



KANGANA DISAPPOINTED

Kangana Ranaut expresses disappointment on the critics for not understanding Indian heritage about the headpiece mistaken for a crown

LEISURE

P2



COUNTEROFFENSIVE THWARTED

Moscow says it has thwarted a major Ukrainian offensive in the south of Ukraine's Donetsk region

INTERNATIONAL

P10



IBRAHIMOVIC RETIRES

Ibrahimovic announces retirement marking an end to one of modern football's most glittering careers

SPORTS

P12

## MAHABHARAT FAME GUFU PAINTAL DIES

**Mumbai:** Veteran actor and filmmaker Sarabjeet Singh alias 'Gufu' Paintal - the elder brother of the noted comedian Kanwarjit Singh Paintal - passed away due to old-age related problems here Monday, sources said. Gufu was 78 and is best remembered for his role as the cunning 'Shakuni Mama' in the mega-teleserial by the late BR Chopra, 'Mahabharat' (1988-1990) which was a rage on Doordarshan. Born October 4, 1944 in the pilgrim town of Tarn Taran in Punjab, he also worked in films like 'Rafoo Chakkar', 'Dillagi', 'Des Pardes', 'Suhaag', and more, besides nearly 18 teleserials in various genres and roles.

## Mamata calls off Darjeeling trip, to visit state today

**Kolkata, June 5:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has cancelled her scheduled three-day visit to Darjeeling, and instead she will visit Odisha again Tuesday to review the condition of those from Bengal who got injured in the ghastly train accident near the Bahanaga Bazar railway station in Balasore district, Friday evening. "Several people from West Bengal who were injured in the train accident are still under treatment at different hospitals in Odisha. I will be going there again to review their condition," the Chief Minister said Monday. She also said that the identities of all those killed in the accident are not known yet.

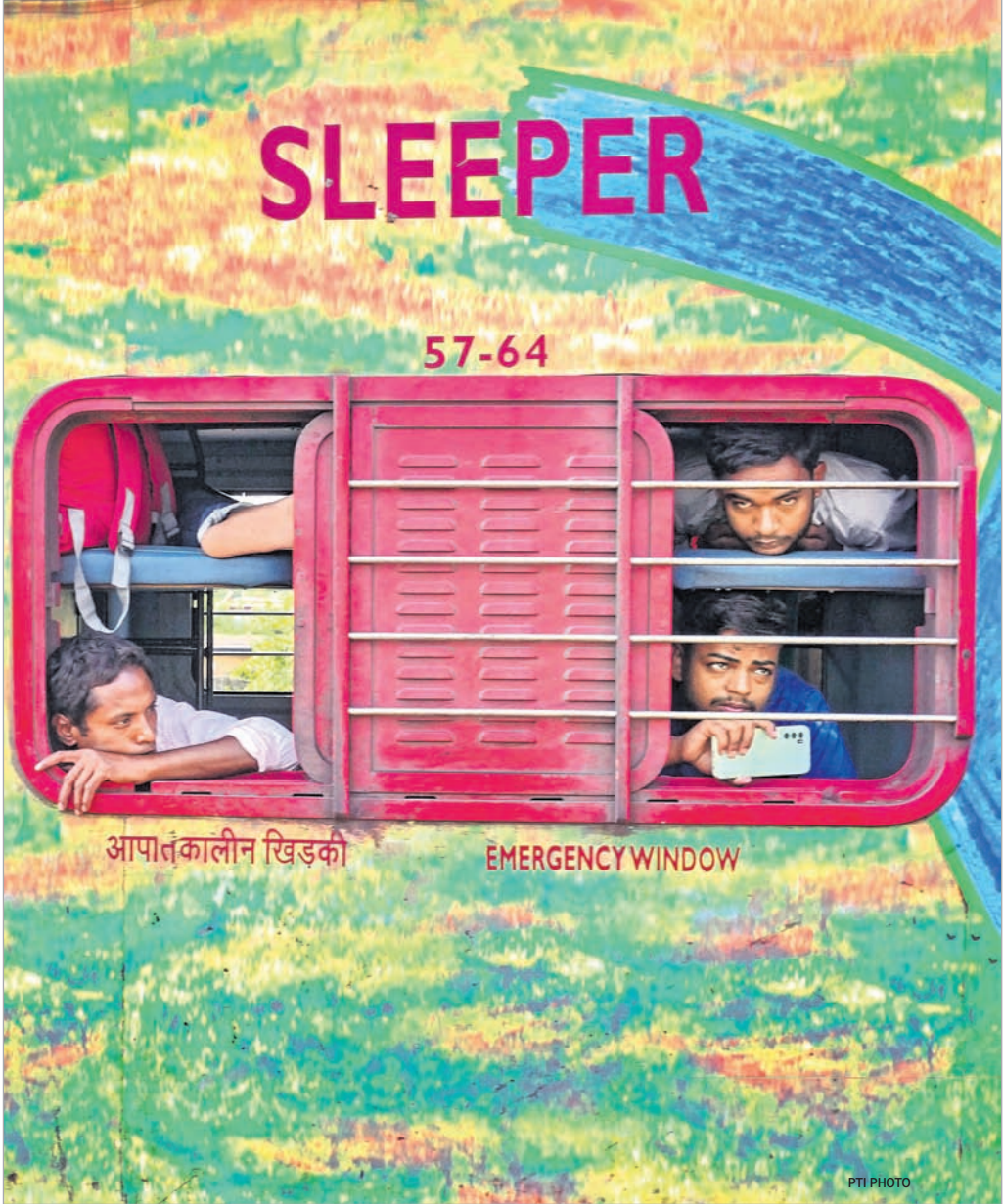
"I had also sought a CBI probe when the Jnaneswari Express accident took place during my tenure as the Railway Minister. That was because Maoists were behind the incident. But nothing has happened although 12 years have passed since then. In case of the latest accident, the CBI has nothing to do. The CBI investigates criminal matters. Rather, the Railway Safety Commission should look into the matter," she said. On Wednesday, Banerjee will hand over compensation cheques to the family members of those killed or injured in the train accident from the state.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
BULLION CURRENCY BOURSES	SENSEX	62787.47	▲ 240.36
	NIFTY	18593.85	▲ 59.75
	DOLLAR	82.56	▲ ₹0.16
	EURO	88.43	▲ ₹0.22
	GOLD	₹59,797	▲ ₹189
	SILVER	₹71,780	▼ ₹240

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
TEMP	MAX 40.1°C	38.5°C	
	MIN 24.9°C	24.5°C	
Humidity	71%	69%	Forecast
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Partly cloudy sky



**LOOK IN THEIR EYES:** Passengers look at the debris from the Coromandel Express as it leaves from Bahanaga Bazar station after train services resumed on the section where the accident happened Friday, in Balasore district, Monday

## PRIVATE GOODS TRAIN DERAILS IN BARGARH



**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** Just three days after the triple train tragedy in Balasore, a goods train of a private company derailed in Bargarh district, officials said Monday. As per initial reports, five wagons of a private company's goods train carrying limestone derailed near Mendhapali in Bargarh. The derailment happened in early morning Monday on the private railway line connecting Dungri Limestone Mines and cement plant of ACC Bargarh. However, no casualty or injury has been reported. Police have already reached the spot and begun a probe. "This is completely a narrow gauge siding of a private cement

company. All the infrastructure, including rolling stock, engine, wagons, train track (narrow gauge) are being maintained by the company, only. There is no role of railways in this matter," East Coast Railway said in a press statement. "There is a private narrow gauge rail line between Dungri Limestone Mines and the cement plant of ACC Bargarh. The line, wagons, loco all are private. It is in no way connected with the Indian Railways system," the statement clarified. Notably, 275 persons were killed and over 1,000 injured in the tragic triple train accident at Bahanaga station in Balasore last Friday. About 260 passengers are still under treatment at different government and private hospitals of Odisha.

## Fans rejoice in 'new' Beatles music thanks to AI

**Washington, June 5:** When the Beatles broke up more than 50 years ago, devastated fans were left yearning for more. Now, artificial intelligence is offering just that. From 're-uniting' the 'Fab Four' on songs from their solo careers, to re-imagining surviving superstar Paul McCartney's later works with his voice restored to its youthful peak, the new creations show off how far this technology has come – and raise a host of ethical and legal questions. "I'm sobbing! This is so beautiful!!!!" wrote a listener in a typical YouTube comment for a fan-created AI cover of McCartney's 2013 single 'New', which features degraded vocals and a bridge part 'sung' by his great songwriting partner and friend, the late John Lennon. Equally impressive is a version of 'Grow Old With Me', one of the last songs penned by Lennon, which was posthumously released after his 1980 murder and recently remade by an AI creator who goes by 'Dae Limbs'.

With enhanced audio quality, an orchestral arrangement and harmonized backing vocals that evoke the Liverpoolian rockers' heyday, the song's most stirring moment comes when McCartney croons over a soaring melody with poignant lyrics about aging. "When I hear this, I lose it. I start crying," said music YouTuber Steve Onotera, who goes by 'SamuraiGuitarist' and has a million followers, in a recent video discussing the new works' unforeseen sentimental resonance. After the most influential band in history parted ways acrimoniously, fans were deprived of a

## After Shah's meet, wrestlers resume duties with Railways

About the meeting with Home Minister Amit Shah Saturday, Malik told reporters that it was a normal conversation and no final solution has emerged



**New Delhi, June 5:** Asserting that none of the protesting wrestlers have backed down, Olympic medalists Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia Monday said they will continue their fight for justice and rubbished reports of their withdrawal from the protest as attempts to sabotage the movement. "The news of our withdrawing from the movement is just a rumour," Punia said, adding that the report of women wrestlers taking back the FIR is also false. About the meeting with Home Minister Amit Shah Saturday, Malik told reporters that it was a normal conversation and no final solution has emerged. "Our stance will remain the same, arrest the accused. Vinesh, Bajrang and I are together in this fight and till we get justice, we will remain united," she said.



final "happy ending", he said. "So when we do get that reunion artificially yet convincingly created by AI, well, it's surprisingly emotional." For the music industry, the ramifications of AI are enormous. As the technology progresses, software that will easily allow people to transform their vocals into one of their favorite singers is likely not far away. "If they're getting paid for their vocal license, hey, everyone's happy," said Onotera. "But what if they're long since passed away? Is it up to their estate?" AI is already proving a helter-skelter impact on the copyright world. In the case of 'Heart

## Multiple claimants or none at all for bodies

In order to authenticate identification of bodies and keep fake claimants at bay, the state government starts conducting DNA sampling in certain doubtful cases

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** The rescue operation in the Balasore triple train tragedy has been completed and injured passengers admitted to different hospitals as per their medical condition. Many have also been discharged, but the major challenge before the state government is the identification of dead bodies. While many bodies are lying unclaimed, two different families from Bihar's Bhagalpur claimed one body as that of their relative. The body was beyond recognition, being severely mutilated and face disfigured. As many as 123 dead bodies have been preserved in the mortuary of AIIMS Bhubaneswar while another 70 have been stored at the mortuaries of Capital Hospital, Sun Hospital, Amri Hospital, KIMS Hospital and Hi-Tech hospital in Bhubaneswar. "We are facing issues in identification of some bodies as the bod-

ies are in very bad condition and faces are not being identified properly. In such cases we have to move forward by conducting DNA tests," said Vijay Amruta Kulange, Commissioner, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). The doctors are following all procedures while handling the bodies, he added. "We have submitted related documents to the local authority to claim our body. But someone else has lodged a complaint claiming the same body. So, we are unable to receive the body," said an old man from West Bengal. Meanwhile, officials at AIIMS, Bhubaneswar came across an incident wherein a woman from Badamba area in Cuttack district made a claim over a body. She was found crying non-stop but when the officials contacted the police in Badamba, they found out that no one from the area was travelling in any of the ill-fated trains. "By the time we decided to call the police, the woman had left, confirming our doubts," an AIIMS official said. "Out of 275 dead bodies, so far 151 bodies have been identified. All bodies after due process are being handed over for transfer to destination," said Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena in a tweet. Arrangements for free transportation of the bodies by hearses or dead body carriers till destina-

## CBI VISITS SPOT, KICKS OFF PROBE

A 10-member CBI team Monday visited the Balasore train accident site and began its probe. EcoR's Khurda Road division DRM Rintesh Ray said that according to his information, the CBI probe has begun but the details were not immediately known. The Railway Board Sunday recommended a CBI probe into the accident. Earlier, Commissioner of Railway Safety Shailesh Kumar Pathak visited the accident site where he went to the control room, signal room and signal point at Bahanaga Bazar railway station. This apart, the Government Railway Police in Balasore has registered a case June 3 under various sections of IPC and Railway Act over the accident.

tion were made by the Odisha government, he said. Facing an uphill task of preserving the bodies of those killed in the accident, AIIMS, Bhubaneswar has procured at least five deep freezer containers from Paradip Port to prevent further decay of the mortal remains of the deceased. The state government has set up help desks at each hospital and each mortuary and officials are extending all required help to the victims and their family members, said Odisha Development Commissioner Anu Garg.

## Couple among 3 dead in accident

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, June 5:** Three persons, including a couple, were killed after being knocked down by a speeding bus near Omkareswar Square here Monday. The deceased were identified as Niranjan Das, 55, and his wife Gayatri Das, 50, of Chhatrapur and Rakesh Nanda of Mangala Ghat area in the Pilgrim City. The incident occurred when the trio was standing near Omkareswar Square in the noon. After attending one of their relatives' engagement ceremony at Shankareswar temple, the couple was chitchatting with Rakesh, an acquaintance, near Omkareswar Square when a speeding bus hit them, leaving the three critically injured. On being informed, police reached the spot and rushed the three to a nearby healthcare facility, where doctors declared them dead on arrival. The bodies were later sent for autopsy. Meanwhile, Sub-Collector Bhabataran Sahoo reached the hospital and placated the bereaved relatives, it was learnt. The bus driver, on the other hand, surrendered before Baseli Sahi police in the evening.

## Mukhtar Ansari sentenced to life

**Lucknow:** A court in Varanasi Monday awarded life sentence to gangster-politician Mukhtar Ansari for the murder of a Congress leader's brother, Awadhesh Rai, more than 30 years ago. Awadhesh Rai, the brother of Congress leader Ajay Rai, was shot dead August 3, 1991, at the gate of his Lahurabir residence in Varanasi. A case was registered against Ansari and others. Ansari faces 61 criminal cases in different states of which he has now been convicted in six. In April, he was sentenced to 10 years in jail by a court in Ghazipur under the Gangsters Act. Ajay Rai is now a regional chief of his party's Uttar Pradesh unit. The MP-MLA court's special judge Avanish Gautam awarded life sentence to Ansari and imposed a Rs 1.20 lakh fine on him, a lawyer told reporters outside the Varanasi court.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You may be impetuous today, which may lead to unforeseen results. You may be in a hurry and complete work which has been pending for a long time. You will find the time to make long-term plans. Ganesha says you will rectify your past mistakes.

TAURUS

Ganesha is pleased to see that you have a bright day ahead. Your efforts are due to give the results you expect. If you are in a mood to achieve something more than usual, this is the day for it. You are not likely to be disappointed. You will be getting increasingly popular socially as well as professionally, and gaining the trust and support of one and all.

GEMINI

A day of conflicting emotions awaits you. Your personal and professional life will both be important. Hence you will experience anxious moments as you try to balance the demands made by both. However, the good news is you will succeed in your attempts and will do justice to all your duties, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You will love to stroll in a world of fantasy. Religious impact will prevail over you. You will charter your fantasy to a mysterious level. You will have communion with God at a temple, mosque or church, you will try to draw lessons from your experience.

LEO

You will exercise your will today and will be in the mood to soar like a free bird today. You will not be in the mood to listen to anyone. Work related travel will be beneficial. Guard against ego clashes in personal relationships, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Contemplating on past successes will help you gather the resources for achieving more of it in the near future. New contacts will help you make considerable headway on the road to success. Ganesha says your amiable nature will help you in getting along easily with people.

LIBRA

Ganesha says that you need to be more careful in your work field as your enemies or your competitors will try to pull you down today. You will have to be very careful in making business agreements or negotiations regarding give and take in the business. You will see your beloved grow distant from you today.

SCORPIO

Long pending task of getting your home renovated may begin today. There are a couple of object de art that have caught your eyes and you wish to decorate your home with those artefacts. You may even plan a small celebration to share your home's new look! A great day indeed.

SAGITTARIUS

Beauty therapies or a new hair do, pick one; makeover and personal grooming is on your mind. Once you decide to shop, nothing in the world can stop you. You have decided to de-stress yourself with shopping. Clothes and jewellery is what your wardrobe is awaiting for, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

Generally, it is difficult for you to maintain a cool head over your shoulders, especially during the stressful times. But, to everyone's surprise, you will display remarkable composure while dealing with challenges today, feels Ganesha. Family life will be smooth and it will enable you to fully concentrate on your career and increasing your efficiency level.

AQUARIUS

With no major highs or lows, you will have a balanced day today. You will handle everything with great efficiency and Ganesha gives you a pat on your back for that. Continue to work hard for the day as your efforts will get noticed and not only that, you will also understand the value of your hardships.

PISCES

Today will not find you in the best of spirits. You need to guard against being sad for the smallest of reasons. Pessimistic thoughts could creep in, owing to some external influences. You need to keep your will-power strong to remain positive.

AMBER HEARD CONSIDERING MEMOIR TO REVEAL HER DOMESTIC ABUSE ORDEAL

Actress Amber Heard is reportedly keen to start sharing her truth with an explosive tell-all memoir, in which she would lay bare the details of her turbulent two-year marriage to Johnny Depp and their bitter court battle after he sued her for defamation of being a victim of domestic abuse, reports [aceshowbiz.com](#).

ARNOLD REVEALS HIS PAST AFFAIR WITH HOUSEKEEPER

Actor Arnold Schwarzenegger has opened up about the affair he had in 1996 with his housekeeper while he was still married to Maria Shriver. The actor, 75, is set to tell his own life story in the upcoming three-part docuseries *Arnold*, which is scheduled to be released on June 7, reports [Mirror.co.uk](#).



Kangana gives cultural lessons to critics

**Mumbai:** Actress Kangana Ranaut clarified the cultural significance of the accessory worn in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh after facing criticism online for wearing a headpiece that was mistaken for a crown.

In response to a news portal's description of it as a crown, the *Queen* actress took to Twitter to explain that it is a traditional Indian jewelry piece popularly known as 'Saggi phool' in Punjab and a variation of 'chakk' in Himachal Pradesh. She expressed her disappointment at the lack of awareness about Indian heritage among both Indians and journalists.

The *Dhaakad* actress also took to Instagram posts to share similar pictures of Punjabi women wearing 'Saggi' and wrote, "Traditional Saggi Phool in Punjab." She shared another picture of a woman in a headpiece and captioned it, "Various headgears in Himachal."

Anupam Kher, her co-star from the film *Emergency*, commented "You look stunning!! Jai Ho."

Kangana occasionally shares pictures of herself in ethnic outfits like lehengas, salwar suits, anarkalis, and sarees. Recently, she decided to move away from the trend of showcasing airport looks, a trend she claims to have initiated.

AGENCIES

Kareena fat shamed Vidya

**Mumbai:**

Actress Kareena Kapoor Khan has often found herself in hot water due to public statements she should not have made. While her strained relationship with Priyanka Chopra was well-known, few are aware of her attack on Vidya Balan.

Kareena on her talk show, *What Women Want*, addresses on issues that affect women worldwide. However, there was a time when she allegedly criticized an actress for her weight. In 2008, Kareena popularized the concept of the zero figure in India through her film *Tashan*. A few years later, Vidya Balan gained acclaim for her role in *The Dirty Picture*, championing body positivity. According to media, the *3 Idiots* actress targeted actresses who gained weight for roles and claimed they were comfortable with it and commented, "Being fat is not s\*xxy! Anyone who says that is talking crap. Voluptuous is s\*xxy, but fat is out. Any woman who says she doesn't want to be thin is talking nonsense. It's every girl's dream. It may be a trend now with some actresses, but I definitely don't want to look plump or fat!"

During her appearance on *Koffee With Karan*, the *Golmaal* actress was asked what she would do if she woke up as Vidya Balan, she told, "I would feel dirty!" Well, well, the claws came out, and the *Kahaani* actress did not take it lying down. While talking to a magazine, she said, "It can't get dirtier than *The Dirty Picture*. They could make a Heroine, but no one will be able to make *The Dirty Picture*".

AGENCIES

Isha spills beans on her Mirzapur 3 character

**Mumbai:** Actress Isha Talwar is currently looking forward to *Mirzapur 3*. Talking about her role, she said that when one takes on an important character, expect nothing but great drama.

The *Article 15* actress plays the role of Madhuri Yadav said, "As we already saw in season 2, Madhuri had almost snatched power towards the end from Kaleen bhaiya essayed by the wonderful Panjak Tripathi for reasons best known to her."

"When you take on such an important character in the show, please expect nothing but great drama intertwined riding on big EQ! This next bit can be left for another story closer to the show because the audience is still confused about Munna's death and I know this from personal experience," adds Isha.

She was seen recently in *Saas Bahu Aur Flamingo*, which was directed by Homi Adajania. It also stars Dimple Kapadia, Angira Dhar and Radhika Madan. It is currently streaming on Disney Plus Hotstar.

IANS

Gufi paintal passes away at 78

**Mumbai:** Veteran actor and filmmaker Sarabjeet Singh alias Gufi Paintal - the elder brother of the noted comedian Kanwarjit Singh Paintal - passed away due to old-age related problems here on Monday.

Gufi was 78 and is best remembered for his role as the cunning Shakuni Mama in the mega-teleserial by the late B. R. Chopra, *Mahabharat* (1988-1990) which was a rage on Doordarshan.

Born on October 4, 1944 in the pilgrim town of Tarn Taran in Punjab, he also worked in films like *Rafoo Chakkar*, *Dillagi*, *Des Pardes*, *Suhaag*, and more, besides nearly 18 teleserials in various genres and roles. After an unsuccessful battle for life, Gufi breathed his last morn-

ing. His last rites were held at 4:30 pm at the Oshwira Crematorium in Andheri in suburban Mumbai Monday.

Actor Mukesh Khanna, who played Bhishma, said, "I had a long relationship with him since *Mahabharat* and cast him in *Shaktimaan* later. We had long confrontational scenes between each other. He was the one who called me for *Mahabharat* and that marked the beginning of our association. He was the one who would call people, then there would be the audition".

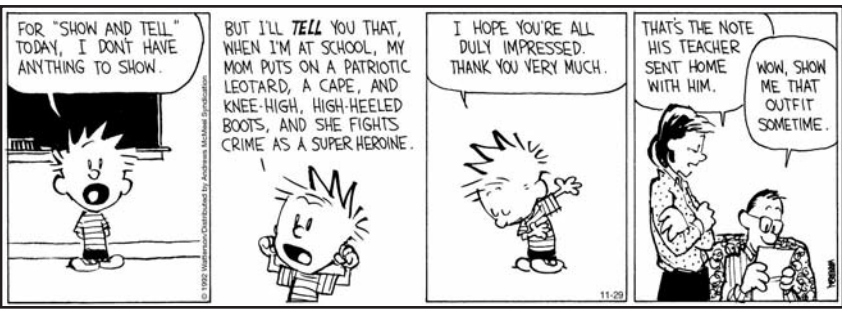
Actor Pankaj Dheer, who played Karna, said, "He was a good friend and we did most of the scenes together in *Mahabharat*. As Shakuni, he was very impressive. Till date people try to copy him but they are not able to reach his style of performance. It is a big loss for the industry." Gufi Paintal was survived by his son, daughter-in-law and a grandchild.

PTI

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

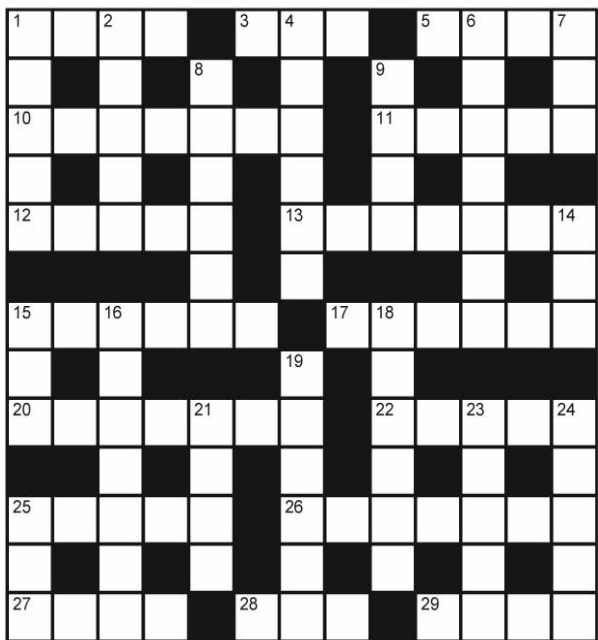


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Six-stringed instrument
- 3 Offbeat
- 5 Nile wader
- 10 Take to the hills (4,3)
- 11 Obstreperous
- 12 Motif
- 13 Metallic element
- 15 Blue moon, e.g.
- 17 Plague

Down

- 20 Busybody
- 22 Cite
- 25 Stomach
- 26 Three-pronged spear
- 27 Castle part
- 28 Have a bawl
- 29 Flock
- 1 Call on
- 2 Martini garnish
- 4 Separate
- 6 Bocce

- 7 Oil source
- 8 Clandestine
- 9 Bone-dry
- 14 Welcome site
- 15 Piña colada ingredient
- 16 Chianti, e.g. (3,4)
- 18 Fluid
- 19 Volcano feature
- 21 Prevaricates
- 23 Corpulent
- 24 Vestibule
- 25 Arctic bird

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.

							1	5
6			5	8				3
2								
	2	6	1		9			
				8	3			
				5	7	9		
						5	4	
7			3			2		
5	4							6

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

B	E	A	V	E	R	E	S	C	O	R	T
I	M	P	R	S	U	N	E				
G	R	A	N	I	T	E	S	P	A	I	N
C	T	C	A	H	I	R	N				
A	D	I	E	U	N	A	I	R	O	B	I
T		R	C				L	S			
F	R	E	E	F	O	R	M	A	L	L	S
E	A		N								S
C	A	R	A	V	A	N		I	N	G	O
Z	E		O	E		A		R			R
E	B	B	E	D		R	I	B	C	A	G
M	I		K		Y	L					V
A	S	T	R	A							S

SUDOKU

9	8	2	7	1	4	6	5	3
6	5	1	8	9	3	4	7	2
4	3	7	2	6	5	8	9	1
1	4	3	6	8	9	7	2	5
8	6	9	5	2	7	1	3	4
7	2	5	3	4	1	9	6	8
2	7	6	1	5	8	3	4	9
5	1	4	9	3	6	2	8	7
3	9	8	4	7	2	5	1	6

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

DIRECT FLIGHTS TO DUBAI, BANGKOK, S'PORE

## Target to double tourist footfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Singapore, June 5:** With the launch of direct flights connecting Bhubaneswar to Dubai, Bangkok and Singapore under the 'Viability Gap Funding' (VGF) scheme, the Odisha government is hopeful of doubling its foreign tourist arrivals in the state by 2025 from its pre-pandemic levels, a tourism official said Monday.

VGF is a government grant provided to airlines to bridge the gap between the cost of operations and expected revenues. "The target is to double the foreign tourist arrivals by 2025 to 2.5 lakh from the pre-Covid peak of 1.2 lakh witnessed in 2019," Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav, Director of Odisha Tourism, said.

The state government has allocated ₹660 crore in its budget for the current financial year for the tourism sector. "With the launch of direct flights with these three cities,

we expect a surge in international tourists taking onward flights to Odisha," Jadhav said during the Odisha Tourism Roadshow here.

"We have shown a more proactive approach in starting direct flights to Bhubaneswar to Dubai,

which began May 15, and Bangkok and Singapore Jun 3," he said.

Connecting Bhubaneswar to these three destinations will not only boost

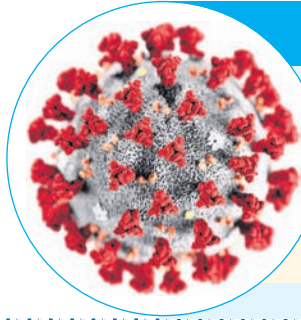
tourism but also bolster trade links, he said. Jadhav expects a 10-15 per cent average increase in annual tourist arrivals with a compound average annual growth of 25 per cent by 2025.

He reckons that the Odia diaspora will act as ambassadors in promoting Odisha as a premier tourism destination. In December 2022, the CM approved Indigo Airlines' bid to operate flights from Bhubaneswar to Dubai, Singapore and Bangkok.



### CONDOLENCE MEET

Catering Association of Odisha and All Odisha Tent House and Supplier Owners' Welfare Association members paid homage to June 2 train mishap victims in Bhubaneswar



### COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,97,90,003	66,21,25,586	68,85,724
India	4,49,91,582	4,44,56,359	5,31,880
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204



TAKING STOCK: Governor Ganeshi Lal interacts with a Balasore train crash victim at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Monday

OP PHOTO

## Kalahandi medical college named after martyr Rendo Majhi

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** The Government Medical College & Hospital, Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district has been rechristened as 'Saheed Rendo Majhi Medical College and Hospital' in the honour of the great freedom fighter of the western Odisha district.

The Odisha government has set up 10 medical colleges in the state that are imparting MBBS course. The Medical College and Hospital at Kalahandi will start its operation from the current year, said sources.

Saheed Rendo Majhi was a great tribal leader and the most prominent freedom fighter of Kalahandi region. He had suffered a lot while fighting for the cause of the people of that region during freedom struggle and made supreme sacrifice of his life for the cause.

National Medical Commission has already issued letter of permission (LoP) April 11, 2023 for admission of 100 MBBS students in the new medical college for the academic session 2023-24. This will increase the number of government medical colleges in the state to 11. The healthcare facility has been built at a cost of ₹481.06 crore.

# State to bear body transport cost

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** The state government will bear the cost of transporting the bodies of triple train crash victims to different states, Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said, Monday.

He said 170 bodies out of 275 have so far been identified in Balasore and Bhubaneswar.

Jena said, "Arrangements for free transportation of the bodies by hearses to various destinations will be done to help the bereaved families." He added that death certificates will be provided at the earliest and will be sent electronically or through Speed Post to the families of the deceased.

The state government has announced two toll-free numbers – 18003450061/1929 – to help those looking for their missing relatives who were travelling in the ill-fated Coromandel Express June 2.

He said people from across the country can dial the numbers to know about the deceased and injured. People coming to Bhubaneswar in connection with the train accident are being helped by officials at the airport and railway station.

Photographs of dead passengers have been uploaded on sr-codisha.nic.in, bmc.gov.in and osdma.org for identification.

As many as 197 bodies were



### TRIPLE TRAIN CRASH

■ A total of 170 bodies out of 275 have so far been identified in Balasore and Bhubaneswar

■ According to a government note, 1,207 injured persons were admitted in different hospitals out of which 1,009 have already been discharged

■ The state govt has announced two toll-free numbers – 18003450061/1929 – to help those looking for their missing relatives

## AIIMS procures 5 containers to preserve bodies

**BHUBANESWAR:** Facing an uphill task of preserving the bodies of those killed in the Balasore train accident, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar has procured at least five deep freezer containers from Paradip Port to prevent further decay of the mortal remains of the deceased.

The medical establishment has received 123 of the 197 bodies brought to Bhubaneswar, Sunday. And had already dispatched 60

after identification till Monday morning. "It was very difficult to store such a large number of bodies with care, identify those and dispatch the bodies to their families after all due formalities," AIIMS-Bhubaneswar Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas said.

He said, nevertheless, the bodies have been stored at the Forensic and Anatomy department with care at present and 60 bodies have already

been dispatched to their relatives.

"By the time AIIMS received the bodies, 30 hours had already passed. Our prime objective was to prevent further decay of the bodies," he said adding, "Five containers were procured from Paradip Port as already three days have passed since the accident took place. The bodies will soon be shifted to these containers. Each container can store 30-40 bodies," he said.

brought to Bhubaneswar from Balasore Sunday and kept in the

morgues of six private and government hospitals. According to a

government note, 1,207 injured persons were admitted in different

hospitals out of which 1,009 have already been discharged. "There are 198 injured passengers in different hospitals. The condition of all barring one is stable," the official said.

Around 51 hours after the triple train crash and barely five hours after the damaged tracks were restored, a coal-laden goods train from Vizag port to Rourkela Steel Plant became the first to run on the route around 10.40 pm on Sunday night. The first high-speed passenger train - Howrah-Puri Vande Bharat Express - passed through Balasore Monday morning through the same tracks, officials said.

Three trains— Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express and a goods train — were involved in the pile-up Friday, being described as one of India's worst train accidents.

The Coromandel Express rammed into a stationary goods train and many of its carriages overturned including some onto another train - the Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, Friday.

Meanwhile, the GRP has registered a case under Sections 337, 338, 304A and 34 of IPC, 1980 and Sections 153, 154 and 175 of Railway Act 1989 following a complaint filed by Balasore GRP sub-inspector (SI) Papu Kumar Naik.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said his government has no intention to hide the deaths in the Balasore train crash and the entire rescue operation was being conducted in full public view.

Reacting to allegations that the death toll was being manipulated, he said Odisha believes in transparency.

"Mediapersons are very much present at the accident site since the beginning. Everything is being done in the presence of cameras," he said. "The Railways had stated the death toll as 288. We also said that, and the figure was based on information from the Railways. But, our Balasore district Collector has verified the toll, and the figure was 275 till 10am of Sunday," he said.

Asked about the change in the toll, Jena said it was due to double counting of some bodies.

The Chief Secretary said there was also no prohibition on the entry of mediapersons at the accident site. "The rescue and even restoration activities went on in full public view," he said.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee questioned the death figures, stating that 61 people from her state were dead and 182 are still missing.

"If from one state, 182 are miss-

## Rlys puts toll at 278

**The** Indian Railways Monday put the official death toll in the triple train crash at 278, stating that three more people have succumbed to their injuries. The state government's revised toll, however, remained unchanged at 275. Khurda Road division DRM Rinkesh Ray said that apart from 278 deaths, 1,100 people were injured in the June 2 mishap. On the state government's toll remaining at 275, he said, "Figures do change with time." Roy said of the 1,100 injured, less than 200 are under treatment in various hospitals.

ing and 61 are confirmed dead, then where would the figures stand?" she asked, addressing a press conference.

Railway Minister Ashiwni Vaishnav declined to take any questions from journalists in connection with Banerjee's allegation.

Of the 275 dead bodies, only 108 have been identified, the Chief Secretary said.

He said the state would like all the bodies to be identified so that those could be cremated by their families. "Keeping in view the prevailing hot weather, the bodies are decomposing fast. Therefore, the state can maximum wait for two more days before disposing of them as per the law," he said.

# SC junks departmental inquiry against officer

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, June 5:** The Supreme Court has quashed departmental inquiry and chargesheet against a judicial officer of Odisha Administrative Tribunal (OAT) for alleged irregularities in appointment of caretakers.

A two-judge bench, comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi and Bela M Trivedi, took note of Rule 7 of the Scheme of Pension Rules, 1992 which states that the departmental inquiry instituted against a retired employee shall not be in respect of any event which occurred more than four years before such institution. The bench said that the chargesheet filed against Suchismita Mishra, the petitioner, was in clear breach of Rule 7 of the Scheme of Pension Rules, 1992.

"The petitioner is entitled to all terminal/retirement benefits if the same have been withheld because of pendency of the departmental inquiry, along with interest at the rate of 9 per cent per annum from the date it was withheld, until actually paid," the bench ordered recently.

Mishra had approached the SC seeking quashing of departmental inquiry against her in connection with alleged irregularities in appointment of caretakers.



The petitioner was Registrar of OAT from June 28, 2012 to October 1, 2015. During her tenure, suitable candidates were appointed for the post of caretakers.

The appointments were challenged before the OAT. However, those were dismissed. Later, the Orissa High Court, too, dismissed the challenge to the tribunal's order. The HC, however, initiated a fact-finding enquiry on the administrative side to examine the process of selection of candidates for the post of caretaker.

The petitioner had argued that as she stood retired from service on attaining the age of superannuation July 2021, under the Odisha Civil Service (Pension) Rules, 1992, the departmental inquiry can be initiated against a retired employee only with the sanction of the government and shall not be in respect of any event which took place more than four years before such institution.

# Eerie silence as Vande Bharat crawls at mishap site

WHEN THE TRAIN  
CROSSED THE FIRST  
MANGLED COACH  
LYING NEXT TO THE  
UP TRACK AT AROUND  
9:25AM, ON WHICH  
COROMANDEL  
EXPRESS TRAVELLED  
THAT FATEFUL NIGHT,  
EVERYONE WAS  
SPEECHLESS

AGENCIES

**Balasore, June 5:** Some passengers gasped. Others muttered "Jagannath Jagannath". Most were too stunned to say anything as everyone gazed out of the windows.

The Vande Bharat express had slowed down to a crawl as it passed by the site of Friday night's train crash near Bahanga Bazar station, providing passengers a close up glimpse of the evidence of the horror – a few upturned coaches, a crane and workers cleaning up the site.

The Howrah-Puri Vande Bharat Monday was the first passenger train to pass through the area in day time after authorities opened the tracks following the accident, which killed 275 people and in-



jured more than 1,200.

"Ish..." said Kanika Chaudhury, 56, using the Bengali expression to convey shock, adding "dekhe koshto hoy (It's painful to watch)".

The railway authorities had Sunday informed passengers through a group SMS that the train would leave on time.

The train left on time from Howrah station at 6:10am but no one was sure of the route it would take as news on the state of the tracks which had broken up because of the accident which claimed 275 lives was unknown.

Passengers were heard discussing the route it might take, especially as the display board in

the compartment showed it was travelling at a speed of over 110 km per hour. The majority of the passengers were bound for Puri, the sea side pilgrim town and a favourite go-to-destination for tourists in eastern India.

However, after the train reached Kharagpur the announcements that the next station would be Balasore made the passengers rush to the large windows of the train, ready with their mobile phones.

The train speed was still between 110 km and 122 km.

The train reached Khantapara station, a few km ahead of Bahanga Bazar and stopped for a brief time.

"Just four minutes away," said Bimal Saha, a young man in hushed tones after checking on the Google map on his phone.

The speed as the train crawled forward was now down to 20 to 25 kmph and all eyes were fixed at the scene that unfolded outside. When the train crossed the first mangled coach lying next to the up track at around 9:25am, on which Coromandel Express travelled that fateful night, not one man or woman spoke.

Mobile cameras were switched on by almost all of them.

The mangled compartments lying next to the up railway line presented an apocalyptic sight for about the next 25 minutes.

The railway authorities have screened off the area with green cloth but the eyes sought out the twisted and mangled steel.

The sight was bizarre as most of them lay capsize, one after another, with their heavy steel underbelly and the wheels protruding into the sky. Almost all gasped, as the enormity of the accident seeped in.

Though every passenger had read about in newspapers or watched its aftermath on their television sets, the actual dimensions sunk in as the vista unfolded.

The Coromandel Express had crashed into a stationary goods train, derailling most of its coaches around 7pm June 2. A few coaches of the Coromandel toppled over the last few coaches of the Bengaluru-Howrah express which was passing by at the same time in the opposite direction, turning it into a devastating triple train crash.

"Undoubtedly, the railway engineers have done a great job. But wish our systems are more advanced to prevent any collision," said Kanika Chaudhury. "So many lives lost, so many families affected," sighed her daughter Soumika, a graphic designer.

"This is too painful to be watched, let alone from the comfortable confines of the Vande Bharat," said Saha, who had remained glued to the window for quite sometime to catch a glimpse of just the scene which was now upsetting him.



NIRF RANKING 2023

4 institutes from Odisha in top 100



POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, June 5:** The Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SoA) Deemed to be University jumped to 26th ranking while Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) jumped to 29th rank in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), 2023, which was released by the Union Education ministry Monday.

SoA and KIIT, along with National Institute of Technology Rourkela (37) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar (91), were ranked among the top 100 institutions across the country in NIRF 2023. NIT Rourkela, KIIT and SoA were also ranked

among top 50 research institutes of the country.

In NIRF 2022, SoA was ranked 30, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology was at 34, while National Institute of Technology Rourkela was at 39 and the Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar was at 65. In the University category, SoA's rank jumped to 15, followed by KIIT, 16, a jump of four spots, and Utkal University was ranked 93.

NIT Rourkela was ranked 16 in the category of top 100 Engineering colleges in the country. SoA 27, Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar 47, KIIT 39, with CV Raman Global University also securing place in the list of top 100 engineering colleges in the country.

- NIT Rourkela has been ranked 16 in the category of top 100 Engineering colleges in the country
- In NIRF 2022, SoA was ranked 30, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology was at 34, while National Institute of Technology Rourkela was at 39 and the Indian Institute Technology Bhubaneswar was at 65
- In the medical category, SoA Bhubaneswar ranked 16 followed by AIIMS Bhubaneswar at 17, KIIT at 26 and SCB Medical College and Hospital at 44

In the medical category, SoA Bhubaneswar ranked 16 followed by AIIMS Bhubaneswar at 17, KIIT at 26 and SCB Medical College and Hospital at 44.

Among the best management institutions, XIM University Bhubaneswar was ranked 46, SoA was at 57, Indian Institute of Management Sambalpur at 58, KIIT at 59 and International Management Institute, Bhubaneswar was ranked 67.

Notably, SoA was also ranked best law institution in Odisha. In the NIRF rankings, SoA ranked eighth, KIIT at 12 and NLU Cuttack at 30 among the top 30 law institutions.

ORERA cell to monitor developers' performance



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** Odisha Real Estate Regulatory Authority (ORERA) created a Disclosure Compliance Monitoring Cell recently to keep a tab on disclosure performance of the project developers and the agents in the state.

The cell was inaugurated by the ORERA Chairman Siddhanta Das in the presence of the member (Admin) Pradeep Kumar Biswal, member (Legal) Gopala Chandra Patnaik and ORERA Secretary Bijaya Kumar Prusty among others.

Inaugurating the cell, Das said that the Authority puts a great deal

of importance on the principle of transparency to be maintained in all transactions between the stakeholders. Timely and accurate disclosure of facts is an absolute necessity to achieve overall sectoral growth. The experience of the Authority shows that the promoters and agents haven't taken their responsibility seriously and have done it on their websites just as a compliance which leads to a lot of conflict and litigation between the home buyers and the developers. The Authority will now monitor the disclosure performance both quantitatively and qualitatively in real-time to bring about the spirit of self-regulation into the sector.

EOW launches probe into illegal black stone quarry

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of state crime branch has lodged a case against a miner and several revenue officials in connection with the illegal quarry of black stones from Aruha hills under Dhamasala Tehsil of Jajpur district. The EOW was earlier directed by the Odisha Lokayukta to launch a probe into the illegal quarry and theft of black stone causing huge losses to the state exchequer.

The case (18/2023) has been registered against Trinath Jena, the lease holder and other public officials under various sections of IPC, Mines & Mineral rules and Prevention of Corruption Act.

According to the complaint, the leaseholder Jena extracted black stone from the hill beyond the permissible limits of lease area. The complainant has pointed out that though there are over 500 small and big quarries under Dhamasala tehsil, royalty and penalty collected from them is less than one per cent in comparison to the illegal quarrying carried out on the hill.

In his submission before the Lokayukta, the Collector mentioned that the Aruha black stone quarry No-1 was settled in favour of Trinath Jena in 2017-18 on lease for a period of five years.



**FOCUS ON PLASTICS HAZARD:** Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat with dignitaries during an event to mark World Environment Day organised at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Monday

OP PHOTO

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Capital city hosts a slew of programmes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** Speaking on World Environment Day Monday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urged citizens of the state to take a vow to plant more trees to fight climate change and protect the environment.

The Chief Minister said, "Environment plays a crucial role for existence of human beings on the shared planet Earth. On World Environment Day, let's all pledge to protect and respect mother Earth by planting more trees and cutting down on carbon footprints."

On this occasion, several events were organised at many government and private institutions of the City to spread awareness about the impact of human behaviour on climate and urge people to prevent environmental pollution. OrissaPOST takes a look:

**Focus on plastic pollution at OES**

What was considered a blessing in 20th Century is now deemed a

curse for the living world. The widespread and unrestrained use of plastics is the cause of concern at present.

As per UNEP report, 80 per cent of plastic pollution can be controlled by 2040, if emphasis is laid on reducing plastic packaging materials, and increasing reuse and recycling of plastics. These observations were made by guests at the World Environment Day by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES).

ICMR-RMRC director Sanghamitra Pati, joining as chief guest, explained how plastics in general and especially microplastics and nanoplastics are causing various ailments such as cancer, reducing body's immunity power, hormonal imbalance, birth defects and mutations in genetic materials.

On the occasion, Padma Shri Daitari Naik of Keonjhar was conferred the 'Water Man of Odisha' award, with Kunja Bihari Satapathy being awarded the Parbati Mishra Memorial 'Environmentalism of the Year Award' and Prakash

Chandra Jena being felicitated with the 'Green Crusader Award'.

**At ILS, lectures on impact of humans on environment**

Institute of Life Science (ILS) observed the day at its main campus auditorium with lectures focusing on good health and awareness on plastic waste in the environment. University of Trans-Disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology, Bengaluru, associate professor Megha spoke on the environmental impact of the food consumed on daily basis. She explained the resources needed to produce it and how we can change our behaviour to get the same nutrition with minimal effect to the environment.

Basic Sciences former director Suryakanta Mishra spoke on plastic pollution with a focus on microplastics. He explained their adverse effects on food chain and living organisms.

ILS senior scientist Rajeev Swain pledged that more such seminars

and awareness campaigns will be organised to promote the "Mission LIFE – life style for environment" initiative of the Central government.

**Hum Agar Nahin: a music video on wetlands launched**

To mark the day, one music video titled 'Hum Agar Nahin' was launched by veteran singer Susmita Das and Aumira Entertainment, that sheds light on the importance of wetlands and encourages their conservation and restoration.

The music video uses the metaphor of science and the supernatural to make a poetic and relevant statement about the relationship between humans and nature.

Composed by Abhijeet Mishra, the song has been penned by Rajkumar Mahto, captured by Pratap Rout and features well-known actors Dipanwit Dashmohapatra and Cookies Swain.

"I like creating songs that are about contemporary social issues," Das said on the occasion.

Revised MKUY guidelines to help agri-entrepreneurs

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** Taking a step to boost agricultural entrepreneurship and facilitate growth of agri-entrepreneurs, the state government has introduced several modifications to the existing guidelines of the Mukhyamantri Krushi Udyog Yojana (MKUY).

"These changes aim to provide greater support to agri-entrepreneurs through enhanced subsidies and expanded eligibility criteria for different schemes as well as helping them to set up new enterprises more easily," said Agriculture, and Farmers' Empowerment, Fisheries Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain.

Under the revised guidelines, agri-entrepreneurs can apply for fresh capital investment subsidy (CIS) for both new projects and for upgradation of existing ventures after a period of 10 years from the date of availing full limit of CIS.

- To empower the agri-entrepreneurs to take up larger projects, maximum limit for CIS has been raised from ₹50 lakh to ₹1 crore per family
  - To encourage large-scale agri-enterprises, the modified guidelines allow entrepreneurs for projects upto ₹50 crore which was earlier only ₹20 crore
- Further in a step towards inclusivity, the revised guidelines now extend eligibility for the CIS to transgenders. Transgender entrepreneurs can now avail themselves of the benefits offered under the scheme, with a subsidy eligibility of 50 per cent.
- To encourage self-reliance and financial independence among agri-entrepreneurs, the revised guidelines now permit the applicants for self-financed projects exceeding 10 lakh.
- The revised guidelines also enable agri-entrepreneurs whose land records are not available in Bhulekh

database, due to unsurveyed villages, to apply for benefits under the scheme.

To further empower the entrepreneurs and facilitate larger-scale projects, the maximum limit for the CIS has been raised from ₹50 lakh to ₹1 crore per family. "This substantial increase in the subsidy cap opens up new avenues for entrepreneurs to embark on ambitious agricultural ventures. To encourage large-scale agri-enterprises, the guidelines have also been modified to allow entrepreneurs for projects upto ₹50 crore which was earlier only ₹20 crore," informed the minister.

Notably, the guidelines have been updated to include sericulture-related activities. By incorporating this sector into the scheme, the government aims at encouraging entrepreneurship in sericulture and harness its potential for economic growth and employment generation.

Thousands witness Lord's Snana Purnima

**Kendrapara:** Snana Purnima was observed at Baladevji temple of Tulashi Khetra, the abode of Lord Baladevji - the elder brother of Lord Jagannath, with much pomp, devotion and religious fervour.

Thousands of devotees throng Tulashi Khetra to witness the Snana Utsav, the bathing ceremony of Trinity. The servants and priests early morning brought the Trinity from sanctum sanctorum to Snana Mandap in dhadi pahandi and later organised Mangala Arati, Niti Snana, Balav Manohi and poured 108 pots of scented sandal water on the deities to complete the bathing rituals of the divinity. Later, the Gajanana Beshha was held at the Snana Mandap. Snana Purnima was also observed at Padmabana Pitha (Mahapurusha Achyutananda tomb) of Nemala on the bank of sacred Chitroptala river. Hundreds of devotees braving scorching heat thronged the pitha to witness Snana Purnima. Elaborate police arrangements were in place to maintain the law and order situation, said Nischantakoili tehsildar Dillip Mohanty.



**IN ACTION:** Artistes from Labanya Theatre enacting a scene from the drama 'Tattoo Wali' at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Monday

OP PHOTO

Youth4Water Plus launches OCOY

The Odisha Conference of Youth (OCOY) will be held from August 9-11 in Capital city

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 5:** Unicef led Youth4Water Plus announced the launching of the Odisha Conference of Youth (OCOY) 2023 at BOCCA Café in the Capital city Monday. Renowned vocalist Susmita Das and Odia film actress Baishali flagged off the event.

OCOY, which will be held from August 9-11 in the City, is a significant milestone, and a transformative initiative aligning with the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and emphasising the importance of local action for the climate change crisis. By empowering the youth



of Odisha to become global leaders, this initiative reinforces the region's commitment to sustainable development and a secure future for generations to come.

Speaking on the occasion, Sugata Roy, Chief of Field Office, Unicef, Bhubaneswar said, "The international community's climate commitments are perceptible to young people, and OCOY serves as a forum to remind us of our commitments to climate action."

Das emphasised on reducing plastic use as much as possible.

"Let's stop being greedy, let's start sharing possessions. It will reduce the torture we are doing to our earth," she said.

Baisali said, "Let's take a pledge to save ourselves from the horrific results of the devastation of Mother Nature."

"In the battle against climate change, youth are the biggest stakeholders. So this effort to bring the perspective of youth into policy planning is much needed," Youth4Water Plus Programme Director Jyoti Sharma quoted.

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# Fraudulent land deals on rise in Sambalpur



REPRESENTATIVE PIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, June 5:** Fraudulent sale of lands belonging to tribals, poor and the gullible are on the rise in Sambalpur district. It has been alleged that middlemen and agents are manipulating records and selling the land without the knowledge of original owners.

Sources said Monday that despite repeated complaints, preventive measures have not been put in place to stop the fraudulent sale of plots of land. This has only emboldened the middlemen and agents to carry on with their illegal deals with impunity. The sources pointed out that such deals could not happen without the connivance of revenue and tehsil officials.

The matter came to the fore after a middleman allegedly manipulated records and sold off four acres 53 decimal of land belonging to Prafulla Rana, a native of Jarasingha mouza under Kayakudt panchayat in Jujumura tehsil. A document to this effect has also

been prepared and the said land has been registered under the name of Jagadish Panda.

The document prepared on a stamp paper worth ₹25,000 is dated November 22, 2022. Prafulla's photo has been replaced with a photograph of Panda, who has bought the land. Karuna Rana and Mansoor Ali Khan have signed on the sale document as witnesses.

Prafulla came to know about the fraudulent deal when he visited the mandi to sell harvested paddy. He then lodged a complaint at the Jujumura police station following which the cops started investigation into the matter. A complaint has also been filed with the district collector's office and efforts are on to nullify the deal.

All the papers submitted for sale of land were found fake after the sub-registrar office conducted verification. On the other hand, the tehsil office at Jujumura has submitted a report to the sub-registrar's office. Police have also asked the tehsil office to submit copies

Prafulla came to know about the fraudulent deal when he visited the mandi to sell harvested paddy. He then lodged a complaint at Jujumura police station following which the cops started investigation into the matter

of all the documents.

After reports of the clandestine deal surfaced, Panda allegedly transferred back the land in the name of Prafulla, June 2. This development again proves the alleged nexus between Panda and the middleman with officials. Efforts by the police to nab the accused have failed till now.

Sources said that minute details have to be worked out for selling of land. Scrutiny of the land is done by the sub-registrar's office. The land is registered in the name of the new owner only after verification of the identity of the seller and his consent. In this case there is ample proof that the due process has not been followed. The sources pointed out the involvement of tehsil officials in the deal. They said without inside help, Prafulla's name couldn't have been struck off.

When contacted, Jujumura IIC Rajkumar Biswal said a case has been registered. He confirmed that Panda has again registered back the land in the name of Prafulla. Biswal said that a probe has unraveled the involvement of a middleman in the fraud and efforts are on to arrest all the accused.

# Lokayukta orders Vig probe into death of 2 workers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar/Jajpur, June 5:** The state Lokayukta here Monday ordered for a Vigilance department probe into the death of two workers who were killed during mining at an illegal black stone quarry in Lunibara near Chadheidhara under Jenapur police limits in Jajpur district, May 31. The Lokayukta passed the order on the basis of a report published on page 5 in **Orissa POST**.

One of the deceased was identified as Appu Raut, the operator of an excavator and Shantanu Khilar, a helper. The Lokayukta

while ordering a probe has observed that apparently, a heavy machine was being used in illegal mining of black stone. The two inside the excavator were loading heavy boulders on a transport vehicle when a large chunk of stone came crashing down on them from a height of 20 feet.

Khilar died on the spot. Raut was rescued and rushed to the Dharmaasala community health centre (CHC) first and later shifted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack where he succumbed during treatment.

The state Lokayukta took suo motu cognizance of the report published in **Orissa POST** and registered a case LY-250/2023 instructing the Director of the Vigilance department to conduct an inquiry and submit a report within a period of two months.

Had the tragedy not taken place, illegal mining in the quarry would not have seen the light of the day. The Lokayukta has questioned

whether the illegal mining was being carried out in connivance with government officials for wrongful gains. The Lokayukta observed that such mining is causing huge financial losses to the state exchequer.

The Vigilance department has been asked to examine whether there exists a prime facie case for proceeding further in the matter against any public servants or any other persons. The matter has been listed for next hearing August 7, 2023 when the Vigilance department will submit its preliminary probe report.



FILE PHOTO

# 'Snana Purnima' rituals observed with fanfare at Angul Jindal Nagar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Angul, June 5:** Thousands of devotees from Jindal Nagar and its periphery villages gathered at the Lord Jagannath temple built at Devbhoomi inside the JSP township to witness the 'Debasnana Festival' of Lord Balabhadra, Lord Sudarshan, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath.

The main servitors of the temple and Chairman of Jindal Steel and Power (JSP) Naveen Jindal joined the Snana Purnima rituals with his spouse Shailu Jindal and performed the Samarjani Shodhan, Chhera Prastuti and Chhera Pahanra neeti rituals.

The deities enshrined on the Snana Mandap were bathed with 108 pots of holy aromatic herbal water.

After the Snana Yatra rituals, the deities traditionally fall ill and for which they will be resting in Anabasara Ghara for the next 14 days. Devotees can get a glimpse of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Deva Sudarshan only June 19 when the three idols will be seen in their 'Naba Jouvan Besha' which is also

known as the holy sight of juvenile youth of Lord Jagannath.

This year, the residents of Jindal Nagar and the villagers from the periphery are very much excited to celebrate the second car festival (Rath Yatra) of Devbhoomi.

Observing the Debasnana Purnima in line with the Puri Temple rituals, the auspicious day started at early in the morning at 6.00am and the priests performed Drara Phita, Mangal Aarati, Mangalarpana, Puspanjali, Dori Bije, etc followed with Dhadi Pahandi of Sri Chaturdha Murati from the main temple to Snana Mandap where Mangal Aarati, Tadap Lagi, Abakas, Srimukha Pocha and other rituals were performed as per the guid-



ance of the chief priest.

The management of Jindal Steel and Power as well as its social arm JSP Foundation is expecting a huge gathering of devotees to pull the holy chariots of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra from Jagannath Temple to Sri Gundicha Temple and return on Bahuda Jatra.

# TRAGIC END FOR MINOR GIRL IN BHADRAK

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Padmapur, June 5:** A minor girl died Monday after her dress got entangled in an aerator (grass mowing) machine at Balabhadraprasad village under Kaithakhola panchayat in

Bhadrak district. The deceased was identified as Pujarani (14), daughter of Rabindra Das, a resident of the village. Locals said that Rabindra was working in his pond and Pujarani had gone to give him food. However, along with her dress she got sucked into

the aerator machine and suffered serious injuries. She was rushed to the Basudevpur community health centre where doctors pronounced her dead on arrival. Dhamara Marine police station personnel sent the body to the district head-

quarters hospital for post-mortem and registered a case of unnatural death (No. 2/23).

## PANCHAYAT SAMITI, KORUKONDA

At/Po-Korukonda, Dist: Malkangiri,  
PIN-764082 (Odisha), Tel./Fax No.06861-238211, Email:ori-korukonda@nic.in  
No.1258/2023 Date:05.06.2023

### TENDER CALL NOTICE NO.02/2023-24

The Block Development Officer, Korukonda invites sealed tenders on behalf of Governor of Odisha from registered and eligible Contractors of the State P.W.D. (R&B)/ Water Resources/ Rural Works/ M.I./ C.P.W.D. for the following works eventually to be drawn up in the P.W.D. F-2 Forms in conformity with the Detailed Tender Call Notice.

Sl. No.	Name of the G.P.	Name of the Work	Amount put to tender in rupees	Cost of tender paper in Rs.	E.M.D. in Rupees (%)	Time for completion of the work in months	Class of Contractor
1.	Nilakhamburu	Construction of Smart Class Room at Balimela (Degree) College of Technology, Niladrinagar	40,92,202/-	6,000/-	40,922/-	Latest by 05.08.2023	"B"

**Sale of Tender Paper:** Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda from 06.06.2023 to 12.06.2023  
Office hour from 07.00 AM to 1.00 PM (Except Sunday and Public Holidays)  
**Place and date of receipt of tender paper:** Panchayat Samiti Korukonda from 7.06.2023 to 13.06.2023 through Registered/ Speed Post only during office hour and upto 12.30 PM on dated 13.06.2023 (Except Sunday and Public Holidays).  
**Place and date of opening of tender paper:** Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda on dated 13.06.2023 at 1.00 P.M.  
**Mode of Receipt of tender paper:** Registered/ Speed Post only.  
**Name of the Scheme:** SPF (CM/Special Assistant)

The tender documents along with term and conditions thereof shall be had from Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda on payment of Demand Draft / Banker Cheque in favour of B.D.O., Korukonda payable at Malkangiri branch as per the cost noted above. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

**Sd./- Block Development Officer, Korukonda**

**Zonal Office, UCO Bank**  
Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751009

**GOLD AUCTION NOTICE**

The following persons, who have availed loans against pledge of gold ornaments, from **CONCERNED BRANCHES of UCO Bank**, have not repaid the amount in spite of our demand notice. Therefore, please take notice that if the principal, interest and other charges are not paid on or before **Dt. 22.06.2023**, the pledge ornaments will be publicly auctioned on **Dt. 23.06.2023 at Respective Branch premises**. The Bank reserves the right to cancel/ postpone the auction to any other convenient date without assigning any reasons.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Borrowers / A/c. No.	Balance Outstanding	Weight in (Grams)
<b>CHAMPESWAR BRANCH, AT/PO - CHAMPESWAR, PS - KANPUR, DIST - CUTTACK-754037</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. SK WASEEM AKRAM, PH. NO.: 9912620044</b>			
1.	<b>Panchanan Mohanty</b> , S/o- Budhiman Mohanty, At- Jalakeli, Po- Paikabababati, Ps- Kanpur, Dist- Cuttack / <b>17670610039809</b>	<b>₹ 32,719.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>17.85</b>
<b>ASHOKA MARKET BRANCH, ASHOKA MARKET, C-2, ASHOK NAGAR, BHUBANESWAR</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. SANTOSH KUMAR, PH. NO.: 9955530493</b>			
1.	<b>Rojamili Rout</b> , Plot No. 185/970, Mahadev Nagar, Jharpada, Bhubaneswar-751009 / <b>17850610039861</b>	<b>₹ 80,000.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>28.50</b>
<b>SATPATNA BRANCH, AT-PATPUR PATNA, PO-SATPATNA, DASPALLA, NAYAGARH, PIN-752091</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. PRABHAT KUMAR MISHRA, PH. NO.: 9123817748</b>			
1.	<b>Reeta Naik</b> , W/o- Arjun Naik, At- Patharpanja, Nelliguda, Daspalla, Pin-752091 / <b>04000610027790</b>	<b>₹ 27,423.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>9.00</b>
2.	<b>Shri Ramesh Malik</b> , S/o- Kashinath Malik, At- Ududa, Pokharigochha, Daspalla, Pin-752091 / <b>04000610019191</b>	<b>₹ 33,187.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>11.50</b>
3.	<b>Shri Banabihari Muduli</b> , S/o- Dhuba Muduli, At- Dindabhuin, Dihagaon, Nayagarh-752093 / <b>04000610019412</b>	<b>₹ 66,947.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>30.20</b>
4.	<b>Shri Krushna Chandra Muduli</b> , S/o- Kailash Muduli, At- Dindabhuin, Dihagaon, Nayagarh-752093 / <b>04000610019641</b>	<b>₹ 41,391.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>17.50</b>
5.	<b>Shri Kulamani Nayak</b> , S/o- Duryodhan Nayak, At- Champadali, Ghughudipada, Nayagarh- 752084 / <b>04000610017043</b>	<b>₹ 12,930.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>8.50</b>
<b>BALIANTA BRANCH, BALIANTA, AT/PO - BALAKATI, KHURDA</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. BISWOJIT NAYAK, PH. NO.: 6370215541</b>			
1.	<b>Lipika Sethi</b> , W/o- Trilochan Sethi, At- Nagapur, Pratapsan, Khurda -752100 / <b>10980610031704</b>	<b>₹ 12,216.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>4.40</b>
2.	<b>Bharat Nayak</b> , S/o- Bira Nayak, At-Hirapur, Po- Gadasrirampur, Khurda-752100 / <b>10980610031261</b>	<b>₹ 15,443.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>8.00</b>
3.	<b>Sagar Dash</b> , S/o- Rama Chandra Dash, At- Hirapur, Balakati, Khurda-752100 / <b>10980610032183</b>	<b>₹ 52,420.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>17.00</b>
<b>SUKAL BRANCH, AT-ALISHA, POST- SUKAL, DIST- PURI, PIN-752014</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. DHARMA PRAKASH MOHAPATRA, PH. NO.: 8270997452</b>			
1.	<b>Mahindra Malik</b> , S/o- Banambar malik, At-Alisha, Post-Sukal, Dist-Puri, Pin-752014 / <b>30310610025017</b>	<b>₹ 20,000.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>7.00</b>
<b>BANAMALIPUR BRANCH, AT- SS COMPLEX, AT/PO - BANAMALIPUR, PIN- 752103</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MRS. AYUSHEE DEY, PH. NO.: 9051775725</b>			
1.	<b>Mr. Prakash Behera</b> , S/o- Rabindra Behera, AT- Guapur, Majhihara, Banamalipur, Pin-752103 / <b>08470610029220</b>	<b>₹ 37,571.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>12.00</b>
2.	<b>Mr. Narahari Singh</b> , S/o- Krushna Chandra Singh, At-Abhayamukhi, Deulidharpur, Banamalipur, Pin - 752103 / <b>08470610027615</b>	<b>₹ 74,635.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>20.00</b>
<b>PATIA BRANCH, PLOT No. 368/1819, INFOCITY ROAD, PATIA CHHAK, BHUBANESWAR</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. ASHOK KUMAR TRIPATHY, PH. NO.: 8328866089</b>			
1.	<b>Bhupesh Srichandan</b> , CHP 50, Kanan Vihar, Phase-I, Patia, Bhubaneswar/ <b>31080610009437</b>	<b>₹ 66,000.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>22.00</b>
2.	<b>Bhupesh Srichandan</b> , CHP 50, Kanan Vihar, Phase-I, Patia, Bhubaneswar/ <b>31080610009444</b>	<b>₹ 89,000.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>27.00</b>
3.	<b>Sarojinee Beuria</b> , W/o- Dharendra Kumar Beuria, At- Bari, Po- Ramachandrapur, Jajpur - 755004 / <b>31080610009024</b>	<b>₹ 36,400.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>14.00</b>
<b>RAIKIA BRANCH, MAIN ROAD, RAIKIA, KANDHAMALA, PIN-762101</b> <b>NAME OF THE MANAGER: MR. BHUSAN SABAR, PH. NO.: 9437459280</b>			
1.	<b>Anirudha Pradhan</b> , S/o- Bhagaban Pradhan, At- Baligada, Po- Gunjibadi, Dist- Kandhamala, Pin-762102 / <b>08100610018132</b>	<b>₹ 27,892.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>10.00</b>
2.	<b>Smt. Padmini Nayak</b> , W/o- Abhimanya Digal, At- Basantipalli, Raikia, Kandhamala-762101 / <b>08100610017999</b>	<b>₹ 22,427.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>10.00</b>
3.	<b>Anirudha Pradhan</b> , S/o- Bhagaban Pradhan, At- Baligada, Po- Gunjibadi, Dist- Kandhamala, Pin-762102 / <b>08100610020043</b>	<b>₹ 13,838.00 + unapplied interest</b>	<b>9.00</b>

**The intending bidders may participate in the auction by fulfilling the following terms:**

- The Bank does not guarantee the weight or purity of the jewellery / coins, either of its gold contents or otherwise.
- The jewel is available for inspection by the intending bidders during business hours on any working day in the bank.
- The intending bidders have to contact the Respective Branch Head for the Reserve Price of each account.**
- The intending purchaser shall make an earnest money deposit of **25%** of Reserve Price (to be computed as per the balance outstanding).
- The jewel to be handed over to the highest bidder on payment of the balance amount within **24 hours** or on the next working day of the bank during its business hours.
- If the successful bidder fails to pay the amount, the earnest money will be forfeited and the jewel may be resold within **30 days** from the date of auction.
- The unsuccessful bidder shall be entitled for the refund of the earnest money immediately after the auction is over.
- It shall be lawful for the Bank to stop the auction at any stage without assigning any reason thereto in which case the earnest money shall be returned to whoever makes the deposit.

**Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 06.06.2023** **Authorised Officer, UCO Bank**

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*In addition to the help desk number/-mail id mentioned above, the insured person/family members/claimants can also file their claims through the toll-free numbers and email IDs mentioned in their policy copies.*

**आईआरईएल (इंडिया) लिमिटेड IREL (India) Limited**  
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CIN: U11109MH1980COO00197 Website: www.irel.co.in  
ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 14001: 2015 & ISO 45001: 2018 Company

**TENDER NOTICE**

Ref: ADVT. No. 23-24/02 Date: 06.06.2023

IREL, OSCOM invites request for proposal for the following items/job descriptions.

Bid No.	Job/Item Description
GEM/2023/B/3523013	Supply, Installation & Training for EDXRF System
GEM/2023/B/3525072	Supply of 1200 MT Caustic soda Lye

Bidder may download tender document from <http://irel.co.in> or <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Any corrigendum / Extension to above tenders shall be hosted in above websites only.

CBC 48129/12/0010/2324 **Sd./- GM & HEAD, OSCOM**

## PRESS ADVERTISEMENT

No. D-58(E): It is hereby informed to the general public that 180 numbers of unclaimed vehicles (Two wheeler - 172 Nos., Three wheeler - 03 Nos., Four wheeler - 02 Nos. and Tractor - 03 Nos.) are lying at 6 different Police Station of Boudh district namely Boudh, Manamunda, Kantamal, Baunsuni, Purunakatak and Harabhangha Police Station. As there are no claimants of these vehicles, the SDM-cum-Su-Collector, Boudh has issued Public Notice for general public to claim these vehicles within 7 days of the advertisement. The details of the these unclaimed vehicles are available on Government website: **boudh.nic.in** (title: Advertisement for list of unclaimed vehicles lying in different Police Station on Boudh Police District on Dtd.01.06.2023). If no person will claimed these vehicles within 07 (Seven) days of publication of this notice, these vehicles shall be placed for public auction in MSTC portal. No further claim will be entertained.


**Sd./- Superintendent of Police-cum-Chairman, District Auction Committee, Boudh**  
OIPR-12142/11/0001/2324



“

Pain is the hammer of the Gods to break a dead resistance in the mortal's heart.

SRI AUROBINDO



# Wrestling For Justice

The obduracy of the government not to act immediately against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president and BJP MP Brij Bhushan, accused of committing sexual crimes, casts serious doubts on its fairness and probity in public life. As if to rub salt into injuries the government keeps mouthing the age old platitude that 'law will take its own course' which, most people in India know, never does. Law needs to be implemented honestly and with all sincerity. It obviously has no life of its own.

The meeting with the Union Home Minister Amit Shah after over a month-long protest by the country's top wrestlers late at night on June 4 produced no tangible result except the same old inane promise of the law taking its own course to mete out justice. FIRs have been filed against Brij Bhushan on the basis of complaints lodged by women wrestlers, including a child. Complaint has also been lodged under the stringent Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. Vinesh Phogat, one of India's top wrestlers, who is currently taking part in the wrestlers' agitation, said when she had complained about Bhusan to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2021, the latter assured her he would look into it. But, nothing has happened since then and Bhushan was even allowed to attend the inauguration of the new Parliament building recently. This makes a mockery of the rule of law and the Prime Minister's own pet programme "Beti bachao" (save daughters). It does seem like a situation has been deliberately created in the country where the nation's daughters need to be saved from politically powerful predators.

It is the agitating women wrestlers who have questioned the sincerity of the government campaign of saving the country's daughters as some of them are awaiting justice for the greatest insult that can be heaped upon a woman. The irony of the criminal justice system in the country is that if a common man is accused of any crime, the wheels of criminal law are immediately set into motion. But, the same process of law screeches to a grinding halt if the accused has connections with the higher-ups or is an influential politician. This tends to get reconfirmed in the case of Brij Bhushan.

It has been over 10 years since the enactment of the POCSO Act 2012. This Act and the amendments to criminal law are expressions of the legislature's intent to safeguard women and children from sexual offences. The Crime in India 2021 report shows that 89,200 cases were registered in the country under Section 354 of the IPC and 16,401 cases under Sections 8 and 10 of the POCSO Act. But, the numbers do not necessarily reflect whether justice is done. The question is whether the cases booked are properly investigated and criminals brought to book. Ground reality does not inspire any degree of confidence as convictions are extremely low.

The government's indifference to the pain, humiliation and helplessness of the women wrestlers has caused widespread concern, both in and out of the country. Notwithstanding protests and condemnation by world sports bodies, the government continues to turn a deaf ear to the clamour for arrest of the accused. The inescapable conclusion is that it is trying to shield the accused because he belongs to the ruling party and is a Member of Parliament. Even though an accused cannot be held guilty till investigation is completed, justice demands at least the accused, who is the current WFI president, should have been asked to step down from his post for the sake of fair probe. This is the norm and must be practised everywhere, including in the current Bahanaga Bazar rail mishap if it is to be investigated without pressure or bias. But, the impression that has been created by the government's inaction and the silence of the BJP leadership in both the cases makes people feel that there is every chance that justice may be denied.

This has apparently encouraged Brij Bhusan that he is emboldened enough to announce he would address a party rally at Katra in his constituency in UP on June 11 as part of the BJP's 'Mahasampark Abhiyan' (mass outreach campaign) to mark completion of nine years of the Narendra Modi government. Earlier, he cancelled his "jan chetna maharally" (mass awareness campaign) in Ayodhya on June 5 citing a police probe into the wrestlers' allegations and "respect for Supreme Court directions".

It clearly shows the BJP is backing the accused WFI chief.

For, otherwise it would not have allowed him to be associated with the party programme. This itself gives a loud and clear message to the investigating agencies how they should conduct the probe against him. The entire episode puts the government of India in a poor light for the brazen disregard for fairness and justice.



Harold James

THE STRUGGLE OVER THE FUTURE OF GLOBALISATION IS A CLASH OVER HISTORICAL LEGACIES

Globalisation brings the world together through the movement of people, things, ideas, money, and much else. But talk of globalisation has become increasingly divisive, with competing assessments of the process now splitting the globalised world itself.

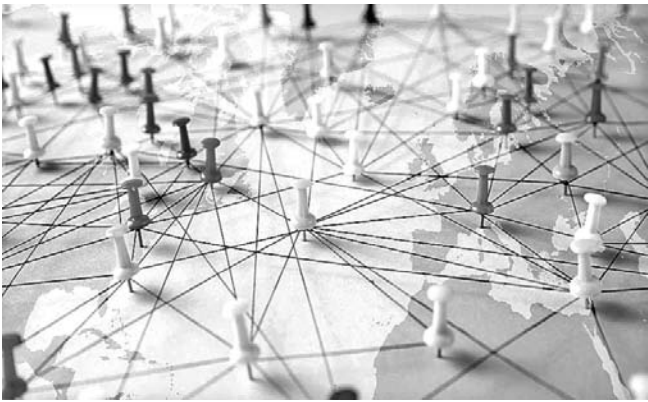
While middle-income countries – emerging markets – remain gung-ho about tapping into global markets and globalisation-driven dynamism, and while many low-income countries see opportunities to leapfrog to greater prosperity with new technologies, the rich world is generally unhappy with the state of things. In mature industrial societies like the United States, the very idea of globalisation is met with suspicion, if not outrage. In keeping with the mood, BlackRock Chairman and CEO Larry Fink struck a chord last year when he proclaimed the end of globalisation, and politicians across the Western world have been touting "friend-shoring" and other forms of decoupling from China.

Most of these descriptions are new variants of an old mantra: Stop the world – I want to get off. Yet for all its power, the rhetoric about global fragmentation does not correspond to reality. The concept of deglobalisation may be everywhere in political speech, but it is not borne out by the statistics. Not only is world trade still expanding, but so, too, is US-China trade. Internet communications and data flows continue to grow exponentially, and, post-pandemic, people are once again moving across borders.

It is rich countries' unhappiness that makes contemporary debates so acrimonious. As globalisation's allure fades, it becomes more tempting to see the world economy as a zero-sum game: If you are winning, I must be losing; but if I can ensure that you are losing, I will be winning. Hence, the US strategy is to preserve a technological lead over China, not least by depriving it of the most advanced semiconductors. Even globally minded intellectuals who like the idea of competition now insist

## FOCUS GLOBALISATION

# WARRING NARRATIVES



Even though Indians appreciate the strength of their economic and personal ties with the US and see these as a foundation for effective development, they worry about the West's motives. In India, as in most other emerging economies, this outlook reflects anti-colonialism (or decolonisation)

that the US can prevail in this race.

Yet this fixation on being "number one" naturally triggers a confrontational response, especially from other large economies that aspire to catch up to and overtake the US. The belief that the US will do anything to stop China from becoming number one leads China to adopt zero-sum rhetoric of its own. Diplomats stop being diplomatic and become braying "wolf warriors."

Moreover, although China does not traditionally engage in alliances, the sense that it is under threat has led it to cultivate closer ties with Russia, another nuclear-armed country with an anti-Western stance. In the current context, a closer relationship with Russia looks like a potent way to augment China's own bid for global dominance.

The decoupling narrative thus creates a yo-yo effect in which both the US and China try to pull away, only to realise that they are both still dependent on the globalised economy – and each other. After making waves last year with her call for friend-shoring, US Secretary of the Treasury Janet

L. Yellen (and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan) is now backpedaling somewhat in an effort to repair the broken process of mutual engagement.

India, meanwhile, is experiencing a softer version of the same anxiety. Even though Indians appreciate the strength of their economic and personal ties with the US and see these as a foundation for effective development, they worry about the West's motives.

In India, as in most other emerging economies, this outlook reflects anti-colonialism (or decolonisation). Globalisation becomes a form of revenge for the abuses of empire, and rich former colonial powers' attempts to decouple or halt globalisation are viewed as new versions of the old colonial oppression. The struggle over the future of globalisation is a clash over historical legacies.

Disagreement about whether globalisation is good or bad makes managing it much more difficult. The old institutions that were supposed to coordinate policies are under strain. The World Trade Organisation was crippled over a decade ago by the failure of the Doha Round of negotiations to

achieve further global reduction of trade barriers, and then Donald Trump rubbed more salt in its wounds with his aggressively nationalistic trade policies. Similarly, while the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are still vital, they now must work with a multitude of new, smaller, and narrowly focused cooperative institutions.

Around the turn of the century, politicians and economists debated whether the IMF should reinvent itself as an international lender of last resort. Then came the 2008 financial crisis, when it positioned itself as part of a structure comprising regional institutions and alternatives that China and Europe had developed (the 2000 Chiang Mai bond initiative, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the European Stability Mechanism, and so forth). Now, managing international money is about coordinating an ever-denser network of regional bodies. That task requires effective communication, but such dialogue is often obstructed and frustrated by disputes over the language and political valence of globalisation.

Is there a way out of the impasse? Can we rid ourselves of the suspicions preventing stronger global cooperation? One prerequisite is for everyone to recognise that the combination of new technology and enhanced interconnectedness has fundamentally unknowable (and thus uncontrollable) implications. No one can ever accurately predict which country will end up as number one.

The linked processes of globalisation and technical change can easily lead the world into a trap. Not only are outcomes uncertain, but the uncertainty is paralysing. The task of government is thus to provide some assurance. The more effective it is in doing so, the less cause there will be for suspicious minds, and the less the world will be divided by anxiety about "winning" and "losing."

*The writer is Professor of History and International Affairs at Princeton University.*

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## SPECTRUM NATION

# Consumption hurdle in growing economy



Shivaji Sarkar

THE PRIVATE FINAL CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE GROWTH SLOWED DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

Sudden boost to India's GDP in the fourth quarter of the financial year made it momentarily different at 6.1%, outpacing projections. It also pushed up the 2022-23 yearly growth to 7.2% making it a standout performance. The RBI had earlier projected the growth at 6.8%. Agriculture was a surprise in the January-March rabi months growing 5.5% and construction surged to 10.4%. India shines at a time when most major economies are struggling.

It is not true that India is not hit by the US sanctions on Russia but that is another story. The important factor for India is trying to make a mark. On the production side, finance, real estate and professional services in the last quarter grew by 7.1%. It is a wonder: Has the fourth quarter done so significant a difference that one tends to believe the last few years of low growth phase is passé now! The figures look good also for the reason that two years back growth reached a nadir in terms of minus figures. Indians can make the difference and possibly the dream of being an engine of world growth once again looks not distant.

However, an expenditure side analysis shows that two key drivers

of growth, consumption and investment seem to be in different directions. The private final consumption expenditure growth slowed down significantly over the course of the year. In the fourth quarter it grew by 2.8%. It's the second successive time it has grown less than 3%. There is a distribution challenge. It has a link with the fall in quality of jobs.

The gross fixed capital growth (GFCF) expenditure continues to show robust trends. Part of it is on account of government push towards capex as capital expenditure increased by 24% between 2021 and 2023. But it is not reflecting in private consumption. The RBI Consumer Confidence Surveys continue to show a negative trend. This is a key indicator of the overall well-being of the people. The private consumption is showing an impact on manufacturing. Its gross value addition saw a contraction in three quarters. The manufacturing sector not doing well may have an effect in the future results. It is not showing the momentum seen in the Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI).

This holds the threat of undermining one of the most encouraging aspects of the GDP data, the surge of investments. Capital for-

mation grew by 8.9% in the last quarter and was 35.3% of the GDP, the highest since the pandemic. But private investment within the country and outside had not been robust perhaps because of the low consumption factor.

Despite facing challenges from an uninspiring global outlook, India's growth momentum is likely to be sustained in 2023-24 amid easing inflationary pressures, the RBI said in its annual report for 2022-23.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaram expressed happiness at the trend. He says that the services sector has maintained its growth marks. He says much of the elasticity is coming from construction activities. This is the catch as well. It indicates that many other sectors may not be doing as well as they are expected.

The government has been able to meet its fiscal deficit at 6.4%, much higher than RBI tolerance limit, though it is in line with the revised budgetary estimates of 2023-24. The inflation rate fell to 4.7% in April. It says the deficit in absolute terms is Rs 17.3 lakh crore against Rs 17.5 lakh crore in the previous year. There is one catch. This figure is above a very high inflationary trend. It means that overall performance of the economy

in real terms might be less than what is being claimed. If it moves as expected, fiscal deficit target could come down to 5.9%.

Morgan Stanley says that India has transformed in a decade and gained positions in the world order. However, it says that there is scepticism with overseas investors, "who say India has not delivered its potential despite it being the second fastest growing economy." The report highlights ten big changes. These include supply-side policy reforms, formalisation of the economy, real estate regulation and development law, digitalising social transfers, insolvency and bankruptcy code, flexible inflation targeting, focus on FDI, government support for corporate profits and MNC sentiments at an all-time high.

In the light of this, the industry has pinned high hopes on the RBI. It remains to be seen how RBI acts at the Monetary Policy Committee meeting on June 6. Industry wants low rates and depositors an increase. So would the RBI be a hawk or a dove? The nation keenly awaits the moves.

*The writer is Professor, Indian Institute of Mass Communication.*

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## WISDOM CORNER

“

The greatest error of a man is to think that he is weak by nature, evil by nature. Every man is divine and strong in his real nature. What are weak and evil are his habits, his desires and thoughts, but not himself.

RAMANA MAHARSHI

“

There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

“

When you are discontent, you always want more, more, more. Your desire can never be satisfied. But when you practice contentment, you can say to yourself, 'Oh yes - I already have everything that I really need.'

DALAI LAMA

## WORDSWORTH

### ■ Ixnay

This delightfully weird word – meaning nix or nothing – is best known in the US, as the type of wordplay that created it was invented in that country and has always been most popular there. It's Pig Latin, or igpay atinlay, as Pig Latinists would name it, at one time instead called Hog Latin. Originally a children's word game known since the 1890s at least, it grew up with them to become fashionable among adults in the 1920s and 1930s. The first known appearance of ixnay in print is in the film script for the early talkie Broadway Melody in 1929. The basic Pig Latin rules are simple, though there are dialectal variations: if a word starts with a vowel, then add ay to the end; otherwise move the first letter (or pair of letters if they represent one sound) to the end and add ay to it. So imay oingay ootay ostonbay is Pig Latin for "I'm going to Boston". The trick has never quite vanished. The film The Lion King included the line ixnay on the upidstay – don't say hyenas are stupid, the hyenas are listening. In Young Frankenstein, the hero complains in the hearing of the monster about the monster's rotten brain; Igor hisses, Ixnay on the ottenray! Yet another example: *Something glinted and caught his eye. He hissed to the nearest kid, "Ixnay on the ottlebay!"* The eight-year-old, squirming in his unaccustomed clothes, flushed and tucked the busted bottle farther out of sight (*Gladiator-at-Law, by Frederik Pohl and C M Kornbluth, 1955*). Ixnay is from nix, nothing, a slang term that was imported from German nights at the end of the eighteenth century. It's uncertain to what extent Pig Latin was used as a cant or argot designed to keep criminal discussions private, but ixnay seems to have become part of the vocabulary of the hard-boiled hoodlums of the period: *I would've done the job only he wanted to put me on the nut, so I says ixnay, gimme the geetus now* (*Los Angeles Times, 8 November 1931*). The term was carried abroad in the detective novels of the time, perplexing British readers until greater understanding of American mores in wartime and afterwards clued us all up and allowed ixnay to appear in British English, though as an exoticism.

# Letters

## TO THE EDITOR

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

**OrissaPOST**  
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## Mockery of history

Sir, The family members of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Khudiram Bose have strongly dismissed any suggestion that Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a prominent figure in the Hindutva ideology, had a role in inspiring these freedom fighters. Their reactions came in response to a tweet by actor Randeep Hooda, who plays Savarkar in the biopic "Swatantrata Veer Savarkar," where he has claimed that Savarkar was the inspiration behind revolutionaries like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Bhagat Singh, and Khudiram Bose. Anita Bose Pfaff, Netaji's daughter, stated that the only thing common between her father and Savarkar was their religion. She mentioned that Netaji was a devout and religious man, with great respect for all religions. Like Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji opposed divisiveness based on religious differences. Pfaff expressed her desire for Savarkar's followers to align with Netaji's vision for a united India rather than hijacking it for views that did not align with the revolutionary freedom fighter's principles. Family members of Netaji Bose and Khudiram Bose dismiss the claims of Randeep Hooda's movie as a "mockery of history."

**Asit Mohanty**, JAJPUR

## Anxiety & disquiet

Sir, The horrific Odisha train accident has plunged the entire nation into deep sorrow and melancholy. The tragedy adds a lot of pain and distress at a time when the country is beset with plenty of problems like poverty, rising prices and unemployment. It is totally unbearable and piteous to the core that those who lost their lives wouldn't have imagined in their wildest dream that they were travelling their "antim yatra." That just a press of a wrong signal could consume 275-odd precious lives in minutes is beyond human imagination and envision. Time alone can heal the trauma and distress being endured by the bereaved family members for the loss of their loved ones. Even in the height of the catastrophe, what warmed the cockles of our hearts is that a lot of youngsters have rushed to hospitals to donate blood to save as many lives as possible. This shows that humanity and compassion haven't diminished a bit in our country when one lends arms to sufferers in times of crisis. Those were the days when a train journey would evoke a bubbling and childlike enthusiasm among us. But living in modern days with science and technology having advanced so much, undertaking a rail travel still creates a sense of anxiety and disquiet.

**Ranganthan Sivakumar**, CHENNAI



of the day quote

It is disheartening to see Rahul Gandhi conducting 'anti-national' programmes and engaging in 'irresponsible' discourse at a time the entire country is united in grief after the deadly train accident in Odisha

**HARDEEP SINGH PURI** | UNION MINISTER

Assam is moving in the direction of growth and development. The state government helped in early approvals related to land acquisition, environment clearances etc

**NITIN GADKARI** | UNION MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

The Shiv Sena and the BJP will contest all future elections together, including civic polls

**EKNATH SHINDE** | MAHARASHTRA CM

SHORT TAKES

Man set on fire

**Pilibhit:** A 55-year-old man, Aijaz Nabi, in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit district, was allegedly set on fire by his 27-year-old son Azad Nabi when he objected to his son illegally connecting the electricity line to their house after it had been disconnected by the Electricity department a day ago over non-payment of bills, police said. According to the police, the accused Azad set Aijaz on fire after pouring diesel on him.

Jawans injured

**Bhopal:** Two Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans were injured in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast on Monday in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said. The police said the attack near the Tekameta hill was planned by a group of Naxals.

TN tourist dies

**Srinagar:** A tourist from Tamil Nadu died when a pine tree fell on him in J&K's Pahalgam hill station on Monday, officials said. Officials said that a tourist identified as Janarthanam of Tamil Nadu was riding a horse in Baisaram area of Pahalgam today when the tree fell on him. "He died on the spot," an official said.

Teen shot dead

**Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh):** A 19-year-old youth, Adil Ali, was allegedly shot dead by assailants at Rajapur Uchwagari under the limits of Cantt police station. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Deepak Bhuker told reporters that police received information about the incident at 11:30 p.m. Saturday and senior cops rushed to the spot. He added that Adil was allegedly shot dead by three of his acquaintances over an old dispute.

Heart attacks more likely on a Monday: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** Serious heart attacks are more likely to happen at the start of the working week than at any other time, according to a study.

The researchers at the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland analysed data of 10,528 patients across Ireland admitted to hospital between 2013 and 2018 with the most serious type of heart attack.

This is known as an ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) and occurs when a major coronary artery is completely blocked. The research, presented at the British Cardiovascular Society (BCS) conference in Manchester, UK, found a spike in rates of STEMI heart attacks at the start of the working week, with



rates highest on a Monday.

There were also higher rates of STEMI than expected on a Sunday, the researchers said. "This study adds to evidence around the timing of particularly serious heart at-

tacks, but we now need to unpick what it is about certain days of the week that makes them more likely," said Professor Nilesh Samani, Medical Director at the British Heart Foundation.

The bridge is not being constructed properly and that is why it collapsed twice since April 2022. It's a serious matter...The department concerned has already initiated a thorough probe into it. Strict action will be taken against those found guilty

**NITISH KUMAR** | BIHAR CM



light the real reasons that caused this grave accident.

He alleged that instead of focusing on strengthening the railways at the basic level, only "superficial touch-up is being done to stay in news". Alleging that the railways was being meted out a "step-motherly treatment" by the government, Kharge said consistently flawed decision making has made travelling by rail unsafe and has in turn compounded the problems of people.

"Unfortunately, the people in charge - your goodself and Railway Minister Ashwani Vaishnaw - do not want to admit that there are problems," he said. The railway minister claims to have already found a root cause, but yet has requested the CBI to investigate, he said, asserting that the agency is meant to investigate crimes, not railway accidents.

"The CBI, or any other law enforcement agency, cannot fix accountability for technical, institutional and political failures. In addition, they lack the technical expertise in railway safety, signalling,

and maintenance practices," the Congress chief said.

In his letter to the prime minister, Kharge said the nation still remembers the 2016 derailment in Kanpur, in which 150 people lost their lives and the then railway minister asked the NIA to investigate it. "Subsequently, you yourself claimed in an election rally in 2017 that there was a 'conspiracy'. The nation was assured that strictest punishment would be meted out. However, in 2018, the NIA closed the investigation and refused to file a charge sheet. The nation is still in the dark - who is responsible for 150 avoidable deaths?" Kharge, a former minister of railways, said.

Kharge said the latest audit report of CAG makes a special mention of how between 2017-18 and 2020-21, about seven out of 10 train accidents happened due to derailment. "But this was erroneously ignored. Between 2017 and 2021, there was zero testing of Rail and Weld (track maintenance) for safety in East Coast Railway. Why were these grave red flags ignored?" he said.

Sisodia fails to get bail respite



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** In a fresh setback for AAP leader Manish Sisodia, the Delhi High Court on Monday refused to grant him interim bail in a money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam, observing that he is facing "extremely serious" allegations and there is a possibility of "influencing the witnesses".

Sisodia had sought bail to attend to his ailing wife. Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma allowed him to meet her for one day at their residence or hospital at her convenience between 10 am and 5 pm but under certain conditions including that he will not interact with media.

"The court finds it very difficult to persuade itself to release the petitioner on interim bail for 6 weeks," the judge said noting that the case concerns "extremely serious allegations" and there is a pos-

sibility of tampering if Sisodia, who held several positions in the city's AAP government, is released.

"However, at the same time, this court feels that the petitioner should get an opportunity to see and meet his wife. Therefore, for one day, as per the convenience of Mrs Seema Sisodia, the petitioner be taken to his residence/hospital (if she is admitted to the hospital) from 10 am to 5 pm in custody," said the court.

Sisodia was arrested in the CBI case on February 26 in connection with its probe into the excise policy after which he resigned as deputy chief minister of Delhi. He was subsequently arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on March 9 and is currently in judicial custody.

The court, in its order, clarified that during his visit, Sisodia shall not interact with media, meet persons other than his wife or family members and use any phone or internet.

It further directed the Commissioner of Delhi Police to ensure that there should not be any media gathering near the vicinity of his residence or the hospital where he is taken.

The court, which had earlier called for a report from LNJP Hospital about Sisodia's wife, also suggested that she be examined by a board of doctors at AIIMS here. It directed that she should be given the best medical treatment.



Search and rescue operation underway after few pilgrims returning from Hemkund Sahib went missing following an avalanche that occurred near Atikoti, in Chamoli district

PTI PHOTO

FISHERMEN RETURN FROM PAKISTAN

Over 200 Indian fishermen, who were in Pakistan jails, returned to their homeland in Vadodra Sunday night. Arriving via a special train from the Wagah border, these fishermen were warmly welcomed by their loved ones and local authorities, marking the end of their years-long separation



Man, wife die of heart attack day after wedding

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bahraich (Uttar Pradesh), June 5:** The post-mortem report of a newly-married couple who were found dead in a room on their wedding night, has revealed that they died of cardiac arrest, police said.

The couple identified as Pratap Yadav, 24, and Pushpa Yadav, 22, were married on May 30. The newly married couple went to sleep in their room and were found dead the next day. The couple was cremated on the same pyre in the village.

Superintendent of Police (SP), Bahraich, Prashant Kumar, said that the post-mortem examination report that came in on Saturday evening, confirmed that the couple died of cardiac arrest. "A team of forensic experts examined the room of the couple and revealed that the room lacked ventilation and in absence of any ceiling fan and lack of air circulation, the possibility of a cardiac arrest could not be ruled out," the SP added.

Kumar also said that there were no signs of forced entry into the room or injury marks on the couple's body, ruling out criminal angle. "Viscera of both the bodies have been preserved for further examination at the State Forensic Science Laboratory in Lucknow. We have not received any complaint from the families yet," he added.



2 dead, 3 missing after firing along border



*Assam and Arunachal Pradesh share an 804-km-long border, and both sides have been engaging in discussions to resolve the boundary disputes*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lakhimpur, June 5:** Two persons died and three others went missing after alleged firing along the Arunachal Pradesh border in Assam's Dhemaji district on Monday, police said.

Locals had arranged a plantation drive at the inter-state border area on the occasion of World Environment Day, Superintendent of Police (SP) Ranjan Bhuyan said. Seven villagers had gone in advance to make the arrangements in the morning. They allegedly came under firing, in which one person died on the spot, he said.

Three others sustained bullet injuries and were taken to the Dhemaji Civil Hospital by locals, where one person died, he added.

Three others went missing and police were looking for

them, Bhuyan said. "Our team rushed to the spot on receiving the information. We are investigating the incident," he said. Locals alleged the involvement of miscreants from Arunachal Pradesh as there was a dispute over the inter-state boundary in the area.

Assam and Arunachal Pradesh share an 804-km-long border, and both sides have been engaging in discussions to resolve the boundary disputes. An MoU was signed by Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma and Arunachal CM Pema Khandu on April 20 in New Delhi, in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, to resolve the border row. In July last year, the two chief ministers signed the Namsai Declaration setting in motion the efforts to solve the boundary disputes.

Arunachal Pradesh, which was made a Union Territory in 1972, claims that several forested tracts in the plains that had traditionally belonged to the hill tribal chiefs and communities were unilaterally transferred to Assam.

After Arunachal Pradesh achieved statehood in 1987, a tripartite committee was appointed which recommended that certain territories be transferred from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh.

Car drivers hack tollgate staff to death



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Ramanagar (Karnataka), June 5:** In a shocking incident, a group of car drivers hacked a tollgate staff to death on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway in Ramanagar district, the police said Monday.

The deceased has been identified as 26-year-old Pavan Kumar, a resident of Bengaluru South taluk. The police said that the incident took place on Sunday night following a scuffle between the deceased and the attackers over paying toll.

"The police have formed two spe-

cial teams to nab the accused persons, who are absconding," said Ramanagar SP, Karthik Reddy.

The police said that Kumar worked at the Sheshagirihalli Toll Plaza and there was an argument between the accused and the deceased in the presence of other people.

The locals intervened and pacified both sides. However, the accused waited near the toll plaza and when Kumar went for a dinner break, the accused fatally attacked him with hockey sticks. The incident took place near the Bidadi police station.



# Illegal mining in Aravallis behind rising sandstorms

SCORES OF HILLS IN THE RANGE HAVE VANISHED IN THE PAST 20 YEARS DUE TO UNCHECKED MINING AND URBANISATION, POSING A THREAT TO THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF ONE OF THE WORLD’S OLDEST MOUNTAIN RANGES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, June 5:** The disappearance of the hills in the Aravalli range as a result of illegal mining, land encroachment and urbanisation has led to an increase in sandstorms in Rajasthan, according to a study by the Central University Rajasthan.

The study, done by Professor Sharma and PhD scholar Alok Raj, is titled “Assessment of land-use dynamics of the Aravalli range (India) using integrated geospatial and CART approach”.

It was recently published in the international journal, ‘Earth Science Informatics’.

“The disappearance of hills is one of the reasons behind rising sandstorms. Evidence suggests that places which saw the vanishing hills, like Bharatpur, Dholpur, Jaipur, and Chittorgarh, have been facing more sandstorms than usual,” said LK Sharma, professor and HOD Environmental Science at CURAJ.

In April and May this year, several of these areas were swept by sandstorms and rain, which even claimed several lives.

According to the report, at least 31 hills in the upper Aravalli range (Haryana-northern Rajasthan) have disappeared in the last two decades besides several other hills



in the lower and middle range of the hills.

In the study conducted during the period 1975 to 2019, it was found that forest areas, turned into settlement areas, were one of the prominent reasons behind the disappearance of hills.

The study results showed that 3676 sq km and 776.8 sq km of land became barren and settlement from 1975 to 2019, 5772.7 sq km (7.63 per cent) of forest land has de-

creased in Aravalli. By 2059, a total of 16360.8 sq km (21.64 per cent) of forest land will be converted to a settlement class.

“The use of a vast quantity of natural resources for the fulfilment of human needs has greatly deteriorated the environment. Due to the weak law enforcement and no action on illegal mining, the remaining hills will disappear very soon,” Sharma said.

Scores of Aravalli hills have

vanished in the past 20 years due to unchecked mining and urbanisation, posing a threat to the flora and fauna of one of the world’s oldest mountain ranges, he added.

This has also led to increased man-animal conflict where leopards, deer and chinkara enter into human settlements for food. Rare plants like Neel, Chona kurinji and Karun kurinji also face wipe-out threats, the study said.

The disappearance of hills at

the upper level was recorded in Naraina, Kalwar, Kotputli, Jhalana and Sariska with heights of 200 metres to 600 metres above sea level.

“Until 1999, 10,462 sq km in the range was covered with dry deciduous forest. This has been reduced to 6116 sq km (41 per cent) in 2019,” Sharma said.

The report makes a special mention of rising dust storms in the state every year since 2018 which claimed many lives and caused damage to properties.

The report also red flags marble dumping yards in the entire range – from Delhi to Gujarat. It suggests that mining leases granted by Rajasthan, which constitutes 80 per cent of the range – Gujarat (10 per cent), Haryana (7 per cent) and Delhi (3 per cent) – be reviewed and suspended in vulnerable areas.

The other essential decisive strategies which must be adopted, include effective legislative and regulatory measures to be implemented within the Aravalli range to limit increasing human intervention, the study suggests.

Measures should be taken to reduce illegal mining and land encroachment within the range and consistent field monitoring, forest prevention, and clearing among others should also be undertaken, it said.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, June 5:** Madhya Pradesh government has derecognised the registration of Ganga Jamuna Higher Secondary School in Damoh, where a hijab controversy had erupted a couple of days back.

An order in this regard was issued by the district education department. In its notification, the education department said the decision has been taken on the basis of the findings of a team which carried out an inspection of the school.

During the inspection, several flaws were found in the school, including in potable water, bathrooms for girl students and many more.

“Ganga Jamuna School in Damoh has been found not complying with the norms set by the state education department, and therefore a decision has been taken to derecognise its registration with immediate effect,” read the notification, which, however, did not mention the hijab controversy.

The school landed in a controversy last Tuesday when it pasted on its wall a poster congratulating its board exam toppers.

Using the pictures of the same poster, various right wing outfits, including the VHP and ABVP, alleged that non-Muslim girl students were forced to wear hijab as



seen in their pictures.

There were also allegations that the students were made to sing verses penned by Muhammad Iqbal.

Following this, Damoh District Collector Mayank Agrawal constituted a high-powered committee to probe the allegations levelled against the school.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had said, “I came to know about our daughters being forced to come to the school with their heads covered. I want to warn everyone that such acts won’t be tolerated in MP. Only the education policy implemented by the Narendra Modi-led government will be applicable in the state. Any school which teaches anything which isn’t in line with the New Education Policy or forces its girl students to wear a scarf or anything else to cover their head will not be allowed to operate in MP.”

# How Congress plans to use Hindutva card to ace MP polls

» *The idea is to counter BJP’s hard-Hindutva with soft-Hindutva*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, June 5:** In the run up to the assembly elections later this year, the Madhya Pradesh Congress is set to counter the party’s portrayal as anti-Hindu. The opposition led by veteran leader Kamal Nath has drawn up elaborate plans to take on the ruling BJP and it’s saffron allies - the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Bharang Dal and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP).

The idea is to counter the BJP’s hard-Hindutva with soft-Hindutva, and for this purpose, the Congress has made the “Dharmik and Utsav Prakosth” fully active now. The committee was formed two years back and had enrolled kathavachak Richa Goswami who has an ashram in Amarkantak, along with several priests and religious storytellers.

The Congress’ “Dharmik and Utsav Prakosth”, which also projected Kamal Nath as a devotee of Lord Hanuman, has organised 30 religious programmes across the state in the last two years. It is now set to take forward its vision across 230 assembly seats in the coming days. The fresh segment of religious programmes starts with a mega event of the Bhagwat Gita kathavachan by Richa Goswami in Panchasheel Nagar of Bhopal. “The religious programmes are



being organised across the state to counter the portrayal of the BJP and its ideological mentor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh of the Congress as anti-Hindu. Local party leaders will be organising the programmes at their expense by involving the local people,” a Congress spokesperson said requesting not to be named.

Sources claimed the preparations for this had began a couple of months ago. In a meeting with MP Congress head Kamal Nath, the priests had voiced their grievances, which include ownership of the temple’s land and that they should be given the status of farmers. The plan is also an attempt to dent the BJP’s Brahmin votes.

A similar concept was utilised during the last elections in 2018 and Hindu religious leaders such as Computer Baba and Mirchi Baba were enrolled to organise pro-

grammes before it returned to power in Madhya Pradesh in 2018. Later, they were given cabinet rank also which had led to a political controversy.

The Congress, however, lost power two years later when 22 legislators quit the party and resigned from the assembly in March 2020. This crisis within the Congress had resulted in Shivraj Singh Chouhan coming back into power again after 15 months.

Importantly, the Congress will take up the recent incident of the ‘Mahakal Lok’ corridor to corner the BJP in the coming elections. Six Saptarshi idols had collapsed following which the opposition Congress criticised the ruling BJP, accusing it of indulging in corruption in the Mahakal Lok corridor project, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in October last year.

*Overall, the state has four major communities -- Rajputs, Jats, Meenas and Gujjars, who voted in a mixed manner in the 2018 Assembly elections, which saw the BJP concede defeat*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jaipur, June 5:** As Rajasthan goes to the polls in December this year, there are crucial caste equations which one needs to study and understand for the social engineering in this state is a little complicated and complex.

These caste equations have been springing surprises for many parties over the years.

The eastern belt forms the crucial region of Rajasthan which is known for its dominance of Meena and Gujjar votes, while the Shekhawati and Marwar belt is known for the crucial Jat votes.

The Meenas in 2018 sprung a surprise by rejecting the tallest leader of their community, Kirodial Meena. Among the Jats, Hanuman Beniwal won by a record margin for he branded himself as a Jat leader.

He contested as an Independent in the assembly polls and later formed an alliance with the BJP from Nagaur. Later, he also contested the parliamentary polls and won. Recently, he broke his alliance with the BJP due to the farm laws issue. The BJP recently organised its state executive meeting in Nagaur to woo voters from this belt.



However, Beniwal still stands strong among his community and has announced he will give his full support to Sachin Pilot if he forms his own party.

The Jats in fact form the biggest caste group in Rajasthan with 9% population, the Marwar and Shekhawati regions are dominated by the Jats in 31 constituencies. Their significance and unity can be gauged from the fact that these constituencies saw voters sending 25 winners from the community.

Overall, they got 37 seats in the 200-member state assembly elections for which were held on December 7, 2018. The Jats are followed by the Rajputs, with 6% of the population, who accounted for 17 seats.

Next is the Gujjar community which has a say in around 30 to 35 seats of eastern Rajasthan. They have traditionally been BJP voters but then they voted for the Congress showing loyalty to their community leader Sachin Pilot.

The community is influential in at least 30 seats, including Dausa, Karauli, Hindaun and Tonk.

Together, the Meenas and Gujjars comprise 13% of the state’s population. “The Gujjars have traditionally been BJP supporters, but last time because of Pilot, they voted for the Congress,” said a party leader.

The Meenas are known to be Congress supporters, but then they had rejected their own community leader Kirodial Meena, who claims to be the biggest tribal leader in the state. Eighteen Meena legislators were elected in the last polls; nine from the Congress, five from the BJP, and three Independents.

The Meenas continued to support the Congress, despite their leader Kirodial Meena’s return to the BJP. According to political analysts, the community supported the Congress “without looking at the candidate, as they were not heard in the BJP government.”

Together, the Meenas and Gujjars comprise 13% of the state’s population.

Now all eyes are on the Assembly polls 2023.

# Unlike Cong, BJP has a long line of CM aspirants

*The first and the foremost leader in Rajasthan BJP is Vasundhara Raje, the former CM who has led the state twice and has a strong base among people*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jaipur, June 5:** Assembly polls 2023 are scheduled in December this year and all eyes are set on faces who can emerge as the next Chief Minister for the state.

While Congress has two major leaders, namely Ashok Gehlot and deputy CM Sachin Pilot, the BJP in fact has a long list of CM faces.

The first and the foremost leader in Rajasthan BJP is Vasundhara Raje, the former CM who has led the state twice and has a strong mass base among people.

However, there are reportedly some differences between her and the top leadership. Meanwhile, the central leaders also tried to sideline her and created a new generation



of leaders, however, she continues with her temple trips and religious yatras.

Now, the question is will she be given a next chance? Speculation is rife that after Karnataka results, BJP might consider her as sidelining Yedyurappa proved disastrous.

Next in line is Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, the Union minister for Jal Shakti, who is considered to be in good books of Modi and Shah. He was about to be made the BJP state president in 2018, however, couldn’t become as Raje had objections. Now, the leader has emerged tall from the Rajput community and could be the tallest

leader in the state.

There is another charming and strong leader, Diya Kumari, who is yet another face to watch out for. Coming from an erstwhile royal family, the Jaipur princess has silently shown her work both as an MLA in Sawai Madhopur and MP in Rajasamand.

Arjun Ram Meghwal is yet another leader who has joined the fray after being anointed as the Union law minister recently. Coming from a bureaucratic background, he has been three times MP and is known for his non-controversial tenure as MP.

His strong point is that he comes

from Dalit background and has a strong fan base too. He too is close to Modi and Shah.

Next in fray is Rajendra Rathore, who is the leader of opposition in the Rajasthan Assembly and has been MLA seven times.

Rathore knows the ifs and buts of state politics, however, he is not known as loyal to any group active in Rajasthan but he definitely has his own leadership.

Besides these tall names, there is a dark horse CP Joshi, who was made the state president recently.

Being the MP twice from Chittaurgarh, the Brahmin leader has won the heart of who’s who of Rajasthan politics and there are silent whispers that he could be the next CM. He has a noncontroversial tenure and comes from the Mewar belt which BJP dominated.

Among the Congress, Gehlot is already making news by announcing new schemes and touring new locations each day.

Similarly all eyes are on Pilot also. Whether he stays with Congress or makes his own party, is something to be watched for:

# Unease in Scindia camp as polls near

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, June 5:** Stage is being set for yet another high-stake contest between the ruling BJP and the Congress in Madhya Pradesh as the states go to polls later this year.

Although, the saffron party had lost the last elections in 2018, and the Congress led by veteran leader Kamal Nath managed to come back to power after 15 years in the state, shifting of 22 MLAs to the BJP (in support of Jyotiraditya Scindia) had brought the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government back into power again in March 2020.

The switching of loyalties continued with four more MLAs - Praduman Singh Lodhi, Sumitra Devi, Narayan Singh Patel and Rahul Singh Lodhi - severing their ties with the grand-old party in July and October 2020.

Subsequently, the bypolls for 28 Assembly seats were held in November 2020, wherein the BJP managed to win 19 getting a comfortable majority in the House, which has a strength of total 230 legislators.

Seven of the 22 Congress MLAs



(Scindia loyalists), who had changed sides, had lost the bypolls to the Congress. They were - Imarti Devi, Raghuraj Singh Kasana, Giriraj Dandotiya, Adal Singh Kasana, Ranvir Jatav, Munnalal Goyal and Jasmant Jatav.

In July 2020, of the 28 cabinet ministers who took oath in CM Chouhan’s cabinet, 12 were Scindia loyalists. They included - Tulsi Silawat, Govind Singh Rajput, Mahendra Singh Sisodia, Prabhuram Chaudhary, Pradumn Singh Tomar, Bisahul Singh, Hardeep Singh Dang, Rajvardhan Singh, OPS Bhadoria, Brijendra Singh Yadav.

Now, with the Assembly elections inching closer, faced with

huge anti-incumbency for nearly two-decade rule of CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the BJP leadership is reportedly struggling to defuse the rift among old vs new party cadre in those respective constituencies when the elections are almost at the door.

Notably, from March 2020, the BJP had to accept all demands made by Scindia, be it inducting his loyalists in cabinet ministers, state ministers, or appointing in different organisations and institutions.

However, the situation seems quite different now and the political future of most Scindia loyalists seems to be at stake, as the BJP leadership claimed the ticket will be given on the basis of surveys and winning possibilities only.

A senior BJP functionary (organisation) told IANS that the message has already been conveyed. “BJP is not like other parties where pressure tactics work. Here, the roles are fixed and decisions are taken only on the basis of performance. That was a deal for a particular duration.”



of the day quote

The state cabinet will be expanded soon and the timeline will be decided by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM

Elective merit will be taken into consideration while allocating tickets to candidates for the next Lok Sabha elections

AJIT PAWAR | NCP LEADER

The state's Budget will be tabled on July 7

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

SHORT TAKES

Teacher ends life

**Ahmedabad:** In a heart-wrenching incident, a 27-year-old teacher residing in Odhav (Ahmedabad), hanged himself to death inside his house early Monday morning. The suicide came as a result of constant harassment from usurers, even after paying an exorbitant interest of 14 lakh rupees. Subroto Pal's elder brother had also attempted suicide by consuming poison just six days ago. The police failed to take any action in response to their complaints. In his suicide note, Subroto stated that three usurers -- Yashpal Singh, Harshil Mishra, and Aman Singh Chauhan --, were tormenting him and his family. Despite seeking police help, their complaint went unaddressed, leaving Subroto in a state of despair.

Man killed

**New Delhi:** A 25-year-old man was stabbed to death by his elder brother in West Delhi's Paschim Puri area after an argument over a petty issue, an official said Monday. The deceased was identified as Anarjeet, a resident of JJ cluster near Shahid Singh camp. The official said that they have arrested the accused identified as Ajay (27).

Bihar cop shot at

**Patna:** A police officer was shot at by unidentified robbers in Bihar's Purnea district. Aamir Jawaid, the Superintendent of Police (SP) of Purnea confirmed the incident. He said that Manish Chandra, the in-charge of Madhubani TOP police station has sustained gunshot injury. He was admitted to the Purnea Medical College and Hospital and is out of danger.

Youth succumbs

**New Delhi:** A 23-year-old youth died Monday after a duo allegedly attacked him with a sharp weapon during a scuffle in south Delhi's Neb Sarai area, police said. The incident occurred near the youth's house where the accused attacked him with a 'sua', a large needle often used to break ice slabs, they added. On receiving a call from the victim's father around 12 pm, the police reached the spot and rushed the victim, identified as Sachin, to the AIIMS Trauma Centre, they said.

Conversion racket busted in UP

**Lucknow:** The Uttar Pradesh police have busted a conversion racket that was being operated through a gaming app for the past few years. A member of a mosque committee in Sanjay Nagar in Ghaziabad has been arrested for his alleged role in the religious conversion of at least four youths. Police have identified him as Abdul Rehman, who is originally from Ballia.



In Delhi, the pace of development has not gone down in the last eight years. Schools, hospitals and flyovers are being constructed. But, the pollution level has dipped in this period

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

COIMBATORE COPS ON ALERT

Coimbatore cops are on alert following a tip-off from Central and state intelligence agencies over certain terror elements regrouping in the city



US, India agree roadmap for defence industry cooperation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** India and the US Monday concluded an ambitious roadmap for defence industrial cooperation to fast-track technology tie-ups and co-production of military platforms such as air combat and land systems, a move that comes in the wake of China's increasingly aggressive behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region.

The new framework for cooperation was finalised during talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his visiting American counterpart Lloyd Austin, two weeks ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington.

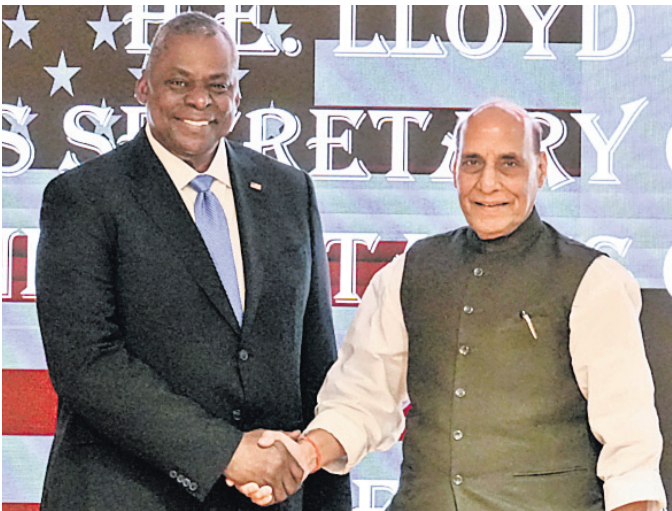
Singh and Austin also decided to initiate negotiations on a framework for the security of supply arrangement and a reciprocal defence procurement agreement, which will promote long-term supply chain stability.

The US defence secretary said the US-India cooperation matters "because we all face a rapidly changing world. We see bullying and coercion from the People's Republic of China and Russian aggression against Ukraine that seeks to redraw borders and threatens national sovereignty."

The Pentagon said the initiative aims to change the "paradigm" for cooperation between the US and Indian defence sectors, including the implementation of a set of specific proposals that could provide India access to cutting-edge technologies and support its defence modernisation plans.

It is learnt that Singh and Austin also touched upon General Electric's proposal to share technology with India for fighter jet engines and New Delhi's plan to procure 30 MQ-9B armed drones for over USD 3 billion from US defence major General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc.

The jet engine deal is likely to be announced during Prime Minister



We established an ambitious new roadmap for defence industrial cooperation with a fast-track (and) high-priority for co-development and co-production projects and to build closer ties between our defence industries

LLOYD AUSTIN | US DEFENCE SECRETARY

Modi's visit to the US. People familiar with the matter said both projects will be part of the roadmap that will also provide for cooperation in areas of intelligence sharing, surveillance and reconnaissance, munitions and the undersea domain.

"We established an ambitious new roadmap for defence industrial cooperation with a fast-track (and) high-priority for co-development and co-production projects and to build closer ties between our defence industries," Austin said at a media briefing.

"We look forward to advancing some of those projects during the upcoming visits," he said, indirectly referring to Modi's upcoming tour of the US. Describing the US-India relationship as one of the

most "consequential" ones, he said Washington only shares technologies with countries that it absolutely trusts. "There is an increasing desire for us to share (them) with partners here in India."

Austin said the US-India partnership is a "cornerstone" for a free and open Indo-Pacific and the deepening of the ties showed how technological innovation and growing military cooperation between the two "great powers" can be a force for global good.

The US defence secretary also held separate talks with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. In a statement, the defence ministry said both sides will identify opportunities for the co-development of new technologies and the co-production of existing and new systems besides facilitating increasing collaboration between defence start-up ecosystems of the two countries.

The ministry said the meeting between Singh and Austin was "warm and cordial" and the two sides discussed a "substantial range" of bilateral defence cooperation issues, with a particular focus on identifying ways to strengthen industrial cooperation.

Abhishek's wife stopped from flying abroad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, June 5:** Rujira Banerjee, wife of senior Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee, was allegedly stopped from boarding a UAE-bound flight citing a "lookout" notice by the Enforcement Directorate that asked her to appear before them on June 8, her lawyer said.

Sources said Rujira had reached Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport in Kolkata with her two children around 7am before being stopped before immigration. A senior ED officer said Rujira was handed over a summons to appear before the agency on June 8.

"We have asked Rujira Banerjee to appear before our officers at the city office on June 8. She was today (Monday) stopped from boarding the flight because of the ED's lookout notice against her and the matter is sub-judice," he said.

One of Rujira's lawyers said, "She was stopped at the immigration, citing a lookout notice issued by the ED in a case. A Supreme Court order says there is no bar on her foreign visits." The lawyer said she had informed the ED on Saturday about her travel plans and gave a copy of her tickets to the agency.

A press statement issued by her office also claimed there is a Supreme Court order which says there are no foreign travel restrictions on the couple. "Rujira Banerjee had visited USA from October 5 to October 18 and there was no objection from the ED then. "Rujira had not been stopped from travelling abroad during the ongoing investigation by the ED. She has not been called for interrogation except once in June last year, which she duly complied with," the statement said.

Last year, the ED had questioned her in connection with a coal pilferage scam. The CBI had also questioned her in 2021 in the same case.

Guard feared dead in Bihar bridge collapse



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Patna, June 5:** A guard deployed at the four-lane bridge connecting Khagaria and Bhagalpur districts on the Ganga river that collapsed Sunday, has gone missing, an official said here.

Vibhash Kumar was hired by the SK Singhla construction company and deployed on Pillar number 11. He had just reached pillar number 11 after parking his motorbike at pillar number 13 when the bridge collapsed.

"We are taking help from the NDRF and SDRF to search for the body. His family has been informed," Akhilesh Kumar, Block Development Officer of Parbatta block in Khagaria district said

"Three guards were deployed at

from the NDRF and SDRF to search for the body. His family has been informed," Akhilesh Kumar, Block Development Officer of Parbatta block in Khagaria district said

"Had the incident occurred between Monday and Saturday, it could have claimed several lives as over 100 labourers were working on the bridge. The construction company probably realised that the bridge might collapse anytime. Hence, it had asked the workers to leave at 1 p.m. on Sunday. The labourers were also staying in makeshift tents under the bridge but had removed their belongings in time. Hence, there is no casualty of labourers," Kumar said.

"Three guards were deployed at

pillar number 11, 12 and 13 but only Kumar reported on duty at Pillar number 11. The other two guards did not come and hence were saved," he said.

"Apparently, the construction company has seen the mishap coming but did not inform the district administration. It needs to be investigated as to why the company officials allowed the guard to report on duty?"

"A large number of passengers also used the waterway to cross the Ganga between Sultanganj and Aguwani Ghat Khagaria.

Luckily, the bridge collapsed on Sunday and boats were not sailing at that time. A boat parked on the bank of the river rose to 50 feet due to the waves generated after the structure fell into the water. "Just imagine the fate of the passengers had the boats come under the impact of the wave," Kumar said.

As per an official of district administration, a massive scale of irregularities and designer fault surfaced during the design and construction of the bridge. Vikas Kumar Karan, the senior deputy collector-cum-incharge of disaster management of Bhagalpur district said: "We have not received any casualty in Bhagalpur side. The maximum part of the collapsed bridge comes under Khagaria."

IIT Madras retains top spot in NIRF rankings



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras retained the top spot among institutions in the country for the fifth consecutive year, while the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru was adjudged the best university and research institution, according to the Ministry of Education's National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

The rankings were announced by Union Minister of State for Education Rajkumar Ranjan Singh on Friday. Seven IITs -- Madras,

Bombay, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Roorkee and Guwahati -- figured in the top 10 in the overall rankings.

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), which was ranked ninth, last year, improved its ranking to sixth this year, while Jawaharlal Nehru University retained its tenth position in the overall category.

The ranking framework, now in its eighth edition, evaluates institutions on five broad generic groups of parameters of teaching, learning and resources, research and professional practice, graduation outcomes, outreach and inclusivity and perception.

Ranks are assigned based on the total sum of marks assigned for each of these five broad groups of parameters. In the universities category, IISc Bengaluru bagged the top spot, followed by JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia at second and third ranks. The trio were on the same positions last year too.



A boy drinks water next to a semi-dry drain choked with garbage at Taimoor Nagar, on the World Environment Day, in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

RAILWAYS CAUGHT ON A SLIPPERY TRACK!

On September 30 last year, in the run-up to the Gujarat elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Vande Bharat express between Gandhinagar and Mumbai. Within a week the train showcased as a specimen of the changing face of new India, met with an accident after a herd of buffaloes came onto the track. The front part of the train engine was damaged but there was no loss of life. Over a period of a month, the train saw three accidents involving cattle and a fourth one in which a woman lost her life. On October 9, a total of 19 cattle had died on the spot after being run over by an Ajmer-Mysore express train near Dungri railway station in Valsad district of Gujarat. Each one of these minor mishaps carried a warning which failed to

serve as a wake-up call.

The trains in question may have got off comparatively lightly but the horrific three- train accident in Balasore district of Odisha on June 2 that has extracted a very high price in terms of human casualties has once again brought into sharp focus a long lingering malaise in the pre-vailing system. The rush to glamorize travel through sleek, high-speed trains hardly serves the intended purpose in the absence of assured safe tracks to run them.

While the exact cause of the pile-up will be known only after an inquiry is conducted, the growing human and cattle pressure on land and the consequent perilous state of movement in and around railway track is there for all of us to see. Cattle roam around these tracks without let or hindrance and so do humans. The possibility of creating a completely barricaded corridor for the movement of trains countrywide still remains a dream for sheer enormity of resources involved in the exercise though the government claims to have eliminated all unmanned railway crossings.



drance and so do humans. The possibility of creating a completely barricaded corridor for the movement of trains countrywide still remains a dream for sheer enormity of resources involved in the exercise though the government claims to have eliminated all unmanned railway crossings.

Unlike the Narendra Modi government's passion project, bullet train between Ahmedabad and Mumbai which is coming up on a fully elevated corridor, most other trains including the

Rajdhani and the semi- high speed Vande Bharat are all operating on the usual tracks and are thus accident-prone, more so as the speed of the trains is sought to be jacked up without corresponding increase in barricaded security leaving the possibility open for the recent Balasore like mishaps in future as well. Railways claimed to have developed technology in signalling and telecommunications and a phased modernization programme was in place. However, spokesperson of the Indian railways also admitted that the Kavach system developed indigenously to prevent train accidents was not available on the route where the recent train accident occurred.

The Congress has gone ballistic furnishing data in support

of their assertion that neglect of vital parameters has played no mean a role in the latest rail disaster. Its spokesperson asserted that a serious collision had been averted in Mysuru division on February 8 exposing serious flaws in the signalling system with clear warning of immediate corrective measures. He also designed to add that the Parliamentary standing committee had slammed the railway board for disregard shown to the recommendations of the Commission for Rail Safety (CRS). Railway insiders also aver that the present government is overly focused on launching new trains and overhauling railway stations which gets more attention rather than overhauling track signalling systems and incorporating better asset management practices.

Villagers chop off Dalit man's thumb

**Patna:** A group of people allegedly assaulted a Dalit man and chopped off his thumb after his nephew picked up a cricket ball during a match at a school playground in Gujarat's Patan district, police said. The incident took place in Kakoshi village in the district on Sunday, an official said. According to the FIR, the accused got angry and threatened the boy who had picked up the ball while watching a cricket match at a school playground in the village, he said. They also allegedly hurled casteist slurs with the intention to insult and intimidate members of the Dalit community, the official said. When the boy's uncle Dhiraj Parmar objected to this, the matter was settled for the time being, he said. However, later that evening, a group of seven men armed with sharp weapons assaulted the complainant Dhiraj and his brother Kirti, the official said. One of the accused chopped off Kirti's thumb and injured him seriously, he said.



# international

## of the day quote

We are now living in the dark ages. Nazi Germany-era law of kin punishment is being practised against PTI. How long will the SC allow complete violation of fundamental rights of anyone linked to Pakistan's biggest political party?

IMRAN KHAN | FORMER PM, PAKISTAN

With strong relationships and with good, proud Indians contributing abroad, and with growth at home – we are very clear, the rise of India is unstoppable

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

We will, I hope, soon see American officials engaging at senior levels with their Chinese counterparts over the coming months to continue that work. And then, at some point, we will see President Biden and President Xi come back together again

JAKE SULLIVAN | NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER, US

## SHORT TAKES

### Harry a no-show on court hearing

**London:** Prince Harry's phone hacking trial against the publisher of the Daily Mirror kicked off Monday without him present – and the judge was not happy. Harry's lawyer said the Duke of Sussex would not be available to testify after opening statements because he caught a flight back from Los Angeles on Sunday after the birthday of his 2-year-old daughter, Lilibet. "I'm a little surprised," Justice Timothy Fancourt said, noting he had directed Harry to be in court for the first day of his case. Mirror Group Newspaper's lawyer, Andrew Green, said he was "deeply troubled" by Harry's absence on opening day. Harry originally was scheduled to testify Tuesday. His lawyer was told last week the duke should attend the trial Monday in case the opening statements concluded before the end of the day.

### India, Bangladesh army chiefs meets

**Dhaka:** Indian Army chief Gen Manoj Pande Monday met his Bangladeshi counterpart General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed here and discussed various aspects of mutual interest and explored ways to further expand bilateral defence and security ties. Gen Pande, who arrived here earlier Monday on a two-day visit to Bangladesh - his second trip to the country as Army chief, also interacted with Lt Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman, the Principal Staff Officer of the Armed forces division. The Indian Army chief visited Bangladesh in July last year on his first foreign visit after assuming charge of the top post.

### Saudi reaching out to US foes

**Dubai:** Saudi Arabia has welcomed Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on an official visit, reaching out to yet another US foe as the oil-rich kingdom engages in a flurry of diplomacy. Maduro arrived late Sunday in the Red Sea city of Jeddah, where he was greeted by Saudi officials, according to the state-run Saudi Press Agency. It did not give a reason for the visit or elaborate on his schedule, but Saudi Arabia is hosting an international conference on combating extremism later this week in the capital, Riyadh. Over the last few months, the kingdom has restored relations with Iran's theocracy and Syria's President Bashar Assad – both seen as pariahs in the West.

## CRACKDOWN ON EDUCATION

### 60 girls poisoned in Afghan



REUTERS

**Kabul, June 5:** Around 60 Afghan girls were hospitalised after being poisoned at their school in northern Afghanistan, police said Monday.

The poisoning, which targeted a girls' school in the Afghan province of Sar-e Pol, comes after intense scrutiny of girls' education in the war-torn nation since the Taliban took over and barred most teenage female students and after a wave of poison attacks on girls' schools in neighbouring Iran.

In Iran, poisoning incidents at girls' schools sickened an estimated 13K mostly female students since Nov

"Some unknown people entered a girls' ... school in Sancharak District ... and poisoned the classes, when the girls come to classes they got poisoned," said Den Mohammad Nazari, Sar-e-Pol's police spokesperson, without elaborating on which substance was used or who was thought to be behind the incident. Nazari said the girls had been taken to hospital but were in "good condition."

The Taliban administration has prevented most female students from attending high school and university since taking over in 2021, sparking condemnation from international governments and many Afghans.

Taliban authorities have kept primary schools open for girls, up until the age of around 12 and say they are in favour of female education under certain conditions.

## Russia thwarts Ukraine offensive

*For months, Ukraine has been preparing for a counter-offensive against Russian forces which officials in Kyiv and CIA Director William Burns have said will pierce Russian President Vladimir Putin's hubris*

REUTERS

**Kyiv, June 5:** Moscow said Monday it had thwarted a major Ukrainian offensive in the south of Ukraine's Donetsk region but Russia's main mercenary leader said Russian forces had lost ground around Bakhmut further north.

Asked whether the attacks represented the start of Ukraine's long-heralded counter-offensive against Russia's invasion, Oleksiy Danilov, Secretary of Ukraine's Security and Defence Council, said, "The war continues. Until complete victory."

Russia's defence ministry said Ukraine had attacked Sunday morning with six mechanised and two tank battalions in southern Donetsk, where Moscow has long suspected Ukraine would seek to drive a wedge through Russian-controlled territory.

"On the morning of June 4, the enemy launched a large-scale offensive in five sectors of the front in the South Donetsk direction," the defence ministry said in a statement posted on Telegram at 1:30 a.m. Moscow time (2230 GMT).

"The enemy's goal was to break through our defences in the most vulnerable, in its opinion, sector of the front," it said. "The enemy did not achieve its tasks, it had no success."

Asked to comment, a Ukrainian military spokesperson said: "We do not have such information and we do not comment on any kind of fake."

Further north, near the long-contested city of Bakhmut, Ukrainian forces were reported to have been "moving forward" by the commander of Ukraine's ground forces, Oleksandr Syrskyi.

An armed forces video showed Russian positions under fire and Russian mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin said Ukrainian forces had retaken part of the settlement of Berkhiivka, north of Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine, calling it a "disgrace".



**RUSSIA SAYS IT FOUGHT OFF ATTACK IN SOUTHERN UKRAINE**  
**MERCENARY LEADER SAYS RUSSIA LOST GROUND NEAR BAKHMUT**  
**UKRAINE AVOIDS SAYING WHETHER COUNTER-OFFENSIVE HAS BEGUN**

Prigozhin's private Wagner army captured Bakhmut last month after the longest battle of the war and handed its positions there to regular Russian troops.

Ukraine has in recent weeks sought to weaken Russian positions but its plans have been shrouded in secrecy as it prepares to take on the much larger military of Russia.

Moscow was last month struck by drones which Russia said was a Ukrainian terrorist attack while pro-Ukrainian forces have repeatedly crossed into Russia's Belgorod region in recent days. Russia said it had repelled a new attempt Sunday. The pro-Ukrainian groups said they had captured some Russian soldiers.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov published a cryptic message on Twitter Sunday, quoting Depeche Mode's track



**The world needs to phase out fossil fuels if it wants to curb global warming**

SIMON STIELL | EXECUTIVE SECRETARY (CLIMATE), UN

## HEAT SHUTS SCHOOLS IN BANGLADESH

The Bangladesh Education Ministry has announced a four-day closure of government primary schools across the country because of the ongoing heatwave. The heatwave has gripped many parts of Bangladesh, including the capital Dhaka, as the country enters the height of summer, pushing temperatures to record levels



**BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY:** A view of Wat Phra Dhammakaya temple during a ceremony commemorating Vesak Day, an annual celebration of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death, in Pathum Thani province outside Bangkok, Thailand

REUTERS

## ITALY TO ABANDON COAL USE BY 2024

REUTERS

**Milan, June 5:** Italy could shut down its coal-fired power stations in 2024, a year earlier than planned, if gas prices remain at current low levels, Environment Minister Gilberto Pichetto Fratin said Monday.

Italy, which had to find an alternative for the gas it used to import from Russia following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, increased its production of energy from coal to 7.5% of the total last year, from 4.6% in 2021.

"The intention is to abandon coal by 2025 or even earlier... I hope to succeed by 2024, if gas prices hold at the current (low) levels," Pichetto Fratin said at an event organised by La Repubblica newspaper.

Under its current plan for energy and climate (PNIEC), which is under review, the government targets an exit from coal in 2025.

The minister said that natural gas, which is considered the least polluting fossil fuel, should accompany Italy's energy transition path until 2050, while the country gradually increases its renewable energy capacity.

The environment ministry's updated strategy for energy and climate, to be unveiled in late June, will aim to increase power generation from renewables to two-thirds of the total by 2030 from the current one third, Pichetto Fratin said.

## UK to house illegal migrants on ships

*British PM said the country's asylum system is being "overwhelmed" with people travelling from safe countries*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, June 5:** British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak Monday claimed that his plan to "stop the boats" of illegal migrants coming to UK shores is working as he announced plans to house them on ships to reduce pressure on taxpayer-funded hotels.

Addressing a press conference at the border town of Dover in Kent, Sunak said the first such ship will be ready later this month and two others to accommodate a further 1,000 migrants soon after.

He pointed out that important legislation, referred to as the Illegal Migration Bill or Stop the Boats Bill, has cleared the House of Commons and will give his government the right to detain and deport migrants who enter the country illegally.

"I promised we would get illegal migrants out of hotels – and into alternative sites, including military facilities," said Sunak.

"To reduce pressures on local communities, we'll also house peo-



**In the five months since I launched the plan, crossings are now down 20 per cent compared to last year**

RISHI SUNAK | PM, UK

ple on ships. The first will arrive in Portland in the next fortnight. And we've secured another two today that will accommodate another 1,000," he said.

The British Indian leader said the country's asylum system is being "overwhelmed" with people travelling from safe countries, which impacts the government's capacity to help those in the greatest need and results in British taxpayers spending around GBP 6 million a day on housing illegal migrants.

He highlighted migration returns partnership agreements struck with European countries, including France, Bulgaria and Albania, which are beginning to show results.

## US slams China for 'unsafe' manoeuvres

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Bangkok, June 5:** The US military released video Monday of what it called an "unsafe" Chinese manoeuvre in the Taiwan Strait on the weekend, in which a Chinese navy ship cut sharply across the path of an American destroyer, forcing the US vessel to slow to avoid a collision.

The incident occurred Saturday as the American destroyer USS Chung-Hoon and Canadian frigate HMCS Montreal were conducting



a so-called "freedom of navigation" transit of the strait between Taiwan and mainland China.

The American destroyer held its course, but reduced speed to 10 knots "to avoid a collision", the military said.

The Indo-Pacific Command said the actions violated maritime rules of safe passage in international water.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin defended the manoeuvre, saying it was undertaken "in accordance with the law". "China's military actions are completely justified, lawful, safe and professional," he said.

## Japanese get trained in 'Hollywood' smiles as masks come off

**SMILE EDUCATION HAS SEEN A MORE THAN FOUR-FOLD JUMP IN DEMAND FROM LAST YEAR, WITH CUSTOMERS RANGING FROM COMPANIES SEEKING MORE APPROACHABLE SALESPeOPLE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS LOOKING TO IMPROVE THEIR RESIDENTS' WELL-BEING**

REUTERS

**Tokyo, June 5:** In one of Keiko Kawano's recent classes, more than a dozen Tokyo art school students held mirrors to their faces, stretching the sides of their mouths upward with their fingers: they were practising how to smile.

It's not something most people would think to pay for but Kawano's services as a smile instructor are seeing a surge in demand in Japan, where mask-wearing was near uni-

versal during the pandemic.

Himawari Yoshida, 20, one of the students taking the class as part of her school's courses to prepare them for the job market, says she needed to work on her smile.

"I hadn't used my facial muscles much during Covid so it's good exercise," she said.

Kawano's company Egaouku - literally "Smile Education" - has seen a more than four-fold jump in demand from last year, with customers ranging from companies



seeking more approachable salespeople and local governments looking to improve their residents' well-being. An hour-long one-on-one lesson costs 7,700 yen (\$55).

Even before the pandemic, donning a mask in Japan was normal for many during hay fever season and around exams due to concern about getting ill for a key life event.

But while the government may have lifted its recommendation to wear masks in March, many people have still not let them go on a daily basis. A poll by public broadcaster NHK in May showed 55% of Japanese saying they were wearing them just as often as two months earlier. Only 8% said they had stopped wearing masks altogether.

Tellingly, roughly a quarter of the art school students who took the class kept their masks on during the lesson. Young people have, perhaps, become used to life with masks, Kawano said, noting that women might find it easier to go out without makeup and men could hide that they hadn't shaved.

The former radio host who started giving lessons in 2017 has also trained 23 others as smiling coaches to spread the virtues and technique of crafting the perfect smile around Japan.

Her trademarked "Hollywood Style Smiling Technique" method comprises "crescent eyes", "round cheeks" and shaping the edges of the mouth to bare eight pearly whites in the upper row. Students can try out their technique on a tablet to get scored on their smile.

Kawano believes that culturally, Japanese people may be less inclined to smile than Westerners because of their sense of security as an island nation and as a unitary state. To hear her tell it, the threat of guns might, ironically, encourage more smiling.

"Culturally, a smile signifies that I'm not holding a gun and I'm not a threat to you," she said. With a surge in inbound tourists, Japanese people need to communicate with foreigners with more than just their eyes, she added.

"I think there's a growing need for people to smile."



of the day **quote**

“We can reduce 40 per cent pollution by not using fossil fuels like petrol and diesel. We import fossil fuels worth ₹16 lakh crore every year. It poses a big economic challenge for us. It also causes pollution”

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

“We want to move towards e-cooking since we have 24/7 electricity in our households”

AJAY TEWARI | ADDITIONAL POWER SECRETARY

“There are massive opportunities and we are really excited about the future of aviation in India”

WILLIE WALSH | DIRECTOR GENERAL, IATA

**SHORT TAKES**

**NCLT to hear Go First lessors' plea**

**New Delhi:** Insolvency tribunal NCLT Monday directed the interim resolution professional of crisis-hit Go First to file a reply within one week over petitions filed by three lessors seeking possession of their aircraft and engines from the Wadia group firm. The three lessors, which approached the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), are BOC Aviation (Ireland), Jackson Square Aviation Ireland and Engine Lease Finance BV. A two-member NCLT bench has directed the IRP (interim resolution professional) to file a reply within 2 weeks and a rejoinder, if any, by the lessors. It had directed to list the matter June 15 for the next date of hearing.

**Daimler launches BharatBenz Certified**

**Chennai:** Commercial vehicles maker Daimler India has forayed into the pre-owned business segment under its new brand 'BharatBenz Certified', the company said Monday. Daimler India Commercial Vehicles is a wholly owned subsidiary of Stuttgart-based Daimler Truck AG. The new business initiative would refurbish and sell pre-owned BharatBenz trucks to customers. To be initially available at Trident Trucking in Bangalore, the BharatBenz Certified programme would be expanded to other dealerships across the country.

**5G sales hit 50% mkt for 1st time**

**New Delhi:** The monthly 5G smartphone sales share has crossed the 50 per cent mark in India for the first time in April this year, a new report said Monday. According to Counterpoint Research, 5G services are still patchy across most of India after launching in October 2022. “There’s still a long way to go, especially in terms of network coverage. But this is a milestone for sure,” said Tarun Pathak, Research Director.

**SBI Card to raise ₹3,000cr via NCDs**

**New Delhi:** SBI Card Monday said it would raise up to ₹3,000 crore by issuing non-convertible debentures to fund business growth. The board approved the raising of funds by way of issuance of non-convertible debentures (NCDs), aggregating to ₹3,000 cores in one or more tranches, SBI Card said in a regulatory filing. This fundraising would be done through private placement in one or more tranches over a period of time, it added.



“The banking sector in India at this juncture is sound, resilient, and financially healthy. So, the time is perhaps right to improve the plumbing by addressing the gaps in governance frameworks, assurance functions and strategise for better times ahead”

RAJESHWAR RAO | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

**DYNAMIC DEMAND**

# Services sector surge defies inflation woes

**THE SECTOR'S OUTPUT INCREASES AT 2ND-FASTEST PACE IN CLOSE TO 13 YRS IN MAY**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** India's services sector growth eased slightly in May, but registered the second-strongest rate of growth in close to 13 years, on favourable demand conditions and new client wins, a monthly survey said Monday.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell from 62 in April to 61.2 in May. Despite falling from April, the latest reading indicated that output increased at the second-quickest pace since July 2010.

For the 22nd straight month, the headline figure was above the neutral 50 threshold. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

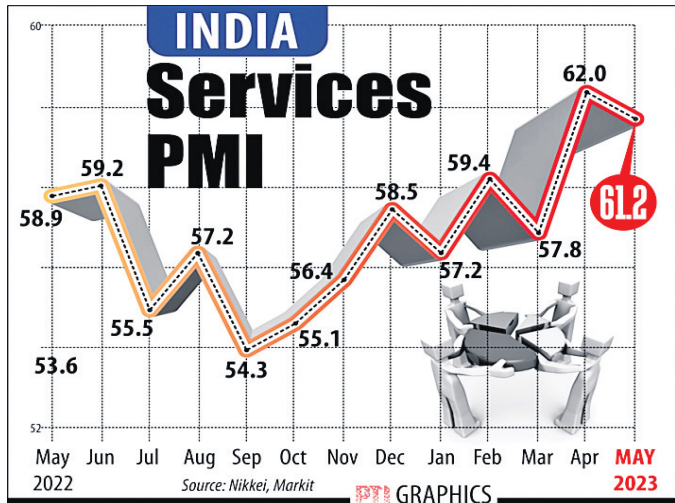
“The PMI data for May stand as a compelling testament to prevailing demand resilience, impressive output growth and job creation within India's dynamic service sector,” said Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Additionally, monitored companies expanded their workforces to accommodate for higher intakes of new work.

Going ahead, services companies maintained an upbeat view that business activity would increase over the coming 12 months.

“Advertising, demand strength and favourable market conditions were among the reasons cited for optimistic forecasts,” the survey said.

Meanwhile, the S&P Global India Composite PMI Output Index -- which measures combined services and manufacturing output -- stood at 61.6 in May, unchanged



“With policymakers closely monitoring inflation developments, long-awaited cuts to interest rates -- which could aid business strategies, budgeting and investment plans -- appear more distant”

POLLYANNA DE LIMA | ECONOMICS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, S&P GLOBAL MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Services PMI fell to 61.2 in May from 62.0 in April

It was above neutral 50 threshold for 22nd straight month

from April.

“India's private sector built on the strong momentum recorded in April by posting a rate of expansion in business activity that was the joint-best in just under 13 years,” the survey said.

On the price front, Indian service providers reported higher food, input, transportation and wage costs in May. Amid reports of rising cost burdens, firms charged more for their services in May.

“While ongoing increases in output charges could erode purchasing power, affect the affordability of services and potentially dampen economic growth, companies could be seeking operational efficiencies and exploring alternative sourcing options to navigate through these challenges,” Lima said.

A meeting of the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das, is scheduled for

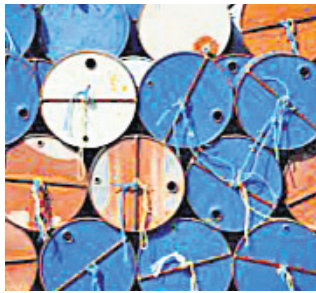
June 6-8. The decision of the 43rd meeting of the MPC would be announced June 8.

After the last MPC meeting in April, the RBI paused its rate hike cycle and stayed with the 6.5 per cent repo rate. Prior to that, the central bank had cumulatively hiked the repo rate by 250 basis points since May 2022 in a bid to contain inflation.

The S&P Global India Services PMI is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 service sector companies. The panel is stratified by detailed sector and company workforce size, based on contributions to GDP. Data collection began in December 2005.

The services sector accounts for more than 50% of India's gross domestic product. Asia's third-largest economy expanded 6.1% in the March quarter, one of the fastest growing emerging markets.

# Oil rises on Saudi plan to cut output



- BRENT AND WTI BOTH JUMP BY MORE THAN \$1
- SAUDI MOVE IS IN ADDITION TO OPEC+ CUTS
- OPEC+ MEETING AND SAUDI CUTS COULD BOOST PRICES

## India may delay price revision

Saudi Arabia's announcement to reduce how much oil it sends to the global economy may arrest the fall in international oil prices, delaying revision in fuel prices in India, industry sources said. This spurt will reverse the softening in rates witnessed in the basket of crude oil that India imports. The Indian basket was hovering around \$72 per barrel in the last few days and had brightened prospects of a cut in petrol and diesel prices. “Public sector oil companies had been recouping losses they incurred for holding rates when crude oil prices shot through the roof. Last month, international oil prices and retail pump rates had come at par. But now with the prices rising, the difference between cost and retail prices will reappear,” an industry official said. India imports 85 per cent of its oil needs and its fuel pricing is indexed to international rates. Petrol and diesel prices have been on a freeze for a record 14 months now. Petrol costs Rs 96.72 per litre in the national capital and diesel comes for Rs 89.62 a litre.

“Saudi remains keener than most other members in terms of ensuring oil prices above \$80 per barrel, which is essential for balancing its own fiscal budget for the year”

SUVRO SARKAR | LEADER (ENERGY SECTOR), DBS BANK

## THE PRODUCTION CUT IS SAUDI ARABIA'S BIGGEST IN YEARS

REUTERS

**London, June 5:** Oil prices rose by more than \$1 a barrel Monday after top crude exporter Saudi Arabia pledged to cut production by a further 1 million barrels per day (bpd) from July to counter macroeconomic headwinds that have depressed markets.

Brent crude futures were up \$1.72, or 2.3%, at \$77.85 a barrel by 0900 GMT after touching a session high of \$78.73. US West Texas Intermediate crude climbed \$1.72, or 2.4%, to \$73.46 after hitting an intraday high of \$75.06.

Both contracts extended gains of more than 2% Friday after the Saudi energy ministry said the kingdom's output would drop to 9 million bpd in July from about 10 million bpd in May.

The voluntary cut is on top of a broader deal by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia to limit supply into 2024 as the OPEC+ producer group seeks to boost flagging oil prices.

OPEC+ pumps about 40% of the world's crude and has cut its output target by a total of 3.66 million bpd, amounting to 3.6% of global demand.

## BYJU'S AAKASH TO GO PUBLIC NEXT YEAR

Edtech major BYJU'S will launch the Initial Public Offering (IPO) of its test preparatory arm Aakash Education Services Limited by middle of next year, the company said Monday. Aakash Education Services Limited (AESL) revenue is on track to reach ₹4,000 crore with an EBITDA (operational profit) of ₹900 crore in the fiscal year 2023-24, the company said



## BoB allows cash withdrawals using UPI on its ATMs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** Bank of Baroda Monday announced launch of Interoperable Cardless Cash Withdrawal (ICCW) facility wherein a customer can withdraw cash using UPI from the bank's ATMs.



“The first public sector bank to launch this service, Bank of Baroda customers as well as customers of other participating issuer banks that use BHIM UPI, bob World UPI or any other UPI application enabled for ICCW on their mobile phone can withdraw cash from a Bank of Baroda ATM without using their debit card,” the lender said.

On selecting the option ‘UPI Cash Withdrawal’ at a Bank of Baroda ATM, the customer needs to enter the withdrawal amount, post which a QR code is displayed on the ATM screen.

Explaining the process, the lender said the customer will scan the QR code using a UPI app enabled for ICCW and then authorise the transaction with her/his UPI PIN on the mobile phone to withdraw the cash from the ATM.

If multiple bank accounts are linked to a single UPI ID, ICCW functionality gives customers the option to select the account to be debited.

Akhil Handa, Chief Digital Officer at Bank of Baroda, said the new ICCW facility being offered by the bank gives customers the freedom to withdraw money without the use of a physical card - a simple, convenient and secure way to withdraw cash.

Customers can avail two transactions a day per account with a withdrawal limit of ₹5,000 per transaction. Bank of Baroda has over 11,000 ATMs across the country.

## PREPAYMENT PROGRAMME

# Adani repays loans worth \$2.65 billion



*The embattled group has reduced the debt on books to assuage investors*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** Embattled Adani Group Monday said it has repaid loans aggregating \$2.65 billion to complete a prepayment programme to cut overall leverage in an attempt to win back investor trust post a damning report of a US short seller.

In a Credit Note released Monday, Adani Group said it has made a full prepayment of \$2.15 billion of loans that were taken by pledging shares in the conglomerate's listed firms and also another \$700 million in loans taken for the acquisition of Ambuja Cement.

“The prepayment was done along with interest payment of \$203 million,” it added.

Further, the credit update states that the promoters completed the sale of shares in four listed group entities to GQG Partners, a leading global investment firm, for \$1.87 billion (Rs 15,446 crore).

“The deleveraging programme testifies to the strong liquidity management and capital access at sponsor level even in volatile market conditions, supplementing the solid capital prudence adopted at all portfolio companies,” Adani Group said in the credit update.

US short-seller Hindenburg Research in January released a damning report alleging accounting fraud and stock price manipulation at Adani Group, triggering a stock market rout that had erased about \$145 billion

in the conglomerate's market value at its lowest point.

Adani Group has denied all allegations by Hindenburg and is plotting a comeback strategy.

The credit update further highlights major improvements in key financial metrics - the portfolio's combined Net Debt to EBITDA ratio has decreased from 3.81 in FY22 to 3.27 in FY23, run rate EBITDA surged from ₹50,706 crore in FY22 to ₹66,566 crore in FY23.

The credit update further states that the banking lines of Adani Group continue to show confidence by disbursing new debt and rolling over existing lines of credit. Moreover, rating agencies both domestic and international rating agencies have reaffirmed their ratings in all the group companies.

Debt Service Cover Ratio (DSCR) has improved to 2.02x during FY23 from 1.47x during FY22. Gross Assets increased to ₹4.23 lakh crore, up by ₹1.06 lakh crore. Gross Asset / Net Debt cover has improved to 2.26x in FY23 from 1.98x in FY22.

Continued investments in core infra with gross assets of ₹3.77 lakh crore (89 per cent of the portfolio) provide long-term multi-decadal visibility of cash flow, it said, adding cash balance was higher by 41.5 per cent at ₹40,351 crore against ₹28,519 crore. Free Flow from operations -- FFO -- (EBITDA less finance cost less tax paid) was ₹37,538 crore.

Cash Balance and FFO (together at ₹77,889 crore) are much higher than debt maturity cover for FY24, FY25 and FY26 of ₹11,796 crore, ₹32,373 crore and ₹16,614 crore, respectively, at the combined portfolio level.

## Govt gets ₹4,185cr from CIL stake sale

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** The government has mopped up Rs 4,185 crore through a three per cent stake sale in state-run Coal India.

The holding of the government has come down to 63.13 per cent in the coal producer after the offer-for-sale (OFS), CIL said in a stock exchange filing.

The government has received Rs 4,185 crore through a 3 per cent stake sale in state-run Coal India as per the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) website.

The government last week sold three per cent stake in CIL and the issue was oversubscribed by both retail and institutional investors.

So far in the current fiscal, the government has mopped up Rs 4,235 crore from PSU stake sale. The full-year target from disinvestment has been pegged at Rs 51,000 crore.



## WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

### 'Beat the Plastic' initiative by SBI

**Bhubaneswar:** SBI Local Head Office Bhubaneswar has observed World Environment Day 2023 on the theme “Beat the Plastic”. A walkathon led by DGM & CDO Manoj Kumar Singh was carried out by staffs of LHO in the morning. Around 150 staffs participated in the walkathon and spread the message Reduce, Reuse, Recycle of plastic for Plastic free environment. Later, a drawing competition among the children of staff members was held at LHO premises. More than 30 children participated and were felicitated by CDO Singh. SBI in association with NGO “Orissa Environment Society” conducted a seminar on the theme in a meeting hall at Bhubaneswar. Around 150 persons from different walks of life and profession had attended the programme and some plantation activity was undertaken to celebrate the occasion.



### Jindal Steel and Power organises 'A Run for Environment'

**Angul:** Pursuing its core principle of sustainability, Jindal Steel and Power (JSP) observed the World Environment Day 2023 with a series of programmes, in which hundreds of employees, school students and local community members participated, campaigning to beat the plastic pollution for eco-restoration in line with the theme of this year. The observation started with ‘A Run for Environment’, flagged off by Hridayeswar Jha, Executive Director & Location Head in the presence of Damodar Mittal, Executive Director- Raw Material and Iron making. The participants in the programme planted more than 500 saplings inside the JSP campus. In his message in social media platform, JSP's Chairman Naveen Jindal appealed, “On World Environment Day, let's



pledge to nurture the planet that nurtures us. Small steps lead to great journeys; let's reduce, reuse, and recycle. Remember, there's no Planet B”.

# Auto retail sales see 10% growth in May

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** Automobile retail sales rose 10 per cent in May on the back of robust demand across segments including passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and tractors, automobile dealers' body FADA said Monday.

The total automobile retail sales jumped to 20,19,414 units last month, from 18,33,421 units in May 2022. Passenger vehicle sales rose by 4 per cent to 2,98,873 units in May, as compared to 2,86,523 units in the year-ago period.

The Federation of Automobile



Dealers Associations (FADA) President Manish Raj Singhania said improved availability of vehicles coupled with pending order list and the robust demand for new launches drove a positive momentum, helping the passenger

vehicle segment rebound after a slump in the previous month.

Two-wheeler retail sales last month rose 9 per cent to 14,93,234 units, as compared to 13,65,924 units in May 2022.

“The two-wheeler sales were positively influenced by seasonal factors like the marriage season, changes in the FAME subsidies effective from June, and the recovery of rural demand,” Singhania said.

Commercial vehicle retail sales rose by 7 per cent to 77,135 units last month, as against 71,964 units in May last year.

Three-wheeler retail sales rose 79 per cent to 79,433 units last month, as compared to 44,482 units in the year-ago period.

Tractor sales rose to 70,739 units, up 10 per cent, as compared to 64,528 units in May 2022.

On business outlook, FADA said that the anticipated stable interest rates by RBI's Monetary Policy Committee could maintain vehicle demand and positively impact auto sales. However, supply chain issues, demand-supply dynamics, and regulatory changes also play a role in shaping the auto retail outlook, it added.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 5: Star Australia batter Steve Smith Monday expressed his concerns over the future of the five-day game ahead of the World Test Championship (WTC) final against India beginning here Wednesday.

The rapid growth of franchise cricket around the world has put pressure on the international schedule. The smaller nations are not playing enough Test cricket, with India, Australia and England effectively driving the longest format.

It was, though, ironical that Smith spoke about the uncertain future ahead of the biggest game in Test cricket – the WTC final. “Yes, I am slightly concerned. But, hopefully Test Cricket still stays alive and well. I think it’s in a good place at the moment,” he said ahead of the title clash against India.

“Some of the games we’ve seen recently have been pretty amazing. So, for me as, I suppose, a traditionalist, someone that loves Test cricket, I hope it still remains at the front of all the Board’s mind and stays alive and well for some time to come.”

The Australians had a lengthy first training session here Monday and there were enough signs that Scott Boland will play in place of injured Josh Hazlewood. All-rounder Cameron Green will be the fourth pace bowling option besides Mitchell Starc and skipper Pat Cummins. London was witnessing sunny weather over the last week but Monday was cold and overcast through the day.

Facing Indian bowlers a challenge

Talking about the WTC final, Smith said he expects the Indian attack to pose a stiff challenge ir-

respective of the combination they go with. Not so long ago in India, Australia’s preparations revolved around Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja but now they also need to be wary of Mohammed Siraj and Mohammed Shami.

“I think they’ve

got a good mix obviously of quality seam bowlers. Shami and Siraj, probably their two main guys who have really good skills and I think the Dukes ball suits them nicely.

“And then obviously their spinners as well, who bowl really well in all conditions. So, I think they’re a good attack and yeah, we’re going to have to play well against them this week,” he said.

Smith has been part of the ODI and T20 World Cup-winning Australian teams but unlike those events, the WTC final is a one-off game in a two year cycle.

Asked if he feels the same as he did while playing the big finals in the shorter formats, he said: “I haven’t thought too much about it in that aspect. It’s obviously been



**Some of the games we’ve seen recently have been pretty amazing. So, for me as, I suppose, a traditionalist, someone that loves Test cricket, I hope it still remains at the front of all the Board’s mind and stays alive and well for some time to come**

STEVE SMITH

# Smith wary of Test future

a good couple of years of Test cricket and to play in a final of the World Test Championship is pretty special.

“But yeah, I don’t know, until we sort of go out there and get started, I don’t know how it’ll feel. But it’s been a good build up the last few days. We’ve had some good days training down in Beckenham and we get to have a hit at the Oval today and tomorrow.”

It is the first time that a Test has been scheduled at The Oval in June and the venue has been hosting games since 1880. The pitch wore a greenish look on Monday but the grass will be trimmed going into day one.

“Yeah, I haven’t had a look at the surface yet, so I probably can’t say too much, but you’re right, usually back into the summer it’s a bit drier. Some spin can come into play, particularly as the game goes on. So, yeah, we’ll wait and see what the surface looks like,” said Smith.

He also backed Boland to fill in nicely for Hazlewood. “I think you’ll get what Scotty does pretty well. Hits a good length, hits the top of the stump, snips the ball around, can swing it if he wants to and he’s got great skills as well, so no doubt it’ll be a challenge if he gets the nod,” he added.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 5: Rising all-rounder Cameron Green wants to carry his impressive IPL batting form into the World Test Championship final against India and feels that there is no need to curb his attacking flair because of a change in format from slam-bang to traditional one. The WTC final between India and Australia will start at the Oval Wednesday, June 7.

Green, inarguably, was Australia’s stand-out player in this year’s IPL, scoring 452 runs from 16 innings at a strike rate north of 160, which also includes a 47-ball ton that took Mumbai Indians to the playoffs.

“The way that England have been playing their cricket has been quite aggressive, so maybe you don’t have to change too much,” Green was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au ahead of the WTC Final to be held at The Oval starting Wednesday.

“Probably starting (my innings) last year, I probably looked to defend a bit too much instead of just looking to score. Then you can defend after when you get a good ball, just making good decisions out there. So this time round, it will be looking to score, and then if it’s a good ball, defend,” he added.

“The more you get exposed to it, the easier it gets. That’s what I’m trying to take into it this time making the change. I kind of know what worked last time and what didn’t, so I’m just trying to learn



how to adjust quicker and better,” said Green.

Besides batting, Green is a vital cog in Australia pace attack and the 24-year-old is looking forward to the challenge of bowling with Dukes ball in English conditions.

“Everyone, especially being a bowler, looks forward to coming over here (England) with the swing,” he said. “Normally, when I bowl in Australia, it’s not doing too much so I’m pretty excited that there’s something I can use over here.

“A few of the guys talk about it swinging a bit too much – so (I’m) just getting the skillsets up with the wobble seam and just playing around with all that.”

## Benzema signs off with a goal



**NEW JOURNEY AWAITS:** Karim Benzema appreciates fans’ applause after appearing in the Real Madrid jersey for one last time, Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Madrid, June 5:** Karim Benzema converted his penalty kick and received a standing ovation from fans before being substituted at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, bringing an end to his memorable career with Real Madrid Sunday.

Benzema was replaced after scoring the 72nd-minute equalizer in Madrid’s 1-1 draw against Athletic Bilbao in his final game with the Spanish powerhouse after 14 seasons. Madrid had announced earlier Sunday that the French striker would not return next season.

The last round of the Spanish league also saw Vinicius Junior’s return to action for the first time since he was racially abused in a league match against Valencia two weeks ago, as well as Valladolid’s relegation.

Vinicius hadn’t played in the last two Madrid games following the latest incident of racist insults targeted at him in Valencia May 21, prompting a widespread reaction from Spanish authorities and the football world. The club had said he was sidelined with a minor knee problem. The Brazil forward wasn’t able to score, having a 79th-

minute goal disallowed for offside.

Benzema did find the net in his farewell match. He fired in a low shot from the spot, then celebrated by sending kisses to the crowd at the Bernabeu. He was immediately substituted by Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti, receiving a big ovation from the fans.

Benzema’s farewell came amid reports he will play in Saudi Arabia next season. After the match, Madrid players threw Benzema up in the air a few times, as they did for the other players not returning next season — Marco Asensio, Eden Hazard and Mariano Diaz.

Still wearing the captain’s armband, Benzema went near the stands and applauded the fans. The result allowed Madrid to finish in second place ahead of Atletico Madrid, which drew 2-2 at Villarreal after conceding a stoppage-time equalizer.

The 35-year-old striker has been with Madrid since 2009. He helped the club win a record 25 titles, including five Champions Leagues, five Club World Cups and four Spanish leagues.

Benzema ended his career with Madrid with 354 goals — the second-most all-time — and 648 appearances, which is the fifth-most all-time.

Six teams had entered the final round fighting to avoid relegation — Valladolid, Celta Vigo, Almeria, Valencia, Getafe and Cadiz. Almeria escaped thanks to an 87th-minute penalty kick converted by Adrián Embarba in a 3-3 draw at Espanyol, finishing just outside the relegation zone.

Valencia stayed safe after a 1-1 draw at Real Betis, while Celta Vigo survived after a 2-1 home win over champion Barcelona with a pair of goals by Gabri Veiga. Barcelona ended the season on 88 points, 10 more than Madrid and 11 more than Atletico.

## Siddharth wins gold at Asian U-20 Athletics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Yecheon (South Korea), June 5:** Shot putter Siddharth Choudhary clinched India’s third gold of the Asian U-20 Athletics Championship here with a personal best throw of 19.52m Monday.

The 17-year-old Choudhary achieved his best throw of 19.52m in his third attempt to better his earlier personal best of 19.11m at the junior level. Djibrine Adoum Ahmat (18.85m) of Qatar and Park Sihoon (18.70m) of the host country were second and third respectively.

India won six medals on the second day of competition to occupy the third position in the standings with 3 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze, behind Japan (8 gold, 2 silver, 2 bronze) and China (5 gold, 3 silver, 2 bronze).

Javelin thrower Shivam Lohakare (72.34m), men’s 3000m steeplechaser Sharuk Khan (8:51.74s) and long jumper Sumita (5.96m) won a silver medal each.

The 4x400m relay team (3:30.12s) of Rezoana Mallick Heena, Deepak Singh, Anushka Dattatray and Navpreet Singh, and 800m runner Shakeel (1:49.79s) won a bronze each.

India were leading the 4x400m relay race at the end of the third leg but Heena tripped just after the exchange of baton. She got up and continued the race but India eventually ended third. The gold went to Sri Lanka with a time of 3:25.41, while South Korea clinched silver with a time of 3:28.29.

Fast-rising Heena and Bharatpreet Singh had clinched a gold medal each in women’s 400m race and men’s discus throw respectively on the opening day Sunday.

## VINESH HITS OUT AT THOSE ‘SPREADING FAKE’ REPORTS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 5:** Borrowing a verse from Urdu poet Abid Adeeb, Asian Games gold medalist Vinesh Phogat Monday launched a broadside against those “spreading fake news” about the wrestlers’ protest, accusing them of “trembling” in front of a “goon”.

Vinesh, along with Olympic medalist grapplers Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia, are at the forefront of the protest against outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who they have accused of sexually harassing women.

“Do those who spread fake news even realise the trauma that women wrestlers are going through? Weak media has legs that start trembling in front of a goon’s hunter; not a female wrestler,” Vinesh tweeted.

To conclude her tweet, Vinesh remembered these lines by Abid Adeeb, “Jahah pohonch ke kadam

dagmagaye hain sab ke usi mukam se ab apna raasta hoga (Where everyone’s steps have wavered to reach, from the same place will now have its way).”

In another tweet, Vinesh said people who had earlier demeaned the wrestlers’ Olympic and world championships medals by comparing their worth with money, were now after their jobs. “Those who said our medals to be worth Rs 15 each are now after our jobs,” said Vinesh.

“Our life is at stake, a job is a very small thing in front of that. If the job is seen to be an obstacle in the way of justice, then we will not take even ten seconds to leave it. Do not blackmail us by threatening us with our jobs,” the World Championships bronze medalist added.

Bajrang also expressed the same views on social media. The trio of Vinesh, Bajrang and Sakshi are with the Indian Railways. Sakshi

is serving as an Officer on Special Duty (OSD).

Brij Bhushan had earlier said that the wrestlers’ medals were worth Rs 15, drawing the ire of the three wrestlers, who said that the trophies were the reward for decades of blood, sweat and toil.

Earlier in the day, Sakshi and Bajrang said they will continue their fight for justice, asserting that none of the wrestlers have backed down and rubbished reports of their withdrawal from the protest.

The news of our withdrawing from the movement is just a “rumour”, Punia said, adding that the report of women wrestlers taking back the FIR is also “false”.

The wrestlers have been protesting against Brij Bhushan, demanding his arrest on allegations of sexual harassment against seven wrestlers, including one minor. He has denied all the charges.

## Dhanush Srikanth bags gold at Suhl Junior WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Suhl (Germany), June 5:** Dhanush Srikanth won the men’s 10m air rifle event in the ISSF Junior World Cup in Suhl, Germany, giving India their third gold of the competition so far, here Monday.

Dhanush posted 249.4 in the 24-shot final to leave silver-winning Swede, Pontus Kallin, a clear 1.3 points behind in a clinical display. Frenchman Romain Aufrere won the bronze.

India also picked up a bronze in the skeet mixed team competition, when Harmehar Lally and Sanjana Sood defeated their Swedish opponents David Jonsson and Felicia Ros in a shoot-off.

India now lead the medal tally with three gold, one silver and two

bronze, ahead of the USA who have two gold and one silver thus far. Late in the day, the women’s 10m air rifle final is also scheduled.

Three Indians made the final of the junior men’s 10m air rifle. Besides Dhanush, who qualified sixth with a score of 628.4, Pratham Bhadana finished above him in fifth with 628.7. Abhinav Shaw, who won the air rifle mixed team gold on Sunday, also grabbed the eighth and final spot with a score of 626.7.

However, Abhinav bowed out in seventh, while Pratham missed out on a medal with a fourth-place finish. Dhanush, though, was in a different league in the final and led from the start, going from strength to strength, giving none of his opponents a chance.

## IBRAHIMOVIC BIDS ADIEU TO FOOTBALL

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Milan, June 5:** Veteran AC Milan forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic announced his immediate retirement from football at the end of an emotional night at San Siro.

Ibrahimovic was out of contract with the Serie A club at the end of the season and Milan had already announced there would be a special ceremony after its match against Hellas Verona to bid farewell to the 41-year-old Swede. But Ibrahimovic later revealed in a news conference that no one knew the big news he was about to drop.

“Even my family didn’t know, because I wanted that when I announced it everyone heard it at the same time,” he said.

Ibrahimovic was given a guard of honor by his teammates as he walked out after the match at San

Siro. He struggled to hold back the tears as he took the microphone and said: “The time has come to say goodbye to soccer but not to you.”

Ibrahimovic scored 93 goals in 163 appearances over two spells at Milan. He returned in January 2020 and helped Milan win the Serie A title last year — his second league trophy with the Rossoneri. But he has struggled with injuries and only made four appearances this season, after undergoing a knee operation last year.

“I have so many memories and emotions inside this stadium,” Ibrahimovic said. “The first time I arrived you gave me happiness, the second time you gave me love.

“I want to thank my family ... I want to thank my second family: the players. I want to thank the coach and his staff for the responsibility, I want to thank the



directors for the opportunity. Last but not least, from my heart, I want to thank you fans.”

He also enjoyed trophy-laden spells at PSG, Inter Milan, Barcelona, Juventus and Ajax, having started his career with hometown club Malmo. He made 122 appearances for Sweden, scoring 62 goals.

Many of the fans at San Siro Sunday were in tears, as were most of his teammates, who were all wearing jerseys with his name and squad number on the back.

Ibrahimovic told reporters he struggled to find someone who wasn’t crying as he looked around during his speech for someone to help give him the strength to stem

his own tears.

Ibrahimovic also couldn’t resist making a joke. “I woke up this morning and it was raining, and I thought Even God is crying,” he said with a smile.

There were emotional scenes even before kickoff as a giant banner was unfurled at one end of the stadium with the words “Godbye.” The fans chanted his name and Ibrahimovic was moved to tears as he cupped his hands in the shape of a heart and blew kisses to the supporters.

However, he ended his speech with a smile and in typical Ibrahimovic fashion. He said: “It’s too difficult, there are so many emotions going through me now. But I will say, I’ll see you around, if you’re lucky,” Ibrahimovic then walked around the stadium to the song “Simply the Best.”