chemicals and microorganisms in food that can cause illness. According to the WHO, food contamination affects about one in every 10 people globally and causes about 4,20,000 deaths annually.

Food contamination can be physical: Foreign objects in food can potentially cause injury or carry disease-causing microorganisms. Pieces of metal, glass and stones can be choking hazards, or cause cuts or damage to teeth. Hair is another physical contaminant.

Biological: Living organisms in food, including microorganisms (bacteria, viruses and protozoa), pests (weevils, cockroaches and rats) or parasites (worms), can cause disease.

Chemical: Substances like soap residue, pesticide residue and toxins produced by microorganisms such as aflatoxins can lead to poisoning.

Most common causes of food contamination
The most common cause of food



contamination is poor food handling. This includes not washing your hands at the appropriate time - before eating and preparing food, after using the toilet, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

Using dirty utensils, not washing fruits and vegetables with clean water, and storing raw and cooked food in the same place can also be harmful. Sick people should not handle food. And you should avoid consuming under-cooked foods, particularly meat.

Poor farming practices can also contaminate food. This includes the heavy use of pesticides and antibiotics, or growing fruits and vegetables using contaminated soil and water. The use of inadequately composted or raw animal manure or sewage is also harmful.

Fresh foods can lead to a number of illnesses. In Kenya, for instance, the contamination of meat, fruits and vegetables with human waste is relatively common. This is attributed to the use of contaminated water to wash food. Flies carrying contaminants can also directly transfer faecal matter and bacteria onto plant leaves or fruits.

Street foods are another common source of food contamination. These foods are widely consumed in low- and middle-income countries because they're cheap and easily accessible.

Signs that you've eaten contaminated food
Biological and chemical substances are the most common food contaminants. They account for more than 200 food-borne illnesses, including typhoid, cholera and listeriosis. Food-borne illnesses usually present as diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach pains.

In severe cases, food-borne illnesses can lead to neurological disorders, organ failure and even death. It's therefore advisable to seek immediate medical attention if you begin to experience symptoms like persistent diarrhoea and vomiting after eating or drinking.

Children aged under five are the most vulnerable to food-borne illnesses. They bear 40 per cent of the food-borne disease burden. A child's immune system is still developing and can't fight off infections as effectively as an adult's.

In low- and middle-income countries, reduced immunity in children can also occur as a result of malnutrition and frequent exposure to infections due to poor hygiene and sanitation, including a lack of access to safe water and toilets. Additionally, when children are ill, they tend to have poor appetites.

New power connection now a missed call away



The process is designed to make new power connections easier and more transparent for customers to connect with TPCODL services

duced multiple channels and mediums. Once customers complete the initial registration step, they can conveniently upload relevant documents and make online payments through SMS/WhatsApp/E-mail links provided by the company. Alternatively, customers also have the option to physically submit documents and make payments at the nearest Consumer Care/Section Office of the division.

Customers have various convenient options to initiate the new connection process. They can call TPCODL's dedicated toll-free number 1800-345-7122/1912, give a missed call to 8093009990, send the message with the format "NC_Mobile Number_Name" to 8093009990, email their details (name, address, mobile number) to newconnection@tpcodlodisha.com, or visit the website https://mobidyut.com/NewConnection/Connection using a mobile or desktop device. Upon registration, prompt assistance from company officials can be expected.

For document submission and payments, TPCODL has intro-

duced multiple channels and mediums. Once customers complete the initial registration step, they can conveniently upload relevant documents and make online payments through SMS/WhatsApp/E-mail links provided by the company. Alternatively, customers also have the option to physically submit documents and make payments at the nearest Consumer Care/Section Office of the division. TPCODL always aims to prioritize customer convenience and foster transparency through following simplified steps. The process is designed to make it easier and more transparent for customers to connect with our services. We are committed to providing our customers with the best possible experience, and this new process eliminates the need for a mediator, allowing customers to connect with us directly. We believe this will result in a more efficient and cost-effective experience for our customers. Chief Executive Officer of TP Central Odisha Distribution Ltd. M Shenbagam said.



CULINARY DELIGHTS: A 10-day Rajasthani Food Festival being organised at Hotel Swosti Premium in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

Global Business Carnival -2023 kicks off in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: The 11-day long Global Business Carnival - 2023 kick started at Janata Maidan here, Friday.

The multi-sector B2B and B2C exhibition was inaugurated by Higher Education Minister Rohit Pujari. BMC Mayor Sulochana Das graced the occasion as guest of honour.

Those present at the event were MSME Director Pawan Gupta, Former MLA (BBSR-North) Priyadarshi Mishra, BPCIL Independent Director, Aiswaraya Biswal, (ICC-Odisha State Council) Vice Chairman Rajiv Sekhar Sahoo, Sr. BJP Leader Sajjan Sharma, Centurian University VC Supriya Patnaik, Gupta Event Management (GEM) Pvt. Ltd Managing Director Sujeeet Gupta and GEM Pvt. Ltd Director Payal Acharya Gupta.

Speaking on this occasion, Pujari said, "Young entrepreneurs should



always come forward. This carnival is an opportunity for entrepreneurs in the state to come and showcase their products."

Commenting on the Carnival, Mayor Das said, "This is a platform for people who cannot go out and do business. Thanks to all members of Gupta Event Management for organising such a Global Business Carnival-2023."

Sujit Kumar Gupta said, "We have tied up with MSME and COIR Board for this carnival. 20 States and 13 countries are participating in this Expo. This 'Global Business Carnival' brings together more than 35,000 national and international products and this is one of the biggest opportunities to generate business opportunities for both consumers and merchants."

Through this carnival, we have a purpose and a determination to provide customers with a unique business and shopping opportunity, he added.

Property Brand Expo, Furniture & Interior Expo, IT & Software Expo, Fashion & Lifestyle Expo, Health & Wellness Expo, Swadeshi Expo and Auto Expo among others are participating in the carnival.

In the Expo, seminars and workshops will be held on Information Technology & software, education & health with speakers from the state and outside the state. Various cultural programmes will be organised on a daily basis to attract the audience.

The carnival will be the best platform for both the customers and the business houses to do business. It is being organised in a fully air-conditioned hangar. Approximately 6 lakh visitors are expected to visit the 11-day long Expo.

Zero Shadow Day to occur May 21



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: Residents of the state Capital of Odisha will experience the Zero Shadow Day May 21, a rare celestial event that is generally witnessed only two times a year. Zero Shadow, which essentially means that there would not be a shadow of any object or beings when the Sun is at its peak in the sky.

Deputy Director of Pathani Samanta Planetarium, Bhubaneswar, Subhendu Patnaik explained the phenomenon which will start at 11:43am. The Cuttack residents will witness the Zero Shadow day May 22 at same time.

"We don't need equipment to see the event but we can use a white paper and place it on a flat ground, keep some vertical object like a bottle on it and study the movement of its shadow," Patnaik said.

"The phenomenon takes place as the rotation axis of the Earth is tilted at an angle of 23.5° to the axis of revolution around the Sun. When the location of the Sun moves from 23.5° N to 23.5° S of Earth's equator, all places whose latitude equals the angle between the location of the Sun and the equator will experience Zero Shadow Days," explained Patnaik.

Patnaik Samanta Planetarium has made special arrangements for the people to witness the event May 21 from 10:30am in the morning.

The Zero Shadow Days fall during the movement of the Sun towards the Tropic of Cancer in the north (Uttarayana) and towards the Tropic of Capricorn in the south (Dakshinayana) between December 21 and June 21.

Bird watching session for nature lovers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: Reiterating its commitment to sustainable development and environmental conservation, Tata Steel Mining organised a bird watching session at its Sukinda Chromite Mine campus here Friday.

Aimed at promoting biodiversity conservation and creating environmental awareness, the event, brought together a diverse group of nature enthusiasts, conservationists and local stakeholders to explore the rich avian biodiversity sur-

rounding the Sukinda Chromite Mine. The objective was to create awareness about the importance of preserving natural habitats and fostering wildlife conservation.

The bird watching session started early in the morning in the lush surroundings of the campus, offering an opportunity for participants to observe the behaviour and habitat of sparrows first-hand. Justus Joshua, senior scientist and biodiversity expert guided the event, providing valuable insights into the life cycle, nesting habits and migration patterns of the charming birds.



NATURE'S FURY: A bamboo structure erected at Chahata Ram Mandir came crashing down following rain and gusty winds in Cuttack, Friday

OP PHOTO

40 Raj students visit ICMR-RMRC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 19: A delegation of 40 students from a diverse group of higher education institutions from Rajasthan visited Indian Council of Medical Research - Regional Medical Research Centre (ICMR-RMRC) Bhubaneswar Friday as part of the second phase of the government's ambitious cultural and educational endeavour 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Yuva Sangam' programme.

A brainchild of Ministry of Education, YuvaSangam' Youth Exchange programme under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat aims to strengthen people-to-people connections, especially between youths of different states and introduce to them the culture and values of India. The idea of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat was conceptualized and structured by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to create a cultural connect between the var-



ious states of India.

Through this visit, the emphasis is laid on increasing the exchange of rich cultural and traditional and exchange of ideas between the two states. Further promotion of tourism, tradition, progress, technology and mutual contact are also part of the agenda.

During the visit, the students will be interacting with the Governor which will be followed by a visit to Puri Jagannath temple, Raghurajpur Village, Konark

Temple, Chandrabhaga beach, Dhauligiri, Khandagiri caves, State Tribal Museum, Paradeep Port and Lalitgiri Monastery among others. Their itinerary also includes a visit to local villages and interaction with start-ups and MSME, entrepreneurs, artists, singers, sports persons and musicians. The Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan will address the delegates at a special ceremony May 20 at SOA Auditorium followed by dinner at Vivanta.

The programme also aims to expose youth who embody not just immense talent, global knowledge, spirit of creativity and innovation but also revisit cultural values that reflect the country's humane philosophy. This initiative was launched in February this year and the first phase of YuvaSangam had an overwhelming participation of 1200 youngsters, with the first batch visiting northeast India.

Over 50% of world's largest lakes losing water: Study

More than 50 per cent of the largest lakes in the world are losing water, according to a new study, with key culprits unsurprisingly being warming climate and unsustainable human consumption.

The study, published in the journal Science, is the first comprehensive assessment of trends and drivers of global lake water storage variability based on an array of satellites and models, said lead author Fangfang Yao, University of Virginia, US.

He said this new method of tracking lake water storage trends and the reasons behind them could give water managers and communities' insight into how to better protect critical sources of water and important regional ecosystems.

Motivated by environmental crises such as the drying of the Aral Sea between Kazakhstan and



Uzbekistan, Yao and colleagues from the University of Colorado Boulder (US), Kansas State University (US), France, and Saudi Arabia set out to measure changes in water levels in nearly 2,000 of the world's biggest lakes and reservoirs, representing 95 per cent of

the total lake water storage on Earth.

For the study, the team created a technique by combining three decades of observations from an array of satellites with models to quantify and attribute trends in lake storage globally.

According to the study, published in the journal Science, 53% of lakes globally experienced a decline in water storage between 1992-2020

Climate change and human water consumption were found to dominate global net decline in natural lake volume and water losses in about 100 large lakes

Assessing storage trends in reservoirs, the researchers found that nearly two-thirds of Earth's large reservoirs experienced significant water losses

They surveyed the area of 1,972 of Earth's biggest lakes by using 2,50,000 lake-area snapshots captured by satellites between 1992 and 2020. Collecting water levels from nine satellite altimeters and using long-term water levels, the scientists reconstructed the volume

of lakes dating back decades.

The results were staggering, they said. 53 per cent of lakes globally experienced a decline in water storage.

By leveraging recent advancements in water use and climate modelling, climate change and human water consumption were found to dominate global net decline in natural lake volume and water losses in about 100 large lakes, Yao said.

"And many of the human and climate change footprints on lake water losses were previously unknown, such as the desiccations of Lake Good-e-Zareh in Afghanistan and Lake Mar Chiquita in Argentina," said Yao.

Lakes in both dry and wet areas of the world are losing volume, the researchers said. The losses in humid tropical lakes and Arctic lakes indicate more widespread drying trends than previously un-

derstood.

Further, assessing storage trends in reservoirs, the researchers found that nearly two-thirds of Earth's large reservoirs experienced significant water losses.

"Sedimentation dominated the global storage decline in existing reservoirs," said Ben Livneh, also a co-author, and associate professor of engineering at CU Boulder. In long-established reservoirs - those that filled before 1992 - sedimentation was more important than droughts and heavy rainfall years.

While the majority of global lakes are shrinking, 24 per cent saw significant increases in water storage. Growing lakes tend to be in under-populated areas in the inner Tibetan Plateau and Northern Great Plains of North America and in areas with new reservoirs such as the Yangtze, Mekong, and Nile river basins, the study said.

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Tribals resort to distress sale of Sal seeds as traders make hay

Lack of stock taking by the government has only resulted in exploitation of the gullible tribals



POST NEWS NETWORK

Dabugaon, May 19: Tribals under this block in Nabarangpur district are resorting to distress sale of minor forest produce (MFP) as they are oblivious about the prices fixed by the state government, a report said Friday.

The state government has permitted the panchayat samitis to fix the prices of MFPs and facilitate their sale. However, the order has remained only in pen and paper as the tribal villagers do not know anything about the prices of various MFPs.

In the absence of a proper mechanism, the traders are calling the shots in deciding the prices. In the haats, traders are fixing the prices of MFPs at their whim fleecing the tribals. Such a situation has cropped up due to sheer negligence of government officials in the panchayat.

The tribals are dependent on collection of 64 varieties of MFPs including Sal seeds and Mohua flowers to earn their livelihood.

The plight of the collectors at Jhaliaguda village under this block is a case in this point.

Tribal women Dhanli Bhatra, Lakshmi Bhatra, Ratna Bhatra and Mula Bhatra of Jhaliaguda village wake up very early every morning and leave for jungle to collect MFPs like Sal seeds.

They spend the whole day in the jungle and it is already evening by the time they return home. Each of them collects around 10-15 kg Sal seeds on a daily basis but they do not know anything about the price of the Sal seeds fixed by the government.

Later, they visit the haat and are forced to sell the seeds to traders asking anything between ₹12 to ₹15 per kg when the price of Sal seeds as fixed by the state government and available with Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation of Odisha Ltd (TDCC) is ₹20 per kg.

Notably, the state government established TDCC in 1967 to facilitate the marketing of tribal produces with a view to

ensure proper remunerative price to the primary producers and collectors.

Accordingly, the loss the gullible collectors suffer is anything between ₹5 to ₹8 per kg of Sal seeds.

Dabugaon panchayat's extension officer AD Prasad said the prices of MFPs are fixed every year in the month of October. However, he did not have the price list with him.

This is indicative that how the tribals are openly exploited due to the negligence and apathetic attitude of government officials.

Sources said the district has a vast forest cover spread over an area of 2,519 sq. km and almost 50 per cent of that area is covered by only Sal forest.

A senior forest official requesting anonymity said that once upon a time the district used to sell 1 lakh quintal of Sal seeds every year.

The state delegated the sale and management of MFPs to the panchayats 20 years back. Since then, the panchayats are only engaged in sanctioning licenses to the traders instead of doing anything good for the collectors. They never see if the collectors get the right price for the MFPs during sale. However, the government has never taken stock of what the panchayats have done for the tribals during these past 20 years.

When contacted, TDCC Director Akhil Bhatra said that TDCC is planning to buy the Sal seeds from tribals and efforts are on to strengthen the infrastructure of TDCC and construct a godown in the district.



TRIBUNAL IN ODISHA: Chairperson of Mahanadi Tribunal Justice AM Khanwilkar along with its members prepares to leave for Sambalpur after their arrival at Veer Surendra Sai Airport, in Jharsuguda, Friday

OP PHOTO

BENGAL FIRECRACKER BLAST

Prime accused factory owner dies in hospital

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata/Cuttack, May 19: In a major shocker for the sleuths investigating the explosion at an illegal firecracker factory at Egra in West Bengal's East Midnapore district that claimed nine lives, the prime accused and the owner of the said factory, Krishnapada Bag aka Bhanu died at a hospital in Cuttack, Friday.

He was arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the West Bengal Police Thursday only along with his son, Prithvijit Bag and nephew Biswajit Bag. However, Bhanu, who himself suffered severe burn injuries in that explosion, could not be released from the hospital and brought back to West Bengal.

Confirming the death of Bhanu, the district police superintendent of East Midnapore K Amarnath claimed that attempts are being made to bring Bhanu's body back to West Bengal.

Following the death of Bhanu, his son and nephew are the two prime accused now. His nephew, Biswajit has been taken into custody of CID. After the cremation,



the police will also take his son, Prithvijit in custody.

Police sources said that Bhanu got admitted to the hospital at Cuttack by misleading the authorities there. He told them that his injury was due to a cylinder blast at a function.

On Thursday, a division bench of the Calcutta High Court directed CID to continue with the probe on the explosion, but after including sections of the Explosives Act in the FIR.

In the initial FIR filed by the po-

lice, only sections under the Indian Penal Code and West Bengal Fire Service Act were included for which the state police attracted severe criticism.

Although the initial police investigation has suggested that the explosion was probably from the firecracker manufacturing raw material stocked at the illegal factory, the opposition parties have claimed that the impact of the explosion proves that not firecrackers but crude bombs were being manufactured there.

Unidentified miscreants open fire at OSRTC bus

Koraput: Some unidentified miscreants fired at Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) passenger bus near Baipariguda police station in Koraput district, Thursday night. Sources said the bus was on its way from Balimela to Berhampur when the miscreants fired at the bus at a place around 100 metres away from Baipariguda police station. None of the passengers were harmed in the incident. An FIR was lodged and the bus was detained by the police following the incident.

CUO to start one new PG, 3 UG programmes

The varsity will start 4-year BSc programmes in Agriculture Science, Dairy Science, and Forest Management and a 2-year PG/MBA programme in Logistics and Supply Chain Management

PNN & AGENCIES



Bhubaneswar, May 19: The Central University of Odisha (CUO) is going to start three new undergraduate (UG) programmes and one postgraduate (PG) programme from the academic year 2023-24.

The University will start four-year BSc programmes in Agriculture Science, Dairy Science, and Forest Management and a two-year PG/MBA programme in Logistics and Supply Chain Management. The decision to launch the new programmes was taken after CUO Vice Chancellor Prof Chakradhar Tripathi had a meeting with the Union Ministry of Education, at New Delhi.

Agriculture, livestock, and forest products are the mainstay of the Koraput district economy, and more than 80 per cent of the population in the district directly depends on agriculture. The majority of farmers use traditional farming systems in Koraput.

In 2012, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations had accorded the status of Globally Important Agricultural

Heritage System (GIAHS) to the traditional agricultural system being practiced in Koraput region for promoting food security and conserving biodiversity.

"Keeping this in view, the University is going to start four-year BSc programmes in Agriculture Science, Dairy Science and Forest Management from the academic session 2023-24," said Vice Chancellor Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi. He said that Koraput is a prominent producer of rice, millet, ginger, coffee, black pepper, vegetable, jackfruit, strawberry, dragon fruit, apple and banana. But there is no adequate management and supply chain system for marketing these products at the national and international level. The new two-year PG/MBA programme in Logistics and Supply Chain Management will fulfil these demands.



FISHING FUN: People gather in a river for fishing at Bankey village under Kuchinda block in Sambalpur district, Friday

OP PHOTO

Living under a roof: These joint families are still going strong

At a time when people prefer a nuclear family, the members of these joint families continue to cement their relationships by sharing their lives together under one roof, setting a major familial goal

POST NEWS NETWORK



S Baburao's 40-member strong family

ample of a closely knit joint family in this area. The family has 40 members where he resides along with his wife, seven brothers, their wives, eight daughters, and nine sons.

Three of his nine sons are married and have six children. Baburao is the head of the family. While women are responsible for taking care of the family members, the men look after the finances.

At a time when people prefer a nuclear family, the members of this joint family continue to cement their relationships by sharing their lives together under one roof, setting a major familial goal.

"All our family members live under a single roof sharing each other's happiness and sorrow. We do not have any difference of opinion or dispute and everything is decided amicably," Baburao and his wife S Sujata said.

Sujata said that all the family members give her the love and respect that she had received from her mother-in-law. The family members respect Baburao and his wife Sujata as their parents and any decision taken by them is final and binding for them, she added.

Baburao's daughter-in-law Madhusmita Patnaik said that she had learnt from her

school teacher that unity is the strength which has been amply proved in the case of their family.

The locals also admire the bonding among the family members and hail their efforts to keep alive the joint family culture.

A local said that no one will believe how this joint family is leading a life full of harmony until one sees them.

Similarly, the family of trader V Hariprasad Gupta is another such instance. Hariprasad is the head of the 26-member family. He has eight brothers and seven sister-in-laws. They have 11 children including five daughters. All his five sisters are married.

The family of G

Mohan Rao having 13 members and all living in a single house is another case in this point. Mohan Rao, the family's head, lives with his wife, four sons and two daughter-in-laws and five grandchildren.

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2 die in mishap; another critical

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandbali, May 19: Two people died on the spot and one was critically injured in a road accident at Ugratara Chowk on Bhadrak-Chandabali main road, late Thursday night.

The deceased was identified as Tapu (35), son of Ramesh Tadu of Tadasahi under Chandabali NAC and Shuvam (24), son of Jagannath Parida of Mruganayani village under Utukuda panchayat limits.

The injured has been identified as Muna Sahu of Shaenta village in the area. He is undergoing treatment at Chandbali community health centre.

As per the information received from police, while Tapu and Muna on a bike were coming from Bhadrak towards Chandbali at 10pm Thursday night, they collided head on with the bike which Shuvam was riding.

After the accident, Tapu and Shuvam died on the spot after they were flung onto the road and crushed under the rear wheel of a sand-laden truck. Muna fell on the roadside and was critically injured.

The driver of the truck surrendered along with the truck at Mato police outpost. Tension prevailed in the area due to the late arrival of the firefighter vehicles. After the arrival of Chandbali police, the situation became normal. Police seized the bodies, sent them for post mortem, and started an investigation.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ST-OT-TELE-ZONAL-BBS-320, Dt.: 15.05.2023

Name of work: TELECOM ZONAL WORK EACH COSTING RS. 5,00,000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION UNDER JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER TELECOM/BHUBANESWAR OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR ONE YEAR.

Tender Value: ₹ 30,14,676.86, EMD: ₹ 60,300/-

Bidding start date: 23.05.2023, Date of Closing of Tender: at 1100 hrs. of 06.06.2023.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website <http://www.iimps.gov.in>

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (S&T)/ Khurda Road
PR-184/O/23-24

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) Tender No. eTender-Optg-KUR-1-2023

Name of Work: PROVISION FOR PRINTING, XEROX AND SUPPLY OF DIVISIONAL CAUTION ORDER (DCO) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION ON DAILY BASIS AT CUTTACK (CTC) & PARADEEP (PRDP) (TOTAL 02 LOCATIONS) ASSIGNED UNDER ZONE-C FOR A PERIOD OF (03) THREE YEARS OF OPERATING DEPARTMENT.

Advertised Tender Value: ₹ 10,68,216.30, EMD: ₹ 21,400/-

(2) Tender No. eTender-Optg-KUR-2-2023

Name of Work: PROVISION FOR PRINTING, XEROX AND SUPPLY OF DIVISIONAL CAUTION ORDER (DCO) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION ON DAILY BASIS AT PALASA (PSA) ASSIGNED UNDER ZONE-B FOR A PERIOD OF (03) YEARS OF OPERATING DEPARTMENT.

Advertised Tender Value: ₹ 9,81,919.35, EMD: ₹ 19,600/-

Period of completion: 36 months (For Both Tenders).

Bidding Start date: 22.05.2023 (For Both Tenders), Tender Closing Date and Time at 1500 hrs. of 05.06.2023 (For Both Tenders).

Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.iimps.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager (Optg), Khurda Road
PR-185/O/23-24

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2023-15, Dt.: 12.05.2023

Name of the Work: COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR ELECTRONIC INTERLOCKING SYSTEM OF SIEMENS MAKE AT 3 (THREE) STATIONS I.E. LAPANGA (LPL), THERUVALI (THV) & RENGALI (RGL) STATION OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR 3 (THREE) YEARS.

Tender value: ₹ 60,70,972/-, EMD: ₹ 1,61,400/-, Cost of Tender document: ₹ 5,900/-

(2) E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2023-16, Dt.: 12.05.2023

Name of the Work: SIGNAL ZONAL WORK FOR JHARSUGUDA ROAD-BADMAL SECTION UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER/SIGNAL/SAMBALPUR IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR ONE YEAR.

Tender value: ₹ 68,83,050.32, Bid Security: ₹ 1,37,700/-

Tender closing date & time at 1100 hrs. of 05.06.2023 (Both tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website <http://www.iimps.gov.in>

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), Sambalpur
PR-183/O/23-24

Whenever in your life, you meet with a hardship, take it as a boon from the Divine's Grace and it will become so.

THE MOTHER



Damaged Reputation

The case of Sandeep Silas, an IRTS officer from the 1984 batch, raises concerns about the irreparable damage caused to a babu's reputation, even after corrective actions have been taken. Recently, the ACC headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved Silas' empanelment in Higher Administrative Grade (HAG) for the 2016-17 panel on a notional basis, almost three years after his superannuation and eight years after being falsely implicated in the "Rail Neer" scandal in 2015.

Sources have informed DKB that despite reports from the Railway Board Vigilance and the Central Vigilance Commission in 2016 clearly stating that "no case is made out" against Silas, the Railway Ministry proceeded to issue a prosecution sanction against the officer, even disregarding the Delhi High Court order quashing this sanction. Silas, who interestingly, had earlier served as the private secretary to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge during his tenure as Labour and Employment Minister, was subjected to custody, both by the CBI and subsequently by the judiciary, and his tenure as CCM (Catering) Northern Railway was cut short to just two months due to a leave vacancy.

While a grievous wrong has been rectified, several babus and observers are asking questions about the role of key officers and the institutional negligence that led to a loss of reputation, career and harassment of the babu. It also serves as a reminder of the urgent need to address the systemic issues that allow such episodes to occur.

New CBI chief: A strategic move or partisan politics?

In the aftermath of the state Assembly elections in Karnataka, while one political battle may seem to have concluded, another one is brewing. The shifting battleground now lies within the power corridors rather than the polling stations. Just a day after the Congress party's triumph, the Centre announced the selection of Karnataka DGP Praveen Sood as the new Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a two-year tenure, replacing the outgoing director Subodh Kumar Jaiswal.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

Given that Sood had been targeted by senior Congress leader DK Shivakumar, who denounced him as a "stooge of the BJP" and even demanded his arrest, the move is being seen by many as a deliberate attempt by the Modi sarkar's way to continue to make things difficult for the new Congress government in Karnataka. The choice of Sood as the head of the CBI clearly indicates that he is the preferred candidate of the Centre. Consequently, Sood is expected to resume his battle with Shivakumar and the Congress, both of which are vulnerable to corruption charges.

However, Sood's appointment did not come without a hitch. Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, the Leader of the Opposition and a member of the three-member selection panel chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressed dissent by stating that Sood's name was not included in the original list submitted to the panel. Despite Chowdhury's reservations, Modi's decision prevailed. And now that Sood will sit in Delhi as the head of the powerful CBI, observers eagerly await the resurgence of the battle between the BJP and the Congress. As the dust settles, only time will reveal the true motivations behind this decision and the impact it will have on the political landscape of Karnataka.

Impasse continues on Delhi's administrative authority

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court's landmark verdict, the AAP government in Delhi wasted no time in acting, swiftly moving to remove Ashish More, Secretary of the Delhi government's Services Department. But the move took a dramatic turn when the Special Secretary of the department responded, asserting that the power of the Delhi government to transfer and post officers independently has not yet been implemented. According to the prevailing order from the Ministry of Home Affairs, this authority rests with the Lt Governor until the Ministry either revokes or revises it.

Clearly, there are still grey areas, despite the five-judge bench order, and given the response of the Services Department to More's transfer, the ultimate hiring power still rests with the Centre!

During this administrative tug-of-war, the Aam Aadmi Party has filed a plea regarding the stalled transfer of the Secretary of the Service Department by the Centre. It has also reportedly recommended the name of 1995 cadre IAS officer AK Singh for the position.

What the ongoing power tussle shows is the complex dynamics of administrative authority in Delhi. The clash between the elected government and the LG's office has been a long-standing issue, with each side claiming legitimate authority. For now, the issue is back with the Supreme Court, and it is hoped that we'll finally see some clarity and guidance on the scope and extent of the elected government's administrative authority. Until then, babus in Delhi will remain on tenterhooks!

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian). Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather. **JOHN RUSKIN**

It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently. **WARREN BUFFETT**

Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. **VIRGINIA WOOLF**

WORDSWORTH

Hunky-dory

The Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang suggests that the term may have been introduced in America about 1865 by a popular variety performer named Japanese Tommy. Other references suggest that it may have been sailors' slang for a street in Yokohama that catered for what one might describe as the special needs of sailors. In Yokohama a broad thoroughfare called Honcho-dori runs from the centre of the city to the port area, so one that would have been familiar to sailors (dori is the Japanese word for a road, in particular a broad or important one). What seems certain is that hunky-dory was a play on an existing sense of the word hunky for something that was fine, splendid or satisfactory. In turn, this probably derives from the adjective hunk, which means that one is all right or in a safe or good position. This derives from the Dutch honk, meaning "goal" or "home" in a Frisian variant of the game of tag. This word (and presumably the game, too) was said to have been taken by the Dutch to New Amsterdam, later New York, but was first recorded only around the 1840s. It has links to another reduplicated term, hunkum-bunkum. Though the first part sounds a bit like the hunker of hunker down (which is also of Dutch origin), the words seem not to be related. It may be that hunky-dory was the result of a bilingual pun, perhaps invented because American sailors knew the word dori and prefixed it with hunky as an imagined Japanese street of earthly delights.

FOCUS MANIPUR

STATE OF CONFLICT

Manipur has been in a state of conflict for quite some time. It is not surprising that the situation often escalates into violence in this north-eastern state bordering Myanmar. The beginning of the current spell of violence in Manipur was perhaps spontaneous but not the discontent and discord between the Meitei and the Kuki tribals. Multiple problems have contributed to the strife between the two groups which are clearly divided by lines of geography, economy, caste and religion. The Meiteis, who are better off, educated, constitute more than half the population and are the ruling elite, want to be included in the list of the state's Scheduled Tribes, setting off the current crisis which escalated after the Manipur High Court asked the state government to consider the demand. The BJP has been in power here for six years under Chief Minister Biren Singh, completing the first year of his second term, yet nothing has been done by the Centre or state to de-escalate a crisis that will ultimately spread, challenging the Constitution, unravelling the efforts to uplift backward classes and ruining the work of our founding fathers. In such a situation appealing for peace in Manipur is just not enough.

Peace is so distant and the only thing that is evident now is the depth of the discord and lack of trust. This can be measured by the fact that 10 Kuki legislators, including two ministers from the present Manipur government and seven BJP MLAs have petitioned the Union government to provide for a separate administration as a constitutional measure for the hills. They have stated that there are no ST members in the valley and there are no Meitei members in the hill areas. The divide is clear.

The depth of the discord can also be measured by the fact that



While caste violence is not a new phenomenon, the large-scale violence against the tribal community in Manipur is unmissable

some home entrances in the valley now reportedly carry written signboards spelling out the social identity of the residents in those homes. What happens then to the Constitutional principle of 'Fraternity' which now seems to be an alien concept in the streets of Manipur? According to Dr Ambedkar, both Equality and Liberty have no meaning in the absence of Fraternity.

The depth of the discord can also be measured in the demand by Meitei leaders that an NRC inquiry be instituted to decide the citizenship status of Kuki tribals. There are different reasons being put on table by various stakeholders as the root cause of the trouble including: the fact that Kuki ST members can purchase land in the valley dominated by the Meitei but not the vice versa; the Meitei were referred to as an ethnic group but not included in the ST list during the framing of the Constitution; the Meitei who represent 53% of the population in Manipur reside in only 10% of the state's land. The other issues include the state government's steps to remove tribals dwelling in forest areas by terming them as 'encroachers'; the avenues open for tribals by their ST quotas have also added to the discord between the two groups. The underlying reason is clear: There is also an element of envy among the Meitei, though they are better off, seeing the progress the ST communities

have achieved.

Prime Minister Modi has yet to say anything on such an important matter: This suggests that as a political party, their difficulty in promoting the idea of Hindutva faces a dilemma in such situations. Does the party and the notion of Hindutva recognise as a non-negotiable principle the importance of the Constitution which has carved out a safe space for the representation in multiple avenues of public life for the marginalised communities through a system of reservation? Or should the Constitution be undermined by promoting the inequality of status as accorded by the caste system? Undoubtedly, the former calls for the party to also undertake a mammoth role, that of the social reformer.

Dr Ambedkar had argued before the Southborough commission in 1919 advocating adult franchise for all Indian citizens on the grounds that the right to representation and the right to hold public office were an integral part of citizenship. The Constitution later legalised adult franchise for all citizens and introduced the system of reservation for SCs and STs spanning the fields of higher education, public sector jobs and the legislatures. The Constitution has expanded the scope of reservation to women, OBCs and lastly for the economically weaker sections who are not a part of the SC, ST and OBCs.

While the rationale for the latter is debatable given their social and political status in the country, the central question is: without reservations in place, would the SC and the ST, the most marginalised communities, have ever found representation, an all-important step towards achieving equality and human dignity in the country?

Reservation in the cases of SCs and STs, apart from the educational and economic benefits have brought about a space for their humanisation. They have suffered centuries of deprivation and humiliation with restrictions on educating themselves. And for the SCs, even restricted physical mobility for moving around in public spaces.

The country has witnessed social tension between the Dalit and the non-Dalit communities for a long time. There have been numerous anti-reservation riots and the incidents of caste violence are by and large on the increase each year: India and all its political parties have failed to abolish untouchability and the practice of manual scavenging. The incidents of caste violence are often rooted in absurd grounds like Dalits growing moustache or dressing better. The patrons of Hindutva have undermined realities on the ground so much that in a state like Gujarat, Dalits though being Hindu, cannot enter temples in 90.2% villages.

While caste violence is not a new phenomenon, the large-scale violence against the tribal community in Manipur is unmissable.

The truth is perhaps simple. An appeal for peace is not enough. The danger is that the cracks in the Constitution are widening. The need of the hour is to find the true meaning of religion. A divisive agenda no matter how strong, will end up dividing the nation and enhancing a culture of division.

The writer is the founder of Navsarjan, a grassroots Dalit organisation fighting for human rights. Views are personal. ©THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Half a century of animal liberation not enough

Fifty years ago, my first article arguing that it is wrong to treat animals as we do appeared in The New York Review of Books. Two years later my book Animal Liberation was published, subsequently to be credited with triggering the modern animal-rights movement. Animal Liberation contains both ethical arguments and factual descriptions of what we do to animals. The ethical arguments have stood up well to nearly 50 years of discussion. Similar perspectives are now supported by many philosophers, including those who hold views that are very different from my own utilitarian position: Christine Korsgaard, a Kantian; feminist philosophers like Carol Adams, Alice Crary, and Lori Gruen; Mark Rowlands, who takes a social contract view of animal rights; and Martha Nussbaum, who is closer to Aristotle.

On the other hand, the factual descriptions in Animal Liberation of what we do to animals have long ceased to capture current conditions accurately. So, 18 months ago, I started a complete update and revision of the book, which will be published this month under the title Animal Liberation Now.

In writing what is, in effect, a new book on our treatment of animals, I could not avoid the question: have

we made progress in our attitudes toward animals, and our treatment of them, since 1975?

Many people are concerned about cruelty to animals, but focus on how we treat our companion animals, especially cats and dogs, who number about 840 million worldwide. That number is dwarfed by the approximately 200 billion vertebrate animals raised for food in appalling conditions in factory farms. In any objective assessment of the lives, and deaths, of animals under human control, the welfare of intensively farmed animals far outweighs the significance of how we treat our companion animals. Of these vertebrate animals raised for food in close confinement, about 124 billion are fish. There is now strong evidence that fish can feel pain, and there is no justification for ignoring that pain.

Moreover, difficult as it may be to conceive of 124 billion individual fish, the total number of fish who suffer because of intensive fish farming is even greater. An estimated 460 billion-1.1 trillion fish are hauled out of the ocean every year: ground up into fish meal, and fed to carnivorous fish. A typical farmed salmon has eaten 147 fish before it is itself killed.

After fish, chickens are the most consumed vertebrate: about 70 billion are raised and killed each year,

typically in large sheds containing about 20,000 birds each. Today's chickens are bred to grow so fast that their immature leg bones cannot easily support their weight, causing them chronic pain for the last fifth of their lives.

For that reason, John Webster, an emeritus professor at the University of Bristol who is also a veterinarian and a widely respected expert on the welfare of farmed animals, has described modern intensive chicken production as "the single most severe, systematic example of man's inhumanity to another sentient animal."

Because of the growth and further intensification of animal production, humans inflict more suffering on animals today than they did in 1975. Nevertheless, the trend since 1975 is not all negative. The idea that animals should have rights has gone from being ridiculed to being widely held. In many countries, safeguarding animal welfare is seen as an important government responsibility.

In Europe, reforms have reduced the suffering of hundreds of millions of animals raised for food or used in research. It is now illegal in the 27 countries of the EU and in the UK to keep egg-laying hens in the standard bare wire cages that, in 1975, prevented nearly all hens from spreading their wings

fully or laying their eggs in the nest that hens instinctively seek if given the opportunity. The same countries also prohibit keeping breeding sows and veal calves in individual crates that prevent them from turning around or moving more than a single step.

Regrettably, most other parts of the world lag behind Europe in this respect. That includes the US, where, in the absence of any federal legislation to regulate how farmed animals can be raised, billions of them still live in conditions that have not improved over the past 50 years.

Then there is China, which 50 years ago produced relatively few intensively farmed animals but is now the world's leading producer of pigs and a huge producer of chickens. To increase production still further, China is now building massive skyscraper "farms," 26 stories high and totalling 800,000 square metres, all to be filled with closely confined pigs.

Mahatma Gandhi said that "the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." By that standard, there are no truly great or morally progressive nations yet.

The writer is Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Water census

Sir, In India, cities and towns constitute a meagre three per cent of water bodies such as lakes, ponds and tanks. Many water bodies have dried up even in the rural areas due to factors like siltation and drying though encroachments of water bodies are more common in urban areas. Massive urbanisation has resulted in untreated sewage, solid waste and industrial emissions polluting all types of water bodies to a considerable extent. Lakes, man-made and artificial, as well as dams have helped but other ways to keep water clean by taking care of siltation, too, yield good results. The Jal Shakti Ministry of the Central government has done a survey that has helped better understanding of keeping water clean and potable while preventing them from being destroyed. Keeping in mind the socioeconomic and ecological importance of water bodies, the ministry's exhaustive study is indeed laudable.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Work in unison

Sir, This refers to "Siddaramaiah CM, Shivakumar deputy," Orissa POST, May 19. The Congress has declared Siddaramaiah as the Chief Minister and DK Shivakumar as his deputy in Karnataka. Siddaramaiah faces the challenge of living up to the expectations of Karnataka's voters, who have given the Congress a decisive mandate. It is imperative for the Congress to ensure clean and transparent governance as the party is on a firm footing this time and is unencumbered by coalition pressures. The onus is on Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar to work in unison, while the high command needs to be proactive about addressing issues that might crop up between them like in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. But Cabinet formation is a big challenge with Shivakumar wanting a larger share of the portfolios for himself or his supporters. Already, the Congress has had to compromise on its one-man-one-post principle by allowing him to hold the post of party chief while being the deputy CM. However, if the two leaders work in concert, the party will be in a position to fulfil the promises made to the electorate. They cannot overlook the fact that although the BJP was trounced, its base remains more or less intact in the state. There are also open threats that the saffron party would go to any extent to destabilise the Congress appecart.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, WASHINGTON

national

of the day quote

Why is LG sir not obeying the SC order? Why hasn't the file pertaining to Services Secretary been signed for two days? It is being said that the Centre is going to reverse the SC order by bringing an ordinance next week? Is the Centre conspiring to overturn the SC order? Is LG sir waiting for the ordinance and that's why he is not signing the file?

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

The Delhi government has constituted 33 teams to regularly inspect industrial units and bring pollution in the city under control

GOPAL RAI | DELHI ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

Statistics revealed that many children below 6 years were underweight and stunted due to malnutrition. Accordingly, I announced a special nutrition programme -- on the day the DMK government stepped into its second year in office -- determined to make Tamil Nadu children strong

MK STALIN | TN CM

SHORT TAKES

Youth beheaded

Jaipur: A youth was beheaded by a 50-year-old man in Rajasthan's Jalore district, following which the accused brandished the victim's severed head before throwing it on the roadside, police officials said. In the wake of the incident that took place in Padardi village on Wednesday evening, the district administration suspended internet services in parts of Jalore to maintain law and order. The angry locals did not allow the police to pick up the 23-year-old Kishore Singh's body and demanded the accused, Sankla Ram, to be arrested first. Police detained Sankla Ram late Wednesday night and arrested him on Thursday and recovered the axe used in the attack from him. Sankla Ram told the police speaking to police said that Kishore used to abuse him and his family members.

Punjab police dog beats cancer

Chandigarh: A Punjab Police sniffer dog, deployed to track down criminals and locate hidden bombs, has survived cancer and is back on duty to ensure public safety, police said Friday. The police said the labrador assists in anti-sabotage checking and has helped them during operations. Superintendent of Police Harjit Singh, who is posted in Faridkot, said dog Simmy had been battling cancer for a long time. The dog had once enabled the police to seize intoxicating substances from a foreigner.

Municipal officials attacked in MP

Bhopal: Municipal officials were attacked during an anti-encroachment drive by the members of a family in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district. In a video clip of the incident that surfaced on social media, a woman could be seen throwing chilli powder and bricks at the municipal officials who had gone there for an anti-encroachment drive Thursday.

Man bludgeons friend to death

Nagpur: A man allegedly bludgeoned his friend to death after the latter sodomised him in an inebriated state at a village in Maharashtra's Nagpur district, police said Friday. The victim, who hailed from Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh, was found dead in the early hours of Thursday, an official said.



The Uttar Pradesh Subordinate Services Selection Commission has issued an advertisement which states 9.5 per cent posts of gram panchayat adhikari have been reserved for the OBC. The reservation allotted to OBCs as per rules is 27 per cent. We will not allow the government to deprive the OBCs of their rights. We will launch an agitation soon. BJP's mindset is becoming a hindrance when it comes to dispensing social justice

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

RAHUL TO VISIT US

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the US on June 22, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will leave for the country May 28 and attend several programmes during his visit there



MONSOON ADVANCES IN ANDAMAN, NICOBAR: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Southwest monsoon has advanced over Southeast Bay of Bengal, Nicobar Islands and South Andaman Sea Friday, setting the stage for the four-month rainy season crucial for the country's farm economy. Earlier this week, the weather office said the onset of monsoon over Kerala, marking its entry into the mainland, would be slightly delayed than the usual date of June 1. "Southwest Monsoon has advanced into some parts of south-east Bay of Bengal, Nicobar Islands and South Andaman Sea today," the India Meteorological Department said.

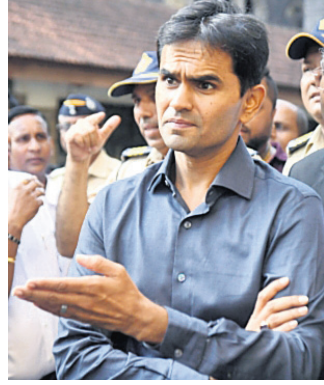


Conditions are favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon into some more parts of south Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea and Andaman & Nicobar Islands during next 3-4 days, it said.

On Tuesday, the weather office had said that the onset of monsoon over Kerala is likely to be on June 4 with a model error of four days. The monsoon arrived in Kerala on May 29 last year, June 3 in 2021, June 1 in 2020, June 8 in 2019 and May 29 in 2018.

Agriculture contributes around 15 per cent to India's 3.5 trillion dollar economy and a good monsoon helps recharge aquifers and reservoirs besides watering the farms. The emergence of the El Nino weather pattern has raised concerns over monsoon rainfall in 2023. El Nino, which is the warming of the waters in the Pacific Ocean near South America, is generally associated with the weakening of monsoon winds and dry weather in India. The El Nino conditions this year follow three consecutive La Nina years. La Nina, which is the opposite of El Nino, typically brings good rainfall during the monsoon season.

Bombay HC restrains CBI from arresting Wankhede till May 22



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 19: Former Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede Friday alleged before the Bombay High Court that the "draft complaint" in the 2021 drugs-on-cruise case named actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan as an accused, but it was later replaced and Aryan's name was dropped. The Indian Revenue Service officer made the claim in his petition

before the HC seeking to quash an FIR registered by the CBI against Wankhede for allegedly seeking a bribe of ₹25 crore from Khan for not implicating his son in the alleged drug bust. A vacation bench of Justices Sharmila U Deshmukh and Arif S Doctor, after recording Wankhede's undertaking that he would appear before the CBI on Saturday, directed the agency not to take any coercive action (like arresting him) till May 22. Among other things, his petition also provided transcriptions of phone chats with Shah Rukh Khan during the period Aryan was in NCB custody. It cited Khan as pleading with Wankhede to be kind to his son and praising the officer for his "uprightness".

The petition, filed through advocate Rizwan Merchant, claimed that after concluding the investigation in the case, a draft complaint was prepared by the Department Legal Advisor, where charges were proposed against Aryan Khan among others. But this draft complaint never came to be filed on record and was replaced by another draft complaint prepared from outside, Wankhede alleged. It made apparent "the evil design of dropping the name of a particular accused from prosecution," it added. The Narcotics Control Bureau, eventually, named 14 people in its charge sheet but let off Aryan due to "lack of sufficient evidence". Gyaneshwar Singh, then NCB deputy director who headed the NCB's team which conducted an inquiry against Wankhede, falsified records to claim that he was not involved in the supervision of Aryan Khan case and Wankhede had acted independently, the plea alleged. Advocate Merchant also argued that the CBI searched his client's house for 14 hours in his absence and took away his phone, slippers and "even undergarments." The petition cited Wankhede's purported phone chats with Shah Rukh Khan to claim that they nowhere suggest that any bribe had been demanded.

SC puts off scientific survey of 'shivling'

THE CENTRE AND THE UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT BOTH AGREED TO THE PLEA FOR ADJOURNING THE PROPOSED SCIENTIFIC SURVEY OF THE STRUCTURE FOR THE TIME BEING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: The Supreme Court Friday deferred a scientific survey, including carbon dating, to determine the age of a "shivling", claimed to have been found at Varanasi's Gyanvapi mosque, saying implications of the Allahabad High Court order for it merit closer scrutiny.

The high court on May 12 had ordered determination of the age of the structure, claimed to be a "shivling", using modern technology. However, the mosque's authorities have said the structure is part of a fountain in the 'wazu khana', where ablutions are performed before namaz.

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud issued notices to the Centre, the Uttar Pradesh government and the Hindu petitioners on the plea of the Anjuman Islamia Masjid committee against the high court order for the "scientific survey", including carbon dating, of the structure.

"Since the implications of the impugned order merit closer scrutiny, the implementation of the directions concerned in the order shall stand deferred till the next date," the bench also comprising justices P S Narasimha and K V Vishwanathan said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Uttar Pradesh government, expressed concerns regarding damage to the structure during the process and said the government will examine in consultation with the Archaeological Survey of India if there is an alternative method to ascertain the age of the "shivling" found at Gyanvapi.



Senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for the Anjuman Islamia Masjid committee, told the bench that the survey work will commence on May 22. The Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government both agreed to the plea for adjourning the proposed scientific survey of the structure for the time being.

The high court had set aside an October 14 order of the Varanasi District Court that rejected a plea for scientific investigation, including carbon dating, of the structure found in May last year during a court-mandated survey of the Gyanvapi mosque located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

Following the high court order, a local court at Varanasi on May 16 agreed to hear a plea for a survey by the ASI of the entire Gyanvapi mosque premises. Prior to this, the high court, on May 12, had directed the Varanasi district judge to proceed, in accordance with the law, on the application by Hindu worshippers for conducting a scientific probe of the structure found last year.

The high court order had said no harm should be done to the structure, which the Hindu petitioners claim is a "shivling". However, the mosque's authorities said it is part of a fountain in the 'wazu khana'. It had passed the order on a revision petition filed by Laxmi Devi and three others challenging the Varanasi court order.

The high court had obtained a report from various institutions, including the IITs in Kanpur and Roorkee, and the Birbal Sahni Institute in Lucknow, before ordering for determination of the age of the structure.

Navy locates sunken vessel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: The Indian Navy's P8I maritime patrol aircraft Thursday located a Chinese fishing vessel that capsized three days ago in the Indian Ocean, officials said.

The position of the boat was "re-layed" to China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy warships for further assistance, they said. The Chinese vessel named 'Lu Peng Yuan Yu 028' with 39 crew members overturned on Tuesday in the central part of the Indian Ocean following which navies of a number of countries including India and Australia extended help to locate the vessel.

The Indian Navy deployed its P8I maritime patrol aircraft Wednesday and Thursday to help in the search and rescue of the vessel. "Continuing with the search and rescue efforts, Indian Navy's P8I aircraft undertook extensive search



in the area and located the capsized fishing vessel on May 18," the Navy said on Friday. "The position of the capsized boat was relayed to PLA (Navy) warships for further assistance. Subsequently, P8I also sighted the fishing vessel's liferaft and guided fishing vessel Lu Peng Yuan Yu 017 towards it," it said.

On Thursday, the Navy said it deployed its air maritime reconnaissance assets in the Southern Indian Ocean region approximately 900 nautical miles from India to trace the Chinese vessel. The crew of the vessel includes nationals from China, Indonesia and Philippines. "In a display of India's obligations as a credible and responsible partner for ensuring safety at sea, the Indian Navy units also coordinated search and rescue efforts with other units in the area and guided the PLA (Navy) warships transiting to the scene of the incident," the Indian Navy said.

BENGAL'S RAM NAVAMI VIOLENCE

SC allows NIA probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: The Supreme Court Friday refused to stay the order of the Calcutta High Court handing over the probe into incidents of violence during Ram Navami celebrations in West Bengal to the NIA.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and KV Viswanathan deferred the hearing on the plea of the West Bengal government challenging the high court order till after the summer vacation.

"We have not stayed the high court order and will take up the matter after summer vacation in the month of July," the bench told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for NIA.

The anti-terror probe agency has registered the case following a high court order. During the hearing, senior advocates Abhishek

Singhvi and Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing the West Bengal government, said the high court has in its order referred to only one FIR related to the Chandan Nagar incident. "We have instructions that the court may allow the probe of Chandan Nagar FIR to be done by NIA but rest five FIRs be allowed to be investigated by the state police," Sankaranarayanan said. Singhvi said the NIA cannot be brought in for ordinary cases of violence unless it affects the country's security or sovereignty.

He said the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has a clear bar and it cannot be brought in just because someone says bombs might have been used in an incident. "Either summoning of police officials by the NIA be stayed or the high court order be stayed till this court has adjudicated the appeal of the state government finally," he said.



Students pose for pictures after getting their hands and faces painted in view of the upcoming G20 meetings in Srinagar

Oppn targets PM over withdrawal of ₹2,000 notes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Opposition parties targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday over the RBI's announcement on the withdrawal of ₹2,000 currency notes from circulation, with the Congress saying the move was "typical of our self-styled vishwaguru" and his method of "first act, second think".

The Congress also said demonetisation has come a full circle and added that the ₹2,000 note was a "band-aid to cover up the foolish decision of demonetising ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes. Left parties, including the CPI and the CPI(M), and the AAP also attacked the gov-

ernment over the issue. A Congress MP said it was the beginning of a second demonetisation "disaster", in an apparent reference to the demonetisation exercise of November 8, 2016, when the legal tender status of all ₹500 and ₹1,000 bank notes was withdrawn by the Modi government.

"Typical of our self-styled Vishwaguru. First Act, Second Think (FAST), 2,000 rupee notes introduced with such fanfare after that singularly disastrous 'Tughlaqi firman' of Nov 8 2016 are now being withdrawn," Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said on Twitter, targeting the prime minister. Senior Congress leader and former Union finance minister P



Chidambaram said a few weeks after demonetisation, the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) were forced to re-introduce the ₹500 note and he will not be surprised if the Centre re-

saying that by banning 2,000 notes, corruption will end. That's why we say, PM should be educated... He doesn't understand. The public has to suffer."

On the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) withdrawing ₹2,000 notes from circulation, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said that it "virtually reverses the 2016 demonetisation, grandly announced by Modi as the answer to India's problems of black money, corruption, terrorist funding, and promoting digital economy". He said it is a dismal failure on all counts.

The TMC also said on Twitter, "BJP demonetised ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes in 2016, disrupting the lives of Indians everywhere! They

claimed that the introduction of ₹2,000 note would curb the flow of black money. Seven years later, they are withdrawing it from circulation. Yet another Modinomic masterstroke?"

CPI leader Binoy Viswam tweeted, "Tuglaks control the financial sector of the country. They have withdrawn the ₹2,000 notes. They may argue that this shows the strength of the economy under Modi." "Are they dare enough to bring out a white paper on Indian economy after the demonetisation," he asked. Congress spokesperson Pawan Khara said the "ghost" of November 8, 2016, has come back to haunt the nation once again.

FOR THE POOR

World's 1st insurance schemes for heat

This form of disaster assistance is on the rise across the developing world, as vulnerable communities are hammered by worsening droughts, storms and heatwaves

REUTERS

Ahmedabad, May 19: A bright sun beat down on the sprawling Indian market where Kamlaben Ashokbhai Patni sat worrying about the brass jewellery on display in her wooden stall. When the heat rises, the metal blackens. Plastic pearls become unglued. "The colour of the jewel starts to fade as it becomes hotter, making it worthless and akin to junk", said the 56-year-old mother of four, on a late April day when temperatures simmered around 38 Celsius (100F) in the western city of Ahmedabad.

Climate change drove heat in the city to a record-breaking 48 degrees C in 2016. Last year, it peaked at nearly 46 degrees C.

Such high temperatures could mean a hit to business. But Patni is now among 21,000 self-employed women in Gujarat state enrolled in one of the world's first insurance schemes for extreme heat, launched this month by nonprofit Arsh-Rock Foundation Resilience Center in partnership with microinsurance startup Blue Marble and a trade union.

If temperatures climb high enough above historical averages and linger there for three days, she'll receive a small payout to help cope and compensate lost income.

While traditional insurance can take months to pay, with so-called "parametric" insurance

there is no need to prove losses. It can pay within days of a trigger being reached - a predetermined threshold beyond which conditions are considered extreme. Payments can be set to things like wind speeds or rainfall.

But with climate change happening faster and causing more damage than scientists had predicted - and too little money being spent on protecting populations - such projects could struggle over the longer-term, according to more than 20 industry experts consulted by Reuters.

Reinsurer Swiss RE reported that sales of parametric product jumped 40% between 2021 and August 2022. Insurance analysts at Allied Market Research estimate the market, valued at \$11.7 billion in 2021, could reach \$29.3 billion by 2031.

The past year has seen new products rolled out across Latin America, Africa, and Asia-Pacific. The U.N. Capital Development Fund, for example, recently developed parametric policies for Vanuatu, Tonga, and Fiji covering cyclone damage.

HEAT IMPACTS
Across the world, heatwaves that once had a 1-in-10 chance of occurring in any given year prior to the industrial revolution are now nearly three times as likely, and 1.2C (2.2F) hotter, according to a 2022 study in the journal Environmental Research Letters. Scientists expect things to get



- HEAT INSURANCE OFFERS CLIMATE CHANGE LIFELINE TO POOR WORKERS
- 21K SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN FROM GUJARAT HAVE ALREADY ENROLLED
- VALUE OF PARAMETRIC INSURANCE SEEN AT \$29.3BN BY 2031
- MANY SCHEMES HAVE PAID OUT AS CLIMATE IMPACTS WORSEN
- INVESTMENT IN ADAPTATION SEEN AS KEY FOR INSTRUMENTS' FUTURE

worse, with such heatwaves becoming nearly six times as likely if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated and the world reaches 2C (3.6F) of warming, the study found.

In the case of the Gujarat heat scheme, insured by ICICI Bank with the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) as the group policyholder, the calculation determining the trigger varies across five districts. It is based on temperature expectations from historical trends over six 10-day assessment cycles.

In Ahmedabad, for example, payouts occur when temperatures add up to between 134 degrees C (273F) and 138 degrees C (280F) over the course of three days, assessed using satellite data. The policy can pay out multiple times, to a maximum of \$85.

"For vulnerable women on the margins, enduring extreme temperatures for three days directly amplifies the chances of sickness or death," said Sahil Hebbur, a physician attending to the women in SEWA who work jobs in construction, trash collecting and shipbreaking.

Insurance payouts allow them to buy things like gloves to protect their hands from scorching hot metal tools, or fans to stay cool and avoid heat exhaustion.

Sitting with her jewel in the market, Patni said if temperatures climbed higher she would put payout money toward medicine to help with heat-related headaches. "I spend 15 hours at the stall every day ... in summers it becomes difficult to stay here," she said.

Across the city, Heena Kamlesh Parmar, 26, works as a daily wage

labourer at a construction site where she is building a high-rise residential complex, earning Rs 350 per day.

LIMITS
While parametric insurance has been around since the 1990s, recent advances in satellite technologies have opened up areas that were previously difficult to assess for damage, such as distant islands or mountain communities.

However, some industry experts question whether the products will be financially viable in the long-run, in part because of too-frequent payouts due to climate risks escalating faster than predicted less than a decade ago. This could drive up premiums.

Some schemes have already fizzled. The Kenya Livestock Insurance Program, for example, supported pastoralists hit by drought with 1.2 billion Kenyan shillings (\$8.8 million) in payouts between 2015 and 2021. But with just 1.1 billion (\$8.1 million) shillings collected in premiums, the scheme operated at a loss and was replaced this year with another that offers other financial savings products alongside insurance.

At the moment, insurance schemes in the developing world are largely subsidized by non-profit groups, national governments, or wealthy countries.

Interviews with more than a dozen groups involved in such insurance found that most products launched in the last five years had already paid out.

Donor nations mobilized just \$29 billion in 2020 to help poorer countries adapt to a warmer world - far below the \$340 billion estimated by the UN Environment Programme to be needed each year by 2030.

SIDDARAMAIAH SWEARING-IN

LDF slams Cong for not inviting Vijayan



Congress's move has proved that it cannot carry out the mission of bringing together the secular democratic forces of the country against the BJP's fascist politics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kannur, May 19: The ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) Friday criticised the Congress for not inviting Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to the swearing-in ceremony of Siddaramaiah as Karnataka's CM, saying the move shows up the grand old party's immature politics and weakness.

Neighbouring Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister MK Stalin, among others, have been invited and will be attending the swearing in May 20 in Bangalore.

"Congress's move has proved that it cannot carry out the mission of bringing together the secular democratic forces of the country against the BJP's fascist politics," LDF Convenor EP

Jayarajan said.

"Now, what anti-BJP stand is the Congress party going to adopt in the country?" he asked, speaking to reporters here.

The move is an indication of the opposition party's "immature" politics and its lack of direction, Jayarajan said.

It also proved that the leadership of the Congress party has become weak at observing and evaluating the national politics and developments of the country, the Marxist party leader alleged.

In the May 10 elections to the 224-member Karnataka Assembly, the Congress scored an emphatic victory by bagging 135 seats, while the BJP and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda-led Janata Dal (Secular) secured 66 and 19 seats respectively.

PASSION OVER PRUDENCE

Govt worker from Kerala takes loans to scale peaks

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, May 19: When friends and colleagues of 36-year-old Kerala government employee, Shaikh Hassan Khan toil hard to take and repay loans for houses and cars, this man takes loans to pursue his passion - climbing mountains.

Khan works in the Finance department at the State Secretariat and hails from Pandalam in Pathanamthitta district.

By now he has climbed Mount Everest and Kilimanjaro. Speaking to IANS over phone from Denver in the US, Monday his next arduous trek commences when he starts to climb the third tallest peak, Mount Denali in Alaska.

Along with him are three Americans, one of whom was with him when they reached the Mount Everest peak, last year.

"I am planning to take five years' leave to reach my target, which is to climb the tallest peaks of 185 countries... Denali would be the third and in July, I will reach Russia and in August - Japan. For 2023, my target is to scale 15 peaks in various countries," said Khan.

But then Khan has a mountainous problem before him as to

Khan makes sure that every peak he conquers, the Tricolour is hoisted. His motto apart from self-satisfaction is to carry the message of unity as well as make people aware about climate change



achieve his target by 2028, he requires about Rs 2.50 crore.

"My Everest trip cost me Rs 3.5 million and the present one will be around Rs two million. The biggest element of cost is buying air tickets and boarding expenses. I am on the lookout for sponsors, not one, but multiple sponsors," said Khan.

And Khan says by now he has an outstanding loan of Rs 2.5 million, which he incurred for his previous two expeditions.

"Since I have a state government job, getting bank loans is easy and

I don't need to build a house, as I have inherited one. I have a good track record too in repaying loans that was taken to pursue my passion. I have bought equipment, a must for my expeditions. So I am sure I will be able to achieve my target and help will come from some quarters," added Khan.

His wife, a teacher by profession, chips in too, as she takes tuitions, while his biggest supporter is his six-year-old daughter, who will now be missing her hero, as he is busy pursuing his target.

Shah to lay foundation stone of NACP

NACP, THE COUNTRY'S FIRST NATIONAL ACADEMY TO TRAIN POLICE FORCES IN EFFECTIVELY SAFEGUARDING THE SHORELINE, STARTED FUNCTIONING IN 2018 FROM THE CAMPUS OF THE GUJARAT FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTRE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 19: Union Home Minister Amit Shah will Saturday lay the foundation stone for the permanent campus of the National Academy of Coastal Policing (NACP) at Okha in Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka district.

The NACP was set up to provide intensive and high-level training to the marine police of nine coastal states, five Union Territories as well as the Central Police Forces, the Border Security Force (BSF) Gujarat Frontier said in a release Friday.

The Centre has sanctioned Rs 441 crore to develop NACP with modern infrastructure, latest technology and state of the art training facilities in order to enhance security of coastal borders, the BSF said.

"The academy trains police personnel and other security agen-



cies in the subjects of marine laws, seamanship, boat work, navigation, weapons handling, and usage of sea guidance and surveillance gadgets and survival skills for long haul operations on the sea, etc," it informed.

The BSF release said Shah will also inaugurate five coastal outposts, which are among 18 such outposts being constructed at a cost of Rs 164 crore between Medi Jakhau in Kutch district.

India has a vast coastline of 7,516 kms touching 13 states and UTs. It also has around 1,197 islands.

The outpost tower at Lakhpatwari Bet (island) in Sir Creek will augment domination and ensure round the clock presence of BSF troops in the region, the release asserted.

Shah will be on a two-day visit of Gujarat from Saturday and is scheduled to attend several programmes in Devbhumi Dwarka, Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, of-

ficials said. In Ahmedabad, he will inaugurate a national convention of the Modi community unday, they said.

In Gandhinagar, the Union minister will attend four programmes on Saturday and Sunday, including an event where he will distribute sports materials to children of a primary school in Borij village.

He will inaugurate and lay foundation stones for various developmental projects of the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation and also attend a cricket match organised in Gandhinagar (North) Assembly seat.

During his visit, Shah will commission 320 buses of the state road transport corporation and also inaugurate a modern organic testing laboratory of Amulfed Dairy in Gandhinagar.

In Ahmedabad, Shah will also inaugurate a gymnasium and library in Naranpura ward as well as a redeveloped lake at Chharodi village, they said.

CENTRE HAS SANCTIONED ₹441CR TO DEVELOP NACP
SHAH WILL ALSO E-INAUGURATE FIVE COASTAL OUTPOSTS

Bageshwar Baba's upcoming Gujarat visit sparks row

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, May 19: As Bageshwar Dham's Dharendra Shastri from Madhya Pradesh prepares to visit Gujarat, a wave of controversy is sweeping across the state.

With both support and opposition mounting for Shastri, preparations for the "divine durbar" are underway in Rajkot, Surat, and Ahmedabad.

Former Gujarat Chief Minister Shankarsinh Vaghela has openly criticised Shastri, accusing him "of being a marketing tool for the BJP, indulging in politics under the guise of religion". He further alleged that "false miracles and religious propaganda were being disseminated by the BJP as part of their political strategy."

Pratap Dudhat, former MLA of Liliya, Savarkundla, penned a satirical letter to Shastri regarding the price of cotton, asking him to leverage his divine power to increase cotton prices for farmers from Rs 1500 to Rs 2400 as promised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2016.

Meanwhile, the Hindutva youth leader Shastri is set to hold a session at Racecourse in Rajkot June 1 and 2.

Rajkot commercial co-operative Bank CEO Purushottam Piparia, however, has challenged Shastri on social media, asking him to reveal how drugs come into Gujarat.

Labourer-turned-athlete seeks sponsors for int'l event

38-YEAR-OLD CASHEW FARM LABOURER SHEEBA SEEKS ₹1.5L TO ATTEND ASIAN ATHLETIC MEET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kollam, May 19: If anybody asks this slender woman how did you take up athletics at the age of 30, she would give an infectious smile first and then reply, "Life made me an athlete."

While she walked and ran to reach work sites on time since her younger days, the woman never thought that she would ever become an athlete one day and win medals in open meets in and outside the country in these categories.

This is Sheeba, a cashew worker and domestic help-turned-athlete from Kerala who represented the country in various World Masters Athletics meets and garnered medals and accolades.

Hailing from Mayyanad in this southern district, the 38-year old

woman is now on another run in life to find a sponsor for the upcoming Asian Masters Athletics Championship scheduled to be held in the Philippines in November this year.

Though the event is a few months away, she is yet to find Rs 1.5 lakh to enable her participate in the international meet.

"As the government does not recognise athletics in the masters' category, we have to find money on our own for participation. I could participate in similar meets held in four countries before and in various Indian states with the support of noble-minded people," Sheeba told PTI.

Last year, the woman athlete had won medals in 400 metres relay race and 3,000 metres walk during the national masters athletic events held in West Bengal, thus



qualifying for the Asian Masters Championship.

A mother of two, Sheeba has been working in a cashew factory for years and also as a domestic help in some households to make both ends meet.

She said she would manage to find time amidst this busy sched-

After completing the household chores, I would go to the factory. Then, with the permission of the employer there, I would leave early in the evening and work as a domestic help in some nearby houses. So, my life itself is a race

SHEEBA | A CASHEW WORKER

ule for daily practice also.

"When I practise wearing a track-suit, people in the neighbourhood make fun of me, asking if she doesn't have any other job at this age. But, I usually won't take these negative comments to my heart," she said.

A school dropout, the woman said she does not receive any desired support from the family to chase her dreams.

Sheeba said she had not par-

ticipated in any sports events during her school days but since she stepped into the world of athletics somehow, it has been her passion and dream.

Despite the hardships, challenges and financial constraints, this woman is optimistic and positive about her participation in the upcoming event in the Philippines.

"Look at these medals and certificates...All I have won fighting all these hardships and challenges," she said pointing to the heap of medals, trophies and certificates, stacked in gunny bags and kept at window panes in her humble home.

"So, I am sure a door will be opened before me this time also...And I will wear the Indian jersey and win medal(s) for the country in the international event," Sheeba signed off.

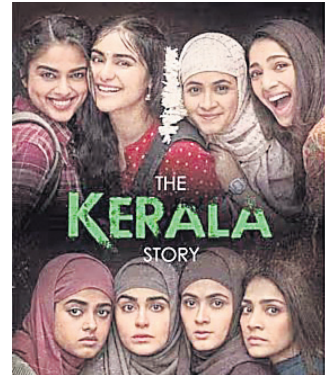
'The Kerala Story' film echoes at Ahmedabad's Jagannath temple

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, May 19: As Ahmedabad readies itself for the 146th Rath Yatra June 20, the Jagannath temple's notice board featured a message inspired by the controversial film 'The Kerala Story'.

The message encapsulates a dialogue from the film while "imparting valuable lessons for parents on raising children". The notice board messages are penned by 'sevak' and advocate Amthabhai Rabari. He has written similar messages across temples in Ahmedabad, including the Samartheswar temple in Law Garden and Bhimnath Mahadev temple in Paldi.

The notice board shares that 'The Kerala Story' explores themes around 'Love Jihad' and ISIS activities. The film features a scene where a girl blames her father for failing to educate her about their enduring



Hindu culture and tradition.

Amthabhai's penned message builds on this dialogue in his attempt to educate the parents about their responsibilities. He points out that "while parents invest significantly in their children's English education for future careers like doctors or engineers, they should also dedicate time to impart knowledge about their religion".

national

of the day quote

The main Gaganyaan will be launched at the end of 2023 or in 2024. It will be delayed a bit



JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

Right before G20 in Kashmir, security forces are breaking into homes, ransacking and violating the privacy of people here. As if the existing repression in Kashmir wasn't enough, G20s paranoia about G20 has unleashed bigger demons. Even women are not being spared



MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF

The state government is committed to freeing land from squatters and an anti-encroachment drive will begin on June 1



BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

SHORT TAKES

4 students dead

Hyderabad: Four college students were killed and eight others were injured in a ghastly road accident at Narsingi in Hyderabad's suburbs on Friday as the group was headed for a picnic, police said. They had breakfast at a roadside eatery and were heading towards popular picnic spot Gandipet when their car rammed into a stationary truck at Khanapur crossroad near CBIT. According to police, the car carrying a group of youngsters was proceeding towards Gandipet from Shankarpally.

Lawyer assaulted

New Delhi: A video capturing an intense fight between two lawyers, one of whom is a woman, within the premises of the Rohini court, has taken social media by storm. The woman lawyer, Neha Gupta, had lodged a formal complaint with the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Rohini) against her male counterpart, accusing him of subjecting her to a series of grave offences. The charges levelled against the male lawyer, Vishnu Kumar Sharma include harassment, verbal assaults, physical violence, and intimidating behaviour. The incident occurred Thursday.

Pregnant woman found dead

Patna: A five-month pregnant woman was found dead in her house in Bihar's Arwal district Friday under mysterious circumstances. But the victim's father Ram Lakhan Paswan and brother Ravindra have blamed her in-laws, saying that they allegedly strangled her and then hung her from the ceiling fan. "My sister, Tetari (30), married Santosh Paswan, a native of Sakri village, in 2011. She also has a 6-year-old daughter. My sister's husband and his father have been demanding dowry since the marriage. We have given them as per our financial capacity but they were still demanding for more," Ravindra Paswan said.

Two killed in buffalo attack

Thiruvananthapuram: Two men were killed when a wild buffalo attacked them in Erumeli in Kerala's Kottayam district. Chackochen was busy reading the day's newspaper at his house on Friday, when a wild buffalo attacked him and he died instantly. His friend, Thomas who lives next door to Chackochen also was attacked by the buffalo, and despite fighting for his life at the Kottayam Medical College hospital, succumbed to injuries.

SC asks Bihar for records on Anand Mohan's release

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: The Supreme Court Friday directed the Bihar government to produce complete original records with regard to the remission granted to former MP Anand Mohan, who was serving life term in the 1994 murder case of then Gopalganj District Magistrate G Krishnaiah.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and JB Pardiwala told advocate Manish Kumar, appearing for the Bihar government, that no further adjournment will be granted in the case and directed him to place the complete records for perusal of the court. It listed the plea filed by the wife of the slain officer challenging the release of Mohan on August 8.

At the outset, Kumar sought some time to file a reply to the plea. Senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, appearing for Uma Krishnaiah, the wife of the slain officer, said the state government has changed the policy retrospectively and released him in the case.

He urged the bench to direct the state to place entire records of criminal antecedents of Mohan and sought the matter to be listed in August. The bench recorded that counsel for state government and Mohan have appeared before it and said no further adjournments will be granted.

"Original records with regard to remission to respondent-4 (Anand Mohan) by order dated April 10, 2023, be placed before the court", the bench said, adding that records with regard to criminal antecedents be also placed before it.

No wrongdoing: Rijju on removal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Senior BJP leader Kiren Rijju Friday assumed charge as Earth Sciences Minister and dismissed suggestions that he was removed as minister of law and justice due to some wrongdoing.

Rijju refused to answer questions about his previous ministry contending that these were no longer relevant and that he looked forward to serving in the Earth Sciences Ministry. "Don't ask questions related to the previous ministry as they are no longer relevant," Rijju said to queries whether he was shunted out for his frequent run-ins with the judiciary.



"Where is the wrongdoing? (Galti thodi hua hai?) Do you feel this has happened because of some wrongdoing," Rijju countered to questions on whether his sudden departure from the law ministry on Thursday was due to some wrongdoing. "These changes and assigning different responsibilities are the way a government functions. It is the prerogative of the prime minister to assign responsibilities as per his thinking. Why do you feel that something is amiss," he said.

Rudraprayag (Uttarakhand), May 19: A recent study conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has found that Rudraprayag's Tungnath temple has tilted slightly.

The report said that the temple has tilted by around five to six degrees, and the idols and smaller structures within the complex have also tilted by 10 degrees which has raised concerns about the existence of the temple. Located at an altitude of 12,800 feet in the Garhwal Himalayas, the temple is the world's highest Shiva shrine. Manoj Kumar Saxena, the Superintendent Archaeologist of Dehradun Circle, has expressed grave concerns about the tilting

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and JB Pardiwala told advocate Manish Kumar, appearing for the Bihar government, that no further adjournment will be granted in the case and directed him to place the complete records for perusal of the court

Mohan was released from the Saharsa jail April 24 after serving 14 years of imprisonment following an amendment made in Bihar's prison rules by the state government



Advocate Shueb Alam appeared for an intervenor, and sought permission to assist the court in the matter. The bench said, "Don't politicise the matter. We are on pure legal issue and would not allow any intervention. If we feel there is necessity, we will allow all the concerned at the bar to assist in the matter".

On May 8, the top court had sought response from the Bihar government on a plea challenging the state government's decision to prematurely release Mohan. Mohan was released from the Saharsa jail April 24 after serving 14 years of imprisonment following an amendment made in Bihar's prison rules by the state government.

The petitioner has contended that life imprisonment awarded to the gangster-turned-politician meant incarceration for his entire natural course of life and it cannot be mechanically interpreted to last just 14 years. "Life imprisonment, when awarded as a substitute for

death penalty, has to be carried out strictly as directed by the court and would be beyond application of remission," she said in her petition before the Supreme Court. Mohan's name figured in a list of more than 20 prisoners who were ordered to be set free by a notification issued by the state's law department as they had spent more than 14 years behind the bars.

The remission of his sentence followed an April 10 amendment to the Bihar Prison Manual by the Nitish Kumar government whereby the restriction on early release of those involved in killing of a public servant on duty was done away with.

This, the critics of the state government's decision claim, was done to facilitate the release of Mohan, a Rajput strongman, who could add heft to the grand alliance led by Nitish Kumar in its fight against the BJP. Several others, including politicians, benefited from the amendment to the state prison rules.



Workers pack mangoes in boxes at a fruit storage centre in Nadia, West Bengal

CUET-UG DEFERRED IN MANIPUR

The Common University Entrance Test-Undergraduate (CUET-UG) has been deferred to May 29 in Manipur in view of the law and order situation, the National Testing Agency (NTA) said Friday. The second edition of the undergraduate entrance exam is set to begin across the country May 21



CBI TO GRILL ABHISHEK TODAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata/Bankura, May 19: TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee, who has been called by the CBI to appear at its Kolkata office on Saturday as part of its probe into the school jobs scam, dared the central agency to arrest him if it has any proof of corruption or misconduct against him.

CBI officials Friday said Banerjee had been sent a missive asking him to join the probe at its offices at Nizam Palace here. "I dare the CBI to arrest me if they have any proof of corruption against me. They have been probing many cases in Bengal for the last several years. They should arrest me if they have any proof against me," he said on Friday at a rally in Bankura.

Earlier, on Thursday, Calcutta High Court had dismissed a peti-



tion filed by Banerjee seeking recall of a previous order of the court which said that investigative agencies such as CBI and ED could interrogate him in the teacher recruitment scam.

The TMC leader's name cropped up in a complaint filed by Kuntal Ghosh, an accused in the scam. Ghosh alleged that he was being pressured by central investigating agencies to name Abhishek Banerjee in the school scam case.

"Abhishek Banerjee will appear at CBI's office at Nizam Palace at 11 am. He will be doing one event in Bankura and then leave for Kolkata," a TMC leader said.

Siddaramaiah, DKS hold talks on Cabinet



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Bangalore, May 19: Karnataka Chief Minister-designate Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister-designate D K Shivakumar Friday discussed the modalities of Cabinet formation in the state with the party leadership in Delhi and are learnt to have shortlisted some names of ministers and their portfolios.

Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar would take oath at 12:30 pm Saturday at the Kanteerava Stadium in Bangalore. A few ministers are also likely to take oath though there was no official announcement.

The two leaders, who flew in from Bangalore along with general secretary in-charge Randeep Surjewala, held a series of meetings in the national capital over cabinet formation. Siddaramaiah held a closed-door meeting with AICC general secretary K C Venugopal and also with Surjewala. Later D K Shivakumar joined them in the discussions over the probable names to be included in the new cabinet.

After hour-long deliberations, both Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar along with Surjewala and Venugopal met Rahul Gandhi at 10, Janpath, where the leaders held talks for over an hour and a half. Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar also formally invited Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra for the swearing-in ceremony.

Sources said the new cabinet would have representation from all regions of the state and sections including SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, women, youth and Lingayats and Vokkaligas, the two prominent communities in the

southern state, sources said. Shivakumar is a Vokkaliga.

After meeting Rahul Gandhi, Surjewala and Venugopal headed to party chief Mallikarjun Kharge's residence where they are said to have finalised the list of ministers, which sources said would be around 20. Venugopal had earlier said "a bunch" of ministers would also be taking oath.

A meeting of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) on Thursday formally elected Siddaramaiah as its leader, following which he staked claim with the governor, who invited him to form the government. After arriving in Delhi, Shivakumar told reporters

"We want to invite our leaders, we want to invite Rahul ji, Sonia ji, Kharge ji and Priyanka ji for the ceremony. They gave their sweat, direction (to the campaign), so I wanted to invite them personally. Later, we are discussing the cabinet formation."

Asked how many Opposition leaders would attend the swearing-in, he said, "That we have requested our AICC president to take care of, for us, first is the Congress president and the Gandhi family, we are here to invite them personally."

He asserted that the promises made by leaders like Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi to the people of Karnataka will be fulfilled in the first Cabinet meeting itself. Newly-elected MLA Priyanka Kharge, son of the Congress president and who is a probable minister, also met Shivakumar at his brother's residence at Kaveri apartments.

Before leaving for Delhi, Shivakumar said fulfilling the promises made to the people is the first priority.

SC gets 2 new judges, full strength for brief period

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and senior advocate Kalpathy Venkataraman Viswanathan were Friday administered the oath of office as judges of the Supreme Court by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud.

The new judges were administered the oath of office during a ceremony at the apex court's auditorium. With the swearing-in of Justice Mishra and Justice

Viswanathan, the number of judges in the Supreme Court reached its sanctioned strength of 34.

However, the apex court will be at full strength only for a brief period as Friday is also the last working day of three judges who are set to retire in June.

Justice KM Joseph, Justice Ajay Rastogi and Justice V Ramasubramanian are set to demit office next month during the summer vacation, which will run from May 22 to July 2.

Justice Joseph is set to retire



on June 16, Justice Rastogi on June 17 and Justice Ramasubramanian on June 29. Justice Krishna Murari will demit office on July 8. Justice Viswanathan will become the Chief Justice of India upon the retirement

of Justice JB Pardiwala on August 11, 2030, and remain in the post till May 25, 2031.

The warrant of appointments of Justice Mishra and Justice Viswanathan as apex court judges was issued from the office of President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday. Their appointments were announced by new Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Twitter.

With the retirements of Justice Dimesh Maheshwari and Justice MR Shah in the past seven days, the strength of judges in the Supreme

Court had fallen to 32.

The collegium headed by the Chief Justice of India on May 16 recommended to the Centre the names of Justice Mishra and senior advocate Viswanathan as apex court judges.

The Centre cleared their appointments within two working days. Justice Mishra was appointed as a judge of the High Court of Chhattisgarh on December 10, 2009. He was appointed as Chief Justice of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh on October 13, 2021.

World's highest Shiva temple, Tungnath, tilting by 5-6 degrees: ASI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

of the temple which may cause problems in the future. Therefore, an inspection of the temple is being done to know the reason for the tilting and damage caused.

The report said that the ASI will find the root cause of the damage in case it can be repaired immediately. Along with this, complete data will be prepared after inspection of the temple premises.

At the same time, the ASI officials are also ascertaining the reasons for the sliding and subsidence of the lower part of the temple which might be the cause of its tilting.

According to Saxena, the damaged foundation stones will be replaced after consulting experts. For now, the agency has fixed glass scales that can measure the movement on the walls of the



main temple.

Earlier also a letter was written to the ASI by the Central government to take over the temple. The

government is considering it to be declared as a monument of national importance. It has given a two-month period to register any

objections. The Badri Kedar Temple Committee (BKTC) and the local authorities of the temple have raised objections to handing over the Tungnath temple to the ASI. This temple also comes under Badri Kedar Mandir Committee like the Kedarnath Dham.

Locals only worship in the Tungnath temple. However, priests are not appointed here by the Badri Kedar Temple Committee. Till date, the management of this temple has been under the Badri Kedar Temple Committee and the local authorities. The Badri Kedar Temple Committee and the rights holders have decided to oppose the declaration of the temple as a national heritage.

Ajendra Ajay, Chairman of the

Badri Kedar Temple Committee, said that a notification has been issued by the ASI to take the Tungnath temple under its protection. Along with this, objections have also been sought in the matter.

"In the board meeting, this proposal has been discussed with the officials and the local authorities. If everyone is objecting to handing over the temple to the ASI, then the temple committee will also register an objection."

In Tungnath temple, Lord Shiva is worshiped as the third Kedar out of the Panch Kedars. This temple is a religious place as well as a beautiful tourist attraction where devotees and tourists throng throughout the year. Tungnath Dham, a tourist destination known as 'Mini Switzerland'.

international

of the day quote

China has no objection to normal exchanges and cooperation between relevant parties and Pacific Island countries, and has always advocated that the international community should pay more attention to and support the development and revitalisation of the island countries

Given its role in the international community and the size of its economy, China has a special responsibility in the world and it has to play by international rules

Global inflationary pressures coupled with the domestic challenges of recent weather events mean a balanced and targeted approach is being taken

SHORT TAKES

Mocha toll reaches 145 in Myanmar

Bangkok: The official death toll from the powerful cyclone that struck Myanmar has burgeoned to at least 145, including 117 members of the Muslim Rohingya minority, state television reported Friday. It said the figure applied to the western state of Rakhine, where Cyclone Mocha did the most damage, but did not say how many storm-related deaths there have been in other parts of the country. The accounting of casualties from the cyclone has been slow, in part due to communication difficulties in the affected areas and the military government's tight control over information.

Philippine VP quits from ruling party

Manila: Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte resigned Friday as a member of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD), the ruling political party in the House of Representatives. Sara Duterte, the daughter of former President Rodrigo Duterte who serves as the party's chairperson, did not state the reason for her "irrevocable" resignation, reports said.

Iran executes three

Tehran: Three men who were sentenced to death in connection to last year's anti-government protests in Iran were executed by the authorities Friday, the judiciary announced. Majid Kazemi (30), Saleh Mirhashemi (36) and Saeed Yaqoubi (37) were arrested in the city of Isfahan November 16, 2022, the BBC reported. They were convicted over their alleged involvement in an attack which killed two Basij paramilitary force members and a police officer during a protest in the city.

PM Modi in Hiroshima for G7, Quad summits

Modi arrived in Hiroshima on the first leg of his three-nation trip to Japan, Papua New Guinea and Australia and is expected to take part in over 40 engagements

AGENCIES

Hiroshima, May 19: Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived here Friday to attend the annual summit of the G7 grouping and the third in-person Quad leaders' meeting during which he will exchange views with world leaders on global challenges and discuss ways to collectively address them. Modi arrived in Hiroshima on the first leg of his three-nation trip to Japan, Papua New Guinea and Australia and is expected to take part in over 40 engagements.

"Landed in Hiroshima to join the G7 Summit proceedings. Will also be having bilateral meetings with various world leaders," Modi tweeted.

Earlier, in his departure statement, the prime minister said he was looking forward to exchanging views with the G7 countries and other invited partners on challenges that the world faces and the need to collectively address them.

"My presence in this G7 summit is particularly meaningful as India holds the G20 presidency this year. I look forward to exchanging views with the G7 countries and other invited partners on challenges that the world faces and the need to collectively address them," he said.

The Prime Minister was received by senior Japanese and Indian officials at the airport. Modi was warmly received by the Indian community when he reached his hotel. The Prime Minister also interacted with children and members of the Indian community.

"I am grateful to Hiroshima's Indian community for a memorable welcome to the city," he tweeted.

Modi is visiting Hiroshima from May 19 to 21 primarily for the annual summit of the G7 advanced economies in which he is expected



MODI IS EXPECTED TO HOLD BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH SOME OF THE WORLD LEADERS ATTENDING THE HIROSHIMA G7 SUMMIT

THE G-7 BLOC COMPRISES JAPAN, THE UNITED STATES, THE UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, GERMANY, CANADA AND ITALY, AS WELL AS THE EUROPEAN UNION

to speak on challenges facing the globe, including food, fertiliser and energy security.

Modi is expected to hold bilateral meetings with some of the world leaders attending the Hiroshima G7 Summit.

The G-7 bloc comprises Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada and Italy, as well as the European Union.

From Japan, he will travel to Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea where he will host the third summit of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) on May 22 jointly with Prime Minister James Marape. In the third and final leg of the trip, Modi will visit Australia from May 22 to 24.

The Quad summit was originally scheduled to be held in Sydney



The long-term impacts of the disaster, including soaring food and energy prices combined with the loss of livelihoods and access to services will push hundreds of thousands of children deeper into poverty

CATHERINE RUSSELL | UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

XI MEETS CENTRAL ASIAN LEADERS

Chinese leader Xi Jinping promised to build more railway and other trade links with Central Asia and proposed jointly developing oil and gas sources at a meeting Friday with the region's leaders that highlighted Beijing's growing influence



Police left Imran's house after having 'water and biscuits'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, May 19: Punjab Police who visited Imran Khan's Zaman Park residence here to conduct a search operation to arrest "terrorists" reportedly hiding there have returned with only "water and biscuits", former Pakistan prime minister's chief security officer said Friday.

A delegation comprising Lahore Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Lahore Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider, DIG Operations Sadiq Dogar and SSP Operations Sohaib, met Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party to hold negotiations with him, according to the Dawn newspaper.

The move comes hours after Punjab Police obtained warrants to conduct a detailed search at Khan's residence.

According to the Punjab Police



statement, the search would encompass a thorough examination of both the entrance and exit points of the residence, with the primary objective of finding "terrorists" hiding at the place, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Khan's chief security officer Iftikhar Ghuman, however, said the Punjab police have returned from Zaman Park "empty-handed", the report said.

Talking to journalists outside Khan's residence, Ghuman said: "I think they have understood that there is nothing here. The only thing they got here was water and biscuits."

On Wednesday, the Punjab government claimed that "30 to 40 terrorists were hiding inside Khan's residence," and gave an ultimatum of 24 hours to his party to hand over the miscreants. However, no action was taken after the deadline expired Thursday.

Zelenskyy, Assad in Saudi for Arab summit

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jeddah, May 19: Saudi Arabia hosted an Arab League summit Friday in which Syrian President Bashar Assad was welcomed back after a 12-year suspension and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy made a surprise visit to rally support against Russia.

Russian airstrikes have left a swath of destruction across both countries, but in Syria they came at Assad's invitation and helped him cling to power through years of grinding civil war.

Several other Arab states have maintained warm ties with Moscow while remaining largely neutral on the Ukraine war.

The odd pairing of the two leaders in the same forum is the result of a recent flurry of diplomacy by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is pursuing regional rapprochement with the same vigour he previously brought to the oil-rich kingdom's confrontation with its archrival Iran.

In recent months, Saudi Arabia has restored diplomatic ties with Iran, ending the kingdom's years long war against Iran-backed rebels in Yemen and led the push for Syria's return to the 22-member Arab League.

The Saudi crown prince welcomed both Assad and Zelenskyy to the Red Sea city of Jeddah, expressing support for "whatever helps in reducing the crisis be-

The summit showcased redoubled Saudi Arabia efforts to exercise sway on the global stage, with Zelenskyy in attendance and Crown Prince Mohammed restating Riyadh's readiness to mediate in the war with Russia

tween Russia and Ukraine."

He added that the kingdom, which brokered a prisoner exchange last year, "is ready to exert efforts for mediation."

Addressing the summit in English, Zelenskyy appeared to invoke the Arab world's own troubled history of invasion and occupation, saying their nations would understand that Ukraine "will never submit to any foreigners or colonisers. That's why we fight."

He took a swipe at Iran for supplying attack drones to Russia and spoke about the suffering of Muslim ethnic Tatars living under Russian occupation in Crimea.

He also accused some in the hall of "turning a blind eye" to Russia's violations, without naming them.

The visit comes amid a whirlwind of international travel by the Ukrainian leader, but until now he has mostly visited allied countries.



China to use Russia port for transport

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, May 19: China will make use of the Russian port Vladivostok near the border as a transit hub for domestic shipments of goods from its northeast Jilin Province to the eastern parts of the country to bring down the transport costs.

China has approved Vladivostok in Russia as a cross-border transit port for domestic trade shipments, the move aimed at implementing the national strategic plan to revitalise Northeast China's industrial base and facilitate the cross-border transport of domestic trade goods with the use of overseas ports, official media quoted Chinese customs announcement.

The agreement which will take effect in June, provides China a shorter and cheaper route to trans-



China, Russia reached the agreement to use the Vladivostok as the two countries continue to firm up their ties in the midst of Ukraine war with Beijing increasing its trade and economic ties with Moscow

port goods from its northeastern region to its eastern economic powerhouse, of Zhejiang province, the Hong Kong based South China Morning Post reported.

The agreement will make the Russian port, in essence, a domestic Chinese port for Jilin, from where the goods will be shipped by rail or truck to the port with no tariffs nor taxes incurred, it said.

By transporting goods through Vladivostok in the future, the land transportation distance can be shortened by more than 800 kms, and the cost will be greatly reduced for Chinese goods, state-run Global Times reported.

SUNAK'S WEALTH DECLINES

AGENCIES

London, May 19: The wealth of British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murty has fallen over the last year, putting them in 275th place in the Sunday Times Rich List, after the value of their stake in Indian I.T. giant Infosys dropped.

The pair were ranked in 222nd position last year. Shares in Infosys (INFY.NS), which was founded by Murty's father, have fallen by about 20% in the last 12 months.

Sunak is the richest ever occupant of 10 Downing Street, and his fortune has opened him up to regular attacks from opposition politicians who say he is out of touch with ordinary people at a time of a cost-of-living crisis making many Britons poorer.

"I think in our country, we judge people not by their bank account, we judge them by their character and their actions. And yes, I'm really fortunate to be in the situation I'm in now, but I wasn't born like this," Sunak said last year.

Inflation stands at over 10% and



LAST YEAR, SUNAK'S INDIAN-BORN WIFE FACED PUBLIC CRITICISM AND ANGER AFTER IT WAS REVEALED SHE HAD "NON-DOMICILED" TAX STATUS, MEANING SHE DID NOT PAY TAX IN BRITAIN ON HER EARNINGS ABROAD

SHE SUBSEQUENTLY RELINQUISHED SUCH STATUS AND SAID SHE WOULD PAY BRITISH TAX ON HER GLOBAL INCOME

wages are not rising as fast, squeezing household incomes and causing a cost of living crisis which dominates headlines. As Prime Minister, he is entitled to an annual

salary of about 165,000 pounds (\$208,246). According to Rich List estimates, his wealth was put at around 730 million pounds last year, before it dropped to 529 million in 2023. According to "The Sunday Times", its annual list is based on identifiable wealth including land, property, other assets such as art, or significant shares in publicly quoted companies, and excludes bank accounts to which it has no access.

Therefore, it notes, the actual size of the fortunes of the country's wealthiest could be larger than the estimated figures.

This year is the 35th such list the newspaper has released and it registers the first fall in the number of billionaires since the 2007-08 financial crisis at 171 - down six from last year. King Charles III makes his entry to the list as the new British monarch, with an estimated fortune of GBP 600 million - which surpasses the wealth of his late mother Queen Elizabeth II, who had an estimated GBP 370 million at the time of her death in 2022.

Salman Rushdie makes 1st public appearance since stabbing incident

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, May 19: Nine months after a near-lethal attack that left him debilitated and without vision in one eye, Booker Prize-winning author Salman Rushdie made his first appearance at the PEN Americas annual gala in New York City.

His appearance at the 2023 Literary Gala at the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan Thursday night came as a surprise as it had not been earlier announced.

PEN America honored the Indian-born author with the PEN Centenary Courage Award. "Rushdie accepted the award in person, in his first public appearance since he was severely wounded in a knife attack nine months ago," said the nonprofit organization that works to defend and celebrate



Hundreds of millions of life years lost to pandemic: WHO

The pandemic has wreaked global devastation and officially killed nearly seven million people, with the true figure believed to be closer to 20 million

REUTERS

Geneva, Switzerland, May 19: Nearly 337 million life years were lost in the two first years of the Covid-19 pandemic, as millions of people died prematurely, the World Health Organization said Friday. The UN health agency's annual world statistics report also showed a swelling threat from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as

heart disease, cancer and diabetes. The most dramatic finding, based on data up to 2022, was the estimate of how many years of life Covid had taken, WHO said.

The pandemic has wreaked global devastation and officially killed nearly seven million people, with the true figure believed to be closer to 20 million.

The WHO report lays bare how the virus itself and the broader impact of the crisis abruptly cut short the lives of millions of people.

While the WHO officially registered 5.4 million Covid deaths in 2020 and 2021, its excess mortality data shows around 14.9 million people actually likely died due to the crisis over that period.

Even more striking, perhaps, it said the statistics show that during



those two years alone, Covid resulted in the loss globally of 336.8 million years that otherwise would have been lived.

"It's like losing 22 years of life for every excess death," Samira Asma,

WHO's assistant chief for data and analytics, told reporters ahead of the launch.

The WHO warned that the pandemic had helped throw off-track many health-related indicators

that had been improving for years.

During the first two decades of the century, the world saw significant improvements in maternal and child health, with deaths falling by one-third and one-half respectively.

The incidence of infectious diseases like HIV, tuberculosis and malaria also declined significantly, as did the risk of premature death from NCDs. Global life expectancy rose from 67 years in 2000 to 73 in 2019. But after the pandemic hit, existing inequalities in access to high-quality health care, routine immunisations and financial protection deepened, among other things sending the long improving trends on malaria and TB in the opposite direction.

'Stark message'
And while the world still enjoys health progress overall, the share

of deaths caused each year by NCDs has grown, the study showed.

In 2000, around 61 percent of global deaths annually were linked to NCDs. By 2019, almost 74 percent were.

"If this trend continues, NCDs are projected to account for about 86 percent of the 90 million annual deaths by mid-century," WHO said in a statement.

"The report sends a stark message on the threat of noncommunicable diseases, which take an immense and increasing toll," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

free expression in the US and worldwide through the advancement of literature and human rights.

As the crowd greeted him with cheers and a standing ovation, the 75-year-old noted author said: "Well, hi everybody... It's nice to be back -- as opposed to not being back, which was also an option. I'm pretty glad the dice rolled this way."

"I just thought if there's a right thing to chose as a re-entry, it's this... It's being part of the world of books, the fight against censorship and for human rights."

Rushdie said he was accepting the award on behalf of the "heroes" who rushed the dias at the Chautauqua Institute in New York State and tackled his assailant after he was repeatedly stabbed August 12, 2022.

business



They (Tesla) are very seriously looking at India as a production and innovation base

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

MALABAR GETS TRQ; 1st JEWELLERY BRAND

Malabar Gold and Diamonds has become the first jewellery group in India to obtain a TRQ (Tariff Rate Quota) license from the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) whereby they can import gold through India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX). It will help in importing gold, under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, at reduced duty rates



of the day quote

India is poised to be the new destination of petrochemicals, globally. Due to our business-friendly policies, the world views India as a trusted partner and priority destination for investment

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS MINISTER

Since the start of the year more than 500 pilots, 2,400 cabin crew and 1,000 other staff have been recruited across AI and AIX. We also saw our 1,000th new cabin crew of the year commence operational duties

CAMPBELL WILSON | CHIEF, AIR INDIA

Despite losing momentum, e-tailing today is 2.5 times of pre-Covid levels and is performing much better than overall retail consumption, which has been tepid in the recent quarters due to inflation concerns

MIRGANK GUTGUTIA | PARTNER, REDSEER

Domestic airlines carried 1.29cr passengers in April

IndiGo leads the domestic market share followed by Air India and Vistara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Domestic airlines flew 1.29 crore passengers in April, a rise of more than 22 per cent compared to the year-ago period, according to official data released Friday.

However, the domestic air traffic number last month at 128.88 lakh was marginally lower than the 128.93 lakh recorded in March. In April 2022, the number of passengers carried by airlines stood at 105.47 lakh.

"Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-April 2023 were 503.93 lakh as against 352.70 lakh during the corresponding period of the previous year,



thereby registering annual growth of 42.88 per cent and monthly growth of 22.20 per cent," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said Friday.

In April, IndiGo's domestic market share rose to 57.5 per cent from 56.8 per cent in the previous month. The market share of Air India declined to 8.6 per cent in April from 8.8 per cent in March, while that of Vistara fell to 8.7 per cent from 8.9 per cent during the same period.

The overall cancellation rate of scheduled domestic airlines stood at 0.47 per cent in April, with Alliance Air seeing the highest cancellation rate of 7.55 per cent.

BGMI to return as govt lifts ban temporarily

BGMI HAD OVER 100 MILLION USERS AT THE TIME IT WAS BANNED IN INDIA

REUTERS

Mumbai, May 19: India has approved popular mobile game Battlegrounds Mobile India (BGMI) to be relaunched for a trial period after a 10-month ban, South Korean game developer Krafton said Friday.

South Korea's foreign affairs and culture ministries held meetings with their Indian counterparts to help lift the ban, a Krafton Inc representative said.

The Indian government blocked BGMI, the flagship game made by Krafton last July, citing concerns about its data-sharing and mining in China.

Krafton is backed by China's Tencent which owns around a 13.5% stake.

The three-month trial approval



The government will keep a close watch on other issues of user harm and addiction in the trial period before making a final decision

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
UNION MINISTER

of the game was agreed after it complied with issues of server locations and data security, Indian deputy minister for Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, said in a tweet.

Daishin Securities analyst Jeeun Lee said the spillover from political spat with China to Krafton will be limited.

"It will be tough for India to impose an outright ban on companies affiliated with China over political issues when they operate through a local corporation that hire Indian workers like Krafton for instance," she said.

Shares of Krafton rose 1.45% compared to the wider KOSPI index's 0.89% rise when the mar-

ket closed Friday.

At the time of its removal from Alphabet Inc's Google Play Store and Apple Inc's App Store, BGMI had more than 100 million users in India.

New Delhi banned another Krafton title, PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG), in 2020, following which the company launched BGMI.

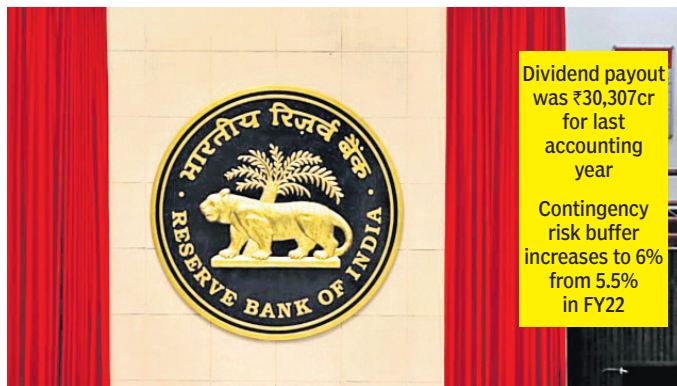
The ban on PUBG was part of a larger ban on more than 300 Chinese apps, including short-video platform TikTok, after the government ramped up its scrutiny of Chinese businesses in the wake of a 2020 clash between the neighbours.

The government also intensified the scrutiny of investments by Chinese firms in Indian companies.

THRICE FY22 FIGURE

RBI's ₹87,416cr surplus to govt

GOVT WAS EXPECTING ₹48K-CR FROM THE RBI, PSBs AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE CURRENT FISCAL



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 19: The Reserve Bank of India Friday approved a Rs 87,416 crore-dividend payout to the central government for 2022-23, nearly triple of what it paid in the previous year.

The dividend payout is significantly higher than the amount estimated in the Union Budget 2023-24 from the central bank and state-owned financial institutions. The government was expecting Rs 48,000 crore from the RBI, public sector banks and financial institutions in the current fiscal.

The dividend payout by the RBI was Rs 30,307 crore for accounting year 2021-22.

With public banks posting record profits of over Rs 1 lakh crore in fiscal 2022-23, the government's earnings from them too is likely to be higher.

For 2021-22 fiscal, the government earned Rs 40,953 crore from the RBI and public sector financial institutions. It was much lower compared to Budget Estimate of Rs 73,948 crore for 2022-23.

The decision on Rs 87,416 crore-dividend payout was taken at the 602nd meeting of the Central Board of Directors of the RBI held under the Chairmanship of Governor Shaktikanta Das.

"The board approved the transfer of Rs 87,416 crore as surplus to the central government for the ac-

counting year 2022-23 while deciding to keep the Contingency Risk Buffer at 6 per cent," the RBI said in a statement.

The contingency risk buffer, which is based on the recommendations of the Bimal Jalan Committee report, was 5.50 per cent for accounting year 2021-22. The panel had prescribed a Contingency Risk Buffer range of 6.5 per cent to 5.5 per cent.

Further, the RBI said the board reviewed the global and domestic economic situation and associated challenges including the impact of current global geopolitical developments.

It also discussed the working of the RBI during the year April 2022 - March 2023 and approved the annual report and accounts for the accounting year 2022-23.

The meeting was attended by deputy governors Mahesh Kumar Jain, Michael Debabrata Patra, M Rajeshwar Rao, T Rabi Sankar and other directors of the central board. Directors on the board are Satish K Marathe, Revathy Iyer, Sachin Chaturvedi, Anand Gopal Mahindra, Pankaj Ramanbhai Patel and Ravindra H Dholakia. Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs also attended the meeting.

HIT NEAR 1-YEAR HIGH FOREX KITTY EDGE TOWARDS \$600BN

AGENCIES

Mumbai, May 19: Rising for the second consecutive week, India's forex kitty jumped \$3.553 billion to \$599.529 billion for the week ended May 12, their highest level since early June, the RBI said Friday.

The overall reserves had jumped by \$7.196 billion to \$595.976 billion for the previous reporting week.

It can be noted that in October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of \$645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments.

For the week ended May 12, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by nearly \$3.577 billion to \$529.598 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI Friday.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves increased by \$38 million to \$46.353 billion, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by \$35 million to \$18.413 billion, the apex bank added.

The country's reserve position with the IMF was down by \$28 million to \$5.164 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

IN A FIRST Defence production surpasses ₹1L-crore

India is one of the largest importers of arms globally

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: For the first time, the value of India's defence production has crossed Rs one lakh crore mark in the financial year 2022-23, the defence ministry said Friday.

The value of total defence production in the country in 2021-22 was over Rs 95,000 crore.

In the last few years, the government has taken a series of measures to promote the domestic defence industry.

"As a result of the consistent efforts of the ministry of defence, the value of defence production in the financial year 2022-23 has crossed the figure of Rs one lakh crore for the first time ever," the ministry said. "The value currently stands at Rs 1,06,800 crore and it will go further up once the data is received from the remaining private defence industries," it added.

The ministry said the value of defence production in 2022-23 is a rise of more than 12 per cent over the figure in 2021-22 when it was Rs 95,000 crore.

"The government is continuously working with defence industries and their associations to remove the challenges faced by them and promote defence production in the country," it said. It said a number of policy re-



forms have been taken to achieve the objective of ease of doing business, including the integration of MSMEs and start-ups into the supply chain.

"There is almost a 200 per cent increase in the number of defence licenses issued to the industries in the last seven-eight years by the government," the ministry said. "These measures have given a boost to the defence industrial manufacturing ecosystem in the country and generated tremendous employment opportunities," it said.

According to estimates, the Indian armed forces are projected to spend around \$130 billion in capital procurement in the next five years.

The government now wants to reduce dependence on imported military platforms and has decided to support domestic defence manufacturing.

The Defence Ministry has set a goal of a turnover of \$25 billion (Rs 1.75 lakh crore) in defence manufacturing by 2024-25 that included an export target of \$5 billion (Rs 35,000 crore) worth of military hardware.

SHORT TAKES

UP top buyer from GeM portal in FY23

New Delhi: Uttar Pradesh emerged as the largest buyer of goods and services among all states and Union Territories from government portal GeM in 2022-23, according to the central government data. The Uttar Pradesh government and its agencies procured goods and services worth Rs 12,152 crore from the union commerce ministry's platform Government e-marketplace (GeM) during last fiscal year, the data showed. It was followed by Gujarat (Rs 7,964 crore), Maharashtra (Rs 4,130 crore), Jammu and Kashmir (Rs 1,999 crore) and Madhya Pradesh (Rs 1,983 crore). Overall procurement of goods and services from GeM has crossed Rs 2 lakh crore this fiscal year on account of an increase in buying activities by different ministries, departments and states. The GeM portal was launched August 9, 2016 for online purchases of goods and services by all the central government ministries and departments.

Gail initiates case against Gazprom

Mumbai: State-owned Gail India Friday said it has initiated legal proceedings against an arm of the Russian energy giant Gazprom for non-delivery of LNG. The company's chairman and managing director SK Gupta said Gail is seeking damages from Gazprom, but declined to spell out the amount being pressed for. It has filed for arbitration in London and also appointed an arbitrator, Gupta said, adding that Gazprom is yet to appoint its representative. A September 2022 news report said the central government is looking at the issue on a bilateral basis and was against pursuing arbitration or seeking any damages. "...We are taking up legally against them to press for specific performance and to claim the damages. And our request for arbitration has been filed in a London arbitration court," Gupta told reporters here.

PNB Q4 net profit jumps over 5-fold

New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) Friday reported over five-fold jump in its net profit to Rs 1,159 crore for the March 2023 quarter, helped by lower bad loans and a rise in interest income. The state-owned bank had earned a standalone net profit of Rs 202 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the bank's total income increased to Rs 27,269 crore from Rs 21,095 crore a year ago, PNB said in a regulatory filing.

Sensex snaps 3-day losing run

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 19: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty found firmer ground on Friday after a three-session losing streak, propped up by buying in IT, tech and banking counters amid a positive trend overseas and unabated foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 297.94 points or 0.48 per cent to settle at 61,729.68 helped by lag-end buying. During the day, the benchmark faced volatile trends, hitting a high of 61,784.61 and a low of 61,251.70. The NSE Nifty advanced 73.45 points or 0.41 per cent to end at 18,203.40.

On a weekly basis, the BSE Sensex declined 298.22 points or 0.48 per cent. The Nifty dipped 111.4 points or 0.60 per cent.

The rupee fell 5 paise to close at 82.67 against the US currency Friday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) emerged as net sellers in the capital markets Friday as they sold shares worth Rs 113.46 crore.

Tata Motors was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising over 3 per cent, followed by Tech Mahindra, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Axis Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, ICICI Bank, UltraTech Cement and Kotak Mahindra Bank. On the other hand, NTPC, Asian Paints, Titan and Power Grid were among the laggards.

No TCS on overseas card spends up to ₹7L

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: The government Friday announced that no tax will be charged on overseas spending of up to Rs 7 lakh in a year using debit or credit as it looked to douse backlash from its earlier decision of levying TCS on all spending.

The government had earlier this week brought overseas credit card spending under Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS). This meant that any spending using credit cards overseas would attract a 20 per cent tax from July 1. Debit card spending was already part of LRS.

However, the move to levy tax collected at source (TCS) attracted criticism with some calling it "tax terrorism".

On Friday evening, the government said no TCS will be de-



ducted on the spending of up to Rs 7 lakh overseas using any debit or credit card.

Concerns have been raised about the applicability of Tax Collection at Source (TCS) to 'small transactions' under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) from July 1, 2023.

"To avoid any procedural ambiguity, it has been decided that any payments by an individual using their international Debit or Credit

cards up to Rs 7 lakh per financial year will be excluded from the LRS limits and hence, will not attract any TCS," the ministry said.

Today's clarification by the ministry means that overseas payments exceeding Rs 7 lakh a year through international credit and debit cards will be subject to TCS levy at the rate of 20 per cent with effect from July 1.

Currently overseas medical treatment and education expenses up to Rs 7 lakh a year is exempt from TCS. A 5 per cent levy is charged on expenses exceeding Rs 7 lakh.

For those who availed of education loans, the rate of TCS is 0.5 per cent.

"Existing beneficial TCS treatment for education and health payments will also continue," the ministry said.

China pips Japan as world's top exporter of car

CHINA'S EXPORTS WERE BOOSTED BY DEMAND FOR ELECTRIC CARS AND SALES TO RUSSIA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beijing, May 19: China said that it has become the world's biggest exporter of cars after overtaking Japan in the first three months of the year.

China exported 1.07 million vehicles in the period, up 58 per cent compared to the first quarter of



2022, the BBC reported.

At the same time Japan's vehicle exports stood at 954,185, after edging up 6 per cent from a year earlier. China's exports were boosted by demand for electric cars and

sales to Russia.

Last year, the Asian giant overtook Germany to become the world's second largest car exporter.

According to China's General Administration of Customs, the

country exported 3.2 million vehicles in 2022, compared to Germany's 2.6 million vehicle exports, the BBC reported.

The shift away from fossil fuels has helped fuel the rise of China's motor industry. First quarter exports of new energy vehicles (NEVs), which includes electric cars, rose by more than 90 per cent, compared to a year earlier.

Tesla's China arm, SAIC - the owner of the MG brand - and BYD, which is backed by veteran US investor Warren Buffett, are among China's top exporters of NEVs.

Elon Musk's electric carmaker Tesla has a huge manufacturing plant in Shanghai which exports to

regions including Japan and Europe.

Tesla's 'Gigafactory' is currently capable of producing 1.25 million vehicles a year, and the company is planning to further increase capacity. Last month, it started making Model Y sport utility vehicles for export to Canada.

China has also seen exports to Russia surge since the start of the Ukraine war, as Western countries imposed trade sanctions on Moscow.

Last year, Chinese carmakers, including Geely, Chery and Great Wall, saw their market share in Russia jump after rivals including Volkswagen and Toyota quit the country following the invasion of Ukraine.

Japan mulling to join India's UPI payment system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Japan is mulling to join India's UPI payment system and promote cooperation on the digital identity system, a statement said Friday.

Bhutan, Nepal, Singapore and UAE have already started accepting Unified Payment Interface (UPI) payment systems. "Almost every global forum, whether G20, SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) or G7, wherever we are presenting Hon'ble PM Modi's Digital India vision, has very good traction. People understand how Modi ji has democratised digital technology. I thank the Japanese digital minister. He has accepted PM Modi's very deep and extensive vision of Digital India," Union Minister for IT and Telecom Ashwini Vaishnav said.

Japanese Digital Minister Kono Taro earlier Friday said that Japan is mulling joining India's UPI system and working on mutually recognising digital identities as well.

"We just had our G7 Digital Ministers' meeting last month and we had our Indian Digital Minister Mr Vaishnav join with us and right now Japan and India are trying to promote digital cooperation. We are now seriously thinking about joining Indian UPI, the payments system and also, we are contemplating how we can mutually recognise e-ID, for well - starting with cooperation, so we can increase interoperability," Taro said.

RR ALIVE IN PLAYOFF RACE

Super Kings eye win to seal playoff berth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dharamsala, May 19: Devdutt Padikkal (51, 30b, 5x4, 3x6) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (50, 36b, 8x4) hit sublime fifties as Rajasthan Royals kept their slim playoff hopes alive with a four-wicket win over Punjab Kings in their final IPL league match here Friday.

Sent into bat, PBKS were reeling at 50/4 but Sam Curran (49 n o, 31b, 4x4, 2x6) and Jitesh Sharma (44, 28b, 3x4, 3x6) revived the innings while M Shahrulkh Khan (41 n o, 23b, 4x4, 2x6) provided the late surge to power the side to 187/5.

A target of 188 was never going to be easy and RR needed to complete the chase in 18.3 overs to momentarily get ahead of RCB's net run-rate but they couldn't.

But still RR got two points to stay afloat with Jaiswal scripting the chase, adding 73 off 49 balls with Padikkal and another 47 off 22 balls with Shimron Hetmyer (46, 28b, 4x4, 3x6) as RR romped home in 19.4 overs.

With the win, RR moved to fifth spot with 14 points, same as RCB (4th) and Mumbai Indians (6th), who both still have a match to play in the league stage. The loss meant, PBKS are officially out of the IPL.

Chasing 188, RR suffered an early setback with Kagiso Rabada getting Jos Buttler LBW for his third duck. But Padikkal and Jaiswal batted with purpose to take RR to 85/1 in 9.4 overs. But RR lost Padikkal and skipper Sanju Samson (3) in quick succession to leave them at 90/3 in the 11th over.

Jaiswal then found a perfect partner in Hetmyer, who slipped into the role of the aggressor with three sixes early on, before Jaiswal got out. With both Jaiswal and Padikkal departing, RR still needed 51 off 33 balls and it was Riyan Parag (20) brought the equation down with a couple of sixes.

But PBKS skipper Shikhar Dhawan pulled off a sensational catch to end Hetmyer's stay even as RR brought in Dhruv Jurel as an impact sub, who clobbered a six in the fourth ball of the last over to knock off the winning runs.

Earlier, PBKS were down 50/4 in 6.3 overs but Curran and Jitesh added 64 to resurrect the innings with the latter being the aggressor. Curran and Shahrulkh then piled up 73 off 37 balls with 46 of them coming off the last 2 overs to take them to a good score.

It was the second last over which



From L: Shimron Hetmyer drives through long-off region, Devdutt Padikkal flicks one towards midwicket, Yashasvi Jaiswal pushes one towards third man

proved to be a turning point with Yuzvendra Chahal, who had conceded 12 runs in his first three overs, went for 28 runs with Curran and Shahrulkh producing some clinical hitting. Shahrulkh then

milked Trent Boult (1/35) for 18 runs as the last five overs yielded 70 runs.

Forced into the XI due to R Ashwin's back spasm, Adam Zampa finished with 1/26, while Navdeep

Saini (3/40) picked up three wickets but Sandeep Sharma had a forgettable outing as he bled 46.

BRIEF SCORES: PBKS 187/5 (Sam Curran 49 n o, Jitesh Sharma 44,

M Shahrulkh Khan 41 n o; Navdeep Saini 3/40, Adam Zampa 1/26) lost to RR 189/6 (Devdutt Padikkal 51, Yashasvi Jaiswal 50, Shimron Hetmyer 46; Kagiso Rabada 2/40) by 4 wickets.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, May 19: A determined Chennai Super Kings unit wouldn't mind being masters of their own fate in their bid to steamroll the already ousted Delhi Capitals, who are looking to end a forgettable IPL campaign on a high in a final league game, here Saturday.

At the moment, CSK are on second on the points table with 15 points from 13 games. But a loss against DC along with a string of unfavourable results could see the four-time champions miss out on the last leg of IPL action.

A win would, however, confirm a playoff spot but whether they finish in second place or third would depend on the Lucknow Super Giants' result against Kolkata Knight Riders later in the day. CSK have a better net run rate of +0.381

than LSG's +0.304, who are also on 15 points.

The slow nature of Feroz Shah Kotla track will suit CSK's game-plan and MS Dhoni, in all likelihood playing his last competitive game in the National Capital will like to make full use of the conditions against an out-of-form team.

Batting has been CSK's strong suit. Devon Conway, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Ajinkya Rahane have provided solid starts but CSK need the likes of Ambati Rayudu, Ravindra Jadeja and Moeen Ali to complement Shivam Dube better in the middle overs.

Dhoni has managed some cameos in the fog end of the innings and the skipper is expected to continue doing so despite calls of him coming up the order.

On the bowling front, Tushar Deshpande has been expensive but he gets breakthroughs while young pacer Matheesha Pathirana has been doing a good job. The spin trika - Jadeja, Moeen and Maheesh Theekshana - has also been effective in stemming the flow of runs.

But standing in CSK's way is an unpredictable Delhi side. After a miserable first half, the Capitals did manage to pick up some momentum, winning five out of their next eight games but it came too late in the competition.

They are out of the reckoning but head into the contest on the back of their first 200 plus scores and a morale boosting 15-run win over Punjab Kings, all but ending their chances of qualification.

Come Saturday, David Warner and Co. would like to play the proverbial party-pooper once again by ending their IPL season with a win at home. However, the main concern is that Delhi haven't fared well at home, with skipper Warner conceding their batting unit has struggled to figure out what the best total is at the Feroz Shah Kotla this season because of slow and inconsistent pitches.

Knights look to spoil Super Giants' party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 19: Set to be clad in local giants Mohun Bagan's iconic green and maroon jersey, Lucknow Super Giants would find themselves at home as they look to seal their playoff berth knocking out a hapless Kolkata Knight Riders in the final IPL game, here Saturday.

The real home team in this case, KKR, have not only complained of being let down by the conditions but their problems go deeper, having struggled to find a perfect winning combination in a topsy-turvy season, enduring seven defeats. Out of those seven, four losses were at the Eden Gardens.

Be it the batting, which still seems to be a work in progress, the bowling, especially pace depart-



ment, has also looked terribly short on experience. In fielding, they have made a mockery of themselves with some of the efforts suggesting that the two-time champions have showed they do not 'belong' at this level.

KKR batters simply have not been able to adapt to the surface while batting first. Courtesy, some



individual brilliance from Rinku Singh and Varun Chakravarty, the KKR still are lucky to have been able to keep their campaign alive in 'blow hot-cold' season.

With a heavy mid-table traffic, there is a possibility of four teams to be locked on 14 points with the one with a superior net run-rate making the playoffs.

Hanging by the thread, KKR with 12 points would not only need to win by a big margin, but they have to rely on Punjab Kings (vs RR), Gujarat Titans (vs RCB) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (vs MI) to win their respective matches.

LSG however do not have to fret so much about the mathematical scenarios as a win would be enough for them to seal their back-to-back playoff berth. On momentum too, LSG look far superior to a struggling KKR who have struggled to get into the act at their home den.

Elevated to captaincy after KL Rahul's pull-out because of injury at the business end of the season, Krunal Pandya looked a natural leader, especially the way he managed to choke MI while defending 177 speaks volumes

about his captaincy.

Not only did he look heavily involved, his tactical bowling changes paved the way for their slender five-run win the other day.

LSG, who will be donning a special edition Mohun Bagan colours, will further be bolstered by the support of the football heavyweights with both the teams have the same owner, RP Sanjiv Goenka Group.



Roma, Sevilla vie for title

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rome, May 19: Jose Mourinho will have a chance to claim a sixth European trophy, although to achieve that his Roma team will have to stop Sevilla from winning a record-extending seventh Europa League title.

Roma reached the Europa League final by holding Bayer Leverkusen to a 0-0 draw in Germany Thursday following the kind of disciplined defensive performance that Mourinho's teams have become known for. The Italian club went through 1-0 on aggregate after winning the first leg of the semifinal at home.

Roma will face six-time champions Sevilla, who knocked out Juventus with a 2-1 win after extra time to prevent an all-Italian final. The final takes place May 31 in the Hungarian capital of Budapest.

Leverkusen forward Moussa Diaby hit the crossbar early and Roma goalkeeper Rui Patricio was busy at times but Roma's defense held firm, despite the team rarely venturing forward and managing just one effort on goal in the entire game.

Mourinho is bidding for back-to-back European titles with Roma after winning the inaugural edition of the Europa Conference League last season. He has won the Europa League — or UEFA Cup as it was previously known — with both Porto and Manchester United and also has two



Roma players and coach Jose Mourinho (inset) celebrate after the match

Champions League titles.

Winning the Europa League could also be the only chance for Roma to qualify for next season's Champions League.

Sevilla trailed 0-1 at home in the second half but substitute Erik Lamela set up the equaliser that forced extra time and then headed in the winner in the 95th minute at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan stadium.

After the two teams drew 1-1 in Torino last week, substitute striker Dusan Vlahovic gave Juventus the lead in the 65th with a precise chip from inside the area. Suso, another substitute, scored the equaliser with a long-range effort seven minutes later.

Sevilla defender Marcos Acuna was sent off after picking up his second yellow card five minutes before the final whistle. Sevilla hope to salvage a turbulent season with a seventh triumph in the second-tier European competition.

CONFERENCE LEAGUE

Substitute Pablo Fornals scored deep into stoppage time for West Ham to beat AZ in Alkmaar 1-0 in the second leg of the Europa Conference League semifinals and send the Premier League club to a European final for the first time in 47 years.

The aftermath was then marred by crowd trouble when some Dutch supporters tried to storm into the area reserved for friends and family of the visiting players behind the dugout after the final whistle. West Ham will face Fiorentina in the final in Prague June 7.

Fiorentina also needed extra time to advance, with substitute midfielder Antonin Barak netting the decisive goal in the 129th minute to secure a 3-1 win at Basel. Fiorentina trailed 2-1 from the first leg but reached its first European final since 1990.

Fiorentina's win means Italy has a team in the final of all three UEFA competitions, with Inter Milan facing Manchester City in the Champions League title match.

Ojas, Jyothi confirm medal at Archery WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shanghai, May 19: India's compound archery team once again brought cheers confirming its first medal from the World Cup Stage 2, as recurve archers continued to falter, here Friday.

The new-look pair of Ojas Deotale and Jyothi Surekha Vennam remained on course for a second successive World Cup gold when they defeated their Italian rivals 157-157 (19*-19) in a dramatic finish to make the final.

As expected, the sixth seeded Indian duo will run into top seed Korea in the final Saturday, in what would be their biggest test since they paired up for the first time, winning the Stage 1 World Cup gold in Antalya last month.



The Indians started off eliminating Bangladesh 158-151 in lopsided pre-quarterfinals, while in the next round they overcame a strong challenge from Turkey to emerge 157-156 winners.

Italy's Elisa Roner and Elia Fregnan had a one-point lead shooting a perfect 40 in the first end. The Italians once again shot a 40 in the third end to extend their lead by two points (117-119).

India face Pak in Jr Asia Cup hockey May 27

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 19: Arch-rivals India and Pakistan have been grouped into the same Pool in the 10-team Men's Junior Asia Cup 2023 to be played at Salalah, Oman from May 23 to June 1. They will clash in a much-anticipated encounter May 27 in a Pool-A match.

The best young Asian men's hockey teams will compete in the top event for junior men in the Continent for the title and the three spots up for grabs for the upcoming FIH Junior Hockey Men's World Cup 2023, to be played in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The ten participating teams have been split into two pools, with Pool A comprising Chinese Taipei, India, Japan, Pakistan and Thailand. In Pool B hosts Oman will be joined by Bangladesh, Korea, Malaysia and Uzbekistan.

The FIH Junior Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 will be played in Kuala Lumpur, December 5-16.

BAJRANG CRITICISES BRIJ BHUSHAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19: Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia has criticised former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh for his alleged comment that a medal is worth just ₹15 and the grapplers should also return the crores of rupees the government has spent on their training.

Brij Bhushan, who is in the eye of a storm for allegedly sexually harassing women wrestlers including a minor, said in a video interview that not just the medals, the athletes should also return the crores of rupees spent on their training.

Bajrang, who is leading the protest at Jantar Mantar along with fellow Olympic medallist Sakshi Malik and Asian Games gold medallist Vinesh Phogat, said Friday that the medal Brij Bhushan was demeaning by saying it was worth just ₹15 had been "earned after 15 years of toil".

"He (Brij Bhushan) has not given me the medal in charity. I have earned it for the country with my blood and sweat. He shouldn't have uttered these words if he truly respects our achieve-



ments," added Bajrang.

Sakshi said that, at an age when she should have been playing with dolls, she took up wrestling and "embraced the mud pits". "The medal he (Brij Bhushan) is saying is worth ₹15, we have sacrificed everything for that. It's shameful that the champion athletes of the country are seeing such bad days. I have won this medal for the country, no one can put a price on it," said Sakshi.

As the protest entered its 27th day, several women's organisations jointly gave a memorandum to the President, Prime Minister,

But Ojas and Jyothi showed remarkable composure to drill in two Xs en route to shooting 40 in the fourth end to force a shoot-off where the Indians sealed the issue with their arrows landing near the centre.

However in the Olympic category, the fifth seeded recurve duo of Dhiraj Bommadevara and Simranjeet Kaur failed to live up to expectations and lost to Indonesia 2-6 (39-35, 37-39, 37-38, 34-35) in their opening match.

The Indian duo who got a bye into the second round (pre-quarterfinals) by virtue of their rankings squandered a 2-0 lead against the lower-ranked Indonesians. They had a chance in the fourth end but they were wayward and shot in the outer seven-point ring to make an early exit.

Home Minister and Sports Minister and demanded the arrest of Brij Bhushan.

They alleged in the memorandum that ever since the politician took charge of WFI, women wrestlers had been facing sexual harassment. The protesting wrestlers also said that the deadline given to the government to take action against Brij Bhushan was due to expire in two days and the khap mahapanchayat could take a "big decision" after that. They also said the agitation at Jantar Mantar will continue until Brij Bhushan is arrested.